



# Jordan Valley 45° Chapter Newsletter

March 2025

## President's Message

Kevin Whitley [kjwtorchlake@gmail.com](mailto:kjwtorchlake@gmail.com)

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### Important Links:

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

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

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

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

The work of improving and promoting the North Country Trail continues through the winter. The leadership team had a regular scheduled meeting in February where we discussed future trail projects and events. Duane updated the team on his meeting with Paul and Kenny from the NCTA where they continue to look for ways to reduce the length of road walks. Duane and I traveled to Michigan State University for the annual Quiet Adventures Symposium. Four Chapters (Grand Traverse, Chief Noonday, Hiawatha Shore to Shore, Jordan Valley 45) with about 15 members staffed a large four table booth where we promoted the North Country Trail to attendees. The Quiet Adventures Society presents this symposium with presentations, workshops, and booths to people interested in canoeing, kayaking, hiking, backpacking, travel, bicycling, running, and similar “quiet” activities.



## Upcoming Hikes

March 15th Group Hike – Johnson to Brubaker & possible campfire  
April 15<sup>th</sup> Group Hike – Springvale to Harmon

# BUILD IT

## Let's Get To Work



By Duane Lawton  
delawton@torchlake.com

### THREE REROUTE PROJECTS

Major reroutes (Dobleski>Giem, Kuzmik>Slashing) are still pending landowner agreements. 😊 So, this year we have three minor projects to do...

**One:** A half mile of new trail west of US-131. Logging tore up a section of trail, and there is a perennial thorny berry patch we will also now avoid. This work weekend is scheduled for National Trails Day—June 7-8. More details coming, we hope to arrange for a camping event.

**Two:** Impending logging north of Springvale Road means we will proactively move two short trail sections off of where logging equipment is destined to travel. See banner. Not a huge project, date tbd.

**Three:** Turns out our trail slips onto private land in Lakes of the North at Scholl Road. We need to move a couple hundred feet of trail a little west onto state land. Probably a small group just show up and do it. If you want to help, let me know.

The Skyline Shelter is on private land which is being sold. We have explored moving the shelter, and it is not practical. We hope to build a replacement on City of Petoskey property to the east of Skyline. Lots of planning required so this is most likely a 2026 project. Meanwhile we plan to visit the shelter during our March 15 group hike, and may have a campfire...



NCT Table at Quiet Adventures Symposium

## January 18th Group Hike Report– Deadman’s Hill to Warner Creek Trailhead

Story by – Bob Courtois - bcourtois@comcast.net

Eleven people and one dog showed up by 10AM. Many of them were new hikers with the J45. We had snow flurries, temps in the mid-teens and a little breezy. The snow was deep and a tiny bit crisp from the previous evening’s light drizzle. At least two people could not make it because it rained in Kalkaska and the roads were icy. So, after a few pictures we headed, in four cars, to Deadman’s hill. As typical for this time of the season, E. Deadman’s Hill Rd. was plowed to about a quarter mile from the overlook. Ten people had snowshoes and one person, and the dog, wore boots, but the dog could not keep her boots on. Everyone warmed up walking up to Deadman’s Overlook where we enjoyed the view with several snowmobilers.





The wind at the overlook was brisk so we did not linger very long and we split into two groups, one for a short 3.7 mile hike and the other for a 6 mile hike. Since Bob had to get to Detroit for the Lions game (lost to Washington), he opted for the short hike with three others. The half mile down Deadman's Hill was not too bad as the snow actually provided traction. Kevin and Bob broke trail, while Sherry and Jane followed. Sherry struggled a bit since she had not snowshoed in these conditions for a while, but she persevered, and we did not abandon her.



Once down Deadman's Hill the wind was blocked by the trees and the balance of the hike more comfortable. From Deadman's it is a mile to Jordan River Rd. where the going was a bit easier due to the packed snowmobile tracks. We cheated a little by taking a shortcut on the sunken road to O'Brien Pond and around the hilly 2020 reroute. This made it a bit easier for Sherry. At O'Brien, the world-famous Beaver Deceiver seems to be working well and the last mile back to Warner Creek Trailhead has tracks from both snowshoes and cross-country skiers.

The fate of the seven people who took the longer hike is unknown....

The longer group did survive and met up with Kevin back at the parking lot.

After the hike, rumor has it, a few people went to Forx restaurant in Elmira.



### ORV's in the Jordan Valley –

Although the proposal to allow ORV's was dropped last year we ask that any of our members that live in the affected townships keep their ears open for this proposal coming up again this year. The townships that the trail passes through are Warner, Star and Chestonia. If you hear any news, please let one of the leadership team know.

