



Summer 2011

The Happy Hiker

The Official Newsletter of the Allentown Hiking Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hiking on Vacation

With summer upon us, don't forget to include some hiking in your summer vacation plans. If you are planning to vacation away from the Lehigh Valley, take some time before you leave to research what trail systems are located in the area you are visiting before you travel, then reserve some time during your trip to enjoy some time on the local trails. There are many sites on the Internet to find information on trail systems at any location in the US. Some of the sites that come up first in a search engine are pay to use sites that want you to subscribe and pay a fee to use their information. There is no need to use these pay sites as there are many other web sites run by non-profit organizations and individuals that are excellent and provide free information on hiking trails.

A great resource on Pennsylvania trails is the Keystone Trails association website at www.kta-hike.org. On the KTA website is a guide to the major trail systems in Pennsylvania with trail maps and trail descriptions. Another useful site for Pennsylvania trails is pahikes.com, on this site besides the usual maps and trail descriptions are trail pictures, trip reports and trail profiles that show the elevation changes over the length of the trail. The north central portion of Pennsylvania offers many excellent trail systems that can easily be day hiked in sections and offer beautiful waterfalls, outstanding vistas and gorgeous streams and river valleys. After a day of hiking stay at a campground, state park cabin or one of the many historical old hotels that dot the area as there are many to choose from, but be sure to plan ahead and make a reservation because they do book up during the summer season. There are many music and art festivals throughout the summer in this region which you could combine as another activity into your trip such as the OATS bluegrass festival in Benton oatsfestival.com, the Briggs Farm blues festival briggsfarm.com or the central Pennsylvania festival of the arts held in state college www.arts-festival.com. This area of Pennsylvania also offers country shops, antique stores and rustic old taverns.

There are many other areas within a few hours drive of the Lehigh Valley that offer good hiking opportunities along with other interesting activities for a fun vacation off the beaten path of the summer tourist traps like the Jersey Shore. Some suggestions are the Catskills in New York state www.catskillguide.com/hiking.htm, The Monongahela National Forest area in east central West Virginia fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!/ut/p/c5/04, central New Jersey's pine barrens www.pinelandsalliance.org/exploration/todo/hiking/ or the Shenandoah area of Virginia www.hikingupward.com

Traveling for work and pleasure over the years has afforded me many opportunities to explore trail systems in diverse parts of this great country and has given me some of the best memories of these places I have visited. So don't forget to include hiking on your summer trips wherever you may travel- you will be glad you did.

Mike "Sparky" Wuerstle
AHC President

Check the club web site, www.allentownhikingclub.org, for changes in the hiking schedule and current news.

Allentown Hiking Club

P.O.Box 1542 — Allentown, Pa 18105-1542

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 Fall 2011 Newsletter & Schedule

Happy Hiker Newsletter
Activity Schedule

Wednesday, Aug. 31, 2011
Wednesday, Sept 7, 2011

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:

July 6th	Annual Picnic meeting
August 3rd	Karen Lutz from the Mid Atlantic Office of the Appalachian Trail will give a presentation at the August meeting.
September 7th	Scheduling night for spring hikes.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS - Spring 2011

Amanda Shaffer	Macungie, PA	Eric Larson	Easton, PA
Richard Shaffer	Macungie, PA	James Larson	Easton, PA
Edward McGinley	Lansdale, PA	Steven Everett	Zion Grove, PA
Geraldine McGinley	Lansdale, PA	Jon Levin	Macungie, PA
Arthur Silfies	Orefield, PA	Edward Orr	Clifton Heights, PA
Kathie Silfies	Orefield, PA	Suzanne Logan	Schnecksville, PA
Amy Schott	Sanatoga, PA	Jackie Seidman	Nazareth, PA
Becky Larson	Easton, PA	Richard Story	Bethlehem, PA
Carol Larson	Easton, PA	Steve Yoachum	Allentown, PA

Allentown Hiking Club Administration

There are two club administration positions that will be vacant this year. The positions are Treasurer and Newsletter Editor. If you would consider assisting the club, please contact the club president, Sparky Wuerstle.

Sue Ritter, the current treasurer, noted she would continue in the position through August 2011.

Bill Geiger, the current newsletter, editor will stay on through the remainder of this year and will publish the Fall and Winter newsletters.



Hiking Basics

Bill Geiger



Over a number of the past issues of the Happy Hiker a series of articles titled “[A Pilgrim’s Progress, Or How I, A Walker, Became An Appalachian Trail Completer](#)” by Janet Goloub were published. Those articles could have sparked an interest in some of the Allentown Hiking Club members to investigate backpacking on the Appalachian Trail or other trails. Therefore I thought I’d run a series of articles which should help address some questions concerning hiking and backpacking in particular. The first question is generally where. That will be addressed in the next Happy Hiker article. Topics will include, Clothing & Gear, Food & Water, and Camping & Shelters. These topics are cut down versions of articles on the Appalachian Trail Conservancy website www.appalachiantrail.org.

