



Charlie Irvin -- February 2011 Volunteer of the Month

Charlie Irvin has been a luminary in PATC for decades.

Charlie began section hiking the Appalachian Trail in 1969 and completed the AT during a two-month hike in 1986.

Charlie joined PATC in 1971 and worked alongside the likes of Ray Fadner, Elizabeth Johnston and Peter Muschamp, to name a few. Charlie and other North Chapter stalwarts have provided the foundation for a strong Pennsylvania trails district for decades. This district is currently responsible for 171 miles of the trail mileage that PATC maintains.

In the early 1990s, Charlie joined forces with Jack Danner and they shared the duties of Pennsylvania district manager.

Early in Charlie's tenure, there was a ferocious wind storm that brought down thousands of blowdowns along PATC's trails in southern PA and northern MD. Charlie worked all season long in the Spring of 1993, in both states, coordinating the efforts with other trail stewards and clearing this catastrophic damage.

Also in the early 90's, PATC's North Chapter was asked by the Keystone Trails Association (KTA) to open up a particularly challenging section of the Tuscarora Trail. Charlie and Jack Danner spearheaded the effort to fully reopen the trail. They were instrumental in locating the old trail



route, getting support for the few active maintainers and finding new overseers to take on the remaining trail sections. After several years and many work trips, the trail was passable in October 1994 and officially reopened in the summer of 1995. For their extraordinary efforts, Charlie and Jack received the American Hiking Society Volunteer of the Year award for Pennsylvania in 1994.

Following work trips in the mid-1990's, Charlie embellished the suppers at Hermitage Cabin with roasted sweet corn. This was an immediate hit and when the meals were moved to Ray Fadner's Gypsy Spring Cabin, dinner itself became an event of its own known as Charlie's Corn Roast. Over the years, Charlie's Corn Roast was attended by various PATC officers and staff in addition to worktrip volunteers.

PATC bestowed Charlie with Honorary Life Membership in 1995. Charlie received the President's Call to Service Award in 2004. The award was a plaque and a letter of congratulations from President Bush. Charlie was one of 644 awardees in the entire United States.

Additionally, Charlie has been active in other community service projects. He raised money for CROP walks, which are fund-raising hikes to end hunger in local communities and around the world. Charlie's walks raised \$1500-\$2000 per year for the CROP program, funds that went directly to the Carpenters Table in Taneytown, MD.

Charlie's influence to a generation of trail stewards has been huge.

The Charlie Irvin Shelter project is PATC's effort to validate the decades of leadership and vigilance that Charlie has provided to the Club. The Shelter will be built along the Tuscarora Trail by Charlie's disciples in the North Chapter. You can donate to this project by sending your check to PATC c/o Charlie Irvin Shelter Project, 118 Park St. SE, Vienna, VA 22180. As a 501(c) 3 non-profit, your donation to PATC is tax-deductible.

Charlie is in his late 80s now and lives in an assisted-living facility in Carroll County, MD. PATC is eternally grateful for the example and legacy that Charlie Irvin has provided for legions of trails volunteers.