



SUSQUEHANNOCK HIKER

On Foot in Potter County...God's Country



Winter 2013

PO Box 643 • Coudersport, PA 16915 • www.stc-hike.org • info@stc-hike.org

The purposes of the STC are to build and maintain trails, aid in the conservation of wetlands and wildlife, and promote good fellowship through the medium of hiking and nature study.

2013 Annual STC Winter Frolic



Photo by Curt Weinhold

- When: **Saturday February 16, 2013**
 Dinner: **Beginning at 6:00 PM**
 Price: **\$13.00 per person**
 Where: **The Gold Church**
Route 449, Village of Gold
9 miles south of Genesee, PA 16923
- Menu: **Chicken**
Swedish Meatballs
Mashed Potatoes
Macaroni and Cheese
Cole Slaw
Vegetable
Dinner Rolls
Dessert
- RSVP: **Saturday February 9, 2013**
 Program: **Hiking the Continental Divide Trail**
By Randy Cimino

The Susquehannock Trail Club's annual Winter Frolic will be held Saturday February 16, 2013. It's the perfect mid-winter break. Time to get out of the cabin and soak up some of the winter's sun reflecting off the snow by enjoying a weekend of adventure in northcentral Pennsylvania!

Day activities are still being planned. Stay tuned to our website for detailed information. In the evening, the club will gather at the Gold Church for dinner catered by Downey's Restaurant in Ulysses, PA.

A short STC business meeting will follow the dinner. The evening will culminate with Potter County's own *Triple Trailer*, Randy Cimino of Roulette, PA, as he relates his adventure hiking the Continental Divide Trial (CDT) in the summer of 2012.

Randy's presentation will include a slide show and tales from the CDT, which runs from Canada to Mexico along the spine of the Rocky Mountains. Randy has previously hiked the Appalachian Trail (AT) (about 2,200 miles) in the East and the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) (about 2,663 miles) on the West Coast. Completing the CDT puts him

in the elite group who have hiked all three of the nation's long-distance trails. The CDT is about 3,100 miles, and much more difficult than either the AT or the PCT, both because of the much more rugged and remote terrain—as if the AT and the PCT aren't already rugged, remote, and demanding!—and also because the trail maintenance and blazing on the CDT are often minimal if not nonexistent. It takes a real trail master to figure it out and negotiate the challenges.

Randy will also bring along some of his gear for display and demonstration. Randy spoke to us previously about his AT and PCT hikes, and I think we might have a consensus that he was perhaps our most enthusiastic, lively, and interesting speaker ever. This will be a show you won't want to miss. Randy is a young man from nearby Roulette, PA, and he has to be the premiere long-distance hiker of Potter County.

We hope to see you there! ☺

Club News

By Bec Fitzgerald

Financial Status

The Susquehannock Trail Club is in good financial shape. Income has almost kept pace with expenses. We began the last quarter of 2012 with a balance \$5,775.60 and ended the quarter with \$5,746.71—a reduction of only \$28.89 during the final three months of the year.

Donations for the entire year of 2012 totaled \$505.00. The club wishes to thank all those who have contributed. The majority of the donations are used for the never-ending task of keeping the Susquehannock Trail System clear of fallen tree branches and plainly blazed for hikers to enjoy.

Trail Maintenance & Hike Report



On the trail maintenance front, volunteers have reported a total of 160 hours performed this quarter alone. Our club has decided to put the names of all the volunteers with more than 50 hours of trail maintenance performed yearly into a drawing at the Winter Frolic in February for one of three or four prizes. We haven't decided what these prizes will be yet. *Come to the Winter Frolic and find out first hand.*

A major accomplishment by our maintenance committee and its volunteers over the past two years is the clearing of two crossover trails along the STS. You can now take a weekend to do one of short loop hikes, or spend a little more time (5-7 days) and hike a longer loop.

With the new crossover trails, the club needed to update our maps. Chuck Dillon of Pine Creek Press, the author of our trail guide, has prepared a new set of colored water-resistant maps for us. The new maps are available from the Susquehannock Trail Club for \$4.50 per set.

The maintenance committee also organized our final STC group hike of the season. Nine people gathered on October 20, 2012 to hike a loop from the Cherry Springs Fire Tower Trailhead, across the East Fork Crossover trail, and back to the fire tower.

You can read the full report of trail work and conditions from the trail maintenance committee on page 3.



