

GAZETTE

Newsletter for the American Long Distance Hiking
Association West
FALL 2015 ISSUE 3



The American Long-Distance Hiking Association-West: Early Days that Shaped a Movement

By Roger Carpenter

(Editor's Note: Roger Carpenter is one of the original, founding members of ALDHA-West and, with contributions from Marmot, another founding member, has compiled a description of the early days of a small, obscure association of like-minded hikers and friends dedicated to the then-odd enthusiasm for long-distance hiking. Twenty years later ALDHA-West is at the forefront of the Hiking Movement -- and can take pride in helping found and form long-distance hiking in America.)

Introduction

On October 15, 1995, the American Long-distance Hiking Association-West, was born after 75 Gathering attendees chose to continue the organization as a 501c7 organization. With their efforts, ALDHA-West jump-started the evolution of long-distance hiking.

It is more meaningful to celebrate 20 years of ALDHA-West by putting our organization's history in the broader perspective of long-distance hiking. In 1994, 42 years after Martin Papendick became the first known person to hike the entire Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) in one continuous trip, about 550 people had traveled the full length of the PCT.

Enter ALDHA-West in 1995. In the 20 years after the organization's formation,

3,000 additional people hiked the PCT. In the first year of the Triple Crown Award, 1994, five hikers received plaques. The Triple Crown of Long Distance Hiking has grown exponentially by doubling the number of recipients every five

years. Today, over 3,550 people have traveled the full length of the PCT, either as thru-hikers or section hikers, and 232 hikers have received Triple Crown Awards.

The efforts of ALDHA-West and its members were catalysts to hiking's growth and evolution. We are the people who formed the foundation of knowledge and an enterprising spirit that enabled this growth and enjoyment of those who chose long-distance hiking as a passion.

1970's and 80's: The Early history of long distance hiking

The 1970's and 1980's saw relatively low participation by long-distance hikers, except perhaps along the Appalachian Trail where larger populations of people lived in close proximity to the AT. In 1968 Colin Fletcher, who hiked a significantly long section of the Grand Canyon, wrote "The Complete Walker". In 1970 Eric Ryback hiked the Pacific Crest Trail and wrote a book of his hike, "The High Adventure of Eric Ryback". Wilderness Press published the first editions of the PCT guidebooks in 1974.

Early thru-hikers in the 1970's depended on relatively few resources to understand how to prepare for long distance hikes. We can see the beneficial changes just by looking at

photographs of those early hikers on the Pacific Crest Trail. The external frame backpacks were large and heavy, but the heavy nylon tents, white gas fuel and tanks, and bulky clothing added even more to the base pack weight!. Boots were leather, heavy and slog-inducing. Few people knew anything about the Pacific Crest Trail, and many who did lacked the courage to undertake long, multi-month hikes along the trail while shouldering the huge loads that were the norm in those days.

It is worth noting that several of ALDHA-West's past officers and members got their starts in the 1970s. Our past Presidents Greg Hummel and Monte Dodge (PCT class of 1977), and Secretary-Treasurer Bert Ewing come to mind.

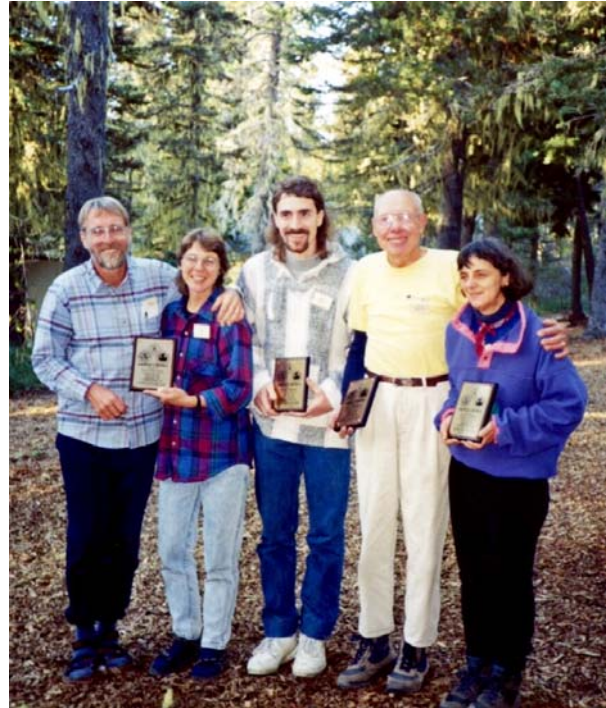
1990's: The heady days of long distance hiking - How ALDHA-West altered the path of long distance hiking

