



Summer 2008

The Happy Hiker

The Official Newsletter of the Allentown Hiking Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Who will be there?

Do you ever think who you will be hiking with on one of our hikes? Will it be anyone you know? Will it be anyone you have hiked with before? Of course you always wonder how many people will go on this particular hike. Believe me, your hike leaders think about this also.

Recently Edna and I led a hike with 13 people and I wondered if this was a typical AHC hike. It was a familiar hike, one that had been done many times before and will probably appear on our schedule again. Let's look at these 13 people by number to protect their privacy and see the kind of folks that hike with the AHC. Number ONE was a long time member, a guy that had hiked with us before. Number TWO was a newer member, less than one year, a guy that also had hiked with us before. Number THREE was not a member, a gal, but had heard about us from the BMECC. Number FOUR



was a newer member, first year, a guy that had not hiked with us before. Number FIVE was long time member, a gal that had hiked with us before and has leadership responsibility in the club. Numbers SIX and SEVEN, gals, were not members and it was their first time hiking with us. Numbers EIGHT, NINE and TEN were new members, first time hiking with us, a family, parents and daughter. How neat is that? Numbers ELEVEN and TWELVE were friends, long time members, guys, that had hiked with us before and frequently together. Number THIRTEEN was a newer member, a gal that had not hiked with us before, but maybe with the club.

So there we have it, gender, new members, longtime members, nonmembers, friends, and even family, quite a diverse group. I hope this says that we are a welcoming hiking club that appeals to wide range of people that like to "walk, hike and climb for the enjoyment and exercise with nature loving companions."

Bernie Harris



Allentown Hiking Club

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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 Summer 2008 Newsletter & Schedule

Happy Hiker Newsletter
Activity Schedule

Wednesday, August 27, 2008
Wednesday, September 3, 2008

Please forward all Club related articles, thoughts, and items to the editor by mail or, preferably, by email or disk using MS Word. Send all hiking schedule activities to the schedule coordinator. You do not have to use the hike schedule form found on the club web site and in this newsletter, but if you choose not to, please include all the listed fields in your description of the activity.

The AHC Forum

The AHC Forum is an opportunity for email communication within our hiking club. This is an ideal method for contacting all members that use email with a COMMON club message or item of interest. If you have email please consider sending Edna Himmler, membership@allentownhikingclub.org, an email asking to be added to the AHC Forum.

A note of thanks to your club

Dear Mr. Harris,

Last summer I hiked the state of Pennsylvania in my summers' section hiking of the Appalachian Trail. One evening, after a very long day of hiking, I stayed at your shelter. There were two things that made my night's stay there so enjoyable.

First of all, the shelter was extremely well kept. The second thing was when I met the care taker for the shelter who had come to cut tree limbs and generally tidy up the sight the morning after my night's stay. He was extremely friendly and helpful. It was a rewarding experience to begin my day in such a pleasant manner. I learned a great deal about what it takes to maintain a shelter and to maintain a trail to the very scarce water source of last summer.

I have been wanting to send this e-mail for several months, but some how or another it got delayed. I apologize. So many times we hikers of the AT don't get to personally thank the many volunteers and club members that help to maintain the AT. Now is my time to do so. As I plan my summer's hike of the AT in New Jersey, New York and Connecticut my hope is that I will have another great summer of experiences on the AT.

From all who have enjoyed the AT to all who have helped to maintain it, I say "Thanks."

Sincerely,

Robert D. Luken (Bamberg Bob)

Bamberg, Germany



KATAHDIN, MAINE - MARCH 3rd > 8th 2007—Part 2

John Wargo

Recalling the last sentence from the previous Happy Hiker -- So, that was the plan...follow the Canadians.

Tuesday, March 6th The previous night proved to be the worst weather I have ever been out in. Through the night we discovered that we had shingled the tarps incorrectly and spindrift was blowing in through the flap, covering the sleeping bags and everything else with snow. The situation was turning dangerous. Around 4:30, Szu-ting's alarm went off. I turned to her and suggested we abandon plans for climbing and come up with another plan. Yaroslav and I got up and fixed the tarps, which gave temporary relief from the wind and snow. But with wind blowing over 30 mph and the outside temp of -18, the wind-chill -44, everyone was uncomfortable. After fixing the tarps I never warmed up till we retreated back to the bunkhouse. That became our quick fix plan; we would all retreat to the bunkhouse and come up with another idea. Upon reaching the bunkhouse we discovered the Canadians abandoned their plans too, the only reasonable thing to do.

