



Discover America

Newsletter of the American Discovery Trail Society

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Ken and Marcia Powers reach the Pacific Ocean following their ADT thru-hike.

Photo courtesy of Ken and Marcia Powers

Ken, 60, and Marcia, “in her 50s,” are experienced long-distance hikers who have also completed the Appalachian Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail, and the Continental Divide Trail. Since 1998, the couple has logged over 13,000 miles backpacking through 31 states.

These retirees wanted to see the wonders of our nation on foot, not in a recreational vehicle. The American Discovery Trail offered them a way to hike into spectacular backcountry where Winnebagos can't go. “We feel we are privileged to see something special,” said Marcia of the couple's roughing it approach to travel. “We got to see America up close. We got to touch it with our feet and hands and smell all its scents and hear its wildlife. It's an amazing country.”

Ken and Marcia reported the conclusion of their trek in their journals: “We hiked the final miles feeling more excited than sad, ready to see home with friends and family. We got to the beach, . . . gave our camera to

All the Way!

When they met in Kansas this past summer, eastbound ADT horseman Matt Parker and westbound ADT hikers Ken and Marcia Powers were headed in opposite directions. But they each were using the American Discovery Trail to cross the country and experience the breadth of our nation's terrain, culture, and people.

This fall, they each accomplished their goals. On October 16, Ken and Marcia Powers completed their coast-to-coast backpacking trip by dipping their hiking boots in the Pacific Ocean at Limantour Beach at Point Reyes National Seashore in California.

The Powers, of Pleasanton, Calif., started their hike at Cape Henlopen, Del., on February 27. It took them only 231 days, or less than eight months, to hike the 4,888 miles by averaging 22 miles a day with only four days off with no hiking. They were relentless in keeping a steady pace because the Powers had their eyes on the goal of being the first to backpack coast to coast on the ADT in one continuous thru-hike. Timing was essential so that desert heat and mountain snow wouldn't stop them.

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Matt Parker and his horse, Cincinnati, reach the Atlantic Ocean at the end of his cross-country trip.

Photo courtesy of Matt Miller

In the News!

There was widespread interest in the completion of the American Discovery Trail by Ken and Marcia Powers and Matt Parker. In fact, the ADT was in the news all over the world this fall. Articles were posted in newspapers and on websites, while interviews were broadcast on television and radio.

This unprecedented media coverage included an interview with Ken and Marcia Powers on the NBC Today Show that required them to get up at 3:30 in the morning Pacific time so that it could air live on the east coast at 8:00 a.m. CNN

Headline news also ran a story on their journey. CBS radio and NPR's Weekend Edition also mentioned their feat.

Reese Lukei, ADT Society vice president of government affairs, said, "The Associated Press article went all over the Asia-Pacific area, and even to Tehran and New Zealand." Other papers that carried the article included the London Times and the Washington Post.

As a result, the Powers reported a stream of guestbook entries on their website "including England, Canada, Scotland, Netherlands, and New Zealand. We are overwhelmed."

Matt Parker's finish was also featured in a number of newspapers and he became the star headline of the Delaware State Park website.

All this publicity created a huge number of hits on the ADT website. Whereas the site had been updated with the latest content in preparation for the press coverage, the large volume of traffic that exposure produced caused the site to temporarily crash.

So, despite the fact that there are many people using the ADT for short sections, it's the allure of the long-distance traveler that really gets people's attention.

Trail News

West Virginia

The West Virginia tourism council has been working to promote tourism through trails in its state. It established information kiosks to enhance public education and trail awareness along the American Discovery Trail in Dolly Sods and Greenland Gap, Fort Ashby, Paw Paw, and Harpers Ferry.

The ADT Society supplied maps and trail descriptions to bicyclist Paul Johnson. Johnson used his GPS device to check the guides and maps for accuracy and make recommendations on the route and data format. Part of the project was to help make the information more universally available and usable with the electronic equipment of more vendors.

Illinois

A Grand Illinois Trail And Parks (GITAP) bicycle tour is scheduled for Sunday, June 11, to Saturday, June 17, 2006. Sponsored by the League of Illinois Bicyclists with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, it is a unique week-long bike ride featuring a sampling of routes on the Grand Illinois Trail combined with overnights at three outstanding state parks and one college.

