



Expanding Horizons

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The newsletter for friends of Adventures for Women

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Dear AFW Members,

On October 28th, Adventures for Women is celebrating its 25th year in existence. Much has happened over the past 25 years. You will be reading some of our history in this newsletter and hearing about it from past and present members at our celebration in October. I'd like to spend a few minutes telling you about 'the state of the order' now.

In the last year we've added a number of new workshops. The Getting Ready to Hike, Backpacking, and Injury Prevention Workshops all received rave reviews. As an offshoot of the Getting Ready to Hike Workshop, Beginner Hikes have been offered throughout the season. New members have expressed an interest in Woodswoman 101 so we will be offering it again this fall. Plans are in the works for reviving our Paddling Workshop, and the Shooting Workshop, which we've offered for the past 4 years, still attracts an enthusiastic group of women.

Weekend and vacation trips have also evolved. The 'Dacks weekend has become a series of low peak hikes accompanied by book discussions on Pat's back porch. Due to its close proximity to northern New Jersey, the 'Gunks trip has become an overnight with a greater emphasis on hiking. Our guides have discovered the Catskills (barely 2 hours from northern New Jersey) and have scheduled a winter weekend close to Frost Valley with its many cross-country, snowshoe and hiking trails. Our fall trip to the Strauss Center in the Catskills is in a building with just our group, and offers a wide variety of activities – wall climbing, orienteering, boating, and, of course, as always, hiking. Our new backpacking enthusiasts have gone out a number of times this season on overnights and have trips planned for the summer and fall.

As in the past, Adventures for Women still offers a variety of day hikes and bike rides throughout the metropolitan area. The level of difficulty varies, but all come with knowledgeable, caring leaders who do their best to make the experience for the novice to seasoned participant a wonderfully memorable one.

The organization itself has also been going through a number of changes. Betty Plunkett resigned as president of the Board of Trustees after serving in this capacity for 5 years. She will remain a member of the Board and continue to serve as its Director. Betty has almost single handedly kept AFW going since Betsy Thomason's retirement. Had it not been for Betty, the organization that Betsy created would have disappeared. Betty developed AFW into a not-for-profit organization, and

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On a balmy winter day in the Catskills.

Celebrating AFW's 25th Anniversary

★ MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW! ★
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28TH, 1 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

That's when we'll be celebrating the founding of Adventures for Women 25 years ago. We are planning a day of activities, filled with fun and food at Camp Glen Gray in Mahwah, NJ, so be sure to join us. You can read more about this upcoming celebration in the enclosed Adventure Menu brochure.

MacEvoy Trail Fall Clean-up

RAMAPO MOUNTAIN STATE FOREST, OAKLAND, NJ

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

Always Helping Mother Earth. When fall arrives, it will be time once again for AFW's semi-annual clean-up hike on the MacEvoy Trail in Ramapo Mt. State Forest. All AFW members and friends are welcome to attend this easy hike and clean-up on Saturday, September 30, 2006 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Please wear hiking boots and bring a pair of gloves and garbage bags. Come out and have fun for a good cause!

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continues to monitor the phone and e-mail inquiries daily. She steps back, not down, to spend more time with her family and to give the rest of us a chance to see what we can do now that she has taken us this far. Julie Mahoney, who has served as Member and Treasurer of the Board since its inception, has resigned, but has begun taking us on the first of, we hope, many City Path excursions. Those of us who have served with Betty and Julie wish to express our gratitude for their tireless service to AFW. We are pleased to announce that Linda Suarez will be our new Treasurer, and I have taken on the responsibilities of President.

One more thing. In some ways, you can say that the success of AFW works against itself. It is a wonderful beginning for those of us too timid to go into the woods on our own. AFW leaders encourage, instruct and help members develop confidence and skills. Members make new friends and discover great places to hike; we give them maps and encourage them to go off on their own. After a few years, they no longer need us and sadly we not only lose their participation but also their financial support. Many continue to support organizations like the Sierra Club, the NY/NJ Trail Conference, ADK or the Nature Conservancy, but let their AFW membership expire.

This is an appeal to those of you who have benefited from AFW in the past but for some reason — life style changes, a move, a new romance, whatever — are no longer members. If you have fond memories of hikes in the wilderness, learning to read a trail map, spotting your first bear, snake or bald eagle, conquering a hill, a stream or rock face you never thought you'd be able to do, and were exhilarated when you reached the other side...if you still keep in touch with women you met through AFW, if you treasure your memories of weekends in the 'Dacks or in the Pine Barrens — please consider renewing your membership so that we can continue to grow — so that we can continue to offer to others the wonderful opportunities we were able to offer to you.

