



# Pathfinder Pathways...

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## Brownies with a Difference

By Annette Nay

Many parents are hard put to explain to their youth why some music, movies, books and magazines are not acceptable material for them to bring into the home for their youth to see, or hear. One parent came up with an original idea that was hard to refute.

He listened to all the reasons his children gave for wanting to see a particular PG-13 movie. It had their favorite actors. Everyone else was seeing it. Even church members said it was great. It was only rated PG-13 because of the suggestion of sex. They never really showed it. The language was pretty good. They only used the Lord's name in vain three times in the whole movie. The video effects were fabulous and the plot was action-packed. Yes, there was the scene where a building and a bunch of people got blown up, but the violence was just the normal stuff. It wasn't very bad.

Even with all these explanations for the rating, the father wouldn't give in. He didn't even give them a satisfying explanation for saying, "No". He just said, "No".

It was a little bit later that evening that this same father asked his teens if they would like some brownies he had prepared. He explained that he had taken the families' favorite recipe and added something new. They asked what it was. He calmly replied that he had added dog poop. He stated that it was only a little bit. All the ingredients were gourmet quality. He had taken great



care to bake it at the precise temperature for the exact time. He was sure the brownies would be superb. Even with all the explanations of the perfect attributes of the brownies the teens would not take one.

The father acted surprised. There was only one little element that would have caused them to act so stubbornly. He assured them that they would hardly notice it, if at all. They all held firm and would not try the brownies.

He then explained that the movie they wanted to see was just like the brownies. Satan tries to enter our minds and our homes by deceiving us into believing that just a little bit of evil won't matter. With the brownies, just a little

bit makes all the difference between a great brownie and a totally unacceptable product. He explained that even though the movie people would have us believe the movies which are coming out are acceptable for adults and youths to see, they are not. Test your movie and see. Would you be comfortable taking Christ with you to see the movie?

Now when this father's youth want to do something or see something they should not, the father merely asks them if they would like some of his special dog poop brownies and they never ask about that item again.



## Computer Connection

The NAD Pathfinder website now has an on-line forum. Internet forums on the web are discussion areas on a web site where visitors can post questions or make remarks on a given topic to be answered by their peers.

Every Pathfinder staff member should go on-line and check it out. There is also a section for the teen Pathfinders to talk about Pathfinder or other stuff.

Not sure how to use forum? Check out the FAQ and your questions should be answered.

<http://www.pathfindersonline.org/forum/>

## Outreach Activity Ideas

Playgrounds and families go hand-in-hand. Have your club or group sponsor a playground pizzazz day! Spiff-up and fix-up a community playground. Celebrate your efforts with a picnic at the park and invite neighborhood kids and families to attend. Ask a local hardware or builders supply store to share in the fix-up and the fun!



## Camping



### Buying a sleeping bag

We've talked about buying sleeping bags before but since this is your most important camping item it doesn't hurt to go over it again. With care, a good sleeping bag will last half a life-time, even with almost regular use. Though tremendous advancements in insulation technology are in the wind, at this writing there are only three types of sleeping bag fill which are worth considering for serious use in the backcountry. These are goose down, Celanese "Polarguard", and DuPont "Quallofil". Any of these products will serve you well if they're sewn into a well constructed bag.

#### Sleeping bag design

1. The smaller the bag, the less area it will have to insulate. Translation: confining mummy bags are much warmer for their weight than roomy rectangular ones.
2. Most heat loss from a sleeping bag occurs through the open head end. It's nearly impossible to seal the open end of a rectangular style sleeping bag so that warm air won't escape. (One solution is to install a collar.) For this reason integral hoods are mandatory on sleeping bags that will be used for cold weather camping. *Tip:* An effective makeshift collar can be made from a sweater or scarf. Drape the garment across your chest and bunch the fabric around your neck and shoulders, feathering it to the adjacent sleeping bag fabric.
3. Inexpensive mummy style sleeping bags, and all rectangular models, are built with a "flat" foot, which means the material is simply folded in half at the foot end, and a zipper is installed around the edge. A "boxed" foot design, though more costly to manufacture, is much more comfortable. Here, a foot high circular panel is sewn in at the bottom (like the end of a tin can) which allows you to maintain a comfortable "toes up" position without bearing against tight material.
4. A full length zipper which runs from foot to chin is a must. Bags with half-length zippers become impossible hot in warm weather.

#### Categories

Down and synthetic sleeping bags are generally categorized as:

- a) *Summer weight* – comfortable in temperatures to freezing.
- b) *Three-season* – warm to about 10-15 degrees Fahrenheit.
- c) *Winter* – good to 20 below zero or more. There are some special arctic bags which go much lower than that.

Note: "Comfort ratings" are speculative. Few sleeping bags are as warm as their manufacturers suggest!

#### Which sleeping bag for you?

Since most Pathfinder camping is done in the spring and fall, a three-season bag is probably your best buy. Then possibly purchase a lighter, less costly summer bag for those warm summer months.

