



Jordan Valley 45° Chapter Newsletter

May 2024

President's Message

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Important links:

[Click here for link to Jordan Valley 45° page on NCTA website](#)

[Jordan Valley 45° is on FaceBook - click here](#)

[Click here for link to Report Volunteer Hours](#)

[Click here for link to NCTA Events Calendar](#)

Hello Fellow Hikers;

Hopefully you are all taking advantage of spring weather and getting out on the trail. If you've never joined a group hike, the May and June hikes will be a great opportunity as there are added bonus features in them; a visit to the skyline shelter and a picnic. See page 2 and 9 for some info on both.

Evelyn Howell was awarded the Big Foot Award at the Jordan Valley 45 annual meeting on January 6. Evelyn was recognized for all of her contributions to the chapter including providing food many times at trail building days and her work on the Junior Hiker Program. She was unable to attend the meeting in January because she was traveling to Honduras and the Galapagos Islands. The Chapter President presented the award to Evelyn after the April monthly hike.

Upcoming Group Hikes:

May 18 – Johnson rd. to Brubaker rd. - Petoskey

June 15 – Starvation Lake to Pickeral Lake – Potluck too!

May Group Hike – Skyline Shelter information

Story and pictures by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

SKYLINE SHELTER, SPRING WATER SOURCE AND VIEWING PLATFORM

Southeast of Petoskey, the NCT passes through the 65-acre Skyline Natural Area (SNA). The SNA runs from Brubaker Rd. to the Krause Rd. Trailhead and is adjacent to large tracts of land owned by the City of Petoskey, the county and the state. At an elevation averaging 1,200 feet, the land provides sweeping views of Little Traverse Bay and the Bear River valley. The SNA includes three special points of interest to hikers of the NCT: Skyline Shelter, a Spring Water Source and a Viewing Platform.

Skyline Shelter - The enclosed shelter is located at the top of a steep spur trail .2 mile above the NCT. Amenities include six bunks, table (and a broom), fire pit, an outhouse and a nice porch with a terrific view. The shelter sits on land owned by Doug and Pam Boor of Petoskey. They have generously allowed hikers to use their property. The shelter was originally just a platform with a Yurt constructed by the Boor's around 2015. The Yurt was replaced by the shelter as a 2018 Eagle Scout project coordinated by Joe Farley, other scouts and the NCT JV45° Chapter. Since there is NO WATER source at the shelter, you must bring your own or retrieve it from the spring below the NCT. To gain entrance, you need to call Doug or Pam to get the combination to the lock. (Doug (231) 330-3759, Pam (231) 838-2771).



Spring Water Source - About .4 miles below the shelter is a green water-collection box built into a spring at the end of a steep spur trail .2 miles below the NCT. Although low flow, this is an important water source for thru-hikers and those using Skyline Shelter. There is a sign and white blazes leading the way down. The water-collection box was installed by Chase Rawson as part of 2018 Eagle Scout project, with help from NCT JV45° Chapter.



Viewing Platform- Very close to the spring and shelter spur trails is a short spur trail leading down to an observation platform perched on the side of the ridge at 1,072 feet. From there, you can look out over rolling farm fields, ridges, the Bear River Valley and a large slice of Little Traverse Bay. If you are coming from the south, this is your first peek at Lake Michigan.



BUILD IT

Let's Get To Work



Paul Gagnon—NCTA Director of Trail Protection—paid a visit to our chapter May 4-5. We had a dinner and discussion Saturday evening, attended by Paul, Duane, Mary, Kevin, Annie, Dan, Sue and Doug, and Jim and Evelyn. Sunday Duane and Paul toured around looking at reroute opportunities and held two meetings. Mary, Kevin, Sue and Jim participated. What we accomplished:

Hathaway Rd to Conway—we looked at two private parcels connecting the nature preserves to Hathaway right across from the Emmet County Road Commission (ECRC) entrance. Owners need to be contacted. The Little Traverse Conservancy (LTC) has a parcel adjoining the nature preserves that touches N. Conway Rd. which they are fine with us crossing. That wouldn't save much road walk, but would allow us to incorporate the nice trails in the preserves. We need to scout it.

