



The Happy Hiker

The Official Newsletter of the Allentown Hiking Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WHO ARE THESE GUYS AND WHY ARE THEY DRESSED SO FUNNY?

The photograph was taken the evening of November 5, 2009 and they are Club members Jim Gabovitz and Gene Scharle. Just 28 days after that on December 2, 2009, they were designated the first ever co-presidents of the Allentown Hiking Club. Little did they know then what their future held. The following is a hypothetical interview with Gene Scharle, who chose to preside over the second half of the year.



H.H. How long has it been?

G.S. It was back in 1997 when I said to myself, "I can't let this Club go without a President." It was like pulling teeth to get anyone to run. So, I was elected to be Club President for 1998.

H.H. What has changed?

G.S. Not too much. The basic reason I used this format of interviewing myself for my first column back then was to emphasize the fact that, if you wanted something done, you were going to have to do it yourself. On the other hand, over the past ten years, several members have made quite a reputation for the Club in the field of trail construction and maintenance. These efforts have not gone unnoticed. Along with a few "Thank You" cards and letters every year from through hikers on the Appalachian Trail, our Club has received the *Friend of the Lehigh River* award from Wildlands Conservancy in Emmaus, and the *Commandant Award* from the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor along with a citation from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for our work on the side trails and "high lift" locks in Lehigh Gorge State Park. You'd think that with that kind of recognition, more members would want to get involved.

H.H. Why isn't that happening?

G.S. I'm not sure. Maybe we need to appeal to a broader spectrum of people. Granted, some of our long-time members are doing more behind the scenes work on committees and outreach projects, and this creates a need to cultivate new and different leaders from the newer members. I don't see these new, young members stepping up to the plate. As a matter of fact, I don't see them even joining the Club.

H.H. Why not? What's going on?

G.S. Well, when I think back ten or even twenty years ago, the Club had a group of trip leaders whose interests covered such varied interests as backpacking, bicycle touring, canoeing, cross-country skiing and even horseback riding. There were "destination" hikes to waterfalls, covered bridges and lighthouses. With very few exceptions, we don't have that kind of innovative thinking anymore. Nowadays we just don't have enough members with enough initiative to commit to the Club as an officer, committee member or even a trip leader.

H.H. What does the Club have to do to inspire its members?

G.S. That's the hardest question yet! Why is there never a shortage of people who want to run for political office like mayor, governor or president? Is it ego, power, money? There must be something to these offices that draws so many people out of the woodwork.

H.H. Any closing thoughts?

G.S. With so many things going for the Club, I hope there will be some people inspired to step up and take a swing at serving as an officer. It's not hard work, and you get to meet a lot of really interesting people.

H.H. What's in your future?

G.S. Well, I'll continue to work behind the scenes and lead trips, but as far as the next election, I'll just have to paraphrase Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce Tribe and say "I will run no more forever".

Gene Scharle



Allentown Hiking Club

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Sponsored by City of Allentown Department of Parks and Recreation

www.allentownhikingclub.org



The Happy Hiker is published quarterly by the Allentown Hiking Club, Inc. The opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the AHC, but of the authors.

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Deadlines for the Winter 2011 Newsletter & Schedule

Happy Hiker Newsletter
Activity Schedule

Wednesday, Nov 24, 2010
Wednesday, Dec 1, 2010

Please forward all Club related articles, thoughts, and items to the editor by mail or, preferably, by email. Send all hiking schedule activities to the schedule coordinator.

Upcoming Programs at the AHC Meetings

In addition to the normal business meeting there is also generally a program which is related in some way to the club's activities. The following is a preview of the upcoming programs:

- Oct.** - Betsy Lyman will give a presentation on invasive species.
- Nov.** - Michael Nonemacher will give a presentation on the switchback railroad.
- Dec.** - Scheduling night for winter hikes.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Anderson, Nancy
Bonilla, Cindy
Carpenito, Paul
Hall, John
Leon, Jose, Mirla, & Amgie

Pennsburg
Macungie
Kunkletown
Allentown
Bethlehem

Reber, Ken & Lynn
Roldan, Ramon & Christian
Stephan, Jason
Uhrin, Paula
Wacker, Robert

Bethlelem
Bethlehem
Coplay
Alburtis
Stroudsburg

Open Position For Allentown Hiking Club

The Allentown Hiking Club has a position available for Membership Secretary. This volunteer position is open to any club member. No previous experience necessary. For more details, please email membership@allentownhikingclub.org.



