



CHAPTER MEETINGS

Meetings are at **7:00 PM** at the Barry Township Hall on Orchard Street in Delton the second Wednesday of each month, and are open to the public. Meetings through the First Quarter of 2009 are **January 14, February 11, and March 11.**

REMINDER: For all the latest information on chapter events, especially toward the end of the quarter, please visit our web site: **www.northcountrytrail.org/cnd/index.htm**

January 17: Hike at Saugatuck Dunes State Park; Allegan County

This hike has the potential to be very memorable, with ice buildup on Lake Michigan among the gorgeous views. It also has the potential to be in the teeth of a big wind. We are going to review our weather potential at the January 14th meeting to determine if this hike goes forward. **Hikers interested in this hike should contact Mick Hawkins at webmaster.ncta-cnd@comcast.net or Larry Hawkins at hawkeyemd@cablespeed.com (or 269-945-5398) so we can get some idea of interest in participation, before the January 14 meeting.** If we determine the hike will indeed happen, we will post hike start location and pre-hike breakfast location on the web site, and let all the “pre-registrants” know by phone if needed.

January 24: Work Day to be determined

This work day will be very much flexible depending on weather. We have a variety of tasks on our list, and the entire first quarter will be in flux as we judge which tasks are doable. Keep an eye on our web site for updates.

February 14: Valentines Day Hike at Ott Preserve, Battle Creek

The February 14 hike at the Ott Preserve in Battle Creek will begin at **9:30 AM** at the entrance at the end of Arlington Road. We will meet for breakfast at **8:30 AM**, just up the road at the McDonalds on **1160 East Michigan Avenue**. We may also do some trail scouting in conjunction with this hike. **Bring your Valentine.**

To get to the Ott Preserve area, you can take I-94 to the I-194 penetrator, and follow the Columbia Avenue exit east until you get onto Michigan Avenue, and then continue east to the McDonalds. Arlington Road is about 0.2 miles farther east from the McDonalds, and you will be turning left (to the north).

February 28: Work Day Scheduled

Again, work location and schedule to be determined.

The Chief Noonday Chapter welcomes anyone to join us for any of our meetings, hikes, or workday events. For more information, please contact Larry Hawkins at hawkeyemd@cablespeed.com, or 269-945-5398 or see web site for other contacts.

March 14: Hike NCT Norris Road to Hall Lake, Barry County

The March 14 hike will begin at **9:30 AM** at our trailhead on Norris Road 0.4 miles south of Gun Lake Road. We will park our cars at the Hall Lake parking lot, 1.4 miles west of Yankee Springs Road (which turns into Norris Road), and then car pool to the beginning of the hike.

We will meet for breakfast at the **Hastings Big Boy**, at 1105 W. State Street in Hastings at **8:00 AM**. From the Big Boy, head west to the junction of M37 and M43 west of Hastings,

1. go west on M43 0.3 miles to M179 (Chief Noonday Road).
2. Follow M179 for 1.3 miles.
3. Bear left onto Gun Lake Road.
4. Go 5.9 miles to the stop sign at Yankee Springs Road.
5. Go 1.4 miles on Gun Lake Road to the Hall Lake parking area.

March 21: Work Day Scheduled

Again, work location and schedule to be determined.

Chief Noonday Hike Schedule in 2009

Our Hiking Committee of **Joe Higdon** and **Charles Krammin** has been busy setting up this lineup of hikes for 2009. To help your planning:

April 2009; Baker Sanctuary near Marshall, MI

May 2009; Fort Custer National Cemetery

June 2009, update: Albion River Trail & Whitehouse Nature Center, Calhoun County

July 2009; Moonlight hike at Otis Sanctuary, perhaps with telescopes, Barry County

August 2009; Lowell State Game Area

September 2009; Peets Road to M-179, a follow-up to Summerfest, Barry County

October 2009; Fall Color Hike in Lost Nations State Game Area

November 7, 2009; Pierce Cedar Creek Trails, Barry County

December 5, 2009; Portage Bicentennial Park Trail, Portage

NCTA Annual Conference:

Valley City, North Dakota

July 30 – August 2, 2009

Web Site Trail Log Reports

Mick Hawkins has included detailed reports, with pictures, at the TRAIL LOG page on our web site on some of our recent activities. In the last quarter he has included reports on:

- ? A report on NCTA Volunteer Awards recognizing **Ron Sootsman, Steve Hicks, Mick Hawkins, Jeff Fleming, and Steve Chapman** for achieving milestones in volunteer hours worked.
- ? A report on the October 11 workday at Kimball Pines, with the upgraded bridge installation. **Ron Sootsman**, his son **Joe Sootsman**, **Larry Hawkins, Mick Hawkins, Steve Hicks** and **Mike Wilkey** were our crew.
- ? Details of our October 18 “moonlight” hike, attended by 17 hikers. We had a great night for it, with clear skies and no wind. Unfortunately the moon did not appear until we were on our way home. Still a great night.
- ? A report of our “double dipper” November 8 hike followed by a workday at Fort Custer National Cemetery. We had 11 hikers for the Portage Bicentennial Park hike. Then **Steve Hicks, Ron Sootsman, Jeff Fleming, Larry Pio, Mike Wilkey, Mick Hawkins, and Larry Hawkins** went to Fort Custer to put the small bridge, which had washed off of one bank in the October flooding, back on the bank. When we arrived we found a tree had fallen on it. Job #2 was clearing the trail of about 15 trees felled by beavers in just a small area. **Mick** and **Jeff** then went on to do more work at Kimball Pines, after the Fort Custer work was completed.
- ? A note on Joan Young’s new blog, which can be found at this link:
<http://www.northcountrytrailnews.blogspot.com/>

More News

Our Chapter Hike on December 6 in Allegan State Game Area was not well attended due to blizzard conditions. Our intrepid hike leaders **Charles Krammin** and **Joe Higdon** were the only ones to make it, and we will have to listen to that for a while.