We (so far mainly Mary) are participating with Bear Creek Township Parks and Rec committee who are working with a Snowmobile Club who want to build

trail from McDougal west to the railroad track, potentially using the culvert we installed across the west side McDougal ditch, and threatening snowmobile access to the NCT by rogue riders. No specific plan yet.

Crossing Bert Notestine's pasture W of Cedar Valley—our fenced trail is there by hand-shake, we need to work with Jared Notestine to get permanent access (easement or purchase).

Cedar Valley to Skyline—no luck so far getting a meeting with Jack Flynn. Regarding Jack's concerns over his septage business being affected, Paul says we could write an easement that would "hold harmless" Jack, and commit we would post warning signs. Paul offered to write a letter to Jack.

Skyline shelter—Met with Doug and Pam Boor at their home (Paul, Kevin, Sue, Duane). Boors potential sale of 55 acres to the City of Petoskey fell through, and they are now selling it on the open market, one 8 acre parcel already sold and under construction which has eliminated access to the shelter directly from Krause parking. An 18-acre parcel containing the shelter is also for sale. We will be pursuing whether the shelter can be moved downhill onto Petosky property (~300 feet), or if we can purchase some of the property to hold or to transfer to Petoskey.

Slashing to Kuzmik—potential to eliminate 4 & 1/2 mile road walk (Thumb Lake Rd./Baker Rd./Camp Ten Rd./Kuzmik Rd.). The Charlevoix County Rec Plan/Hudson Twp. Map shows "Dirt Bike Trail" that follows the approximate route we crave. We are consulting with the township and with Charlevoix County Parks and Rec.

Dobleski Rd. reroute—met with Joe Taylor at his Dobleski Rd. property (Paul, Mary, Duane). We want to cross ~10 feet of his parcel's corner. Paul allayed his fears of potential liability. We assured him that we would not support or enable the DNR to build a road to provide logging access. He's unwilling to make a permanent commitment (easement), but will consider an agreement, which Paul will be drafting. Yea!!

Corey Road and Doerr Rd. to Five Lake—Alba school district owns land all along Five Lake east and west which shares a corner with a Chestonia township parcel which borders Corey Rd. So, an apparent opportunity to reroute off of Doerr and most of Corey.

Also looked at several maintenance issues

- Board on viewing platform at Skyline...need to replace a ~30" piece of PT 5/4 x 6.
- Boardwalk along Russian Creek in NCMC Natural Area...need to replace 60' of it with 36" wide on swamp pans. *Will check with NCMC to see if they can fund the material.
- Could use a 4x4 marker at Kipp Road.
- #@\$ porkies at N end of Jordan River Road...One new 9" NCT logo plaque is toast (the other is fine). The armored post has minor damage.
- FYI: Work started on 3 Tubes replacement...many trees cut.

POTENTIAL 2024 WORK PROJECTS

- Replace 60' boardwalk in NCMC Natural Area along Russian Creek
- Erect interpretive panel in Petoskey Bayfront Park
- New puncheon and steps near JRNFH (Dan is lead)

Top of Michigan Festival of Races -May 25th Helpers needed

Story by Sue Bouwense – sbouwense@gmail.com

Representing the NCT in our Neighborhood

Our chapter will again host an aid station for the Top of Michigan Half Marathon/10K/5K races on Saturday, May 25. Volunteers are needed from 7:45 to 10:30 at our spot near the Mt. Baldy trailhead (campground office) inside Petoskey State Park. All you need to bring is your enthusiasm! All supplies will be provided by the Top of Michigan Trails Council.

We have provided refreshments and encouragement for runners for several years, and we are happy to be part of the excitement again this year! A bonus is exposing more people to the existence of the North Country Trail, which comprises part of the course for this race. If you are able to join the fun on the 25th, it would be great to know by Wednesday, May 22. Please call or text Sue Bouwense at (231) 347-4394 or email sbouwense@gmail.com



2023 Marathon event volunteers

March 16th Group Hike Report – Kipp Rd to Bayfront Park, Petoskey

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net



We had thirteen people and two dogs show up at the entrance to Bayfront Park next to the mouth of the Bear River. After introductions and pictures, chapter President Kevin Whitley presented Bob Courtois with a 2023 NCTA Honor Award for organizing the monthly hikes for the past six or seven years. Time flies! We then caravanned four cars to the Kipp Rd. Trailhead, which is the northern terminus of the JV45° Chapter and the beginning of the Harbor Springs Chapter, which runs to the Mackinac Bridge.