Clothing and Gear

What you need to carry depends on how far you’re going, where, and when. New equipment for even an overnight hike can easily run \$1,000 to \$2,000 or more. However, some backpacking stores offer gear rental, and notices for used equipment are often posted on A.T.-related discussion forums.

What should I carry?

Packing for a day-hike is relatively simple. You should have:

- A map and compass (learn to use them first!)
- Water (at least 1 quart, and 2–3 on longer hikes in hot weather)
- Warm clothing, rain gear, and a hat
- Food (including extra high-energy snacks)
- A trowel for burying human waste and toilet paper
- A first-aid kit with blister treatments
- A whistle (three blasts is the international signal for help)
- A garbage bag to carry out trash
- Sunglasses and sunscreen—especially when leaf cover is gone
- A blaze-orange vest or hat during hunting season

On longer hikes, especially in remote or rugged terrain, add:

- A flashlight with extra batteries and bulb
- A heavy-duty garbage bag to use as an emergency tarp or to insulate a hypothermia victim
- A sharp knife
- A fire starter, such as a candle, and waterproof matches
- Shelter, such as a tent or tarp
- A lightweight pot and cooking utensils
- A stove and fuel
- Medium-sized backpack (big “expedition–size” packs are usually overkill)
- A pack cover or plastic bag for rainy weather
- A sleeping pad to insulate you from the cold ground
- A sleeping bag of appropriate warmth for the season
- Additional food and clothing
- 50’ of rope or cord to hang your food at night
- Water filter or another method of treating water

What kind of clothing do I need?

Hope for the best weather, pack for the worst. Clothing to protect you from cold and rain is a must, even in midsummer and especially at higher elevations. Avoid cotton clothes, particularly in chilly, rainy weather, which can strike the mountains at any time of year. Wet cotton can be worse than nothing in that it does not dry easily or quickly and can contribute to hypothermia, a potentially fatal threat. Synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene and various acrylic blends as well as wool or silk will help protect you against the dangers of hypothermia. Layer your clothes—a “polypro” shirt, synthetic fleece, and a coated nylon or “breathable” waterproof outer shell will keep you both warmer and drier than a single heavy overcoat in cold, damp weather.

Remember, hiking will make you sweat, no matter the weather. Shedding thin layers enables you to regulate your body temperature more effectively than choosing between keeping a heavy jacket on or taking it off.

Is my footwear adequate?

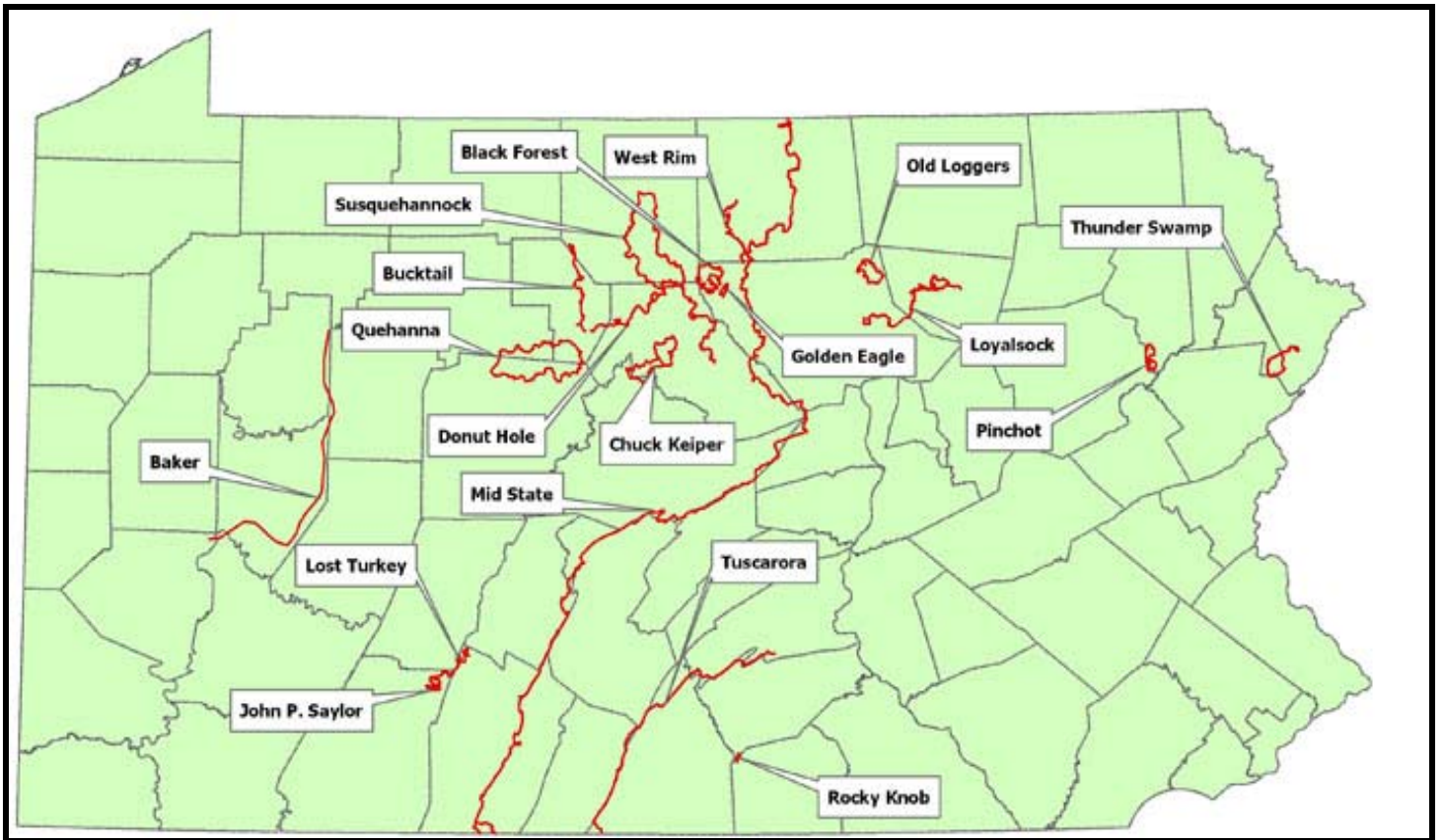
Hiking boots are optional for day-hikes but recommended for overnight and long distance hikes over rough terrain. Many hikers wear trail runners or lightweight boots. The most important thing is that shoes or boots fit well and are well broken-in before you hit the trail—nothing ends a hike quicker than blistered feet, and even minor blisters can become infected and cause serious trouble. Because backpackers can expect their feet to swell, long-distance hikers should buy boots half a size too big.



