

Special Interest

- April 1, 2011
5:30-8:30PM

"Windtalker"
performs
Native American
flute music
at

Port of Leonardtown
Winery
23190 Newtowne
Neck Rd.
Leonardtown, MD

- July 13, 2011
7:00PM

"Windtalker & Mom"
present
"Appalachian Trail
Reflections"
The story of their
2006 thru-hike

at
REI
1701 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD

Individual Highlights:

Trail Event Listings

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VISIT US AT

www.RMGHAventures.com

Hiking Season is Almost Here!

It's time to dust off the hiking boots, take an inventory of your gear and scour the pages of backpacking magazines

and catalogues for the latest new innovations in hiking equipment, to get ready for this hiking season.

In this issue are some tips to help you hike easier and better, as well as a list of hiking events you may want to attend.

Four Legs Are Better Than Two

When we first began hiking, we thought that using trekking poles was a very "wimpy" thing to do. It was not until we had been hiking for a year or so that we gave them a try. It was then that we came to understand how essential they are to minimizing the stress on your legs when carrying a backpack up and down mountains. Now, we never hike without them, even if it is just on a day hike.

When used correctly, trekking poles can help you pull yourself up a long ascent, rather than relying on your legs to do all the work. And when making a long descent, they act as brakes to minimize the stress and damage to your knees.

The key to getting the full benefit from your poles is to use them correctly. Trekking poles should be extended so that your arms are at a 90° angle. If they are set too short, you do not get the full benefit of the additional balance they offer. If they are set too long, your hands can

go numb and your arms are likely to get tired more quickly.

ADJUSTMENTS

Some hikers adjust the length of their poles for ascents and descents, shortening them when going uphill, and then lengthening them when going downhill. While this is a good idea, it can slow you down as you constantly stop hiking to readjust the length for the varying terrain.

What we find to be much more efficient for us is to simply lower our grip on the pole when going uphill and placing our hands on top of the grips when proceeding downhill. When making a descent, we extend the poles out in front of us, plant them in the ground and then walk toward them. Using this technique, they act as brakes, putting the downward force on our arms and the poles, rather than on our knees.

CHOICES

With so many choices in

poles, which is the best to get? The key things to keep in mind when looking for poles, is weight, ease of adjustment, grip comfort, price and the warranty. Try out several brands in the store and see which ones feel the best and are the easiest to adjust. Take a pair of winter gloves with you so you can test how easy, or difficult, it is to make adjustments with them on. Be prepared to pay \$125.00 - \$175.00 for a set of quality poles. There are less expensive ones, but they are not really up to the rigors of extensive backcountry trekking.

We are still using the same Leki poles that have survived a thru-hike of the A.T., an end-to-end hike of The Long Trail and thousands of miles of other trails, since 2001. They are easy to adjust, are obviously tough, and they have a lifetime warranty. Leki sets up a booth at Trail Days each year and repairs hundreds of thru-hikers' poles for FREE. Now that's service!

Upcoming Trail Events

APPALACHIAN TRAIL DAYS – “Celebrating the Appalachian Trail and Thru-Hikers”

Friday – Sunday

May 13-15, 2011

Damascus, VA

For a schedule of events, visit <http://www.traildays.us>

(“Windtalker” will be performing a Native American flute concert and will be at a book signing at Mt. Rogers Outfitters)



NATIONAL TRAILS DAY – “Made With All the Right Ingredients”

Saturday

June 4, 2011

A day to encourage all Americans to get outside, connect with local outdoor clubs, businesses, community groups, and parks and recreation departments, as well as federal land managing agencies, to experience, appreciate and celebrate the natural places where we can find a spread of scenery, a plateful of peace, and a heap of happiness and health. For a list of events in your state, visit <http://www.americanhiking.org/NTD.aspx>

(Georgia and I will be giving our presentation, “Appalachian Trail Reflections,” at the Byrd Visitor Center at Big Meadows Campground, in Shenandoah National Park at 3:30PM)



POTOMAC APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB DAY

Saturday

June 11, 2011

9:00am – 2:00pm

Greenbrier State Park, 21843 Boonsboro Pike, Boonsboro, MD

A day of exhibits, trail maintenance demonstrations, hikes on the A.T., and rock climbing for the whole family. For more information, visit <http://www.patc.net>

(Georgia and I will be giving our presentation, “Appalachian Trail Reflections,” at the visitor center at 7:00PM)



APPALACHIAN TRAIL MUSEUM FESTIVAL – “Celebrating the Trail and the Museum’s 1st Anniversary”

Friday - Sunday

June 17 - 19, 2011

Pine Grove Furnace State Park, Gardner’s, PA

A weekend of events celebrating the museum’s 1st anniversary. There will be music, vendors, guest speakers and activities for the entire family. Come meet AT thru-hikers who stop at the nearby store to compete in the trail’s famed “Half Gallon Ice Cream Eating Challenge.” The first inductees into the museum’s “Hall of Fame” will also be made. For more information on this event, and the museum itself, visit <http://www.atmuseum.org>

(Georgia and I will have a vendor booth at this event and I will be giving a Native American flute concert as well)



38th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

July 1-8, 2011

Emory & Henry College

Emory, VA

A week of exhibits, informative seminars, hikes on numerous trails in the area, excursions, music, food, fun and ATC’s annual business meeting. For more information, and to register for the conference, visit <http://www.appalachiantrail.org>

(“Windtalker” will be a panelist at the workshop, “Thru-Hikers Share Secrets of Success.”)



5th ANNUAL RUTLAND LONG TRAIL FESTIVAL – “A Celebratory Gathering to Inspire Individuals to Participate in the Outdoors”

August 6, 2011

Vermont State Fairgrounds

Rutland, VT

Spend a wonderful day at the foot of the Green Mountains. There will be great music, informative & entertaining speakers, children’s activities, equipment vendors and delicious food. Come meet AT thru-hikers and Long Trail hikers who stop by. For more information, visit <http://www.longtrailfestivalvt.com>

(Georgia and I will have a vendor booth at this event and “Windtalker” will be performing Native American flute music)