The ride begins and ends at Rochelle. It makes an extended circular tour through western Illinois, including four days along the Mississippi River. The route is generally flat, with mileage choices ranging from 315 to 555 miles for the week.

Dinners, breakfasts, campsites, sag wagons, bike repair, T-shirts, door prizes, and evening programs are included. It is limited to 160 riders, and the cost is \$330. For information, visit www.bikelib.org/gitap or contact Chuck Oestreich at oestreich@qconline.com or 309-788-1845.

Missouri

A statewide set of bicycle road maps is being developed by the Missouri Department of Transportation to provide information for bicyclists planning to ride across the state or between two towns. The maps will provide traffic volume and shoulder information. The maps will also include locations of airports, state parks, camping facilities, hospitals, and Amtrak stations.

Additional information about this bicycle-pedestrian program is available by visiting www.modot.org or calling 1-888-ASK MODOT (275-6636).

Colorado

The U. S. Forest Service website (www.fs.fed.us/r2/recreation/hiking) shows the American Discovery Trail through the Rocky Mountains. Under "Scenic and Historic Trails," the website describes the ADT through Colorado as offering a variety of challenges and spectacular scenery: "The ADT crosses the eastern plains of Colorado following the paths of explorers and pioneers in their wagons painted with 'Pikes Peak or Bust!' West of Denver, the towering Rocky Mountains provide mag-

nificent backcountry travel through six national forests on trails that rise above timberline to reveal breathtaking views. The ADT crosses 15 mountain passes over 9,000 feet high including four that are above 12,000 feet. The route crosses the Continental Divide twice and uses portions of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Colorado Trail."

In Sheridan, where the northern and southern ADT routes split going east, a sign has been erected to mark the spot. Harv Higen, the ADT Society's chair of discovery and education, crafted the three-by-six foot cedar sign, which is identical to the sister sign he made for the spot in Elizabethtown, Ohio, where the two routes reconverge. Now both confluences will be acknowledged to users and the public.



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American Discovery Trail Affiliated Trails

One thing is certain. The American Discovery Trail is not alone out there. There are a multitude of trails throughout our great country. But a unique aspect of the ADT is the way that it acts as a spine to connect so many trails and make them into something even bigger. Sometimes the ADT coincides with parts or all of another trail. Sometimes it merely crosses paths with another trail, giving hikers a choice of destinations. To give an idea of the magnitude of the ADT's cross-country journey, in this issue we are listing trails affiliated with the ADT.

California:

Tahoe Rim Trail
Western States Trail
Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
Foresthill Loop Trail
Confluence Trail
Western States Pioneer Express Trail
American River Bike Trail
Jedediah Smith National Recreation Trail
Delta de Anza Regional Trail
Stewartville Trail
Ridge Trail
Black Diamond Trail
Cumberland Trail
Black Diamond to Mt. Diablo Trail
Bruce Lee Trail
Mitchell Canyon Trail
Deer Flat Creek Trail
Prospectors Gap Trail
North Peak Trail
Summit Trail
Wall Point Trail
Briones-Mount Diablo Trail
Lafayette Ridge Trail
Glenn T. Seaborg (formerly Homestead Valley) Trail
Oursan Trail
Bear Creek Trail
Inspiration Trail
Bay Area Ridge Trail
Sea View Trail
Vollmer Peak Trail
Grizzly Peak Trail
San Francisco Bay Trail
SCA Trail
Bobcat Trail
Miwok Trail
Redwood Creek Trail
Deer Creek Park Fire Trail
Hillside Trail
Ben Johnson Trail
Stapleveldt Trail

Matt Davis Trail
Coastal Trail
Bolinas Ridge Trail
Randall Trail
Olema Valley Trail
Stewart Trail
Glen Trail
Bear Valley Trail
Coast Trail
Mokelumne Coast to Crest Trail

Nevada

Tahoe Rim Trail
Pony Express National Historic Trail
Mount Jefferson Trail
Toiyabe National Recreation Trail

Utah

Kokopelli's Trail
Great Western Trail
Paiute ATV Trail
Oak Creek Trail
Lockhart Basin Trail
Hurrah Pass Trail

