



# Footnotes

SPRING 2010

NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL HIKERS

[www.northcountrytrail.org/nct](http://www.northcountrytrail.org/nct)

Marquette, Michigan

## Hiking Quote -

*"There are some good things to be said about walking. Not many, but some. Walking takes longer, for example, than any other known form of locomotion except crawling. Thus it stretches time and prolongs life. Life is already too short to waste on speed. I have a friend who's always in a hurry; he never gets anywhere. Walking makes the world much bigger and thus more interesting. You have time to observe the details." ~ Edward Abbey, "Walking" (p. 205).*

## Welcome New Members -

Since January several new members have joined our chapter. Please join me in welcoming them to NCTA/NCTH. If you see them at a meeting, an activity, or on the trail, be sure to take a few moments to get to know them.

Carole & Zane Bard  
Roger & Denise Barry  
Frank & Laura Farwell  
Heidi Sweet  
John & Marilyn Weting  
Peter Zenti

## Hiking Palm Desert -

by Jan Lindstrom Wester and Carole and Zane Bard

Jan writes: Palm Desert, a hiking mecca, is one of a string of cities in the Coachella Valley, about 100 miles inland from Los Angeles. Mountains to the west draw moisture from Pacific storms, leaving the Valley only a few inches of rain a year. Native Americans and early settlers found good water in springs and natural wells. What produced the water? Earthquake fissures. One, the notorious San Andreas fault, cuts for miles along one side of the Valley.

Sharply contoured foothills and mountains, some with snowy peaks, run roughly parallel to the string of cities and golf courses. Beyond the homes and greens some undeveloped desert remains. We found

that any hiking trails that begin on the desert floor very soon involve climbing.

The three of us took such a hike one mild March day at the Living Desert, a botanical and zoological park that re-creates many deserts of the world, and offers 3 looped hiking trails. The longest trail, a loop of only 6 miles, reaches the base of 1952-ft. high Eisenhower Mountain. The highest point on the base trail is about 500 feet above the desert floor.

Guidebooks advise that one part of this trail, the "canyon leg," involves a boulder scramble. We were up for that.

Our morning hike began with an easy walk on hard-packed trail over the tan-grey desert floor. Scattered creosote bushes, brittle-bushes and cacti dotted the desert around us. A short side spur took us to an overlook, where a belt of green far in the distance revealed presence of the San Andreas Fault. At the overlook we heard faint cries and, listening, realized they were the voices of far-off coyotes singing.

At the start of the canyon leg, a sign said: Trail not patrolled. Do not hike alone. No water. It sounded like a warning, but we thought, this is just a 3-mile stretch, we're not intimidated. So our boulder climb began.

Here rounded or angular boulders one to two feet wide were jumbled together up a narrow passage, with smaller rocks jammed between them. This was four-paw hiking, and these ancient boulders had been eroded to sandpaper-like roughness. Gloves would have been welcome indeed. Here and there a patch of sand was just big enough to stand on. At times the boulder heap was several feet wide, but no blaze or cairn hinted at the best route, so one of us, usually Carole, scouted ahead. A steep mountainside on our left and a ravine on the right left no choice but to go ever upward, as we all agreed that going up was hard, but even the thought of going down was scary. And we had no idea how far the boulder field went, so we could reach the end at any time.

Granted, the view behind, when footing was secure enough to turn around, was spectacular, with more

and more desert and far hills coming into view and the buildings of the Living Desert growing ever tinier until they finally disappeared when we worked our way around a bend. We yearned for the ramada (a slat-roofed shade structure) that we knew was at the top of the loop. On our right, ahead and upward, we glimpsed a straight-edge that had to be man-made. Finally we were close enough to see it, and found that it was the edge of the roof of a modernistic home, built on a plateau on the other side of the ravine. We climbed past it and looked down to see three other houses near it. Their owners had obviously found an escape from the close-packed cities below.

After over an hour of scrambling, tired, hungry, hot, and short on water, we reached a sign announcing a fork: down to the right to a tinaja, up to the left to the ramada. Sightseeing was no longer our goal and we bore to the left, happy to find the trail was now more dirt and less rock. To our surprise we reached a spot where we could look directly down to the tinaja about 50 feet below. A tinaja is a mountain pool, a catchment of water in the midst of desert rock, a potential lifesaver to thirsty travelers. This one was perhaps 20 feet wide. Water-lily-like leaves fringed one end of the black water, and as we watched, a big green frog jumped into the pond. It was fascinating to think of the processes involved in the frog's being there.

