



Grand Traverse Hiking Club

A Chapter of the North Country Trail Association

Volume No.16 Issue 4 December 2009

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Notes from the Board *John Heiam*

The new reroute is finished! You can read Arlen's "Trail Tread Ways" later in this newsletter, but the short version is that you can now hike from Hodenpyl Dam all the way to Harvey Bridge, on Number 19 Road, and be on new trail the whole way. The trail crew did an incredible job this fall working through the nice weather in September and then the constant rain of October and November. To build this trail, they had to haul over a ton of supplies for miles on steep slippery hills covered in clay. Be sure to hike this new section of trail starting at M-37 and Number 12 Road (driving south on M-37, #12 is the last road on the left before the Manistee River). This is a gorgeous five mile stretch of trail. It has beautiful overlooks of the Manistee River, and deep ravines with small creeks and waterfalls. After you see this trail, send Arlen a note of thanks so he can pass it on to the trail crew.

This is our last newsletter of 2009, and it marks the end of the terms of our current board members. Many will continue, but some will step down. Please think about joining the board and lending a hand in guiding this organization. One position we need to fill is Program Chairperson. Jody Bennett is stepping down after two years of great service. If you think about the programs we have had over these two years, I think you will agree that she has done a wonderful job. She has all the programs planned through May, and has some leads for next fall. So if you take this position you will have a real running start. Contact me

or Jody if you want to find out more about the job and what it entails.

Programs & Meetings

Meeting Location

**Boardman River Nature Center
1450 Cass Road (1.5 miles south of
South Airport)
Traverse City, MI**



Sunday, December 13, 2009
Holiday season outdoor activity (morning)

Our meeting will be replaced by a hike or X-C ski outing at the Sand Lakes Quiet Area. The activity will be determined by local snow conditions. Contact John Heiam or Lois Goldstein after December 9 for exact details. lgoldstein@charter.net or (231) 938-9655.

Note: In order to accommodate our speaker, the program in January will not occur on a Tuesday night, but rather on Sunday. Mark your calendar now!

Sunday, January 17, 2010 at 7 PM
Boardman River Nature Center
Far, Fast, & Light: 23,000 Miles of Backpacking in America's Wild Lands
By Andrew Skurka

The presentation* will encompass many of Andrew's hikes and outdoor experiences starting with his early trips to the mountains of New Hampshire and Maine, moving on to his first steps on the Appalachian Trail, an exhilarating trek around the West, and his adventures in exotic destinations like Alaska and Iceland. With a mix of photos and video clips, he'll share his most entertaining, inspiring, and heart-warming stories, and will highlight what he believes are the most important life lessons that he's learned through them. The presentation will last about 45 minutes and it will be followed by a 15-minute Q&A session. Some of his lightweight gear will be on display, though it won't be a primary focus of the presentation.

Andrew snowshoed 1,400 miles through both peninsulas of Michigan, northern Wisconsin, and northern Minnesota in winter 2005 via the North Country Trail as part of his Sea-to-Sea Route hike.

*A \$5.00 admission charge will help defray Andrew's travel expenses.

Note: On January 18, 2005 Andy entered our segment of trail on his cross country hike. Ed Morse and John Heiam met him in Mesick, brought him to the post office to make his food pickup, and had lunch with him at a local restaurant. Ed walked with him for a few hours and then brought him back to the motel in Mesick. Andy averaged 20 miles a day on snowshoes through Michigan! He spent the night in the Mushroom Cap Motel (no charge) and ate for free while he was in town – courtesy of the people in Mesick. Here is a photo John took of Andy at our M-37 trailhead.



Tuesday, February 16, 2010 at 7 PM
Boardman River Nature Center
The 45th Parallel Here and There
By Nancy Fleming

Nancy and her husband Bill Schafer spent two weeks hiking in the Transylvanian Mountains of Romania with Wilderness Travel. Come and hear about their adventures.

