



Jordan Valley 45° Chapter Newsletter

March 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;

On March 2nd, Dan Dueweke and I attended the Quiet Adventures Symposium at Michigan State University. 7 different chapters of the North Country Trail Association with around 21 members hosted a booth where we answered questions and introduced attendees to our trail. The Quiet Adventures Group estimated about 1500 people were at the symposium. Dan Dueweke was a featured presenter and talked to a group about his experience helping the NCTA with a post-tornado log out on the Border Route in the Boundary Water Canoe Area of Minnesota.

The Quiet Waters Symposium is a good chance to educate the public and encourage participation in non-motorized outdoor recreation. The day is also an opportunity to promote public concern and support environmental stewardship and conservation of natural resources of the Great Lakes Region. Previously known as Quiet Waters, with an emphasis on paddling canoes and kayaks, the group now includes bicycling, hiking, backpacking and other quiet outdoor activities. Thanks to Dan for allowing me to ride along as he drove to East Lansing. We went down the day before and helped set up the booth and we had dinner near the campus and rooms on campus.

Congratulations to Bob Courtois, the recipient of the North Country Trail Association honor award for 2023 for his extraordinary volunteer effort to lead a monthly hike for the Jordan Valley 45 Chapter. Bob has been leading hikes once a month for longer than I have been a member which must be more than 5 years. The award is normally presented at our annual meeting in January, but this year the meeting took place before the award was ready so I presented the award to Bob at our March hike.

Upcoming Group Hikes:

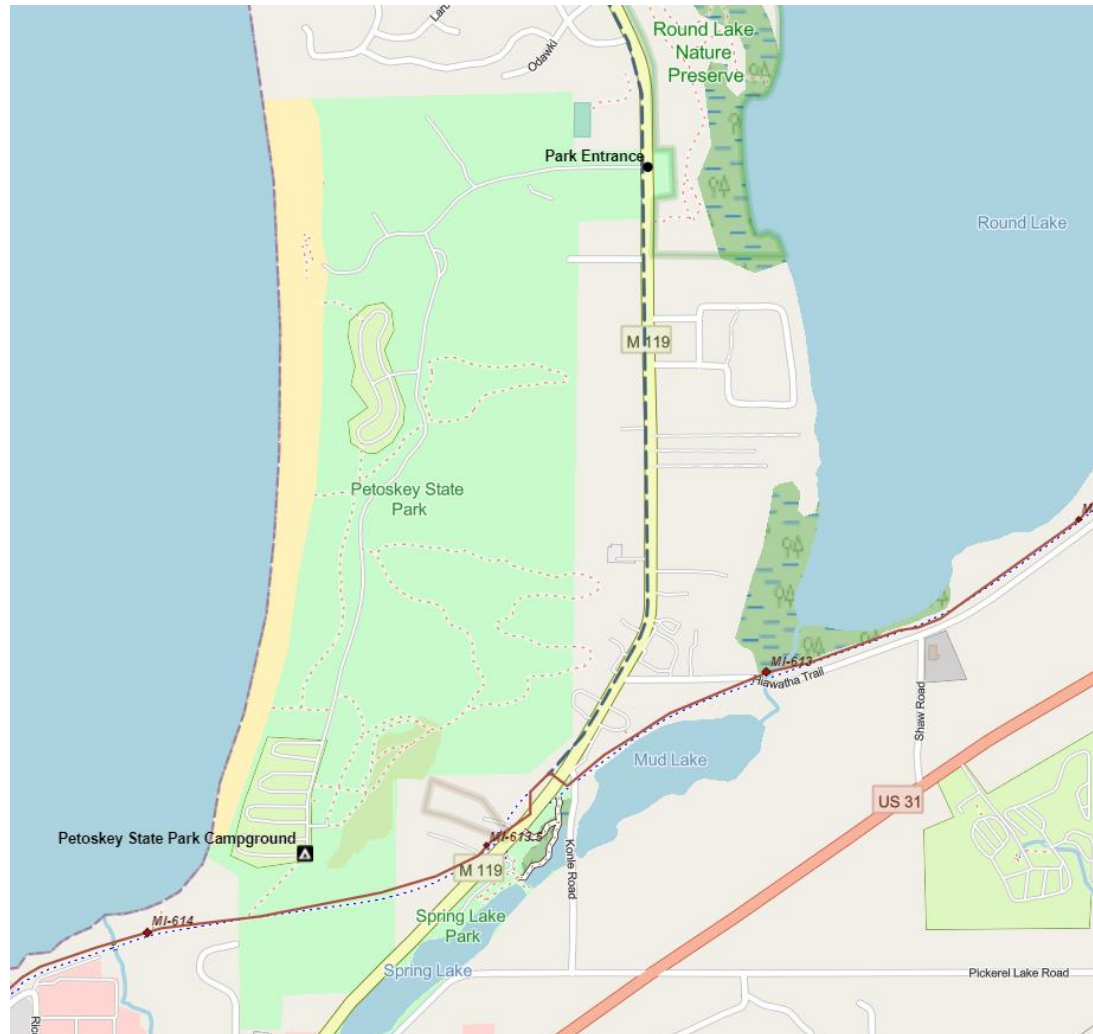
April 20 – TBD?