Plan "B"; Wait at the bunkhouse till one of the rangers made their way to Chimney Pond and see if the Roaring Brook bunkhouse was available for the night. None of us wanted to spend another night exposed to the ferocious weather. As we waited and warmed, our gracious friends from Quebec offered us room in the bunkhouse. If we could not stay at Roaring Brook we would take up that offer. After a while one of the mountain rescue guys came by to see what was going on with us. I believe he was relieved to see we all decided to stay put, probably thinking, better they remain than having to rescue some people stuck out in the severe weather.

The ranger made it up about mid-morning. I asked about the bunkhouse at Roaring Brook and he said to meet him at the station in 10 minutes and he would let us know. We all hoped to stay in the warmth of the cabin. Meanwhile we were quickly retrieving gear from the shelter to pack the sleds for the return to Roaring Brook. I stopped by the ranger station and he said the RB bunkhouse is all yours. What a relief! We thanked our Chimney Pond hosts and made our way the 3.3 miles down in the tempest. Pulling the sleds through the drifted snow was difficult in spots but we made our way without many problems. Well at least to the Basin Pond. Crossing the frozen ponds proved to be the most dangerous part of the trip. The pond was blown clear of snow except for a narrow track where the route crossed. With the wind whipping across, it literally picked up some of the sleds and toppled over the person pulling. Pasha in the lead, not pulling a sled, helped those who were blown over. We crossed as quickly as possible and gathered in the woods on the other side to assess the damage. No one was injured, just some gear blown out of the sleds. Yaroslav somehow managed to collect the gear off of the pond. Alex had his video camera rolling during the crossing. Once across the ponds the travel became less intense as we made our way down. We arrived at the Roaring Brook bunkhouse about 3pm and were happy to have a place to stay, out of the fierce weather. The outside temperature at the bunkhouse was still -15 and only 10 inside but it felt warmer. I immediately started a fire in the wood stove. Everyone was hanging wet clothing and sleeping bags, starting stoves, drinking hot drinks. Shortly the cabin warmed up and I believe we all felt much better about our situation. Any venture outside reminded me how lucky we were to finally be inside. Although the snow seemed to stop the wind continued to howl into the night. I had a much better night's sleep than the previous one.

Wednesday March 7th The last leg of our trip, the wind was still blowing outside, but not as hard as before. The sky was crystal clear with temps still well below 0. The 12-mile sled pull from Roaring Brook to Abol Bridge was still ahead. With the cold temps and frozen snow we made the trip in less than 7 hours, stopping only briefly for food, water and to chat with some folks heading into Roaring Brook. Heading out we had great views of Katahdin in the azure blue sky. My thoughts were...I really want to try it again. By 2:15 we were back at the parking area, packing cars for the trip back to Millinocket. Once we returned to the Pamola Motel we retrieved extra gear we had left there. The decision was made, since it was early, to head south now and shorten the trip back to Pennsylvania the next day. Szu-ting and Yaroslav were traveling west back to North Conway, NH to return avalanche transceivers. Alex and Pasha in their car and Heather and I in mine headed south. We stopped about 7:30 pm in York, ME. Got a room at the Econo Lodge. Heather, Alex, Pasha, and I went for a good meal to celebrate our experience.

Thursday, March 8th An uneventful drive home, just one little problem was a communication breakdown on the way. Heather, driving with me, was supposed to change cars around the Interstate 78 and 287 interchange to make the final leg back to Philadelphia. I would continue on RT. 78 to Allentown. It worked out fine after all. We all made it safely home by Thursday evening.

I feel I have learned a lot from this trip. It made me think about what others have to endure while climbing in such severe conditions on much more difficult mountains. I am hopeful that our group will try again next year. I would like to thank everyone, Heather, Yaroslav, Alex, and Pasha, for all their contributions and especially Szu-ting for her leadership and organization of this trip as well as Bill Steinmetz for his insight, advice and support.



MARP REPORT

Anne Griffin

MARP – What is it and what does it mean to you as a member of the Allentown Hiking Club?