Tuesday, March 16, 2010 at 7 PM
Boardman River Nature Center
Backpacking in Glacier National Park
By Bert Courson

Six audacious explorers spent the last week of July 2009 exploring the backcountry of Glacier National Park. Bears, moose, marmots, and even a few Hominids crossed their paths as they experienced of this mountainous area.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at 7 PM
Boardman River Nature Center
Cycling in Bhutan
By Roger Raehl

Details will be posted in our next newsletter.

Tuesday, May 18, 2010
Boardman River Nature Center
Cycling in Viet Nam
By Henry Eckhardt

After watching Henry's presentation you will learn that although we lost the war, we won the peace. Viet Nam is an independent capitalist country, and they like Americans!

Club Outings



Note: You do not have to be a member of the Hiking Club to attend one of our outings. However, if you enjoy the trips and continue to participate in a number of our outings, we would hope that you would support the organization by becoming a member.

Sunday, December 13 (morning)
Holiday season outdoor activity
Leaders: John Heiam and Lois Goldstein

We will hike or X-C ski at the Sand Lakes Quiet Area. The activity will be determined by local snow conditions. If the snowcover is adequate, we will ski. If not, we will snowshoe or hike. We will probably go out for lunch afterwards. Contact John Heiam or Lois Goldstein after December 9 for exact details.
lgoldstein@charter.net or (231) 938-9655.

Saturday, December 26 (morning)
X-C Ski at Muncie Lakes

Leaders: John Heiam and Lois Goldstein

Avoid the crowded stores on December 26, and come use something you got for Christmas! We will ski the big loop and then go out for lunch. If the snow is isn't skiable, we will snowshoe or hike. Contact John Heiam or Lois Goldstein after December 22 for exact details. lgoldstein@charter.net or (231) 938-9655.

Saturday, January 23, 2010 (morning and afternoon - do one or both)
Snowshoe on the Bayview Trail in SBDNL
Leaders: Nancy Fleming and Bill Schafer

Bill and Nancy will lead a snowshoe hike on the Bayview Trail, leaving at 10 AM from The Homestead's main parking lot by the Village. This trip is 4-5 miles, or about 2-3 hours.

The morning trip will be combined with lunch in Glen Arbor (Art's? Boone Docks?) and then an afternoon snowshoe trip at Pyramid Point (the meadow loop) or if the snow is really good, an afternoon XC ski trip at Alligator Hill near Glen Arbor. Call to confirm and to find out our plans for the afternoon. Our contact number at The Homestead is 231-334-6300. or cell phone: 630-729-4662,

Saturday, February 13, 2010 (morning)
Snowshoe along the North Branch of the Boardman River
Leaders: John Heiam & Lois Goldstein

This is a beautiful section of the North Country Trail, located not far from the intersection of Supply Road and Williamsburg Road. The trail follows the river very closely and there is shelter from the cold winter winds. We have done this hike when it was -17 F and we were very comfortable! We will hike for about three hours and then go out for lunch. Contact us after February 10 for exact meeting time and location. E-mail lgoldstein@charter.net or phone 231-938-9655

Other Outings Possibilities

Hiking Buddies

Lois Goldstein & John Heiam

Several people have voiced an interest in leading specific trips when the snow and weather conditions are appropriate. For example, Dick Naperala wants to lead a snowshoe hike on the new section of trail along the Manistee River just east of M-37, but he needs to figure out just where the county will be plowing so he can choose an appropriate trailhead. John Heiam and Jocelyn Trepte want to lead a snowshoe hike to the Valley of the Giants right after a big snowfall so they can get some good photos.

To find out about these impromptu outings you must get your email address onto the "Hiking Buddies" list maintained by Lois Goldstein. Here is how it works. Lois has a group of email addresses in her address book entitled "Hiking Buddies", and she shares it with everyone on the list. Periodically people send out notes asking if anyone would like to join them on an impromptu outing in the area. These outings occur both on weekends and weekdays. Last season about thirty requests were sent out, and there were frequently groups of two to ten people on these outings. For this to work, you need an email address and you need to check your emails at least once a day, because these notices often go out with very little lead time. For example, at 6 PM Friday evening we might send out a notice about a Saturday morning hike. We have over eighty people on the list so it is impractical to call specific individuals if they do not have email.

