President's Corner

by Gudy Gaskill

End of Summer Season

Another season has come and gone. Merle McDonald and George Miller have picked up the last equipment in Durango, picked up the last equipment trailer in Lake City, and put The CT Education Center cabin to rest for the winter.

The summer was a hard one for the farmers and ranchers in the Midwest and West. Rain halted all planting before it was even completed, and then flooding wiped out the rest. Actually, that’s kinda how the trail crews, classes, and treks fared this summer. There was moss growing between the toes! Some of the treks were shortened or aborted, and some of the crews left a day or so early; but the classes continued for the full week, thanks to the shelter of the Education Center. The crew

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Trail Maintenance Seminar

by Merle McDonald, Adopt-A-Trail Coordinator

The CTF, in conjunction with the Salida Ranger District, held a trail maintenance seminar and cookout for Trail adopters and crew leaders on June 14th, at the Avalanche Trailhead near Buena Vista. Thirty-one friends of The Colorado Trail (and two horses) attended. Jeff Hyatt of the Salida RD reviewed the latest thinking and experience of the Forest Service on trail construction and maintenance. He also provided the CTF with the latest version of the Forest Service Trails Handbook and several other informative handouts.

After the presentations and a question-and-answer period, the group hiked along a varied section of The CT and discussed what construction features were working, where improvements were needed, and what techniques might work. A lot of good ideas were put forth.

As evening approached, we returned to the trailhead for a cookout prepared by Gudy and lots of visiting with old friends. It was a fun day in the mountains and on The Colorado Trail. Everyone had a good time. (See photograph collage on page 6 of this issue of Tread Lines.)

As promised in the last issue of Tread Lines, here is the photograph of Diane Parker and Gudy accepting the $600 check from the US West Foundation.

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that worked on the Center this summer continued to enhance the setting with more rock walls, a smoother drive, an elevated solar panel, general cleanup, and Paul Newendorp’s new hand-carved sign.

Education Center Classes

The Education Center cabin hosted the wildflower class and the watercolor class, a perfect location for both subjects. Dr. John Sowell conducted an informative class for a group of very eager students. He will be missed next year when he leaves on sabbatical. Despite the rainy weather, the watercolor class produced a great many paintings. A fun art show was held on Friday afternoon with the Colorado Mountain Club (they were camped down the valley on an outing) as the invited guests. Margaret Barge from Durango was the instructor. Jan and Dan Wolfe volunteered their time to help out with both of the classes. The geology class had the misfortune of having rain every morning. Dr. Jack Campbell took advantage of the situation and held lectures under the protecting front fly (spilling over into the kitchen tent as the rains became more intense). Afternoons turned dry, so long hikes were taken into the basins, valleys, and ridges around Molas Pass.

Work Crews

The work crews accomplished a great deal this summer, in spite of working in the rain. We are always amazed at the dedication and difficult labor that comes from every crew. Give them an assignment, and it gets done! Sometimes we’re not sure how it was managed or accomplished. Here’s one case in point: Merle McDonald led a crew into the Chalk Cliffs below Mount Princeton, and there they built a switchback “experimental” trail.

Glenn Kepler, who had just hiked up Mount Princeton that day, and I went over to the draw where the trail had been built and attempted to climb up through the scree to where the trail started. Because of the rains, we couldn’t find the trail that the crew used each day, so had to climb two up and one down, up the rolling small scree. Despite the gully washers, the trail was holding up remarkably well. Glenn said that climbing up to the “trailhead” was more difficult than hiking up Mount Princeton! That was a job WELL DONE! Ernie Werren’s crew finished the last segment of the Gunnison Spur, and my crew almost finished signing and pushing a mileage wheel from Gunnison to the other side of the Continental Divide.

Cumberland Basin, Cochetopa Hills, Cascade Creek, and Coney Peak all had rerouting and fix-up projects that were a joy to behold when they were completed. Merle McDonald and wife Uta led five crews this summer. I understand that they were still smiling on the last one! Each crew had a unique problem to solve, and Merle managed them with great aplomb! Phil and Mae Smith were back in their beloved Cochetopa Hills area for three weeks this past summer. Each year Phil’s crews repair motorcycle damage to The CT. (I understand that the motorcycle users are complaining that Phil is taking the challenge out of the sport!) Harriet Patton’s crew was the last crew to finish up, working at Cascade Creek. She and her crew repaired countless swamps and poor drainage. With the amount of bicycle use that that area gets, the repair was imperative, before it becomes too late to fix it at all!