### February 15th Group Hike Report – Starvation Lake Rd to Sand Lake

Story by Bob Courtois - [bcourtois@comcast.net](mailto:bcourtois@comcast.net)

Weather – Can you say snow? DEEEEEEP snow and it snowed all day. Temperatures were in the teens and low wind, perfect. It has definitely been one of the snowiest winters on record with temperatures seldom above freezing since December. Obviously, snowshoes were mandatory. The National Weather Service says this area has received 171 inches season to date, about 153% of normal. We can expect an average of 149 inches for the season. In 2007, we received a record 188 inches and with more snow in the forecast we can expect a new record year. Bring it on.



We had ten hikers today, including one new member of the NCTA, Nicole who just moved up to Cadillac area from Sturgis. Welcome aboard Nicole! We all gathered at the ORV lot near the Starvation Lake Rd. trail crossing. Wow, nobody's vehicle got stuck this year! The first part of the hike was an out and back 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. With the deep snow we took turns "breaking trail", which made it considerably easier for the people behind. At MacNeil Pond there are still two large beaver lodges but, again, no fresh signs of beavers. The return trip to Starvation Lake Rd. was much easier and faster.



After returning to Starvation Lake Rd., we were joined by three more hikers, 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 a 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 and more last year. 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 directed to do all the time, but it only happens if the equipment operator gets the word. Anyway, the remaining trees create a sort of snow fence so, here, the snow was even deeper.



When we reached Sand Lake, we were all pretty tired, so we skipped walking around to the north side of the lake and, instead, we took a snack break. 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 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. Anyway, after resting and getting cold, we took pictures and headed back to Starvation Lake Rd. Oh yeah, on the way back Bob hit his 100 miles for the NCT annual 100-mile challenge. Most of it was on snowshoes in the JV45.



With the snow we were surprised to not see/hear more snowmobiles. This area has many ORV/snowmobile trails but it is still usually pretty quiet. We didn't see many animal tracks or other evidence of wildlife. Speaking of snowmobiles and wildlife, the Hide-A-Way Bar lot was pretty full of snowmobiles so seven of us opted to go to the Iron Skillet in Mancelona, which has great food.

Next Hike – March 18<sup>th</sup>- Location TBD.



Lovely Nature Words – From Ellen Whitehead

Komorebi – Sunlight filtering through trees

Psithurism (sith-yuh-riz-uhm) – Hear the wind passing through trees. The sound of rustling leaves or wind in the trees

Petrichor – The earthy, pleasant smell after a rain

Dendrophile – One who finds poetry in the forest's heart, who feels a deep connection with the woods, a lover of trees



## “Q & A with Tamara Krembs – On hiking all of Michigan Miles of NCT

Back in January of 2024 we featured an article about the four JV45 members that have completed all of the Michigan miles on the North Country Trail. Happy to feature another JV45 member that has completed all Michigan miles. Thank you, Tammy, for sharing your story; the trail is an amazing and special place.

### **1 – What were your starting and ending dates, and starting and ending locations?**

Mackinaw Bridge 2009 was the first time on official trail. Ended Aug 2024 at Wisconsin border.

### **2 – What was your favorite section of trail?**

It is hard to pick just one. I'm going to say Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, because that is where my family was all together.

### **3 – Were there any memorable moments on the trail (assistance, funny, etc.?)**

Lots of memorable moments. The most unique one is when I finished the Lower Peninsula at NCTA headquarters and we celebrated with champagne. It was the first time I had met & hiked with Linda and she was the one that thought of the celebration and brought the champagne.

### **4 – Describe the most challenging day on the trail.**

The most challenging day on the trail was in the UP with my son, Jay. We started at Muskallonge SP and were planning on a 12-mile day. A mile in and it started to rain. We got to a state forest campground around lunch time and the rain had stopped. We found a clearing and spread out our dew dampened hammock tarps and settled in for lunch. A ranger came and chased us off. The time came to make camp and we discovered that it was in a low area and the mosquitos were swarming. We also didn't see any clean water that was indicated on the map. Deciding to hike on, discussing options, we came to the conclusion to hike the last 8 miles out to the car. We cached our backpacks and used a daypack to carry a few necessities. 20 miles that day and we finished our trip a day early.

### **5 – What's next on your hiking bucket list?**

For the answer to that please read the story below that Tammy submitted to Joan Young for the long-distance hiker award...

