



# ON THE TRAIL NEWSLETTER

June 2020

# CALGARY WEEKEND HIKERS

## Summer Edition

### Important Dates

- Hike Season opened on or about second last week in June
- End of hike season TBA.

### From the Online

### Photo Gallery

- [Feb 9 - Chester Lake Elephant Rocks.](#)  
When times were still happy.



- [Feb 16 - Rawson Lake.](#) While we still could hike.



- [July 3 - Nr Glenmore Hike with distancing](#)



### From the President

-- by Mike Cogut --

I'm hoping that everyone is in good health. I'm also hoping that everyone is getting used to their new hair styles.

The President's report usually discusses the statistics for the early part of our hiking season. So here they are:

Hikes 0 — Participants 0 — Events 0.

As tired as I am of talking about Covid-19 there's just no getting away from it.

I tried to look on YouTube for a video on how to run a hiking club during a worldwide pandemic and didn't find much help. Amazon wasn't helpful either. So, here's how we improvised.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic became part of our lives our Executive Committee made some unprecedented decisions regarding how the Club operates. We cancelled the New Members Night, postponed the opening of the Club's hiking season, and deactivated the Club's website schedule. In addition, we've endeavoured to spend as little money as possible until we figured out where this was all going.

These actions required less debate than you would think because the facts regarding the pandemic became so compelling. In the future we may look back at these actions and think that they were absolutely necessary to ensure the safety of our membership or we may see them as overly conservative. We won't know this for years.

We have just opened the Club's hiking season because we have concluded that, once you leave your house, hiking is one of the safest activities that you can be engaged in. Our thinking is that the daily infection rate has shrunk to a number that we are comfortable with so that it is unlikely (but not impossible) to have an infected person join a hike. In addition, we are putting in place new rules to further protect our members. These rules can be found on our website under "Documents" in a document titled "Covid-19 Guidelines".

- There should be no carpooling, unless the carpoolers live at the same residence;

*(Continued on page 2)*

### The 2018 Executive Committee

President:	Mike Cogut	Social Coordinator:	Sigrid Willi
Vice President:	vacant	Communications Coordinator:	Fritz Kiessling
Secretary:	Susan Rimer	Archiving:	by Secretary
Treasurer:	Terry Wilson	Newsletter:	Dorothy Whitson
Hike Planning Coordinator:	Lorna Jurgens	Webmaster:	Fritz Kiessling
Membership:	Pati Roberts		



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- The maximum number of members on a hike will be fixed at 8;
- No sign-up at the trailhead is required;
- No guests will be permitted on hikes;
- Hikers should bring a face mask for a situation where social distancing is impractical, such as administering first aid;

The coordinator will conduct a short “safety meeting” prior to each hike in which the social distancing rules will be reviewed and the participants will be asked:

- a. Do you have any Covid-19 symptoms?
- b. Have you been exposed to someone that has Covid-19 in the past 2 weeks?
- c. Have you been out of Western Canada in the past 2 weeks?

Any “yes” response and the person will be asked to leave the hike.

All hikers must maintain social distancing of a minimum of 2m (6 ft). However, you will get much closer when you react to a person stopping in front of you, so we recommend a greater distance (hold your hiking pole out at arms length and add 1 foot. This is the minimum distance to the next hiker);

The coordinator or participants should speak out if he/she feels uncomfortable with the lack of social distancing or other safety measures; and

If you should test positive for Covid-19 and have been on a hike in the previous 2 weeks, please inform the Club’s President so we can mitigate the risk for our members.

**If you are on a hike and you ignore these rules you will be stoned (sic) by your fellow hikers.**

Also, individuals will be asked to sign an additional waiver when they register for hikes as the existing waiver doesn’t cover this new risk.

So, when we get back to hiking, the process will change a bit, but this will be the price of safety.