The 1990's was a time of intense evolution for long distance hiking. Today, many of us are witness to the accomplishments of individuals who defied our earlier impressions of backpacking: there has now been a Yo-Yo of the PCT, various speed records, and a winter traverse of the PCT.

But those extreme accomplishments do not tell the real story. People within the long distance hiking community began to take notice of Ray Jardine's book, "The PCT Hiker's Handbook" in 1992, and the Second Edition in 1996. This breakthrough book, in my opinion, increased hikers' ability to achieve their goals and/or make long journeys on trails more enjoyable by introducing the concept of lighter-weight gear, and a minimalist approach to hiking and experiencing the long trails.

As an extension of Mr. Jardine's publishing venture, ALDHA-West was born. In 1993 a very small group gathered in La Pine, Oregon in the fall of 1993, including the Jardines, Brice Hammack, Steve Queen, Lesya Struz, Joris Naiman, Scott Williamson, and Roger

Carpenter. The first gatherings, organized by Ray and Jenny Jardine, were held at the Big Lake Youth Camp in October 1994 and Diamond Lake in 1995. The 75 or so people who attended each event began to see firsthand Jardine's ideas in the presentations, slide shows and exhibits. The first five Triple Crown plaques were awarded to five members 1994, and two more in 1995.



First Triple Crown recipients 1994; l-r Ray Jardine, Jenny Jardine, Steve Queen, Brice Hammack, Alice Gmur.

During the 1995 gathering Ray Jardine announced he would discontinue publishing the Gazette and organizing the gatherings. The attendees at Diamond Lake were not discouraged by the announcement. Instead, they were determined to keep ALDHA-West going. On Saturday evening the attendees formed three committees (bylaws, gathering and Gazette) and worked late into the night to draw up bylaws that would be the basis for a lasting, inclusive organization. The team that discussed the bylaws focused on establishing a five-position board consisting of a President, Secretary/Treasurer, and three at-large board positions.

The bylaws emphasized that membership was open to anyone who supported long distance hiking. The bylaws in effect today were derived from those written and approved by the attendees on Sunday, October 15, 1995. The first officers were elected on that same Sunday morning. In the ensuing weeks the re-organized ALDHA-West would register as a 501c7 Non-Profit entity.

Articles in the Distance Hiker's Gazette were a forum of ideas and accounts of adventures which emphasized better approaches, new technologies and a less-is-more approach to hiking. Below is a sampling of articles published in the Gazette, considered "leading edge" in the 1990's but are considered mainstream and taken for granted today.

- Hiking the Triple Crown trails (PCT, CDT and AT)
- Other trails (North Country, John Muir, Great Divide, Tahoe Rim, and the Wonderland Trail)
- Canadian Continental Divide – by Chris Townsend
- GPS on the CDT, by Del Zander (1996)
- 15-year old Joy Turner's PCT thru-hike with her father, Bob Turner, who also served as President (1997)
- Tarp-Tents by Bill Gurwell (1999).
- Canol Heritage Trail (Alaska) – A Very Different Hike by Dave and Roberta Cobb (1999).
- Hiking Montana by Walkin' Jim Stoltz (1999).
- Backpacking Hammocks by Dick Vogel (2000)
- The Arizona Trail, by Paul Leech (1999) and again by Chris Townsend (2000)
- Digital mapping for Distance Hikers, by Dave Porter (2000)
- Alcohol stoves: Bill Gurwell (1999), Roy Robinson (2000) and Monte Dodge (2001)
- Digital photography for Distance Hikers (2001)
- Hiking the Scottish Monros by Chris Townsend (2001)

This very brief list simply demonstrates how members of ALDHA-West were sharing their new ideas and trails previously unknown to many of us. The process of knowledge sharing in the late 1990's planted the seeds for the enthusiasm, growth and spirit of long distance hiking.

