



Jordan Valley 45° Chapter Newsletter

March 2023

President's Message

from Kevin Whitley kjw@torchlake.com

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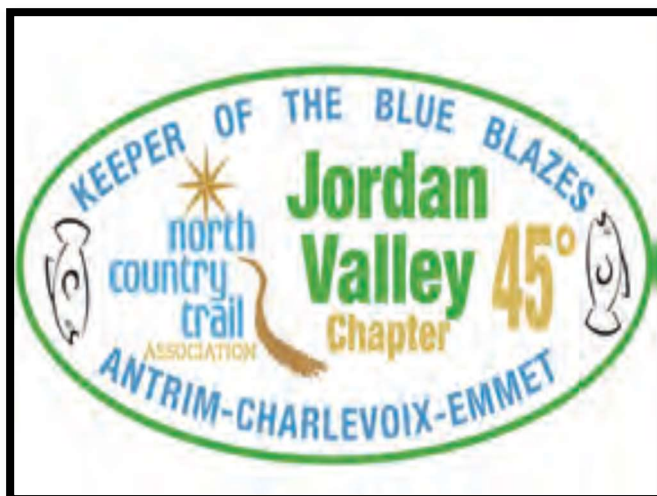
[Click here for link to Jordan Valley 45° page on NCTA website](#)

[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 hikers; Things are progressing well with the Jordan Valley Chapter. We had a leadership meeting on February 23 at The Foundry in East Jordan. I recently visited the North Country Trail Headquarters in Lowell, Michigan. The office is located in a storefront in downtown Lowell. The store is open to the public and anyone can stop in and pick up trail information or buy trail gear. The NCT goes through downtown Lowell following along the Flat River near the confluence with the Grand River. I hiked a total of 11 miles mostly in the Lowell State Game Area. I was surprised to see some hills in the area. A short white-blaze hike off of the NCT will take you to The Fallasburg Covered Bridge, built in 1870 and still used today for cars. After my time spent in Lowell, I moved on to MSU to attend the Quiet Adventures Symposium (see article on page 2). Join us for upcoming chapter hikes as we experience the woods turning to spring. It's also not too early to give thought to attending the annual celebration in eastern NY this September!



Upcoming Group Hikes:

March 18 – Jordan Valley hike, meet at Warner Creek Parking lot

April 15 – TBD

The Trail is Poetry to Me

Fallowed – Ellen Whitehead

I wave hello to
winter's fallowed ways as she
graces the landscape



Sketches – Ellen Whitehead

Winter its canvas
a bronze beech branch sketches like
a gypsy artist



Quiet Adventures Symposium

Lansing, Michigan - Saturday, March 4, 2023

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

On March 4th we had a wonderful day at the 28th Quiet Adventures Symposium in East Lansing! This year's in-person event was held at the Michigan State University Pavilion. Originally named "Quiet Waters", the symposium was renamed to reflect the other participating "quiet sports" organizations.

Despite the little blizzard that blew through Friday night, the Saturday event was heavily attended. The day-long event featured guest speakers, gear demonstrations, raffles, special kids' activities and more than 100 exhibitors, all dedicated to "quiet" outdoor adventures such as hiking, biking, backpacking, paddling and fishing.

About fifteen members from four different Michigan Chapters of the NCTA staffed the display booths. The set-ups included videos, picture boards, maps and various handouts. Chapters represented included Hiawatha Shore-to-Shore, Chief Noonday,

Grand Traverse Hiking Club and, of course, the Jordan Valley 45°. From the JV45 we had Kevin Whitley, Dan Dueweke and Bob Courtois.



The NCTA's own Kenny Wawsczyk gave a presentation all about the NCTA that drew more people than what the meeting room could hold (Kenny will have to start charging admission). Other guest speakers covered a wide range of topics and interests, including multiple presentations on Isle Royale, introductions to stand-up paddleboarding and orienteering, how to protect oneself from bears and ticks, camping tips, gravel biking, e-biking and more.

