

The Co-Hiker



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In This Issue ...

Club News

Hike Reports

- Infirmary Mound Park (8/23)
- Sugarcreek MetroPark (8/9)
- Lake Katharine State Nature Preserve (7/26)
- Walnut Woods Metro Park – Sr. Hike (7/19)
- Old Man’s Cave/Cedar Falls (7/12)
- Dawes Arboretum (6/28)
- Blues Creek Preserve – Sr. Hike (6/21)
- Charles Alley Nature Park (6/14)
- Delaware State Park (5/24)
- Inniswood Metro Gardens – Sr. Hike (5/17)
- John Bryan State Park (5/10)

Social Reports

- Corn Roast (8/23)

Tidbits from the Trail

- Merkle on the Long Haul
- Puzzle destination: Crossword!

Club News ...

Hiking Milestones

Bob Merkle 5,000 miles!
 Jeanne Barbee, Carol Moore 1,500 miles!
 Roberta Core 500 miles!

Board Notes

Remember, the board established a COHC Facebook page to provide members with easy access to news and photos of club activities. Be sure to “like” the COHC Facebook to join the conversation!



We were saddened with the news of the passing of long-time COHC member Betty Shay on Sept. 10. Her husband, Jack, also had been a member; he died in March of 2013. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Shay family.

Current Board Members

President..... John Troutman
 VP/Trail Master Connie Sheridan
 Secretary..... Linda Coe
 Treasurer Gerlinde Lott
 Co-Hiker Editor Jamie Abel
 Membership Kate Graham
 Special Events Jeanne Barbee
 Historian Betty Bradley
 Social Events Carol Beal
 Webmaster..... Kathy Lince



Sister Gregory of Rosary College was the muse behind the song, Climb Every Mountain. She wrote letters to Oscar Hammerstein, describing the parallels between a nun’s choice for a religious life and the choices that humans must make to find their purpose and direction in life. Hammerstein felt that the metaphors of climbing mountains and fording streams suited Maria’s quest for her spiritual compass.

Climb Every Mountain

Climb every mountain, search high and low,
 Follow every byway, every path you know.

Chorus:

Climb every mountain, ford every stream,
 Follow every rainbow, 'till you find your dream.

A dream that will need, all the love you can give,
 Every day of your life, for as long as you live.

Chorus

A dream that will need, all the love you can give,
 Every day of your life, for as long as you live.

Chorus

*Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II; Music by Richard Rodgers
 Sung by Patricia Neway, 1960 Broadway production
 Sung by Constance Shacklock, 1961 London production
 Sung by Margery MacKay (for Peggy Wood), 1965 film*

Hike Reports ...



Infirmary Mound Park

Aug. 23, 2014

Bob Merkle, leader; Giesla French, sweep

A warm day greeted the 17 hikers who followed Bob Merkle for four miles through Infirmary Mound Park. We headed across the open park to an area of construction, where the Licking County Park District is putting the finishing touches on a very impressive dog exercise area. We then entered the woods, emerging later near Infirmary Mound, a remnant of the pre-Columbian Native American culture that built this mound and numerous structures across Ohio – the Octagon Earthworks in nearby Newark, Serpent Mound in southwestern Ohio and others. We then headed up to the equestrian dressage arena, circled a section of prairie, re-entered the woods and then emerged again at the back side of Mirror Lake. We circled the Lake and made our way through Memorial Tree Grove, where Betty Bradley arranged for a tree to honor the memory of her husband, Ray. Bob then led the group back to the shelter for a great meal (see Corn Roast). 🌻🌻

Sugarcreek MetroPark

Aug. 9, 2014

Dick Barbee, leader; Jeanne Barbee, sweep

21 members completed this hike just south of Dayton. For a few, this was their first time hiking here. It was a hot, sunny day, but fortunately there were lots of big, old shadetrees. All hikers were warned to watch for “runners” who travel these trails. Our plan was to step right so runners could pass on the left. We also had to look for them coming or going – which they did! The first challenge came quickly as we went down big, flat stones across a creek to a shoulder-high, weed-bordered path on

the opposite bank for three quarters of a mile. (No runners on this side, but there was some mud.) We did enjoy watching a dog splash in the creek for thrown sticks. Crossing back over those same rocks, they somehow looked bigger and higher going up. Now it was the usual up-and-down hills, but we were grateful for the deep shade. It was amazing to see men and women running up and down the same hills that we were “trudging” up! We next went to see the three sisters (one belated), which are now 2 mighty, old trees. As many hikers as could enjoyed sitting on a swing and looking at the trees for a while.