Our first few challenging years reinforced the new direction of long distance hiking. The 1996 Gathering included presentations on making light weight gear, trail foods, a woman's round table, defining success on a long distance hike and the first-ever trail Olympics. We learned how to sew lightweight gear and clothing at home, prepare energy-packed trail food, fix our feet, deal with altitude sickness, and explore other continents.

Enterprising individuals started small businesses in their garages and homes. They designed, manufactured and sold products that gave an ever increasing number of hikers access to lighter weight gear that the larger, mainstream companies did not make available. In those first seven years between 1995 and 2001 the concept of 'ultra-light' evolved and entered the mainstream. Notably, the 2001 Gathering featured a significant display of tarps and tents produced by ALDHA-West members: Ron Moak (Six Moon Designs), Brian Frankle (ULA Equipment), Tom Hennessy (Hennessy Hammock). Additionally, Bill Gurwell presented a program on making your own gear and displayed shelters he had designed. In the ensuing years the members of ALDHA-West continued to push forward as if striving to reach the terminus of a national scenic trail.

Moreover, the Gatherings began to feel like family reunions as we learned that a kindred spirit exists among us. It was not just about technique, gear or miles hiked per day. Sharing our experiences and just being together made attending worthwhile.

1998: The first thru-hike of the PCT by Martin Papendick is disclosed



Marvin Papendick was the first person known to have hiked the PCT back in 1952.

My favorite Gazette article was written by Gazette Editor Karl Diederich in the Spring 1998 issue. Martin Papendick was a World War II veteran living in a nursing home near Portland, Oregon. Karl spoke to Mr. Papendick at length about a thru-hike of the PCT he completed in 1952. Karl wrote, "he was very clear that the entire border-to-border distance was hiked...Martin did months of preparation...can you imagine the difficulty of figuring out issues such as resupply and water sources with the information available back then?" Martin's accomplishment was somehow forgotten, buried deep in the attic of long distance hiking archives. I am happy that ALDHA-West chose to keep the historical 1952 PCT thru-hike alive by naming the Trail Angel of the Year Award in the name of Martin Papendick.

2000 to 2015: Growing interest in Long Distance Hiking and ALDHA-West

As ALDHA-West matured in the 2000's we made important choices to keep the organization moving forward. Previously, the gatherings were held only in Oregon and Washington because the roots of the organization were there. The 2004 gathering, the first to break that tradition, was held at the Clair Tappaan Lodge in Donner Pass, California. It was attended by 123 people, and it was clear ALDHA-West was ready to

grow geographically. The gathering location continues to be rotated among those three west coast states.

The interest in long distance hiking continued as evidenced by the number of people who traveled the entire length of the Pacific Crest Trail and received Triple Crown Awards from ALDHA-West.

Years	PCT	TC	Comments
1952	1		Marvin Papendick
1959	2		June & Don Mulford (equestrians)
1970-74	36		
1975-79	141		
1980-84	102		
1985-89	97		
1990-94	162	5	First Gathering in 1994
1995-99	321	12	
2000-05	589	25	
2005-09	586	64	
2010-14	1477	126	3,514 PCT completions 232 Triple Crown awards

Triple Crown award totals have doubled every 5 years!

Note 1: PCT completions are compiled from the PCTA website <http://www.pcta.org/discover-the-trail/long-distance-hiking/2600-miler-list/>. 3,434 people have completed the trail; 68 did it more than once. A very small minority were equestrians.

Note 2: Triple Crown awards are compiled from the ALDHA-West website: <http://aldhawest.org/triple-crown/>.

