



# Expanding Horizons

VOL. 24 NO. 2 FALL 2009

The newsletter for friends of Adventures for Women

ADVENTURES FOR WOMEN ■ P.O. Box 75, Midland Park, NJ 07432 ■ Tel (973) 644-3592

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

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Adventurous Women,

Our numbers are growing – our membership and the number of women contacting our website and phone line asking about AFW have increased. We are frequently asked about our origins, our membership, and how we operate. Therefore, we've decided to devote this issue of *Expanding Horizons* to answering some of these inquiries. If you have a question or two that we did not address, please don't hesitate to drop an e-mail to [contactus@adventuresforwomen.org](mailto:contactus@adventuresforwomen.org) or leave a message on our answering machine. One of us will get back to you as soon as we can.

I want to extend a special thank you to Elena Postal who developed and ran our photo workshop in March and to Gail Lahm who did the same for the Rowing Crew Workshop in May. Both Elena and Gail have been AFW members a relatively short time, but by sharing their passion and skills have opened up new avenues of adventure for all of us. Thanks, ladies.

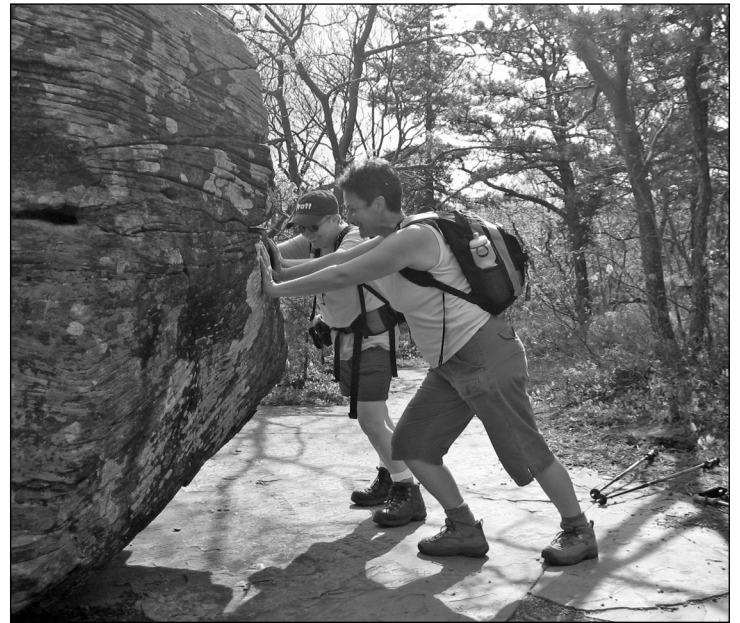
And that brings me to this thought .... if you have a special/unique interest or a place that you just love and would like to share with AFW members, please get in touch with one of our trustees or hike leaders. She'll be able to give you some insight as to how we go about setting up workshop or city path events, and also put you in touch with someone who will be glad to discuss the pros and cons of such a venture and help with details. It's only through you, our members, that we grow.

*enjoy the journey ... Pisovilla*

## New AFW Address

AFW has a new mailing address. Please send your snail mail to:

Adventures For Women  
P.O. Box 75, Midland Park, NJ 07432



*Let's get this boulder out of the way!!!!*

## MacEvoy Trail Fall Clean-up

This fall's clean-up date is Sunday, November 22. Please join AFW's new MacEvoy Trail maintenance leader, Sue, and other volunteers on an easy hike to clean up this trail in Ramapo Mt. State Forest. Put on your hiking boots, bring a pair of gloves, garbage bags, water and friends and meet the group at Skyline Drive Lower Lot at 9:30 AM. It's a good cause.

## Getting There

Our ever helpful hike leaders want to make it easier for you to find your way to the meeting places/trailheads for hikes. In addition to the detailed driving directions you've been getting, AFW is now working hard on getting street addresses, street intersections, and/or latitude and longitude positions so you can map them on Google, MapQuest or on your GPS. As we get them, we will post them to our website (Event Signup/Directions). When we are all done, there will be no more excuses for getting lost ... we hope!!

# FAQs

A good question reflects interest and a desire to learn and get involved. And judging by the questions our members have asked on hikes and other outings, we are happy that they feel this way about AFW. Here are some frequently asked questions and the answers that we'd like to share with all members ... new and "old".

## ABOUT AFW

### 1. Who runs AFW?

Adventures for Women is a non-profit organization registered with the State of New Jersey. It is run by a Board of Trustees consisting of a President, Director, Treasurer, Secretary and 3 additional Trustees, and supported by volunteer hike leaders and trip and workshop coordinators from its membership.

### 2. Does AFW hold public meetings?

Yes. There is a public meeting every May. Please call for exact date, time and place if you are interested in attending.

### 3. How can I get an AFW t-shirt and/or bandana?

T-shirts and bandanas are often available through the hike leaders on hikes and at any AFW get-together. They can also be ordered by mail with your payment in full. No charge cards are accepted.

## ABOUT HIKING ETIQUETTE

### 4. Does AFW ever cancel hikes?

Yes. Hikes are cancelled if the hike leader is ill and there is no replacement available or if trail and/or road conditions are deemed hazardous or unsafe. This is at the discretion of the hike leader.