If your name is not on the list, you can add it by emailing Lois at lgoldstein@charter.net and letting her know you want to be on the Hiking Buddies list. You do not have to be a club member to be included, but since this is a service we run for the club, we hope you would

support our efforts and join. See the last page of this newsletter for an application.

Places to Hike

Do you want to expand your horizons? There are many wonderful places to hike in the Grand Traverse Region that you haven't tried. Check out some of these online resources for new places to hike close to home:

Sleeping Bear Dunes has an excellent web site that has maps of all their hiking trails.

<http://www.nps.gov/slbe/planyourvisit/trails.htm>

The Leelanau Conservancy has a web site that lists all their trails.

<http://www.theconservancy.com/naturalareaspreserves.html>

The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy has a web site that lists their trails.

<http://www.gtrlc.org/preserves/preservemap.php>

The Grand Traverse Conservation District has a web site that lists all their trails.

<http://www.gtcd.org/trailmaps/>

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has a web site that lists their trails:

http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10365_16839_50522---,00.html

These links provide maps and descriptions for 75 trails in our area, and that is not including the state DNR site which lists trails all over the state.

There are also many nature and outdoor events scheduled at the Boardman River Nature Center:

1450 Cass Road
Traverse City, MI 49684
231.941.0960

<http://www.NaturesCalling.org/>

Check out the winter calendar at

<http://www.gtcd.org/calendar/>

* Suggested donation \$5 for all programs



Log on for the latest GTHC

Newsletter!! Visit our GTHC Web Page@

<http://www.northcountrytrail.org/gtr>

Trail Tread Ways
Arlen Matson



No. 12/15 To No. 19 Road Reroute

Phase 3 of last year's Hodenpyl - NCT Reroute was completed on November 2. This new section of the NCT measures 4.7 miles from the corner of No.12 and 15 roads to its terminal point where it reconnects to the NCT at No.19 Road. There is parking at No.12/15 Road, and another lot adjacent to Harvey Bridge at No.19 Road.

This reroute was built from August to mid-November by our Trail Crew of 32 workers. It is our most rugged section of hiking trail and involves eleven stream crossings, and numerous steep ravines. Bridges are in place, water bars built, steps installed, trees blazed the familiar blue, and signage erected where necessary.

Never was there a section of trail built that involved so much benching into clay, while working through an unusually wet October. Heavy were our shoes as they became laden with Manistee River clay, but the views of the river, and the sound of rushing creeks in the ravines gave us an inspiring contact with a truly wilderness setting. On two occasions we brought an orange plastic sled from home to help carry decking to the bridge sites, while we used Ed's wagon to do the same. The skillful use of 4x6's, 2x4's, 2x6's, 6x6's, nails, spikes,

drills, Pulaskis, McCleods, bowsaws, loppers, levels, hammers, flagging, and miles of walking classify all of this crew as "Pros".

We secured two grants from the NCTA totaling \$1306 to pay for some of the materials. The more we worked, the more needs we discovered, so another grant from the NPS for \$286 was secured. The ravines and streams challenged us again for more funding. As we began to approach rifle deer hunting season, a 16-foot bridge needed to be built and adjacent 17 steps up the Big Ravine. Deena Barshney and Sara Cockrell came to the rescue and both wrote checks to cover the need of an additional \$850. So, when you are out hiking the new NCT, about a mile from Harvey Bridge, you will discover two very special places. We call them Deena's Bridge and Sara's Steps, a most surprising legacy indeed; our crew and club are grateful.

