

Appalachian Footnotes

Delaware Valley Chapter • Appalachian Mountain Club

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***Sun is a Compass* review**
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And much more



Appalachian Footnotes

the magazine of the
Delaware Valley Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club
published using recycled electrons.

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Questions, complaints, concerns or comments about the Delaware Valley Chapter of AMC should be directed to Chapter Ombudsman, Allen Male at ombudsman@amcdv.org.



Cover: Our new hiking chair Julia Watson took this photo of Aida Babic descending a tricky spot in the Catskills early last March.

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DV Chapter holds its first ever virtual Annual Meeting

The Chapter held its first Annual Meeting without the usual tasty dinner and close up social time with outdoor friends on Thursday, November 12. Despite the things we missed so much, all attending seemed to enjoy the program and we completed our necessary business and honored some of our outstanding members.

As members signed in, a photo montage of outdoor photos and art work from members was displayed. The evening began with welcomes from Chuck Johnston, AMC Chief Financial Officer representing AMC staff, a video message from John Judge, AMC's CEO, and a Conservation update from the AMC Mid-Atlantic Conservation Office at Illick's Mill led by Mark Zakutansky and featuring Kimberly Witt and Patricia McCloskey.

Susan Weida, Chapter Chair, gave a report on the status of the Chapter and recognized retiring Executive Committee members Kathy Kindness (Membership), Jeanne Mantell (Social), Kate Prisby (20s and 30s Members), and John Rogers (Hiking).

Adrian Noble, chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of Officers for 2021. Newly appointed positions on the Executive Committee are Bill De Stefano (Chair), Karla Geissler (Vice Chair), Amy Williams (Membership), Julie Watson (Hiking), Karen Rossino (Social), and Katie Martens and Kristin Falzon (20s and 30s Chair and Vice Chair respectively).

Kathy Kindness, retiring Membership Chair, honored our 50 and 25 year members and noted some great AMC memories that they had shared with her.

Newly elected Chapter Chair Bill De Stefano recognized DV Chapter Volunteers of the Month and COVID heroes who vied for a one night stay for two at an AMC facility and REI gift certificates through a live virtual drawing. Bill also presented DV Chapter Appie of the Year Larry Priori and Golden Appie of the Year Joe Nanfara who got hearty congratulations from the group.

During the evening the polling feature of ZOOM was used to solicit input from members about their preferences for social activities during the upcoming winter season when we anticipate in person social activities will continue to be limited. The chat feature was used to solicit input from members about what they would like to see their new Executive Committee focus on during 2021.

As with all Annual Meetings, it took a village to make this meeting happen. Thanks to Raun Kercher who handled the technical details, to Eric Pavlak for promoting the event and to the Annual Meeting Committee members Susan Weida, Jeanne Mantell, Midori Wakabayashi and Janet Penner.

And thanks to all the members who took a chance on this different format in a very different year by attending and being part of the meeting.

Larry Priori named Appie of the Year

Larry Priori, our Appie of the Year, is a popular hike leader, known for his welcoming and relaxed style. To offer support, he will often tell a first-time hiker his story about starting to hike seriously later in life, building up to a high level of fitness. He often led hikes several times a week before the COVID shut down and has been one of our first leaders offering regular hikes following the July restart.

But don't let that calm attitude fool you, because Larry has done extensive preparation and education to be ready for almost any adverse event that can take place in the outdoors. In fact, his motto regarding Wilderness First Aid skills is "not if, but when."

He includes a first-aid mini-talk in most of his hikes to raise awareness of the importance of being prepared. And being a true trail-blazer, during the activity pause he agreed to offer on line First Aid reviews to keep members skills sharp. His first aid kit is amazing.

Larry has also helped the chapter by being a member of our Nominating Committee for the past two years.



Joe Nanfara is Golden Appie of the Year

Joe Nanfara, our Golden Appie of the Year, has a quiet sense of humor and a sincere love of introducing people to the outdoors that is apparent from the moment you meet him.

He is also a popular hike leader who makes new participants feel welcome and accepted immediately. Often when new members talk about how they came to be part of AMC, one

of the weekly hikes our Golden Appie led is mentioned.

Joe has also served the Chapter by being part of the Chapter Executive Committee for four years, managing Chapter finances.

And if that wasn't enough, he volunteered and is doing the



same management of finances for our Fall Gathering 2021 Committee.