The remainder of our year’s social activities (Pot Luck dinner and 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration) have been put on hold. Having a Pot Luck dinner on Zoom doesn’t seem very workable, so we’ll revisit these at the end of the Summer.

However, as an act of normalcy, we have continued to financially support the Bragg Creek Trail Association, Glenbow Park and Friends of Kananaskis.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Executive Committee who’ve been great to work with and have shared a passion for not putting our members’ health at risk.

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## Membership

-- by Pati Roberts --

### New Members

The purpose of our annual New Members Night is to motivate our new members to register for some hikes and feel confident in joining other members in some of our outings. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the event this year. Instead we are going to offer a couple of hikes exclusively to our new members. One will be a city hike and one will be more of a wilderness experience. Stay tuned and watch for an email invitation.

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## Social Report

-- by Sigrid Wili --

COVID has not only shut down our hiking for the time being, but it has also messed up our social gatherings. As you may or may not recall, the New Members Night had been scheduled for March 17th but was cancelled at the last minute due to the pandemic and the lockdown that went into effect about the same time. We thought a couple of New Members hikes would be offered instead. These may still be possible, but we'll announce details when the Executive has a better sense of when we can safely take to the trails.



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At this time we are hopeful that social distancing rules will relax such that the Club can see its way to hosting the annual Pot-Luck dinner event scheduled for October 24. Of course with the concerns and limitations regarding buffets and meeting sizes, we may have to come up with a new strategy. Please stay tuned.

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## **CANADA PARK PASS EXTENSIONS**

-- by Joanna Van Hal --

Canada Park Passes have been extended by 4 Months

If Park Pass expired:

In March 2020, it is extended to July 31, 2020.

In April 2020, it is extended to Aug. 31, 2020.

In May 2020, it is extended to Sept. 31, 2020.

In June 2020, it is extended to Oct. 31, 2020.

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## **Get Lost**

-- by Steve Thor --

Harry Chapin was a singer songwriter that I admired. He was able to sculpt a story. I enjoyed his storytelling on the way home from a hike but find I am not able to set this story up to make it more interesting. To me it is captivating and fascinating and thought provoking on its own.

There are certain times when I have hiked on my own. There are times I have hiked and found my cognitive abilities have been compromised to some degree or other by the cold of my body. This is a cautionary tale of happenstance and circumstances (or one or two of these at the same time) that can befall any adventurer but should and can be guarded against. It is a story of what to include in your pack to make it less likely that you will find yourself with a cold core and limited higher brain functioning skills that are needed to orienteer your way to safety.

With the benefit of hindsight in the comfort of my

heated home and from anecdotes from others who have been lost, it is good to have another person with you to talk strategy. Without the talking, the thought processes may not mature to action and /or be a good idea in the first place.

The first time I was up on Prairie Mountain there was such a thick fog we could not be assured we had reached the top. Then there was not so much a cairn as five rocks assembled on a top of an unremarkable hump that may have been the peak but may delineate a route to the true top. It was also a mountain that did not have a discernible path to follow. You had to figure out which ridge was the one you wanted to go up so I went with someone who had done it before to guide me. Often you find false summits and with no visibility the conclusion was not obvious. So we continued on a ridge that had a grand cliff on one side of it to mark our progress while making mental notes about where to turn into the trees and such to retrace our steps. The cliff continued down for so long we turned around and headed again for the true top. We had an unremarkable trip because we paid attention and had a guide with us for the adventure.

