

Neil Fricke – Appointed OCHBC Chairman of the Board

As the president of OCHBC, I am appointing Neil Fricke as Chairman of the Board. Neil is symbolic in body and spirit of many of those who join OCHBC. He loved hiking as a kid and when life's duties called, school, work, and family, hiking diminished. Neil's story goes one step further than the average OCHBC member in that he is permanently disabled. His handicap is due to a deteriorative disease of the cervical disc that forced surgery leaving him permanently disabled and in chronic pain. Neil's pain is persistent and can be dealt with only through medication, yet instead of sitting in front of the TV set, Neil uses movement and hiking therapeutically to make the pain tolerable.

I am electing Neil as Chairman of OCHBC due to his courage and ability to overcome tremendous odds and find a positive way to live. Neil exemplifies courage and perseverance. When you have the honor of hiking with Neil you may see him sitting or even laying down on a hike to relieve his chronic pain, but in spite of it he moves forward. Neil says he would rather be out hiking than lying in bed in pain, though many wouldn't see it that way. His ability to carry on is awe inspiring.



He is an experienced outdoorsman in his own right and has (slowly and carefully) reached the summit Mount Whitney twice! Additionally, Neil is a patient teacher for all who want to learn. His education as a therapist influences his already diplomatic disposition and his attentiveness to members keeps him in touch with the needs of our hiking community. It is my hope that Neil's inspiration and leadership will be a guiding light for our members for many years to come.

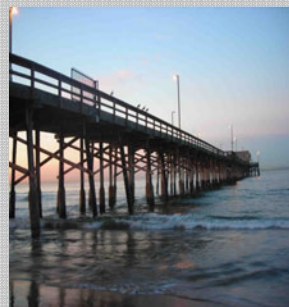
Sincerely,
Suki Reed – OCHBC President

"My participation in the OCHBC has not just opened a world to me that I had thought closed completely, but the world. I appreciate that the members let a disabled person join them to hike, let alone afford me a position of responsibility in the organization. I am grateful for understanding and patience of my fellow Board Members for my consistently slow efforts, occasional delays, and the aid I sometimes require from them to fulfill my duties, dictated by my disability. Thank you all." ~ Neil Fricke – OCHBC Chairman

Join Neil on his Bommer Ridge Introductory Slow Beginner Hike (and 10 Essentials) –every first Saturday of the month

OCHBC in the OC Register!

Suki Reed, President of OCHBC is now a writer for the Orange County Register.
Past articles cover hiking topics and locations.
Suki's articles can be found in the Outdoor Section of the OC Register newspaper every Monday.
Past articles can be found at:
<http://www.ocreger.com/articles/walk-beach-pier-2291789-sand-advanced>



Important Reminder!

Please be considerate of other hikers and be sure to update your RSVP for upcoming hikes.

If you cannot make a hike, please change your RSVP to NO.

Our group is expanding rapidly and waiting lists are filling up. It is unfair to "no-show" to a hike when your cancellation could have allowed another hiker to attend.



Welcome our 3,000th OCHBC Member!

A few questions with our latest OCHBC member, Kevin Meinhart.

1) What made you decide to join the OCHBC?

-We are so fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful locations in the world. We have the weather, climate, oceans, mountains, and deserts all within our reach. I wanted to share that with other people who enjoy the same.

2) What/Where would your dream hike be?

-Tough one, but hiking the length of the Great Wall be an accomplishment.

3) What other outdoor hobbies/interests to do you have?

-Cycling, Surfing, White Water, any active sports.

4) What goals for 2009 do you hope to fulfill by joining the OCHBC?

-To find some close friends to enjoy the outdoors/active sports with. My wife and I usually explore just us two. We would love to find a few friends to do some over-nighters and be active with.

5) Would you rather climb a tall mountain or trek a long trail? Why?

-Trek a long trail. I presume climbing a peak relates to great obstacles in one's life, once you've accomplished it, it's finished. Trekking a long trail in my eyes is more representative of the trek of life itself, in that there will always be the long trail.

6) Do you have any pets? Would they be up for hiking with the OCHBC?

- We have one tortoise shell, Cat. She is very friendly, but most likely not up for hikes. :(

7) What's the answer to the current economic crisis in our country?

-How about people taking responsibility for themselves? I'm sorry, but the government is not there to baby us, we must determine our own destiny and be responsible for our own actions. If you don't have the money, don't spend it.

MEET A HIKE ORGANIZER



Nancy is a Realtor in Laguna Niguel, CA. She is happily married and has two wonderful daughters. She use to mountain bike all over the western US with her husband but got tired of crashing and now loves to hike.

Local Favorites:

1. Aliso Woods Canyon
2. Colinas Bluff
3. Crystal Cove
4. Rollercoaster
5. Ridgeline
6. Whiting Ranch

Out of Town Favorites:

1. Bishop Pass Trail, CA
2. Bright Angel Trail, Grand Canyon, AZ

Look for Nancy's hikes on the Meetup Calendar!



OCHBC Photos of the Month

To submit your photos send them to: newsletter@ochbc.org

OCHBC TO BE FEATURED ON A NATIONAL MEETUP.COM TV COMMERCIAL



Back row; left to right: 1. Tom Woods 2. Dave S. 3. Neil Fricke 4. Mary Booth 5. Captain Steve
6. Joel Olivera 7. Thuy Tham

Middle row; left to right: 1. Paul Brenner w/ Whiskey 2. Perry Andrus w/ Julie dog 3. Laura Romero
4. Barb Wolak 5. Frank Palacios

Front Row; center: Marie Kirk and Sunnie dog

Meetup.com recently asked the meetup groups that use its service to send in a group photo for a chance to have the photo used in an upcoming national television commercial. The commercial was to be run the week of the Presidential Inauguration and would include select sound bytes of Barack Obama's inaugural speech which was to talk about community. Thousands of groups sent in photos from across the country but very few of them read the rules stating that they needed to include the meetup logo signs as we did in the above photo. Days after sending off the OCHBC group photo to meetup's New York office Suki Reed, President of OCHBC, was told that our submitted photo was to be used. In the end, Meetup.com did not feel the commercial was strong enough to justify the price so they scraped the commercial and thanked us for our time.

If you would like to see the commercial please visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3waEF4VFqo>

Would you like to help out the group and become an Assistant Hike Organizer?

Do you have some spare time to help give back to the club?

Please fill out and fax or email the application form located at:

<http://files.meetup.com/332719/Application%20Volunteer%20Hike%20Organizers.pdf>

Special Thanks To Our Business Partners:

