



MileMarker Newsletter ----- Volume 3 ----- Issue 6 ----- June 2011 ----- www.OC-Hiking.com

On the trail with tykes, toddlers and teens

As Published in the OC Register | By SUKI REED, OCHC President

Children of all ages need an outlet, and the great outdoors provides one of the biggest and healthiest, and one that's a lot of fun.

I asked my teenage son to write something about his experiences in nature.

"I really enjoyed my first hike; the view was remarkable, and it provided a great change of scenery from drab city sky scrapers," said 17-year-old Frank Adam Luna of Newport Beach. "Hiking made me feel at peace and appreciate the natural beauty and simplicity of nature which we ignore in our everyday chaotic lives..."



"...We need to get out and explore and be as free as the wind, as my ancestors (American Indians) once lived, to grow with nature and learn true survival skills of living in sync with the world.

"It's something that can't be found in books, but can only be learned firsthand through personal experience by leaving your troubles at the starting point of the trail. Magically, on your return, you will find an unbiased solution to the problems you left behind."

Time spent outdoors in nature can have a long-lasting positive effect, according to research from Cornell University's Dr. Nancy Wells. Her research shows that children who spend time outdoors can have greater self-control in adulthood, are better able to deal with stress, and might experience enhanced cognitive and decision-making abilities.

How old do kids need to be to hike? They need to be old enough to walk comfortably on their own, or have someone along with a strong back.

But do kids like to hike? If not, they will with some easy first steps.

Continued below.....



HOW TO START

Plan an easy hike: Make sure the trail is scenic and short. Don't try to turn your child into a nature lover all in one trip.

Pack the night before: Assemble all hiking gear the night before the hike.

Take frequent breaks: Kids often forget to hydrate. Make frequent stops to make sure kids are drinking plenty of water, and use these pauses to stop, take pictures and explore.

Speed: Let them set the pace and go only as fast as the kids.

Google the trail: Learn about the area together before you get there, so you can share some of the sites and history of the trail.

Point out interesting details: How old do you think that tree is? What kind of bug is that? Who do you think slept in that big cave?

WHAT TO BRING

Child carrier for toddlers: Wear a child carrier for toddlers who wear out.

Dress for the weather: If it's hot, wear a hat with a brim, (such as a baseball cap), sunglasses, lip balm, and sunscreen. Long-sleeved cotton shirts will help prevent sunburn. In cold weather, wear a beanie, extra layers, and gloves.

Shoes & socks: Ankle-high hiking boots are the safest way to prevent sprained ankles on rough terrain, but running shoes will do in a pinch. Buy boots a size larger to prevent toes from rubbing on downhill decent. Wool blend hiking socks will help prevent blisters.

Snacks & water: Bring plenty of favorite snacks and extra water. Stop for lunch someplace special, near a stream, waterfall, big tree, or a view.

The 10 essentials: Go to backpacking.net/ten-essl.html. Teach kids to be independent by carrying a backpack with their own essentials, lunch, and a basic first aid kit. The pack weight should be light and appropriate for their age.

Remove trash: If you see trash on the trail, together you can pick it up and pack it out.

Electronics: By allowing kids to bring their cell phones, they can text and share the adventure real-time with their friends.

Extras: Bring a camera. When you get home, you can relive the experience and use the photos as screen savers or slide shows.

Patience: Allow time for free play. Kids might want to stop and explore, take a closer look at bugs, play in the water, climb rocks, and generally slow down your forward motion. Learn to stop and enjoy nature's habitat as much as they do.

Hiking the 37.2 mile Trans Catalina Trail

By Glenn Plank, OCHC Member

Just a few short years ago the final pieces were put in place to complete the Trans Catalina Trail (TCT), a trail stretching the length of Catalina Island. The official distance is 37.2 miles although to complete the return from the distant end of the island back to Two Harbors where you can get back home will round it up to about 52 miles. The trail begins just outside Avalon and reaches as far as Starlight Beach at the northwestern end of the island. A group of 5 of us set out to complete this hike in 4 days by starting in Avalon and continuing to Blackjack for our first camp. The following night would take us to Two Harbors. The last official day on the TCT would take us all the way out to Starlight Beach and then back to Parson's Landing for the night. Our final day was our return via the easy coastal road back to Two Harbors.

For an island that has a high point of only 2,010 ft., this hike is a tough one with about 9,000 ft. of elevation gain! Nothing is flat on Catalina. The TCT is either going up a hill, bouncing along a ridge or descending straight down. I give a few sections of the trail a 10 out of 10 on the black toenail scale! To make the trip more enjoyable, add a few extra days and spent a night at Little Harbor between Blackjack and Two Harbors and add a second night at Parson's Landing. By doing this you will have plenty of time to enjoy swimming in the afternoon and not be so exhausted from the strenuous days hiking. Contact the Catalina Island Conservancy for reservations and information.