*I first heard about the North Country National Scenic Trail when I was planning for a thru hike on the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in 2008. I first logged miles in 2009 when we last walked the Mackinac Bridge as a family, (husband & 2 boys). The Pictured Rocks trip was delayed until 2012 and that is when Tom Funke was telling us about his trek across the UP as he transported us to Grand Marais. For a few years after that I would plan a family backpacking trip somewhere along the North Country Trail.*

*The boys grew up and left for college and my husband and I continued to day hike the trail because he could no longer backpack with me. As his health declined, he started walking with a cane, then a walker with wheels, and eventually a motorized wheelchair. I continued to take him to the sections of trail that would accommodate.*



*The trail became a place of solace for me and I would get away for long weekends with friends. After his death, I started joining in on chapter hikes more often with the Jordan Valley 45 and Hiawatha Shore to Shore chapters. I suppose this is when I really became focused on finishing the state of Michigan. I think I logged over 400 unique miles in 2018. I attended my first NCT celebration in Bellaire, MI in 2019. Later that year, I completed hiking the trail in Lower Michigan finishing at the NCTA headquarters in Lowell. My hiking buddy that day brought a bottle of champagne and we celebrated with the staff.*

*We all know what happened in 2020, and that is when I rescued my dog, Jack. He has been my hiking companion ever since and we did seven backpacking trips that year. We both suffered injuries in 2022 that set us back from finishing until now.*

*I have met many wonderful people and had many amazing trail angels assist me. Countless hiking buddies and I even did two solo backpacking trips before adopting Jack. I have learned that I do not like to solo hike. I like the socialization and camaraderie that hiking provides, even if we don't talk a whole lot. I do not get a chance to do trail maintenance. Maybe*

*that will change now that I'm not focused on completing the trail and getting unique miles. I would like to join in on work weekend camping trips.*

*Completing other states is not a goal of mine, but I would like to hike a few miles in each one. I have hiked the Oak Openings area and Wabash trail in Ohio, and I hope to make a trip to Hocking Hills. In Minnesota I have "kicked the Kek" with Tom Funke & Mike & Keith Otis. The Border Route and Superior Hiking Trail are also on my radar, although I don't intend to thru hike them. I think it would be cool to visit the Eastern Terminus in Vermont and the Western one in North Dakota.*

## Trail Maintenance Update

Dan Dueweke - [dandueweke@gmail.com](mailto:dandueweke@gmail.com)

Ever wonder what it costs to put a sawyer on the trail? It's not just the certification class which averages \$275 per person and must be updated every three years. It also includes the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at \$265 per sawyer (hardhat, Kevlar chaps, ear and eye protection) and \$100 for a first aid/CPR class for both the sawyer and the swamper which needs to be updated every two years. These costs are covered by the NPS and do not come out of chapter funds. Should anyone question the cost of training and the PPE; the average chainsaw injury requires 110 stitches and medical costs for chainsaw injuries nationwide are estimated to be \$350 million per year. The two leading causes for chainsaw injuries are lack of training / experience and not wearing PPE.

When adopters sign up to be sawyers, the NCTA tries to prepare and outfit them as best they can with the expectation that in return, they will keep their Chapter's trails clear of blowdowns and perhaps help other Chapters when the need arises. Soon the snow will melt off and sawyers of spring will take to the trails to clear over-winter blowdowns in preparation for the 2025 hiking season. Please note that when approaching a sawyer from behind, don't try to step over the log they're cutting (I've seen it happen) or enter their work zone. Wait for the sawyers to finish their cuts and notice you, at which point they'll apply their chain brakes and let you pass.

Considering adopting a trail? JV45° has two sections available: Send me a note if interested.



**Mancelona Rd to Whispering Pines Dr, a pleasantly wooded section with little elevation change.**



**Brubaker Rd to Click Rd, mostly a road walk with some grass to mow behind the soccer fields.**

## North Dakota – Hike Fest Save the Date August 20 - 23

Instead of the NCTA celebration the ND chapters are working on hosting a hike-fest get together. Early stages of development but if you are interested save the date and stay tuned for more info. All 3 chapters are offering hikes. Sounds like it will be a moving feast or a pub crawl.

- Wednesday, August 20, Dakota Prairie Chapter--day hike
- Thursday, August 21, Sheyenne River Valley Chapter--day hike
- Friday, August 22, travel day, evening event, Central Flyway Chapter
- Saturday, August 23, Central Flyway Chapter--day hike

We also expect that suggestions will be made regarding accommodations..

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities Sue Bouwense - [sbouwense@gmail.com](mailto:sbouwense@gmail.com)

### ***A chance to serve!***

Our chapter will again host an aid station for the Top of Michigan Half Marathon/10K/5K races on Saturday, May 24. Volunteers are needed from 7:45am to 10:30am at our usual spot near the Mt. Baldy trailhead (campground office) inside Petoskey State Park. All supplies will be provided by the Top of Michigan Trails Council. All you need to bring is some enthusiasm and a willingness to represent the JV45 chapter of the NCT.

Providing volunteers for this community event has been going on for several years, and we are excited to be a part of it 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 May 24<sup>th</sup>, please call or text Sue Bouwense at (231) 347-4394 or email her at [sbouwense@gmail.com](mailto:sbouwense@gmail.com).