*Which is best, down or synthetics?* Down bags are lighter, warmer, more compact, and have a more "gentle hand" than any of the synthetics. If you've ever slept under a down comforter, you know what I mean. Good down is also much more resilient and long lived than synthetics. For an equivalent weight of fill, down has a lower and wider temperature comfort range. This means down will keep you warmer when it's cold, and cooler when it's warm, than will a synthetic.

For example: Consider two three-season sleeping bags, one down, one Polarguard or Quallofil. Both bags are rated to 10 degrees Fahrenheit. Finished weight of the down bag will be *at least* a pound less than either synthetic and it will compact into a much smaller space. The synthetic bag will become too warm when the temperature reaches 50 degrees Fahrenheit, while the down bag will remain comfortable, even at 60 degrees.

*However*, good down sleeping bags are much more expensive than equivalently rated synthetic ones, and you can't beat them around as much. And wet down is almost impossible to dry under typical field conditions. Because down is a natural fiber, it absorbs body moisture, which in damp winter conditions can be serious. For this reason, experienced winter hikers usually select Polarguard or Quallofil sleeping bags.

*Question:* If down dries so slowly, shouldn't we eliminate it from consideration for summer use too? Absolutely not! If you "sandwich pack" your sleeping bag and storm-proof your tent, you should never get sleeping bags – or anything else – wet on camping trips.

Buy what you can afford; but what ever you buy, make sure it has a hood to keep your head warm, a full-length two-way zipper to keep your feet cool, and a temperature range which matches the environment in which you'll camp. If you chose a "mummy bag" – and most experienced campers do – try it in the store before you buy it. Mummy bags come in different lengths and girths; some are quite restrictive while others are surprisingly roomy. If a bag feels tight in the store, you won't like it in the field.

*Winter sleeping bags* are more generously sized than summer ones to allow dressing space inside. Winter campers usually take their clothing and canteens to bed so they need space for all these "rummage sale" items. The typical polyester-filled winter bag weighs five pounds or more. Summer weight bags may weigh half that.

*Packing the sleeping bag:* Sleeping bags (discounting station-wagon types) should be *stuffed* not rolled. Zippers should be closed to prevent galling of the material. Just grab the foot end of the bag and stuff it,

handful by handful into its nylon sack. This is easier on the fabric and fill than traditional rolling.

*Do not store sleeping bags in stuff sacks; you'll wear out the filler in no time.* Instead, keep sleeping bags in a breathable cotton sack (a pillow case works fine), or store them flat or on hangers.

#### **Do's and don'ts for sleeping bags**

- *Don't* roll sleeping bags; stuff them!
- *Don't* yank sleeping bags out of the stuff sacks; pull gently.
- *Don't* leave sleeping bags stuffed for long periods of time.
- *Do* air and fluff sleeping bags after each use.
- *Do* store sleeping bags flat, on hangers, or in large porous sacks.
- *Do* sponge clean the shell of your sleeping bag occasionally.

--Edited from *Camping Secrets* by Cliff Jacobson

## Hike of the Month

*'The journey is the destination'*



### **Alum Bluff Cave Trail** Smokey Mountains, TN

One of the most popular locations for hiking within the Great Smokey Mountains National Park is Mt. Leconte and probably the most popular trail on Mt. Leconte is the Alum Bluff Cave Trail.

The trail gets its name from a very shallow cave (actually little more than an indentation in the cliff face) from which alum was extracted up through the time of the civil war. At first the trail passes through dense pine forest and along a small creek. At one point it climbs through a tunnel in the rock; steps and a guardrail have been installed at this point.

Past this point the trail starts climbing the side of Mt. Leconte. From here extraordinary views of the surrounding mountains can be seen. One of the more interesting sights is of the next ridge where erosion has worn a hole completely through the rock.

The main drawback to this trail is its extreme popularity. When hiking you are almost always within sight of other hikers. Still, the trail is interesting and if you arrive on a weekday or in the off season it is definitely worth giving a try.

From the Sugarlands Visitor Center, drive 8.6 miles east on Newfound Gap Road. There you will find two parking areas, where a gravel path leads to The Grassy Patch and the beginning of a 2.3 mile hike to Alum Cave Bluff.

**Summary:** This moderately difficult hike is 4.6 miles round-trip or 5.1 miles on to LeConte Lodge. The round-

trip to the cave bluff takes about 2 and 1/2 hours, but allow about 3 and 1/2 hours to LeConte Lodge. The Alum Cave Trail is the most popular and well-known route to Mount Le Conte.

Elevation: You gain 2600 feet on the way to 6400 feet.

**Features:** Arch Rock, 1993 summer storm damage, Inspiration Point, Alum Cave Bluff

Mother Nature's majesty and power are clearly demonstrated in this 4.6 mile (round-trip) hike. The views are great, particularly if you go on to LeConte Lodge and Cliff Tops, and the trail is not too difficult--even for children.