Gene Cash (our wonderful, handsome leader from Nebraska), and Jon Greeneisen, our super trail crew coordinator, did a remarkable job at Coney Peak. The tie-in is still awkward, and we’ll have to stand back and see how it can be improved. Arthur Rankin’s crew was shuttled over to the CT trailhead on Highway ___ to build a new and larger trailhead. The South Platte Ranger
Great passion the interest that Bill and Donna had in their experiences—Bill and Donna were the first no-hiking listeners whom the hikers had met who knew and visualized their experiences. The cold lemonade was welcome too. Next summer we would like to have a continuous series of hosts on Spring Creek Pass, which could give us a lot of visual PR and accurate counts of through users. If you love people, this is a great place. Think about volunteering!

The Word Is Out!

We have had articles in many newspapers this summer. Every time anyone hikes the trail, they seem to write an article for their home newspaper. The New York Times and the Chicago Tribune, to name a few. There was a great newspaper article on Ken Marshall’s maintenance of his adopted section (Junction Creek). Ken, who straps his chain saw on his bike, was able to recruit other bikers to help him on his second weekend in August. That’s the way to go, Ken!

Year-Round Volunteers

Carol Skoff, who has been doing our order mailings for the last couple of years, has had to resign. While I am out of the country for the next seven weeks, Glenn Kepler, with Denise Wright monitoring, will pitch in until our replacement comes back in town. If there is anyone who would like to try his or her hand at it, it requires one evening a week, depending on the season. Give Charlotte a call at (303) 526-0809. Speaking of Charlotte, she has done a yeoman’s service to the CT Foundation with her manning of the phone this summer. So many calls came in for information on how to manage the trail with the South Platte bridge out as well as with the inclement weather. If Charlotte doesn’t have the answer, she researches the question and comes up with the hard-found answer. It’s confining, demanding, and all hours. There is a star somewhere in the heavens with your name on it. And thanks to Al Mauthe for his continuous work in answering the inquiries and running our errands. Without this type of dedication we couldn’t offer the crews, classes, and treks that we are now doing!

Fall Events

Although we are not having our annual reunion this year because I will not be around, we will plan once again to have our early Christmas get-together and maybe a fall hike in October, depending on a higher-up decision on the weather.

On Friday, October 17, at 7:00 p.m., the CTF will present its 1997 (new) slide show in the Community Room of the Greenwood Village City Hall, 6060 South Quebec Street (one mile west of I-25 on Orchard Road, then 1/4 mile south; City Hall is on the east side of Quebec). I will present the show and lead the discussion regarding issues and plans relating to The Colorado Trail and its continuing development and maintenance. Several of us are going to meet for dinner before the show. Call Charlotte if you’d like to do that.

Several Friends of The CT have made reservations to use the Education Center cabin. If you too would like to use the cabin (fall coloring was incredible in the valley last year!), call George Miller for details, at (719) 685-1278. Anyone wishing to use it must be a supporting Friend of The CT. Because the cabin, which will comfortably hold six occupants, has been put to bed for the winter, users will have to haul their own water from the creek.

Future Projects

With the work completed at Coney Peak, we are a short step closer to making The CT a nonmotorized trail. If the route is chosen at Mount Princeton, it will be an expensive and difficult route to build. We will need your letters of support for an application to GO Colorado for matching funds for the South Platte Bridge. I will send you an appeal in October. Your response is important.
Trail Crew Report, Crew WE-1
by Joe Slack, Crew Leader

DATES: May 31-June 1, 1997

PROJECT: Repair or build new tread, install water bars, and place fill materials in eroded spots of The Colorado Trail toward old South Platte City. Starting Point: where the trail crosses the road between the former Top of The World Campground and the old (upper), rock quarry.

CREW MEMBERS: Linda and Paul Berteau; Patricia and Don Burrell; Lois Cochran; Nancy and Roger Gomas; Anne Greer; Terry Hardie; Christy, Bobby, and Jana Henderson; Bob Hunter; Cindy and Sarah Johnson; James J. Kleckner; Nancy Kranzow; Rosalie Long; Diane Parker; Jim Parr; Diana Rahl; Anke Rommerskirch; Carol Skoff; Joe Slack; Kelly Tangeman; Larry J. White.

WORK DONE: Roger acted as coleader. Paul, Cindy, and James helped supervise some sections of the crew, which was stretched quite a distance along the trail. 8” to 10” diameter logs, 8 to 14 feet in length, were cut and peeled for over 35 water bars; retaining logs and a fill-in for a badly eroded, narrow ravine crossing; 6 reroutes, with one requiring two sharp switchbacks, and another that needed an 18-foot-long and very, large diameter log to retain the fill material needed to cover a huge boulder that would require dynamite to remove it.

Only a few members had little trail building and/or repair experience but quickly picked up the techniques. As in past years, this well-experienced crew worked very hard and efficiently and finished in one day the work that John and I had laid out for the entire weekend. We then flagged extra work, which the crew finished by early afternoon Sunday.