Colorado

Pueblo Riverwalk
Canon City Riverwalk
Cripple Creek Trails System
Ute Pass Trail
America The Beautiful Trail
Green Mountain Falls Bikeway
Sinton Trail
Pikes Peak Greenway
New Santa Fe Trail
Carpenter Peak Trail
Chatfield Trail System
South Platte River Trail
Bear Creek Greenway
Castle Trail
People's Path
Warren Gulch Trail
Spring Creek Trail
South Park Trail
Burning Bear Trail
Hall Valley Trail
Colorado Trail
Vail Pass Tenmile Canyon National Recreation Trail
Chalk Creek Trail
Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
Timberline Trail
Taylor Pass Trail
Brush Creek Trail
Crystal River Trail
Braderick Creek Trail
Lake Ridge Lakes Trail

High Trail
Sunlight-Powderhorn Snowmobile Trail
Leon Lake Trail
Crag Crest National Recreation Trail
Kannah Creek Trail
Old Spanish Trail
Colorado Riverfront Trail
Liberty Cap Trail
Black Ridge Trail
Monument Canyon Trail
Kokopelli's Trail

Nebraska

Pony Express National Historic Trail
Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail
MoPac East Trail
Val-Brainard Trail
Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

Kansas

Santa Fe National Historic Trail
Overland Park Bike and Hike Trail

Iowa

Riverfront Trail
Hoover Nature Trail
Cedar Valley Nature Trail
Cedar Valley Lakes Trail
Pioneer Trail
Comet Trail
Heart of Iowa Nature Trail
Saylorville-Des Moines River Trail
Raccoon River Valley Trail

Missouri

Katy Trail
Santa Fe National Historic Trail
Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

Illinois

Old Plank Road Trail
Illinois and Michigan Canal State Trail
Grand Illinois Trail
Kaskaskia Trail
Great River Trail
River to River Trail
Tunnel Hill Rail-Trail
Metro-East Levee Trail

Indiana

Whitewater Valley Gorge National Recreation Trail
Cardinal Greenway
Pigeon Creek Greenway

Ohio/Kentucky

Buckeye Trail
Burr Oak Loop Trail

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All the Way!

(Continued from page 1)

the closest woman and posed for our finish shot, complete with a wave washing over our feet.”

Meanwhile, Matt Parker, and his horse, Cincinnati, dipped their respective feet and hooves into the Atlantic Ocean in Delaware on November 3. Matt’s journey began in California in May of 2003 and his goal was to ride horseback across the country on the American Discovery Trail. Stopped by cold weather in the winters, Matt would start heading east again on his horse each spring. Over the three years Matt was on the trail, he used various horses to complete his trip. At times, he had to explore alternate routes parallel to the ADT because some parts of the ADT route do not allow horses. In that way, he served as a “pioneer” for equestrians that are likely to follow.

When asked why he did it, Parker, 25, said, “I kind of wanted to see what I was made of at a basic level. I couldn’t imagine a more supreme test than to ride a horse across the U.S. in this day and age. I’ve already had the best education money can buy...and it didn’t teach me a thing about manhood. This trip for me is a rite of passage to manhood.” Thus, he named his quest a “Ride of Passage.”

Dick Bratton, vice president of the ADT Society, said, “Matt Parker is a truly remarkable young man who was willing to face the unknown alone. He overcame many adversities on his 4,000 mile ride. He met the challenges head on with great perseverance and dedication. On the trail Matt learned a lot about Amer-



Matt Parker and Cincinnati

Photo courtesy of Cindee Saadi

ica and the American people but what is most important is what he learned about himself.”

Harry David Cyphers, the ADT Maryland coordinator said, “I was impressed with Matt’s persistence in adhering to the ADT trail corridor as much as practical.”

Several equestrians joined Matt for his final miles into Cape Henlopen State Park and the state of Delaware hosted ceremonies and a celebration at the Park’s main pavilion that included state senators and a representative from the state park system.

These adventurers show us that the spirit of discovery still exists in America today. Discoveries of a lifetime await those who are willing to get out there, and the Ameri-

can Discovery Trail can help show the way. To read more about the Powers’ or Matt Parker’s journeys, visit their websites at www.trailjournals.com/ *GottaWalkADT*, www.rideofpassage.com, or the American Discovery Trail website at www.discoverytrail.org.

