

Kindness and Courage

Trail Journal, July 1:

I started this hike ninety-three days ago, weary of people and their needs and needing solitude and nature. Now I am tired of hiking and need people in my life.

We crossed the Connecticut state line on another hot and muggy day. Ten miles ahead was the town of Kent. We needed a break, so we called ahead to book a room. No price would be too great for a shower. I was wrong, though; \$120 did seem too much to pay for a shower. Kent was an upscale town, a playground for rich folks from New York City. Antique shops, B&Bs, expensive chocolate stores, and other attractions made Kent inviting, but too pricey for hikers interested only in a shower and rest.

Garmin called the owner of the Backcountry Outfitters to inquire about getting a ride to nearby Wingdale, in hopes of finding a cheaper room. The owner agreed to pick us up at the road crossing, take us to our motel, and pick us up again in the morning to return to Kent, where we all had scheduled food drops. Fargo, who thoroughly enjoyed staying in shelters, would stay behind in the woods; I agreed to meet him in Kent the next morning.

We came to the road crossing where we would meet our ride, and a BMW convertible waited for us. The ride was exhilarating, and the