



The Appalachian Trail Diary

By Dia Black & Marcel Montville

Friday, April 8, 1983

We departed from Providence bus terminal at 11:00am.

Saturday, April 9, 1983

We arrived at Amicalola Falls at 4:30pm and weighed-in our packs at 40 pounds each. The cab man took our names and the state we were from and gave us his address. He asked us to drop a line after we had gone 100 miles. Last year 110 people hiked the trail from start to finish. We noticed as we signed in that five other people have signed in today hoping to go all the way to Maine. One was even from RI. Called both parents and let them know we were really on the way. We are staying tonight at the falls and starting out fresh in the morning. Weather was mild with a few wispy clouds. The stars filled the skies. We'll see if Dia's sleeping bag's warm enough. Marcel took a hot shower thank god! Used his shirt as a towel then threw it in the dryer. He also managed to cut his face shaving w/soap.

Sunday, April 10th, 1983

Today we went up to Springer Mountain. Thought I would never make it on the last two miles. Soooo steep! After the first ½ hour we ran into Jim. He is from Boston. The last two miles he went ahead of us. He got there an hour before us. When we finally got to the top we met two ladies from Baltimore. They hope to walk the trail to Maine too. Jim isn't going all the way because he has to back to work in May. Jim has been to Central America. From there he hitchhiked back to Vermont. We had Mac' N' Cheese and hot chocolate. Weather is very windy and chilly. This is the big test for Dia's sleeping bag.

Monday, April 11th 1983

Well the bag made it but Dia almost didn't. I'm so sore & stiff I didn't sleep most of the night. Got up at 7:00am at Springer Lean-To and saw a mouse. We went to the top and took pictures, got going about 9:00am. Jim started after us. Walk was tame and scenery gorgeous. Beautiful falls, lots of water. Trail was relocated and omitted uphill climbing. Last ½ mile my right knee acted up. Just when I thought that I would not make it we got to the shelter. We met two more guys at the lean-to, George and Tracy "Spaceman" Gayton. When George gets to Hot Springs he will have completed the whole trail. Tracy is hoping to get to Maine. Jim Moore came in at about 4:00pm, an hour after us. Imagine spending the night with four guys! Tomorrow's climb should be hard. It won't be four guys Rob strolled in about 5:30pm. He's going to pitch a tent.

Tuesday, April 12th 1983

Got up at 7:30am leg felt good and I slept all night. We started off at 8:45am from Hawk Mountain Lean-to with Tracy and George in front of us and Jim and Rob behind. My knee started act up right away and managed to get half way before pain was unbearable so we stopped for lunch at Cooper Gap. Weather was the best yet. Marcel and I both got sunburns. Jim and Rob caught up and had lunch with us. Rob's head was sunburned as he is partially bald. Lunch for us consisted of granola bar and water. Knee wasn't much better after an hour but I kept on going with use of walking stick. Only two miles to the creek and a long welcome bath. It took two hours to go two miles to creek. Lots of tree fall at top. Marcel had to help me over most of it. We got to Blackwell Creek at 3:30pm. After pitching tent we took baths. It felt so good. For supper we had beef vegetable soup with tang and chocolate fudge pudding for dessert. We don't seem to be eating much and get full very quickly. Hopefully tomorrow leg will be good enough to hobble two miles to the next shelter where we can hole up until the leg is better and not worry about rain.

Wednesday, April 13th 1983

Got up at 8:00am. Knee was no better. We started off, Dia with her stick!! Terrain was nice and not too hard. But knee took 2 ½ hours to do 2 miles. We stayed at Gooch Gap Lean-To for ½ hour. It was only 11:00am so we decided to walk another mile to where there should be water. Unfortunately the way the trail ran there was no water for the next 3.5 miles. By then I was totally exhausted and my knee was as big as a balloon. We got to Woody Gap and found no place to pitch a tent. So we decided to go into Suches for the night. We walked ½ mile on road and two guys picked us up and gave us a ride into town. They dropped us off at the clinic. The nurse was not due for an hour so we went up the street to the store. Well our luck was running not too well so of course the store was closed. When we got back to the clinic the nurse came in and examined me. She said I had water on the knee or something to that effect. As my luck ran she said I had to be off it for at least 3 weeks. She said I have to go home. Lynn (the nurse) took

us to her house for the night. Her two nurses are taking me to Atlanta tomorrow. Marcel is going to see the trail for the both of us.

Thursday, April 14th, 1983

Well, it has been a long day. Dia and I read most of the day waiting for a ride to Atlanta and home. She's really heart-broken. She's a real hiker! We ate our last mac & cheese dinner together, said our goodbyes and parted. Went into town and picked up some junk food. Waited about 1 ½ hours for Lynn to give me a ride back to her house. Waiting here were two friends of hers Michelle & Harry. Harry and Lynn went back to the center to give their reports to the board while Michelle stayed behind to study to become a dental hygienist. Michelle is separated and will be going through a divorce. She made the mistake of getting married too early and is now feeling the repercussions; she is starting over again at 21 years. Harry is a dentist who works for the center. When Lynn took on this job she took on a massive project. Lynn is a Don Quixote, fighting windmills. It is 9:22pm, raining like hell and I'm getting tired and bored. Hope this weather breaks.

Friday, April 15th, 1983

Got a ride to Woody Gap by Lynn this morning. It was foggy at first but cleared and I got a spectacular view at Blood Mountain. Saw 3 deer at slaughter creek area, a buck, doe and fawn. I have never seen deer so close, about 100 feet. I spotted them first. As soon as I saw them I froze. The Doe saw me but was not alarmed. I slowly walked towards them and the buck looked at me, I froze again. After a few minutes he went back to eating. I walked towards them again and suddenly they bolted such grace and beauty. Also I saw a garter snake sunning in the middle of the trail. I bypassed Neels Gap because at the store there was no phone to call home. The store is strange because the trail goes right through the middle of it, literally. It's 7:09pm and the sun is setting. I just set up the tent around Cowrock Mountain and ate some oriental noodle soup, fantastic stuff. I did about 15 miles today, best yet, but I was exhausted. The weather man says

there will be frost tonight, I believe it, it's cold and windy. Going to play the radio for a while and go to bed. I sure miss Dia!!!

Saturday, April 16th, 1983

Hiked down from the summit to Rt. 348 and got a ride to Blairsville called dearie's house but no Dia at least she got home safely. Stuck out my thumb and got a ride within a mile. People sure are friendly around here, if they are not going to give you a ride they're waving to you. I got back to Tesnatee Gap hiked over to Low Gap Lean-to. There is a high school class on class outing here and tons of kids. Too tired to go on so I'll sleep here. Right now they're building a fire. I washed my hair, face and shaved, feels good. Going to enjoy the fire and go to sleep.

Sunday, April 17th, 1983

Up at 7:00am packed and hiking by 7:40am. Hiked from Low Gap to Montray Lean-To (15 ½ mi.). I was exhausted. The last 3 miles were real hard for me but I stuck it out. Saw a grouse up close for the first time, they're pretty big! Also saw a wild turkey, I could tell by pictures I've seen. I ran out of tang so I mixed up some Kool-Aid (grape) I bought in Blairsville and it wasn't too bad. Last night was tent city in Low Gap and tonight I am all alone. On the wall in this shelter there is an article from the Atlanta Constitution dated March 26th. The article is about A.T. fever and says that out of 200 thru-hikers, 110 made it and also stated that the ATC recorded 1,110 successful journeymen. I will be in that group. Some guy named Phil Goad is going from Springer to Springer. Rob slept here last night and on the register he says that he is staying at the next shelter to "wash clothes and daydream" I will be looking for him tomorrow. It's getting dark so I'll sign off.

Monday, April 18, 1983

Woke up this morning to snow. The weatherman said that it was the coldest temperature ever recorded on this date. Hiked about 5 ½ miles in snow, rain and sleet. I decided to stay at Addis Gap Lean-To because the next shelter is 11 miles away. When I came into the shelter the girls that stayed here last night said that I missed Rob by two hours, see him tomorrow. Two thru hikers are sleeping here tonight, Tim Platts from Pennsylvania and Greg from Missouri.

Tuesday, April 19th, 1983

At 7:00am it was 35 degrees Fahrenheit and Greg was cold because his sleeping bag isn't the right comfort range. Both Greg and Tim are going into Hiawassee to sleep in a hotel pig out at Waffle Shack and bathe. At 11:00am stopped at Dicks Creek Gap (Us. Rt. 76) to get water. An RV pulled up into the rest area, a man about 65 years old got out and offered me a coffee. I was apprehensive but I went for it. The man and his wife are Al and Anne Weed two of the nicest people you'd want to meet. They fed me homemade whole wheat bread (4 slices) apple sauce and apple pudding fantastic! They told me that the RV is their home and that they tour the country. Back in 1979 they thru-hiked the AT. And have been helping hikers ever since. They have been helping a guy named "crazy Roger" who has a place in New York State. Roger, who is hiking from New York State to Springer, has accommodations for seven at his summer house. He feeds and puts up all hikers that he sees for free. We talked for a while and he took my picture, a copy will be made, one he will put on his wall and the other I will keep. The 11.0 miles I hiked today seemed to fly by. It's too late to go on to the next shelter so I'll stay here at Plumorchard Gap Lean-To tonight. Tomorrow I will say goodbye to Georgia. Hello North Carolina. I have 13 States to go and 12 miles to next lean-to.

Wednesday, April 20th, 1983

North Carolina greeted me with a big mountain and some uphill that lasted till 12:30pm. Slept with 2 North bounders last night. They're headed for Bly Gap to take pictures and catch some rays. I also met "Wild Bill" from Minnesota, crazy as a loon. When he left camp this morning he let out a blood curdling scream. He's doing sections of the trail and heading for Springer. I made it to Standing Indian Lean-To 3:30pm, good time. There is still quite a bit of snow on the ground from the storm that I hiked through on the Montray to Addis gap trip. It seems to have hit this area quite a bit harder as these mountains in North Carolina are 1000 feet higher, on an average. Hiked all day and didn't see a soul. What beautiful country around here, Dia would love it. Wonder what she is doing now? I sat down for a half hour today just listening to the snow melt off of the trees, never noticed it before. It seems that when you're up here alone for a while your senses become sharpened. I saw a hoot owl today. He must had a wing span of about 3 feet, a big one, all the birds were scrambling. A guy that lives around here said that this was the coldest spring in 100 years of record keeping. Many of the other hikers are cold at night but not me, this sleeping bag is great.

Thursday, April 21st, 1983

Saw some breathtaking views today and the weather was perfect. The trail goes directly under a fire tower so I went up. Charlie (the fire ranger) and I talked for about ½ an hour and he offered me a Mountain Dew which I guzzled, real nice guy. I made about 15 miles to Big Spring Lean-To today and Mt. (fat) Albert was a killer. The trail was hand over hand, straight up for ½ mile. The view offered me after the tedious climb made it all worth it! I'm headed into Franklin North Carolina tomorrow for laundry and a Pizza Hut pig out. Time to take a shower pretty soon cause I can smell myself. While I'm there I'll call home too. Looks like I'll be sleeping alone tonight, it's not too bad in fact I like it.

Friday, April 22nd, 1983

Up and out of the shelter by 7:30am. I hiked down to Rock Gap Lean-To and lo and behold Rob. He's headed up to Wesser, North Carolina and I'm going into Franklin, North Carolina so our paths will cross again. After two miles of road walking on Route 64 I got a lift into town. I checked into the Woods motel, did laundry, stocked up on food and ate at Pizza Hut. After I got back from "The Hut" I called the folks and repacked my bag. I bought too much food!! While I was at it I cleaned my stove. At 9:30pm I will call Dia. It will be nice to hear her voice! My feet ache today, hope that they will be better tomorrow! Rain tomorrow and a rotten hike back to the trail.

Saturday, April 23rd, 1983

I woke up at 8:30am finished packing and watched bugs bunny till 11:00am. The swelling in my feet went down considerably since last night. Just to be safe I bandaged them up anyway. Hiked down to the local outlet and bought some batteries for my radio. Spent about \$45:00 in town and I hope that I don't do that too often. Hitchhiked in pouring rain and I got a ride. The guy gave me a ride all the way up to the trail, real nice of him. I got back to Rock Gap Lean-To about 1:00pm ate and have been writing ever since. Three thru-hikers just came in and are going into Franklin North Carolina tomorrow. Next stop Siler Bald Lean-To.

Sunday, April 24th, 1983

I got up to Siler Bald Lean-To at 1:00pm. Rob was here to greet me. It drizzled all the way up here. Started snowing about 4:30pm and it's just beginning to stick. Black toe and Troy "Trick Knee" Martin pulled in 1 ½ hours ago. Mark and Troy also went into town for a pig-out. Don't feel like writing much so I won't.

