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Experienced outdoor adventurer hosting several presentations at Carter Caves

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OLIVE HILL, Ky. -- Carter Caves State Resort Park will host adventurer Andy Niekamp in April for the last of three presentations about trails, hiking and the outdoors.

Niekamp, a park volunteer from Dayton, Ohio, is the lead adventurer for Outdoor Adventure Connection. He has backpacked more than 13,000 miles, has hiked the Appalachian Trail three times, and is leader of the Dayton Hikers group.

The three presentations are free to the public and will be at the Carter Caves lodge. Arrive early and have dinner at Tierney's Cavern restaurant. There will be all-you-can-eat catfish for \$9.99 a person or Little T's sandwiches (catfish, chicken or cheeseburger) for \$6.95.

At 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 22, the presentation will be "7,800 Miles On A 2,200 Mile Trail. Lessons Learned From An Appalachian Trail Long Distance Hiker."

Since 1994 Niekamp has hiked 7,800 miles on the Appalachian Trail (AT), a continuous footpath that runs through 14 states from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Katahdin in Maine. He has been awarded three "2,000 miler" certificates by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, which is conferred on hikers who have completed the entire AT; and he is a Life Member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. His average hike on the trail is 10-15 miles per day, but he has walked up to 40 miles in one day. He labels himself as a chronic section hiker of the AT. He finds each successive end-to-end hike gets easier and more enjoyable. His favorite areas of the trail are the southern Appalachians, New Hampshire and Maine.

Most of his AT hiking is solo, but occasionally he has friends join him for short sections, and he has met many interesting people along the way. The presentation includes photos and tips and advice about hiking the AT.

"The physical and mental demands of long distance hiking are a great way to recharge one's internal batteries and get a fresh look on life," said Niekamp, in a news release.

Carter Caves State Resort Park features a lodge and vacation cottages. The lodge restaurant offers a variety of food for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. There's also hiking, camping, horse camping, golf, mini-golf, fishing, horseback riding, gem mining and cave tours. The park in northeastern Kentucky is four miles off Interstate 64 between Grayson and Olive Hill (Exit 161). Call 1-800-325-0059.

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