Joe is one of the biggest cheerleaders for the Delaware Valley Chapter and approaches decisions with fairness and kindness.

The Smartest of Birds



Of all creatures, crows have a social structure most like our own.

Story by Eric Pavlak

Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren photo

It was just before sunrise in a supermarket parking lot. The delivery man loaded his hand truck with boxes of chips and snack foods and wheeled into the store, leaving the back of his van open. I watched from my parked car.

Four crows alighted. One acted as lookout while the other three went into the van and dragged out a bag of nacho chips. They pulled it away from the truck, ripped it open and all four began eating. Thus began my fascination with crows.

There is little doubt that crows are the most intelligent of all birds. They are the only non-primate that fashions and uses tools, and the only one that uses weapons. More on that later.

There are 45 species of crow in the family *Corvus*, and they inhabit all continents except Antarctica. There is no scientific distinction between crows and ravens; they are just different species of *Corvus*.

Crows communicate with each other with a language of about 250 words. There are regional languages and local dialects. The loud calls most of us notice are warnings and alerts to danger or food. Listen carefully, and you can hear them speaking softly to each other.

If one crow spots danger, say a hawk or a farmer with a shotgun, quickly all the crows in the area know about it and avoid it. If they find a good source of food, they tell other members of their family.

Crows are both predators and scavengers and are omniv-

orous. They eat almost anything that is safe to eat. And it takes a good deal of intelligence to know what is safe.

They are the only species besides ours that has benefited from the automobile. They quickly spot fresh road kill, and there are verified reports of crows diving on rabbits and squirrels in order to get them to run out into traffic. And crows learn that traffic stops for red lights.

Of all creatures, crows have a social structure most like our own. They generally mate for life, although if one partner dies the survivor will seek a new mate. The offspring stay with their parents for four or five years, and help raise their younger siblings. Even after going out on their own, they remain in contact with their parents and brothers and sisters, and with aunts, uncles and cousins, even grandparents.

Crows reach sexual maturity at age three to four for females and five for males. They choose their partners by what we would call dating: they hang out and play with one member of the opposite sex for weeks, sometimes trying several partners before pairing for life.

They nest in the top quarter of tall trees (hence "crows nest" for the highest lookout perch on a ship), but they will nest in tall man-made locations in urban areas. They have no hesitation to use human material like wire, coat hangers and rags. They are known to stockpile rocks at the nest site to drop on egg-stealing squirrels.

continued

Smartest of Birds

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The crows living in our area have blue eyes and orange beaks for the first months of their lives, but then turn all black.

Half of all crows do not survive their first year of life, but then can live 20 or more years. The longest documented crow life was 59 years.

I have witnessed a crow funeral. Several dozen birds gathered in a treetop near the body of the deceased. They sat silent for several minutes, then one crow said a few soft sounds or words. They then all solemnly and silently flew away.

For several years, crows nested in a very tall sycamore tree in my back yard. I watched the violent aerial battles that ensued when a hawk tried to nest raid.

A loud alarm call was sounded. Four or five crows would fly, not at the hawk, but upward, gaining altitude. Then this squadron would dive at the hawk, in formation with the sun at their backs. The same tactic fighter pilots have long used, but crows likely used it first. The diving crows would try to rip flight feathers from the hawk, or just hit it and drive it away.

Once I saw a crow injured in this combat. It couldn't fly, so it hid in some dense bushes. The other crows brought it food, and flew cover when it walked to a puddle to drink. In a week it had healed enough to fly.

Although crows have strong family ties, they often form larger flocks, both for feeding and just for play. In the winter they gather in large groups and roost in trees and sleep at night, packed wing-to-wing to help keep warm. The periodically rotate the end birds.

Crows have a large brain for their body size, but it is not the largest among birds. Parrots have proportionally larger brains, and are indeed very smart birds. Just not quite as smart as crows. Extensive socialization both demands and develops intelligence. It certainly happened for our own species.

Researchers have learned that crows have the rare ability to comprehend that other crows and other creatures (such



The American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos) is native to most of North America. Crows in the northern part of their range, mostly in Canada, may gather in large flocks and migrate south for the winter. It is one of the species observed to make tools.

as people) have different minds and wills than their own, something that few animals species have. Humans are not born with this, but develop it during the first few years of life. Crows have to learn it, too.

Scientists have found that crows can recognize individual humans, and can remember for years which ones are dangerous and which are benign. And they share this knowledge with other crows, essentially saying "that guy is trouble, stay away."