### ***National Trails Day – Saturday, June 7***

A focus for Trails Day this year will be an emphasis on the Hike 100 Challenge. We hope to encourage online signups and also will be informing people in our area about the “Hike the Chapter” challenge. In this way we will be

introducing folks to the excitement that can be found on the North Country Trail in our area. Watch for a special email to our members and social media posts informing hikers about the challenge of logging miles on the NCT.

From the NCT website: *“The Hike 100 Challenge is a program designed to help you meet your goals. Maybe you want to explore the outdoors more, spend time with your family, make new trail friends, find solitude, try backpacking, or see how far you can wander. Whatever your goals are, the Hike 100 Challenge is the motivation you need.*

*“The main rule is to complete your 100 miles on the North Country National Scenic Trail within the calendar year. Fortunately, there are 4,800 miles to choose from! Visit the same one mile 100 times over or explore 100 unique miles. Hike, walk, backpack, snowshoe, or cross-country ski. Make the journey yours.”*

Folks who register on the NCT website and log their 100 miles will receive a patch like this:



And those who hike the entire JV 45 chapter will receive a patch as well.



Patch for hiking entire JV45° Chapter

For more information about the Hike 100 or the “Hike the Chapter” challenge, please call or text Sue Bouwense at (231) 347-4394.

## JV45 Leadership Meeting February 27th, 2025 Foundry Grill – East Jordan

Meeting called to order at 5:33pm by Kevin Whitley

Members present: Bob Courtois, Duane Lawton, Dan Dueweke, Kevin Whitley, Jim Howell and Doug Seaney

Minutes from October 2024 board meeting and chapter annual meeting in January 2025 both approved unanimously.

News from NCTA: NCTA recently held a conference call and discussion on cuts to NPS, Andrea and all the staff at NCTA headquarters are monitoring the situation. There may be some reduction of NPS staff which may cause approval process to be delayed for projects. With the strong volunteer involvement of the NCTA all are hoping the actual impact on the trail will be limited.

Financial report: account balance: \$8,700. Members: 131 families on the roster with 135 unique email addresses. We also have 156 unique e-mail addresses on our “Friends” list that receive hike and work day invites, as well as the newsletter.

ATV use in Jordan Valley – Request that all keep eyes and ears open for news if this reappears on the township’s agendas. Was tabled and or denied last fall but may come up again.

Reroutes:

Dobleski: No response from Joe Taylor and other landowner is still a “No” so looking like that is very much on the back burner unless one of the land owners has a change of heart or ownership changes hands.

Skyline Shelter: Boors are hoping to sell the parcel with the shelter in 2025 and City of Petoskey will not pursue a purchase. We can still move trail and city seems receptive to having a shelter on city property. We would just start with a new shelter as logistics to move the existing shelter are very challenging.

Kuzmik Rd: Duane and Kenny looking at west and east reroute options, possibly to route onto Little Traverse Conservancy land.

US – 131: short ½ mile re-route, potential work day late spring / summer?

Springvale Rd.: Very short re-route 100 – 200 yards – work weekend TBD

Tool trailer/Tool box: both are buried under lots of snow 😊

Monthly Hikes report from Bob: March hike will be near Skyline Shelter and possible bonfire after the hike.

2025 Events:

Quiet Adventures in E. Lansing, March 1st – Duane and Kevin to attend

Marathon race Memorial Day in Petoskey State Park – Volunteers needed

National Trails Day 1st Saturday in June

Trail adopters’ lunch in October?

Hiking weekend in North Dakota in lieu of NCTA celebration August 20 - 24– we may have a group of JV45'ers attend.

Annual Meeting date TBD may have in December or February, due to travel plans of president and VP, possible location of Boyne Falls Fire Hall.

Next leadership meeting April 24th

Meeting adjourned at 6:46pm

Meeting minutes types by Doug Seaney

JV45 Communication Coordinator

## CURRENT JV45<sup>o</sup> GOVERNING BOARD

**Kevin Whitley – President**

[kjwtorchlake@gmail.com](mailto:kjwtorchlake@gmail.com)

**James Howell - Vice President**

[pattenlake2620@gmail.com](mailto:pattenlake2620@gmail.com)

**Annie Matz - Secretary-Treasurer**

[amatz57@yahoo.com](mailto:amatz57@yahoo.com)

**Duane Lawton - Project Coordinator**

[delawton@torchlake.com](mailto:delawton@torchlake.com)

**Sue Bouwense - Events Coordinator**

[sbouwense@gmail.com](mailto:sbouwense@gmail.com)

**Dan Dueweke - Trail Coordinator**

[dandueweke@gmail.com](mailto:dandueweke@gmail.com)

**Bob Courtois - Hike Coordinator**

[bcourtois@comcast.net](mailto:bcourtois@comcast.net)

**Doug Seaney - Communication**

**Coordinator**

[dseaney@hotmail.com](mailto:dseaney@hotmail.com)