



Spring 2011

The Happy Hiker

The Official Newsletter of the Allentown Hiking Club

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What is Old is New Again

Spring is just a few weeks away. A time when the grays of winter are painted over with nature's green brush, making the world seem fresh and new. Although I enjoy outdoor activities in the winter, spring brings on a new enthusiasm to being outside – a new beginning.

Like the rebirth of spring, my return to president of the Allentown Hiking Club after 20 years is a new beginning to an old hobby. The club is something I never lost interest in, I just became less active due to the physical complications of Lyme disease. I have been doing better the past few years and was looking forward to becoming more active again with the club this summer when I received the panicked call from Edna who was heading the nominating committee. She was frantic that no one would accept the nomination for President and elections were just a few days away. After thinking about it for a minute I accepted the nomination, because the AHC has given so much to me over the years and I could not let it falter. In actuality, being the president of the AHC is an easy job. This is because the club has always had some of the most dedicated volunteers in the committee positions and as hike leaders and they are what makes this club strong and being President easy.

When I think back to all the interesting people I have met, the lifelong friends I have made and the many places I have been to all because of the Allentown Hiking Club, I realize joining AHC was one of the best decisions I have ever made. But one thing has changed since I joined the AHC as a 20 something back in the mid '80s. Back then there were a lot of younger people active in the club in various positions. The leadership of our club has aged along with me. If the club is to remain strong, we need to encourage and nurture younger participation in our club.

So this is my call to the younger members of the club to become more involved with the operation of your club. Whether it is to be an officer, lead a hike or participate in AT monitoring or maintenance. There are great people that will help you learn what you need to know and the experience will give back to you much more than you give.

This is also my call to the older members of the club to encourage the younger people that you know that enjoy the outdoors to become involved with the club. If you feel passionate about the club and what it does to maintain our portion of the AT, and other trails then you understand the importance to have someone to pass the torch to.

So as our club celebrates its 80th anniversary here's looking forward to a great year of activities with the best organization in the Lehigh Valley!

Now if this rebirth could only make my hair grow back

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 Summer 2011 Newsletter & Schedule

Happy Hiker Newsletter
Activity Schedule

Wednesday, May 25, 2011
Wednesday, June 1, 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:

- Apr.** Alan Stangl will give a presentation on eating wild plants.
- May** Dick Saul will give a presentation on through hiking the Appalachian Trail .
- June** Scheduling night for spring hikes.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS - Winter 2011

Dina Adams	New Philadelphia, PA	Mark Mazer	Phillipsburg, NJ
Lisa Aderhold	Allentown, PA	Chung & Sung Park	Orefield, PA
Jason Bretz	Leighton, PA	David Rohlfing	Nesquehoning, PA
Bruce & Mary Dawson	Bethlehem, PA	Margaret Schell	Northampton, PA
Edward Donchez	Walnutport, PA	Sharon Southall	Lebanon, PA
George Fennell	Allentown, PA	Donald Stewart	Phillipsburg, NJ
Paul & Helga Grundmann	Whitehall, PA	Virginia Stover	Slatington, PA
Heidemarie Hafner	E. Stroudsburg, PA	Diana Valors	Orefield, PA
Al & Lexi Karp	Perkasie, PA		

Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Volunteer of the Month for December

Allentown Hiking Club volunteer (and KTA Life member) **Barbara Wiemann** was named the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's volunteer of the month for December. Barb gives a great deal of her time and talent to the Appalachian Trail, both on the Trail and as an administrator and leader. "When you can make a contribution," Barb says, "you should offer your talents in areas where they can be useful."



A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, OR HOW I, A WALKER, BECAME AN APPLALACHIAN TRAIL COMPLETER – Part 5

At the end of Part 4 I'd nearly finished hiking for 2004, but still had the 72 miles in VT connecting my 1997 section with JoAnne and the earlier in '04 with Mary Ann Nissley. Martin drove me to the start, where we saw Nick Rosato. You don't see people from your local hiking club every day in VT; he & I hiked Killington Peak in 2 short day hikes, one in rain, the other in sun. In VT another major climb is Stratton Mt. At the shelter that morning I'd heard a pack of barking dogs way off, very odd. Going up the mountain I heard them again and stopped to try figuring it out. Suddenly a great dark lump came bounding out of the brush to my right and below the trail. A moose! and the barking its huffing and puffing as it ran. A huge male with fully formed antlers ran past me parallel to the trail for about .2 mile, and perhaps 100' away from me at its closest. My second to last day in major moose country and I had this unbelievably wonderful sighting. At the end of that stretch I'd hiked 126 miles in '04, and had finished upper New England with all its especially difficult struggles.

2005's ATC biennial was at Johnson City, Tennessee. That year I had conflicting thoughts about having to hike the entire A.T. I had 1/3 of the 2,200 mile trail left, had enjoyed the annual new experience of each section, having fond memories no matter how awful some of it had been. I never completely understood what was going on, though there were obvious possibilities. I was pretty sure that once I started hiking it'd all go away – and it did.