New Members

We've had six new members join us during this quarter. They are:

- Jennifer Bateman..... Sharpsville, PA
- Zania Maniz Lancaster, PA
- Chuck & Mary Dundon..... Coudersport, PA
- Robert & Janice Smith Rhinebeck, NY

STS Circuit Hiker Award

Congratulations to the following for completing the STS Circuit, in turn earning their Circuit Hiker Award:

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------|------|----------------|
| 1044 | Matthew Yohn | 1047 | David Knepper |
| | Astoria, NY | | Naperville, IL |
| 1045 | Lewis Russell | 1048 | Robert Smith |
| | Ulysses, PA | | Rhinebeck, NY |
| 1046 | Wayne MacKenzie | 1049 | Janice Smith |
| | Coudersport, PA | | Rhinebeck, NY |

For information on the Circuit Hiker Award, contact the Susquehannock Trail Club at PO Box 643 Coudersport, PA 16915, or email us at info@stc-hike.org.

New Business

Several members of the club have requested that we purchase a presentation board for use at the shows the club attends. It will help us get our message out by attracting the public to our table to see pictures from our events, view scenes along the trail, or study a map of the trail system. We hope to have the new presentation boards for the upcoming spring 2013 events.

It has come to the attention of the club that the term "Susquehannock Trail" is being used by other organizations. Therefore, the club has decided to look into obtaining trademarks on "Susquehannock Trail Club" and "Susquehannock Trail System." This will not prevent people from using "Susquehannock Trail" however, it will give the club primary usage rights to the term. 5π



Next Newsletter Deadline

All articles must be received before **March 23, 2013** to be included in the next edition of the *Susquehannock Hiker*.

Email your articles to info@stc-hike.org no later than Wednesday **March 20, 2013**, or mail them to **PO Box B, Robinson, PA 15949**, by **March 13, 2013**. 5π

Trail Maintenance Report

Fourth Quarter 2012

By Bill Boyd, STC Trails Committee Chairman

October 9: Cleared brush and saplings from an old logging road to provide better access to the upper Long and Bobsled hollow trails

October 22: Kerr Trail sign placed at Patterson Park and Tower Trail sign placed at Wild Boy Road

October 26: Fork Hill Road section reblazed, and brush cleared from blazes and the STS and Donut Hole Trail signs

November 5: Portion of White Line Trail cleared and reblazed

November 9: Remainder of White Line Trail plus Splash Dam Trail cleared and reblazed

November 11: Plantation and Hribar Route trails cleared and reblazed

November 21: Empty Tank and Seed-Study trails cleared

November 22: Empty Tank Trail reblazed

December 2: Tower and Wild Boy trails cleared and reblazed

December 13: Approximately 80 yards of Splash Dam Trail re-dug and leveled

Six dates: Hammersley Trail, Cross Fork Creek area, Hungry Hollow Road, and Cherry Springs Tower trails received maintenance

Crew members at various times were Joe Allis, Chris Bell, Donna Batterson, Joe Boyd, Bill Boyd, Tom Fitzgerald, Art Huber, Jerry Johnston, Mary Lou Parker, Elaine Pike, and Bruce Robbins

Other maintenance activities:

Several ski trails that intersect with, and cross the STS on Denton Hill, are maintained every year by Joe Allis.

Boards were donated by a friend of the club and planed for future routed signs by Art Huber.

Signs were routed by Tom Fitzgerald and John Burnham. Thanks to John Burnham of the Burnham Tree Farm for demonstrating his CNC router to make a few signs.

Over 50 volunteers, 14 of whom were women, reported a total of 1,719 hours, including travel time ☺



2013 STS Maintenance Plans

Hammersley Wild Area Section—May 17-19, 2013

By Bill Boyd, STC Trails Committee Chairman

A Keystone Trails Association work crew has volunteered to help the STC tackle our most difficult section—the Hammersley Wild Area. This is the longest segment of the STS without a road crossing (10 miles). It includes a long stretch of the Hammersley Trail, the entire Elkhorn Trail, and the southern end of the Twin Sisters Trail.

It's relatively easy to tackle the two ends, but the long walk in and out of the center leaves little time for productive work on a one-day visit. The KTA volunteers need as much help from STC members as we can provide.

The KTA crew will camp at Ole Bull State Park Friday night and spend Saturday in the Hammersley Wild Area. Saturday's supper will be provided by the Susquehannock Trail Club. **We need some good cooks to volunteer for that, too!** The monthly meeting of the STC will follow

with the guests providing insight from outside our club. Please mark your calendar for that important weekend. The club has enough tools for a small crew, but you are encouraged to bring your own. Picks, standard mattocks, Pulaskis, shovels, Rich rakes, brush loppers, and saws are all needed.

