

George F. Thompson Publishing, L.L.C.  
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Staunton, VA 24401-3511, U.S.A.  
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BOOK INFORMATION SHEET (8.15.24)

**Author (as it should appear on the book):** Dave Pruett

**Title:** *Hiking the AT in the Virginias*

**Subtitle:** *A Septuagenarian's Journey*

**Contributor:** Foreword by Mills Kelly

**Partner:** Published in association with the Center for the Study of Place

**Book pages:** 216

**Number and type of illustrations:** 202 photographs and 4 maps = 206 (all color)

**Trim size:** 7.0" x 9.0" upright/portrait

**List price:** \$29.95

**Discount:** Trade

**ISBN (book):** 978-1-960521-07-1

**ISBNs (electronic):** TBD

**Edition:** Softcover w/ gatefold flaps

**E-book?** TBD

**Jacket:** No.

**Edition size:** 1,250/1,500/1,750

**Publication date:** May 2025

**Advances due:** April

**To warehouse:** May

**Printed in:** China or Korea

**Distributor:** University of Virginia Press

**Bookstore categories (list three):** Nature/Hiking/Virginia

**Audience:** Anyone interested in the Appalachian Trail (AT) as well as nearby Shenandoah National Park, Skyline Drive, and Blue Ridge Parkway; general readers and students/teachers at all grade levels interested in the history of the AT and greenways in general.

**Selling points (list three):** (1) The Appalachian Trail (AT) is one of the most famous greenways/footpaths in the United States and world; (2) people and hikers from all over the U.S. and world come to the AT and its adjacent national parks and forests, so this will become a welcome book for all who visit directly as well as those who prefer an armchair experience; (3) the idea for the AT originates in October 1921 and was officially presented in March 1925, so this is a de facto centennial book.

**Tagline:** A terrific personal guide to hiking the famous AT in the Virginias!

## **Description of the work:**

In October 1921 the famous planner and conservationist Benton MacKaye formally proposed the establishment of the Appalachian Trail (the AT) from northern Georgia to Maine. The trail and its 2,198.4 miles was finally opened in 1937. Today, it is one of the most visited and cherished greenways and hiking paths in North America.

In *Hiking the AT in the Virginias*, Dave Pruett shares his incredible journey of hiking all 559 miles of the AT in Virginia and West Virginia, beginning with retirement at sixty-five and completing it as a septuagenarian at age 75. Perhaps no stretch of the AT provides such awe, diversity, and wonder as the AT in Virginia and West Virginia, which, prior to 1862, were one state. Pruett's informative and beautifully illustrated book conveys what it is like to experience the AT's many characteristics—its vistas, bridges, flora, meadows, shelters, weather, water sources, wildlife, and magic—in an unforgettable journey.

For those who seek a sense of what it is like to walk and hike the AT in the Virginias, Pruett's book is perhaps the best guide available. Written for the general reader and for the millions who visit not only the AT but the Skyline Drive, Blue Ridge Parkway, and Shenandoah and Great Smokey Mountains National Parks, Pruett's book is an indispensable and memorable guide.

## **Blurbs:**

“Dave Pruett's book is an enlightening and visually enjoyable journey that introduces readers to the beauty, moods, and magic of the Appalachian Trail in Virginia and West Virginia. Pruett aptly captures the lure of the Trail, which draws him back to hike sections year after year, despite injuries and setbacks. His observations and appreciation for the A.T. will inspire readers of all ages to plan their next adventure on this iconic recreational resource.”