Petoskey State Park – Stakeholders meeting

Story by Doug Seaney

dseaney@hotmail.com

The Michigan DNR is working on an improvement plan for Petoskey State Park in autumn of 2024. As our section of the trail runs through the southern part of the park; we were invited to attend a stakeholder meeting to discuss current status of the park and share thoughts on priorities of possible projects at the park. On March 11th, I attended a 2-hour session at the Petoskey Library along with about 24 other folks from various areas. Local chambers of commerce, visitor's bureau, city and county parks departments, Top of Michigan mountain bikers, Top of MI trails council, local sewer department, and several folks that work with homeless people that are sometimes found camping in the park. It was the first of several meetings and it was interesting to hear the varied viewpoints. We were asked to brainstorm ideas for changes and then vote on our top three choices. Happy to say completing / improving trails and signage was one of the top 3 chosen by all the members attending. It was ironic that the three people in attendance from trail organizations all ended up sitting at the same table without even knowing we had trails in common. I guess we trail folks can find our people without even trying!



There is a link on-line to complete a survey if anyone is interested in completing it. [The Survey is here and ends March 22nd.](#)

Michigan DNR E-Bike Survey – Must respond by March 31st

Another opportunity to let your voice be heard. There is a current proposal to expand bike use to include E-bikes on State Park managed trails. For more information about the intent and impact of this proposal can be [Found Here](#). There is a link at the end of the press release that take you to a survey on e-bike use. The interactive map of the over 3000 miles of state managed trail that would be impacted shows most of the North Country Trail Michigan would potentially allow e-bike usage on State managed lands.

January 20th Group Hike Report – Deadman’s Hill to Warner Creek

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

We had terrific winter weather for snow shoeing. We had over two feet of snow this past week and it was 5 to 10 degrees during the hike, but little wind. Unbelievably, we had twenty-six hikers find their way to the Warner Creek Trailhead. About half were first timers hiking with the J45 and none were from other chapters. After introductions, we ferried everyone to the end of the plowed portion of East Deadman’s Hill Road, about a quarter mile from Deadman’s overlook.

Because of the deep snow, this was a challenging hike so we had 17 people opt for the shorter 4-mile hike while 9 people went the full 6.5 miles. From the

overlook we took the spur hill directly into the valley and signed in at the register box. From there a group of nine headed a mile or so south to the overlook at the beaver ponds. Along the way, we checked out the springs and humpy bumpy conditions under Deadman’s Hill. After a break and crispy treats, the group headed back toward hikes-end at the trailhead on M32 (Warner Creek).



The larger short hike group of 17 went directly north toward M32. The trail was all clear, except for a very large tree down near Jordan River Road (JRRd) that we had to tromp around. Although Bob had been out on Friday and broke trail, with the large group the snow packed down on the path for easier walking.

The large amount of snow this past week was the first real big snow of the season, so the snowmobilers were out in force on JRRd. They are good about staying on the road and off the hiking trails. We noted the potential of a reroute that could get a quarter mile off JRRd. Still, we would need to jog onto JRRd in order to cross the Jordan River.



After the river a little way, there is a 2021 reroute that got the trail off the sunken road leading to O'Brien Pond and the elevated walkway over the world famous and deceptive Beaver Deceiver. From there it's a little over a mile back to the trailhead. No one opted to hike the Warner Creek loop. Near the trailhead Bob finished his 2024, 100 mile challenge!



Although most went home, several people did go to Forx in Elmira for pops and chili. The food was good but a bit slow. The February 17th hike location is TBD but either Starvation Lake Rd. to Sand Lake, or Cinder Hill to Mancelona Rd.

February 17th Group Hike Report – Mancelona Snowshoe hike

Story by Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

This season has seen lowest snowfall in many years but winter returned this week and saved the day. Although we had a 2-foot storm in January, most of that had melted off but there was still a base of snow in the woods. Until this week we all wondered if we would even need snowshoes. Fortunately, we received 6 to 8 inches of fresh snow on Wednesday to Friday and the trees were heavily coated with the snow. The temperatures were in the upper teens and very breezy in the open areas and it snowed off and on.

By 10:30 we had fourteen hikers (no dogs) at the ORV lot on Mancelona and Sand Lake Rds. After Duane grabbed a group picture, we ferried everyone to the Cinder Hill Rd. trail crossing.