Going on through the Osage Orange Tunnel was a special treat. Here too, age is creeping up on the older trees, and the tunnel needs some new “Old” trees, but it was still grand to see them. Last, but not least, we experienced the prairie on our way back to the starting point, where we saw many wild flowers: purple cone flowers; scarlet, pink and white monarda; jewel weed, black-eyed susans, etc. – many of them wearing butterflies as adornments. Heading toward the cars, we were happy to know we’d accomplished six miles of good hiking and enjoyed refreshing ourselves with dinner at a Bob Evans. 🌻🌻



Lake Katharine State Nature Preserve

July 26, 2014

John Troutman, leader; Whaja Troutman, sweep

The forecast called for rain, but instead we got heat and humidity. Quite a change since the summer had been cool up to that point. This is a favorite area of mine, with the sandstone outcroppings and pine forest. At the bridge over a cascade from the stream exiting the lake, one member decided to sit in the cool water and slide down the cascade like a water slide (but not on purpose!). Afterward, we had nice dinner at the Ponderosa Restaurant in Jackson. 🌻🌻

Walnut Woods Metro Park (Sr. Hike)

July 19, 2014

Gerlinde Lott, leader; John Troutman, sweep

On a cloudy afternoon, fifteen of us hiked the 2.5-mile Tall Pines Trail at Walnut Woods Metro Park in a little over an hour. Because it had rained earlier in the day, the stand of pines gave off a great scent; unfortunately, however, mosquitos descended on us in full force on that stretch of trail. Twelve of us then enjoyed dinner together at O'Charley's. It was a good hike and fellowship. Thanks, John, for serving as sweep! 🌻🌻

Old Man's Cave/Cedar Falls

July 12, 2014

John Troutman, leader; Whaja Troutman, sweep

We got to check out the changes they made to the Old Man's Cave parking lot. Before, you had to scamper across the road and hope no one hit you. Now they have relocated that road to the back side of the parking lot, not only eliminating the dart across the road but also adding extra parking. And they needed it that day. It was an absolutely beautiful day and half of Ohio must have been there. Away from the high traffic areas of Old Man's Cave

and Cedar Falls, the hike was a pleasant walk through some of the prettiest parts of Ohio. Afterward, we had a fine dinner at Olde Dutch Restaurant. 🌻🌻

Dawes Arboretum

June 28, 2014

Bob Merkle, leader; Connie Sheridan, sweep

A large group of eager hikers (total of 29) turned out for this hike. At the beginning, it was warm with mostly blue sky, with only one or two wispy clouds overhead. We passed through the cypress swamp area and crossed through the tunnel to the east side. This section just recently reopened after damaging windstorms two years ago. Trails are not as smooth and wide as they once were, and this time it was fairly muddy in places. There is still a beautiful view looking north across the valley, with some golden ripening grain in the foreground.



We returned to the main section of the park and had a cool, welcome break at the Visitor Center. The clouds were thickening and the humidity was rising. We walked along toward the Japanese Garden (closed for revamping), headed up Holly Hill, pausing to rest several times. Humidity began to take its toll on some of our hikers. We had started to walk toward Dawes Lake when we heard rumbles of thunder and noticed how dark and threatening the western skies had become. We decided it was time to head for the cars! Thanks to Jim Dearnell who knew the quickest path to take us there. Most of us drove to Stacy's Buffet for our evening meal. We had just seated ourselves when the skies opened up and thunder boomed right over our heads. We were blessed to be inside and with full plates of food. We sang Happy Birthday to Bob Merkle, our esteemed hike leader, who celebrated his 92nd on Wednesday. (The rain ended before it was time to leave!)