I hiked about 40 miles at the conference. In an early start to the season, Hurricane Dennis made for some very wet hiking in the Smokies. After finishing the northern half from Newfound Gap, I continued north to finish TN and some of North Carolina. Max Patch, one of the balds in the south, tops of mountains that are kept clear of trees and provide views, has nearly a mile of very pleasant walking across it. Shuttled to Newfound Gap again, I hiked south to Fontana Dam. The Smokies' A.T. is remote, and wasn't very well maintained. I spent a night in a shelter where an ATC crew was camped, working on the trail for the week – right behind me.

Though it's required to reserve shelter space, I spent 2 of my 5 nights in shelters alone. At the Molly Ridge Shelter, my last in the Smokies and one not mentioned in my brand-new-never-used 1995 guidebook, I was a happy camper who had got a little wet in rain approaching it, but not drenched in the downpour that occurred 5 minutes after I arrived. Alone here, in one of the shelters not fenced in against bear intrusion, I was quite comfortable, did the end-of-day routine, and went to sleep. Toward sunrise I heard a noise outside, and decided to rouse myself when I heard it closer a few minutes later. A round dark thing was right at the front of the shelter; I saw it and it saw me, turned, and tore off to the right. That's the closest I got to a bear sighting along the entire A.T., calling it a bear because I don't know what else it could have been.

After hiking 183 miles in 2005, I decided in '06 to finish the south; it was too long a trip for many jaunts. I arranged for shuttlers again, as in '05. My doubts of '05 had disappeared, and I was looking forward to hiking. I hiked 21 days straight, including driving and shuttlers; it was one of my most enjoyable sections. Describing it would require a book, so let me list some highlights.

The first 5 nights, from Fontana Dam to Wesser/Nantahala Outdoor Center ("the NOC") so cold I finally broke down and bought a mat, one of the best purchases I've ever made.

Meeting Baggins, a 55-year old, 4'7" thruhiker, who said she was "having the time of [her] life!" I kept wondering how far could she get, so short.

Leaving a shelter one morning, flushing a pileated woodpecker along the approach trail to the A.T. What a treat to see one so close! Running into ridge runner Gizmo/Glenn, who had been ours for 2 seasons. He told me how well the new attitude and policy toward bears was working. No more fences; now control is by storing our food away from us and unreachable to them.

One of the best lightning shows I've ever seen at Low Gap Shelter in GA.

A shelter in GA reported in my brand-new-never-used 1994 guidebook that wasn't there, and an hour of semi-panic and indecision till I came upon its new replacement a mile further on.

The 1.5 mile detour that took me and another hiker to the Wasilik Poplar, possibly dead now, and HUGE, 9-10' diameter at chest height.

A local, spending Memorial Day weekend at a shelter (tsk tsk), finding the site of a small plane crash 20-30 years ago that he'd been looking for, for years, and taking a couple of us to see it.

The realization that years earlier climbing these mountains would have been so hard, and after hiking N. England they were verging on easy!

Later that summer, in VA, Martin & I saw the Keffer Oak, which claims to be the largest on the A.T., and which takes your breath away. I think the lower branches spread out 50' on each side. After hiking about 45 miles, Martin put me on the final stretch for an overnight over Peters Mt., and I connected to Pearisburg where I'd hiked to in 1999. My total for 2006 was nearly 250 miles.

2007 included Shenandoah National Park, first with the hiking friends in May (We were the Spring Beauties.), then with Martin in September. During the ATC biennial at Ramapo College in NJ, I did another 40 miles in New York. There's a train stop from NYC on the A.T. That's the name: Appalachian Trail. NY also claims another largest tree, the Dover Oak. Whichever wins, it's a fine tree. My roommate on my trip to Bolivia a couple years later, we realized, looked familiar because we'd both been on one of the day hikes. NY also can claim some of the worst invasions of non-native botany on the A.T., in the form of Japanese barberry and garlic mustard – acres solid with them.

I backpacked on north from the conference, getting Connecticut under my belt. CT has a steep descent I took forever getting down, carefully maneuvering my way down the rocks. It also provided about 45 minutes of invasive noise from a single vehicle going around a race-track below. Hal Wright commented about that a few years ago. He was right.

I had 180 miles to go after 2007, and intended to finish in 2008. Difficult family events drained me so that I had no desire to hike. But toward the fall, niggles started; Martin offered to shuttle me, and we went to N. Adams, MA in October. We planned to do Mt. Greylock, MA's highest mountain, in the JG method: drive to the top 2 days and I descend, 7 miles each direction. In N. Adams, we took a short hike to stretch the legs. Signs were on the trail; I read one and continued on. Martin, behind me, called me back. The other sign said the road to the top was closed till spring; big refurbishing was going on. Good thing someone reads the signs. I worked out a new itinerary, and by the end of the week I was able to do the then 12-mile hike over Greylock in a day. The hiking was fairly easy, and each day a treat of fall color.