Since an injury kept Grady Monk from joining the crew, Roger recruited his coworkers and we had our Chef’s special breakfast of fluffy pancakes. That evening Nancy and her “chop chop” gang produced an excellent chicken stir-fry.

John Bradford (USFS Coordinator) and the USFS South Platte Ranger District, as in the past, provided us excellent support. In addition to all tools and materials needed, we were provided a very nice campsite and all the fresh water we needed.


Fill covering rock ledge. New tread and switchbacks.
When we moved to Colorado nine years ago, our first hike was at Kenosha Pass, to see the aspens changing; the three of us were spellbound by the beauty of our new home. In May of 1995, we approached Scott Dollus of the South Platte Ranger District with the idea of placing a bench on The Colorado Trail for our son, Jason; Kenosha Pass was our first choice. Scott encouraged us in the project, and turned the idea over to Lori Malcolm, also of the South Platte District. It was Lori who suggested we put Jason’s poem on his bench. Jason’s words, from that poem, describe him best: “Life is too short to waste away . . . Just show you’re happy, make it clear . . . There is a God and I think He likes me . . .:” Every day, Jason would say it is “the best day of my life,” and in living that way he amazed everyone who knew or even saw him as a source of encouragement, optimism, decency, and idealism. From the first, the bench has been an expression of love for Jason: looking for the right log, sawing, planing, sanding, and, finally, cementing it in place last October with the help of some of Jason’s friends.

Carl Whitehouse and Jim Sealy putting Jason’s Bench together for installation, in October of last year.

Jason’s bench is close to the historical site project in progress at Kenosha Pass. When all the work is finished, it will be near the top of the wheelchair accessible path, close to the first grove of aspens. We think of the bench as Jason’s gift to thousands of hikers, bikers, and walkers.

We’d like to thank Lori Malcolm and the South Platte Ranger District, and Gudy Gaskill and all the members of The Colorado Trail Foundation for allowing and helping Jason’s Bench to happen.

My Statement on Life

Life is too short to waste away.
Be glad. That’s all I have to say.
Just wear a smile from ear to ear.
Just show you’re happy, make it clear.

My point is that life has its good sides
and its bad ones.
But always look to the good side.
If you go through life always looking down,
You are not living, your just passing by.
What you are doing is wasting a life...yours.

Jason Jameson Sealy

Life is a blessing not a curse.
You’ve got to see the sunsets as the birth of a new night,
not the death of a day.
I see the sunrise as the birth of a new day,
not the death of the night.

I think happiness can be compared to a lit torch
in the darkness, the darkness being the lives
of those who are sad.
The darkness does not vanquish the torch,
it’s quite the opposite.
It has the ability to light the lives of others
and maybe light their torches.

I am in the U.S. and life great.
There is a God and I think he likes me.
I am an optimist and everyday day is a great day.
I always look to the upside of things.
Life is too short and sweet to waste away feeling sad.
I always have a smile on my face
even when I might feel down.

Life has its highs and its lows.
Look past the downs...look up I say.
If you are happy, it will show.
Slap on a smile...it will pay.
# The Colorado Trail Store

All proceeds provide important support for The Colorado Trail.

**Send Orders to**
The Colorado Trail Foundation
P.O. Box 260876
Lakewood, CO 80226-0876

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CT T-Shirts

**Short Sleeves:** New Design; CT map on front; trail segment descriptions, including length and elevation gain, are printed on the back. 100% cotton.
- Jade Green L XL 12.00
- Sky Blue L XL 12.00

**Long Sleeves:** Crew neck and embroidered logo.
- Jade Green L XL 19.50
- Sky Blue L XL 19.50

CT Wall Map
- Poster, 17 x 24 inches, with trail segments marked. 10.50

CT Golf Cap
- Tan imitation leather, with embroidered logo. 17.50

All prices are listed postpaid. Colorado residents add 4.3% tax. Subtotal: Colo. Tax: Total:

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So Much to be Done!

We make a living by what we get
We make a life by what we give.

Winston Churchill

Yes, I would like to support the Colorado Trail . . . Please accept my annual contribution to the Colorado Trail Foundation as a "Friend of the Colorado Trail."

$15.00 Senior/Student $75.00 Contributor
$25.00 Individual $100.00 Patron
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Benefits for Friends of the Colorado Trail include:
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Discounts on CT Publications CT Trek Invite
Information on CT functions, meetings, and crews

___ I would like to work on a trail crew. Please send information.
___ I would like to adopt a section of the trail to maintain.

Name ________________________________________________________________
Address ______________________________________________________________
City _______________________________ State _______________ Zip __________

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548 Pine Song Trail
Golden, CO 80401

The Foundation invites you to join in making the Colorado Trail an educational and recreational reality . . .