First, we did a warm up hike west about a half mile to Five Lake and then back to Cinder Hill Road. From the trail you can see two or three lakes, but on a map, you can see there are indeed five lakes at Five Lake (singular). From Cinder Hill crossing we headed south back to Mancelona Road. The first mile was a bit of a slog uphill in the deep snow. We stopped to let everyone catch their breath and grab a snack. We don't know officially if the hill's name is "Cinder Hill" but it's the only hill of note on the entire length of Cinder Hill Rd., which runs from Alba down to near Starvation Lake Road.

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 mostly uphill, but after that it is fairly flat and bumps up against farm fields. Even with the fresh snow we did not see a lot of animal 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). At Bocook Rd. Duane and Donna decided to walk the road back to ORV lot as a short cut, while the rest of us followed the trail.





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). With the return of deep snow, snowmobilers were out in force. As we walked the last 100 yards to Mancelona Rd., we encountered two snowmobiles coming up the HIKING trail even though it is clearly marked as a HIKING trail. They did turn around when they saw us and claimed ignorance, but they knew. I must say we don’t often have problems with snowmobilers, probably because much of the path is too narrow. Maybe creating choke points near trailhead for ORVs should be part of our maintenance plan.

Following the hike, 7 of the 14 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.

Trail Maintenance Update

Dan Dueweke - dandueweke@gmail.com

The trailheads are becoming accessible earlier than normal with all this warm weather, and adopters can get a snow-free look at their trails now to determine maintenance needs. Please let me know if you need any assistance and I will spread the word. Particularly if you are not chainsaw certified and find down trees needing chain saw work please let me know location using Avenza map mile markers or at least a GPS location if you have either of those available to you. A picture of the tree is helpful so we can plan on what tools may be needed.

Jordan Valley Benches

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

Between Landslide Overlook and Cascade Creek there is bench by the bridge over Section 13 Creek.

If you’ve ever tried to decipher what is written on the bench, you know it is difficult to read what was written many years ago. It appears each letter was stamped in with a lettering tool.



Wear, tear and graffiti have obscured much of what was written long ago. So, as best as I can determine, here is what is written.



Troop 17 E A, BSA, 53 OP

On the left end of the bench:

THE SOURCE OF THIS CREEK IS JUST ABOVE THE SMALL WATER FALL. THE CAREFUL OBSERVER MAY

NOTICETHAT THE WOOD DAMMING UP THE WATERFALL HAD BEEN CUT BY MAN. THE LOGGERS USED THE POND TO DRAW WATER TO ICE DOWN THE LOGGING SKID ROAD THAT YOU ARE STANDING ON AND AS A WATERING POND FOR HORSES.



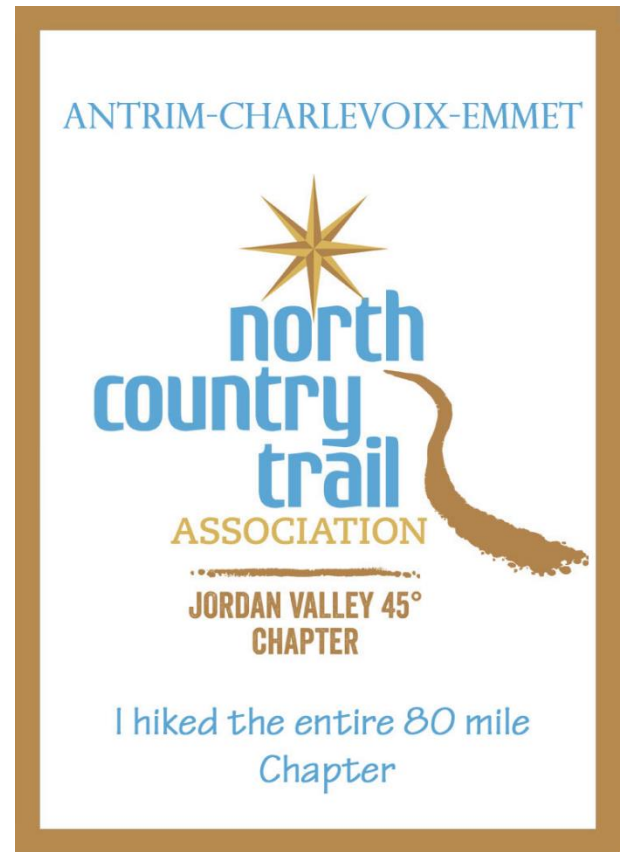
In the center of the bench:
JORDAN RIVER PATHWAY
A map of the Jordan Valley (see pic)
On the right end of the bench:
FOR TED. HE LOVED
FAMILY FRIENDS AND
THE OUTDOORS.



Please let me know if you have any information on the installation date or other background on this bench and the other bench located at the overlook north of Pinney Bridge Campground. – Bob Courtois

NCTA Volunteers at Quiet Adventures Symposium





New Patch for hiking entire JV45° Chapter

CURRENT JV45° GOVERNING BOARD

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