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A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, OR HOW I, A WALKER, BECAME AN APPLALACHIAN TRAIL COMPLETER – Part 5

continued

So – I had 155 miles left for 2009. The southern half of MA was scheduled for July with Kathy and Martha joining me. I'd had a bug the week before, and couldn't hike the whole 50 miles. I was pretty grumpy about having to make an additional trip for 20 miles. A kind of trail angel in the form of grandson, Ian, made a perfect August weekend, finishing those miles.

Now northern VA and MD, planned easy hiking for the end. The plan: VA to Harper's Ferry, WV in September; MD to Harper's Ferry in October. Kathy, living in VA, hiked with me for part of that stretch. Remember 4'7" Baggins in GA? A father/son pair on this stretch had seen her the year before in NJ. I was so happy to hear about her – hooray, Baggins! In October I got Lyme disease instead of hiking. It was one nasty experience, but luckily a short bout.

November always seems brown, cold, and dreary to me, but Martin was willing to shuttle and I determined to finish, and we headed to MD mid-month. The temperatures were very mild, rain made the mornings misty, but some of the fall color was still there, the terrain was easy, and I dawdled a lot each day, drawing out the finish by hiking only 10 miles/day. The last day even became sunny, and as I got close to Harper's Ferry, the C&O Canal stretch was full of people in shirtsleeves enjoying the day. Martin, Ivan, my son, and Meg, his wife, met me in Harper's Ferry, and walked with me the last 1/2-mile, November 15, 2009. 0 miles to go.

And that's how I became an Appalachian Trail Completer.

Janet Goloub

2010 Corridor Monitoring Report

Barb Wiemann - AHC Monitor Coordinator

Beginning in the late 1970s, the National Parks Service began purchasing land and acquiring easements on land near the Appalachian Trail to protect the trail from development. The hiking clubs that maintain sections of the trail are also responsible for monitoring the land located along their section of trail.

The Allentown Hiking Club is responsible for 34 tracts of land, containing about 600 acres, with over 15¼ miles of exterior boundary lines. Club volunteers walk the boundary lines of these tracts, ensuring that there are no encroachments (such as cutting trees, erecting structures, littering, or trespassing), clearing the boundary lines, maintaining the boundary blazing, and checking the surveyors' monuments.

WHO WAS IT THAT SAID ALL YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT WITH REGARD TO YOUR BIRD FEEDERS WAS SQUIRRELS?

Bill Geiger

When I first saw these pictures I was thinking about my back yard and squirrels. However after a few minutes it dawned on me that the manner in which this bird feeder was suspended was very similar to one of the ways it is recommended that hikers keep their food away from bears at night while backpacking. I had heard that in some areas bears have been known to find the lines which suspend food in trees and tear them down, but this is something I had not heard of before. With bears like this, what is the recommended procedure for food storage?



D&L Trail Patrol Announces First Meeting, Seeks Volunteers

The Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L) is developing a volunteer Trail Patrol to provide a number of services on the 165-mile D&L Trail, which follows the canal towpath and rail corridors between Bristol, Bucks County, and Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County.

Silas Chamberlin, manager of the D&L Trail Patrol, announced that the first meeting was to be held on Saturday, March 5 from 9 am to 12 noon at the Emrick Technology Center in Hugh Moore Park, Easton. All volunteers interested in the patrol were encouraged to attend. The meeting was to include an overview of patrol duties and optional workshops on basic bike repair, interpretation, first aid, and monitoring trail conditions. A cookout-style lunch would follow the meeting.

"We have had an overwhelming response to our first call for volunteers, and I am looking forward to our first meeting," said Chamberlin. "Everyone is excited to get out on the trail and start patrolling."

Members of the trail patrol will regularly walk or bike the trail, offer information to fellow trail users, provide basic first aid items and emergency contact information when the need arises, assist with basic bike repairs, and send periodic trail condition reports to D&L staff members.

The program will be very flexible, and patrol members can choose which services they feel comfortable providing. The best candidates for the patrol are the people who already regularly walk or bike their local section of the trail and want to help improve the experience for others.

The D&L Trail Patrol will work in cooperation with the D&L Trail Tenders, a long-standing volunteer group that commits its time to maintaining the trail and its adjacent historic sites. "We can't be everywhere at once," Chamberlin says. "We need volunteers to serve as our eyes and ears on the trail and report issues back to us. When the patrol reports a maintenance issue, our Trail Tenders or a municipal partner will step in to address it."

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the patrol is encouraged to email Silas Chamberlin at Silas@delawareandlehigh.org or call 610-923-3548 (x222).

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 _____

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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