MARP stands for **Mid-Atlantic Regional Partnership**. The members are representatives from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the National Parks Service, and individuals from clubs such as ours that maintain sections of the Appalachian Trail. These people all have a common goal, a love of nature, and the outdoors combined with a common goal to preserve the Appalachian Trail experience and environment.

MARP meets twice a year to discuss various topics affecting the trail. We communicate through out the year with one another through group e-mail and express our interests and concerns. These may be local or trail wide. At the first monthly hiking club meeting that occurs after a MARP meeting I give a summary of what was discussed. I plan on sharing some of those topics in the future with those of you who do not make it to meetings through our newsletter.

One of the most exciting things we discussed at the March meeting was the initiative to create a shared data base. When you are discussing something as large as the AT, you have to take resources into consideration. They include funding for projects and labor. As with any project there is a certain amount of red tape involved. We are currently working our way through that with this project. What is envisioned for the very near future is a website you could access to see what is being done in your geographic area.

The goal is to assess the current status of the trail. What is the water quality of the springs on it, are the invasive species a problem, are there any encroachments on the trail, do we have any threats from local utilities or community projects? It is hoped that volunteers will participate in this objective.

By becoming a member of the hiking club you have already expressed your love of nature and the outdoors, many of you have also gotten involved in the various community projects we do as a group with the Lehigh Gap Nature Center, Delaware Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, and our own club maintenance day projects. This site would allow you to see what projects are being conducted locally.

It would allow you to participate in activities that may be of personal interest to you. I am very excited about this initiative and will keep you posted as we progress.

Please feel free to contact me as your representative on this committee with your concerns.

Scouting Jamboree

Barb Wiemann

The Allentown Hiking Club's hiking and backpacking booth at the Boy Scout JAMBO at Kutztown University on May 17 was a success. Hundreds of Scouts and their leaders stopped at the booth to learn about the hiking and backpacking equipment that club members displayed, to look at the maps and guidebooks, and talk to us about hiking. This was a good opportunity to share our hiking knowledge, and provided exposure for the club.

Thanks to Ed Ritter, Gene Scharle, Maryann Wagner, Al Wiemann, and Liz Wiemann for staffing the booth.

Pennsylvania Hiking Trails, 13th edition

The thirteenth edition of Pennsylvania Hiking Trails, KTA's comprehensive statewide guide to hiking opportunities in the Commonwealth, is "hot off the press." The 256 page book, with 29 maps and eight pages of color photographs, is available either by mail from the KTA Harrisburg office (101 N. Front St., Harrisburg, PA 17101) or at book and outdoor stores throughout the state.

Edited by Ben Cramer of State College, this edition is dedicated to the many hundreds of volunteers who collectively contribute more than 30,000 hours each year to build and maintain the state's wonderful hiking trails.

The guide divides the state into nine regions and identifies the diverse hiking opportunities in each area. There is also a chapter devoted to the state's long distance trails.

Retail price is \$16.95; the discount price for KTA members is \$14.95.



Annual Allentown Hiking Club Maintenance Hike

Barb Wiemann

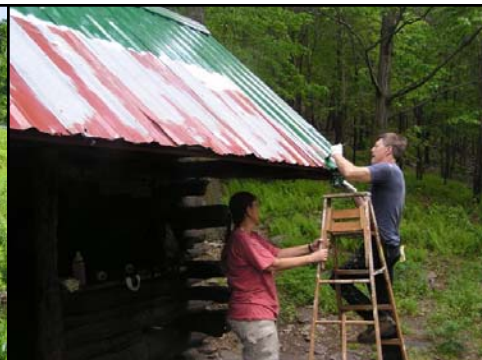
On June 1, 19 volunteers accomplished a wide variety of tasks during the club's spring maintenance hike. 83 tires, a freezer, an air conditioner, a wooden desk, and other assorted trash were removed from the Appalachian Trail and NPS corridor lands. The group also painted the roof of the Outerbridge Shelter, worked on the Fort Franklin Road parking lot, and cleaned the area around the Allentown Shelter and New Tripoli campsite. Thanks to the planning of Ed Ritter, 5 teams of volunteers accomplished a great deal.



Tires at 309 Blue Mountain Summit



Chest Freezer Recovery



Outerbridge Shelter Roof Painting

The hike was followed by the traditional post hike picnic at Leaser Lake, which was coordinated by Edna Harris.

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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SML MED LRG XLG

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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