Monday, April 25th, 1983

I left the guys about 8:45am. Hiker till about 12:00 noon and ate lunch, Tang and a fudge cookie. Saw my first glimpse of the Smokies from Wayah Mountain Observatory. They were covered with snow and quite massive. Wesser is a day away and I will go in for supplies, bath and socks. The weather was cool, breezy but sunny and perfect for hiking. I thought that I'd try Hormel Vienna Sausages that I bought in town. I didn't like them but at least I got some meat in me for a change. This lean-to (Cold Spring Lean-To) is pretty nice. It's built log cabin style and seems to be very sturdy. Not 50 feet from the entrance is a small spring, very convenient. Have been here for two hours and haven't seen hide nor hair of the others that I have left behind. Maybe they are tenting tonight. Tracy "Spaceman" Gayton is about five days ahead and I'll probably never catch him. Tim stayed here last night so he must be in Wesser today.

Tuesday, April 26th, 1983

Today I am about 1 mile south of Wesser. This shelter (A. Rufus Morgan Lean-To) is so new that there is no graffiti. Wesser Bald had a beautiful overlook. I am staying with three other hikers who are just hiking around. About 3:00pm I stopped for a break and, under a leaf, I found a box tortoise. He hissed a lot when I picked him up, but I wasn't too scared. I knighted him "Sir Tom." Tomorrow, Wesser.

Wednesday, April 27th, 1983

Easy hike into Wesser. Saw a bunch of thru-hikers. Hard hike up to Swim Bald. Saw my first Cardinal (red) and many wild flowers. We're having a Mac & Cheese festival, it's great. This was the hardest climb yet. Five hours of continuous climbing. This shelter (Sassafras Gap Lean-To) is small but there is a nice creek out back. It was real nice to hear from Dia. I know that she is lonely but I have to do this. I miss her too!

Thursday, April 28th, 1983

Last night was fun, everybody was in good spirits. I talked to Diane Spott for a while and she told me about her childhood in Iowa. She made us laugh about having boing-boings (Kraft Mac & Cheese Spirals). This morning I started out about 8:00am. The first peak was a killer, straight up again. I hiked hard most of the day. The guidebook said that this is one of the hardest sections on the trail.

I also recall Ed Garvey saying the same. I hiked most of the morning with Diane. She broke for a long lunch and I broke for a short one. I started ahead of her and Bob but they caught up to me by 3:30pm around Brown Fork gap. Seeing that it was only six miles to the next shelter I thought that I could make it. As hard as I tried I couldn't make it so I set up camp four miles south of the shelter in Cody Gap. Tomorrow should be a breeze and the next day is Fontana. When I left her Diane had a strained leg muscle and was very tired but she was still pushing on. I'll meet them at Fontana. Today I developed a blister on my right foot. It was good to read Dia's letter yesterday and I'm looking forward to the next.

Friday, April 29th, 1983

Last night Rob came by and decided to make camp with me. We talked about many things and solved all the world's problems. Today's hike was pretty easy. I am now sitting on Fontana Dam. It's just an incredible feat of engineering. I am awestruck. On top of the dam there are free showers for all thru-hikers. After my shower I felt like a million bucks. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw that the shower room was made out of real marble, what class! They have cable cars that take you from the top of the dam into the power house where they house the turbines. Tomorrow I want to see that. I hope that I get my mail drop tomorrow because if I don't I'll have to wait until Monday. The next section is the Smokies and 6000' peaks. They say that the trails are graded but 6000' is still a long way

up! Spring has sprung and it's been gorgeous out. Right now it's about 70 degrees at 6:00pm and I'm sleeping at Fontana Hilton Hikers Shelter. I saw a yellow cardinal today and there are swallows flying all over the place. What a perfect day!

Saturday, April 30th, 1983

Up and out of shelter by 8:00am. Went up to dam to get permits. Waited till 10:00am but no ranger. Post office closed at 12:00 noon and it was one hours hike to town. Got into town and picked up A.T. guide but no letter. The guide was sent "Rush." I forwarded my mail to Hot Springs North Carolina about 100 miles away. Met Greg, Steve, Bob "Fish" Fisher, Diane Spott, Rob, Mark and Phil. We talked while our laundry was being dried. Rob invited me to share his campsite and I accepted. I didn't feel comfortable with the company in the Fontana Hilton Hiker Shelter, I do with Rob. Tonight is feast night. I bought some pasta, Ragu tomato sauce, bologna, mustard, hot dog rolls and potato chips. Can't wait for Rob to get back with the water! Tomorrow I will be in the Smokies. The rangers hunted down all of the thru-hikers and gave us permits. Many things beyond their control happened to them this morning so they couldn't issue permits earlier today. The rangers are really nice but I don't like all the damn rules that they have!!

Sunday, May 1st, 1983

Last night Rob and I talked about ourselves till 11:00pm. Seems that he had an unhappy childhood and that's his reason for needing more space. When we are together we give each other a wide berth. Each one understands the others need

for periodic isolation. Today was quite leisurely. I left the campsite at 11:00am, hiked up to the Fontana Hilton Hikers Shelter where I stayed two nights before because my sweatband was missing. Upon arriving I was greeted by black toe and trick knee. They helped me find my headband and told me that the shelter there was crowded and noisy. They decided to let the other groups go ahead so that they could enjoy their peace. Had a shower at the dam before leaving and hiked five miles to Birch Spring Shelter and decided to stay. All the other hikers will go to the other shelter and I will have my solitude. A kid just came in Mark from Ohio.

He has a Boy Scout rucksack and cooks on a Sterno stove. He's an out of work carpenter that intends on hiking the Smokies. He said that if he has no job offers by the time that he reaches his goal he will hike on. Shelters are different here they are three sided stone structures with hurricane (chain link) fence stretched out in front of the open side. Inside is a series of wire bunks to sleep on. I hope that a loose wire doesn't come through my ground cloth and puncture my bag!

Monday, May 2nd, 1983

Beautiful day for hiking. So far the trail hasn't been bad at all. I believe that I have a hiking partner in Mark for the Smoky Range; he seems to have taken to me. We hiked about nine miles and passed two shelters. Four hikers came plodding into camp last night about midnight and they came into camp about two hours after us today. During today's hike Mike and I saw a family of wild boar. While picking up wood for their fire the guys spotted a buck in the field. I ran up there with my camera and got two great pictures. Shortly after coming back to camp some doe's appeared. I got two shots of them, fantastic!! For the past two days I've been eating toasted baloney sandwiches which I bought from Fontana village. As I've been writing this there has been a herd of wild deer circling our shelter and feeding. I got some great pictures here at Spence Field Shelter.

Tuesday, May 3rd, 1983

It was very windy on Thunderhead Mountain. Rained two miles south of Derrick Knob Shelter so I decided to stay here for the night. I've been eating too much and not hiking enough, bad sign. Seem to be losing my drive, I'm worried.

Wednesday, May 4th, 1983

I woke up sick today, had the craps. Started very cloudy but cleared up before we got to Clingmans Dome. After a short time I really felt great. Great views throughout the days hike. Clingmans Dome was a gas! This is the best I've felt in a long time. Hiked twenty one miles to Kephart Prong Shelter and this is my best yet. I am officially a twenty miler and that is a milestone. My attitude did a turnabout. There are twenty people here so I am tenting tonight.

Thursday, May 5th, 1983

The day started out lousy. Woke up at 6:30am to the patter of rain on the tent. I woke Mike up and we packed out. We got to Pecks Corner Shelter (7.4 miles) by noon. Mike wanted to go on and I wanted to stay to avoid the kids from Beckett Academy so we shook hands and parted company. Shortly thereafter the sun began to shine and I opted to continue. On my way to Tri-corners Knob Shelter I met a thru-hiking mother and daughter team. The mother is in her late sixties. They go slow but steady. Mike has been having a lot of trouble with drinking and is trying to straighten out. The mountains don't hold the answers to his problems. That's why he's in a hurry to get out of the park. The bad weather this morning

made me miss some great views. Tomorrow I will hike to Davenport Shelter which is .9 miles from the park and the Smoky Range. Mark, who has done the AT before and says the next section is short but tough (30 miles). Tonight I am sleeping with the Becket kids.

Friday, May 6th, 1983

Woke up early to a beautiful day. Hiked fifteen miles to Davenport Gap Shelter and got in at about 2:30pm. Beautiful day and scenery and mild grades. After I got to the shelter I laid out my wet clothes and tent to dry and headed down to the store. The town is real big, four buildings. Not much variety in the chicken coop/store either. Got two blisters, one on each heel. Mark said that the next section, Pisgah National Forest, will be tough but short. I finally saw Captain Video, what a rush.

Saturday, May 7th, 1983

Real tough climb today. Hiked up 2000' from Big Pigeon River. I hiked continuously, straight up, for four hours. It was a long but graded climb. At the top there was an F.A.A. tower. Never saw one like that before. I am staying at Groundhog Creek Shelter with Steve and three older ladies that are heading South. They introduced us to the shelter belter. Great drink! Bourbon and lemonade.

Sunday, May 8th, 1983

It's been raining, on and off, all day. Hiked till noon alone then Steve Poole caught up and we hiked together for the rest of the day. Steve is an ex coast guard lieutenant who's last tour of duty was in Puerto Rico. He is officially an Alaskan citizen. He has many stories and a great personality. We are both psyched for Hot Springs and will be starting off tomorrow at 5:00am. Camping out at Walnut

Mountain Shelter so I am only thirteen miles to Hot Springs and PO, pig out, shower and groceries and can't wait!

Monday, May 9th, 1983

Woke up at 5:00am this morning but it was cold, dark and drizzly. We set the alarm for 5:30am but it was still too dark to hike. Neither of us could sleep so Steve made some hot cocoa for us and I put a new dressing on my wounds. We packed up and were out by 6:45am. We both hiked like men possessed and got to Deer Park Mountain Shelter (10 miles) by 11:00am.

After a quick lunch of bologna we headed into town. We each got a room for \$8:00 per night and the meal \$5:00 was an all you can eat vegetarian meal. The meal consisted of pea soup, brown rice with hard boiled eggs sliced in half on top, tossed salad, banana pudding and peppermint tea. It was great!! I did laundry and bought some groceries. I was glad to pick up my care package and letters. Hot Spott was so glad to see me that she hugged me, she's nice. Everybody wolfed down moms brownies. They were excellent and everybody loved them. It was nice to hear Dia's voice. She figured out that I was playing down the trip so she wouldn't feel bad.

Tuesday May 10th, 1983

Woke up at 7:30am. I tried to fall back asleep but couldn't so I got up and took a shower. My blisters are barely perceptible but do hurt considerably. Under Steve's advice I've been wrapping them each day and they are getting better. We had a huge breakfast with three pancakes, two eggs, two toasts, hash browns and a large milk. Afterwards I finished grocery shopping and mailed my letters, post cards and package. By the time I got done it was too late to hike to the next

shelter so I opted to stay for another night. I asked the innkeeper if I could work off last night's meal and he agreed. He had me mow the rear lawn and rake for two hours. I had dinner at the trail café. It consisted of a huge hamburger a large order of fries and a large Pepsi. I weighed myself and I have lost 30 pounds (165 lbs.). I hope that I lose more. Tomorrow Steve and I will try for a twenty miler to Little Laurel Shelter.

Wednesday May 11th, 1983

Started out at 9:00am and stopped for lunch at Spring Mountain Shelter. Hiked 14.4 miles with heavy packs and the one day layover didn't help any.

Tonight we are tenting out at Allen Gap. There is a small store in the Gap and we took advantage of it. When we got here we ate 2 pints of ice cream and three sodas each. It was in the mid-seventies all day. It's amazing that in a few short weeks the brown forest has turned into a green, lush haven.

Thursday May 12th, 1983

Hiked 11.4 miles today. We were going to hike more but we got a rain storm five minutes out of Jerry Cabin Shelter so we hiked back and are staying for the night. Got my first look at Mt. Mitchell (6,684') highest peak in the Eastern US. Someday I'll come back and climb it.

Friday May 13th, 1983

Woke up to torrential downpours this morning. By noon it cleared so I headed to Flint Gap Shelter which was relocated one mile south of the old shelter. This

shelter is one year old and very spacious. Yesterday we met Mr. Davis who is the chairman of the A.T.C. board and the man who designed this shelter. I hiked between rainstorms today, started just after morning rain and finished just before late afternoon rain. Rob came in last night and slept in the shelter. Rob ran out of money so he decided to call mom. Mom had no money so he decided to go home. He hitched about 80 miles off the trail. At about 11:30 pm he sacked out off of the road and found \$85.00. Next day he hitched back to Hot Springs and is again on the trail. Smitty just hiked in from the rain at 7:45pm and is staying for the night.

Saturday May 14th, 1983

Last night two new people came into the shelter, Bruce and Cathy, a husband and wife team. They started from Springer on March 31st but got held up by family matters. Today we hiked 15 grueling miles to a store for ½ gallon of chocolate ice cream. We got into camp to find Smitty bundled up inside. The shelter is designated as an emergency shelter called the “Genghis Khan Shelter”. Actually it’s an old lineman shack that can accommodate one person comfortably. Smitty told us of some new houses that they’re putting up over the ridge so Steve and I slept in one of the vacant houses. All of the houses are beautiful so we ate supper and slept in style. This part of the trail has a 27 mile span between shelters which makes it hard on rainy days.