—Sandi Marra, President and CEO, Appalachian Trail Conservancy

“David Pruett's *Hiking the AT in the Virginias: A Septuagenarian's Journey* is a deeply personal guide to an experience many people dream of having. The 559 miles of the AT that pass through Virginia and West Virginia draw hikers from across the U.S. and the world to the rugged beauty of a national park, national forests, and state parks. The proximity to major urban areas like Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Richmond opens the door for extended walking experiences to large populations of city-bound outdoor enthusiasts. Pruett's book, in its writing and photography, conveys a unique sense of place that makes each section of the trail accessible and attainable. It helps you imagine connecting the sections and completing the whole, whether in segments or in a single push. It is a wonderful sourcebook for information on everything from AT condition hotlines to resistance against environmental degradation. This is a book for inspiration and insight.”

—William Wylie, Commonwealth Professor of Art at the University of Virginia and author of *Pompeii Archive*, *Carrara*, *Stillwater*, and *Riverwalk*

“As Dave Pruett opines in this marvelous book: ‘The attentive hiker will never be bored on the AT. Every mile affords ample opportunities for surprise or awe.’ This is as true of Pruett’s book *about* the Trail as it is *of* the Trail itself. With engaging, often riveting prose and an abundance of beautiful photographs, Pruett celebrates the world-renowned footpath through the stunning and challenging landscapes of Virginia and West Virginia in intimate and honest detail. He is a perfect trail companion for the journey, affectionately recording his encounters with fellow hikers, both ‘day’ and ‘through,’ and celebrating the incomparable beauty of the mountains and valleys of the Virginias and the unparalleled biological diversity of the Appalachian region. Pruett tells it like it is—carrying a forty-pound pack is not for the faint of heart or weak of knee. As a day hiker and occasional back-packer who lives in Washington, D.C., and who has hiked the AT from the Pennsylvania border through Maryland and into Virginia—as well as many stretches in other states from Maine to Georgia—I reveled in every page of Pruett’s book. After reading the text and lingering longingly over the photographs, I can’t wait to get back out on the trail and hike south toward Mt. Rogers!”

—Melanie Choukas-Bradley, author of *City of Trees: The Complete Field Guide to the Trees of Washington, DC*, *A Year in Rock Creek Park: The Wild, Wooded Heart of Washington, DC*, and *Sugarloaf: The Mountain’s History, Geology, and Natural Lore*

[Blurb by Senator Tim Kaine to come after the election.]

### **About the Author:**

*Dave Pruett* is a long-term resident of the Shenandoah Valley who, following his semi-retirement in 2012, section-hiked the entire AT through the Virginias over nine summers, completing it in 2023 at age seventy-five. Pruett previously worked in the aerospace industry at NASA Langley Research Center (LaRC) and taught mathematics and computational science at Virginia Commonwealth University, the College of William and Mary, and James Madison University (JMU). In 1996, Pruett received the Robert T. Knapp Award of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, for pioneering computer simulations of high-speed flows, work conducted in collaboration with world-renown scientists at NASA LaRC. As a full-time faculty member in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at JMU, Pruett garnered numerous teaching awards, including the first Mengebier Endowed Professorship and the first Provost’s Award for Excellence in Honors Teaching, the latter for a groundbreaking honors course that explored the interface between science and spirituality. His first book, *Reason and Wonder* (Praeger, 2012), received a Choice Award from the American Library Association.

### **About the Contributor:**

*Mills Kelly* is a Professor of History at George Mason University and Senior Scholar at the award-winning Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media. He has been hiking the AT since 1971 and is the archivist for the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, co-maintainer of a historic cabin in Shenandoah National Park, and the maintainer of the Manassas Gap Shelter—one of the original shelters built along the AT during the 1930s. Professor Kelly has received numerous grants and fellowships from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Delmas Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, and U.S. Department of Education. His books include *Virginia's Lost Appalachian Trail* (The History Press, 2023), *Teaching History in the Digital Age* (University of Michigan Press, 2013; 2016), *World History Matters: A Student Guide to World History*, with Kristin Lehner and Kelly Schrum (Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2009), *Without Remorse: Czech National Socialism in Late Habsburg Austria* (East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, 2007), and a forthcoming history of the Appalachian Trail as told from the perspective of hikers.