More information on Quiet Adventures can be found at quietwatersociety.org

BUILD IT

Let's Get To Work



Story and pictures by Duane Lawton

delawton@torchlake.com

Duane has been very busy hiking around the USA (and the rest of the world). See his "where I Hiked report on page 8. Still hopeful to obtain permissions for the Dobleski Rd. re-route. 2023 looks like it may be a year of smaller maintenance items. Stay tuned as Spring gets closer for opportunities.

Trail Maintenance Update

Dan Dueweke - dandueweke@gmail.com

Looking forward to Spring! As the weather warms and snow fades away (eventually), it will be helpful to know places in need of attention. As you hike JV45°, note any fallen trees, washouts and high water, or failing puncheon boards. Copy me on the location and include a picture or two for scale. We've got 8 JV45° members signed up for chainsaw classes in May and June!

Hike the Chapter - 80 miles of FUN!

September 8 – 12, 2023

Duane Lawton – delawton@torchlake.com

Hike The Chapter 2023

In October 2021, four of us (Mary, Jim, Nick, Duane) hiked the entire chapter trail south to north over five days. Three nights we camped out, one night we went home due to weather. We “slack-packed”—our packs were ferried for us by generous collaborators so we didn’t have to carry them all day. On the fourth day by pre-arrangement, we joined up with the monthly chapter group hike from Springvale Rd. to Krause Rd. It was a blast!

So, we’re going to do it again in 2023. This time, hiking north to south, again five days, four nights, again slack pack camping. ...and in September instead of October.

September 8-12

Day 1, Friday: 17.2 miles - Kipp Road trail head to Skyline Shelter.

Day 2, Saturday: 15.7 miles - Skyline Shelter to Chandler Hill Road. Join JV45 monthly group hike. Disperse camp (tents)

Day 3, Sunday: 13.7 miles - Chandler Hill Road to Dobleski Road. Disperse camp (tents)

Day 4, Monday: 15.9 miles - Dobleski Road to Pinney Bridge SFCG. Tent camp established sites, outhouses, fire rings

Day 5, Tuesday: 16.8 miles - Pinney Bridge SFCG to Starvation Lake Road.

You are welcome to participate. Join us! ...it’s a great way to nail “Hike 100”. Please let me know your intentions. Closer to the hike we’ll be working out detailed logistics.

- Do you want to do the whole thing?
- Do you want to do part (which days)?
- Do you want to help support the hike (shuttle people and gear)?
(we’ll work out in detail when you can and what)



January 21st Group Hike Report – Mancelona Snowshoe Hike

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

Fortunately, we received 5 or 6 inches of fresh snow on Thursday and the trees were still heavily coated with the snow. Absolutely beautiful. The temperatures were in the low 20's and only a little breeze in the open areas. Perfect. Despite the fresh snow, and a decent base of ice and snow left over from the Christmas blizzard, there were surprisingly few snow mobiles (only one trailer at the ORV lot).

Today, we had twelve hikers and no dogs. Our Secretary Annie Matz brought along her sister Tina Drost from Charlevoix (and Beaver Island). This was Tina's first hike with us. Twelve was a nice but small turnout. In 2019 we had 35 people for this hike.

Nine of us met at the ORV lot on Mancelona Rd. and then we then ferried everyone to the Cinder Hill Rd. trail crossing where three more hikers were waiting (Sue and Mary & John). After Duane grabbed a group picture, three hikers headed south while nine of us went west about .7 miles to Five Lake and then back to Cinder Hill Rd.



We had a spirited debate of where the name "Five Lake" came from. From the trail you can see two or three lakes. But Kevin found a map on his phone that, indeed, shows there are five lakes. Puzzling, the name Five Lake is singular. While we were at it, we pondered where the name "Cinder Hill" came from. The only hill of note on the entire length of Cinder Hill Rd. is about a quarter mile south of the trail crossing. Is that it?

The four miles north between Five Lake and Landslide Overlook is, perhaps, one of the least hiked sections in the JV45°. Most of it is decent road walk (low traffic and pretty). From Five Lake south to Mancelona Rd. the trail is all off-road trail through mixed hardwoods and pines. The first mile from Cinder Hill Rd. to Whispering Pines Rd. is a bit hilly, but after that it is fairly flat and bumps up against farm fields. Near Bocook Rd., the fresh snow has revealed a lot of deer, small animal and coyote tracks. South of Scholl Rd., along the east

end of the farm fields, the snow blows into the woods and it gets quite a bit deeper in the “Zastrugi” (snow blown into ridges and grooves).