Thank you, and *get outdoors.*



Priscilla Pogact

Backpacking with AFW

It's been two years since AFW introduced backpacking to the schedule. More than a dozen members have completed the **Beginner Backpacking Workshop**. These hikers, and several more members with backpacking experience, have taken to the trails with their houses on their backs. Their rewards for hiking the longer trails are increased self-confidence and independence, an earned sense of accomplishment, and the camaraderie and fun of sharing the challenges of the trail with friends. Oh, and let's not forget the views, the beautiful views that day hikes do not always have.

In the past two years AFW has explored the northern corner of New Jersey, hiking in the area surrounding High Point. Harriman Park in New York has also been a favorite haunt, hosting three of the weekends. Most recently, AFW hiked the Appalachian Trail from the Delaware Water Gap north to Crater Lake. The hike included a ridge described in Backpacker magazine as "one of the ten best views along the AT." This fall, an October weekend will put hikers in the middle of fall foliage. Plans in the works include winter camping and spring hikes on new trails.

Fond Memories

A group is as much fun as its members make it, and that's why AFW has been and continues to be a whole lot of fun. As we celebrate our 25th Anniversary, we thought it would be interesting to have a few of our longstanding members reminisce on their years with AFW. Their enthusiasm, their love for adventure and their sense of camaraderie clearly shine through in their writings below and we know you'll enjoy reading them.

MARTY DOUGHERTY has the distinction of being an AFW member from its inception. She joined in 1982 and is still a loyal enthusiast. She has been an active hiker and skier, both locally and in the Adirondacks. She doesn't seem to slow down, just speeds up. Last spring she hosted our Celery Farm potluck.

There was an insert in a local adult community school bulletin. A course was going to be offered, "Giving Up Goldilocks — an Introduction to Hiking" in March of 1982. "Giving up Goldilocks" was defined as "the bare essentials leading towards self-sufficiency in the outdoors."

Betsy Thomason, our fearless and esteemed leader, wanted women to "expand their horizons", going into the woods either alone or as members of a group. Not only would we become self-sufficient in outdoorsmanship, but we would learn about ourselves — our needs, our aspirations, what we could become!

The group who gathered that March became "Adventures for Women in Outdoor Living" — AWOL! And you can imagine the jokes that the "AWOL" created! There were 9 of us at that first meeting — 4 of us had first names that started with "M", and we became known as the 4 M's — Marty, Maria, Michele, and Mardell. We eventually wound up part of the Advisory Board.

Betsy taught us all kinds of woods lore — I still have the protractor we made for determining directions on a map and I have "The Plan" for Hike III. It was quite involved. Our objective was "The Mountain". The mountain was 1,100 feet high on the SW end. "Along its southern ridge, it affords a dramatic view of the Ramapo Valley. Your accuracy in finding "The Mountain" will be confirmed by the shocking sight to the south of the misguided solution to a major ignored issue of contemporary life."

But to partake in any hikes, we had to first participate in the GUG hikes — "Growing Up Goldilocks" hikes. They were, in the spring/summer of '83, held every month, March, April, May, with an introduction to hiking the evening before, followed up with two hikes the following two Saturdays, costing \$60.00. We started having overnights in March of '83. There was a camping/hiking/exploring hike for women and kids at the Delaware Water Gap the weekend of August 21–22nd. But the piece de résistance was the hiking of the Adirondacks High Peaks in August of 1989. There were six of us neophytes! Along with Betsy, we hiked the three miles in to Johns Brook Lodge — backpacked in with all our needs packed on our backs. I had a backpack borrowed from one of my Boy Scout sons — I still have it! Betsy always wanted us to reminisce after a hike and the following are some of my thoughts after the hike to the High Peaks.

August 6-10, 1989

"My knees are creaking — so it is difficult to go up and down the stairs...my sense of accomplishment knows no bounds. I had moments — one of them was at one of the last streams we had to cross going up Mt. Marcy, when the thought came to me — I can't do

this this time, immediately followed by, yes I can! Try it. And, of course, I did. Just knowing I did it was of immense pleasure...The group consciousness...the vulnerability that each allowed to be – NEVER has anyone assisted me with a backpack or carrying anything. When Nancy offered to carry my sleeping bag when I was having trouble carrying everything, what that did to me. I was beholden to someone – or so I thought. And as the week wore on, we were all beholden to one another – that was how we made it through. We were all in pain at one point – raw blisters, headaches, bruised toes, and disappointment about leaving Gothics for another year. But the beauty that nature is shone through. I'm glad I was there."

Many many memories – Oh life! Ain't it grand!

KATHY CONNIFF CLINES joined AFW in 1989. Before moving to Prince Edward Island and Florida, she was an active supporter. She created City Paths, our urban walks in the metropolitan area, and introduced the AT hiking series as well as the Wild Women's book club. She was also AFW's sole editorial staff (it now takes several of us to fill her shoes!).