Crows also have the rare ability to pass on knowledge and traditions to their young, including the meaning of sounds (words). This is the beginning of culture.

They have friends, enjoy play and even seem to have sports with rules. Crows are one of the few wild animals that have increasing populations. They are successful for the very same reasons we humans are.

AMC looks forward to PA joining RGGI

The Appalachian Mountain Club supports Pennsylvania's trajectory to link with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a cooperative effort among Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to reduce pollution contributing to climate change from electric power plants.

In joining RGGI, the Commonwealth will prevent an estimated 180 million tons of carbon dioxide pollution by 2030, which represents a 25 percent decrease between 2022 and 2030. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) projects that by participating in RGGI, the state will prevent premature deaths and hospital visits from respiratory illnesses and promote a net increase of 27,000 jobs in the Commonwealth.

AMC recognizes RGGI as an effective strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and urges Pennsylvania to finalize its plan to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont already participate in the "cap and trade" program which requires that power plants hold a credit (or "allowance") for each ton of carbon pollution they emit.

Supporting this initiative is a policy priority for the Appalachian Mountain Club as we take action to combat and prepare for climate change.

— Kimberly Witt, AMC Mid Atlantic Policy Manager

More information: www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/RGGI.aspx

Super hiker and AT trail angel Len Morawski adds magic

By Karla Geissler

While still fairly new to AMC, Len Morawski made quite a name for himself having been the top Delaware Valley Chapter mile hiker in both 2016 and 2017, walking more than 2,200 miles with the club in 2017. At times, Len would go on both morning and evening hikes. Not one to embrace technology, prior to departing, Len would coordinate with others for the next upcoming hike.

In 2018, Len began a quest to section hike the Appalachian Trail. While COVID-19 sidelined many from pursuing this endeavor, Len was there to support those who persevered.

Len has made a great impression not only in our Delaware Valley Chapter, but also up and down the AT, bringing supplies and trail magic to many. A gracious communication from an uplifted AT trekker from Albuquerque was the impetus for this nomination.

After speaking to several others, it seems this nomination is well-deserved.

Len had been described as kind, a caring gentle soul. Generous and humble, willing to go the extra mile or several hundred, as our AT trekker indicated. "Turtle 77" was known as far north as New Hampshire and Maine.

Providing support for one of our own DV members, Len not only carried their supplies through Vermont, but every day would lay out trail magic at various trail entries. When they came to a bridge crossing and spotted a bag of apples and bananas hanging from the railing, they knew that Len had been there. Len would bring fruit, ice, protein bars and water, as well as provide transportation for resupply to other hikers.

Len is also known to be a rather stealthy, super trail angel. Imagine a long day of hiking the AT, it's May and the trail is heavy with thru-hikers. You've finished dinner and look up, and there like a mirage is Len, coming into camp with coolers, with not only pints of ice cream for you and your hiking partner, but additional ice cream for the thru-hikers. Still frozen ice cream! With just a rough itinerary and a bit of magic, Len anticipated where the pair would be, found a roadside crossing and provided the ultimate surprise!

Having left Vermont, our AT trekker thought he would not see Len again. However, later in their journey when they reached the area near Katahdin in Maine, Len drove from his home in the Delaware Valley to help with supply in the 100 Mile Wilderness.

Len's generous spirit has touched many on the trail. Despite costs associated with supporting others on the trail, Len continues to give graciously and without accepting financial contributions.



Len camped along the Appalachian Trail with Barbara Blythe and Del Candelaria, who took this picture.

Help maintain and build the trails you use and love

Story by Greg Bernet, Chapter Trails Chair. Photos by Greg Bernet, Raun Kercher and Jose Ibarra.



As they walk along a beautiful, well kept trail, many people don't stop to think how the trail got to this condition. It is done by trail volunteers from our chapter as well as other hiking organizations. If it weren't for their efforts, the trails we love to hike might become filled with trash, overgrown, eroded, impassable, or might not even exist in the first place! Think of that the next time you hike on a trail, give our trail workers a deserved "thank you," and consider becoming a trail work volunteer yourself.

It really pays to give back to the trails we love to hike. It feels good to know that you've done something that makes peoples' outdoor experiences enjoyable, that you've supported your local community, and that you've helped conservation efforts — not to mention it just feels good to put in a hard day's work exercising your muscles!