Despite all the logging in recent years, the thinned parts of the woods are recovering nicely, but the areas where they clear-cut still look devastated. Along the farm fields, over the course of the year, it's interesting to watch the changes as the crops are sown, grow and are harvested. We should try a monthly hike here in the summer.

Bob's feet were hurting so he couldn't do the complete hike and instead provided ferry service. Sue Miller hurt her ankle in late December and so went only as far as Bocook Rd. where Bob picked her up for a ride back to her car. He then met hikers at the trail crossing on Mancelona Rd. and gave lifts back to the ORV lot. Duane and Dan took a shortcut to the ORV lot via the power lines.

Following the hike, 8 of the 12 went to the Green Lantern pub in Alba (three miles from the trail crossing on Cinder Hill Rd.). The pops, food and service were great.

February 18th Group Hike Report – Starvation Lake Rd. to Sand Lake

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

Weather – For February, it was a balmy day in the upper 20s, a little wind and partly sunny. It has been a mild winter and the accumulated snow was not that deep, but enough for snowshoes. We had 5 with snowshoes and 5 without. Although this area has had near average snow, the whoop de doo warmups have thinned out the base. Luckily, we had 5 or 6 inches on Thursday night that freshened up the trail. The National Weather Service says this area has receive 108 inches season to date. This is at about 93% of normal. We can expect an average of 149 inches for the season. In 2007, we received a record 188 inches. The forecast for the coming week is for over a foot. Bring it on.

We had ten hikers today, including one new member of the chapter, Sulo Otto from Petoskey. Welcome aboard Sulo! We all gathered at the freshly plowed ORV lot near the Starvation Lake Rd. trail crossing. Wow, nobody's vehicle got stuck this year! The first part of the hike was a round trip one mile south to MacNeil Pond. The name says "Pond" but it is actually a pretty good size lake. Mostly flat, this mile of trail is well maintained by the Grand Traverse Hiking Club. At MacNeil Pond there are still two large beaver lodges but, again, no fresh signs of beavers.



After returning to Starvation Lake Rd., we checked in at the JV 45 register box and headed north 2.5 miles to Sand Lake. The trail adopters for this southern-most part of the JV45 are Ellen Whitehead and Jim & Denise DeKett. (They could not make it today.) The first half mile is beautiful red pine forest that we believe was a CCC planting from the 30's. Of note is a tree stump that was cut probably well before 1900. It has to be one of the biggest diameter trees in the J45.



After continuing a mile north from the pines, past the oil collection station and the new communications tower, there is a mile or so stretch that was logged out a few years ago. Although clear cut, for most of it, the loggers left a nice uncut corridor around the trail that is maybe 100 feet wide. Supposedly this is what loggers are supposed to do all the time, but it only happens if the equipment operator gets the word. Anyway, the remaining trees create a snow fence, so the snow was deeper and textured with "zastrugi" (snow blown into ridges and grooves). Wil Shapton pointed out that zastrugi (or sastrugi) also refers to what happens when gravel roads turn into a bone jarring washboard surface.

When we reached Sand Lake, the sun was trying to come out but the sky never really cleared up. This large lake is a “kettle lake”, with no feeder creeks or drains, and rises and falls over the years with the water table. Currently, the water level is up three or four feet and covers much of the beach and trail. Over the years the trail has been shifted up and down the hill with the water level. After stopping for a snack, we headed back to Starvation Lake Rd.

With the fresh snow this week, there were a lot of snowmobilers out but usually this area is pretty quiet. There are plenty of snowmobile trails and the snowmobiles usually stay off the foot trails. Even with the fresh snow, there was not a lot of animal tracks or other evidence of wildlife.

Speaking of snowmobiles and wildlife, following the hike, we wanted to stop at Hide-A-Way Bar. The place was too packed with snowmobilers so four of us went to the Iron Skillet in Mancelona, which has great food but the only beer is root beer.



