*COBBLE CREEK HIKERS*

**Hiking With Cobble Creek Hiking Club**

***How can I join the hiking club (CCHC)? Are there any other club activities?***

         Fill out application and submit that with the $10. annual fee per member to Barbara McIlravy at 3917 Mount Hayden Drive.

         Because the club is a Clubhouse-sponsored activity (which enables us to use the Clubhouse for meetings and socials), ***you must be a Clubhouse current or grandfathered member to participate***.  Club sponsored social events are held in private homes and open space as well as at the Clubhouse.  We also have occasional Adventure Trips which may be overnight or longer.

         Clubhouse sponsorship is also important to CCHC for the issue of **liability** (of Adventure and hike schedulers, etc.) The Clubhouse Membership Agreement, page 6, paragraph 4 of **Loss ....or Instances of Personal Injury**, states: "*Any member, family member, guest or other person who, in any manner, makes use of or accepts the use of any...privilege or service whatsoever...including...who engages in any...activity operated, organized, arranged or sponsored by the Club, either on or off the Club's premises, shall do so at his or her own risk...."* etc.  Each Clubhouse member, and thus each CCHC member, signs this agreement.

***What days are the hikes?***

* The group hikes on Wednesdays and one weekend day, usually Saturdays.

***Can I bring a guest?***

         Visitors to your home are welcome at any time; guests from the area are welcome on an occasional basis.  If the guest is a Cobble Creek resident ***they must be a Clubhouse member to participate.*** It is your responsibility to ensure all your guests are ***properly outfitted and physically able*** to do the hike.  You should stay with them and if, despite screening, they are unable to complete the hike, you must ***see to their welfare***.

***How can I tell if a hike is for me?***

* Read the hike description thoroughly.  Hikes rated as “Easy” are normally those of 5 miles or less with an elevation gain of no more than 500’.  Easy hikes have few complicating terrain issues.  Easy-Moderate hikes will have some issues, which could include more elevation gain, steep sections, loose rock, boulder fields, and water crossings.  Moderate hikes will have any of the above along with more rapid elevation gain.  Strenuous hikes will have more extremes of issues cited above.
* If you have questions or concerns about the hike description, call the hike scheduler to discuss them.
* Remember that it is best to ***start slowly*** such as with an Easy hike.  Build confidence, ability, and judgment of your capabilities.  Rapid elevation gain can have a major impact on those not acclimated.  Set yourself up for success and enjoyment, not for the risks of overexertion or injury.

***What shape do I need to be in?***

* ***Most hikes are usually paced at approximately 1.75 - 2 mph which means, with rest stops factored in, hikers cover about 1.5 - 2 miles an hour, depending on terrain and altitude.  You should be able to maintain this pace under normal conditions.  Easy hikes, which include wildflower and other natural/cultural hikes, are usually at a slower pace.  Good balance is also important, especially if rock scrambling is involved.  Remember that hiking is not walking – the biggest differences are pace and terrain.  Almost all hikes involve terrain that is not flat and groomed.  Start with hikes that you are confident that you can do.***

***What clothing and gear do I need?***

* ***Boots should be properly fitted, with good tread, and large enough to accommodate hiking socks.   Packing an extra pair of socks is a good idea - for dry feet after stream crossings.   Because we snowshoe, as well as have stream crossings on many trails, waterproof  boots are recommended. Gators are also recommended for snow activities (along with snowshoes).***
* ***Light weight hiking apparel with wicking feature, worn in layers, is the best choice for comfort and safety.  This apparel will ensure rapid drying for summer comfort & to stave off hypothermia in winter.  Jeans are not appropriate for most hikes/snowshoeing.  Gear for weather protection is essential.  A windbreaker is often needed, and even in summer a fleece or other layer may also be needed at higher elevations.  Rain gear is highly recommended; weather in the mountains can change suddenly with rain storms often moving in by early afternoon.  Bottom line:  Mountain weather is very changeable – be prepared.***
* ***For summer hikes insect repellant with DEET is recommended.  Sunscreen, sunglasses and a sunhat (with good ventilation) are also recommended.  The sun is intense at our elevation in all seasons so sun protection is needed for winter hikes which also often have intense sun reflection off the snow.***
* ***A basic, comfortable pack (waist or back) is needed to carry water, extra clothing, nutritious snacks, tissues, etc., leaving hands free.  Include some basic first aid items such as Band-Aids, tape, and moleskin in your pack (see fuller list of options on “Hiking & First Aid Pack” sheet).***
* ***Hiking poles are useful especially in crossing water and in hiking downhill.  They help with balance, provide stability, and may relieve pressure on the knees***

         Assemble everything you will need to be comfortable and safe on the trail, as detailed above.  Most importantly, ***take plenty of water***.  Also hydrate before the hike – drink at least ½ liter of water.