There was a little drizzle and temps were in the 30's, but the rain stopped and it was a dry hike. The stiff breeze out of the south west was mostly blocked so we were pretty comfortable. The drizzle started again, but after the hike.

Last September, Duane Lawton organized a workday to reroute a mile of trail off of Kipp and E. Hathaway Rds. The trail now cuts through woods and fields and is in excellent conditions after the winter. We took the opportunity to pick up trash that was not visible in the fall and Annie Matz cut back "toe catchers" along the way.

From there we headed south on N. Conway Rd. and picked up as much trash as we could, four bags full. We then joined the bike trail that parallels US-31. With the cool weather we only saw a few bikers. We paused at the office for the Top of Michigan Trails Council, which is a beautiful stone structure and park. Despite being right on the trail the map sign out front does not show the NCT! Except for about a mile or so on N. Conway Rd and a spot along US-31, most of this section is off-road enough that it is not too noisy from the traffic. Most of the way there are terrific view of Little Traverse Bay and out to the open waters of Lake Michigan. Across the bay you can see Harbor Springs and Boyne Highlands.

We also stopped at the Round Lake overlook. Very interesting, Round Lake is isolated from Lake Michigan, Little Traverse Bay by a narrow ridge of sand dunes. As a result, the lake is actually part of the Cheboygan watershed and flows east, via the interconnected rivers and lakes to drain into Lake Huron at Cheboygan.



After shifting off US-31, there is a gorgeous mile of trail through Bayfront Park with a tunnel up to town where we stopped at Duffy's Garage & Grill for pops and corn beef fare in honor of St. Patrick's Day. Erin King got a corn beef pizza, with pickles.

April 20th Group Hike Report – Warner Creek to Dobleski Rd.

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

With additional photos by Duane Lawton

Usually, we start at Warner Creek Trailhead and walk to Dobleski Rd. For this hike we reversed it and, after meeting at Warner and dishing out Gay's Krispie Treats, we drove fifteen hikers to Dobleski Rd. and walked back to Warner Creek. It was a cold morning but the first mile was mostly uphill and got the blood moving.



For the half mile west of US131 there was logging (thinning) activity. Trail damage was minimal but some touch up will be needed. As we passed through, we pulled the ribbons from the trees that the loggers used to mark the trail. Logging can be disappointing to say the least, but this time, they made an effort to preserve the trail.

About half way along we met up with Jen Reynolds and Dan Dueweke were hiking the other direction so they could clear trees and debris from the trail. Dan noted they had to clear a few healthy trees someone appeared to have intentionally cut so they fell along and across the trail. There was no other reason to cut them. Fortunately, we don't very often see trail shenanigans like this.



There were two hiking options: The longer hike was about 7 miles including the Warner Creek Pathway and O'Brien Pond. Seven hikers did the Warner loop and experienced the high and dry reroute away from chronically wet pond section. We also checked out the O'Brien Pond boardwalk and the world-famous Beaver Deceiver, which are in great shape. Eight hikers skipped the Warner Creek segment.



The section from M32 to US131 is very hilly and is a decent workout. On this cold day, trail was very dry with no snow that is so typical, even in April. Spring was evident from all the emerging buds and wildflowers, including: Trillium, Trout Lilies (spotted leaves and yellow hanging heads) Hepatica, Spring Beauties, Leeks and Dutchmen's Breeches.



Following the hike, eight of us met at Forx Restaurant, in Elmira, for pops and sandwiches. They seated us in the side-room and the food and service were excellent.

Trail Maintenance Update

Dan Dueweke - dandueweke@gmail.com

May is for maintenance, a time for adopters to walk their trail sections and see what needs to be done. Take a lopper and folding saw for any saplings or low hanging branches. Report any blowdowns and we'll get a sawyer team on them.

Just hiking the Chapter? Take a picture of any obstructions with your cell phone and copy me on it with the approximate location. Photos are helpful in determining which tools to bring.