A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, OR HOW I, A WALKER, BECAME AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMPLETER - Part 3

Janet Goloub

Martha & I had decided to do the White Mts. via the huts run by the Appalachian Mountain Club in 2000, mainly because we wouldn't have to carry heavy backpacks that way. The Whites are ranked 10 for difficulty, and 3 years earlier I'd been intimidated by the thought of climbing north out of Franconia Notch. Now I was hiking with a woman with knee and hip problems for the next 11 days. Martha & I met right on time at the Lafayette Campground, placed our cars, and started up Mt. Lafayette the next morning.

I was surprised at how easy the climb was for the first mile, but then it got very steep and rocky. An easier stretch out of the woods, and we were above treeline. Above treeline is magical to us who are surrounded by trees, a whole 'nother world. You can see forever, maybe identify some yonder peaks, study the new flora at your feet, and here you walk along the ridge, so the trail was much more level.

We had a mix of sunny and drizzly weather. In that first section, a lovely break was Zealand Falls Hut, with a fine sit-down and wash-up in the falls there. One of the hardest climbs was up Wildcat Mt. in the Carter-Moriah Range. I limped into the hut nearly totaled after the 6-mile hike on a very hot day. It had another of those 1,000' in 1/2-mile gains, then a couple more not so bad, and ending with 1,000' in a 1/2-mi. descent to top everything off. The next day was again steep, rocky climbing including gorgeous views as we got higher, and ending above treeline on a rock perfect for basking in the sun for lunch.

At Pinkham Notch, starting point for the Presidential Range, we began the climb up Mt. Madison, an 8-mile climb ending with a miserable 3 miles. The 1st of those final miles, a 2,000' gain, wasn't as bad as I expected, just rocks and rocks and rocks, and more rocks. The last 2 miles were huge rocks you had to pick and claw your way up, and Mt. Madison replaced Smarts Mt. (see Part 1) for 1st place hard. It took us 6 hours to do those 3 miles.

A bright, sunny day started the hike to Mt. Washington, but it became cloudy as we got closer. The trail goes right by the visitors center and weather station; I got about 10 seconds of sun up there. We stayed at the Lakes of the Clouds Hut, the largest of the huts with 90+ bunks. It was very mildewed. The night became so clear we could see every star in the sky, plus a satellite. The morning was so misty you could barely see the next cairn; above treeline there are no trees to paint blazes on. After a few hours we took off our rain gear, and it was sunny the rest of the day.

I was exceedingly glad when I was done with the Whites! I have many good memories about the A.T. from them, but nowhere else along the trail was harder. Well... I still had the Mahoosucs and Katahdin in ME to do, so who knows. In any case, those 75 miles were all I did that year, and I was content with that.

Although I didn't mind hiking alone at all, there were a few sections I didn't want to hike alone. The Whites were one, and the 100-mile Wilderness in ME was another. But I did it alone, in 2001. To people who have various alarmed reactions to that I remind them that on the A.T. you're seldom totally alone. In Monson, the starting point, I arranged for a shuttle to take me back to Caratunk, so I could do the miles I needed from the Kennebec River (1996, remember?) to Monson. A memorable thing on that hike was a nearly entire, totally cleaned moose skeleton right in the trail. I learned that the moose had been hit by a car on a nearby highway in April; this was August.

The Wilderness isn't one; there's just very limited road access to anywhere, so it's hard to resupply, and you have to carry food for maybe 10 days. I arranged a resupply to White House Landing, across a narrow part of Pemadumcook Lake. I enjoyed myself most of the time. A few mountains were challenging, but how can you beat seeing a moose and her calf across the pond first thing in the morning at a lean-to (New England talk for shelter). Or, during a drought, fording only 3 of the 11 streams the map/guidebook described. Yet, there was plenty of water everywhere; what they call ponds we call lakes.

