

Paul Caccamo's Last Postcard

By Lee Borrowman

On August 20, the "Hiker Guy," as he has been known around the offices of your friendly neighborhood newspaper all summer, sent his final postcard. After three months and 1600 miles of walking, local music teacher Paul Caccamo decided to leave the Pacific Crest Trail and bring his worn and weary feet home.

"The journey," he wrote, "even though unfinished, was an incredible experience. Leaving my house in April with only a backpack and the clothes I wore to get me through the next five months was a daunting moment. It makes one realize how little we actually need to survive. Sleeping under the stars every night; in 177 days I only pitched my tarp 5 times -- that's very nice. Getting into my warm bag on a cold night after walking 23 miles; pure heaven. The amazing generosity of complete strangers. Town stops and total gluttony; it's just good clean fun. Best of all, the people; the 'thru-hiking community' so to speak. They are the most colorful group of characters I have ever met. I don't mind not finishing this year so much, but I miss my friends like crazy, especially Filthy Figaro, with whom I walked over 1300 miles.

Things I will not miss, because I must be 'fair and balanced:' Yellow jackets after my sandwich at lunchtime. Mosquitoes. Messed-up feet. The scorching San Felipe Hills, 110 degrees at 11:00a.m. Teddy Bear Cholla cactus; I kicked a piece of one and it felt like a sword had been thrust through my foot. At a pace of 25 miles a day one doesn't get to stop much and enjoy a particular place, there is always that clock ticking that says 'Canada isn't getting any closer while you're hanging out by this lake all afternoon.'

I have a long list of places along the PCT that are ripe for a more relaxed stay. This was not a relaxing journey, but it was some of the most fun I have ever had."

Caccamo plans to walk the Oregon and Washington miles of the trail next June and July, on fresh feet. Feeling somewhat like we've just finished a great summer read,



"The Germinator" (Zack Mermel) and Paul Caccamo atop Forester Pass, the highest point on the Pacific Crest Trail Photo provided

with all the ambivalence of having enjoyed the story but wondering what's next, we here at the Lamorinda Weekly hope he will keep us on his mailing list.

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