AMC Delaware Valley offers numerous opportunities to get involved, and we are always looking for new volunteers. Crews are run on a generally open basis, meaning you do not have to commit to attending each work session. You may join in as you are able. Other options involve a specific commitment, but only at limited, specific times. The current options (south to north) are:

- The Valley Forge Crew does regular monthly maintenance on the Mt. Misery, Mt. Joy, and Valley Creek trails at Valley Forge National Historic Park near King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Other trails may be added in the future.
- The Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Stewards have been working on building new trails for the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network as well as maintaining them once they are built. This work has been done in Bucks County.
- The New Jersey Highlands Trail Crew does regular maintenance on trails in Jenny Jump State Forest in Warren County, New Jersey as well as occasional maintenance on the Highlands Trail in western New Jersey in Hunterdon and Warren Counties.
- The Appalachian Trail Shelter Watchers are individual or couple volunteers who sign up for a specific time period to inspect and maintain the Leroy Smith Shelter, privy, and campsite just off the Appalachian Trail near Katellen in Northampton County Pennsylvania. There are available assignments throughout the year: every week during season, every other week in off season.
- The Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitors are individual/couple volunteers who work in one of seven small teams to do work maintaining the Appalachian Trail boundary corridor along our 15 mile section. It is generally done only one or two days per year. This is challenging, off trail work for the more adventurous.
- The Appalachian Trail Crew does regular maintenance during the spring of AMC-DV's adopted 15 mile section of the famed hiking trail from Wind Gap south to Little Gap on the Northampton-Monroe county line.

To volunteer, or for more information contact Greg at trails@amcdv.org or check the web calendar.

The Sun Is a Compass A 4,000-Mile Journey into the Alaskan Wilds

By Caroline Van Hemert. Little, Brown Spark, 2019

Book Review by Kathy Kelly-Borowski

If you like stories of adventures, have an interest in birds, paddling or the Arctic this book is worth reading. Caroline holds a PhD in biology, and her special expertise is birds. Her husband and travel companion, Pat Farrell, builds homes.

In their early thirties, the couple set out on an expedition of 4,000 miles from the Pacific rainforest to the Arctic coast.

"No roads, no trails, and no motors. We would travel by foot, on skis, in rowboats, rafts, and canoes. We would use only our own muscles to carry us through some of the wildest places left on earth."

For 176 days, they traveled from Bellingham, Washington to Kotzebue, Alaska. Caroline and Pat spent hundreds of hours in a small tent, with no doors, no privacy and no facilities. They encountered mosquitoes, mountain goats, moose, bear, sea lions, whales, caribou and countless species of birds. They were tired, hungry, and hurting most of the trip, but they had to travel twenty plus miles a day to complete the trek in six months. In the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, they learned to trust the caribou instincts.

"And so, crossing this river has become necessary, in the way that it's necessary to kiss a lover before leaving, to pause and look up when the moon is rising. Our bodies know what is essential and what is not."

Before starting this adventure on March 17, 2012, the couple had climbed, skied, paddled, and explored together for more than 10 years. They spent a year planning this backcountry expedition. During this time, Pat was busy building the canoes they used at the start of their trip. Caroline was planning and packing their food. By the time they started in Washington, time had run out and the boats had not touched water and they had not had a chance to operate them.

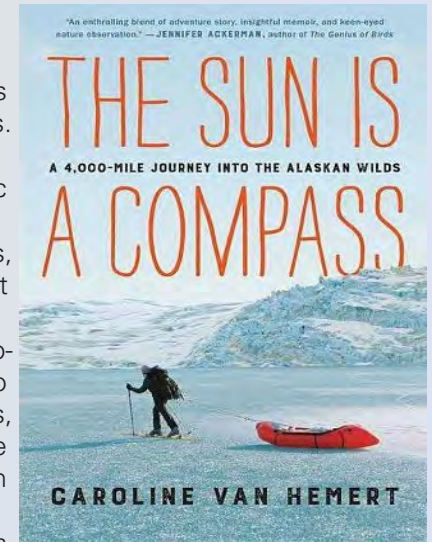
Weather was an issue for much of the trip: snow, strong winds and rain. Due to a route change they were low on food and the weather caused a delay of their only air re-supply. When it finally arrived and they moved on, they experienced a view of the western Arctic caribou herd migration. This almost made being stuck waiting for their needed food worthwhile. On September 9, the duo completed what had been a dream for years.