An epidemic of step building yielded 120 coming down White Cap Mt., where the summit provided views all around. Roots and rocks could make you crazy. Old lean-tos used young tree trunks laid front to back for the floors. There were friendly hikers, fine foot soaks in endless creeks, etc., frogs and toads of all sizes and colors, walks through large white birches, a grove of hemlock – and names like Potaywadjo, Nahmakanta, Nesuntabunt, and Nesowadnehunk.

I was meeting Martha, JoAnne and others at Katahdin, and got there a day early, so I decided to try climbing it, 5 miles to the top – and then back down. You can pick up a daypack at the ranger's cabin for the day's supplies. I signed in and started up. The 1st mile was easy, the 2nd harder. Mile 3, from my journal: "...up boulders I couldn't see how I'd get back down... Sticks superfluous, so put them down, hoping I'd see them again on the way back. .8 mile of climbing up, around, through boulders, on hands and knees, hand bars to help; haul oneself up, over or down... Vertigo not allowed; best not to look anywhere but at the rocks. ...eventually the treeline, and more boulders up. Nearly 2 1/2 hours."

I sat down and stared ahead, checked the clouding up sky and wind, took a picture, turned, and left. My sticks were where I'd left them.

I spent a couple of delightful days with the women: Baxter State Park is a miracle of vision, determination and generosity by one man, Percival P. Baxter. The next 2 days were rainy; Katahdin wasn't closed but it was iffy – and I had absolutely no wish to climb it again.

Ever. I'd done 153 of the 155 miles I'd planned to do – what did 2 miles at the top of Katahdin matter.

1,220 miles to go.



KTA Urges Passage of three Pennsylvania House Bills to Regulate the Gas Industry

Over 700 Marcellus Shale gas wells have been drilled in the past two years. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania is ill-prepared for the consequences of gas drilling.

Recently EOG Resources lost control of a gas well in Clearfield County. Natural gas and contaminated frack water shot 75 feet into the air for 16 hours before being brought under control. [Editor's note: The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) imposed a \$400,000 fine on EOG. As quoted in the Philadelphia Inquirer, July 14, 2010, John G. Vittitow Sr., a petroleum engineer hired by the DEP to investigate the accident, blamed it on human error and procedures that fell short of the industry's best practices, saying, "I don't know any company that would cut corners like this, on this kind of well."]

KTA encourages our members to call their State Representative, State Senator, and Governor and share your thoughts on the following bills:

- H. B. 2213: The Land and Water Protection Act, which will require public notice of applications for drilling permits, mandate inspections by DEP at each critical phase of drilling, update bond requirements to cover the costs of plugging a gas well, extend liability for pollution, and require minimum setback distances from environmentally sensitive areas.
- H. B. 2443: A severance tax, to ensure that natural gas drillers bear the long term costs associated with increased drilling, with a portion set aside to enhance public resources.
- H. B. 2235: The Save Our Forests legislation, which will place a three-year moratorium on new leases for natural gas drilling in our state forests, and requires an impact study of current leasing in our forests.

2010-11 HUNTING SEASONS

For more details check the Pennsylvania Game Commission Web site (www.pgc.state.pa.us)