Blues Creek Preserve (Sr. Hike)

June 21, 2014

Gerlinde Lott, leader; Connie Sheridan, sweep

Under a cloudy sky, nine of us took to the trails starting on the Meadowlark Trail, but we had to turn back because of standing water. Walking along the road a bit, we reached the Shagbark Loop Trail, where it still was a challenge to keep our feet dry. While passing the wetland area, we saw a turtle looking for the sun and heard a chorus of frogs. Continuing on our trail, we saw a stand of several large hickory trees that give this trail its name. The Fox Run trail led us back to the parking lot. It was a very pleasant hike. Thank you, Connie, for being the Sweep. 🌻🌻

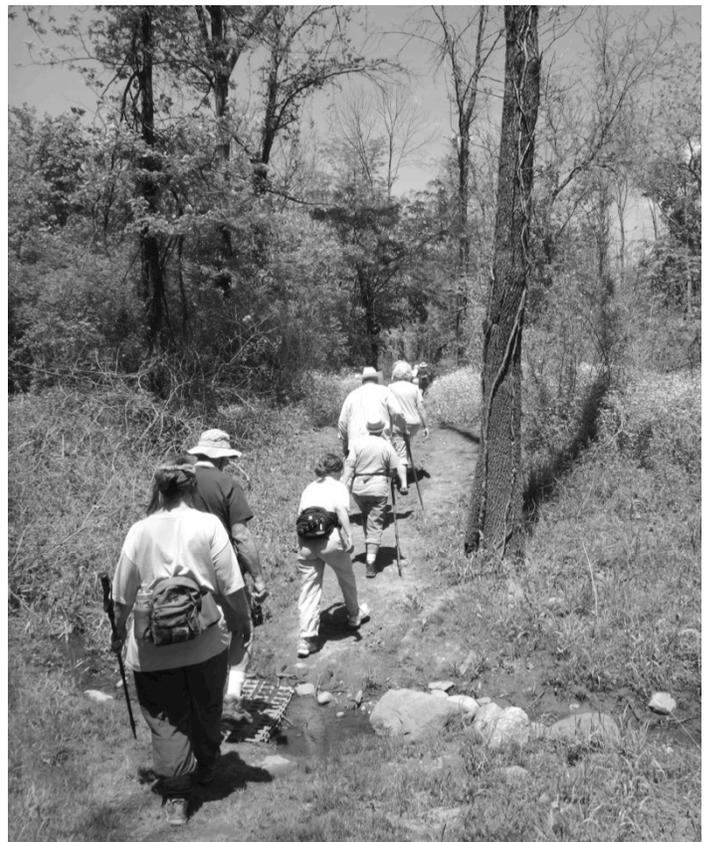


Charles Alley Nature Park

June 14, 2014

Carol Beal, leader; Jim Dearnell, sweep

A group of 20 eager hikers enjoyed a beautiful day tramping around Charles Alley Park near Lancaster, Ohio. Out of the parking lot, the hikers circled the north end of the park, before turning south through a park full of rock formations, colorful wildflowers and interesting fungi. Eventually, the group emerged from the woods and onto the dam for Twin Lake, where we stopped for twenty minutes to observe a family of majestic, nesting American Bald Eagles. After we had watched the parents soar overhead for a while and took our fill of photos, the group trekked up and down some final hills, before arriving at Lake Loretta, the covered bridge, the rustic log cabin and, after five miles, the parking lot. We then enjoyed a nice meal at Max & Erma's in Lancaster. 🌻🌻