As people find trail magic along the Appalachian and other long distances trails, Caroline and Pat found locals who were willing to help them out with knowledge of the area, equipment, lodging and food. Learning that people are kind was the most valuable lesson I learned when I hiked the Appalachian Trail. Kindness was found in the people I travelled with and that of complete strangers.

For route information and pictures from the trip: <https://carolineandpat.wordpress.com/home/trip-overview/>

Book website: <https://www.carolinevanhemert.com/book>

Kathy Kelly-Borowski is a long-distance hiker completing the Appalachian, Long Trail, John Muir and Wonderland Trails. She has hiked in the Canadian Rockies, did a section of the Colorado Trail, walked Rim to Rim of the Grand Canyon, climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, hiked the Inca Trail to Machu Pichu in Peru along with the Milford and Routeburn Tracks in New Zealand. Kathy has visited Alaska, Scotland, Slovenia, Antarctica and Hokkaido, Japan.



Upper Bucks Rail Trail Opens

The November 19 opening of the 3.2-mile Upper Bucks Rail Trail completes an important section in the Highlands Trail Network in Pennsylvania.

In 2004, Congress passed the Highlands Conservation Act designating portions of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania as a nationally significant region with outstanding natural and recreational resources.

In 2007, Appalachian Mountain Club convened the Highlands Trail Steering Committee and joined with partner organizations and local and county government to begin planning the 300-mile Highlands Trail in Pennsylvania. By 2013, Highlands Trail planning along SEPTA's rail corridor from Coopersburg to Quakertown was underway with the Upper Bucks Rail Trail project. In February 2020, with 100 percent funding from Bucks County's Act 13 Legacy Fund, construction of the Upper Bucks Rail Trail began, and on November 19 the rail trail officially opened for residents and visitors of the upper Bucks region.

The trail runs from Veterans Park in Quakertown to just south of Coopersburg, connects north to the 8-mile Saucon Rail Trail and to additional trails and sidewalk in Richland



Bill Steinmetz (left) and Dan Schwartz were commended for their years of service by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.



AMC leaders and local officials took part in the opening ceremony for the latest section of the Highlands Trail.

Township and Quakertown Borough, for a total of 16 miles of connected trail and sidewalks.

Not only does the Upper Bucks Rail Trail provide a new recreation and transportation resource for the region, the trail contributes to a sense of community, a place to improve physical and mental health, and is an important driver of local and regional economic development.

New investments are being made in the region in the form of a new trailhead in Richland Township, signage, bike racks, bike repair stations in Quakertown and a \$30,000 Walkworks grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Health to develop a regional active transportation plan.

Together with AMC, many organizations were involved in the planning and development of the Upper Bucks Rail Trail project, including SEPTA, the Bucks County Commissioners, Bucks County Planning Commission, Springfield and Richland Townships, and the Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission.

— Patricia McCloskey, AMC regional planner

[Click here for Highlands Trail interactive map](#)

ATC honors DV members for service

DV Chapter Members Bill Steinmetz and Dan Schwartz have been recognized by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) for their years of service to the organization.

Both Bill and Dan have served on ATC's Regional Partnership Committee (RPC). The RPC is an advisory group providing a critical communications link between Appalachian Trail maintaining clubs, ATC's regional offices, the Stewardship Council and ATC's Board of Directors as well as with agency and community partners.

The RPC advises the ATC regional office on items of interest or concern. It exchanges information and experience with the other clubs in the region.

It learns of and provides input to the Council on issues of trailwide concern.

Plus it raises issues for consideration by the Council and the Board.

Bill Steinmetz has served on the RPC since 2013, ATC Board of Managers from 1996-2013, ATC Board of Managers from 1995-2017 (with terms as Chair and Secretary), and the NEPA Ridgerunner Supervisor from 1992 to the present.

Dan Schwartz continues to be active as our chapter's RPC representative and also continues an active role as the leader of AMC's AT Trail Crew, maintaining 15 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Northeast Pennsylvania, including the Leroy Smith Shelter near Wind Gap, Pennsylvania.

Bill noted the reason for his many years of service: "It has always been a unique privilege for me to have helped to care for and preserve the Appalachian Trail experience of current and future generations."

Thanks and congratulations to these two outstanding DV members.

NPS releases plan for Water Gap and Middle Delaware River

The National Park Service (NPS) released the final Visitor Use Management (VMU) Plan for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River.

