



# Expanding Horizons

VOL. 18 NO. 1 SPRING 2003

The newsletter for friends of Adventures for Women

ADVENTURES FOR WOMEN ■ Betty Plunkett, Director ■ 15 Victoria Lane ■ Morristown, NJ 07960 ■ Tel (973) 644-3592 ■ Fax (973) 644-3598

Visit us at: [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org) ■ Email [ContactUs@adventuresforwomen.org](mailto:ContactUs@adventuresforwomen.org)

## Dear Adventurous Women:

Welcome to a new season of hiking, biking, paddling and feeling those fresh spring breezes! It was a long and cold winter, but that is what makes spring such a treasure. Recently I was at a management seminar where the theme was "going beyond your comfort zone." Now you can certainly apply this message to your job, but I would prefer to apply it to life.

We all build our lives to provide comfort and that is good; however, spending all our time in the "comfort zone" will lead to complacency and stagnation, two less enviable attributes. So can you guess what I am going to say next? Yes, that's right; I want to challenge you all to get outside your comfort zone this year. Try a hike that is maybe a bit harder than you like. Learn to paddle. Go hiking alone. Even better, make a new friend at AFW and go hiking together.

When we begin to move into those uncomfortable areas, we begin to grow. We grow new skills, grow new confidence, and we are able to leave the comfort zone more frequently. When you learn these new skills and gain that new confidence it starts to penetrate other areas of your life. One more thing: once you have gone beyond your normal edge, come back and tell us at AFW how it was. What kind of new experience did you have? What did you learn about yourself? We would love to include your experiences in our newsletter.

*Mind the path... Betty*

## MacEvoy Trail Spring Clean-up

Ramapo Mountain State Forest  
Oakland, NJ Saturday, April 26, 2003

Once spring arrives it is again time to help preserve AFW's MacEvoy trail in Ramapo Mountain State Forest. All members and friends are invited to participate in this semi-annual five-mile hike and litter clean-up on Saturday, April 26 from 9 AM to noon. Please bring gloves and trash bags, and call Jen Francisco, our intrepid leader and organizer, to say you are coming. E-mail Jen at [jfrog1310@yahoo.com](mailto:jfrog1310@yahoo.com) for more details.



A Monday joy hike at Anthony's Nose this past June.

Photo: Betty Plunkett

## Betsy's Outdoor Tip

(Tip 2 of a series on directions)

Developing a sense of direction is an essential survival skill for women who want to be comfortable traveling in the wilderness. Don't depend on the moss that theoretically grows on the north side of trees. Suppose it's a cloudy day and your compass is not in your knapsack. What next?

Feel the wind on your body. Look at your surroundings to see the wind stirring things up. Most of the time, the wind (and the weather) is coming from the west. If it's summer, it's probably southwest; if it's winter, most likely northwest. (Once in a while major storms originate from the northeast, thus nor'easters.) That's all the info you need to orient yourself and make wise decisions. Happy trails!

## Welcome New Members

Terry Greenberg, Maria Davis, Marilyn Greer, Louise Poresky, Kelly Winell, Donna Sadlon, Cynthia Cox, Sana Hafiz, Lorraine Anderson, Cindy Fildes, Paula Capela, Patricia Lemos, Maryann Pelish

## Hiking in the Caribou Mountains

by Susan Blackwood

One of my goals last year was to take a vacation "by myself." You know, not where I'm actually by myself, but where I'm not depending on anyone else to accompany me. I also wanted something different from vacations I'd taken before, something focused on a physical activity and one where I could truly get away. My hut-to-hut hiking trip in the Caribou Mountains of British Columbia, Canada, hosted by the women's travel company Adventures in Good Company ([www.goodadventure.com](http://www.goodadventure.com)) helped me achieve my goals and more!

This wasn't a trip about vacation amenities like fancy restaurants and maid service. It was more like luxury camping. Although the huts didn't have running water, they did have heat, sleeping pallets, duvets and pillows, cooking equipment and food. So we didn't have to carry sleeping bags, tents or cooking equipment. We got to trek our way through five days of hiking in remote wilderness with lighter-than-usual camping backpacks.

The first hut's associated composting toilet seemed like

a luxury when we got familiar with the second hut's plain old outhouse! And our guides did a great job cooking for us and making us feel comfortable. You really didn't have to care at all about your fashion style (it was all function) or what you looked like...I never realized how much time I spent trying to look good.

In all, our group consisted of five hikers and two guides, all women. There were three thirty-something-year-olds, two forty-somethings and two fifty-somethings, with a range of fitness levels, diversity in careers and accomplishments and experiences. The Canadian guide from the outfitter who owns the cabins always led the way. Our Minnesotan guide from the tour company always swept behind; she continuously kept an eye on making sure we were having the best time we could. And both guides looked out for our safety.

We hiked on all kinds of terrain—up steep hills, along very muddy paths (nothing like plunking your new, clean hiking boot into a big sloppy mud puddle—and not losing your balance), over streams, through

icy-cold streams sans boots, through snow fields (yes, even in July), over boulder fields, up and down rock scrambles, through flowering mountain meadows, and through wooded mountainsides.

We had the opportunity to take a dip in a cold mountain lake, a dip that left you invigorated and with a little skip to your step. We got to sit on top of a mountain and enjoy a panoramic view and watch rainstorms pass through at a distance while we sat in the sun bundled up from the chilly wind. We sat on look-outs and listened to the wind blowing through the fir trees.

We spied marmots, and we heard them whistling too. We enjoyed the babbling of the many brooks. We sat amongst the wildflowers and snapped each other's pictures. We enjoyed being in nature and not seeing or hearing anyone else while we were out for the five days; no people, planes, cars, trains, trucks, TVs, radios, phones, cell phones—just the noises of mother nature. Okay, we could have used a few less mosquitoes at times.

Everyone felt a sense of per-

sonal accomplishment as we emerged from our hike out of the woods on the last day. And we all enjoyed our hot and long showers when we got back to the hotel, which we followed with a simple celebratory dinner before falling asleep early in our comfy beds.

I left the trip with new friends, many great memories, a great first hiking-trip experience, and the discovery of the peace you can find in yourself given the right environment. If you're looking for a women's-only hiking vacation where you can get away from all the noise of your hectic life and enjoy the challenge of vigorous hiking in beautiful surroundings, I highly recommend this trip. It's a physical challenge, but with plenty of reward.

I have to add that one of the side benefits of this trip was that in preparing for it, I found out about **Adventures for Women**. I met Sue Bradshaw of AFW at Campmor while shopping for boots for the trip. We had a conversation in between trying on boots, and she told me about the group. Now in addition to my summer vacation hiking, I've enjoyed several local hikes



*Relaxing in front of John's Brook Lodge on the Adirondacks Hiking the High and Low Peaks weekend is (l-r): Jean-Marie Herron, Julie Mahoney, Roberta McIver, Guide Betsy Thomason, Barbara Lima and Ann Silverstein.*

Photo: Jean-Marie Herron

EDITORS: Kathy Conniff Clines,  
Dolores Andrews  
DESIGN: Renée Michaels