Other notable facts about the early years of ALDHA-West:

1993:
Gathering at Ray Jardine's house, Lone Pine, Oregon, October 1993; In attendance were:

Ray Jardine
Jenny Jardine
Scott Williamson
Lesya Struz
Joris Naiman
Brice Hammack
Steve Queen
Roger Carpenter

1994:

- First Distance Hikers Gazette
- Gathering at Big Lake Youth Camp, Oregon, October 1994
- The first Triple Crown awards were presented: Ray & Jenny Jardine, Alice Gmuer, Brice Hammack, Steve Queen

1995:

- The Gathering at Diamond Lake Resort was attended by about 75 people.
- The first officers elected by the charter members:

President: Namie Bacile II
Secretary / Treasurer: Robin Harold
At Large: Cindy Thieman, Garret Holmes, Roger Carpenter

- Robin Harold was the first Gazette Editor, making her a key person in the early days of ALDHA-West.
- The establishment of the new ALDHA-West severed ties with Ray Jardine who chose to not be a member. The 75 attendees became charter members of re-organized ALDHA-West.
- The first Gazette of the new ALDHA-West was published in autumn 1995.

1996:

The first Gathering of the re-organized ALDHA-West was held at Diamond Lake Resort, Oregon on October 18-20, 1996. Cindy Thieman was the Gathering Coordinator. The "first annual" Trail Olympics was held.

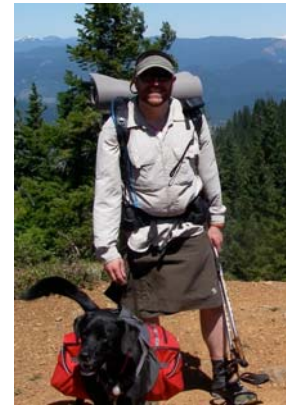
A chronological history of ALDHA-West, including the names of the members who volunteered their time and energy toward the growth of the organization, will appear in a future Gazette.

Did you know that just over 3500 hikers have completed the entire PCT and only 232 people have been recognized for completing the Triple Crown, yet, more than 4000 people have summited Mount Everest!

President's Letter

Whitney "Allgood" LaRuffa

ALDHA-West has had a great year and the best is yet to come -- the Gathering! If you are a member, a non-member, even the second cousin twice removed of a member, you need to join us for the Gathering



Sept. 25-27 at the spacious Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp about one hour from Portland. This is a big one.

It is important -- because it will commemorate the 20th year of ALDHA-West, an organization that has hugely helped shape the hiking scene as we see it today (check out Roger Carpenter's wonderful history article in this Gazette).

And it's also important -- because we're just getting started on another 20 years and have important work to continue to shape the hiking community, its culture, its values of respect and stewardship for trails and nature.

The Gathering is important -- because the leadership of ALDHA-West may be redefined by four board openings that will come up for general election at the Gathering. (See description of job responsibilities elsewhere in this Gazette)

We will decide who will be president for the next two years, who will be secretary, and who will fill two "at large" positions. Ask yourself: why not me? Maybe it's time for me to step up, help out, make a difference.

Is it hard and sometimes frustrating? You bet it is. Worth it? You bet it is. On a personal note, my two years as your president were just great, would not have missed them for anything.

Volunteer for anything -- we need all hands on deck. For instance, we're going to set up a team of people to help guide our 2016 Gathering. As we've grown in size the premier event of the Gathering has become more and more complex. And there are many, many other opportunities for you to find something you WANT to do while doing something your hiking community NEEDS you to do.

If there's anything I've learned about ALDHA-West it's that we are critically important. A few weeks ago we helped put on PCT Days at Cascade Locks along the Columbia River. We served breakfast to hundreds of hikers, talked to everyone we could about our mission, and handed out hundreds and hundreds of gift samples from our sponsors.



ALDHA-West is involved in the organization and operation of Trail Days in Cascade Locks, OR. We are the only organization directly focused on the long distance hiker.

There were many, many other groups there, representing the trails and the resources, representing the governmental agencies that manage the land, and representing many, many fine companies making efficient new ever-safer equipment for hikers.

But there was only one organization really focused on hikers and long-distance hiking: ALDHA-West. Big job, big responsibility -- and a ton of fun.

Let's make the next 20 years even better, and let's start that process with you.