The Plan is the culmination of a five-year planning effort that began in summer 2015 and included a great deal of time, energy, collaboration, and input by neighboring town governments, chambers of commerce, industry partners, communities, stakeholders, NPS staff, and the public.

The Plan is available on the park's website at <https://www.nps.gov/dewa/getinvolved/planning.htm>.

The development of the Plan was informed by three rounds of public and stakeholder outreach, review, and comment.

"This plan reflects adaptive management strategies, flexibility, and continued public engagement," said park superintendent Sula Jacobs.

Implementation of individual plan components will be based on the availability of funds and some will require additional public review and input. Park staff will monitor changes and impacts to park resources and visitor experiences at locations throughout the recreation area using the indicators, thresholds, and site capacities identified in the VUM Plan.

Some adaptive management strategies are already being piloted in the park including the mobile or pop-up visitor center approach which brings park staff out of the visitor centers and into the park where they can reach more people; the closure of unofficial visitor-created trails at Raymondskill Falls to limit crowd sizes and protect park resources while providing safe and high quality experiences for park visitors; and establishing new traffic patterns to increase parking capacity at Kittatinny Point on busy weekends. The park has also begun assessing the feasibility of a permit program for hunters with disabilities including limited administrative road access and accessible hunting blinds.

Based on public feedback, the NPS will not move forward with the proposal to charge a parkwide entrance fee. The park will continue with the current expanded amenity fee structure and additional park sites may be included as amenity fee sites in the future.

Improvements to the park's trails will link trail networks, enhance accessibility, and diversify trail experiences and will be sustainably designed to protect park resources. Partnership and cost-sharing opportunities will be explored related to equestrian and biking trails.

Expanded picnicking opportunities will be implemented in a variety of locations throughout the park to better meet demand, including designated areas that can accommodate large groups. Hidden Lake is one area that may be evaluated for use as a group picnic area; other expansions or improvements could take place at park beaches.

Projects to increase and improve accessibility include improvements to the Loch Lomond and Hidden Lake fishing piers and trails, canoe and kayak access points with launch aids, improved online and virtual services, audio descriptions on waysides at Childs Park and Dingmans Falls; ramp access to key public buildings; trail improvements and a permit system for hunting access.

A Walk in the Harriman Woods

By Richard Puglisi

It was a hot and humid August day when I left the Elk Pen parking lot at Harriman State Park. There was a bright sun shining as I began my hike on the Appalachian Trail with a steady climb up a mountain. Upon reaching the summit I could now see the glistening blue waters of Island Pond through the green leaves of the trees.

It was quiet as I walked along on a weekday in this time of COVID-19, feeling lucky to be alive. There was much time for reflection as I enjoyed the solitude and beauty of nature all around me. After about two miles I arrived at the Lemon Squeezer and was just amazed at this natural formation. I sucked in my gut, wiggled my way through and climbed over the rocks to continue on my way.

Hiking a week and a half after Tropical Storm Isaias, I passed numerous blow-downs along the way. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, all were made passable.

Next, I headed south on the Long Path which at one point parallels a reedy wetland for over a mile. Here there were many blow-downs that were yet to be cleared.

A large rock called Times Square, because multiple trails intersect here, was where I picked up the Arden-Surebridge trail. It would take me back around Island Pond on the east side. I passed through some amazing pine and hemlock forests along the way. I was most impressed when I passed through a very dense forest of young saplings which will someday in the future be a thick forest of mature trees.

As I began my descent down the mountain. I was startled by another hiker who was putting on his face mask to pass me by. He laughed as I said he was the first human I saw all day.

Soon I was back at my car slipping off my boots, thinking what a beautiful place Harriman State Park is and how lucky we are to have such a natural treasure so close to home.

River camping is one of the unique experiences offered at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and on the Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River. The NPS will move forward with charging a \$16 per site, per night fee and establishing a reservation system for use of the river campsites.

Implementation will be phased in over time, beginning in 2021. The park will continue to maintain existing river campsites, pilot alternative waste management solutions at two river campsites, and restore up to 20 river campsites in clustered groupings using creative solutions for human waste management, improved accessibility for people with disabilities and ease of access for maintenance. Education about Leave No Trace principles and water safety will be promoted to increase resource protection and human health and safety practices in the outdoors.

NPS will seek funding for a New Jersey river access study to determine the feasibility of developing a new river access on the NJ side of the park and the expansion of existing sites.