NCTA website has a wealth of information on caring for your adopted section:

<https://northcountrytrail.org/volunteer/volunteer-resource-center/>

Mowing season is approaching fast and the DR brush mower has been maintained and is available for trail maintainers to use. It is stored at the Jordan River Hatchery. Please co-ordinate use with Dan so he can let others know if it's in use.

June Group Hike and Picnic

June 15, 2024

The Jordan Valley 45° Chapter will be hosting a hike on June 15, 2024. We are starting summer with an out-of-chapter venture into the Grand Traverse Chapter's section of the NCT. We will gather at 9:30am and head out by 10:00.

We will meet at the NCT crossing on Starvation Lake Rd. (mile marker 688.0), at the snowmobile parking lot just east of the trail crossing). From there we will hike about 7.0 miles south to Pickerel Lake (694.75, Pickerel Lake State Forest Campground). If 7 miles is a bit too far for you, we can post cars at the 4-mile mark on Twin Lake Rd. (692.0).

See map and mile markers at:

<http://nct.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=23a2c0d674cb443ea9835af2e8c5f13a>

The terrain is a nice mix of hills and level terrain and all wooded. Along the way we will pass MacNeil Pond (689.25) and Eagle Lake (689.75). We will also check out the recent logging activity.

Following the hike lunch will be served at Ellen & Dave Whitehead's on Little Twin Lake (Just a 3-mile drive from the hike's end on Sunset Trail). Ellen will provide brats, hot dogs and baked beans. Please bring a dish to pass. Somehow, we will ferry people back to their cars.

Question? – call or text Bob Courtois at 248-212-6699 (put your name in the text so I know who it is). For picnic info, you can also call Ellen Whitehead 231-350-9057.



Dave and Ellen at last year's picnic

Jordan Valley Benches part II

Story and pictures by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

JORDAN VALLEY BENCHES – Jordan River Road

On the Jordan River Valley Pathway, between Landslide Creek Overlook and Jordan River Rd. there are two spring fed creeks. Walking north from Landslide, the first is Section 13 Creek. The second, unnamed creek, has a bench about a mile from Jordan River Road. This bench is one of three installed by BSA Troop 17, from East Jordan, in the mid-90s. Unlike the other two, between Landslide Overlook and Cascade Creeks, and the one near Pinney Bridge Campground, this one is fairly easy to decipher. Wear, tear and graffiti have obscured much of what was written so long ago. As best as I can determine, here is what is written.



On Top Left end of the bench:

1. YOU ARE BETWEEN STOPS 19- THE JORDAN RIVER
2. ROAD SEGMENT – 3.1 MI. AND STOP 20 – THE
3. WHITE SPRUCE SEGMENT – WHICH IS TOWARD
4. DEADMANS HILL. STOP 18 IS THE LANDSLIDE
5. CREEK OVERLOOK.

In the Center two boards is a big map of the Jordan Valley noting:
EAST JORDAN, JORDAN RIVER PATHWAY, DEADMANS HILL, GAYLORD
PINNEY BRIDGE, YOU ARE HERE, 18, 19, 20, LANDSLIDE OVERLOOK, U.S. 131

The numbers apparently refer to the numbered “Stops” you see on the tall post installed long ago throughout the valley. If anyone has a map or brochure listing those stops, please let me know.

On Top Right end of the bench:

1. TROOP 17 EAST JORDAN
2. BSA

JV45 Leadership Meeting April 25th, 2024

East Jordan Marina park

Members in attendance: Kevin Whitley, Jim Howell, Bob Courtois, Mary Campbell, Doug Seaney, Dan Dueweke, Annie Matz, Duane Lawton

Meeting called to order at 10:06a.m. by Kevin Whitley

October meeting minutes approved by all. Annual meeting minutes approved by all.

NCTA news from Kevin: Nothing new

JV45 Financial report/budget by Kevin: 122 members, Account balance: \$7600

Expected revenue: Nothing planned

Expected Expenditures: Nothing planned

2024 Work Projects by Duane Lawton

NCTA trail protection/Paul is coming for a site visit on May 4-5. Duane will host a dinner at his home on May 4th for all J45 leaders to meet with Paul. Attempts will be made to contact Joe Taylor to see if he'll agree to meet with Paul and Duane to discuss an easement across his property so we can reroute the trail off Dobleski Rd.