Affiliated Trails

(Continued from page 4)

Robert and Mary Lou Paton Trail
Grandma Gatewood Trail
Perimeter Trail
The Riverwalk (Cincinnati)
The Shaker Trace
Hedgeapple Trail
Big Woods Trail
Sugar Bush Trail
West Shore Trail

West Virginia

North Bend Rail Trail
Harrison County Rail-Trail
Dryfork Rail-Trail
Allegheny Trail

Maryland/Washington, D.C.

Smuggler’s Trail, formerly Queen Anne’s Railroad (future)
Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis (WB&A) Rail Trail
Baltimore and Annapolis (B&A) Trail
East Coast Greenway
Anacostia Tributary Trails
Fort Circle Trail
Capitol Crescent Trail
Rock Creek Park Trail
Appalachian National Scenic Trail
Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
Allegheny Highlands Trail
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Towpath

Delaware

Cape Henlopen Bike Trail

Attention Federal Employees

The ADTS is participating again this year in the Combined Federal Campaign nationwide. Please consider a donation to the ADT when you give this year.

The ADTS donation number is 2350.

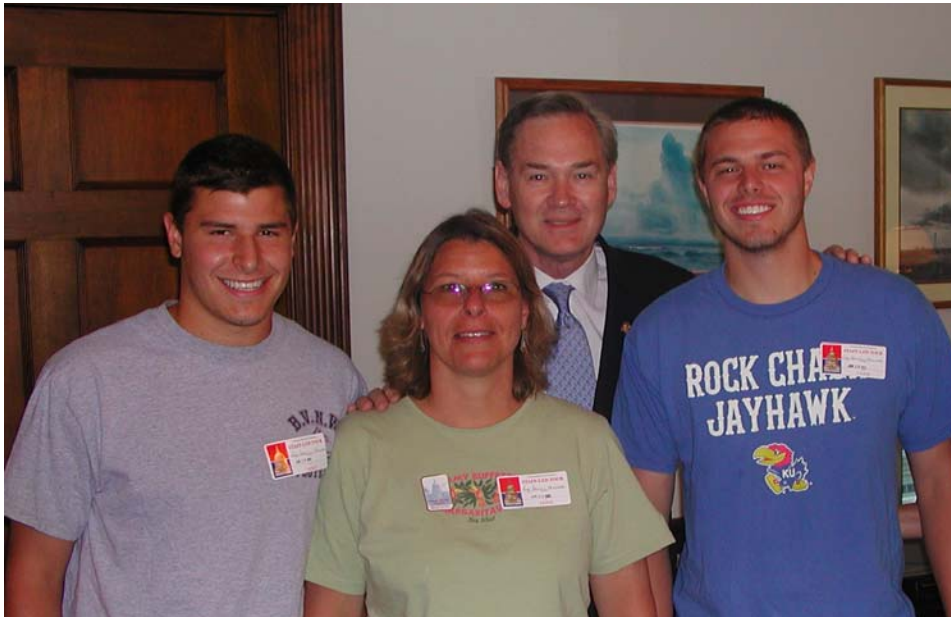


Fog streams over the coastal hills on the Bolinas Ridge Trail as Ken and Marcia Powers near Point Reyes National Seashore.

Photo courtesy of Ken and Marcia Powers

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Chad, Jan, and Justin Davis (left to right) visit their congressman, Rep. Dennis Moore (in back) of Kansas on a recent trip to Washington, D.C. to encourage him to support HR 690, the National Discovery Trails Act. They followed up their visit with an e-mail. Soon after, they received a letter from Rep. Moore that he had signed on as a co-sponsor. The more people who contact their congressional representatives, the better our chances are that this important legislation will pass. For information on contacting your representative, visit www.discoverytrail.org. Photo courtesy of Rep. Dennis Moore's office

Bikes Beat Cars

Bike sales have exceeded car sales in the United States during the past 12 months, according to a story in YahooNews. Tim Blumenthat, executive director of Bikes Belong, said bicycle sales are near an all-time high and haven't sold in these numbers since the oil crisis of 1973.

While high-rising gas prices may be prompting commuters to opt for two wheels instead of four, it's also "concern for the environment and the cost of another car," said Paul Gaiser, owner of Scooter Commuter in Bethesda, Md.

Some \$3.5 million dollars in federal money has been set aside to create cycling trails over the next four years.

With all these forces coming together to increase bike sales, the ADT and its affiliated trails can provide these users with plenty of opportunities for safe and scenic biking.

Making Connections...

Coast to Coast

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