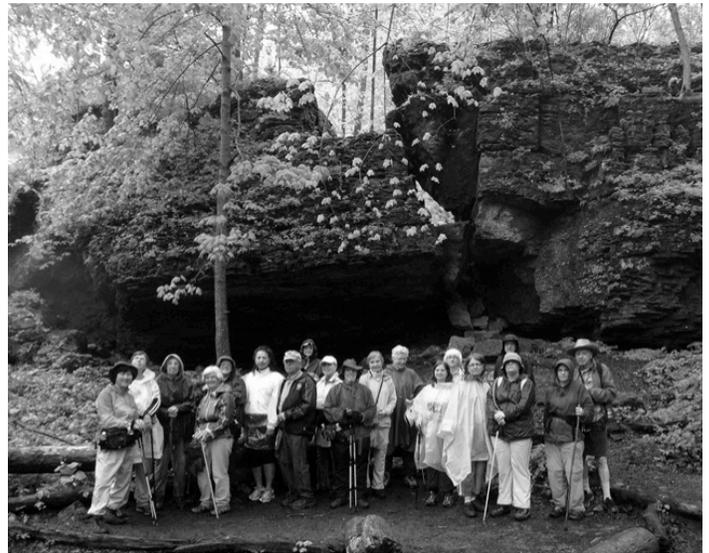


Delaware State Park

May 24, 2014

Betty Bradley, leader; Tammy Roberts, sweep

A group of 23 hikers was prepared for the mud on our hike, but fortunately we were able to find the trails with the least mud and did fine. John Tannehill joined us for the Mink Trail and then returned as he had other commitments, but it was fun to see our Indiana member again. We spent most of our time on the Briar Patch trail since it had the least mud. Originally, the plan was to view the lake from the Lakeview Trail, but in a trial hike the day before, it was one mud hole after another, so we walked the Briar Patch trail to one of the camp entrances and returned. A great surprise was the set of stump steps a trail volunteer created for us so that we could descend the Mink Trail bridge without peril. This park sits on 350-year-old bedrock, which was quarried to build the state capital building. The park includes some southern species, like bald cypress and sweetgum, according to the Ohio State Park Guide. After the hike, we went to the Corner Café, a favorite of Betty and Jack Shay, on the east side of Delaware. We had visited it previously, but not recently, so it was novel in terms of large servings and interesting food. It was wonderful weather and a great hiking day; a good one for Tammy Roberts to have as her first experience as a sweep! 🌻🌻



there. We continued along the north side to the “Narrows,” the point where Mr. Darnell leaped across the chasm to escape the Indians. We returned by descending the stairs and retracing our steps until we reached the relatively smooth “Stagecoach Trail,” which we followed back to our cars. The highlight of a spring day in this park was the wide variety of spring flowers and unusual rock formations. We were not disappointed in the variety and abundance of flowers, as the many pictures taken will indicate. We dined at the Golden Jersey Inn, just north of Yellow Springs. 🌸🌻

Inniswoods Metro Gardens

May 17, 2014

Kathy Lince, leader; Gerlinde Lott, sweep

15 COHC members met at Inniswoods Metro Gardens for a two-mile hike on a damp, overcast Saturday afternoon. We headed out on the Boardwalk Trail, where we saw Jack-in-the-Pulpits and other wildflowers. We skipped the muddy Chipmunk Chatter Trail, instead opting for the formal gardens in the center of the park. Once we finished making our way through the ornate gardens and stream there, we took The Sisters’ Garden Loop and Brookwood Trail to make our way back to the parking lot. The hungry hikers then adjourned for dinner at China Garden Buffet in Westerville. 🌸🌻

John Bryan State Park

May 10, 2014

Connie Sheridan, leader; Cathy Young, sweep

There were 22 happy hikers who turned out on a rainy day for a hike at John Bryan SP and Clifton Gorge. We drove through a hard rain to get to our destination. Fortunately the rain at the trailhead was very slight and quickly ended. We began our meandering along the south side of the Little Miami River, crossed over to the north side and climbed the steps outside the Nature Center, which we were lucky to be able to visit and see the realia exhibited



Social Reports ...

Corn Roast – Infirmary Mound Park

Aug. 23, 2014

Carol Beal, coordinator

A good hike, bountiful food and great friends joined together for a wonderful day at Infirmary Mound Park, south of Granville. Numerous folks arrived early to decorate, shuck corn and arrange tables. Later, most went hiking with Bob Merkle again in the lead, while some of enjoyed the breezes on the screened in porch or finished dinner arrangements.