Bill Boyd plans to lead a crew from the McConnell Road to the pipeline crossing. There is a thicket of briars in parts of the next stretch. Along the hillside between the main Hammersley stream crossing and Elkhorn Hollow, the trail has become nearly filled with earth and fallen leaves from 70+ years of slow erosion and annual autumn leaf falls. A few signs are being readied for trail intersections also.

Further details will be available in the next issue. ☺

A Matchless Ski Hike

By Bill Boyd

During the winter of 1977-78, when we were building our new house, the wife and I were also beginning to dabble in cross-country skiing. After learning that the contractor and his wife were also skiers, we decided to do a Saturday trek. Our plan was to ski into the headwaters of Woodcock Creek, which is in the Raymond/Gold area of Potter County, and then follow that downstream, past Camp Moxie and on out to the Seven Bridges area.

When Saturday morning arrived, we awoke to a temperature of ten below zero! After a consultation, we decided that if and when it got up to zero, we would go. We figured that would be an indication that at least it was going to warm up a little bit. And the sun was supposed to come out, so it looked promising. So when the temperature reached the zero mark and the sun was shining we headed out.

After meeting the others, we dropped off a vehicle in the Seven Bridges area, and proceeded to the Barnett farm on Route 49. Parking there, we skied out a field road to some of the Barnett's back fields (we had permission). Continuing in a southerly direction, we soon struck Woodcock Creek. Turning westerly, we followed old woods roads and trails as best we could down the valley.

As we passed the remains of the old Boy Scout camp known as Camp Moxie, we started looking for a likely spot for some lunch. We were toting some hot dogs and all the fixins', plus hot chocolate in thermos bottles (fortunately!).

We picked a sheltered area on the flat below the camp, amongst the heavy pines. Here we had an abundance of small, dry twigs with which to lay up a nice little fire. That being done, it was time to light it up.

“OK, who has the matches?”

“Whoops, I don't - Sal, how about you?”

After searching, “Nope.” (And it was I who had insisted that she quit smoking.)

Then Dave would surely have some. Another “whoops.” Well, maybe his wife. Another “nope.”

After some more almost frantic searching, we decided there were no matches among us! No lighters, not even a flint and steel. We figured by the time we rubbed sticks together long enough to start a fire, the hot dogs would be frozen.

So, to cut our losses, we sipped hot chocolate, ate cold hot-dogs, and decided that we would plan better for the next trip. By then, it was time to hit the trail. We were only about a couple of miles from the vehicle at this point, so we were in no great danger. We had a good laugh about it, shouldered the packs, put the skis on, and I'd like to say “hot-footed” it out of there. But after standing around for awhile with just cross-country ski-boots on, there were no hot feet.

Crossing the stream and climbing up to the old railroad grade, we finished our trip down to the vehicle and home. One of the best things about cross-country skiing is the amount of calories that you burn, thus the heat you generate. So we had no trouble getting warmed back up.

Good lesson: If you take nothing else with you on your woods adventures, take **matches!** Getting cold is your biggest danger. Not having a cooked hot-dog may come in there someplace, but unlike the predicament of the man in the 1908 Jack London classic, “To build a Fire,” it's not life threatening. Take the big matches, the wooden “barn-burners”, waterproofed. And look for a thick stand of evergreens. You'll always find dry fuel and shelter there. (But don't build the fire directly beneath a sagging snow-covered branch as London's protagonist did.)

Remember what the old mountain-man, Bill Williams said- “I'm afraid of only one thing—a cold wind. It'll kill you for nothing. You'll just die like a dern fool”.

Pay attention to the Boy Scouts - Be Prepared! Happy trails. ☸

Anybody got a match???



Photo from <http://myoldcountryhome.blogspot.com/>

On Track

By Mary Wetmore

It's always exciting to get out for a walk after a new covering of snow. The outdoor world is a special new adventure with several inches of new snow. On a recent such outing I was fortunate to have my ten-year-old grandson with me as his school was closed due to the snow. It's always nice to have one or more companions for walking, and especially to have children along.



Photo from <http://extension.entm.purdue.edu>

Our walk took us first over a field of last fall's harvested corn and then a walk along a winding river. Looking far up the path ahead where no man-made tracks were in evidence, I said to Ben, "Isn't it exciting that we are seeing deer tracks, turkey tracks, muskrat and raccoon tracks, but we are the first humans along this path to be leaving our bootprints in this gorgeous blanket of snow?"