After another half-hour spent following the serpentine upward trail, when the ramada was fully in view, we found a cairn -- the only one! We rested, then started down the well-worn "ridge leg" of the loop. This was easier by far than the canyon leg, though edged in places by a sharp drop-off. Looking down we saw the tightly-packed communities in the sunny valley below. We met casual hikers coming up and learned they go both up and down on the ridge leg, an option that sounded very attractive to us.

Our boulder scramble had been about a mile long. It would have been nice if the guidebooks had mentioned its length, but then that might have discouraged us from attempting this unique hike.

A much less strenuous but very enjoyable hike on another day started at the Visitor Center of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains National Monument, just south of Palm Desert. No boulder ladders here, just a network of sandy-gravelly trails working upward on desert washes and ridges. Here again, looking back we could see grand distant views. In late March, colorful blooms were out on

many of the shrubs and cacti. At a high point near the top, a gate and sign blocked the trail, to protect habitat of bighorn sheep who roam the higher hills. Having heard at the Visitor Center that it was permitted to go just a little further, we squeezed around the end of the gate and walked to an overlook where the desert cities were spread out below.

Returning to the gate, we rested at a berm beside the downward leg of the trail and lunched, admiring the view of the trail and distant mountains. Descending, we caught up with a group on a guided hike, led by volunteers from the Visitors' Center. The Center's twice-weekly trail trips are free, and are a good way to learn some of the natural history of the desert.

Carole and Zane write: There are so many beautiful, and at least for northerners, unusual hiking experiences to be had in the Palm Desert area it is hard to choose which to tell about. One, which was written up in guidebooks and spoken of by many people we spoke to, was the combination Ladder Canyon and Painted Canyon in the south end of the Coachella Valley near the town of Mecca. It turned out to be quite challenging, but magnificent in its beauty and awesome in its scope. We were unsure of exactly where to locate the trail (even after reading



Ladder Canyon

several guidebooks) so we waited to attach ourselves to a family group whose leader had hiked it before.



Looking down Ladder Canyon

The first striking sight was the massive cliffs, towering over us. The entrance to Ladder Canyon is behind a pile of skree, and after navigating this first obstacle we could see why it is a “slot canyon” The “trail” winds torturously through a passage so narrow at times it was little more than shoulder width, and with walls so high it is much darker at the bottom even with bright sunlight above. Then, after clambering around and over boulders and rock formations, that section of the canyon comes to a dead end, and someone (or group) has placed ladders, which hikers climb, with some trepidation, to the next level. After three sets of ladders and some helping hands from our adopted fellow hikers who were much younger, we reached the top of the canyon area and were again awed by the sights that met our eyes.

There were deep canyons all around with Badlands-Like formations of every sort. According to the guide books there is trail which goes back to the trailhead by way of the Painted Canyon rather than having to navigate the way back down the difficult Ladder Canyon. Following our adopted family we hiked along ridges with 200 foot drops on one side, which would come to a dead end where every side dropped away—only to have to back track again! After several false attempts and a rather precarious descent, we were back at the top of the Ladder Canyon, never having found the circle route down the Painted Canyon. Since we didn’t want to risk getting lost, we continued to follow our leader back down the ladders, which, by the way did not quite reach the top of each level, making a very scary trip back. We arrived unscathed, however, and after we ate our picnic lunch we decided to try the Painted

Canyon, which branches off from the Ladder Canyon.

All the canyons and rock formations in this area are the result of earthquake activity along the San Andreas Fault eons ago, and this is especially evident in the Painted Canyon where the normal horizontal strata of rock layers are turned on edge or even “folded” over, making it resemble ribbon taffy in some places. It is “painted” because there are so many types of rock shoved up next to each other, resulting in areas of green, purple, pink, sand-colored and almost black rock. (Back home in Marquette however we realized that the colors of our ancient formations were much more striking!) This canyon itself is very wide, at least as far as we went, but the cliff tops, again were at least 200 feet above. In a photo, a person is a mere speck at the bottom if the whole rock face is in the picture. We only hiked about a mile into Painted Canyon, until we came to another ladder! After scouting a bit ahead of this we determined that it would repeat some of our earlier “adventures” and decided we had had enough for one day. On our way out we ran into a couple who had successfully navigated the climb up Ladder Canyon and back down Painted Canyon and when we asked how they had found their way, they said they just followed the arrows formed with stones on the trail! Then when we got back to the juncture of the two canyons we saw on the ground a huge arrow of stones, about ten feet long, pointing to the entrance to the Ladder Canyon. It would pay to be more observant.

Epilogue: Two days after our canyon adventure was Easter Sunday, and while visiting at the home of friends in Palm Desert, we experienced our first earthquake, which at its epicenter measured 7.2 on the Richter Scale. While we were about 200 miles from the epicenter, and no damage was done where we were, the undulating of the earth was quite pronounced, making light fixtures swing wildly and water in a pool to slosh back and forth over the edges. We were very glad we weren’t hiking in the Ladder Canyon that day!

