

Fall 2012



THE HAPPY HIKER

The Official Newsletter of the Allentown Hiking Club

MEMBER OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY AND THE KEYSTONE TRAILS ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Appalachian Trail is Celebrating its 75th Birthday What are you bringing to the party?

The year 2012 marks the 75 year anniversary of the completion of the Appalachian Trail. The AT means many different things to different people. For some it is place for recreation, to find some solitude, or to prove to yourself and the world that you can complete a challenge, or maybe to teach yourself that the journey is more important than the final destination.

To me, the Appalachian Trail is a monument to volunteers of all kinds. It shows the world that people working together toward a common goal can accomplish great things where the sum is much greater than the individual parts. When you stop to consider the thousands of people who have volunteered countless hours over the years to build maintain and rebuild this footpath, you have to be in awe of what has been accomplished by the power of volunteering. I say far more impressive than the Pyramids or the Great Wall of China because the Appalachian Trail was built by people freely giving of their time for the greater good. Many of these volunteers will never see the entire trail or meet most of the other trail volunteers, but they understand the importance of doing their part. If you have ever helped on an AT work trip then you too are a part of the trail and it has become part of you.

So in this quarter's president's message I want to salute all the volunteers of the Allentown Hiking Club who have done so much over the club's history. Our members have not just worked on the AT, but many other trail projects on area trails and also in the general operation of our club in committees, officer positions and leading hikes and outings. Without your volunteer time there would be no Allentown Hiking Club. Too often thank you goes unsaid so let me be sure to say it here: Thank You to everyone who have volunteered in any way to make the AHC the great organization that it is.

I am a firm believer that it is important to do your part in supporting any recreational activity that you enjoy. You always get back more than you give. I know that my life has been richly enhanced by the time I have spent volunteering for the AHC, as well as my other hobbies volunteering at music festivals and community radio, just to name a few. So I ask you, what are you bringing to the party? I challenge every AHC member to do something to give back to the hobby that has given so much to them. Consider leading a hike, helping on a trail project or taking on a club responsibility or office. The best present you can give to the AT on its 75th birthday is some of your time giving something back to hiking.

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

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Deadlines for the Winter 2012 Newsletter & Schedule

Happy Hiker Newsletter Wednesday November 28, 2012

Activity Schedule Wednesday, December 5, 2012

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 Hiking 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:

October 3rd Barbara Malt from the Lehigh Valley Audubon Society will give a presentation on birds of the Lehigh Valley.

November 7th Charlie Root, EPA Manager for the Palmerton Superfund site, will speak on the restoration project on the Blue Mountain east of Lehigh Gap.

December 5th Annual Christmas Holiday Party, business meeting and scheduling night for January, February and March activities for the Winter Happy Hiker.

Welcome to Our New Members! - Fall 2012

Jane Albright – Allentown, PA

William McDermott – Staten Island, NY

Dirk Schoup – Northampton, PA

William Antrim – Whitehall, PA

Alyssa Schoup – Northampton, PA

Tyler Schoup – Northampton, PA

Chris Schoup – Northampton, PA

KTA Hosts 2012 Fall Meeting & Hiking Weekend in Clearfield, Clearfield County, PA

KTA will be headed to the heart of Pennsylvania in Clearfield this year for our Fall Hiking Weekend, from October 12-14, 2012. With a base camp at the Comfort Inn of Clearfield, volunteer hike leaders from the Quehanna Area Trails Club will guide both new and experienced hikers through the best trails in the area. Clearfield County is close to the center of PA, and is brimming with beautiful scenery, bustling and historic towns, and lots of things to do! A wide variety of guided hikes will be offered on and around the scenic Quehanna Trail during the three-day weekend. In your free time, you and your family can check out Clearfield's Fall Festival, the Clearfield County Conservation District's "Dam Darkness" nighttime hike, the new Clearfield County "Geotrail" (for geocachers), nearby Lincoln Caverns, Grice Museum for the car enthusiasts, take a tour at Starr Hill Winery, or spend some time fishing or boating at Curwensville Lake! For more information check the KTA website at kta-hike.org.

“When you have worn out your shoes, the strength of the shoe leather has passed into the fiber of your body. I measure your health by the number of shoes and hats and clothes you have worn out.”

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson



The Adventures of Mary Ann and Janet on the MidState Trail Part III

By Janet Goloub

After our slightly interrupted night with the search and rescue, we slept about 3 hours. In the morning, using the guidebook, we got to the creek we needed the day before. Where I'd gone the wrong way at the fork, there was no blaze, but the book said go to the right, and eventually some blazes showed up. We continued on past the creek, had a nice lie-down in a grassy area, continued climbing up and down in woods and found a good campsite. We weren't near a water source, but were near a road with a few houses on it. A man was sitting outside one, and we asked if we could get water there. He said sure, and brought us water and brownies his mother down the road had made, and we chatted with him quite awhile. I had to sleep under the stars again (treetops, in the woods) because my tent stakes were lost in the previous night's activities. I'd brought my bigger tent, though, making dressing in the morning much easier. If I could have been in it.