Cedar Valley reroute: nothing new

Notestine property: plan to discuss with Paul

Signs and Interpretive panels: One left to place and Kendall from city of Petoskey will let us know if we can place it behind Kilwin's along the trail.

Wet area SW of 3 Tubes: Dan has permit and cedar trees available on his neighbor's property. A work bee will be scheduled to build steps and puncheon. May get SEEDS to help.

Bob mentioned a broken board at Skyline Shelter and Duane says he can fix it while Paul is here.

Mary has noticed the puncheon in the NCMC needs attention.

Duane contacted Tom at the DNR about the muddy parking area at Warner Creek. Tom will plan to fix when the weather dries.

Duane reports the deal for the city of Petoskey to buy the land where the Skyline Shelter sits fell through. Duane will attempt to schedule a meeting with current owner Doug Boor to discuss a resolution.

Miscellaneous Administrative Items:

Quiet Adventures at MSU: Kevin and Dan attended and Dan presented.

Kevin recently attended a meeting with the Petoskey Snowmobile Club concerning a reroute of their current trail which may cross the NCT near McDougal Rd. Another meeting is scheduled the afternoon of April 25 and Mary has agreed to attend.

Chain saw training: Next class is scheduled on June 8 in Munising.

Trail Adopter Report by Dan Dueweke:

Lots of blow downs: Please contact Dan if you have cleared your trail or if you need assistance clearing.

Dan is forming a roving crew to help with poorly maintained sections. Please let Dan know if you are interested in joining the crew.

Monthly Hikes by Bob Courtois:

May 18 hike is planned for Johnson Rd to Brubaker Rd.

June 15 hike is planned for Starvation Lake Rd with lunch to follow at Ellen Whitehead's home.

2024 Events:

5/25 Petoskey Marathon, contact Kevin or Sue if you would like to help at the aid station.

6/1 National Trails Day: no plan yet

Sept: Wild Things family hike: Sue will plan

8/22: NCTA Celebration in St Ignace

10/19: Trail Adopters Appreciation Party at Chandler Twp Hall (Annie will reserve)

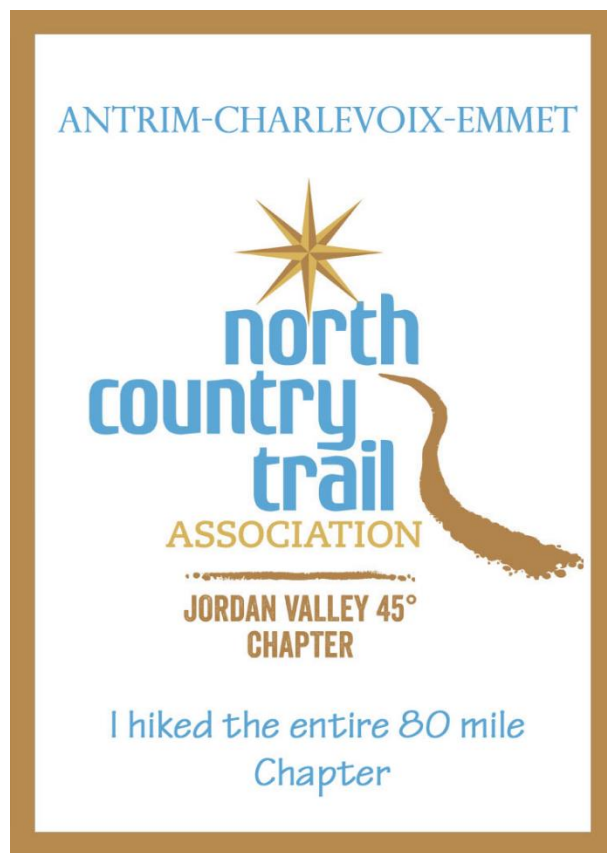
January 2025: Annual Meeting: Looking for a location. Mary will check on Resort twp. hall. May consider a potluck. Need ideas for a presenter or program.

Next Meeting June 27 at 5:30pm at Jim's house and he is making pizza!

Meeting adjourned at 11:35am

Minutes typed by Annie Matz

Secretary/Treas JV45



New Patch for hiking entire JV45° Chapter

CURRENT JV45° GOVERNING BOARD

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