I get as "turned on" as a child tramping around in the snow and examining every different kind of tracks. I can't always identify them, so sometimes when we get back to the house we go to our wildlife books to dig out more information. No doubt those who have access to the internet can find some answers there, but since I do not have that, I rely on earlier methods of identification.

My first fascination with wildlife tracks was back in the early 1940's when deer hunting with my dad and brother. Deer were not yet very plentiful in our area and there were not many hunters to stir up deer. So our favorite way of hunting, if we were blessed with a snow covering, was to track them. Usually we would come across a few tracks early in the day. Dad would try to sort out the tracks to determine the most likely buck by the size of the hoof tracks and the dewclaws tracks. The latter do not show up in smaller deer tracks. Dad said a large buck's tracks would tend to toe out somewhat, especially if running. Also a buck would leave longer drag marks between hoof

prints and dewclaws would be evident. So when we kicked out a bunch of deer, Dad would examine the tracks carefully. We could determine which direction they were going, whether walking, running, or bounding. Then he would tell me to go out about 50 or more yards to the right or left of him, and my brother would go the other way, just so we could still see Dad, but be a bit ahead of him.

Dad would follow the track, and we would all proceed slowly together. His theory was that the deer would often stop and look back to watch the tracker and be unaware of those of us out to the side where we might be able to get a closer view and a shot. This method worked well for us, and was for me, the most exciting way to hunt.

As years went by, it became less practical to try to hunt this way for several reasons: as the deer herd increased, it became more difficult to sort out a buck's tracks and stay on course with that one, with many other groups of deer intermingling and crisscrossing the original group we started with. Also with more hunters in a given area, the buck we would be tracking would more often be a target for others, rather than for the hunters in our group.

In addition to the fun of tracking deer, it is also fun to study the tracks of other wildlife. In my early life I sometimes went with my older brother on his trapline, trapping muskrats, foxes, and beavers and viewing their tracks.

Another enjoyable experience for me to learn more about wildlife tracks occurred in the mid 1960's when I volunteered to be a Cub Scout Den Mother. (Now they call them "Den Leaders.") I had seven boys in my den including my son—all about 8 or 9 years old. We lived on a farm in a rural area, and all of the boys rode the same school bus. For two years, these seven boys (plus our young daughter) got off the bus at our place every Thursday afternoon. They came running with a "hop, skip, and a jump" onto our porch where I greeted them with an open door, a big "Welcome!" and usually with a cookie or a cinnamon bun. We had our formal meeting first, and then did all sorts of outdoor activities. In winter, we played snow games, and in warmer weather it was yard games, ball games, hikes, nature hunts, etc.

One of our projects to help the boys earn a special badge was to make plaster casts of wild animal tracks. My husband helped me on this project as he was a farmer and



Photo from <http://www.ndakinnacenter.org>

more knowledgeable on wildlife tracks than I was. To make casts of tracks, it works best to try to find tracks in rather firm mud or damp ground where a good impression has been made. We mixed up plaster of Paris and filled the tracks. The boys with my husband's help identified the tracks and kept an account of their locations in their notebooks. After the plaster had set up, they would go and carefully loosen the casts if they would hold their shape, and place them on heavyweight paper plates to finish curing.

One year, we scheduled a special meeting the next day to retrieve the plaster casts. Then at the next monthly pack meeting at the school, we would display them, and the boys would get credit toward a special badge. So through this project, I learned more about wildlife tracks, as did the boys.

I am glad to know about the Mentored Youth Hunting Program now sponsored by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. It is heartening to see the pictures of the happy, successful young hunters.

Hiking with Grandpa



Photo by Curt Weinhold

To dads and moms, grandpas and grandmas, uncles and aunts, or other adult friends—there are lots of youngsters out there who would enjoy participating in hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, and other outdoor activities. If you take a kid along, I'm sure you will enjoy it as much as they will! ♪

Hiker Rescued after Cell Phone Dies

By Mike Lynch, Outdoors Writer, *Lake Placid News*, NY

SARANAC LAKE – Forest rangers rescued an Albany area man in the Seward Range Saturday night after he became lost while attempting to use his “smartphone” cell phone with GPS capability to navigate.

Bernard Hyatt, 43, of Latham, ran into problems when the GPS function of his cell phone stopped working because the batteries had weakened. Realizing he was lost, he called 911. A Franklin County 911 dispatcher was then able to text Hyatt and determine his general vicinity before Hyatt's phone's batteries died completely.