- SQUIRRELS, Red, Gray, Black and Fox: Oct. 9 -Nov. 27; Dec. 13-23 and Dec. 27-Feb. 5
- RUFFED GROUSE: Oct. 16–Nov. 27, Dec. 13-23 and Dec. 27-Jan. 22
- RABBIT (Cottontail): Oct. 9-Nov. 27, Dec. 13-23 and Dec. 27-Feb. 26
- PHEASANT: Oct. 9-Nov. 27, Dec. 13-23 and Dec. 27-Feb. 5
- BOBWHITE QUAIL: Oct. 23-Nov. 27
- HARES (SNOWSHOE RABBITS) OR VARYING HARES: Dec. 27–Jan. 1
- WOODCHUCKS (GROUNDHOGS): No closed season, except: Sundays; during deer seasons; and spring gobbler turkey season.
- CROWS: July 2-April 10, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday only.
- STARLINGS AND ENGLISH SPARROWS: No closed season, except: Sundays; during deer seasons; and spring gobbler turkey season.
- WILD TURKEY (Male or Female): Nov. 6-19 and Nov. 25-27
- SPRING GOBBLER (Bearded bird only): April 23-May 31, 2011.
- BLACK BEAR, Bow and Arrow only: Nov. 15-19.
- BLACK BEAR : Nov. 20, and Nov. 22-23.
- ELK : Sept. 1 - Nov. 1-13
- DEER, ARCHERY: Sept. 18 - Nov. 27 and Dec. 27-Jan. 29.
- DEER, RIFLE: Oct. 21-23., Junior and Senior License Holders, Nov. 29-Dec. 11 and Nov. 29-Dec. 3
- DEER,MUZZLELOADER: Oct. 16-23.
- DEER, FLINTLOCK: Dec. 27-Jan. 15.
- COYOTES: No closed season.
- RACCOON and FOXES: Oct. 23–Feb. 19,
- OPOSSUM, SKUNKS & WEASELS: No closed season, except Sundays and during legal hunting hours of the spring gobbler season.
- BOBCAT: Dec. 18-Jan. 8.

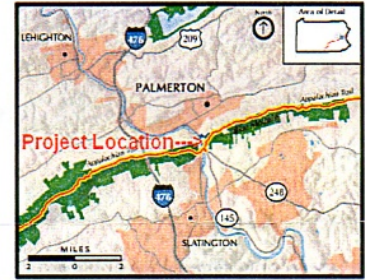
Don't Forget while hiking in State Game Lands -- You must wear Blaze Orange



Lehigh Gap Site Slope Stabilization Project Update

National Park Service - Community Fact Sheet

Using American Reinvestment and Recovery Act funding, the National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is implementing an engineering slope stabilization project along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail near Palmerton, Pennsylvania, on the east side of Lehigh Gap.



The Lehigh Gap Site was contaminated, defoliated, and destabilized by historic smelter emissions that emitted tons of zinc, lead, cadmium, and sulfur dioxide plumes into the atmosphere. The Lehigh Gap project is a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, also known as Superfund) to abate the ongoing migration of contaminated soil and water from the Site, abate the threat to public safety from a potential rockfall at the Site, and ensure the long-term success of future revegetation efforts for the Site planned in the context of the Palmerton Zinc Pile Priorities List (NPL) Site remedial action.

Starting in July 2010, and proceeding through approximately May 2011, contractors will be onsite to implement the Lehigh Gap project using a variety of engineering techniques such as installation of gabions, rock bolts, shotcrete buttresses, drapes, and fences.

The Appalachian Trail will remain open for the duration of the project. However, to ensure the safety of visitors, the blue-blazed Winter Trail (sometimes used by hikers to get to the town of Palmerton) will be closed during the project because it will be the primary project access for the contractor and an active construction zone. Please plan accordingly when visiting the area and be alert to construction activities. Regular updates will be posted at the following website: www.appalachiantrail.org/updates.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE \$10.00 PER CALENDAR YEAR FROM JANUARY TO DECEMBER, AND RENEWALS MUST BE MADE BEFORE JANUARY 31ST TO STAY ON THE CLUB'S MEMBERSHIP ROLLS. DUES CAN BE PAID AT THE MONTHLY MEETING OR MAILED TO THE CLUB MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY. HOUSEHOLD DUES (MORE THAN ONE MEMBER PER ADDRESS) ARE \$15.00.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Edna Himmler > 1754 South Albert St., Allentown, Pa. 18103

NAME(S):

ADDRESS:

CITY:

STATE:

ZIP: —

PHONE:

RENEWAL

NEW

EMAIL:

Dues @\$10.00 / \$15.00 Household _____

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QTY

SHIRTS - T-SHIRTS @ \$6.00 + \$3.50 SHIPPING EA _____

SHIRTS - CLUB GOLF @ \$12.00 + \$3.50 SHIPPING EA _____

CLUB PATCH @ \$1.50 + \$.75 SHIPPING EA _____

CHECKS PAYABLE TO "ALLENTOWN HIKING CLUB" _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Yes :: Please sign me up for the Allentown Hiking Club's email list --- the AHC Forum