You'll begin this hike at the Grassy Patch just off the parking area. Shortly after entering the forest, you will parallel the Alum Cave Creek for approximately a mile and then follow Styx Branch, a main tributary of Alum Cave Creek. A few hundred yards beyond this point, you'll see the boulder and log remains of a 1993 flash flood and landslide on your left. A heavy thunderstorm dumped several inches of rain, with a force so great that huge boulders were exposed and tossed--its path is clear to the hiker and will remain so for years. At mile 1.5 you come to Arch Rock, where a set of stone stairs aids your passage through one of the few natural arches inside the park. At the 1.8 mile mark you will come upon Inspiration Point, affording the first panoramic view of the area. Thereafter, you'll pass through an area of low shrubs, and shortly thereafter arrive at Alum Cave Bluff (mile 2.3). Alum Cave is not what the name implies. Its not a cave--rather it's a jutting ledge of black slate, forming out over the trail to give the impression of a cave. The name Alum Cave comes from the deposits of alum found along the "cave" walls.

For the hardy souls who will continue on to LeConte Lodge, the trail curves up and around the bluff and begins following the ridge that forms the southern flank of Mount Le Conte.

Two hundred yards from its finish at Le Conte Lodge, the trail is joined from the left by the Rainbow Falls Trail. Le Conte Lodge consists of several wood-shingled cabins, two lodges, and a dining room. There is no electricity and water is pumped into holding tanks from a spring. The lodge uses llamas to haul in supplies (that's a story for a future issue!). Reservations can be made at LeConte Lodge by calling (423) 429-5704.

Above the lodge you'll find Cliff Top, one of the best vantage points in the Smokies--when the view is not obscured by misty clouds.

#### [Alum Bluff Cave Trail](#)



**Birthdays are good for you;  
The more you have,  
the longer you live.**

## Camp Cooking

### Another Tip for regulating Oven Cooking Temperature

- Rotate the Dutch oven every 15 minutes by turning the oven 90° in one direction and the lid 90° in the opposite direction.

<http://www.backwoodshome.com/articles/beattie47.html>

### Basque Blackberry Cobbler

[http://www.ceedubs.com/dutch\\_oven\\_recipes.htm#spuds](http://www.ceedubs.com/dutch_oven_recipes.htm#spuds)

To top off your meal, a fresh-baked cobbler is a mouth-watering finish that will WOW your guests and campers! This recipe uses fresh blackberries, but it can be made substituting 2-3 cans of pie filling for the blackberries. Spice up your pie filling cobblers by adding lime or lemon juice and additional spices such as ground cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, or allspice. These same seasonings can be added to any dump cake to add a little "zing" to your dessert. For an added treat, serve your cobblers and dump cakes with a scoop of ice cream or whipped cream!

Ingredients
6 oz cream cheese
2 cubes butter
2 cups flour
Pinch of salt
4-6 cups berries
½ cup white or brown sugar
½ teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 Tablespoon lemon or lime juice
½ cup flour
2-3 Tablespoons melted butter

For pastry, cut the cream cheese and butter into flour and salt. Form soft dough into ball and chill. Pour berries into 12" Dutch oven and sprinkle with sugar, nutmeg, cinnamon, and juice. Sprinkle with flour and drip melted butter over the top of fruit. Roll well-chilled pastry dough to about 11" circle. Carefully place the crust over the berries. Use 5-6 briquettes under the Dutch oven and load the lid with 25 briquettes. Bake for 45 minutes.

## Honor Toolbox



### Reptiles

For some staff, teaching the reptile honor to their Pathfinders may not be something that they get very excited about. But if you are afraid of snakes it's important not to pass on your fears to the children. It's good for them to learn about and respect the snakes.

Remember learning about snakes provides an opportunity to replace fear and misconception with knowledge.

So here are a couple of ideas to help you teach the reptile honor.

- Find someone else to teach the honor.
- Get a book of coloring pages and make copies for each Pathfinder to color.
- Go on a field trip to a zoo (and even some aquariums). They will have exhibits with the snakes safely behind glass.

[Snakes Alive Inc.](#)

[Snake Printouts](#)

[Snake WebQuest](#)

[Herpetology program](#) – has great pictures

## Knot this Month

### Tie Up the Dog

This game is good for teaching uses for the bowline. Have the Pathfinders bring in their stuffed animal dogs. Set the Pathfinders up into relay race teams, with the stuffed toys at one end of the room sitting on a chair (one chair of toys per team) and the girls at the other end. Each Pathfinder in turn has to run down to the chair, tie their dog to the chair with a bowline and go back to the end of their line. When everyone in your line is sitting down and all the dogs are tied to your chair you win!

## Geocaching



### April 16 is Cache In Trash Out Day

Every April, geocachers around the world get together and clean up their local parks. It's just one way they can contribute to the maintenance of our outdoor spaces and to say "thanks" to the land managers that help to make our parks a great place for geocaching. Learn about how you can start your own CITO event, or just how you and your Pathfinders can CITO every time you go geocaching by going to [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com).

### Goals

- Actively promote the Cache In/Trash Out program – leave it better than you found it.
- Assist in the maintenance of parks & trail systems
- Increase public awareness of Geocaching
- Help educate community on Low Impact Geocaching

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