* + ***For Easy to Moderate hikes of 4-6 miles, the minimum amount of water to bring is one liter. Two liters are recommended, however, to allow for increased needs due to higher temperatures and/or elevation gain.  The high energy output of snowshoeing also necessitates intense hydration.***
* ***Try out your boots and loaded pack on an easy walk to assure comfort with your gear.***

***What will happen at the meeting place & in route to trailhead?***

         Arrive a bit early to meet others & arrange carpooling.  The published time is the time the group is scheduled to leave for the trailhead.

         Carpooling is generally reciprocal.  If you will not be able to “take your turn”, ***helping with gas is highly*** ***recommended***.  Rule of thumb is $3-5 for a trip within 1 ½ hours driving time (one way) and $5-10 for longer trips.  Bear in mind that although a trip may be shorter in miles, it may be on rough and dusty/muddy roads that will necessitate a car wash (& maybe alignment!).

         ***Listen carefully*** to information about the route to the trailhead including information on any ***bathroom stops*** that will be made along the route.

         Each driver should ***keep the following vehicle in sight*** (especially important at junctions), ensuring that no one makes a wrong turn.

***What should I do to have a safe and pleasurable hiking experience?***

         ***Follow any written or oral instructions***.  Ask for advice/clarification if you are uncertain.

       ***Do not start on the trail until all hikers in your group have arrived at the******TH*** and any necessary group division is completed.  (If the trail is steep or difficult - requiring a slower group - or if some hikers are doing an extension or are fast paced,  groups will be formed; there are often three groups  – lead, middle, and rear.  In the interest of safety, a ***volunteer monitor/sweep,*** who will ensure ***no hiker is lost or left behind*,** should be designated for each group.   A turnaround time may be set to ensure the groups are on similar timetables.

       ***Stay with your group***, and ***never leave the trail, even for a “restroom” break, without*** ***informing someone***. If you wish to travel at a faster pace than the group, discuss that with other members.

       Because of the possibility of health or injury issues or animal encounter, ***it is recommended that no one hikes alone far removed from the group.***Ideally, those seeking solitude will stay within ***visual or voice contact*** of the hiker ahead or behind.

       If a hiker wishes to ***stop or turn back*** and there is no one to accompany them, it is recommended they wait by the trail for the group’s return.

         Periodic short stops will be made to ***drink (stay hydrated!)*** and put on or take off clothing (dependent upon weather) along with a snack stop. As there are generally ***no rest room facilities***, trees, bushes and rocks serve in their stead. At about the midpoint of the hike, a longer lunch stop will be made on most mountain hikes.  If located conveniently, a café lunch may be scheduled for those who wish to participate.

* ***If the group is spread out, stop at junctions to ensure the person/s behind you knows which route to take.  Also, stop at water crossings to ensure that everyone can get across safely.***
* ***Stick to the trail; do not cut trail even if others have.  This will cut down on erosion and ensure our trails stay in good condition - and avoid trespassing on private land.***
* ***Respect other hikers and the group.  Do your part to assure that everyone has a good, safe experience.  Do not use devices with earphones.  Turn off your cell phone.  When conversing on the trail, turn down your volume and avoid controversial subjects.  Keep in mind that some hikers are on the trail for the exposure to nature not social exchanges.***
* ***Also keep in mind that the scheduler/coordinator may choose to change the length or route of the hike or the pace of the group dependent upon weather or physical conditions.***

         Buy a ***Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue (CORSAR) Card*** available locally at the Dept. of Wildlife on South Townsend and online (Google Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue).

o   By purchasing a CORSAR card you are contributing to the Search and Rescue Fund, which will reimburse teams for costs incurred in your search and rescue. Anyone with a current hunting/fishing license or a boat, snowmobile, or ATV registration is already covered by the fund.

* ***Take only memories leave only footprints.  Leave nothing behind.  In our arid climate, orange peelings & other lunch “leftovers” do not decompose.  Our goal is to leave a trail/area as clean or cleaner than we found it.***
* ***Above all, remember:  “Blessed are the flexible for they shall not get bent out of shape.”  Have fun!***

***Rev. July17 blm***