I asked my hike-mates if they had ever encountered the reduced thinking capacity due to cold temperatures. It is not all that common an affliction I found out. I had regaled them with my story of the fog on top and compass work from the top of that mountain over there (the north peak of Nihahi Ridge). You could see the peak and the valley that heads for the road, from the cirque made by Compression Ridge and Nihahi Ridge. And the route was done by headlamp in the dark with no trail. They did not know about compass work but they were a rapt audience (or just polite enough for me to retell my stories). So I then recounted the story of the cold and the circle that we found ourselves in and repeating twice. How you can think you are heading back, retracing your steps only to get turned around twice to find yourselves on the same trail in less than a kilometer!?! And not only once but twice! The dreary snowy days of omnidirectional light and the cold befuddlement



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was supreme and unprecedented. It may give some of you some idea of how the cold can effect a sane person like me. I was not too far gone to hike too long both times; to not recognise the hill ahead of us as previously hiked up and down. Turning 180 degrees to follow my trail is embarrassing and hard to explain to your hikemate but we had enough of our wits about us to have recognized it twice. At the place where we were sure the mistake had taken place we regrouped. We decided to fish out our emergency gear and get a bit warm. This was where (see full Hells' ridge story for the scary details) we found our hands were so cold it was not possible to use our thumbs and fingers to open the fasteck buckles to get our packs off our backs. I used my two hands like boards to karate chop them open. When my head got warm and my hands started thawing out with the dry clothes I took the map out and the compass and set a course to intersect with the road that followed a stream so that we could then turn on it to get back up to the car. Then it was short work to get the red needle lined up in the compass and keep in one direction no matter what you thought your direction should be. It is intimidating to trust a little red needle instead of your senses.

My story prompted the tale of being lost on this mountain; for this year there was a rescue that had taken place on this very mountain, of a family grouping that wandered off the trail and spent the night out there. They were found and walked out with the rescuer the next day. (I still have to research this story and it will have to be presented as an anecdotal story that has been heard third hand and remembered fuzzily.)

The first hand story of my young daughter comes to mind as she was with an adult but an adult that is known to not remember whether she came from the right or left on the trail when she stops. They took a break and some horse riders went by and they just chose to follow and were lucky they went the right way.

This is why it is a good idea to know how to use

a compass and it is best if two people know and then a dialogue can ensue where you discuss the plan and agree on sensible options. You never know what mountain you will need your survival skills on and which would have no survival skills needed but a little orienteering skills would help you to get out of a sticky situation. The higher mental functions of analysis are needed so it is best to have enough clothing to be able to stay warm even when things get wet.

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## **Techy Bits**

-- by Fritz Kiessling --

You may think that it's been quiet in the CHW website programming department, because of the Covid inactivity, but it's been just the opposite.

To make every one aware of the current health security situation, we have implemented an online-per-hike waiver, that must be accepted "before" a member can register for a hike, add their name to the waitlist, or by coordinators before they can post a new hike.

Elsewhere in this newsletter there is mention of current club rules, but I'll quickly list the ones that the website program will enforce.

- a. There is a maximum of 8 enforced for a hike,
- b. Only 1 coordinator for a hike,
- c. No guests on hikes,
- d. No carpooling (except if you live together).

Stay Safe, Happy Trails. Fritz

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## **Bees 2020**

-- by Stephen Thor --

Bees are a personal story but let me get personal quickly. Insects are said to be down by a 50 percent decline in their populations, as a whole. Do you remember growing up and every gas fill up you had to get the squeegee and scrub off the windshield for all the bug carcasses that were on it, dried and obscuring the view. Often, I remember that on a road trip we had to



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stop at a gas station just to use their squeegee. It was worse than freezing rain. Occasionally, these days I have been on the road at sunset and gone through a swarm and gotten my bumper and windshield plastered with little ones but that is rare these days. Do you remember those times too? Is it more personal to you to know we have drained our swamps and have a drier environment that is not as conducive to bugs of all kinds?

Collectively we also have a criss cross pattern of roads that have high speed traffic all across the country now and they act like they are buzz saws. Each car is a blade that will kill anything in its path. If a bug population can not absorb that kind of mortality there are little pockets that may harbor them or they may have crashed to extinction already. Science is looking at little things these days but many little things are not there anymore.