Prince Edward Island, where I now live in summer, is called "The Gentle Island." I love gentle! I love awakening to songbirds and seeing the red sun rise from the sea and over the bay and fields of wildflowers outside my cottage window. I love early morning walks on the beach, alone except for a family of foxes eyeing me from the dunes. I love riding my bike on easy rolling hills, passing farms along the way, and stopping in the evening to hear fiddle tunes at a local community hall. In town, I love noting that islanders wait for the "walk" signal to flash before crossing the street, even when there is not a car in sight!

But I also love exciting! I loved my 13-plus years with Adventures for Women. I loved climbing steep hills with the thrilling possibility of bears lurking around every turn. (Actual bear encounters are another story!) I loved staring up at an Adirondack high peak and exclaiming "There's no way!" and yet puffing and sweating my way to the top and being completely captivated by awe-some views of endless mountains and forests. I loved kayaking down a narrow racing river and repeatedly crashing into the overgrown banks, thinking "I hope they know where to find my body," and then suddenly gliding – still right side up – into a wide, peaceful lake and finding my fellow kayakers waiting and all of us yelling "Wow! That was fun!"

I loved hiking our portion of the Appalachian Trail, scrambling over rocks, balancing on slippery stones crossing a stream, and enjoying the process of scouting so much that I would occasionally miss a turn on the world's best blazed trail. I loved sitting on a log mid-hike and trading stories and trail mix with a group of interesting women.

I loved our book club – still going strong – that grew from an AFW discussion of *Women Who Run With the Wolves*. This book, by Clarissa Pinkola Estes, is a wonderful guide to listening to the spirit within.

And of course I loved City Paths: the noise! the chaos! Trying to keep track of 20 chatting women on jam-packed streets where New Yorkers pay little attention to traffic signals. Or discovering that the subway we were traveling on is whimsically taking a different route than the one I had carefully rehearsed, but then finding the way to our destination nonetheless. And at the end of the day, riding the ferry back to New Jersey, looking back at the Manhattan skyline, brilliant with the light of the setting sun.

So now instead of running with wolves and running away from

bears, I am now serenely trotting with foxes. All part of the big adventure, I guess. I love PEI, but I miss AFW and most of all I miss the friends I have met there. Here's to the next 25 years!

ANGELA OGLE was an active member of AFW before she married and moved to Tennessee. She could always be found on the hiking trails in Harriman or the Catskills as well as on the City Paths excursions.

I can't believe AFW is 25 years old already. I joined in the early 90's and was very active with the group until I moved to Tennessee in 1999. I made lots of wonderful friendships and have many fond memories. The hikes were always an adventure.

What I always admired about Betsy is how she attended to every person on the hike, always staying behind to give words of encouragement to those near the back of the group. I learned so much from her. My first encounter with Betsy was a compass workshop held at Bear Mountain, which was recommended for beginners. I was so impressed by her experience and confidence and she became a role model. Betsy and I car-pooled up to NY State for a cross-country skiing weekend. We also attended a "Wild Women" retreat together. I got to know her very well and admired her greatly.

I also remember Judith fondly. She was originally from Buffalo and then moved to NYC. She led many difficult hikes but always made them fun. We'd often meet at a bakery where we had breakfast and waited for the group to assemble. Then we'd chip in and buy coffee cake to share during our hike. Once on a very hot day she even surprised us at the end of the hike with some watermelon she had in her car.

I remember a weekend at the beach with a number of AFW members where we stayed at a lovely B&B and walked for miles. One of my fondest memories was the decadence celebration at Kathy Clines' home in Ringwood on the lake.

A number of members were celebrating decade birthdays so we decided to have a big celebration. Even though the theme was "decadence", as I recall, the most decadent thing we did was drink wine and eat caviar.

Thank you for the opportunity to reminisce about a very joyful time of my life. Wishing AFW much continued success.



City Path hikers amid the tulips in Central Park, New York City.

What We Did Last Spring

Some of us learned. Some discovered. Some explored. Some mastered new challenges. From newly-minted members to longstanding stalwarts, we shared our enjoyment of the outdoors and one another's company ... at a potluck gathering, on bike rides, on easy hikes for beginners and more strenuous ones for seasoned hikers, on weekend vacations, on backpacking trips and at workshops. For those who were unable to join us, we'd like to share with you a few highlights and hope we'll see you at our fall and winter activities.

Getting Ready to Hike Workshop - A Good Start

Why would a group of 20 women have been talking about wicking shirts, zip-off pants, bandanas, hydration systems, boots, poles, and maps on Saturday, April 1st? This was not an April Fool's joke. These women were actually getting ready to take the leap from walking on their local sidewalks to hiking in the many "wilderness" parks in the area.