**National Trails Day - Saturday, June 5**

**1:00 - 4:00 pm**

**Lakenenland Sculpture Park**

**15 miles east of Marquette on M-28.**

**Please bring family and friends!**

## Spring Softies Hike -

Thursday, May 20 - Sunday, May 23 found Carole Bard, Marge and John Forslin, Gale Jansen, Lorana Jinkerson, Reggie and LuAnn Krueger, Jim and Norma Matteson, Penny Larsen, and Jan Lindstrom Wester continuing our eastward march across the Upper Peninsula on the NCT between M-45 and FR 16.

Thursday after arriving at the Loop Road Lodge in Trout Creek, we headed up to the trail where we met Gale. You may recall, last fall we skipped the piece from Gardner Road east across the east branch of the Ontonagon River and ending at FR 884. John dropped us off at the corner of FR 1180 and FR 884. We proceeded to hike south, coming to a new, extremely interesting beaver dam. We made our way across and upon reaching the point where the NCNST crosses the road we turned right heading west towards the river.



Interesting engineering by our beaver friends

Our hope was that when we arrived at the river it would be low or slow enough to cross and continue on the trail to Gardner Road. Alas, that was not to be. The banks were deep, the water muddy and the river wide, deep and moving along at a pace we were not comfortable crossing. So we retraced our steps back to FR 884, crossing the beaver dam once again and met John patiently waiting for us at FR 1180.

Upon our return to the lodge, we showered and then prepared our potluck dinner that turned out to be more than we could possibly eat. All dishes were sampled and enjoyed by all.

Friday's Hiking Assignment: Distance 8.75 miles – U.S 45 to Gardner Rd. by Penny Larsen

After a restful night sleep, at least for some of us, who don't suffer from insomnia or didn't have

roomies who snored, we ate a nourishing breakfast with strong coffee. We were out the door and on the trail by 9 am, applying various solutions to repel mosquitoes, black flies and hopefully ticks!

Members of our group were unusually resourceful this spring. Several of us were conducting scientific experiments with repellent solutions (our former science teachers would be proud of us). Members attached scented dryer sheets, repellent yellow buttons and Listerine! Yes, Listerine. Hard to believe! Thanks to a member's "carpet guy" who suggested the use of this popular mouthwash, Penny decided to give it a try. Accordingly, one sprays Listerine on the skin and clothes and it will discourage insects (for hours) better than any other insect repellent. Well, we will see!

Hiking the North Country Trail from M-45 east towards Gardner Road provided many challenges due to a lack of trail maintenance. After some miles we arrived at the Baltimore River. This river gorge is absolutely beautiful and very picturesque. Lovely water falls cascading over sandstone substructures providing marvelous photo opportunities making us realize how lucky we are to be living in the Upper Peninsula. Well worth the hike.

On we went. The challenges continued with the hikers climbing over numerous blow downs, stumping through mud, losing our hiking sticks in the brown ooze, losing our path because of the lack of "blue blazes" on trees, and temperatures well above average. Oh what a challenge this day was proving to be! Due to the lack of blue blazes we almost lost some of group in the deep woods of the Ottawa Forest looking for the trail markers which gave some us concern. However the Pathfinder award for our survival and eventual trek to safety needs to be awarded LuAnn for her determined efforts in locating the blue blaze. Horary for LuAnn!

As you might guess, once back on the North Country Trail, we would eventually arrive at another challenge. The trail took us down, down and down into another river gorge. This was not a particular easy descent and we were constantly looking for the trail markings. On top of this, we were hungry as it was lunchtime! After what seemed forever, we finally reached the bottom, with the uneasy thought that what goes down must go up. Forcing the thought from our minds, we had our lunch beside the Middle Branch of the Ontonagon River. We were careful not to sit on the ground which was crawling with ticks eager to attach themselves to their lunch guests!

Now it was time to climb up out of the river gorge. What a climb it was! Up and up the trail ascended with us begging for relief! After some time we made it to the rim of the gorge without having a heart attack!

The trail continued through the woods many times lacking clear markings, climbing over blow downs, and wondering how much longer this segment went on. As nature would have it, we sometimes needed to relieve ourselves. Lacking modern conveniences, we resorted to the woods. After a member's finishing her business, she returned to the trail catching up with the group, when she realized that she left her walking stick behind. There was very little choice but to return to the approximate location to retrieve the stick. This of course caused some delay and extra effort. However, the end result was positive: the stick was found!