For all you beach lovers who like to hike, this is a trail for you!



Suki Reed in the OC Register!



Suki Reed, President of OC Hiking Club, is a writer for the Orange County Register. Past articles include topics such as hiking for stress relief, camera tips, and favorite local hiking spots. Look for her articles on the back page of the Outdoor Section every Monday.

Past articles can be found at:

<http://www.ocregister.com/fi/search/?q=suki+reed>

OCHC Member Donnella was a semi-regular on the Monday night Turtle Rock hikes with Perry until she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Good news – She is a survivor as of February 2011 and is now working part time for the American Cancer Society. The 2nd Annual Orange County Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk is coming up and is a great way to build awareness about breast cancer by forming teams that consist of friends, family, and/or co-workers. There's NO COST to register and the walk is a fun 5k.

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

a non-competitive walk in the fight against breast cancer



Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

Segerstrom Center for the Arts

Sunday, October 9, 2011

2nd Annual 5K Walk

No registration fee. All individuals and teams are welcome.

For more information:

Donnella Andraos – 949.221.1115

donnella.andraos@cancer.org

<http://makingstrides.acsevents.org/orangecounty>

Ocean Lovers Beginning Hike Dana Point w/ Jeannie June 25, 2011



Summer hiking dangerous for dogs

As Published in the OC Register | By SUKI REED, OCHC President

The recent death of a local dog due to heatstroke and exhaustion on a long hike has brought a tear to the eye of canine lovers all over.

Remember: Dogs can't talk, so think twice before taking your dog on a sizzling hot summertime hike.

First off, owners must be extra sensitive to the needs of their four-legged friends because of the loyalty factor. A loyal dog will follow you to the ends of the earth - even if it kills him or her.

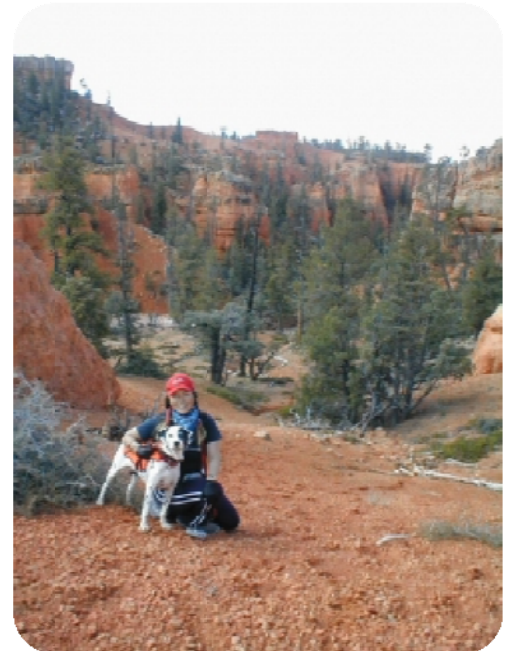
In addition to heat, inadequate conditioning can cause big problems. A physically unfit dog can be injured or even die on the trail. More than once, I have witnessed hikers taking their house pet on big hikes up Santiago Peak and even Mt. Whitney - where dogs are illegal past the Whitney Zone. It makes me wonder why.

Why would someone want to take a physically unfit dog on a monster hike? Is the dog going to boast about it when he gets back home? The dog I saw on Mt. Whitney was near exhaustion and the owner was not only oblivious, but aggressively in denial.

With slow and proper conditioning, dogs can eventually go on longer hikes - but hot temperatures can kill them quickly because they dehydrate more rapidly than people do.

At the peak of her hiking career, my favorite four-legged hiking companion - Julie - used to follow me up mountains without breaking a sweat. But I had to leave her at home during hot weather.

Your dog's love for you can cause him or her to use up every drop of energy to the point of utter exhaustion. Dogs feel soreness, aches and pains, just as you do. Always start with short conditioning walks before attempting longer hikes, just as you would for your own physical conditioning.



Have you checked out the **OC Hiking Club Shop** yet?

A portion of each purchase goes directly back to the Club for its non-profit goals.

http://www.cafepress.com/oc_hikingshop



Wild Edibles Walk - a presentation of Earthroots Field School



Yucca Flowers &
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Sponsor Kids in Need of Nature!

Is your company looking to make a difference in the life of a child? Corporate sponsorships are needed for the OC Hiking Club's Kids in Need of Nature program. Contact Kate at sponsorship @oc-hiking.com for more information. All donations are tax deductible.

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