AFW's Getting Ready to Hike Workshop was designed for women who had never ventured onto the many marked trails that are found throughout the NY/NJ metropolitan area. It began with an hour and a half classroom session, during which the group was given information on gear, basic trail sense, connecting with other hikers, and local outdoor stores in the area.

Following the indoor session, the group took a short hike at Ramapo State Forest where they found a side trail which led to a lovely spot overlooking Ramapo Lake. Here they enjoyed the peace and quiet of woods and water, and enjoyed a snack with their new hiking friends.

The overwhelming response to the workshop was positive and a number of the participants have enjoyed subsequent AFW events. We will continue to offer workshops that answer some of the needs of women who want to expand their horizons. In fact, look for the Woodswoman 101 Workshop offered this fall by Mary and Priscilla. If you have other suggestions/requests, please let Dagi know.

Injury Prevention Workshop - A Great Success

AFW's first Injury Prevention Workshop was held on Saturday, May 13th. Over a dozen participants were able to ask questions and get practical, hands-on advice from the professional group. While chiropractor, Lori Nuzzi and physical therapist, Tom Willemann, addressed what hikers could do to avoid injuries, Debbie Connolly gave massages to a few lucky participants. Nissan, representing the outdoor store, Campmor, provided additional injury prevention tips as he demonstrated how to choose and use properly fitting backpacks, boots, walking sticks and other hiking equipment to ensure comfort and long lasting wear. Ending the demonstration, personal trainer and Pilates instructor Lynn DeLancy led the group in a series of stretches before the group headed out to hike in Ramapo State Forest for the afternoon. Participants gave the workshop a big thumbs up. Comments heard were ... *When is the next one? I'll sign up... Really good... I have to check the schedule for what's coming up next ...I hope you do this every year.*

Shooting Workshop - On Target

The day of the Shooting Workshop, April 22nd, started and remained overcast and damp. But the day's constant drizzle and slight chill didn't dampen the six participants' enthusiasm or cool their zeal for putting multiple holes in paper dots and knocking metal targets off a rail. First-time shooters appreciated the patience of the experienced staff of the Easton Fish and Game Association. These three trainers made sure that each participant understood their instructions, was comfortable using the guns and successfully hitting

the targets. After a discussion and demonstration of safety and gun range etiquette, the group practiced shooting rifles from a seated position. As their skills improved, the challenge became shooting pistols while standing. They were able to use several different kinds of guns and had ample time to do plenty of shooting. By the end of the session each participant was consistently hitting the smallest targets.

City Paths Excursions - Lots of Exploring

It was a picture-perfect day on April 30th when eighteen AFW members carpoled into the city to explore **Central Park**. We walked past lakes, fountains, a waterfall and a reservoir, pausing for lunch on a park bench along the way. Sunbathers were out ... humans on the lawns and turtles on the rocks in the lake. The Conservatory Garden in the Park's northeast corner was ablaze with tulips of myriad colors and fragrant with the perfume of blossoming wisteria. Fun was had by all.

Eleven AFW members came on our second excursion to **City Island**, just beyond the Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx. The overcast sky on that day, May 14th, added to the mystery of the surrounding waters of Long Island Sound and Eastchester Bay. We strolled the length and breadth of the island, dropped in at a few local shops, visited the nautical museum, and enjoyed the distant views of Manhattan and its bridges to Long Island. We had lunch at a local seafood restaurant, joined by a long-time resident who enhanced our visit with her tidbits of information on the island's history.

Catskill Winter Weekend - Missed the Snow

In March a dozen AFW members met at the Alpine Inn for a weekend of winter hiking, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. Alas, the only snow to be found was at the higher elevations of Panther Mountain. Undaunted, members stowed their winter gear and enjoyed the rare pleasure of hiking the Catskills in balmy weather. Even the Sunday rain didn't interfere with the group's enjoyment of the ice falls at Frost Valley. Plan to join us next March for another Catskill adventure, winter or otherwise.

Please check our Adventure Menu brochure and our Adventure Schedule, included in this mailing, for more details of our fall and winter activities ... and sign up!

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Welcome New Members

Brenda Alexander, Jackie Alexander, Sharon Austin, Deborah Bianculli, Anne Caulfield, Filis Estrin, Kristine Geraci, Betsy Hall, Patricia Hegadorn, Sharalynn Hopkins, Dee Katzenberger, Kathy Levin, Sonia Lopez, Manju Malik, Kara Moore, Sandra Norman, Dorothy O'Connell, Elva O'Suna, Pam Palumbo, Amita Patel, Jodi Patterson, Sheryl Paynter, Karen Richards, Diane Rothschild, Kaye Taylor, Janet Thevenin, Liz Thomas