Up and down the trail, over obstacles we went and we, as true hikers on the North Country Trail, we succeeded. After such a trying day filled with challenges we were picked up at the trail head and eager to take a shower! True to our day, we were faced with yet another challenge. Upon arriving to our lodge, undressing we each jumped into our respective showers and were stopped instantly – no hot water! Apparently, our hot water tank stopped working while we were gone. Several of us took the coldest shower of our lives – colder than Lake Superior! Other members took sponge baths or simply gave up!

Ticks, did I mention ticks? We were invaded with the charming little buggers! We pulled ticks off us for hours (and even days!). Later that day, as we were driving to dinner, ticks were passed from the back of the car to the driver who disposed of them out the window! Ah, the out of doors! Don't we love it?

Now for the results of our scientific experiments, it seems that my "carpet guy" did know what he was taking about. Listerine seems to work! Who would have thought it? Now if it only worked on ticks!

Eight hikers made up the group on Saturday: Carole, Gale, Jim, Lorana, LuAnn, Norma, Penny and Reggie.

The morning started out with grey clouds so some decided to take along rain gear, "just in case". We loaded the vans but thought Carole was still in the lodge so we waited with Lorana even peering through the tinted windows of the Matteson's van to see if she was there. Finally after about 10 minutes,

windows were rolled down and we discovered that, indeed, Carole was in the van waiting, just like the rest of us! Don't ever trust Lorana to check again.

For the next 20 minutes we traveled east along M-28 to FR 16 to Skogland Road but the signs were down so Marge was not sure we were on the correct road even though she and John had scouted all the roads and trailheads a week ago. John, however, was positive he was right since he was following his trusty Tom-Tom where he had entered all the information. Well, it seems the Tom-Tom was right. We eventually turned onto Forest Rd 1100, and after leaving a trail of dust for Jim to drive in we located the trailhead.

Upon our exit from the vans, we were overtaken by swarms of mosquitos. Along with the high humidity and those nasty little creatures we were sure we were in for another exciting day on the trail!

The trail was in pretty good condition, compared to Thursday and Friday's segments, and fairly well marked. We tried to stay one step ahead of the mosquitos by rarely stopping for breaks. Norma used a shotgun approach to the mosquito problem with dryer sheets, bug buttons, bug hat and Deet. Some of the rest of us were hiding behind net hats and shirts - anything to keep them at bay.

We had planned to take the spur trail up to Bob Lake where Marge, John and Jan would meet us for lunch. We crossed several beaver ponds and 26 blowdowns on our way. Before long we were at the spur corner, heading for lunch, hopeful that the mosquitos might not be so vicious by the lake. John had told us there was a wonderful outhouse, the cleanest and the nicest looking he had ever experienced, at the campground so several hikers were eager to get there. A line immediately formed.

Since John, Marge and Jan had driven to the campground, we had not carried our lunches in our packs. John brought out the cooler full of lunches and we proceeded to see who could eat their lunch and not get eaten ourselves. The mosquitos were slightly less vicious than on the trail, but it was still a challenge. Our lunch was topped off with wedges of cold watermelon - thanks Carole!

Jan joined the hikers for the trip back down the spur trail to the NCT and on to FR 16. We found a few more blow downs but the most interesting was a mystery flower we discovered crossing a beaver dam. Norma had taken a picture on our way up to Bob Lake but all those with cameras decided to do so on our way down. Note: Upon our return to the

lodge later that evening and transferring the picture to a computer where we could blow it up in size, we realized it was just a set of diseased leaves and not a flower at all! However, there was a small 5 petaled flower in the woods that none of us could identify.



Barren Strawberry

Once again, our faithful support van-man, John, was waiting as we emerged from the trail. We jumped in the vans as quickly as possible and then began swatting all the mosquitos we brought along with us.

John prepared dinner for us warning, “do not to step foot in the kitchen” while he was working. Since Marge had contacted the caretaker of the lodge about our cold shower difficulties of yesterday, we were hoping for hot showers. Unfortunately, that did not happen, rather the water was tepid. Marge graciously offered her shower which did have hot water and three hikers took her up on the offer. It seems the pilot light on the water heater on the other side of the house kept going out so the caretaker would light it then leave. Eventually he realized it needed a new thermocouple but, of course, none were available on a Saturday. The rest of us survived with the luke warm showers, actually grateful that at least the water was not frigid.

John, Marge and Penny planned to leave by 8:30 am Sunday morning. The rest of us had a couple of options: we could hike from FR 16 to Laird Road for a 6.5 mile hike or we could take a side trip to visit Bond Falls. As the heat was continuing, guess what we chose - Bond Falls! If you have not yet visited Bond Falls, do plan to do so. It is the most photographed falls in the Upper Peninsula and I took

my share of photos while there, probably more than I took on the whole hike altogether.