Where I Hiked – Mt. Cook, New Zealand

Story by Duane Lawton – delawton@torchlake.com

While on a two-week tour of the South Island of New Zealand in February (their “August”), we took a walk on the Hooker Lake Track out-and-back 6-1/2 miles with 630 feet ascent in 3-1/2 hours. The scenery was amazing. We started from our accommodations in the town of Twizel on an hour-long bus ride to the trailhead in Mt. Cook Village.

The trails in New Zealand that we hiked are very well built, wide, usually gravel, with bridges and boardwalks to envy. On this walk there were three swing bridges crossing glacial rivers. There were a lot of hikers on the trail, it is very popular because you reach the shore of Hooker Lake, which is formed by the melt from Hooker Glacier which is at the foot of Mt. Cook.

Mt. Cook, the highest mountain in New Zealand—at over 12,000’—is snow-covered year-round. Here in the “Southern Alps” there are many glaciers. When we reached the shore of Hooker Lake many of us had our picture taken standing on a large boulder. Our tour guide (“Taz”) went swimming....to an iceberg! We spent an hour here just taking in the scene.





A week earlier I took an airplane ride over the Southern Alps and got a picture of Hooker Lake, without realizing I would be hiking down there later. You can see the foot of Hooker Glacier in the lower left, and the river the swing bridges cross beyond...



There is a lot to see in New Zealand, and outstanding hiking. There are the "Ten Great Walks" of New Zealand, including the famous "Milford Track". We also walked part (a short part) of the Abel Tasman Coast Track, and the Routeburn Track. Interesting fact – the Southern Alps are at **45° S** latitude (halfway between the South Pole and the equator!)

JV45 Leadership Meeting February 23, 2023 - 5:15pm

Members present: Kevin Whitley, Jim Howell, Dan Dueweke, Doug Seaney, Evelyn Howell

Call to order 5:23pm

Minutes from 10/27/22 motion and seconded by Jim and Doug; approved as presented

News from NCTA via Kevin

NCTA has purchased land in Ross township near Kellogg bird sanctuary

HQ is looking to update email lists and eliminate duplicate emails

Kevin attended a zoom meeting to learn about NCTA attending the "hike the hill" event in Washington DC.

Chainsaw training in Rapid City only had one person sign up – **actually had some late sign ups so 5 from JV45 with one "observer" and 8 from other chapters so total of 14. (editor)*

There is a NCTA zoom call on 3/29/23 at 6pm to discuss trail protection as it pertains to landowner relations and easements.

The 2022 trail progress report is available online

Financial report: we have 113 members and an account balance of \$6300

2023 work projects: several in process of approval and land owner permissions to get trail off road. Dobleski rd., Cedar Valley, Kipp Rd, Notestein property. Need to finish building sign kiosks at Duane's house for install early spring.

Adopter report – Dan Dueweke – not much action right now, too much snow cover. Will likely put out an email blast in spring to ask all members and friends to provide feedback on trail conditions for spring log out. Adding a second Pulaski tool to the Petoskey tool box.

Dan and Kevin are attending the quiet adventures symposium in Lansing on March 4th.

June 3rd is National trails day Sue Bouwense and Dove Day working on Wild Things adventure for kids and families; location to be decided. Sue is checking with Harbor Springs chapter to see if they want to combine efforts with us; but no response yet.

NCTA day is 9/23 – we are tentatively doing a hike of all chapter miles during that period, dates to be firmed up by Duane and Jim. Trying to coordinate NCTA day, Chapter group hike and National celebration.

National celebration is in East NY near Vermont border 9/27/23

Miscellaneous: Jim Howell is still working on a trail structure inventory. Kevin has made some inquiries about a patch for anyone hiking all of our chapter miles. Suggest he talk to Joan Young or Harbor Springs Chapter as they both have dealt with patch ordering and pricing. Evelyn Howell working on a Jr. hiker program to encourage young kids to get rewards for exploring the JV45 trail. Perhaps a QR code at the trailhead that links to “what to look for here” page on our website.

Next meeting April 27th, 2023

Meeting adjourned at 6:18pm moved and seconded by Doug and Dan

Minutes by Doug Seaney filling in as secretary.

CURRENT JV45° GOVERNING BOARD

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