An outstanding feature of this reroute is that there are at least 12 scenic vistas along the Manistee River. At the eastern end of this section of trail, where the new trail joins the existing NCT, coming from Wheeler Creek, there is a fantastic overlook which some of us believe exceeds even the Highbanks Rollway site. You may wind up with muddy boots, but the hike is worth it. And hopefully the trail is wide enough so you won't be scratched by many of those thorn bushes (puckerbush) and hawthornes. True, there aren't the flowers of the Hodenpyl area, but you can try to spot the unusual blue beech trees.

On the subject of the Highbanks Rollway, the section of trail leading to it has been faithfully maintained for many years by Fred & Kathy Sabel and Larry & Donna Dodd. It has been included in their reports as a place needing restoration due to trashing and erosion. Dick Naperala, John Heiam and I will propose to the Cadillac DNR when we meet for our annual meeting that this site be given particular attention as a special place worth stabilizing and protecting.

2010 GTHC Trail Work

Our major goal for next year will be to improve the quality of the existing NCT. For the last 2 years, our trail adopters have turned in maintenance reports to Betsy Duede. These reports specify items that need particular attention. Due to the building of some 17 miles of new trail, we have neglected to keep current with adopters' reports. In 2010 we plan to upgrade and improve the trail by installing new decking to the Anderson Creek Bridge, constructing water bars at key locations, and replacing boardwalk planking where needed. We also want to make adjustments to damaged or eroded tread, re-blaze trees, and update the information kiosks. The list goes on.....

We also plan to divide our 90 miles of trail into eastern and western sectors with two individuals to act as Trail Coordinators. As we build new bridges and trail, it is obvious that we need to monitor the condition of the NCT. Our Adopters are a vital link in communicating this information to us. Through Betsy, this information is consolidated and passed on to our current trail coordinators. By having 4 trail coordinators, Dick Naperala and I will be able to spend more time on organization and administration while the Sector Trail Coordinators can monitor their respective sections of trail.

Trail Networking Expands

While measuring the new reroute south and east of the Marilla Trailhead one day, we met a couple backpacking the popular Manistee River Trail. They mentioned that there were many backpackers like them who had limited time to spend on the trail, and saw a need for loop trails. Of course the Manistee River Trail and the NCT are a long loop trail.

Heather Peyton and June Thaden also mentioned that we could make the new No. 12/15 Road to No. 19 Road a loop trail by

using some of the existing old NCT coming from Wheeler Creek. The Wheeler Creek Bridge was the first one we built and it is a solid double bridge anchored on large boulders supplied by Elmer's.

We have also been working with the community of Fife Lake. They are currently developing a trail system that will loop their village. We developed it this year as a spur trail from the NCT at Sparling Road into the village. They now have access to the NCT.

Mesick is also working on a loop trail around the village with a spur to the NCT. Grants are being procured for this purpose. We are assisting them in this project. Loop trails are an answer to any hiker who doesn't want to backtrack to the trailhead. They also make for greater accessibility in a given community. Kingsley is also in the process of developing a loop trail, and would like to have access to the NCT with a spur trail.

New Tool/Mower Storage Location

Beginning the first of November, we moved our two trailers and materials to Melcarek's Greenhouse site, on Silver Pines Road between E. Silver Lake Road and US 31. From our home on Dracka Road that's about 3 miles west. If any of you have equipment from this summer's work, we need it returned ASAP so we can take inventory. Call Arlen for further information if you have questions.

Adopt-A-Trail For New Reroute

There are now 3 new openings for anyone interested in adopting our new finished reroute. Contact Betsy.

Adopt-a-Trail Program

The GTHC Trail Adopters were hard at work again this year logging in over 390 hours of work. They maintained 23 sections on the NCT and 4 local DNR Pathways. Their main responsibility is to walk the trail in the spring and fall and keep it in good shape for hiking.

Please appreciate the time and energy these 2009 Trail Adopters (and their families and friends) expended this year to keep our area hiking trails in great shape for all of us to enjoy.