The Nov. 13 SMART Conference in Middleville, also promoted by the Thornapple Trail Association, was attended by **Ron and Linda Sootsman, and Mick Hawkins**. Presentations were reported to be of a very high quality.

SEGMENT SPOTLIGHT; Ott Biological Preserve, in Battle Creek

One of the jewels of our Chief Noonday Chapter is our trail through the Harvey N. Ott Biological Preserve in Emmett Township just east of Battle Creek. This 300 acre greenspace dates back to 1911, was established in 1926 as the Battle Creek College Biological Preserve, and when Battle Creek College closed, it was obtained by Albion College and named the Ott Preserve. In 1977 Calhoun County purchased the Ott Preserve with help from a DNR grant to become a nature preserve. It is the largest public park in Calhoun County.

In the fall of 2001, the NCTA, with National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Funding, helicoptered a bridge into the Ott Preserve to allow crossing the stream between the two lakes. Occasionally with help from local beavers, this stream looks more like a lake. A long boardwalk provided by the Calhoun County Road Commission reaches the bridge even during high water incidences.

For more information: http://www.calhouncrc.net/departments/parks_ott.htm

This segment of trail is 1.75 miles long, and there are other trails within the Preserve. Parking is available at both ends of the trail.

The northwest parking lot is on Jameson Street. To reach Jameson, take Emmett Street to Raymond Street, turn south on Raymond to Jameson, and follow Jameson east to the parking lot (right hand side on the end of the road).

The south parking lot is on the north end of Arlington Avenue, which is accessible from Michigan Avenue, one of the main thoroughfares on the east side of Battle Creek. **Our February 14 hike will explore the Ott Preserve.**

Chief Noonday Member 2009 Hiker Challenge

While not officially endorsed by the CND leadership, I am throwing out the gauntlet to see who in our Chapter can hike the most miles on the North Country Trail in 2009. We will publish the top ten hikers each quarter, as information is provided. At the end of the year, the hiker with the most miles might get his name on the **Chief Noonday Hiker Challenge Cup**. The rules are pretty simple so far:

- ? You must be a member of the Chief Noonday Chapter at some time during the year
- ? Only North Country Trail miles can be counted
- ? Any segment can only be counted once during the year. (For example, adopters can only count their segment one time. Sorry.)
- ? Report your segment mileage, and segment ID, to me in person, or via email to nalcoman1@aol.com with the subject **CND Hiker Challenge mileage**, or by mail to: 2409 Woody Noll; Portage, MI 49002

As a bonus, if you hike more than 200 miles on the North Country Trail, **lifetime total**, you will be listed on the NCTA web site as a "Hiker of Note".


The question: do we have 10 hikers that can out-hike **Charles Krammin**?

Report Your Volunteer Hours

PLEASE report your volunteer hours on a quarterly basis, either by mail, or by filling out the form on the NCTA web site. <http://www.northcountrytrail.org> Go to the Volunteers heading, and click on Report Hours. Or, you can report them to Larry Hawkins, and he can submit a group report to headquarters.

Receive the Chief Noonday Chapter newsletter via email. Contact Larry Pio at nalcoman1@aol.com. Please share your newsletter with a friend, and tell someone about Chief Noonday and the NCT.

Joining the North Country Trail Association Interested in joining the North Country Trail Association? The easiest way is to go to the SUPPORT NCTA link, JOIN / RENEW section, and do it online. Memberships start at \$10 for students, and are \$46 for a regular membership. Your support is appreciated. With a sponsored membership, new members can join at half price. Invite your friends!

\$23 Introductory Rate for your Friends!	
<p>Our Sponsored Membership program allows current members to sign up new members at an introductory rate of \$23.</p> <p>To qualify, Sponsored Members must be new to NCTA, or not have been members for at least two years. The \$23 rate is good only for the first year of membership. To use the program, just fill in your name in the "Sponsored by:" box. Then, give the form to your friend to finish.</p>	<p>Name(s) of New Member(s):</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>City, State Zip:</p> <p>Phone: E-mail:</p> <p>I'd like to volunteer the following skills (optional):</p> <p>Please choose your Chapter affiliation (check one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member of a specific chapter: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member of my closest local chapter (if one exists)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member-at-Large (not affiliated with any Chapter)</p>
<p>Sponsored by: _____</p>	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p>Welcome New Members!</p> <p>To begin your membership, please complete this form and send it with your \$23 payment to:</p> <p>North Country Trail Association • 229 East Main Street • Lowell, Michigan 49331</p> </div> </div>	

Thank you to those businesses that support our chapter:

Lee's Sports & Sportswear
 311 W. Kilgore
 Kalamazoo
 (269) 381-7700
www.leesports.com

Sandhill Marketing Communications
 1715 Glendale Blvd.
 Kalamazoo
 (269) 382-2561
 Designs CND brochures and more.

North Country Trail Association
Chief Noonday Newsletter
2409 Woody Noll
Portage, MI 49002

Mid-Lakes Mini Storage
 11235 S. Wall Lake Rd., Delton
 269-623-5005
 Provides storage for Chief Noonday Tool Trailer.

Yankee Springs Outdoor Center
 Long Lake and Chief Noonday Outdoor Centers
 269-795-3856 Provide use of lodge for some Chapter winter hikes.

Katies & Christy's Midlakes Screen-Printing,
 Monogramming Active Wear and Tanning Salon
 Get Chief Noonday Logo on your clothing. Delton, MI.