Where to Hike

Bill Geiger

In addition to the Appalachian Trail, Pennsylvania's State Forests are premier hiking destinations and offer trails that cover a variety of terrain and all difficulty levels. These trails are indicated on the map below. Further details on each of the trails can be found on the State Forestry website <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/recreation/hiking/stateforesttrails/index.htm>. Other sources for hiking trails were listed in our President's message (pg 1).



State Forest Trails and The State Forest they are located in

Trail	<> miles	State Forest	Trail	<> miles	State Forest
Baker	141	Clear Creek	Black Forest	42	Tiadaghton
Bucktail Path	34	Elk	Chuck Keiper	53	Sproul
Donut Hole	90	Sproul	Golden Eagle	9	Tiadaghton
John P. Saylor	18	Gallitzin	Lost Turkey	26	Gallitzin
Loyalsock	59	Loyalsock	Midstate	319	Buchanan, Rothrock, Bald Eagle, Tiadaghton, & Tioga
Old Loggers Path	27	Loyalsock	Pinchot	23	Lackawanna
Quehanna	75	Moshannon & Elk	Rocky Knob	4	Michaux
Susquehannock	85	Susquehannock	Thunder Swamp	45	Delaware
Tuscarora	110	Buchanan & Tuscarora	West Rim	30	Tioga



Appalachian Trail Museum to Celebrate First Anniversary

GARDNERS, PA. – Hundreds of volunteers and other supporters who have made the Appalachian Trail Museum a success during its first year of being open will gather at the museum June 17-19 to celebrate.

“We have a lot to celebrate,” said Larry Luxenberg, president of the Appalachian Trail Museum Society, and founder of the museum. “Volunteers have spent countless hours getting the museum building and grounds ready for another season. Our first year exceeded all expectations as the museum attracted more than 8,000 visitors from 47 states and 18 other countries. It was open from June to September last year, and we are very pleased that it has become one of the top attractions in Cumberland County. We also are really excited about opening for our second season.”

Luxenberg added that the museum, a 501(C)3 nonprofit organization, is 100% volunteer funded and operated, and that, as soon as a \$50,000 challenge grant is matched, work will begin on the museum’s second phase. In the first phase, the museum showcases and honors the legendary hikers who made the idea for a footpath from Maine to Georgia a reality. The trail today is 2,181 miles long and crosses 14 states.

Among the trail pioneers honored with exhibits are Benton MacKaye who is credited with conceptualizing the Appalachian Trail, and Myron Avery who credited with spearheading construction of the trail that was completed in 1937. One of the hiker shelters built by York native Earl Shaffer is the museum's first feature exhibit. In 1948, Shaffer was the first person to hike the trail end to end. Other thru-hikers who are featured are Gene Espy who, in 1951, became the second person to thru-hike the trail; Grandma Gatewood, who, in 1955 at the age of 67, became the first solo woman thru-hiker and later became the first person to hike the trail more than once; and Ed Garvey of Falls Church, Virginia, who popularized long distance backpacking in the 1970s.



Scott Wyatt (left) and Chuck Wood (right) work with other volunteers to erect a new Appalachian Trail midpoint sign. The sign, made by Wood, is located two miles south of the museum in Pine Grove Furnace State Park near Carlisle and Gettysburg, Pa.

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.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Paula Uhrin :: 283 Ridgeview Drive, Alburtis Pa. 18011

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