Sunday May 15th, 1983

Got up and out of “our house” early. The day has been quite uneventful. We hiked to No Business Knob Shelter together. Steve wanted some hotel/motel time

and I must conserve my money so I opted to stay here to avoid paying for a room. Tomorrow I will head for Irwin Tennessee for Pizza Hut and a shower but most of all cards and letters from home. Six miles to Irwin!!

Monday May 16th, 1983

Woke up to a raging rain storm but even that couldn't dampen my spirits. I put all of my rain gear on and got into Irwin by 11:00am. By the time I got to the road I was swimming in my own sweat. So far I can find nobody able to stay dry in the rain. Most people live with the fact that they will get wet and hike that way. Once I got to the road I took off my rain gear and hiked in shorts and a short sleeve shirt. I hiked about three miles before I asked a guy for directions to the P.O.

He gave me a ride to the P.O., waited for me to get my mail and drove me to Pizza Hut. He was a real nice guy! While I waited for my Cavatini Supreme I changed into some dry clothes and pigged out. After the Hut I did laundry, finished my letter, shopped and went to Nolicucky Expeditions and showered for a buck. After the shower I hiked to Curley Maple Gap Shelter which was 3.5 miles up the trail to find Steve, Kathy, Bruce and Claudia. They squeezed me into the shelter and sleep came fast I made 10 miles today. Not Bad!

Tuesday May 17th, 1983

A cold front came in last night and it stayed cool all day, perfect hiking weather. I hiked to Iron Mountain Gap (15 mi) went down to the grocery store (.8 mi) and ate a half gallon of ice cream and one bottle of strawberry soda. I then proceeded to hike six miles to Clyde Smith Shelter for a total of 21 miles. Fantastic!!

Wednesday May 18th, 1983

Got off to a late start. Hiked up to Roan (groan) Mountain and nearly died. I've been very tired all day. Started out alone but caught up with Claudia so I hiked up to the top with her. We parted company on top and I headed to Roan Highland Shelter. Got some beautiful views from Roan High Knob (took pictures). Roan High knob is easily accessible by road and is an easy hike. I want to take Dia here someday. It is quite cold today and very windy. It should prove to be a chilly night. Tomorrow I will head into Elk Park, North Carolina for P.O. stop and maybe groceries. I did only 10 miles and I am beat!!

Thursday May 19th, 1983

Last Night it started to rain about midnight. This shelter is situated so that the wind began blowing the rain in. In spite of the high winds I hung my tarp across half of the front of the shelter. I pulled my rainfly down the middle and held it with rocks. The wind was so fierce that the rocks couldn't hold the rainfly down so about 3:00am I found some huge rocks and that secured it. The alarm woke me at 6:00am to find the rainfly had been blown loose from the top and my sleeping bag was beginning to get wet. By this time it was getting light enough to secure it for good. Here in this saddle the winds are much lighter than on the tops so if the winds are high here than the top of the next mountain must be awesome. I am forced to stay here for the day. The forecast said sunny and warmer tomorrow. No matter what I'm leaving tomorrow. This idleness is driving me nuts. Today I listened to the radio and read a sci-fi book that Mark gave me. It has kept my sanity. It is 4:12pm and I am very bored. I am beginning to understand how Dia feels at home.

Friday May 20th, 1983

Got up at 6:30am this morning, packed all of my gear, and headed for U.S.19E and Elk Park (7 miles). Got down to the highway by 11:30am. I saw some beautiful views on Hump Mountain. These balds never cease to amaze me. The guidebook says that Elk Park, North Carolina is 1.5 miles west on Rt. 19E. Bullshit it is east and I found out the hard way. Once I got into town I located the post office and was greeted by two care packages and numerous letters from home. I never knew that I was so loved!! Even pep wrote a letter. I'm worried about him 'cause he is losing his eyesight and motor functions. I stocked up on my provisions and decided to get a hotel room to dry out all of my gear. I called home and Dia and both were glad to hear from me. I was glad to hear that Dia only had a badly bruised muscle and soon she will be functioning normally.

Saturday May 21st, 1983

Got a ride to the trailhead by Ronnie Harrison who asked me to write when I complete the trail. I got on the trail about 12:00 noon. Reached Don Nelan Shelter by 1:30pm so I decided to push on to the next shelter. The trail was quite rough and muddy. It started raining on me a few hours out of the first shelter. Got into Moreland Gap Shelter by 7:00pm and met a lady thru-hiker from Toronto Canada. Claudia came in at about 11:00pm with a thru-hiker named Steve Rohrbeck

Sunday May 22nd, 1983

Woke up sick today and didn't start hiking until noon. I hiked seven easy miles and was exhausted. I have contracted Giardia I believe. My symptoms are lack of strength, fever and Diarrhea. Claudia gave me some Streptomycin to help me through it.

Monday May 23rd, 1983

I feel a bit stronger so I'll try to get to Watauga Lake Shelter today (10.4 miles). Got to shelter at 6:00pm. Stopped into grocery store for coke and potato chips as store is right on trail. Proceeded to camping area on Watauga Lake where I shaved, washed upper body and hair, cleaned my feet and washed some clothes. The antibiotic seems to be working and I feel better hour. Maybe tomorrow I can put in a normal day. That would be a good moral booster! This shelter is nice and new in fact it smells of cedar. It is 7:00pm and no one has stopped in for the night. Ah, a night of solitude at long last!

Tuesday May 24th, 1983

Woke up at 6:00am and out by 6:45. The day turned out to be lovely. Birds sang serenades to me all day and I felt great. Today I hiked 21 miles and it felt great. I got into Double Springs Shelter at 5:30pm to find that I had caught up with Claudia. Tomorrow I say goodbye to North Carolina and Tennessee and hello Virginia and Damascus.

Wednesday May 25th, 1983

I did 19 easy miles today and I think that I'm cured. I had my first hot lunch of the trip at Abington Gap Shelter to celebrate my good health and my reaching Virginia. Got into town at 4:00pm and just in time to get my package from the post office and then proceeded to "The Place" to find Diane, Fish, The Keystone Kid, Smitty, Claudia, Frank "The Merry Slav" Krajcovic, Steve Rohabec and Pat Guthrie. We had our pudding fest, drank wine and told trail tales till 11:00pm. I

also bought groceries and took a shower before retiring. I will stay one more night and head on out.

Thursday May 26th, 1983

Pat got up early and headed up the trail. The three musketeers left at about 11:00am but before then we all pigged out on mom's prune bread and some leftover goodies from my Elk Park care package. We all took group photos of "The Clan" and got each other's addresses and phone numbers. We also made plans to meet in Boston after Katahdin and have a good time. Wonder if it will ever happen? Did laundry and wrote letters and post cards and will try calling the folks today also. Claudia, Smitty, Frank and Steve are also leaving tomorrow. I was told that there are no shelters for at least 26 miles out of town so it's tenting tomorrow night. I weighed in at 160 pounds today and hopefully declining.

Friday May 27th, 1983

Slept late this morning and was on the trail by 9:00am and it felt good. Today was a perfect day, cool and sunny. The trail was easy so 18 miles was no burden. I am hiking with Frank "The Merry Slav" Krajcovic whom I met at the hostel. He has lived all over the country even though he is only 26 years of age. He told me that he wrote a book but could not get it published. The book is a satire on baseball as he is a baseball fan. The "Awesome Robots" got into the hostel last night and told me that they had gone to the mountain music festival and had a terrific time. They are from Massachusetts and are quite a pair. Tonight we are camped at the base of White Mountain so we can hit the 5000' peak early in the morning before it gets too warm and after that the rest of the day will be cake!

Saturday May 28th, 1983

Hiked up to White Mountain quite early this morning and got a splendid view of the countryside. The AT was packed with people as it is Saturday but fortunately most were headed south. Saw trail crews fixing up the trail and thanked them all for their help. Today was partly cloudy and it has just started raining but the views were tremendous. Most of the day was spent hiking in grassy, overgrown fields with huge granite outcroppings. Made it 21 miles to Old Orchard Shelter and the bottoms of my feet can feel it.

Sunday May 29th, 1983

Hiked 14.2 miles today to Trimpi Shelter and decided to stay here as the next shelter is 17 miles away. It threatened rain all day but I was fortunate to get through unscathed. I got to the shelter at 3:00pm to find Smitty (Dave Smith) laying around and munching out. Today I began writing a letter to Harry. There is a bird nesting in the rafters of the shelter and it's neat watching her do her thing. Tomorrow will be a 17 miler to the next shelter for both of us.

Monday May 30th, 1983

Woke up at 7:00am got packed and was ready to hit the road when Frank told me that he was having problems with his stove. Took me ½ hour to get it running correctly and that made him very happy. Started hiking with Smitty and by 12:30pm we had done 10 miles. At one point we timed ourselves at 3 miles per hour. Stopped at the United States Forest Service Headquarters for lunch and proceeded on another 7 miles to Glade Mountain Lean-To. Got here to find Claudia sacked out. She said that she hiked all night and got lost. Sometimes it's tough to be an AT purist. Anyhow tomorrow Atkins Virginia. Oh yes, Frank made it to Trimpi Shelter late last night. I've been expecting to see The Robots (Jim Hassan and Eric Watkins) all day but so far they are a no show.

Tuesday May 31st, 1983

Got into Atkins Virginia by 9:00am and picked up care packages and letters from home. Claudia came in ½ hour later and The Robots a half hour after her. Both Claudia and I got rides into town but The Robots had to walk all of the way in and they weren't happy about it. Claudia and I hiked out of town together and proceeded on about 10 easy miles to the next shelter. The shelter is actually a picnic pavilion and we are sleeping on the tables. Tomorrow mega-miles I hope. Everyone at home is surprised at my progress on the trail.

Wednesday June 1st, 1983

Last night Claudia and I had quite a start. At about 10:00pm some good old boys decided to party in the parking lot next to the pavilion. Not knowing whether they were friends or foe we decided to quietly and discretely pack up and head for the next shelter. They had a basketball and it got away from them. Naturally it rolled next to the pavilion while we were packing.

We hid as they turned their car to illuminate the pavilion so they could find their basketball. The ball was found and we were not observed. It happened a second time but this time the ball was much closer. It is still unclear if we were found out but once their ball was retrieved they all jumped in their car and slung gravel. Meanwhile we finished packing, found the path after ten long minutes of searching and headed for the next shelter, about 2 miles away. Claudia was quite scared and I was calm but very alert. We got to Knot Mole Shelter to find The Robots and Smitty there. We recounted our story and headed for dreamland. Today I've come only 10 miles to a rock hut on Chestnut Ridge just south of Walker Gap. Rain and fatigue has suspended my hiking for the day. Claudia has joined me for the night once again as I suspect that she is too weary from last night's episode. Tomorrow will be mega-miles!

Thursday June 2nd, 1983

Got up at 5:30am today to put in some mileage. Watched dawn break as I hiked and it was beautiful. Chestnut ridge is also very pretty. The whole ridgeline is a grassy field and one can see for miles. By 11:00am I had put in ten miles and ate lunch at Jenkins Lean-To and it was such a nice day that I also took a twenty minute catnap and as I left the lean-to Claudia hiked in. On the trail there were notes that a hiker had left saying to stop in at "The Corner Diner" on Rt. 51. When I got to the road I was quite hungry so I opted to hike the mile down to the diner. The first thing Levi (the owner) said was "come in friend you are among friends here" and I was. While eating he told me of his friend Warren Doyle, of the new shelters they will be building shortly and of all the hikers ahead. He even had a register from the forest service and Warren Doyle's personal register. When I was done a fantastic and filling meal he drove me back to the trail head. I hiked a few hundred yards to find Claudia sitting next to a bathtub which was sunk in the middle of a stream and a mailbox with two registers. Both were from Warren Doyle and so was the tub.

The first register was a run of the mill one but the second one was a thru-hiker register. I signed it and am the 95th north bounder this year and there are also about 10 south bounders. The tub was quite inviting and even though it was late I took the time to wash my hair. Claudia left and soon after I left as well. I ended up missing the trail to the shelter by two miles so I made camp on the trail thus ending a 26 mile day.

Friday June 3rd, 1983

Got up late today and just finished packing when Claudia came bouncing up the road. Stopped for lunch at 11:00am when Claudia pulled in and she told me her knee was hurting really badly. I advised her to go back to the diner where she could get help and she agreed so I pushed on. About three it started to shower. Fortunately I was on a road and waited the shower out on the porch. The last six miles of today's hike was done in the pouring rain. It was nice to see Wapitu

Shelter as I was worried that I may have missed this one also. Tonight I am all alone and it feels good!