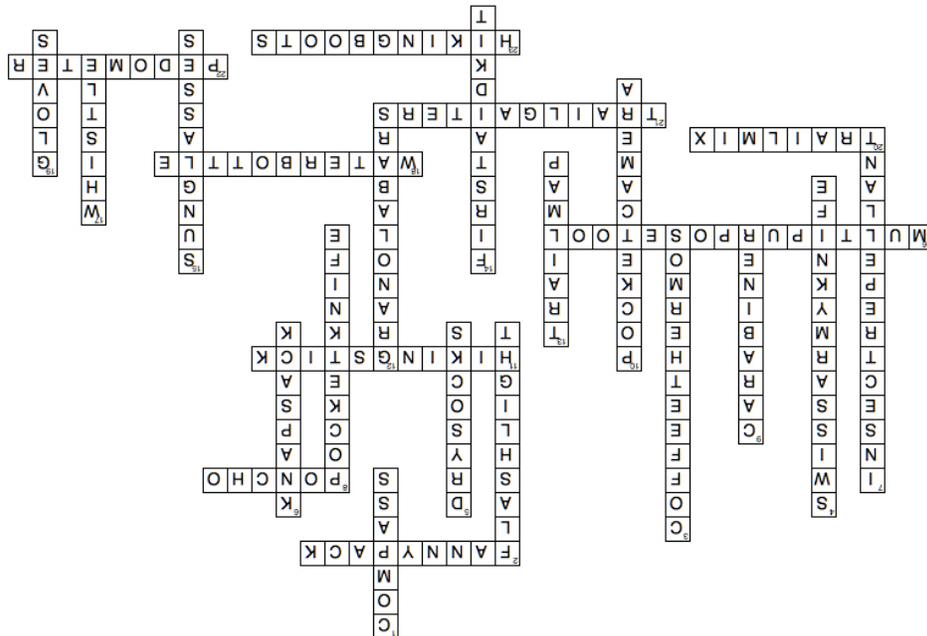
When the hikers returned, we all said grace and sat down to enjoy delicious food, refreshing air-conditioning and non-stop conversation. We served up hot dogs, corn on-the-cob and lots of tasty side dishes and scrumptious desserts. Thank you to all who prepared the food!!

John Troutman then held the popular raffle drawing. Winners went home with floral centerpieces or a backpack. Anyone who wanted or needed bread products took their choice from a huge variety of items brought to us by Tom Olander.

We also recognized Bob for reaching the 5,000-mile mark during the day's hike. He spoke for a few minutes about the achievement, while on a table next to the drinks, an electronic photo-frame cycled through dozens of pictures of Bob through the years. Thanks to Mike Passerini for his fantastic pictures! 🌻🌻



Crossword answers:



Tidbits from the Trail ...

“Pull out, pull out on the long trail – the trail that is always new!”
—Rudyard Kipling

Merkle’s COHC odometer hits 5,000

By the time most people pass the age of 90, they slow down quite a lot. Robert E. “Bob” Merkle admits to easing up a little at 92, but you can still find him regularly hiking trails across Ohio. A longtime member of COHC, the lean, good-humored Merkle surpassed the 5,000-mile mark with the club during a hike he recently led in Licking County, Ohio. That feat represents nearly double the number of miles hiked by the next-closest club member.

A former employee of the Ohio Fuel Gas Company, later Columbia Gas, Merkle was born in rural West Virginia and grew up in western Pennsylvania. “There, we learned to enjoy hunting, fishing and camping out,” he recalled.

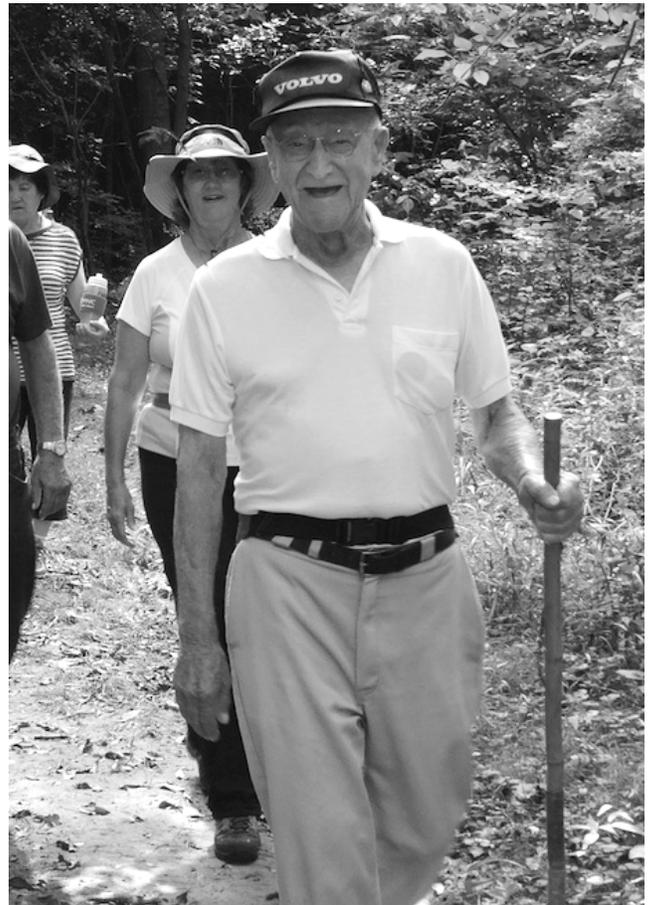
Bob’s wife, Dorothy, was also an avid hiker. She was already a member of COHC for a couple of years before she talked Bob into joining her on his first club hike in 1958 at Mt. Gilead State Park, north of Columbus.