No rain this time. The next morning, we reviewed the day to see what we needed to know about water. A creek was not far ahead, but then nothing certain for 14 miles. Uh oh. It seemed to me a repeat of the day before. Mary Ann (MA) was very tired from the preceding day, the rocks and midnight disturbance doing her in. I wasn't looking forward to the repeat, not looking forward to having to go on ahead of her, etc. We were near a road, and if we thought we'd not get to the far water source, starting out tired that morning, this was where we should get off the trail. We decided to do that, and if there was any question about whether we should continue to hike, in no time at all I stumbled on a rock and twisted my foot nearly under itself, eliminating any chance of going forward. My foot wasn't happy about walking out, but nothing seemed broken or especially strained.

The guidebook for this trail was developed in the '70s by a Penn State U. professor; at the time there was a push to metrify the U.S., and this fellow put all the distances in kilometers. It made for much confusion on our hikes, partly because neither of us was very good at converting, and partly because MA kept saying miles, quite often when the figure was kilometers. That happened with the 14 miles above; it actually was 14 k, which is less than 10 miles. Still, after stumbling on the rock it was all I could do to go the 1½ miles to a restaurant on the highway, where we'd get something to eat and then thumb a ride to the car. Which we did, except that in the restaurant a man came up to MA and asked if she recognized him. She did - he'd shuttled her and grandson to their car in June! Could he help us now? And we had our ride. Isn't that something?

It took several weeks for my foot to get back to normal, and our next attempt was in early October. I wasn't thrilled to backpack in such short days, but it was only for a weekend, and the forecast was pleasant - after the 1st day. I had a PA A.T. Committee meeting at the Lehigh Gap Nature Center in the morning and drove for 3 1/2 hours in pouring rain. We met again in Williamsburg, as the rain stopped. We slept in our cars that night in the parking lot, one of us driving down to where we got off the trail in August. Going up this very minor road, we came on a woman walking along, stopped, and asked her if she knew of any place we could park our car for 3 days. At her place, she said, at the end of the road, and were we the two women whom her son had given water to in the summer? She knew all about us.

It was early enough for us to hike quite a ways that day, care-ful-ly walking over those rocks, coming to the creek soon, and only taking in its beauty, since we had full water bottles. It turned out to be a pleasant ascent following the creek that took us to a woods road, and that's pretty much what we walked on the rest of the day. The spring mentioned in the book didn't come and didn't come, but we found a nice campsite off the trail in woods. It had been a nice day - except that we'd hoped to get to the water source, and were a little afraid we'd missed it; while the next one wasn't any 10 miles away, it was far enough.

MA was up early the next morning, as usual, and when I got onto the trail, she was waiting for me at the spring, about .1 mile along. Well, good, and we filled up the bottles. Another beautiful fall day, we went along fine, getting water from a spring that wasn't easy to get to but had water in it; I filled our bottles and we continued on, the next water source described very iffy. MA was getting tired after some miles; again, the terrain was easy and the weather fine. We had a lie-down just before a turn-off to where the iffy spring would be. We needed the spring for the next morning, both having water, although MA was getting low. After the experience in August, I filled both liters every time we had the chance.

We tried to find the spring, going a mile down a woods road, then going to the trail, past a turn-off and up a hill quite a way before giving up, so back to the trail. The book seems to be detailed, but wasn't a help in this case. We passed a puddle with fairly dirty water in it, and I filled my small bottle with water from it - never again will I go past a water source unless both liters are full. At least not on the MST.

It was getting to the time when MA likes to stop, and we were on a woods road that contoured the mountain. To the right, straight up; to the left, straight down. I pushed us on another mile just to shorten the next day, since we didn't cover the distance we'd wanted to that day. The road widened enough for 2 vehicles to pass each other, and since we hadn't met a soul all day - this is not a much traveled trail - we set up camp on the trail. It was one of the nicest campsites I've ever had.

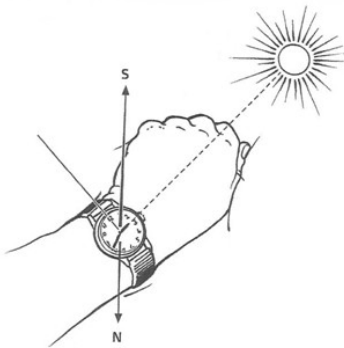
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Mid State Trail
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A very pleasant evening, we kind of reveled in how nice the day had been – except for the pain of looking for that iffy spring – so different from our previous attempts. The next day was going to be harder, a stretch described in the books as “rocks galore,” and a steep climb up right at the beginning. But the climb was very short, the rocks galore just that – no climbing except over endless rocks. Otherwise we were at the top of the ridge in another beautiful fall day, the section ending with about 5 miles of road walking down Tussey Mt. Rd, through farmland, and into Williamsburg. MA longed for a ride, walking on the road hard on her feet, and naturally none came. We also lost the trail in town, but someone on a porch told us where the parking lot was – it seemed an appropriate ending to our hikes full of misadventure.