Lower Bond Falls

Once more those little 5 petaled yellow flowers were seen. I had not taken a picture of them while on the trail so I did here. After much research back at home, the closest I could come was Indian Strawberry, but that was not quite right. Then Joan Young and Marie Altenau arrived at my house to continue Joan’s quest to be the first woman to hike all 4600 miles of the NCNST. I mentioned the flower to her and she immediately recognized it as Barren Strawberry! Mystery solved! Thanks Joan.

Overall, our Softies Hike proved, once again, that through whatever trials and tribulations we encounter, we will prevail and have a grand time doing so. Please plan to join us for next fall’s adventure: September 23 - 25.

### **Revitalization of Grand Marais Chapter -**

Bill Menke, Regional Trail Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region of the NCTA, hosted two meetings, one in Munising and one in Grand Marais, in an attempt to revitalize the chapter. A few current members of the Grand Marais Chapter attended as well as some people in each community who were interested. A decision to rename the chapter to the Superior Shoreline Chapter was made, reflecting more accurately, the location of the chapter than the previous chapter name. They plan to hold a conference call between the two towns and begin reorganization with the intent of ensuring maintenance of the NCNST through their 101 miles of responsibility. If you know anyone in that area who might be interested in joining them, please let Lorana know [nct@northcountrytrail.org](mailto:nct@northcountrytrail.org) / 226-6210.

## Support / Get Involved in NCTA/NCTH -

Your help in supporting NCTA and NCTH are very important to our mission of building, maintaining, and promoting the North Country Trail. There are many ways that you can help:

- Save your **ECONO** grocery receipts - Send to Caroline Jordan, 1011 Pine Street, Marquette, or drop off at the front desk of the Peter White Public Library in an envelope addressed to Caroline.
- When purchasing merchandise at **Down Wind Sports** mention that a credit should be given to NCTH.
- Keep your membership current or upgrade to a higher level. To renew expired NCTA memberships, go to the website, [northcountrytrail.org/involved-become\\_a\\_member.php](http://northcountrytrail.org/involved-become_a_member.php).
- Encourage friends and family to join - Remember you can sponsor new members at half price! Contact one of the Board members to get the form.
- Make a donation to NCTA, NCTH or both - Send your check made out to NCTA to Don Miller, 107 N. Lakeshore Blvd., 2H, Marquette, MI, 49855.
- Volunteer to help with trail building and maintenance as a trail segment adopter or as a member of the Trail Crew - Contact our Trail Boss Cliff Stammer, 228-9897 / [cnstammer@charter.net](mailto:cnstammer@charter.net).
- Volunteer to serve on the Board of NCTH, help with the newsletter, plan cross-country ski / snowshoe / canoe / kayak outings or other administrative tasks. Talk to any Board member.

## Upcoming Events, Join Us! -

- Monthly **Board of Director Meetings**, 3rd Tuesday of each month in the Conference Room of the Peter White Public Library at 7:00 pm. Any member is welcome to attend.
- **Monday, September 6. Big Mac Bridge Walk.** We will leave early Monday morning, stop for breakfast along the way, walk the bridge, and stop for dinner on our way back to Marquette. Contact Lorana if you wish to participate.
- **Tuesday, September 11th. General Membership Meeting** at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the Peter White Public Library. Chuck Delpierre, Negaunee Middle School teacher will share his experiences of taking his students on overnight camping trips.
- Plan a hike, picnic, kayak/canoe outing or other social event and let us know.

## Website Redesign -



Our chapter website [northcountrytrail.org/nct](http://northcountrytrail.org/nct) has been redesigned. In addition to the new look, the trail segments' pages have all been fleshed out with details about the trail, maps, and directions. A Trail Maintenance Work Report page has been added at [northcountrytrail.org/nct/TrailWorkReport.htm](http://northcountrytrail.org/nct/TrailWorkReport.htm). Here you can see the progress, by segment, the Trail Crew is making on blazing, clearing, chain sawing, leaf blowing, lopping, mowing, raking, and weed whacking. As time permits, additional pictures will be added to the blue strip on the right of each page. Take a look and if you see any errors, omissions, typos, etc. please contact Lorana.

## Trekking the North Country Trail -



Nimblewill Nomad, M. J. Eberhart, who graced our trail last summer by hiking all 4600 miles from North Dakota to New York, has published his journal of that exceptional hike, *Trekking the North Country Trail*. He details our segment on pages 70-76. If you would like to get a glimpse of the NCNST without actually hiking it all, get Eb's book. It's a charming read.

Purchase directly from Eb for \$18 including shipping at: [www.nimblewillnomad.com/book\\_tnct.htm](http://www.nimblewillnomad.com/book_tnct.htm).