Forest rangers then checked a trailhead registry to determine where Hyatt had started his hike. Three forest rangers were able to find Hyatt by 10:20 PM on Donaldson Mountain. During the last stretch, they were able to follow the sounds of his whistle. Hyatt was returned to his vehicle by 12:45 AM Sunday.

Hyatt was attempting his final peaks to become an Adirondack 46er, a club for people that have climbed the 46 High Peaks that were originally believed to be above 4,000 feet. He did not have a map or compass.

Editor's note: (Thanks to John Eastlake for sending us this.) I never venture very far into the woods without my compass and a topo map. Years ago, I learned my lesson as part of a timber-marking crew. We had to bushwhack in for about two miles to get to the job site on one of Potter County's broad undulating ridge tops. One overcast day without any snow on the ground I lagged behind the rest of the crew, and in the belief I was following them, walked in a complete circle. It was scary to see a unique tree I had passed half an hour earlier, suddenly appear directly in front of me!

These days, I also carry a GPS unit, which is not part of a cell phone. I keep it off most of the time to save the batteries, and use it mainly to store waypoints. If I want to navigate directly to a stored waypoint, I turn on the GPS, wait until I have good satellite access, then note the azimuth and distance to my desired destination. After that, I turn off the GPS, convert the azimuth from true to magnetic, and follow the azimuth with my Suunto KB-14 compass. If the distance is long, after awhile I'll take another GPS reading and make an adjustment to my heading if I've strayed off course.

Even with good batteries, GPS units don't work very well in deep narrow hollows or under dense foliage. And sometimes the satellites are not in the right position for good readings. But the compass never runs out of power, and if you stay back from iron and steel objects, is almost always accurate enough for general navigation. ♪

Regular STC Meetings' Shared Dinner Fare

Black Bean Soup

Submitted by Alice & Gary Buchanan

- 1 medium onion diced
- ½ Red pepper diced
- ½ green pepper diced
- 2 ribs celery diced
- 1 can (15 oz) diced tomatoes
- 3 cans black beans, rinsed
- 1 or 2 cans diced green chilies
- 1 can (15 oz) chick or vegetable stock
- 2 tsp cumin

1. Saute vegetables in small amount of oil.
2. Puree one can of beans in blender with some of the stock.
3. Add to pan with vegetables.
4. Add remainder of stock.
5. Add beans, green chilies, tomatoes, and cumin
6. Simmer for 5-10 minutes, just enough to blend flavors
7. Adjust seasoning to taste
8. Garnish with shredded cheese &/or sour cream
9. Serve with cornbread



Broccoli, Rice, and Cheese Casserole with Almonds

Submitted by Mary Lou Parker & Jerry Johnston

- 1 Can cream of chicken soup
- 2 to 4 cups of cooked rice
- 1 package frozen chopped broccoli
- 1 (8 oz) gar cheese whiz
- ½ cup slivered almonds

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cook broccoli per directions.
3. Mix together all ingredients.
4. Place in greased casserole.
5. Spread buttered crumbs over top.
6. Back uncovered for 30 minutes.

Carrot Cake

Submitted by Myra & Gene Neefe

Cake

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 4 eggs | 2 c flour |
| 2 c sugar | 2 t baking power |
| 1 ½ cups oil (I use canola) | 2 t baking soda |
| 1 t salt | 3 ½ c grated carrots |
| 2 t vanilla | 1 ¾ c chopped walnuts |
| 2 t cinnamon | |

1. Preheat oven to 350.
2. Beat eggs until light shade of yellow.
3. Slowly add sugar. Beat until thick.
4. Add oil.
5. Beat for two minutes.
6. Add salt, vanilla, cinnamon, flour, baking powder, and baking soda.
7. Mix well.
8. Add carrots and walnuts.
9. Mix on low until well mixed.
10. Back for 30-35 minutes. Watch closely because it will turn from jiggly to solid very quickly. Test with a clean knife or toothpick.
11. Cool cake before icing.

Icing

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 8 oz cream cheese | 2 T water |
| ½ c butter | 5 c sugar |
| 1 t salt | Chopped Walnuts |
| 1 t vanilla | (optional) |

1. Beat cream cheese and butter together until creamy.
2. Mix in salt, vanilla, water.
3. Slowly add sugar.
4. Mix well.
5. Spread on cooled cake.
6. Sprinkle with chopped walnuts (if desired).
7. Refrigerate until 1 hour before serving.