We drove back to the other car. The man who gave us water and one of his mom’s brownies in August came out when he saw us leaving, and we chatted with him a bit. We couldn’t see his mom; she was working. And Mary Ann finally finished the MidState Trail section we first planned to do in May, only 4 attempts for her and 3 for me. She has continued it on her own since, and hopes to finish it this year. The End.



How to Turn a Watch into a Compass

Let's assume that you are lost in the wilderness, but you have a watch that still works. You can easily find the cardinal points by pointing the hour hand at the sun. Then form an imaginary line directly through the center of the "wedge" that is created between the hour hand and 12:00 o'clock. This is your south-north line.

The height of the sun in the sky and the time of day will then show you which end of the line is north and which is south, remembering that the sun sets in the west and rises in the east. Try this at home first!

Bear Grylls, survivalist and author

Appalachian Trail Conservancy Volunteer Leadership Meeting August 10-12, 2012

by Paula Uhrin

The 2012 meeting of Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) volunteers kicked off on Friday afternoon at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. The Allentown Hiking Club was represented by Chris Jackson, Paula Uhrin and Barb Wiemann, who attended as a member of the ATC Stewardship Council. For the first time in ten years it was an opportunity to gather together representatives from each of the 31 clubs that maintain the Appalachian Trail and allow for ideas, frustrations, and solutions to be shared among the clubs as well as with the ATC and National Park Service.

As a relative newcomer to the AT and its supporting clubs, I was impressed not only by the number of people involved in AT maintenance but also the amount of energy that each person and club brought to the table. It seems that hiking the trails brings with it a passion to see to it that the footpaths are well maintained for both current and future hikers. Everyone was eager to better understand how they and their club could more effectively interact with the ATC’s Board of Directors, Stewardship Council, and Regional Partnership Committees to build and maintain a robust trail.

One topic that was near and dear to many attendees’ hearts was building and sustaining their clubs as well as the leadership positions within those clubs. Guest speakers Andrea Taylor and Scott Martin from the Temple University Intergenerational Center provided an overview of what motivates people of different generations to participate in volunteer activities like our AT maintaining clubs. Amongst attendees it was a shared frustration that the younger generations are not sufficiently represented and therefore significant opportunities are being missed from both the club and participant perspectives. With the formative years being defined as ages 16-23, it’s critical to engage people at that point in time when their values are being shaped and are likely to be carried with them for life. And if that can be leveraged into continued support for projects and teams like ours ... all the better!

Everyone brainstormed to take the generational drivers and turn them into creative actions that can be put to use at the club level. One key take-away was to try new and different ideas targeted at the audience you are trying to attract, realizing that if the current methods aren’t getting the desired results, then just doing more of them will only make a marginal impact, at best. Fresh ideas are needed to attract new members and new, sustaining energy to the clubs. Additional break-out sessions included the topics of club development, community and youth engagement, risk management and trail safety, and trail project planning. The AHC will continue to incorporate what was learned into a path forward to allow us to grow and flourish, not only as a successful volunteer organization, but also as a thriving community resource.





Indian Pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*) also known as ghost flower or corpse plant.

Indian Pipes

Indian pipes are non-photosynthetic flowering plants. They are devoid of green chlorophyll and are mostly white although some have black flecks or pale pink coloration with rare variants having a deep red color. Rather than obtaining their energy from the sun as do green plants, Indian pipes are parasitic on fungi associated with tree roots. Generally considered scarce or rare in occurrence, they are found in dark, shady environments such as the understory of dense forests. They are confined to temperate regions of North and South America and Asia. They are in the family, Ericaceae which includes blueberries, cranberries, heath, rhododendron and azaleas. Also known as ghost flower or corpse plants, their flesh oozes a clear gelatinous substance when cut and their flesh turns black when picked or wounded. Indians used it as an eye lotion as well as a cure for cold and fevers. Early American settlers used it to treat spasms, fainting spells and nervous conditions. Thus it has earned the name eyebright, convulsionweed and fitroot. The plants reach a height of 4-12 inches with a single half-inch, bell-shaped flower that blooms from early summer to early autumn. Pollination may occur by bumblebees attracted to the flower's sweet nectar although generally white flowers are attractive to night-flying moths.

"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks."

-- John Muir

"Me thinks that the moment my legs begin to move, my thoughts begin to flow."

-- Henry David Thoreau

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

NAME(S):

ADDRESS:

CITY:

STATE:

ZIP: —

PHONE:

RENEWAL

NEW

EMAIL:

_____ Dues @\$10.00 / \$15.00 Household

SML MED LRG XLG

SML MED LRG

XLG

_____ Club T-shirt @ \$6.00 + \$3.50 shipping ea.

_____ Club golf shirt @ \$12.00 + \$3.50 shipping ea.

_____ Club Embroidered patch @ \$1.50 + \$.75 shipping ea.

_____ Club window decal @ \$2.50 + \$.75 shipping ea

_____ Club window cling decal @ \$2.50 + \$.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