Saturday June 4th, 1983

The word for today is "slack pack" because that is just what I did. I woke up late, caught up on my journal and got out on the trail at 11:30am. I hiked up to Sugar Run Mountain Overlook and stopped for lunch which lasted 45 minutes and then I hiked two miles to flat top and took pictures. Another three miles to Docs Knob Shelter for a grand total of 7 miles and it was great. Tomorrow it will be a big effort to hit Pearisburg for groceries, laundry and Pizza Hut.

Sunday June 5th, 1983

The day started at dawn. Visions of Pizza Hut flashed before me as I sped for town. Got in at 10:00am and made a bee line for the hospice. The hospice is a barn style structure complete with a shower, kitchenette, library, weight scale and sleeping area in the loft. Here I have met many people but the most interesting is Paul. Paul is hiking the AT from Washington DC. To Georgia and then plans to hike from Georgia to California. This in itself is amazing, but add to the fact that he is deaf and it becomes almost heroic.

Monday June 6th, 1983

Today was letter writing day and package mailing and I feel mellow. My boots are finally dry and I'm ready to bail out of town if the rain holds out.

Tuesday June 7th, 1983

Woke up to a grey day and a rainy forecast so I went to the library, filled my fuel container and generally hung around. I was bored! The worst part is that it didn't rain so rain or shine tomorrow its back on the trail!!

Wednesday June 8th, 1983

Beautiful hiking today sunny, cool and breezy so I did 20 miles to Pine Swamp Branch Shelter. Saw much wildlife many rabbits, grouse, a box turtle and even an albino deer. I never saw that before and I'll bet few people have. Grouse have a little game that they play to protect their young. When a predator gets too close they fake an injury and draw the predator away from the babies. They'll walk in front of you faking a broken wing and scream in mock pain and when you get too close to them they fly away. Neat!

Thursday June 9th, 1983

Had an easy hike today. Did only 11.8 miles all day because I was told that the next shelter has no water. The nails that hold my sole to the boot are poking through the inner boot and it's starting to hurt. I put a rubber pad over the offending nails but it did not cure the problem. Hopefully there is a cobbler in Buchanan, Virginia. There is a relocation that takes ten miles off of the trail mileage which will make it possible to get to Niday shelter tomorrow. This shelter, WarSpur, is nice and it has a large stream 100 feet in front of it. The day seemed long today because my foot is hurting from my boot problem.

Friday June 10th, 1983

Redressed my wounds and put two rubber backed moleskins, one over the other, in my left boot over the nail and hiked all day without it bothering me. Last night I slept alone and it looks like the same tonight, fantastic! I hiked all day and never saw a soul on the trail. There has been a relocation on this section and it involves some hard climbing but knocks ten miles off of the old route. Today I saw many deer and chipmunks. Last night at dusk and early this morning I had a visitor. She was a very young doe and was quite curious. Early this morning she came sniffing at the entrance of the lean-to as if to wake me. Today was a 17.5 miler and I'm staying at Niday Shelter.

Saturday June 11th, 1983

Hiked to Pickle Branch Shelter today. Only 8.0 miles but it was a nice shelter and I am celebrating two months on the trail. Washed and shaved at Craig Creek around noon. Saw a 3' black snake and even got a picture. Heard many deer in the forest today. Tonight I eat Ramen noodles and pudding to celebrate. Wish Dia was here.

Sunday June 12th, 1983

Had quite a day. I felt guilty about taking yesterday off so I did a 20 miler to Lamberts Meadow Shelter to make up. A hiker came into camp last night and offered me spaghetti, pudding, fig bars and I gobbled it all up in seconds. This was to be his last day on the trail so he was dumping all of his spare food. I got up to Dragon Tooth about 11:00am and the view was spectacular from the top. Went down to the grocery store and bought a coke and that broke me. Now I have three cents. Today's hike was long and hard with the temps in the 80's and I must have sweated a gallon of water. The last two miles are straight up and after 18 miles they damn near killed me. I do feel good though and not as exhausted as I would have been in the beginning of the trip. I saw a large black snake again and many lizards on the rocks and heard many deer.

Monday June 13th, 1983

Claudia and her friend Sue hiked into camp last night around 11:00pm and all they had on were boots. They said that it was too hot to wear clothes so they peeled them off and hiked the trail. Claudia decided to do a flip for some reason and that's why she was there. Today was very hot. I hiked through Cloverdale Virginia today and it was tough not to stop for the night for the trail goes by Coke machines, stores, Pizza Hut and an A.Y.C.E. (all you can eat) restaurant. With my pockets empty I had to move on. According to the register everyone else had a good time in town. Bad planning on my part. I was hiking down VA652 when I started talking to one of the locals and we had a pleasant conversation and shared some ice water. People are nice around here. I only hiked 14 miles today because it was too hot. Tomorrow will be a 13 miler to Bobblets Gap Shelter the last shelter south of Buchanan Virginia. I have been able to hike 120 miles without restocking. Looks like tonight I sleep in Fulhardt Knob Shelter alone.

Tuesday June 14th, 1983

Easy day. Met two college kids at Taylors Mountain Overlook and will be sharing the shelter with them tonight. A girl in a Triumph TR7 offered us some watermelon and I pigged out. The trail intersected the Blue Ridge Parkway three times today and the second intersection is where I got the melon. Here, in the shelter there is a flyer describing the hostel in Buchanan Virginia. For \$8.00 per night you get kitchen facilities, bunk, shower, cable television, stereo and a ride back to the trailhead. It's an old converted hotel and it sounds great! Tomorrow on to Buchanan Virginia!

Wednesday June 15th, 1983

Got a ride into Buchanan. Hit the PO first, picked up mail and ate goodies. Next stop was the Hostel where I got acquainted with the people and got a room. On to the IGA then to the Laundromat. At the Laundromat I met a guy who invited me to his house We drank beer, talked and he showed me a dice game like Cosmic Whimpout. About 8:00pm I got back to the hostel, cleaned my gear and called Dia. Talked till about 10:30pm and went to bed. A bunch of bikers doing the bikecentennial are also staying here for the night.

Thursday June 16th, 1983

Sloth is the word of the day. I've decided to stay here another night because it was late and hot before I got out of the cobblers. The cobbler, Lloyd Long, is a man afflicted with a muscle disorder cause during the Korean conflict. The tank that he was in got hit by a shell. He has many pieces of shrapnel throughout his body. Despite his handicap he's one hell of a cobbler and an even better man. You can tell that he loves life and people too. An outstanding example of personal triumph and heroism.

Imagine this man who has endured so much pain in his lifetime admiring me for hiking fifty miles on a little nail pushing through my boot. A truly humble person. I met fuzzy Jim again he came in town yesterday. We went to the bar room and ate hot dogs and played pool. Ready to go tomorrow.

Friday June 17th, 1983

Got on the trail by 10:00am and am hiking today with fuzzy Jim. We met Sue about eight miles up the trail and she tagged along. Claudia is hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway because it's easier on her leg. Floyd Mountain wasn't nearly as hard as I thought it would be. When I got into Thunder Hill Lean-To I found Claudia and a few weekenders there. Fish just came in and he is also hiking the

parkway. I am true to the white blazes. I have done 15 miles mostly uphill and I feel great.

Saturday June 18th, 1983

Hiked 21.5 miles today and saw my first rattlesnake today. As I was walking on the trail I happened to look down at my boot and saw a 3 foot rattler coiled up under leaves of a short plant about 2 inches from my boot. I jumped aside but he was quite placid. I dropped my pack about 20 feet up the trail and returned to the snake with a stick to prod him and a camera to take a picture. It worked and in fact he even rattled at me. After that it began to rain which prompted me to stay at Matts Creek Lean-To for a while. It cleared by 6:00pm which prompted me to continue another five miles to Johns Hollow Shelter. Upon arriving to the shelter I found it full of fat weekenders so I tented. My shoes and socks are soaked from the rain.

Sunday June 19th, 1983

Got off to a late start because I had to pack my tent. Hiked with Sue to Punchbowl Lean-To where she stopped due to bad feet so we said good bye and I hiked on. Met two locals at a road crossing and we talked and I drank a beer. They offered another one which I accepted and put it in my pack as I was already feeling a buzz. The hike up to Brown Creek Lean-To to stay for the night and it seemed like a short hike due to my condition. I saw a beautiful stand of virgin old growth forest by Peddler Lake and even had a bath in Brown Creek. I found out why I shouldn't hike in the rain. Your feet get soaked, soften and begin hurting; especially the bottoms.

Monday June 20th, 1983

Today I am hiking with an English teacher from Idaho who thru-hiked in the 80's. He has been telling me of his thru-hike and we've been comparing notes. We hiked a tough section today and plan on a 20 miler tomorrow. Staying the night at Wiggins Spring Lean-To which is true to its name with a big spring in front of it. Scott and I will hit The Priest tomorrow.

Tuesday June 21st, 1983

Hiked to the Priest Lean-To and did about 13 miles. We were going to hike more but it started to pour just as we got to the lean-to. The days hike was very easy with periods of sunshine and cloudiness. Being forced into this lean-to was a blessing because while reading the shelter register I found out there are grocery stores both one mile east and west off the trail and I will hit these tomorrow. I have three dollars in my pack. Plenty!

Wednesday June 22nd, 1983

Woke up to a cloudy, dank morning. Hiked down from the Priest and to the grocery store and bought one bag of Chips Ahoy chocolate chip cookies and one pound of pasta. This days hike I was told was to be extremely difficult. My body feels fantastic and in fact I've never felt so strong since the beginning of the trip. I flew up three ridges at over two miles per hour and the climb is four miles uphill. Got to Maupin Field Lean-To to find Scott, who had taken the easier blue blazed trail, sleeping. Tomorrow is an easy 17 miler into the big "W."

Thursday June 23rd, 1983

Had a long but easy day today. Scott and I saw some outstanding views especially from Humpback Rock and got some good pictures too. Where the trail crosses the parkway there is a visitor's center with a reproduction of an old mountain homestead. We checked it out and I took lots of pictures. I must say that the Blue Ridge Parkway was very beautiful and well maintained. Tonight I will be tenting at the firehouse in Waynesboro Virginia. Had a shower there and thanks to Scott pigged out at Pizza Hut. I ate Cavatini Supreme, garlic bread, a large Pepsi and went back to the salad bar five times and boy I was stuffed. I found out that Frank "The Merry Slav" Krajcovic quit the trail. Too bad.

Friday June 24th, 1983

Last night's sleep was very noisy. The local hangout is right beside the firehouse and all I could hear was screeching tires and blaring radios. Scott decided to get off of the trail here so we said our good-byes. He also said that he knew that I would finish the trail because I had the drive. It felt good to hear that from an ex AT thru hiker! The day largely consisted of grocery shopping, laundry, Post office stop and pigging out.

My stove has been leaking recently so I had Dia send me a repair kit here. It seems to have done the job but the real test will be on the trail. I believe that I need a new pump and cap so I will have Dia buy me new ones and send them to Harpers Ferry West Virginia. I called Dia tonight and found out she wants to see me at Harpers Ferry for the 4th of July and I can't wait. Mom and dad are on vacation so I couldn't talk to them. I was tempted to see Superman 3 tonight but I don't have the time. Tonight I am a minority as there are six women here and just Paul and I.

Saturday June 25th, 1983

Got up early today eager to get on the trail and went to the post office to send extra weight home. Took a shower, shaved and ate a five dollar breakfast at McDonalds. Paul and I hitched to the trail and got to the trail head by 11:30am but got sidetracked to pick up permits for the park. I found travelling quite easy and the views were beautiful. My travelling partner Paul Nichols lives in Western Massachusetts and is a soft spoken person. As I he dislikes all of the rules and regulations put up by the park service and they are extensive. Bummer. We've hiked only ten miles to Sawmill Run today due to our late start but tomorrow we will resume 20 milers...I hope. My one man tent is tolerable but there is a large hole that allows ants to venture in. Here in the park there is a cabin system so my tent will have limited use. I will have to hang my food tonight so the bears won't get it. I hope that I see one!

Sunday June 26th, 1983

Got up and out by 7:10am hiked 23 miles to Pinefield Hut and saw some beautiful sights on the ridges. There are shelters about every twenty miles along the trail which makes it just right for thru-hikers. The grades are easy and these last two days have been beautiful.

Monday June 27th, 1983

Met two locals last night at the shelter and both were high school computer science teachers. These men respected us greatly for our undertaking and treated us like kings. One had a student that wants to thru-hike next year so I gave him my name and address if he needs info. Today we hiked 20 miles and the end of the hike brought us to Lewis Mountain Campground with a store and showers. I ate two pints of ice cream, a soda and a large bag of potato chips. Although we only hiked 20 miles the heat and terrain tired us greatly. We are staying at Bearfence Mountain Hut and it looks like rain tonight.

