

## Sam Moore

Samuel V. Moore was heavily involved in PATC, Boy Scouts (along with sons Robert, Andrew, and Douglas), and other projects. He retired from the US Air Force as a Lieutenant Colonel and was also formerly employed by the Department of the Navy, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Sam was a member of PATC since 1938 and received the 50+ Trail Overseer Award in 1993 for his half century of work. He was made an Honorary Life Member in 1989 in recognition of his over fifty years of continuous service in trail maintenance. In 1993 a trail shelter was named in his honor.

He became involved in Scouting as an adult in 1960 and held various positions, including Scoutmaster, Chairman of the Training Committee, Assistant District Commissioner, Unit Commissioner, Chairman of the Conservation Committee of the Council Camping Committee, and numerous other posts. He was a member of the Order of the Arrow and received several scouting awards.

Among his extensive other volunteer work, Sam was a charter member of Providence Presbyterian Church and was most recently on the church Property Management Committee. He was appointed by Annandale Magisterial District Supervisor to Countywide Trails Committee of Fairfax County in 1986. He was formerly Chairman of Park Advisory Committee to Braddock District Supervisor. He was a park volunteer at Hidden Oaks Nature Center and at Green Spring Park and Horticultural Center. He worked for many years in support of W. T. Woodson High School band programs, and, in recognition of service, was made Honorary Member in 1989 and named Band Patron of the Year in 1990.

- Bianca Menendez, archivist

### Blazing with Sam

I don't know whether to call Sam a friend or a father. I've been walking trails with him for about 15 of the 20 years I've known him, and one of the highlights of my hiking days came when I could keep up with Sam-about four years ago. He enjoyed the joke.

When my father died, I gravitated closer to Sam-mostly because we were friends with very similar interests, and in many ways he and my father were alike.

As I walk his trails now, I miss Sam, and every perfectly painted blaze I see on the trees reminds me of his presence and impact on all who knew him.

He taught me how he blazes a trail. It is an art form if you do it correctly.

First you open the trail by removing all obstacles to seeing where you are going. You study the terrain to decide how far apart the blazes should be to keep hikers on the path. You select trees at about the correct distance that are on the

same side of the trail and easily noticed.

The key is consistency. Travelers should not be aware they are looking for blazes because they are the same distance, height above ground, size, and shape. Blazes gently reassure you normally, but lead you if you are in doubt.

Trails have two directions. Sam would carefully blaze in one direction, then turn around and blaze going the other direction using the best tree each way. Whichever direction you walk on Sam's trails, they were blazed just for you.

As we worked, the conversation could be about anything -woodcraft, classical music, marching bands, science fiction. No matter what it was, Sam was interesting, stimulating, and challenging. He made you think about what you were saying, which resulted in insights. Sam was a natural teacher.

If he knew more than I did, he would teach. If not, only a trial lawyer could ask more questions until he understood. Sam was tough and a worker who quit only when the sun was gone. There was always "one more little job we can do today."

After finishing the trail, we would walk back to check our work, sometimes scraping a blaze off one tree and moving it to a better place. Sam was a very precise person.

Some trees take to blazes better than others. Generally, rough bark is harder to blaze, but the blaze lasts longer. On smooth barked trees, the blaze is more likely to weather or just disappear as the tree grows. Sam didn't care as long as it was the right tree. He just gave the smooth barked tree more attention over the years.

Sam has left his blaze on me. And as I walk in the woods, I am reminded of all the Boy Scouts, hikers and friends he has touched with his blazes.

— Nick Dunten, Member