In Alberta I was told we have one extinction of bees and more on the wait list. I was thrilled to find out there are over 300 kinds of bees native to Alberta and was amazed at the beautiful and non bee like bees I saw pictures of at a Friends of Kananaskis seminar a few years ago. I have a bumble bee box installed in my back yard but did not disturb it to see if the bumble bees found it to overwinter. I will add two more boxes on my property this year for overwintering bees.

It was years ago that my cousin introduced me to all the amazing statistics of bee hives and their honey production. Then I started wondering about how this affects native populations and now am wondering about all the hives I know of around my house. I know they are visiting my apple trees and helping my harvests but is there enough left over for those solitary native bees to ply their trade. I will try to maintain my native flowers to help out in this environment as well.

Let me say, on my own behalf, that I am a naturalist but have very little knowledge of things but a shallow interest in many things. I have not joined in any groups to further my knowledge and that is a shame for there are so many

knowledgeable people around for me to chat with to find out more.

I like to throw questions around but do not study enough to figure out many answers. So if you are a bee person or a bug person and have a few years to educate a simple observing bumpkin, think of me and I will be there to learn a bit more each and every day.

I have to say that this personal story came about because of a story in the Nature Conservancy of Canada's spring 2020 magazine that went like this:

Driving along the one-way road in Pinery Provincial Park, Ontario, with a colleague in 2009, Sheila Colla spotted a bumble bee in the roadside weeds that looked different from others she had seen that day. Sure enough, it was a rare rusty-patched bumble bee. But it was also the last individual of its kind observed in Canada. (Nature Conservancy of Canada, Wendy Ho)

On a different note let me tell a personal story. I have visited relatives in Denmark many times over the years. Denmark is a remarkable country for it is flat and mostly cultivatable farmland over the whole countryside. When the Vikings were around and not busy making movies, they decided to drain their swamps and ponds that stopped mosquitoes and other insects from bugging their population. They dug and moved the water via culverts but then bound sticks together and made a pipe out of the decomposing wood by filling in the culverts with clay. As the water trickled out by the sticks the clay was held at bay and a pipe in the earth stayed. These drains are still in operation and have been so successful that the homes in Denmark do not have screens over them! They are very diligent about their garbage too that gets picked up and made into thermal energy to heat their homes, so that there are no flies either. As a consequence I noticed there is a paucity of different birds in Denmark. No bugs to eat.

Now I caught a fish in the pond behind my house this year and notice there are no chorus frogs



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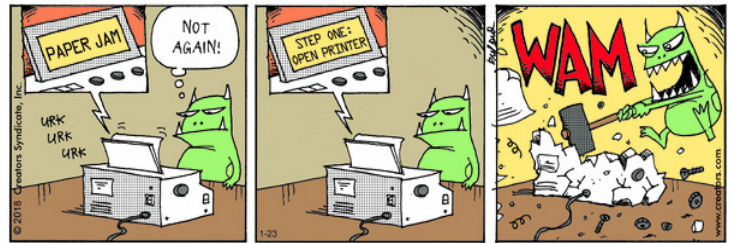
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croaking out their spring song on my pond. I caught it when I picked up a plastic bag out of the water! It is an introduced species that someone thought was good to grow in a pond by their house. Now I worry about all the ponds and waterways attached to my pond. Maybe next year it will be the pond down from our pond, the the Forest Lawn Creek and then the Bow River and on it goes. People are messing with ecosystems when they have no business doing so. Hence I am in favour of banning non native species as pets! That includes dogs and cats and snakes and birds and on it goes for plants as well. I can still buy the seeds for shasta daisies that are non native! They are all potential threats to frogs, deer, rocky mountain sheep and skunks and foxes and all those other flora and fauna that still can be found in this section of the world.

**To close this rare and unusual issue:  
Be Kind, Be Calm and Be Safe.  
Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC CMO**

Reprinted courtesy Ralph Hagen of "The Other Coast"

What I felt like doing a few times this last week, Fritz.



Reprinted courtesy of "The Calgary Herald"