Tuesday June 28th, 1983

Paul and I woke up to grey skies. The gloomy sky threatened rain but we remained undaunted. By the time we got to Big Meadow campground the sky opened and the sun came blaring out. At Big Meadow I bought two candy bars, a package of cookies and one coke. By noon we were at Skyland where I bought one soda, one Milky Way bar, and one package of cookies. All other items were beyond my entire life's net worth. Today I've seen the most spectacular views of the trip and climbed some granite cliffs. Our days meandering brought us 21.5 miles north of yesterday's hut. Just as we came into Byrd #3 Shelter it began to storm, this is a Shenandoah National Park shelter and is only to be used in inclement weather so the storm was a stroke of luck. Tomorrow will be a short day to the next Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) shelter.

Wednesday June 29th, 1983

It cleared for a short time last night and from the shelter we could see the towns lit up and it was beautiful. We hiked 17 cold, wet miles. Stopped at the Panorama Restaurant and bought a candy bar and peanuts. Around 1:00pm we hit Elk Wallow Wayside where I had a steak sub, potato chips and a coke and then hiked down to Gravel Springs Hut. The cold rain made for a tiring day and I decided to skip supper again. I just wanted to sleep in my warm sleeping bag. Hope that tomorrow is nice!!

Thursday June 30th, 1983

Today was overcast most of the day but it did not rain. Paul and I made a mad dash for the Linden Virginia post office and did excellent time doing 19 miles by 3:00pm. Frank and Claudia were there pigging out. Called Dia and I am psyched to get into Harpers Ferry as she is going to be there. Love blossoms on the trail Frank and Claudia are getting very cozy. Claudia talked Frank (The Merry Slav) back on the trail in ways which I will not discuss. Tomorrow will be a mega-miler. Paul and I have parted because he has to wait in Linden for a mail drop and I have to head on.

Friday July 1st, 1983

Did twenty two miles - ten of which were road miles. The twelve trail miles were quite easy but the road miles hurt my feet for they are quite sore. Scott had told me about a good Samaritan by the name of Tony Carbone who lives at the end of today's road walk. I stopped in and got a dry place to sleep and a cold shower so now I feel like a new man. According to the Data Book it is twelve miles to Keys Gap Shelter which will be tomorrows destination and then six miles to Harpers Ferry and Dia.

Saturday July 2nd, 1983

I am sitting at Keys Gap Shelter about six miles south of Harpers Ferry West Virginia. Today was a 12 mile slack pack. It was 100 deg. Fahrenheit in the city so I was fortunate to have an easy schedule. Met Abbey and Bob from Pennsylvania a few nights ago. About 2 miles from this shelter there is a small grocery store and all went down to get ice cream except me. Abbey felt bad and gave me \$1.00 to buy some ice cream for myself. I took it with many thanks and pigged out. Tomorrow I will see Dia.

Sunday July 3rd, 1983

Got up at 5:00am and had an easy hike to Harpers Ferry. Met some Jesus freaks near town and we discussed my damnation. It was fun. Had an easy hitch to Dia's hotel (The Cliffside Inn). Saw Dia about 9:00am ate and told her about the trip. Nice to see her again!

Monday July 4th, 1983

Woke up late, ate breakfast, aired out the sleeping bag and backpack. Dia cleaned out my pots and did my laundry. I wrote letters and post cards and cleaned my stove. Later in the day when it cooled down Dia and I went into town to see the sights. Everything is closed today because it's the 4th of July. Tomorrow will be a busy day.

Tuesday July 5th, 1983

Today was moderately busy. Ate breakfast at a diner in town and went to the ATC (Appalachian Trail Conference) headquarters and met Jean Cashin, a very nice lady, and on the ball. I finally bought the Philosophers Guide, 1983 data book and guide packets #2 and #3.

Wednesday July 6th, 1983

We took the bus down to Charlestown West Virginia. There we dropped my boots off to be re-soled and I had my backpack repaired. Next we did grocery shopping, ate breakfast and the bus returned us back to the hotel about 3:00pm. There I re-packed and wrote letters home. The night was spent watching television and being a sloth.

Thursday July 7th, 1983

Dia and I had our last breakfast together and parted again. From the train station I went to ATC headquarters to wait for the mini bus to the trail head. While waiting a television camera crew came in and told us that they were doing a story and the AT and its solo thru hikers. We went to Weverton Cliffs where they interviewed me and they gave me a ride to the cobbler and filmed me going in to pick up my shoes. They also filmed me hiking down the trail. By the time they we got done it was too late to hit the shelter which is six miles out of town so here I stay at the KOA campground till tomorrow morning. Tent sites are \$4.00.

Friday July 8th, 1983

Got up at 6:00am and walked from the KOA campground to the trail about 3 miles away. Ate lunch at Crampton Gap. Talked to a guy from Pennsylvania and told him to go to Weverton Cliffs. Pulled into Pine Knob Shelter about 7:30pm to end a 25 mile day. There a bunch of boy scouts here tenting out but they are well behaved and a fair distance from the camp. I will sleep well tonight for I am quite tired. The weather was perfect, warm sunny and a bit breezy with little humidity. The trail was very easy but quite rocky at times.

Saturday July 9th, 1983

Woke up to another beautiful day and hiked a 21 miler to Mackie Run Shelter. Got into Pen Mar Picnic Grounds just in time to mooch a free meal from the tourists. I ate ham and beans, potato salad, chips and cold juice. Got to the shelter by 7:00pm. This shelter is very close to the road. One of the locals was walking his dog so I asked him if there was a store nearby. He said yes and even offered me a ride up there and back. Got back to the shelter with a quart of ice cream and a liter of coke. All in all I had an exceptionally lucky day.

Sunday July 10th, 1983

Beautiful day and nice trails. Met many people hiking from north to south. Did my starving hiker act and had some fried chicken at Caledonia State Park. For the second day I have seen the gypsy moth wreak havoc on these trails and in sections it seems like fall. The trees are bare and their leaves are dead on the pathway. Gail Miller paid me a visit at this Quarry Gap Shelter and what a nice person. Again I had a perfect day weather wise and water has been no problem.

Monday July 11th, 1983

Today has been a fun day. In the course of the day we have hiked 24 miles and took over two hours off to eat our way into the half gallon club. When I say we I mean Bruce "The Yak" Berlin and I. We met Frank (The Merry Slav) about 10 miles out so he hooked into our rocket sled and we all flew to the store. The terrain is easy here. After the store Bruce and I went to Tagg Run Lean-To where we found Eric Olson and Julie "Big Mama" Settle, Bruce's regular hiking partners.

Tuesday July 12th, 1983

Again Bruce and I got into the Berlin express and did twelve miles before 1:00pm. We caught up with Frank and Claudia and wagon train to the Cumberland road walk where we caught up with Fuzzy Jim. Where the road walk begins there is a local swimming hole and the Berlin express chugged right in. From there we split up and Jim went on almost immediately and then Frank and Claudia took off. Bruce and I ate lunch and waited for Julie and Eric. When they arrived we all began to hike together but soon visions of the ice cream lady entered my head. Those visions propelled me forward and the next time that I looked back none were in sight. I caught up with Frank and we both visited Bonnie Shipe together. Bonnie is a fine lady and not at all what I had envisioned. Claudia pulled in a short time later and we all talked for a while. After leaving Bonnie's we hiked to a restaurant on the AT. The food there was good and plentiful. We all left at 9:30pm. Finishing the road walk at night was ideal in that it is considerably cooler. Although I was quite tired I pushed on to the end of the road walk at to finish a 27 mile day.

Wednesday July 13th, 1983

Woke up quite late today for yesterday's hike drained me. I have blisters on the bottom of my feet and my feet have swelled. Frank left for town to pick up mail drop before the post office closes. Claudia and I adopted a snail's pace for the remaining 12 miles into Duncannon. We got into town about 4:30pm and checked into the Doyle hotel. I can see why they only charge \$7.00 per night, what a dump. The best part of the hotel is the \$.25 cent beers in the bar at the hotel. There are many thru-hikers here so we had a half-way party. Me, Fuzzy Jim, Pete

Headden and Jamie got together and made tacos for supper on the train station lawn and it was great fun. I feel free as a child.

Thursday July 14th, 1983

Today was grocery and laundry day. Picked up my packages at the post office and got letters and it's nice to hear from home. I will set up my backpack and plan for tomorrow. My feet are still sore as hell but my spirit is good. It is very hot outside. Sonny gave me a package. He gives but never expects anything in return/He sent me \$10.00 and made me laugh. I must call him and say hi.

Friday July 15th, 1983

Got up at 7:30am and went down to the grocery and had ice cream for breakfast. I bought Dia a birthday card and sent it off. My feet have been hurting from the road walk but are feeling much better today. Today I only hiked 9 miles to Earl Shaffer Shelter because the next shelter is another 17 miles north and there is little water in this section. I am staying with five other thru-hikers Frank, Claudia, Eric, Julie and Mark Dimicelli from New York City.

Saturday July 16th, 1983

Got up at 5:00am and got out by 5:45am. I caught up with Mark and did 17 miles by 1:00pm. We are staying at the Halfway Hilton tonight. The day was very hot so I hiked with my shirt off for the first time and the sweat dripped off of me. Good thing it was only for half a day

Sunday July 17th, 1983

Mark and I got up at 4:30am and the day was hot and muggy. My right foot had a blister on the heel which hurt me much of the day. The trail has not been maintained and so we walked through bramble a good part of the day. As we hiked through the bramble the thorns would scratch our legs and the salt from our sweat would burn. Tonight we are camping at Hertlein Campsite and it is threatening rain very loudly. There is a swimming hole .01 mile north of here which we bathed in when we got here.

Monday July 18th, 1983

Got up at 4:30am and out for 5:30am. Did 21 miles to Windsor Furnace Shelter to find Jim, Tim Platts (at last), Pete and Alan Strackeljahn (Gonzo). They had done a 5 miler and we found Fuzzy Jim packing a case of Rolling Rock beer. Good time.

Tuesday July 19th, 1983

Hiked 17 miles today at a leisurely pace to the Allentown Hiking Club Shelter. Mark has gone ahead and I am hiking with the rest. This is much more fun than mega-mileing. Met Mike, a great local, who bought a case of beer for all of us. Terri Zimmerman came in from a few days off. Al (Gonzo) killed a rattle snake (11 rattles), skinned it and we ate it for supper (not bad). Tomorrow we will be doing 18 miles and Mike is promising ice cream there.

Wednesday July 20th, 1983

Hiked 18 miles to George W. Outerbridge Shelter. Many rocks but still and easy hike. Stopped to pick blueberries for breakfast tomorrow. I caught up with Paul Nichols and talked him into staying at Outerbridge and party. Yes "The Party" is the third day in a row for a beer opportunity. This time Mike is bringing hamburgers and ice cream. Great Guy!! Tonight is the same crew as yesterday plus Paul Nichols. I have the whole crew getting up at 4:30am.

Thursday July 21st, 1983

The crew woke up at 4:30am and we rock climbed up from Lehigh Gap. The views were great and the climb was easy. Did a 21 miler and napped two hours in the middle of the day. Got to the Gateway Motel just before the rain hit. We split the bill three ways and it cost me \$7.00. Feet are still sore from these damn rocks.

Friday July 22nd, 1983

Did a 15 mile slackpack into Delaware Water Gap. We got in at about 2:30pm and hit the post office and checked on the bus schedule to Stroudsburg. Me, Al and Terri went to the Blue Note to eat dinner. Tonight I will crash at the hostel here in town.

Saturday July 23rd, 1983

Not much happened today just a day of rest. Julie of Eric and Julie quit the trail so Eric is now hiking with Bruce Berlin and they just came in this afternoon. We are all heading out this afternoon.

Sunday July 24th, 1983

Started hiking late as we will be doing short miles today. Pete met us on Camp Mohican Road with beer, root beer, ham and cheese sandwiches and tuna

sandwiches and then it threatened to rain so it was on to Mt. Mohican Shelter. We did get rained on before we got there.

Monday July 25th, 1983

Hiked with Damien and Al today. We got up at 4:30am and did 21 miles to Sunrise Mountain Pavilion. It says "No Camping" but we don't read signs. Got to the bakery/store/deli about 2:00pm and pigged out after which we napped for an hour and proceeded to the pavilion. The day was perfect and the terrain was easy. I will call Scott (Dyanne Black's boyfriend) tomorrow when I go to Unionville. Tonight will be a cool night so sleeping will be easy.

Tuesday July 26th, 1983

Hiked 24 miles today. I am quite tired from the many ups and downs and my feet are sore. We went to Unionville New York so we could eat ice cream. Called Dia and instructed her to tell Scott to pick me up. Tonight I am tenting a few miles north of Pochuck Mountain in somebodies field.

Wednesday July 27th, 1983

Got up late and hiked to Route 94 where I was to meet Scott. Got there for 10:00am and waited till 11:00am. I went down to Vernon New Jersey to call him. He gave me some bullshit excuse for not being there so I hit the trail. Because of the delay I had to climb Wawayanda Mountain in the hottest part of the day. It was a grueling climb and spirits were down. The next ten miles to Rogers were difficult and I dragged ass all of the way. Got to Rogers at 8:33pm so the delay put me in after supper so I made some soup and quickly crashed. Paul, Tim, Jim, Eric, Bruce, Al, and John Beckstrand were there.

