

BootPrints

WESTERN MICHIGAN CHAPTER, NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL ASSOCIATION JANUARY, 2009



What's going on...

Boot Prints, this newsletter coming to your mailbox bimonthly, replaces *Due North*, our longtime, quarterly publication edited so ably for many years by Aaron and Sharon Phipps. The pressure of his day job has forced Aaron to give up the assignment. We hope *Boot Prints* will keep you informed of chapter activities until Aaron can help again. In the meantime, members who would like to use *Boot Prints* for announcements should contact Werner Veit at wv12@aol.com, or (616) 776-1630. *Boot Prints* will also be posted on the chapter's website. Members with access may opt out of the mail version if they wish by sending an e-mail message to Werner.

What's ahead ...

Winter Outings Our chapter's annual snow shoe event (or cross country skiing or hiking if there is not enough snow in the Huron Manistee National Forest) is scheduled for **Saturday, Feb. 21**. Meet at the Birch Grove Schoolhouse at 10 AM. Bring a dish to pass for a meal afterward. Directions to the schoolhouse: North on M37 through White Cloud to 5-Mile Road. Left on 5-Mile Road to Felch. Left again and the schoolhouse is on your left. Let Stephanie Black know you are coming by e-mailing stephblk@iserv.net or calling her at (616) 675-7237.

If there is enough interest, **Paul Haan** will lead a three-day winter **hiking trip to New Hampshire** on **March 11-15** centered around Joe Dodge Lodge in Pinkham Notch, NH. . Paul will guide moderate to strenuous hikes. All kinds of skiing is also available. Members interested must provide a \$100, non-refundable deposit by **Jan. 15** for the trip to be confirmed. Total cost estimate: \$415 per person if driving; \$1,055, flying. Minimum of four and maximum of 12. Lodging will be in shared bedrooms; showers and bathroom facilities down the hall. Breakfasts and dinners provided. To participate, contact Paul at paulhaan@sbcglobal.net or (616) 363-3342 as soon as possible.

Trail Work, construction and maintenance work, resumes on **March 28** with the Sportsman Park connector project in Newaygo County. April and May will also be particularly busy. Details will be listed in the March *Boot Prints*. To participate, let Trail Manager **Paul Haan** know you're available to work this construction season.

What went on...

Chapter Election did not produce a President because no candidate came forward. Fortunately, **JerriLynn Osmar**, current Vice President, volunteered to run chapter affairs until a replacement can be found. A list of the other offices, board members and chairs appears below.

Above the Call describes the work of **Chuck Hayden**, maintainer in the Lowell State Game Area and **Gordy Lachiet**. About a year ago, Gordy built sign posts to place at either end of Montcalm Avenue. Laminated maps were left there to help hikers figure out how to navigate the roadwalk portion of the North Country Trail in the Lowell SGA. But the maps were a little too attractive to vandals. They went missing over the summer. Enter Chuck who became aware of the problem this winter. So, during the holiday period, he installed new maps with a Plexiglas cover. Deciding that was not enough, he built literature boxes, installed them, and filled them with maps for Lowell SGA hikers.

Western Michigan Chapter's **trail crew** also got applause from the Forest Service for partnering with the Baldwin/White Cloud Ranger district to repair severe stream bank damage along creeks in the Huron Manistee National Forest caused by horses and mountain bikes. Our crew hardened surfaces, rerouted a trail and installed turnstile barriers and erected signs to discourage illegal and poor recreational use.

First Aid kits will be available this year for all workdays and outings thanks to the work for **Chuck Vannette** who equipped the chapter. One set will be kept at the Birch Grove Schoolhouse and another in our tool trailer. Chuck will keep a third kit to pass out to leaders of hikes and other outings.

2009 Board of Directors

Jerrilynn Osmar	Vice President	osmarjer@charter.net.	616	560-7029
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Len Baron	Schoolhouse Manager	jlbarton@charter.net	616	677-3598
Lisa Locke	Communications Chair	llocke@sustainableresearchgroup.com	616	914-1597
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