



# MIAMI VALLEY OUTDOOR CLUB

December 2007

## *Annual Holiday Feast & Auction at Dec. 4 Meeting*

Bring your gently worn outdoor gear and related items - skis, rollerblades, backpacks, tents, jackets, books, dried food, stoves, flashlights, lanterns, maps, sunglasses - and your money - to this fun and food-filled annual event, at our regular December meeting at Wegerzyn Garden Center, 1301 E. Siebenthaler Ave. Set-up begins at 6:00 p.m., dinner will start at 6:30 p.m. and the auction will start around 7:30 p.m. Please bring a covered dish, salad or desert to share, plus table service for yourself. MVOC will provide honey baked ham, (hot and cold), turkey breasts, rolls, and hot and soft drinks. The entertainment will feature an auction of your donated outdoor gear. The proceeds will be donated to a deserving nature center in the area.



**Historic Canal Trek, November 18.** Seventeen MVOC members spent the day enjoying each other's company and exploring the canal remains in Auglaize County. Back row from left: Kathy Hemmerick, Julie Webb, Mike Nelson, Steve Demmy, Jeremiah Stager, Dave Todd, Gary Mount, Andy Niekamp, Dwight Gehring, Donna Gehring. Kneeling from left: Linda Clevenger, Lindy McDonough. Front row from left: Sue Demmy, Catanya Stager, Sandy Todd, Ella Himes, Sharon Mullins. See story page 4.

## Upcoming Activities

### **Membership Meeting, Tuesday, Dec. 4**

Instead of our usual membership meeting, we will be having our annual holiday feast and auction. Set-up begins at 6:00 p.m., dinner starts at 6:30 p.m. and the auction at 7:30. Proceeds will go to a deserving area nature preserve. Meat and drinks provided. Bring a side dish to share, your own table setting and lots of money. The meeting will be at Wegerzyn Garden Center, 1301 E. Siebenthaler Ave., Dayton.

### **Ohio - Over and Under Saturday, December 8**

Come join the fun as we visit Campbell Hill and Ohio Caverns near Bellefontaine. Campbell Hill is Ohio's highest point above sea level at 1,549 feet. Ohio Caverns is the largest and most beautiful of all Ohio caves boasting exquisite crystal-white stalactite and stalagmite formations. We'll also tour Freshwater Farms and visit Marie's Candies. Freshwater Farms has the largest indoor fish hatchery in Ohio and has a Sturgeon petting zoo. Marie's Candies is known for its chocolates and is located in a restored historical train depot. Contact Andy Niekamp at [andyniekamp@gmail.com](mailto:andyniekamp@gmail.com) or 937-296-0245 if you are interested.

### **Board Meeting, Thursday, Dec. 13**

This month's board meeting will be at Marion's Pizza Restaurant, 3443 N. Dixie Dr., 6:00 p.m. All club members are welcome.

### **Clifton Gorge Christmas Light Hike Saturday, December 15**

Don't miss this entertaining annual 3-mile hike through John Bryan State Park and Clifton Gorge to see the lights at Clifton Mill. We will arrive at the Clifton Mill shortly before dark, when the millions of lights are turned on. We will meet at the entrance to John Bryan State Park camping area and shuttle some cars over to Clifton so we can get back at the end of the night. The hike will start promptly at 4:00 p.m.

(don't be late - we wouldn't want to still be hiking after dark!) Kids are welcome on this hike, but dogs are not permitted in the Clifton Gorge Nature Preserve. Please contact Dwight Gehring at [dgehring@worldnet.att.net](mailto:dgehring@worldnet.att.net) or 836-8515 if you plan to attend so we can determine how many cars we need to shuttle. If there is interest, we may end the evening with dinner somewhere in Yellow Springs.

### **Northern Ohio Cross Country Ski Trip Fri. - Sun., January 25-27**

Plans are in the early stages for a weekend ski trip to either the Toledo/Detroit area or to Lake County outside Cleveland. Motel accommodations. For more information or to sign up contact David or Virginia Wood, 937-426-9875.

