



Trailblazer March-April 2007 Newsletter

Trailblazer Website

Visit the Trailblazers online at <http://shtrailblazers.org/>.

Spring Campout

The spring campout is less than two weeks away, April 27-29, at Deer Valley. Make certain to call the Y (412-833-5600) and sign up as soon as possible. We are planning some fun activities again, so don't miss out.



Chris Burke has offered to coordinate and lead a group bike ride again this year, so bring your bikes and riding equipment. The route is a mixture of paved roads, gravel roads, and (according to Dave Knaus) goat paths, so bikes and equipment meant for that terrain are recommended. The 15-mile route is from Mt. Davis (elevation 3213 ft) to the Confluence, PA area (elevation 1340 ft). The drop of 1900 feet is not without hills, though, so be prepared for some short-distance uphill pedaling. Also, some downhills are steep, so although you don't need to be an expert rider, some basic skills at riding and controlling your bike on steep and/or rough terrain is recommended. Return transportation for both riders and bikes will be provided. Plan on 2-3 hours on Saturday for the trip.

Mitch Small is also planning on leading some more geocaching (hunting for pre-hidden caches with a GPS unit), so plan on participating. Deer Valley has a (very) few GPS units we can use, but bring your own if you have one.

Saturday night we will plan on a Trailblazer dinner at our lodging site (as yet unspecified). To participate, plan on contributing about \$5 ahead. We'll plan on a steak and burger cookout.

Golf Outing



On Saturday, May 12, at 12 noon the Trailblazers will meet at Cool Springs Golf Center (<http://www.coolspringsgolfcenter.com>) in Bethel Park (1530 Hamilton Road, just off Baptist Road). For \$20/pair, you'll get a lunch of pizza and soft drinks, plus your choice of two activities: mini-golf, driving range, or batting cages. To register, email Dave Knaus at davidk@keystonecoachworks.com or sign up at the Trailblazer website: <http://shtrailblazers.org/>.

Spring Trip

The spring trip is firmed up and is open to Trailblazers, former Trailblazers, and their families! Spend Memorial Day weekend touring Niagara Falls and Toronto!

I'll be sending out a more detailed announcement with pricing and such in a day or two. The most important action you can take to help is to respond promptly when you get the packet.

We designed the trip to give a lot of options—you won't be locked into scheduled events other than the bus or the hotel. We will be leaving the YMCA by motor coach at 5 AM on Saturday, May 26 for Niagara Falls State Park in New York. After a day of Falls activities in the area, including the Maid of the Mist and the Whirlpool Jet boats, we'll depart from the Canadian side after dinner for our hotel in Oakville, Ontario. Oakville is about 20 minutes this side of Toronto.



On Sunday, we'll head into Toronto for a private behind-the-scenes tour of the Toronto Skydome (Rogers Center, home of the Bluejays). We'll spend the afternoon in unscheduled time seeing sites like the Hockey Hall of Fame, the Ontario Science Center, the Royal Ontario Museum, or the Toronto Waterfront.

Dinner will be your choice of the Toronto Medieval Times Restaurant and Jousting Show or the revolving 360 Restaurant atop the CN tower, the world's

tallest self-supporting structure. Afterwards, everyone can experience the observation areas of the CN tower, including (for the brave) walking across the glass floor 1100 feet above the ground or trying to walk against the wind in the outside observation walk.



Monday morning we'll stop at the African Lion Safari wild animal park for a drive-through tour among the lions and giraffes. After lunch at the park, we'll take a well-deserved rest on the relaxing coach ride back to the YMCA, arriving around 7 pm.

Looking for a Few Good Men

NEEDED: Trailboss

I'll be finishing up my stint as Trailboss in a couple months. To ensure the success of our Trailblazer group, we need someone to step forward and take the reins for the 2007-2008 season. Scott and I will be in the program again next year, and I am willing to be sub-Trailboss, helping out with the Trailboss activities, but someone else needs to take the lead. None of us, I'm sure, feels we have the time to be Trailboss, but consider taking on the task. It's important to the program. With my help next year as a sub-boss, I'm thinking the lead job won't be too taxing. How about it? Please seriously consider it and talk to me about what's involved.

NEEDED: Rocket Ranger

Mitch Small has served admirably the last few years as Rocket Ranger for our fall campouts. He will continue to do so next year, but we need to start getting someone in place for down the road. If you are interested in keeping the rocket stock and providing rocket-building advice to members, talk to Mitch about helping him out this coming year and eventually taking over as Rocket Ranger.

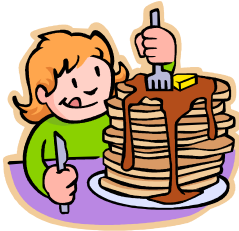
Chule Races

Participation in the Trailblazer Chule Race in February was pretty low, but the results are in. Scott Ketelaar took first place with a legal but sorry excuse for a chule car. Lucas Johnson took second the second place trophy.



The Trailblazers thank the Chule Chief, Jeff Dixon, and his staff for well run race week.

Rotary Pancake Festival



On Saturday March 3, the Bethel-St. Clair Rotarians held their annual pancake festival at Westminster Presbyterian Church from 8 am 7 pm. A few of the Trailblazers helped bus tables and serve the patrons at this fundraiser. As a result, the Rotarians will funnel some of the funds raised to the Y.

Paintball

On March 25, 37 Trailblazers tried in the woods north of Cranberry in outing. There were a couple of injuries, and a lot of fun for all involved. The best count determined that 27,000 rounds (yes, 27,000) of paint were fired off in the four-hour outing, which works out to an average of 730 rounds per person. Midway through the battles we took time for a lunch of pizza and soft drinks. Over the course of the day, the blue team got the better of the red team. Congratulations Blues!



coloring each other the annual paintball nasty hits, no serious

Next Planning Meeting

The next planning meeting will be Thursday, May 3, 2007, at 7 pm.

Contact Me

To contact me on any issue, call or email me (Dan Ketelaar, 724-941-2939 or email dan@ketelaar.com).