Thursday July 28th, 1983

Only did 14 miles today as sun and humidity has taken its toll on all of us. We all had breakfast at Rogers and went to the Orange Turnpike where there is a piped spring on the side of the road. While filling up a local in a pickup stopped in for some water. After talking to him for a while we found out that there was a Pizza Hut in Monroe, New York which is about six miles down the road. He offered us a ride and we went for it. Six miles later the five of us were sitting at a table with three medium pan pizzas' and an A.Y.C.E salad bar and beer. After such a hot day it was the boost that we needed. On our way back we talked a lady with a pickup into bringing us back to the trail. The lady kept insisting that she knew the way back to the trail head and brought us to a road crossing two miles north of where we wanted to go so we got back to the spring by dusk. Paul and I tented by the spring and the others went up to Arden Mountain for the night.

Friday July 29th, 1983

Paul and I did 14 miles to William Brien Memorial Shelter. Stopped into Fingerboard Shelter for lunch and got fed by some weekenders. About a mile down the trail we stopped at Tiorati Circle Campground for water, a Coke and to look at the bikini clad beauties on the beach. Another 5 miles got us here. The sky is clouding up and it may rain tonight. Tomorrow our goal is the monastery to pig out. Back to pre-dawn wake ups.

Saturday July 30th, 1983

Up by 4:30am and out by 5:30am. I have found this to be a very dry area. All of New York has been trashed out to the max. The trail in New York puts you over every hill it possibly can. Between the many climbs the heat and the lack of water my miles per day has suffered. Tonight we met up with the rest of the group at Greymoor Monastery. We were each given a room and A.Y.C.E dinner and

breakfast tomorrow morning. The monks have shown us great hospitality. I also took a shower here and washed my clothes.

Sunday July 31st, 1983

Woke up late and pigged out at Greymoor and had 5 miles of road walk. The day was hot and humid but the trail was easy. Paul and I did 18 miles and got to Ralph Peak Hikers Cabin by 6:00pm. This is not a cabin but it's a hostel and everyone is here tonight the place is jumpin'. As I walked into the cabin I was greeted with watermelon and ice cream. The caretakers are great people. They also bought us beer.

Monday August 1st, 1983

Left Ralphs Peak Hikers Cabin a bit late due to restless night and had a really easy day. Hikes 16 miles and 10 miles were road walk. Today we are at Murrow Park in the pavilion. Paid a buck for showers and to sleep in the pavilion.

Tuesday August 2nd, 1983

Last night I pitched my tent near the pavilion because the bugs were all over. It started to rain so I ended up pitching my tent in the pavilion and got a lousy night's sleep. Got up late to make up for lost sleep and did 18 miles into Kent Connecticut. Everyone crowded around as I opened my care package. We all munched it down then headed for pizza and beer. Tonight we will tent behind the post office.

Wednesday August 3rd, 1983

Today is a day of rest so I did laundry, wrote letters, did shopping, repacked pack and just hung around. Paul left about 4:00pm, he is anxious to get home. Everyone left early this morning. Mom, dad and Dia will be coming to see me tomorrow. Can't wait!

Thursday August 4th, 1983

Mom, dad and Dia got in about 11:00am and it was great to see them. We went to Macedonia State Park for a picnic and then we ate some Haagen Dazs ice cream. It was great to hear from home, made me feel as if I was there. They dropped me off at the trail head and I hiked to Chase Mountain Lean-To. It rained on me a bit but my spirits are quite high.

Friday August 5th, 1983

Got up at 4:45am and did a 20 miler. Met Mister Connecticut doing some trail maintenance. He has a gruff exterior but inside he is a hell of a guy. He and I talked for about an hour about the trail, drugs, drinking and many other things. After leaving him I hiked to the package store at Cornwall Bridge and drank my free beer and then on to the grocery store for Haagen Dazs and two Hostess cherry pies. At the package store I met my first two south bounders, it was a couple. Got to the Y.C.C. lean to at about 7:00pm to find it full of screaming kids, it was right off of the road. Down the road about .3 miles there is a water pump so that is where I elected to stay and tent. Hope that it doesn't rain because the

weekenders don't seem too friendly. Last night was the first night in a long time that I had a lean-to to myself and what a nice change it was!

Saturday August 6th, 1983

Did a 20 miler today. Met a southbounder who stayed with Paul last night who is about 10 miles ahead. No need to catch him for I am quite content hiking solo. The bugs were unreal today and started biting me from the second I got out of the tent this morning till just a few minutes ago when I got into the tent and it is 6:17pm. Stopped at the Corner Diner on the AT near Falls Village and ate some veal parmesan. Today is extremely humid and even got rained on a few times but it wasn't much. I am hoping that it doesn't rain tonight. Lying here quietly in my tent near Limestone Springs I can hear the drone of thousands of bugs and I am not exaggerating. I can also hear thunder in the distance.

Sunday August 7th, 1983

I got visited by a guest at about 2:00am this morning and it was Mr. Skunk. Yesterday I had decided to go with a new game plan. Even in early morning the bugs have been ferocious so I decided to do everything that I possibly can in the tent and this included eating breakfast. Last night I set all my breakfast stuff right beside the tent. Bad move dummy! At about two this morning I heard a clatter of pots. A few seconds past as I fumbled for my flashlight and after I wrestled it into submission and turned it on lo and behold to my amazement Mr. Skunk sauntered by the tent with my Sugar Smacks. In a flash I shot out of the tent, rock in hand, to retrieve those succulent morsels. A few minutes of chase ensued until it dawned

on me that he was indeed a skunk and quite an animal to be reckoned with. I think that at this moment the same thought struck him and he abruptly halted, turned and backed himself up to a tree and stuck his tail up. Needless to say a hasty retreat was in order. After a few seconds of evaluation I concluded that one breakfast wasn't all that important. I did throw a rock at him but only after I got at a safe distance. After all, I had to show him who was boss but I think he already knew. It didn't rain last night after all and today was perfect and views atop these mountains are beautiful. Being a nice Sunday I met many weekenders. I will surely hike this again. Almost forgot, I knocked off another state. I hope that Massachusetts is nice.

Monday August 8th, 1983

Today was very hot and the bugs were out in force. Went through a very dry section and I hear that the next section is dry as well. Went into Sheffield today which was a bad move because it was tough hitching a ride. In spite of the heat I did a 20 miler to Mount Wilcox Lean-To.

Tuesday August 9th, 1983

Nice breezy day so I did a 20 miler to October Mountain Lean-To. Lousy lean-to and no water. In the previous registers the "The Ridge Runner" says that there is a house on the road near the shelter and the people are friendly to hikers so I will procure some water there. Hiked with a guy from Illinois today and he looks bushed. Tomorrow is 12 miles to Dalton Massachusetts and some rest and relaxation.

Wednesday August 10th, 1983

Did an easy 12 miles to Dalton Massachusetts. When I got to the Community Center there were Tim, Bruce Berlin, Eric Olson, John Beckstrand and also Arlee. Did laundry, groceries and wrote a letter it was a cool morning which made for a pleasant hike.

Thursday August 11th, 1983

Hung around at the center this morning and got bored. This afternoon I left my pack here, took the bus to Cheshire Massachusetts and day hiked back south to Dalton to get those nine miles on the AT done.

Friday August 12th, 1983

Rain again so I decided to go with Julie and Eric Olson to Williamstown Massachusetts to pick up my mail drop. Williamstown was a college town with beautiful buildings, lots of money there and a great ice cream parlor across from the post office. Took the bus back to Dalton and Al, Arlee and myself went into Pittsfield for a movie. None were any good so we went to Coltsville Massachusetts for a Pizza Hut pig out and more ice cream. On the road tomorrow.

Saturday August 13th, 1983

Had an easy day with an early breakfast with Al Savage at a restaurant and went back to bed. Caught the bus to the Cheshire trailhead and headed north. Caught up with Al at the base of Mount Greylock and we hiked the 8 miles to Bascom Lodge together. At the lodge I managed to trade work (floor sweeping) for an all you can eat (A.Y.C.E) supper. Nice people these crew (cree) people are! Tonight I will sleep at the pavilion.

Sunday August 14th, 1983

Saw the meteor shower last night and it was quite cool at the top of Mount Greylock and I loved it. Hiked 21 miles into Vermont on the Long Trail. I also hit Burger Chef on Route 2 at about 9:30am. That was the last time I saw Al. He said that his knee was bothering him so maybe he won't make it here tonight. I am staying at Dunville Hollow Primitive Camping Area. I found the Appalachian Trail Club (AMC) up to its old tricks again. They have a series of shelters in Vermont with caretakers and charge \$1.50 for an overnight stay. I marked these shelters down in my data book and will avoid them at all cost. Al Savage and Tim, Bruce Berlin and Eric Olson and John just rolled in from Route 2.

Monday August 15th, 1983

Did an 18 miler today to Kid Gore Shelter with all but John Beckstrand who had to go into Bennington Vermont for a food drop. Met a member of the trail crew pushing a mileage wheel and he gave us the grand tour. You can tell that this is Vermont because the gnats are chewing on us but at least the weather is cool.

Tuesday August 16th, 1983

Did a 21 miler today and found a great place near a stream at the Bromley Tenting Area where Al and I will be staying for the night. Shared some G.O.R.P (good old raisins and peanuts) with a caretaker at Vondell Shelter at Stratton Pond. The day was nearly all downhill and real easy. Tomorrow we hit the Bromley Alpine Slide and I'm psyched!!

Wednesday August 17th, 1983

Another great day on the trail. Alan and I got up to Bromley and rode the Alpine Slide to 12:00 noon. While at the lodge we pigged out on ice cream and I had a hamburger. Those alpine slides are great fun. After a good time we knocked off another 12 miles to Lost Pond Shelter. We are setting our sights on Killington for Saturday.

Thursday August 18th, 1983

Last night was loads of laughs. Started to rain about 2:00am so I packed it in and moved to the shelter and then it stopped after I got in. Rained most of the morning but my attitude is so positive that it didn't matter and that is probably why it got nice this afternoon. I can't believe that I have less than 500 miles to the big "K". The day flew by. I hit a convenience store and ate ice cream. I also packed up a six pack of beer to Clarendon Shelter and waited for everyone to come in and each hiker was given a beer upon arrival. Soon I will be in my back yard, New Hampshire and the White Mountains. Wow!!

Friday August 19th, 1983

The word for today is "slackpack". We hiked 13.5 miles up to Pico Camp Cabin. Thought that Killington would be tough but it was cake. Alan Savage and I are hanging back 3 miles from Sherburne Pass at this cabin so we can hit the Post Office early tomorrow.

Saturday August 20th, 1983

Hiked a big 2 miles today and got in exhausted. Speaking of exhaust we are staying at the Mountain Meadow Inn with Joe who has quite an exhaust himself and I'll bet he has brown spots on his shorts. Had three packages at the Post Office. Got an \$8:00 meal for free in exchange for stacking cord wood. Not bad. Ate some Haagen Dazs today.

Sunday August 21st, 1983

Another slack packing day for Rhode Island Red and a big breakfast at Mountain Meadows Inn. Did a day hike from the inn south to route 4 after which I wrote a letter and some post cards. About 3:00pm we finally got out and hiked a big 7.7 miles beside the 3 mile day hike. I'll miss Tim for he has decided to leave the AT and do the Long Trail. When I did the day hike I met him at the AT/Long Trail Junction. Well on to Cloudland Shelter tomorrow to see The Avril Privy.

Monday August 22nd, 1983

Got into Cloudland Shelter after a soggy day of hiking and have just been invaded by a Boy Scout troop. Alan has not gotten in yet and it is 6:34pm. Eric Olson, who is ahead on the trail, posted this notice in the shelter.

Wanted

1 (one) Marcel Montville aka- Chippy- Derived from unusual capacity of eating food and storing in cheeks for winter.

Diesel Spoon- Named for non-stop blur of utensil motion while feeding.

Fart Breath- Speech and gas have same effect on one's nasal passage.

Wanted by: Federal Government and Julia Child for flagrant abuses of standard ethical, societal feeding practices and anal reverberations soon following.

Often accompanied by

Alan Savage: aka Doc Savage the "G" Magnet who's got short shorts. Heard to apply daily applications of Nair on legs to remove hair and reduce wind resistance.

Consider both Montville and Savage farted and dangerous.

Montville's secret weapon is Ramen meal while Savages forte is dried apricots.

Do Not Attempt to Apprehend

Unless willing to suffer nasal consequences. If sighted please notify bounty hunters Berlin and Olson who have done irreparable damage to their olfactory nerves already and besides have a score to settle for a particularly nasty night at Pico Camp. A rebuttal is in order. Oh yes, Avril Privy is beautiful.