### **Michigan Cross Country Ski Trip, February 9-15**

This year we are going to try a trip to Paradise, MI. Paradise is located in the Upper Peninsula on Lake Superior at Whitefish Point. It is the closest community to Tahquamenon Falls at which we will be able to ski. We will begin the weekend in Sault Ste. Marie trying out some night cross country skiing. From there we will travel to Paradise for some snowshoeing and cross country skiing. Last year there was lots of snow! Cabin accommodations will allow us to do some of our own food preparation, but we are also close enough to walk into town to restaurants. For more information look up Paradise on [www.exploringthenorth.com/Paradise/](http://www.exploringthenorth.com/Paradise/) or [Harmonsbirchwoodresort.com](http://Harmonsbirchwoodresort.com) or just call David or Virginia Wood, 937-426-9875 for the itinerary and to sign up. Costs: \$25-40 per night per person for accommodations, plus food and transportation. Deposit for the cabins in Paradise is \$40 per person if received no later than November 30<sup>th</sup>. After that date the deposit will be \$60. We will make motel reservations in January. Those not able to confirm immediately may still join the trip. You just may not be in the same cluster of cabins as the larger group. Join us for the weekend in Sault Ste. Marie or midweek in Paradise. Not a skier? bring a book along. All cabins have lounges and VCRs. Snowshoe and ski rental

can be arranged. A final planning meeting will be scheduled for early January. We already have eleven people planning to go!!

## **Carter Caves 27th Annual Crawlathon Fri. - Sun., January 25-27**

Crawl out of the bitter cold and into the warmth of a deep dark cave in Kentucky. The Crawlathon, sponsored by Carter Caves State Resort Park, is a popular caving event with wild cave trips and programs for all skill levels. Registration begins on December 15. Register early as trips fill up fast! For more info visit [www.crawlathon.com](http://www.crawlathon.com). Contact Andy Niekamp at [andyniekamp@gmail.com](mailto:andyniekamp@gmail.com) or 937-296-0245 if you are interested.

## **Trip Reports**

### **Shawnee Backpack Trip, Nov. 3-4**

*by Gary Mount*

Saturday morning, Nov. 3 seven MVOC backpackers drove to Shawnee State Forest in ideal backpack weather. The participants were Connie Steele, Ella Himes, Yvonne Wurstner, Sharon Mullins, Andy Niekamp, Gary Smith, and Gary Mount. The trees were showing all their colors as we trekked through the forest on the Silver Arrow Trail. The first five miles proved to be the most challenging but by the time we got to a gravel road (which was part of the trail) the trail got better. We arrived at camp #1 around 4 pm. Andy restarted the fire from hot coals so that we could remain warm and enjoy our dinner. Andy and Sharon still had some energy left for a nite hike so they went out to check out the coyotes. The rest of us stayed back at the camp to guard the fire. Being allowed an extra hour of sleep because of the time change we were on the trail by 10 am Or was it 11 am? The hike out was much easier so we managed to make good

time. We drove up to the lodge for lunch. We sat out on the veranda which offered a wonderful view of the forest as we ate. On the way home Andy and his crew decided to stop in Portsmouth to see the wall paintings which can be viewed on his website at [www.niekamp.org](http://www.niekamp.org).



*Scenes from Shawnee Backback Trip. Above, foreground, Ella Himes. Below from left: Andy Niekamp, Yvonne Wurstner, Sharon Mullins, Gary Mount, Ella Himes, Gary Smith, and Connie Steele.*

## Historic Canal Trek, Sunday, November 18

by Lindy McDonough

On this chilly day of clouds and sunshine, seventeen hearty MVOCer's travelled back in time, to an era before rail transportation when people and goods traversed Ohio on manmade canals. After an 8:30 a.m. check-in with coffee and donuts, the sight-seers watched a video of Ohio's canal history at the Minster, OH youth center. From there, the group was treated to a series of driving tours thanks to Minster residents Rick Thien and Greg Bergman, three hikes totalling about five miles and several stops at historic canal sites in Minster, New Bremen and St. Marys in Auglaize County.

The three walks along historic towpaths took us through old and new residential areas, town centers, industrial sites, local parks and open farmland. We saw the actual remains of several canal locks and recently reconstructed ones as well. At the New Bremen History Museum we learned more about canal history, the community's German heritage, and some of its early industries like furniture making and ice production. At noon we took a break for lunch at the charming Fireside Pub in New Bremen. On a brief stop at historic "Bloody Bridge" we learned some local folklore about a tragic love triangle of the 1850's involving the violent deaths and disappearance of two canal boat workers and the woman they both loved.

At Memorial Park in St. Marys we

### *Scenes from Canal Trek, Nov. 18*

*Top: Lock 8 North is considered the best preserved in the United States..*

*Middle: MVOCers hiking the towpath.*

*Bottom: Replica of the Belle of St. Mary's canal boat.*

*Photos by Andy Niekamp*



boarded a replica of the historic canal boat the Belle of St. Marys for a look around. The days itinerary ran like clockwork thanks to Andy Niekamp's masterful organizational skills. Thanks, Andy, for a great day!