“We would meet at the YMCA downtown, and sometimes we had a school bus to take us to the hike,” he reminisced as the keynote speaker at the club’s 2013 Spring Banquet. “On the return trip, we’d stop for church supper. Sometimes we’d have banquets in the YMCA dining room or at the Great Southern Hotel.”

Bob earned the club’s high mileage award three times, and his wife, Dorothy, won the award herself once. Bob also earned the club’s volunteer award, an award that he and Dorothy won together in another year. A founding member and former officer of the Buckeye Trail Association, Bob received a special award from COHC in 2006 for the extraordinary contributions he’s made to the growth of the club.

Reflecting upon Bob’s auspicious achievement, it seemed that it would be interesting to see what that distance really means. Here are some facts:

- To hike 5,000 miles would require about 10 million steps at the average stride.
- The distance from Los Angeles to New York and back is 4,896 miles.
- How long does it take a commercial plane to fly 5,000 miles? About 10 hours.
- An adult hedgehog has at least 5,000 quills.



- A modern estimate of the length of the Great Wall of China is just 3,900 miles.
- How long does it take non-stop to drive 5,000 miles at 60 mph? Almost four full days.
- Hiking the Appalachian Trail from Springer Mountain, GA, to Katahdin, ME, and back again would total only 4,360 miles.
- To travel 5,000 miles on the world’s longest roller coaster, you would have to take 3,333 trips of the Steel Dragon 2000 in Mie, Japan.
- The distance from Columbus to Kiev, Ukraine is 5,024 miles.
- Hiking Ohio’s Buckeye Trail 3½ times would total 5,054 miles.
- Traveling to the International Space Station 23 times would total 5,014 miles.
- The longest river on earth – the Nile – is only 4,132 miles long.
- Humpback whales annually migrate 5,100 miles from Central America to Antarctica.
- To travel 5,000 miles at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, you would have to drive 2,000 laps.
 - The distance from Columbus to Santiago, Chile, is 5,111 miles.



A Typical Day on the Trail

Find equipment and other supplies that might be carried on a hike.

ACROSS

- 2 Smaller than a backpack
- 8 A hiker rain wrapper
- 11 A paddle for land travel
- 16 Pliers, screwdriver, can opener, etc.
- 18 Liquid gold on a hot day
- 20 Nutty, chocolaty, raisiny
- 21 Ankle-high and ankle-dry
- 22 A step-by-step analyzer
- 23 Feel like 2 lbs. at start; like 10 at end

DOWN

- 1 A gizmo to show you the way
- 2 To scare away the darkness

- 3 George's java jar
- 4 Knife, spoon, toothpick, etc.
- 5 Comfort at the end of a wet hike
- 6 Maybe a bag for forty winks?
- 7 Keeps the little critters away
- 8 A whittler's best friend
- 9 A ring for climbing or attaching
- 10 Memories on paper or in pixels
- 12 Oats, nuts, fruit, honey, etc.
- 13 Dashes, dots & squiggles on paper
- 14 Hope you never need it
- 15 These cut down on the rays
- 17 A drink will help you wet this
- 19 Insulates the digits