At the top of Storm King Mountain

### 5. Is it okay to just show up for a hike without signing up for it?

Although we welcome new hikers, we strongly suggest that you register for a hike so you will receive an email from the hike leader with the latest information on the time and meeting place or notification if the hike is cancelled. If it is last minute, at least contact the hike leader so she knows how many people will be hiking.

### 6. What should I do if I cannot go on a hike for which I have signed up?

Every effort should be made to contact the hike leader and/or AFW of any change in your plans. In the event something happens on your way to a hike we realize that cell phone service is iffy at best in the mountains. However, at least try to leave a message. Hike leaders will usually wait only 15 minutes for latecomers unless they hear otherwise from the participant.

### 7. What happens if I'm delayed in traffic on my drive to the trail head?

See number 6 above.

### 8. Some hiking clubs discourage the use of cell phones on a hike. What is AFW's position on this?

Hiking, especially with a group, is all about nature and camaraderie. While we understand the need for cell phones, we ask that they be kept on vibrate and only used in case of emergencies.

### 9. May I bring my child(ren) on AFW hikes?

AFW is for women and our insurance does not extend to their children. Also, it is unfair to expect children to keep up with our pace. However, we do have instances where children are welcome, i.e. the clean-up hikes that are run by a member of our group twice a year. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult and a risk form must be completed.

### 10. May I bring my dog on an AFW hike?

AFW does not have dog friendly hikes. While many of us are dog owners and lovers, we recognize that not everyone feels as we do and many have allergies and fears. It is best to leave your "other" best friend home.

### 11. Is it okay to throw my biodegradable items, such as apple cores or banana peels, in the woods?

It's not about biodegradability, it's about habituation. We do not want animals to associate hiking trails with food. This is dangerous to both the hikers and the animals. AFW has a strict carry in/carry out policy. By the way, apples can be cut up at home and tossed with cinnamon and sugar for an easy snack and bananas can be peeled and wrapped in plastic wrap without turning brown. Also, a little FYI, did you know it takes a banana peel 2 years to disappear into the soil?



## ABOUT HIKING SAFETY

### 12. I do not have hiking boots. Is it okay if I hike in sneakers?

While sneakers may be acceptable on some very easy, beginner hikes on well-maintained and flat trails, we strongly recommend hiking boots for most of our hikes. Unlike sneakers, hiking boots provide better traction with their deeply grooved soles, sturdier support, and better protection from protruding sticks and stones. If you have any questions, please contact the hike leader. Please note, the hike leader has the authority to refuse to allow a participant to hike if she feels she is not appropriately prepared. Please visit the "Our Library" page of our website and read Dara's article "Footgear Tips for Hikers" (2008 Fall Newsletter, page 3).

### 13. What should I do if I have a problem during a hike e.g. become dizzy/overly hot/overly cold, develop an irritated spot or blister on my foot, run out of water, etc.?

Always tell the hike leader immediately if something is wrong. Most problems can be handled easily and quickly when they are small. Remember, when you are part of a hiking group, we are all everyone's responsibility and more than willing to assist where needed before it becomes an emergency.

### 14. I would like to try hiking in the winter. How is that different from hiking during the warmer weather?

Many of us love winter hiking – no bugs, no snakes, no bears and the views are beautiful. However, it does require a little additional planning. If this is your first time winter-hiking, call the hike leader. You will probably find most of your usual hiking clothes can be adapted and layered for winter hiking.

### 15. How much water should I bring?

This is something you learn by doing but usually, for a moderate hike, bring a minimum of 2 liters of water, more for strenuous hikes and hikes in the summer. Water is probably the most important item in your pack and the old adage is true – better to have and not need, than need and not have. You can find three articles on this subject in the "Our Library" page of our website: AFW's founder Betsy Thomason's "Our Need for Water", Nancy's "Water Facts on Health and Safety" (2008 Fall newsletter, page 4), and Judy's "A Lesson Learned – The Importance of Water" (2009 Spring Newsletter, page 4).

### 16. What foods should I bring on a day hike?

Most find that a simple sandwich and a piece of fruit for lunch with some gorp or energy bars for snacking is sufficient but you can bring anything you want. Just remember, you have to carry out whatever you carry in. In the cold weather you may want to pack a little more, and perhaps a hot drink in a thermos, and in the summer you may want to pack smaller portions, eating smaller amounts every 2 hours rather than eating a lot all at once.

### 17. What should I carry in my backpack?

Your backpack should always contain your water and map, food, a small first aid kit, a wind or rain jacket. Some hikers bring something to sit on, a knife and compass. Depending on the weather, add bug spray, sun block, additional fleece top, hat and gloves, maybe a spare pair of socks. Always have some form of identification, including your emergency contact person and phone number, in your pack. (See "Our Library/Equipment" on our website.)

