

Appalachian Trail Servants

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A.T. Servants Year End Recap

By God's glory, through the obedience of so many Christians, 2006 was the most successful year that A.T. Servants has experienced thus far.

In 2006, we worked to begin diversifying our approach by both having a greater number of Trail Chaplains go out through A.T. Servants in the name of Christ and by continuing to send out volunteers to serve hikers physical needs.



God graciously allowed our own Craig 'Clay' and Suzy 'Branch' to hike for 3 months and around 900 miles of the Appalachian Trail as Trail Chaplains. To find out more about their hike check out their journal at <http://www.atservants.org/cgi-bin/at06/display.cgi> .

Our second team of Trail Chaplains, Brett 'Social' and

Bronwyn 'Dandelion' successfully hiked the entire 2,175-mile trail to the glory of our Lord. They were a great team that brought a light onto the trail even when they were hiking during the night. To read more about their hike check out their journal at <http://www.trailjournals.com/entry.cfm?trailname=3854> .

While these two teams of Trail Chaplains were hiking, the rest of the A.T. Servants Board of Directors were super busy coordinating volunteers to serve physical needs of hikers. Whether they were meeting hikers by the roadside or serving during Trail Days, a festival held in Damascus, VA every May, Christ was continually glorified through their extra efforts. During Trail Days, A.T. Servants worked alongside Liberty Park of Birmingham, Alabama and First

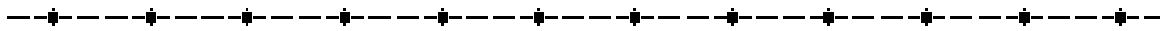


Baptist of Damascus to form a powerful team whose sole mission was to show hikers the glory of God by serving hikers' physical needs.

People have begun to notice what God is doing through this small ministry. This year A.T. Servants has been featured in several publications such as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, the Gwinnett Daily News, the White County News-Telegraph, the Baptist Press, the Christian Index, and On Mission Magazine!

We are also beginning to look to the future of A.T. Servants. While we have been tossing around a few long-range ideas, we are actively working to develop relationships with collegiate ministries in several Christian denominations. It is our hope that these relationships will build an awareness of the possibilities with this ministry and through that awareness we will see more Godly college students apply to be Trail Chaplains.

To those of you who throughout this year have volunteered your time, sacrificed your finances, and lifted up prayer on behalf of A.T. Servants, we thank you for your hard work. It is an honor and a blessing to know that we are a part of a huge team that is dedicated to the work that God has called us to.



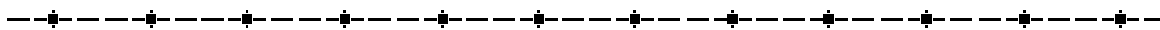
Craig and Suzy to Hike Again in 2007



After hiking for 3 months and about 900 miles in the last year, Craig and Suzy plan to spend around 2 more months hiking the Appalachian Trail again in 2007.

We have been asked several times whether or not we will start where we left off on the trail or begin all over again at Springer Mountain. After a good bit of prayer and contemplation, and after gaining lots of advice from others, we have decided to start again at Springer Mountain in early March, along with other hikers. This decision has

forced us to examine our priorities on the A.T. While we know that it would look good for us to be able to have completed the entire trail, we could not justify spending 2 to 3 months on the trail basically alone. It is the hikers that we care about. It is truly our desire to see hikers come to know Jesus as their Lord. So, we have come to accept that even though we may never see Mt. Katahdin, it is our place to hike along other hikers so that we may be a vessel of service.



A.T. Servants Gathers Together with Other Hikers at the SoRuck in North Carolina



This last weekend (January 12-14) about 60 hikers from all walks of life gathered at the Nantahala Outdoor Center near Bryson City, North Carolina to reminisce, to share stories from the trail, to give advice and encouragement to each other as some prepared for hikes, and just spend time hanging out with fellow hikers. Doctors and homeless wanderers, older retirees and recent college grads, Christian and nonChristian all happily shared tables and each other's company. Craig, Suzy, and Jonathan "Vapor" (Trail Chaplain 2005 and Board of Directors member) joined the crowd.

This was a great time of getting hyped up for the upcoming trail season, rekindling friendships, and making plans.

Brett and Bronwyn Reflect on Life after Katahdin

By Brett Stamps

So I am finally putting up a post trip post. Readjusting is harder than we would have thought it would have been. I think we just really miss the trail and the simplicity of it. Now we're back at work and back in the swing of things but I still find myself going and looking at pictures five times a day just to make sure we really did it and it wasn't a dream. Most of my aches and pains have healed except my finger I jammed in the 100 mile wilderness and my knee aches if I stay idle for too long. I miss my friends from the trail terribly. Many of us still talk and e-mail daily and the fact that Super Dave is still on the trail keeps us all interested. He is doing great, making wonderful time. He is almost to Damascus, I wish I could go out and hike with him but life won't let me now.

I guess the big question we get is would you do it again; the answer is simple, absolutely. I would love to step out



April 1st of next year and begin the voyage north again. It ain't gonna happen but I would. I know it would never be the same as it was that first time but parts would be better and hikers are all the same so we would meet more cool people. There are some Mid-Atlantic States I would want to skip, but I would do it all again.

The other question I get is what advice would I give to anyone interested in hiking. Three things first go light. I'm not a super light backpacker but I was always finding ways to cut weight. A simple rule of thumb, if you didn't use it yesterday, you didn't use it today and you don't foresee using it tomorrow you can send it home, or at least bounce it forward to the next post office. If you didn't miss it then send it home. Next, unless you have very weak ankles go with trail runners, not boots. Boots dry slower, they are heavy and from what I saw they cause more blisters. Trail runners are cheaper so you don't mind switching them out when they fall apart, which they will. Plus they dry super fast and break in faster. My foot grew a size so any shoes I had broken in before I hiked were useless. Last, go slow. Unless you have a time crunch don't get caught up in the race to be the fastest. Enjoy every day, every hike, every mile. If you aren't having fun take a day or two off. Katahdin is going to be there.

Anyway, if anyone out there has any questions feel free to e-mail us at bb3364@hotmail.com. Also if you have not signed the guest book please do so. Thanks again for reading, and get out and hike!

This is an excerpt taken from one the post hike entries from Brett and Bronwyn's Journal: <http://www.trailjournals.com/entry.cfm?id=162493>