## National Trails Day; Please Join Us! -

National Trails Day is Saturday, June 5. NCTH will be hosting hikes at [Lakeland Sculpture Park](#), 15 miles east of Marquette off M-28 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. We have specifically invited the residents of the Pathways Mental Health Houses in Marquette, the Special Olympics, the residents of Teaching Family Homes and Bay Cliff Health Camp. Hikers can enjoy the sculptures at the Park or head out to the NCNST that traverses the south portion of the Park property. Hiking is easy on sandy soil. Families and friends are encouraged to come enjoy this event with us. Information about our chapter as well as the NPS and NCTA will be available.

## NCTA Annual Conference -



The NCTA Annual Conference, planned for Wednesday, August 5 through Sunday, August 9 in Ashland, WI is sponsored by the Wisconsin and Upper Peninsula chapters, including NCTH!

I would like to strongly encourage

members and friends of our NCTH Chapter to attend one or more days of the Conference. This is a great opportunity to meet members from other chapters across the 7 states of the North Country National Scenic Trail. Last year's conference saw over 150 members in attendance. I'd really like to see that grow this year. You can help by attending!

Pre-conference workshops scheduled for Thursday, August 5, include Chain Saw Certification and Medic First Aid.

Hikes of the local area are planned each day. In addition, there are several workshops scheduled for Friday that can help you learn more about chapter leadership, communication, grant writing, trail maintenance and adopter responsibilities, and photography.

Thursday night's dinner will include the NCTA General Membership meeting, National Park Service Volunteer Hours Awards and entertainment by "Take Three".

Marquette's very own Frida Waara will be the entertainment at Friday night's dinner, immediately following the live auction, an event filled with fun

and bringing much needed monies to the Association.

Saturday evening's dinner includes the presentation of the NCTA Awards by Lorana Jinkerson, Awards Chair, followed by entertainment from "Donn Christensen and The Red Pine Resonations".

The Annual Conference Planning Committee is looking for volunteers to help during the conference. If you are willing to drive a 15-passenger van or personal vehicle to shuttle to and from hikes, provide information regarding the local area, assist at the registration table or trail shop, set up and take down the auction, serve as a sweep for a hike, or help out wherever you might be needed, please contact Pat Prusila, Volunteer Committee Chair, at [twoslowboats@cheqnet.net](mailto:twoslowboats@cheqnet.net).

Lastly, if you are willing to donate an item or items for the silent or live auctions, please contact Lynne Nason, Conference Chair at [phlpnason@gmail.com](mailto:phlpnason@gmail.com). Any item, hiking or outdoor related, new or only slightly used, can be donated for the auctions. Donated items are tax deductible if you itemize your deductions and the proceeds from the auctions go to help support the work of NCTA as we build, maintain, promote, and protect the North Country National Scenic Trail. At last year's conference over \$5500 was raised. Let's help exceed that amount this year!

Go to [northcountrytrail.org/conf10/](http://northcountrytrail.org/conf10/) to get more details, **REGISTER** and I'll see you there!

## NPS Volunteer in Parks -

Dan Watson, the National Park Service Volunteer in Parks Coordinator, held a meeting with chapter trail crew members on Saturday, March 20 in Marquette to discuss the NPS requirements for anyone working on the NCNST. All members of NCTA are automatically covered for injuries sustained while working to build, maintain and promote the trail as long as they are conducting their work in accordance with the NPS guidelines, including being sawyer certified for using a chain saw. Non-members who come out to help us on the trail, **MUST** complete a Volunteer Services Agreement which is then sent in to Dan's office. If you are a non-member, please join to avoid having to complete a form! Anyone under the age of 18 **MUST** have parental permission on the Volunteer Services Agreement form. Contact Cliff Stammer, [cnstammer@charter.net](mailto:cnstammer@charter.net) 228-9897, or Lorana

Jinkerson [nct@northcountrytrail.org](mailto:nct@northcountrytrail.org) 226-6210 for more information.

If you are injured while working on the trail, Cliff and Lorana also have the forms that should be taken to the hospital with you but do not hesitate getting to the hospital. Do call us as soon as possible though so we can get the forms to you and the hospital. The sooner you get the forms completed and returned after an injury, the easier it is for the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Worker's Compensation Programs to process your claim.

### **Trail Maintenance Season -**

Trail maintenance season started early this spring with our warm temperatures. Cliff Stammer, our trail boss, and his crew including many of you have already covered segments 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 18-OT, 24, 25, 27, 28 and 29. This does not necessarily mean that more won't be done on those segments but at least a good start has taken place by removing blow downs, lopping, leaf blowing, etc.