### 18. I have seen many AFW hikers with hiking poles. Should I use them?

This is purely personal. Some never use poles, others use only one and some use both poles all the time. Those who use poles find it helps with balance, especially when crossing a stream or hiking over a field of rocks, aids their knees when hiking down a mountain, provides a little workout for the arms and upper body and minimizes the swelling of dangling hands. However, poles can be costly. If you're curious, mention it to your hike leader. Usually, an extra set can be found for you to borrow to try out on their hike.



Rowing Workshop – First get the l-o-n-g boat to the water!

## What's In a Name?

While hiking sections of the Appalachian Trail (AT) in New Jersey and New York, we sometimes encounter AT thru-hikers making their way from Georgia to Maine. Often, we stop to chat, asking about their experiences and "trail name". "What's that?" you ask. All thru-hikers are given a name, usually early in their journey. It may have something to do with their hobbies, like Beatbox who carried his guitar the entire hike, or their personalities, like Sunbeam - self explanatory. There was Jackaroo who got his name from a thru-hiker from Australia (!) and Rock Steady who got his from the steady pace he kept. Some of us remember Pappy, a grandfather who was hiking with his grandson, Appy. There seems to be the idea or feeling that thru-hikers are on a quest, leaving their pasts behind for a few months, re-discovering themselves. Trail names provide them with anonymity and recognition all at the same time and it's fun to read their entries in the journals found at most AT shelters.

To find out more, Google "trail names" or visit the following sites. It's a fun read.

<http://www.atmuseum.org/trailnames.htm> • <http://gorp.away.com/gorp/books/excerpts/thruhike2.htm>

## Never Too Late To Learn

... or as a popular quote goes, "Learning is not a spectator sport." If there is one thing AFW is not it's a spectator club. Since the beginning of the year, we have had fun learning and yes, sometimes faltering at, new things and finding new adventures.

Elena's photography workshop resulted in some great photos from camera enthusiasts. Budding photographers learned what some of the buttons were actually for and some of us learned that the best place to start was by opening the manual.

Lynn helped prepare us for the new hiking season with exercises and stretches to awaken our winter muscles. For those who attended, take heart – even Lynn was sore the next day.

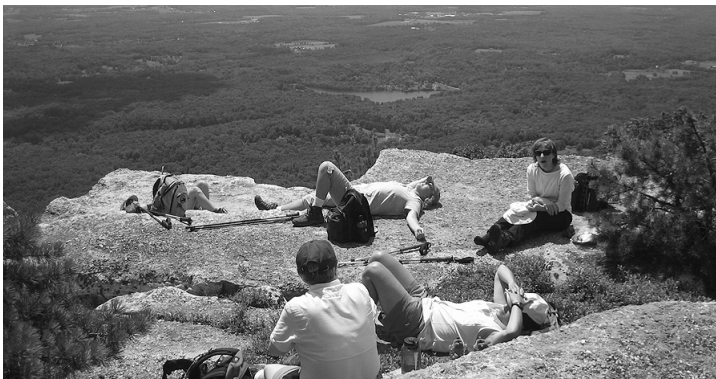
Mary's shooting workshop was a sell-out, as usual. It seems that overcoming a fear of fire arms and learning proper safety techniques goes hand-in-hand. Not to worry, I don't think any of us are getting our gun permits.

For those city-phobics, Lynne taught us it is possible to survive a trip to the Big Apple using mass transit. We bought bus tickets – all by ourselves! And navigated four major terminals by subway (without getting lost) ending at historic Grand Central Station! We learned to read signs and subway maps, not entirely unlike following trail markers in the woods, and use our day MetroCard at the turnstiles, a biggie for some of us. We did get a few "looks" from New Yorkers who aren't used to seeing 20+ women, herded together, trying to navigate the bowels of the city. For some of us, this was the scariest thing we've ever done.

Gail and Sue helped us discover their passion – team rowing. The operative word here is "team," as in working together, synchronization. Well, poetry in motion we are not but we had a lot of fun and, in the process, learned that "lift your hands" really means lift your hands, not the oar, and "catching the crab" has nothing to do with fishing. As Sook said, in hiking you only have to coordinate your feet. In rowing you have to push with your legs keeping arms and legs straight, then pull arms back while leaning back, then straighten arms while leaning forward, then bend knees sliding up to start while actually remembering to put your oars in and out of the water in time with everyone else!! So what did everyone think? This should be a yearly event!

### Updates and Alerts

Be sure to check the Home Page of our website regularly for changes and additions to the Adventure Schedule.



A well-earned rest at Gertrude's Nose in the Gunks



Water break at Times Square, Harriman State Park

### Membership Privacy

AFW does not allow the use of its membership list for anything other than AFW business. For more information on how we protect our membership directory, please see our Privacy Statement on the "Join Us" page of AFW's website.

### Save Your Spot

Our weekend trips are popular and often have a waiting list. Sending in your deposit by the required date is the only way to guarantee your registration. Without payment, AFW will have to release your spot to the next person on the waiting list.

### Sign-ups & Cancellations

Registering for an event is easy ... just go to the "Event Sign-up" page on our website. To cancel out of an event, please either send an email to [contactus@adventuresforwomen.org](mailto:contactus@adventuresforwomen.org), call 973-644-3592, or contact the leader of the event.

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### Welcome New Members

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