Dean & Diane Tobias
Laurie & Greg Bailey
Lee Billingsley (BSA Troop #42)
Heather Peyton
Nancy Fleming and Bill Schafer
Fred & Kathy Sabel
Larry & Donna Dodd
Bob Rudd
Peter & Natalie Melcarek
Pat Delaney
Eric Dreier
Mark Lindsay
Jody Wilder
Jerry Freels
Bill & Bonnie Mathias
Mandy & Austin Gibson
Donald Grier
Tom Mayhew
Mona Liska & June Thaden
Mike Schaeffer & Debby Page
Hannah Dietz
Jay & Darlene Warren
Dennis Hansen
Jerry Heiman
Bud Ward
Jim Heffner & Dave Hicks

Steve & Betsy Duede
Ed Morse
Richard Naperala
Rit Portuesi

If you are interested in adopting a trail section for 2010 or want to learn more about the Adopt-a-Trail program, please contact me.

Betsy Duede
231-946-4524
Pedalpushers272@cs.com

The following is a note from new trail adopter, Mark Lindsay,

Just a quick note to let all of those responsible for supporting the NCT know that when someone walks our sections of the trail, the dedication is evident. I was able to spend some time this summer hiking the trail and every section I hiked was in beautiful shape. Nimblewill Nomad made a comment to me while hiking together on June 7th this year that the trail is just marvelous here. I have been following his journal this year and he certainly speaks his mind and he would be one to listen to. He was very discouraged with the shape of some of the trail in Ohio.

It makes me very happy to be involved with an organization such as the GTHC and NCTA. Every bit of work is worth it. Thank you for all you do.

Mark Lindsay

Save a Tree



Do you realize that each mailed newsletter costs our club about \$1.00. If you are able to download your GTHC newsletter via the web, and are no longer interested in receiving this newsletter by mail, please contact June Thaden. Leave a message at 231-947-8476 or send an email to: jthaden00@yahoo.com By doing this, you will help save both a tree and money for our club. Thank you.

Join Us!!

How this works: Actually you will join the North Country Trail Association (NCTA), the organization that supports the many clubs that do the work of building and maintaining the trail. At the same time that you join the NCTA you also become affiliated with the Grand Traverse Hiking Club. Our Sponsored Membership Program allows current members to sign up new members at an introductory rate of just \$23.00. 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. The rate for continuing members is \$46.00.

1. Fill out the **New Member** form on the next page.
2. Mail it with a check to: **North Country Trail Association**, 229 E. Main St., Lowell MI 49331

For Sale

E.M.S. 3 section snowshoeing/trekking poles made by Komperdell. These aluminum poles are green with cork handles and have one set of small trekking baskets and one set of large snow baskets. With the small baskets the pair weigh 21 oz or 600 grams. \$35 contact John at johnheiam@charter.net or call 231 938-9655.

2009 Officers and Committees

President:

John Heiam Tel. (231) 938-9655
E-mail: johnheiam@charter.net

Program Chairperson

Jody Bennett Tel. (231) 932-9249
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Secretary/Membership

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Email: jthaden00@yahoo.com

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Dick Naperala Tel. (231) 223-7903
Email: napperri@yahoo.com

Advisor:

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Email: pedalpushers272@cs.com

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Rick Halbert Tel. (231) 947-8485
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Web Page:

Brian Cox Tel. (231) 883-3722
Email: tcbrian@chartermi.net

Trail Guide

June Thaden Tel. (231) 947-8476
Email: jthaden00@yahoo.com



New Member Form:

1. Fill out the form.
2. Mail it with a check to: **North Country Trail Association**, 229 E. Main St., Lowell MI

Sponsored by: John Heiam (NCTA #5951) – President Grand Traverse Hiking Club		
Name (please print)	Daytime phone (area code first):	
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Skills to Volunteer:	Email address:	



**Grand Traverse Hiking
Club**
520 Highland Park Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686

Stamp