Tuesday August 23rd, 1983

Had a troop of scouts come in last night after I finished my log entry and from then on camp seemed like Grand Central Station. One of the kids managed to slit his hand open with his sheath knife...what excitement. Anyway I bailed out of camp early this morning. The miles went by all too fast and before I knew it I was in New Hampshire, my back yard. I met a south bounder thru-hiker about 12:00

noon and we traded information. Got to Dartmouth where I found Bruce and Eric. They pointed me out to the best frat house. A bunch of thru-hikers went to Thayer Hall for a \$6:00 AYCE dinner and we ate for 2 ½ hours. This is a real nice college town. Also picked up a new mini-pump and cap for my stove because mine has been acting up.

Wednesday August 24th, 1983

Well here I am at Phi Sigma Psi. Met Alan at the AYCE breakfast at Thayer Hall. Tomorrow John, Bruce and I will be leaving and Alan will stay one more day. Today I mailed my summer fashions home, picked up some groceries and just hung around. I will be glad to get back on the AT. Called Dia last night and she is bummed out because she won't see me at Gene's in North Woodstock New Hampshire. Now about this Long Trail. Ever since I crossed the junction of the AT and the Long Trail I have been considering finishing the Long Trail after Katahdin but the big problems are my job and money - obstacles more formidable than the AT. Maybe I can borrow from Sonny because he will understand. The trail is coming to a close and I am not ready to give up my freedom.

Thursday August 25th, 1983

Another tough day. Got all of my stuff ready and headed out the door. Three steps from the house I met Damien (Paul) and decided to stay another day with Paul and Alan but tomorrow is boogie time. Still thinking of the Long Trail.

Friday August 16th, 1983

Was up and out by 5:30am. Damien and I had a pretty uneventful day. The day was hot and humid. I can tell that this is New Hampshire because the terrain is tougher. I don't know how many miles I did today because the data book indicates 17.5 miles, the sign at this shelter says 15.2 miles and the map says 13

miles so your guess is as good as mine. I wrote a rebuttal to Eric's comments at Cloudland Shelter. Too bad he is ahead. Alan just got in. I am sleeping at Trapper John Shelter tonight if the mosquitos will let me.

Saturday August 17th, 1983

Well I missed another Bugs Bunny Show. Did a whopping 11 miles over Smart Mountain today. The day was hot and humid and I hear thunder. The wind is picking up and the temperature is cooling down which is a sure indication of rain. Damien, Al and I are staying at a dilapidated Mount Cube Shelter and I hope that it is water tight. We have been doing crap mileage because we want to get into Glenclyff New Hampshire Monday for our Post office drop. Met a south bounder named Ron who is a very nice guy from New York City. Tomorrow we will hit Mount Cube Sugar House for Pancakes.

Sunday August 18th, 1983

Easy 17 miler. Got atop Mount Cube early in the morning to see the valley shrouded in fog and the peaks rising up over the fog. Trucked down to the sugar house and pigged out on pancakes (5), milk, coffee, homemade apple pie and ice cream. Last night it rained very hard but the shelter only had one leak although it looked like it would leak all over. Tonight Al, Paul and I are camped out just down the street from the post office in Glenclyff. Just talked to Dia on the phone and she seems in great spirits.

Hopefully I will see her Saturday on Washington with my folks. Tomorrow I will pick up my Post office drop and hit "The Moose" (Mount Moosilauke) my first "White" of the trip.

Monday August 29th, 1983

Talked to mom and dad early this morning. Got a great post office drop; three packages and many letters. This is the first time that I hiked "The Moose" from the south side. The climb was quite long but not a problem. Got to the summit and read Dia's letter and pigged out on malted milk balls. It wasn't long before a storm came in so we bailed out and went down to Beaver Brook. The sensation is still a religious experience when I watch the mist climbing the North Slope toward the summit. Soon we were engulfed by the storm and as we hiked down it began to pour buckets and then it started to hail. The trail down was beautiful. Got down to Beaver Brook Shelter and decided to go into North Woodstock New Hampshire. Easy hike and we went into Ernie's to pig out. Tomorrow is a big day.

Tuesday August 30th, 1983

Had a rough day. Partly because of my own idiocy and partly because of bad luck. It was cloudy most of the day but the weather forecast called for clearing skies. Went from Beaver Brook Shelter to Kinsman Pond Shelter and found the skies to be clearing so I decided to go on and tent at Franconia Notch. Halfway between Kinsman Pond Shelter and Lonesome Lake it got dark and began to rain. When we got to the Lonesome Lake Hut we tried to talk the hut master into letting us crash on the floor but no dice. Damn AMC, if they don't get their bucks they don't give a shit about you. No way that I'm going to pay \$26.00/night at no damn hut so we continued on to Franconia Notch and arrived there at about 7:00pm. We set up an illegal camp just before darkness crept in. It looks like we are in for a hell of a rain storm.

Wednesday August 31st, 1983

Rained like hell all last night and woke to a raging downpour this morning. My rainfly managed to stave off the onslaught for most of the night but alas the rain won and water had just begun to come in as I woke. At least I stayed dry all night. My sleeping bag is wet with most of my gear so the wise decision is to go into

North Woodstock and dry everything off and crash at Gene's place. Paul went on so he will not see the splendor of Franconia Ridge. Yesterday I did two idiot things

1. I forgot my pack cover at Beaver Brook Shelter
2. I forgot my guidebook at Lonesome Lake Hut

I had to travel two extra miles in the pouring rain to retrieve my guidebook. Dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb. Gene agreed to let me stay in the back of his truck for the night and had me work off a meal by cutting grass. Tomorrow is supposed to be nice. It would be great to see the ridge on a nice day.

Thursday September 1st, 1983

Got a lift to the AT and started hiking by 9:00am. Met a black man (Winston Lumston) at Liberty Spring Campsite. Winston plans to be the first black man to hike the AT from north to south. He is well educated and a nice person. Hit the ridge on a perfect day. I had forgotten just how beautiful it was. These climbs seem so easy now. What would have killed me before is so easy for me now. I can remember few times that I have felt better about myself and the world in general. I sat on each peak and took many pictures. I have been repaid tenfold for the last few days of rain. At this very moment I am sitting atop Mount Garfield. The sun is setting here on top of the world and for tonight I will sleep here. Dawn will be spectacular and in two days I will see Dia.

Friday September 2nd, 1983

Another beautiful day for Rhode Island Red. I woke up early, packed my gear and watched the sun rise. There is nothing more beautiful!! Last night after I logged in Robert and Janet Thigpen hiked up to Mount Garfield Summit. It was great to see them as I haven't seen them since Harpers Ferry when we did the interview.

Today I hiked with them to Ethan Pond Shelter where I stayed. They went on because they are meeting someone in Crawford Notch. No reason for me to go since Dia won't be at the hostel till tomorrow noon. All three of us hit Zealand and Guyot huts where we pigged out on some good food for minimal bucks. Got to Ethan Pond Shelter to find a couple of guys from New York City camping there. They found out that I was a thru hiker and I was treated like a king. I was up till 11:00pm telling stories of my adventures. I will see Dia tomorrow.

Saturday September 3rd, 1983

Up and out by 7:30am. Walked to the hostel where I'm supposed to meet Dia because I couldn't get a ride. About a mile before the hostel I was about to give up hitching and just then a pickup stopped and offered me a ride. I threw the pack in the back of the pickup and just as I went to get in I spotted Robert and Janet. That was my first surprise. The Sonny came up to canoe camp and on his way he visited me. The second surprise. Bill and Andrea brought Dia up and that was the third surprise. We all enjoyed each other's company and I hated to see them go. Dia read this diary and now knows my aspirations toward the Long Trail and she says "go for it". I will if all seems right. My biggest worry is where to sleep tomorrow. Can't stay above tree line, or can I?

Sunday September 4th, 1983

I hiked quite a respectable day. Got up at 5:30am and hiked till 6:15pm, 15 miles. This is not to be scoffed at due to the fact that this is some toughest terrain on the whole of the AT. In this section I passed two huts and each is supposed to be a day's hike. I have elected to stay here at Edmonds Col, which is two miles shy of

Madison Hut, because I'm sure that it's full. Here I'm well above tree line which is very dangerous in bad weather. I checked the weather at Mt. Washington Observatory and it calls for a perfectly clear night as well as a perfect day tomorrow so I'm giving it a shot. Every time I'd hit a hut I'd pig out and on top of Washington I ate at the cafeteria. I had three ice cream sandwiches and two Pepsi's but at the huts I ate nutritious food. Tomorrow I will be at Pinkham Notch AMC Hut.

Monday September 5th, 1983

Survived the above tree line camp last night. As a matter of fact it was a bit on the warm side. The wind did blow at a constant velocity all night though. The rest of the day was uneventful. Hiked over to Madison Hut and ate a free omelet courtesy of the hut crew and then I hiked down to Pinkham Notch AMC Hut where I bought and ate a trail lunch (\$2.00). Talked to a few people and hiked 1.9 miles up Wildcat Trail. Here I found a nice place to camp complete with a spring. In the past three days I have seen more people than on the entire trip. The Mount Washington Observatory was packed as well as all the huts that I passed and there were people all over the ridges. The only time I had the mountains to myself was early this morning and this didn't last very long. A few days ago I bitched at the hut people. Well I take it back they're OK and I have been treated pretty well. Had a shower and washed my shorts and shirt by hand at Pinkham. Oh yeah, I hiked about 11.0 miles today.

Tuesday September 6th, 1983

A strange chain of events lead to a bizarre meeting today. I got up at 5:50am feeling quite tired and drained. My body was telling me that it needed a rest. I had a headache and had no aspirin left and by the time that I got to Carter Notch Hut I was pretty tired. The next event was that today was the first day of

caretaker service which means that it would cost only \$6.00 to stay as opposed to the \$26.00 that the weekend warriors have to pay during the summer months. It is after Labor Day and the hut is relatively empty so with all of these things considered I decided to take the day off and rest. I hung around slept and read all afternoon. It was about 3:00pm, I was sitting out in front of the bunkhouse when I heard a noise. I turned around to see Jim Moore walking up the trail toward me. If you recall at the beginning of this diary he was the guy that Dia and I hiked up the approach trail to Springer Mountain with. Very strange!!! He's hiked up with a few friends and we all had a good time. I can't get over the coincidence. Tomorrow I'm back on the trail to Katahdin (The big "K"). Robert and Janet are day hiking this section found out that I was here and stopped in to say hi.

Wednesday September 7th, 1983

Had a pretty good day. Said goodbye to Jim and friends. Got to the top of Carter Dome and rooster crowed down to the hut where Jim answered with an owl hoot. Had a black cloud follow me to Imp Shelter. Got inside the shelter just as it started to rain but soon it stopped and I was back on the trail. Got here at Rattle River Shelter about 4:00pm and it is about 7:00pm now. Guess it's safe to say that I will be staying here alone tonight. I am 1 ½ miles from US Rt.2 which leads into Gorham, New Hampshire. Rather than going into town I will hit the grocery store tomorrow one mile east of the AT and move on. Mahoosuc Notch is within reach and my feet are itching.

Thursday September 8th, 1983

Did 15 ½ miles today to Gentian Pond Shelter. I restocked at the store in the campground 1 mile east of the AT an US Rt. 2 and they didn't have shit there. Met up with Damien (Paul Nichols) at this shelter. Tonight I am staying with some people who did Mahoosuc Notch and they said that we'll be lucky to hike ten

miles a day through this section, we'll see. My legs are giving me a bad time they always feel tired and I don't know why. I only have one more state to go and three miles left in New Hampshire. I've come a long way!

Friday September 9th, 1983

Well today was a big 9.0 miler but at least I'm in Maine, my last state. The guidebook says that this is the hardest section of the AT and I believe it. It's less than 300 miles to the big "K" and really looking forward to Mahoosuc Notch. I've been hearing about this place since Vermont. The Mahoosuc Arm is supposed to be real tough also. Tomorrow I will hit both then it's on to Grafton Notch. I have decided to resupply at Andover, Maine for I do not have enough supplies to get to Stratton. 274.6 miles to the big "K". I'm staying here at Full Goose Shelter with the crew from last night including Richard Kozon who's been ahead of me from the beginning. Beautiful day, cool temperature, sunny and breezy. Couldn't have it better!!

Saturday September 10th, 1983

The Notch was cake although I took a good spill. The day was overcast and dreary. Rocks were very slippery as most were covered with moss which made the notch quite dangerous. The Notch was a narrow corridor between two mountains and inside was huge boulders which made it difficult to navigate. There were huge crevasses which were ice filled in their depths. While hiking through you could feel the frigid air blast up from the crevasses. Once through the notch Mahoosuc Arm was much easier than I was told. Got up to Speck Pond Shelter around 12:00 noon so I decided to go to Grafton Notch Lean to where I am now. Paul and Rich got in about ½ hour after me. I am relieved that this is over.