## **Wildcat Hollow Backpack Trip November 11-12**

*By Donna Gehring*

Our favorite trail maintenance project near Burr Oak State Park is also rather nice for backpacking. Five MVOCers who participated in updating the boot cleaning station at the Wildcat Hollow trail head last month felt a need to see the rest of the trail . . . all 13 miles of it. So, Barbara McCray, Ralph Weiss, Bob Kelley and my husband Dwight agreed to go with me. This was my first backpack trip in about two years. We started at about 10:45 am Saturday and reached our planned camping spot by 3:30 pm. We had lovely weather for our hike. We set up camp and cooked dinner. By 5:00 pm it was getting dark. We talked around the campfire for as long as we could stay upright. But, eventually the strenuous hike of the day sent our weary bones into our tents for some rest. Middle of the night tinklers reported sigting a UFO hovering and then disappearing behind the hill nearby.

Next morning we were up early, cooked breakfast and were onto the trail for the longest portion of our hike. We can report that there is quite a bit of trail maintenance to be done. Several gnarly piles of debris that Mother Nature had seen fit to drop into our paths and a badly erroded section of the trail that had been rerouted off the pipeline ten years ago and now needs to be benched. The refrigerator landmark is still there. And we saw puff ball mushrooms near the trail. Most of the autumn leaves were on the ground. Although there was still some impressive color in the tree tops, the forest floor is strikingly beautiful when covered with a thick layer of red, orange, and yellow leaves. We returned to the trail head between 3:30 and 4:00 pm. We collected and stowed our gear in our cars and left our favorite forest for the madness and chaos of civiliation.

## **Other**

### **Think About Joining the MVOC Board**

Elections are coming up at the February meeting and some of our loyal leaders may be willing to hand over their power positions to enthusiastic MVOC member who have time on their hands and are looking for a worthwhile volunteer activity. The board positions are President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Program Director, Newsletter/Publicity, Activities Director and Webmaster. It has not yet been determined what positions are available. Openings will be announced later. In the meantime, let someone on the board know if you are interested in any position and incumbents may be willing to defer to new blood. Our chaotic, but productive meetings at Marions Pizza once a month are short and the pizza, beer and good company after are great!

### **Membership Renewal Time Coming Up**

January 1 is the start of the new membership year. Don't risk missing any of the 2008 newsletters; email notices about impromptu outings and last minute changes; lots of fun activities; guest speakers; our annual July picnic, December feast and auction and mid-winter chili cook-off; announcements of other outdoor activities in the Miami Valley like GearFest and the Outdoor Summit; and the comraderie of people who love the outdoors! Renew today! You'll find a membership form on the back of this newsletter.

## **Coming Up**

- Dec. 4..... Annual Holiday Feast & Auction
- Dec. 8 ..... "Ohio - Above and Below" - outing to Ohio and Zane Caverns and Ohio's highest point - Campbell Hill
- Dec. 13..... Board Meeting, Marion's Pizza
- Dec. 15 .... Christmas Light Hike, Clifton Gorge
- Jan. 25-27. Cross-country ski trip to northern Ohio
- Jan. 25-27. 27th Annual Carter Caves Crawlathon
- Feb. 5 ..... MVOC meeting and elections
- Feb. 7-9.... Miami Valley Adventure Summit, WSU
- Feb. 9-15.. Michigan Cross Country Ski Trip

## Membership Response Form

Annual dues are \$16 for singles or \$24 for families. New members joining after July 1 may pay half a year's dues.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ I'd like to join \_\_\_\_\_ I'd like to renew \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ I'd like more information \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle one: (Include) (Do not include) my name and information on the annual roster sent to all MVOC members.

I hereby declare that I am at least 18 years of age and agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Miami Valley Outdoor Club. I do hereby relieve the Miami Valley Outdoor Club and/or its officers and members from all responsibility and liability regarding any loss, injury, or accidents incurred at, or related to, any club activity or function.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### *MVOC Officers*

President:	Sandy Todd	698-5046	saza3@hotmail.com
Vice President:	Gary Mount	367-6702	glmount@yahoo.com
Secretary/Treasurer:	Dale Bockhorst	433-5533	dalebockhorst@yahoo.com
Programs Director:	Dwight Gehring	836-8515	dgehring@worldnet.att.net
Newsletter/Publicity:	Lindy McDonough	278-1493	lindymcd46@aol.com
Activities:	Donna Gehring	836-8515	dgehring@worldnet.att.net
Webmaster:	Shari Christy	879-7241	mac.secretary@sbcglobal.net

### **Miami Valley Outdoor Club**

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