In addition, a blazing crew has been busy refreshing the blue blazes. Their work will continue over the course of the summer with the goal of totally refreshing all segments. If you get out on any of our segments, please report back to Cliff, [cnstammer@charter.net](mailto:cnstammer@charter.net) or 228-9897 if you see work that needs to be done. Or, if you are not on the trail crew list but would like to help out, contact Lorana.

We are anxiously awaiting the arrival of our new trailer to house our tools that is being funded by a National Park Service Challenge Cost Share project. It will be signed with the NCTA logo and our chapter name so we will be very visible as we travel to and from work sites. The new leaf blower, partially funded by the NPS Challenge Cost Share Project, has already proven its value in clearing the trail of small limbs and leaves. Sure beats raking! Of course, we still have to rake the McCormick Wilderness and Mike Rankinen and the trail crew have it already raked. Good work all.

### **Membership / Fund Development -**

As a member of the NCTA Board of Directors, one of my jobs is to encourage membership and donations to the NCTA and as NCTH's President, I also consider those important aspects of my job.

NCT Hikers current membership stands at 107. We can easily grow that if each and everyone of you would bring in one new member, be it a family member or friend. For just \$23, you can sponsor a

new member to the NCTA/NCTH. Full-time students can become members for just \$10. All memberships can be purchased online at [www.northcountrytrail.org/involved-become\\_a\\_member.php](http://www.northcountrytrail.org/involved-become_a_member.php).

If you are currently a member, **renew early** and/or **upgrade** to either a Household at \$60, Trail Leader at \$75, Pathfinder at \$100, or Patron at \$250 level. If you know of someone who was a member but has not renewed, please encourage them to renew. If you are a member who has not renewed, please consider renewing. All members are important to our work. Note that 20% of membership dollars come back to our local chapter. Membership dues are considered donations so are tax deductible if you itemize your deductions.

Donations are another way to help support the NCTA/NCTH and the trail. Donations can be made at any time, in any amount. If you can donate a minimum of \$500 or more annually, you can become a member of the Founder's Circle. Just note that when you make your donation through the website at [www.northcountrytrail.org/involved-donate\\_now.php](http://www.northcountrytrail.org/involved-donate_now.php) or e-mail Laura Lindstrom [llindstrom@northcountrytrail.org](mailto:llindstrom@northcountrytrail.org) to let her know your desire to become a Founder's Circle member.

At the NCTA level we are seeking members who would be willing to add NCTA in their wills or request memorial donations in their name. If you would like to discuss including NCTA in your will, listing NCTA as a memorial donation, or any other type of giving to the NCTA, please give me a call and we can discuss it; Lorana at 226-6210.

### **Minutes of the General Membership Meeting -**

May 18, 2010, at the Peter White Public Library Community Room, Marquette, MI

Chapter President Lorana Jinkerson called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM and welcomed to the Chapter our new members: Carole and Zane Bard, Roger and Denise Barry, Frank and Laura Farwell, Heidi Sweet, and Peter Zenti.

Our speakers for the evening were Bruce Matthews, Executive Director of the North Country Trail Association, and Bill Menke, NCTA Regional Trail Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region. Together they presented an overview of the history of the North Country National Scenic Trail, the mission and organization of NCTA, and the current status of trail development. Bruce noted that the most recent Annual Report of the NCTA is on the

organization's web site and details recent accomplishments and financial information. Some developments have included a decision to recruit a director of development for NCTA, passage of federal "willing seller" legislation authorizing purchase of permanent trail easements where needed, and initiation of a drive to increase NCTA membership from the current 2500 to 4600 (that being the length in miles of the NCNST when completed). Bruce reported that our average number of volunteer hours per member is 27; the Adirondack Trail Association membership, in contrast, averages 5 volunteer hrs. per member annually. NCTA participates in the Partnership for Scenic and Historic Trails, an umbrella advocacy organization which has obtained a congressional budget "earmark" for trail support. As Regional Trail Coordinator, Bill Menke assists various chapters with technical aspects of trail work, membership issues, and facilitation of tool and equipment orders through the National Park Service, the NCTA's governmental partner.

A question-and-answer session followed and included mention that discussions have occurred regarding NCT extension to meet other existing trails to the west and east so that the goal of a sea-to-sea hiking route may someday be accomplished.

Following this informative discussion a video about the upcoming NCTA Conference in Ashland, WI, Aug. 5 - 8, was shown, highlighting that area and some of the segments of the NCNST.

The Business Meeting continued with a membership report showing our Chapter currently has 107 members, and a Treasurer's report showing our balance with NCTA is \$10,491.