Sunday September 11th, 1983

Nice hike into town today. Baldpate Mountain was beautiful although tough to climb. We got rained on while at Frye Notch but cleared by the time we reached Dunn Notch. Dunn Notch is one of those places that I'll have to come back to. Andover is a friendly town. We got in and ate much ice cream and pie and then pigged out on pizza and soda. Called home to tell them of my whereabouts. Sounds as though they are psyched about the Big "K". Tonight we are sleeping behind one of the stores in a field. I restocked in town and the next stop is Rangeley, Maine, a tourist town.

Monday September 12th, 1983

Couldn't sleep last night because the damn church bell rang every hour and I heard all of them. I did have a good breakfast though, two egg sandwiches, milk and home fries. We got on the road to the AT early and hiked for a short time before we got our first ride. After our first ride we hiked another half hour and got our second ride. The AT has been relocated which means that there is no trail head sign to indicate its intersection with the road. Well, we missed the damn trail by about five miles so after another hour of walking back down the road we finally got a ride. The guy who gave us a ride this time knew where it was so we finally started hiking on the trail about 10:30am. Stopped at Surplus Pond for lunch and hear the forecast so we decided to stop at Hall Mountain Lean To due to a threat of rain this evening. This lean to is pretty new, but the water supply is low. Today was a big 6.0 mile day on the trail and I hope that we can pick up the pace soon!

Tuesday September 13th, 1983

Did a real good day, 21.0 miles in fact. We all hooked into a Southbounder doing a flip-flop north named Max Smith. Max is a Native of Maine who started thru hiking in March and then got a job with the Audubon Society for sixteen weeks.

Now he will finish the AT. Tomorrow will be a nine miler to ME 4 and Rangeley, Maine.

Wednesday September 14th, 1983

Woke up to a 38 degree morning. Perfect day for hiking as it was clear and cool all day. Got to ME 4 by 11:00am and got a ride within five minutes. The guy that stopped to pick us up was overheating so we relieved the pressure in the radiator and filled it with water. Once in Rangeley Maine Paul and I pigged out at the "Red Onion", did laundry and groceries. Wrote post cards to "The Robots" (Jim Hassan and Eric), Sister Spott (Diane Spot) and Fish. At the post office I sent back film and the Vermont/New Hampshire guidebook. After getting finished with the town chores we went to a hostel and paid a buck for a shower. The hitch back to the AT was easy and now I am at Piazza Rock Lean To. Did a total of 11.0 miles, not bad! Alan Savage is ahead of us and has been since Andover Maine.

Thursday September 15th, 1983

Knocked off 15.0 tough miles today. The guidebook says that this is the hardest north of the Presidential Range in New Hampshire. I didn't find it too difficult. Saddleback was truly spectacular. Woke up to a cool crisp morning and it stayed cool all day. Fall is fantastic!!! No bugs!!! I was thinking of climbing in drag just to be different. That would be wild. Who knows maybe I'll do it. Tonight I'm staying at Spaulding Mountain Lean To, my first baseball bat shelter.

Doesn't seem too bad. We left Rich Kozon in Rangeley Maine at the hostel maybe he'll catch up and we should see Alan Savage in Stratton Maine. All others are but a few days away. Back to decent mileage and tomorrow we climb Crocker Mountain.

Friday September 16th, 1983

Easy 13.0 mile day and Crocker Mountain was cake. Put on a mad dash from the base of Crocker to ME 27. Easy hitch into Stratton Maine. Hit the post office and checked into the Widows Walk with friendly people. This hotel is an old Victorian home which is a beautiful piece of architecture. Got my other pack frame from home as mine has been eaten through by body salt over the summers walk. Ate supper at Cathy's Restaurant, good food but lousy service. Weather forecast says rain, rain, rain. I might stay in town tomorrow.

Saturday September 17th, 1983

Woke up to the forecasted rain. Decided to stay dry and organize my pack. Rich Kozon pulled in about 10:00am. Caught up with Curt "The Runt" Anderson and AT his dog. Here we all stay Rich, Curt, Damien, Al, AT and I. We are all getting restless for the miles. Tomorrow rain or shine I'm outta here!! Can't wait to turn on the sweat machine! Maine, what a great state.

Sunday September 18th, 1983

I did a big 8.0 mile day over the Bigelow Range. This is supposed to be the last big mountains before Katahdin. Tonight I am staying at Myron H. Avery Lean To. The Bigelow range was a long and fairly easy climb but without views due to weather. I am also staying with a few south bounders tonight. Going to be chilly tonight.

Monday September 19th, 1983

Getting up to big days; 10 miles. Woke up to a foggy morning and it had rained heavily all night and I was the first one out. Went over Avery Peak in thick fog but by the time I got to Little Bigelow Mountain it had begun to clear. I tried to hike

past Flagstaff Lake but it's beautiful shore attracted me like a magnet. Hung out there about 2 ½ hours till the rest of the crew caught up and then we did the last two miles to Jerome Brook Lean To together. We are hearing all kinds of stories about the Kennebec River so we'll have to find out ourselves.

Tuesday September 20th, 1983

Beautiful warm summer day? Pretty uneventful. I've been seeing a lot of moose tracks but no moose so far. This, Pierce Pond Lean To, is very nice and well situated. Tomorrow is the Carrying Place for 12 pancakes, 2 eggs, juice, milk and then on to the Kennebec River Crossing.

Wednesday September 21st, 1983

Pigged out at the Carrying Place and even that formidable breakfast wasn't enough to fill me up. Three miles later I stood on the shores of the mighty Kennebec River. All the others were halfway across the ford before I even touched the water. Couldn't find any sticks to help me across so I grabbed the best one I could find. This morning I bagged everything in garbage bags just in case and I also put my sleeping bag on top of my pack away from the water. Made it to the halfway mark with no incident but the current was swift and I was having a tough time on the slippery rocks. About ¾ of the way across my stick broke and I fell in face first. The current swept me quickly down the river and my 40 pound pack kept me submerged for what seemed to be hours. At first I began to panic but I calmed myself down. After groping around I found the bottom and wedged my feet between two rocks and after gathering up all of my strength my legs hoisted my body up and out of the water. There I was about ¾ of the way to shore in a strong current with no walking stick. I was worried! The guys on shore tried to throw me walking sticks but none could reach. I knew that if I were to make it I would have to focus all my concentration on the lower part of my body. It was time to summon my Chi within. I closed my eyes and felt the strength leave my upper body and my legs turned to steel and with that I was ready to move. Slowly

and deliberately I strode toward shore as my legs battled the current. When I got to shore we all sat down, breathed a sigh of relief and started to laugh.

Got to Caratunk Maine but the soda machine there had been emptied for the winter. About two miles later we stopped to pick some apples which were at the peak of perfection. Another mile up the road Curt saw two baby cubs. As I caught up I strained my eyes and finally got a good glimpse. I finally saw a bear, took long enough. Did a 17 miler to Joes Hole Brook Lean To.

Thursday September 22nd, 1983

Rain this morning. A huge pond formed during the night's storm not fifty feet from the lean-to. I was the first one out and it took a good long time to get up the courage to wade through knee-deep water so early in the morning. The rest of the day was spent in soaking wet sneakers. The sun did come out in the afternoon but the trail remained a stream all day. I did a 12 mile day to Breakneck Ridge Lean To and under these conditions that is not bad. Tomorrow is Monson Maine, my last town stop it's a pig out at Shaw's for AYCE breakfast. Monson is not a moment too soon for I am out of food completely.

Friday September 23rd, 1983

Did a 9.0 mile walk to Monson in 2 ½ hours, I was burning rubber and melting mud. I decided to stay at the old church because Shaw was using unfair business tactics to lure hikers to his place. This information was found out when I went to the post office and found Tracy "Spaceman" Gayton there.

It seems that Tracy had already done the section south of Monson and wanted to catch us so he "jumped up". Pete Headen pulled into town late this afternoon and said that he's damn glad that he caught up to us for he has been hiking alone since "The Water Gap" (Delaware Water Gap). The Robots, Fish and Hot Spott left

me post cards at the Post office and Terri sent me a post card from Gorham New Hampshire saying that she is on the way north to the Big "K". We're having a great party tonight for all the gang staying at the old church.

Saturday September 24th, 1983

Can't stay in town another day for I am so anxious to get to Baxter Park. The day has been set at Sunday October 2nd, 1983 and I will be there. Wrote post cards this morning, had an AYCE breakfast and sent my tent and odds and ends back home. Took off at 11:30am and Rich Kozon, Paul "Damien" Nichols, Pete Headen and Al Savage is following me. We all did 10 miles to Little Wilson Falls where we will camp out for the night. Dreams of the big "K" will dance in my head tonight.

Sunday September 25th, 1983

Felt real great today so I did 19 miles with Pete to Chairback Gap Lean-To. I did another stupid thing today. I came to a stream early in the day that I had to ford so I decided to ford barefoot. I threw the first boot across to the other side and aimed perfectly. The second boots laces caught around my arm and landed directly in the middle of the stream. There I stood in horror barefooted on shore watching my boot float downstream. Snapping into action I bolted into the ice cold water and began wading downstream after it while watching it submerge. I wade well downstream and started fishing for it. Well, after almost giving up it came floating down the stream toward me so I snatched it up, kissed it, and walked it to the other shore. The rest of the day was uneventful but picturesque.

I caught up with Tracy, Curt and Albie Pokrob & company. It's like grand central station here tonight.

Monday September 26th, 1983

Saw the big "K" today and even 40 miles away, as the crow flies, it was impressive. Pete and I are planning to get to Abol Bridge by early Friday morning. Apple turnovers and coke are on my mind. I am staying at The Hermitage and am wired for the "K".

Tuesday September 27th, 1983

I woke up feeling lousy. Feel weak, tired and I have the shits. I did a big 11.0 mile day on easy terrain and almost died. I am staying here at Logan Brook Lean To for the night and try to recuperate. DAMN!!!!

Wednesday September 28th, 1983

Another 11.0 mile day and almost didn't make it the last three miles. I'm staying at Cooper Brook Lean to tonight. Tracy and Curt just left so I am alone right now but expect Damien and Rich to be pulling in later on today. I have serious doubts whether I can get to Katahdin Campground by October 2nd or if I can even climb "K" in this condition. If I can average fourteen miles per day then I can get to Katahdin Campground on Saturday.

Thursday September 29th, 1983

I felt great today and knocked off 19 miles. Saw a bear at Nahmakanta Stream and he bolted off the second he saw me. Saw the big "K" twice today. My God what a monster!! Damien, Rich and Al caught up with me and will be staying with me

tonight. Albie forgot his camera at an overlook so he had to backtrack to retrieve it but will be staying here at Rainbow Stream Lean To. This is a nice lean to.

Friday September 30th, 1983

Easy 14.0 miles to Abol Bridge and I am camping here tonight. I can't believe that it is fall. It's 75 Deg. F and the bugs are driving me crazy. It's only ten miles to Katahdin Stream Campground where I will meet everybody from home. I saw two moose early this morning, one bull on the trail and a cow feeding in a small pond. Now I feel complete. The lakes region of Maine sure was pretty. Even though it's warm the trees colored in yellow, orange and deep crimson continue to shed their leaves unto the waiting forest floor. Sure hate to leave this beauty.

Saturday October 1st, 1983

Last night the bugs stopped bothering me after dusk and allowed me to have a night's sleep. It's too bad that the Raccoons and Mr. Skunk didn't have the same consideration as they raised hell all night. This morning we had a breakfast of Sugar Crisps and pancakes with syrup. After breakfast we slowly meandered up to Katahdin Stream Campground I figured that the people from home would be in by 4:00pm so we hung out at Big Niagara Falls and then hiked to Daicey Pond Campground. Just as I was ready to leave for Katahdin Stream Dia ran up and gave me a welcome home kiss and hug. Mom and Dad followed close behind. From Daicey Pond we flew the next two miles in twenty minutes. Wow!!! As Damien hiked the last ½ mile, which is road walk his mom and brother drove up to greet

him. We are all renting a log cabin just outside of the park. When we got to the cabin there were Harry (My brother) and Sonny (My Cousin). Mom made some dynamite and all eleven of us had a great time. Tomorrow is the big "K".

Sunday October 2nd, 1983

Didn't get a wink of sleep last night and I can tell that I have Katahdin on the brain. I'm almost done!!! We all got started up the mountain by 7:30am. Although it was a dismal morning mom and dad hiked up about a mile before returning. Once over tree line the going got tough and Dia had a hard time making it over the huge boulders littering the mountainside. After much negotiating Dia, Harry, Sonny and I get to the summit about 2:30pm. On top we got a bit of rain but even this could not dampen our spirits. We all slugged on red wine and ate dynamite which I had brought up. We got down by 7:00pm just in time because it gets dark early this time of the year. Mom and dad were worried for it took us a great deal of time due to the flat-landers sensitive feet and shortness of breath. Once back we had a great party and all enjoyed. What a time and what an end!!!



Home!

2,145.3 miles total mileage of Appalachian Trail

176 days hiking the Appalachian Trail