Cliff Stammer gave the Trail Boss's report and detailed the considerable maintenance already completed this season. Further work plans for maintenance, re-blazing, and trail construction include building a proposed new trail to join the Little Presque Isle and Little Garlic segments. Of note, the NCT through the McCormick Wilderness Tract has been completely raked by hand (no power tools allowed there) and the trail is now clearly identifiable. We have upgraded our tool inventory with a DR Mower, new chain saw, power blower, and some new hand tools, and a tool storage trailer purchased with cost-share funds will be delivered any day.

Announcements included the following: The spring Softies hike will take place May 20 - 23. National

Trails Day is June 5 and we have arranged hikes at the Lakeneland Sculpture Park and adjacent NCT, with special invitations sent to Pathways, Special Olympics and Teaching Family Homes. Attendance is encouraged at the National Conference in Ashland, WI, Aug. 5 - 8 and volunteers are needed for help at sign-in, etc. and items are wanted for the silent and live auctions. M.J. Eberhart (aka Nimblewill Nomad) has published a book about his trek across the NCT and Lorana has a copy. The Chapter has a copy of the NCTA Annual Report for any who wish to read it (also available on the NCTA website). Our Chapter website now has a page detailing maintenance status of our various segments. We have received invitations from local organizations that are dedicated to eliminating invasive weeds, to participate in weed identification and eradication efforts; particularly if we spot a new area of invasion along the trail, we should report it so the invasives can be eradicated early. For the annual Labor Day Bridge Walk on the Big Mac bridge, the Hiawatha Shore-to-Shore chapter is again planning a campout, with additional local hikes and other activities (Sept. 3 - 7).

We need a Social Events Planner who will be in charge of organizing pleasure hikes, canoe/kayak trips, breakfast socials, picnics etc. Anyone who is interested please contact Lorana or a Board member. This is the most fun job in the Club and a good way to make a contribution.

Also wanted is a Newsletter editor. Presently it is being done by our Club President who has many other tasks. Writing is done by various members, but we need the expertise of someone who is adept at computer publishing.

We are operating without a Vice President of the Club and would like someone to fill that position. An election will be held at the Sept. General Membership Meeting. Please come forward if you are willing to help out in this way, or make a nomination of a candidate to any Board member.

The next General Membership Meeting will be Tuesday, September 14, 7:00 PM at the Peter White Public Library Community Room. Our speaker will be Chuck Delpierre, Negaunee Middle School teacher.

The NCTH Board of Directors meet the third Tuesday of every month at 7 PM at PWPL, usually in the Conference Room. Any member, and interested guests, are welcome.

Jan Lindstrom Wester, NCTH Secretary



North Country Trail Hikers Newsletter  
Published three times per year  
Editor: Lorana Jinkerson  
Comments and ideas as well as articles for future  
issues would be greatly appreciated.

North Country Trail Hikers  
c/o Lorana A. Jinkerson  
1830 Altamont  
Marquette, MI 49855



## North Country Trail Hikers Activities

Watch the website events page ([www.northcountrytrail.org/nct/Events.htm](http://www.northcountrytrail.org/nct/Events.htm)) or your e-mail for up-to-date specifics. Contact Cliff Stammer, 228-9897 / [cnstammer@charter.net](mailto:cnstammer@charter.net), to suggest work needs or volunteer. Contact Lorana Jinkerson, 226-6210 / [nct@northcountrytrail.org](mailto:nct@northcountrytrail.org) for hiking/canoeing/kayaking/snowshoeing/cross-country skiing ideas. Please, please, let us know if you plan to join us for any activity. Thanks.

### June 2010

- **Saturday, June 5 - National Trails Day.** 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Lakenenland Sculpture Park, 15 miles east of Marquette on M-28. Come hike the NCNST or around the park. Water available. Everyone welcome.
- **Tuesday, June 15 - Board of Directors Meeting.** 7:00 pm, Conference Room Peter White Public Library. Any member is welcome to attend.

### July 2010

- **Tuesday, July 20 - Board of Directors Meeting.** 7:00 pm, Conference Room, Peter White Public Library. Any member is welcome to attend.

### August 2010

- **Thursday, August 5 - Sunday, August 8 - NCTA Annual Conference.** Ashland, WI. Please come for one or more days and hike the NCNST, attend a workshop, and meet other members from across the 7 states.
- **Tuesday, August 17 - Board of Directors Meeting.** 7:00 pm, Conference Room, Peter White Public Library. Any member is welcome to attend.

### September 2010

- **Tuesday, September 14 - General Membership Meeting.** 7:00 pm, Community Room, Peter White Public Library. Presentation by Chuck Delpierre, Negaunee Middle School teacher, about taking his students for overnight camping trips.
- **Thursday, September 23 - Saturday, September 25 - Fall Softies Hike.** Contact Marge Forslin ([mforslin2@charter.net](mailto:mforslin2@charter.net) / 869-4791) if interested in participating