Annual Election

Several Positions Open for Leadership Team

Following ALDHA-West by-laws and tradition of shared responsibility, several board-level leadership positions will be open and voted on during the Sept. 25-27 annual Gathering at Kiwanis Camp, Government Camp, Oregon. The critically important two-year term of president will be decided, as will secretary/web contact and two of the five "at large" board members. Below is a short description of some of the major responsibilities -- but one point is critical and key to understanding any ALDHA-West leadership role: flexibility. Our organization is a dynamic, growing and involved group within the rapidly changing world of hiking and especially of long-distance hiking. Flexibility and a willingness to "do what it takes" in unusual and creative ways is vital.

Current ALDHA-West board members emphasize several key aspects of serving that is somewhat different from other non-profit organizations -- especially that, in the strictest sense of volunteering, there is no financial compensation for travel and expenses and event registration. In addition, board members need to attend meetings and to familiarize themselves with the issues

discussed; assist in the identification and cultivation of prospective individual, corporate and foundation donors who are capable of making gifts to the ALDHA-West; serve on one or more of the board's committees; and assist in the identification (and recruitment) of key volunteers for board, program and fund raising activities.

President

Main responsibility is to lead the board and set agendas on a monthly basis and help facilitate member's desires for the club into action by engaging the board to do the behind-the-scenes work. The president works closely with the treasure on budget, the VP on big-picture ideas, and the secretary on communications with our members. In addition, the president communicates with outside media, and others seeking information about ALDHA-West and acts as the spokesperson/public image of the organization. He or she works with business donors for gear donations to be used during the year at events; works with agency trail partners to help support fundraising efforts for trails; is the voice of the long distance trail user; helps foster a mutually beneficial partnership with stakeholders from a wide variety of trails-orientated groups; extensive event planning and management to identify annual events, help organize events with site location, menu, registration and general organization.

Secretary/Web Contact

Responsible for membership database: submission of renewal reminders, submit new member welcome package. Scrub database for duplicate names. Responsible for working with board on Gazette design and distribution via VerticalResponse. Responsible for working in conjunction with the board on social media outlets for distribution of upcoming events, hiker happenings, general information surrounding the long distance hiking community, etc...social media outlets at this time include: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Eventbrite. Responsible for meeting

minute distribution to the board after each meeting and storing minutes in DropBox.

Responsible for receiving information from secretary email and responding or disseminate email to appropriate board members for response. Responsible for submitting communication via VerticalResponse as deemed necessary from ALDHA-W President.

At-large Board Members

These positions are the infantry of the board, able (and willing) to take on special projects, or gather others into special teams to help with events or communications or outreach. They participate in coordination of Gathering, including finding speakers. They are part of the planning process, examining broader perspectives and issues of long-distance hiking beyond Triple Crown. They promote ALDHA-West locally in the community, hiking organizations and wilderness programs. Sometime a board member is asked to organize the photo/poster contest for the year, yet the next year they might be organizing and setting up the Martin Papendick Award nominations and presentation.

It is estimated to take approximately 6 million steps to hike the PCT, 8 million for the CDT and 7.5 million steps to complete the AT (terrain dictates smaller steps)

Horizon Hunting: A Day's Dawn

by McIntyre Johnson

Hawk Camp, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, near San Francisco

Like most hikers I wake early. Today, with miles to go and sore muscles, I linger in my bivy sack against the chill still air on a ridge line above the Pacific Ocean, almost in sight of the Golden Gate Bridge.

If you are interested, and willing to ask 'round, you'll discover something parsed,

divided, set and called twilight . . . and split, morning or night, into three: astronomical dawn, nautical dawn, civil dawn.

But, really . . .

4:12, by the luminous dial on my watch. The world is deep black. No ground seen without a flashlight. Shimmering canopy of stars in every direction, black horizons are lost to black sky. No wind. Complete silence. And the cold of the clear dark sky of night.

4:26, the east seems somehow – perhaps my imagination? -- less dense, less deep. The black within the black shifts toward purple. The process of dawn begins.

4:39, the stars in the east dim as the black of the sky separates from the black of the earth's edge – and, then, almost a surprise -- there is an event within the process -- the horizon comes up, a first separation of world and sky.

5:12, now the colors, just clues, then hints, then teases of blues. And lower on the eastern edge the first milky pastels.

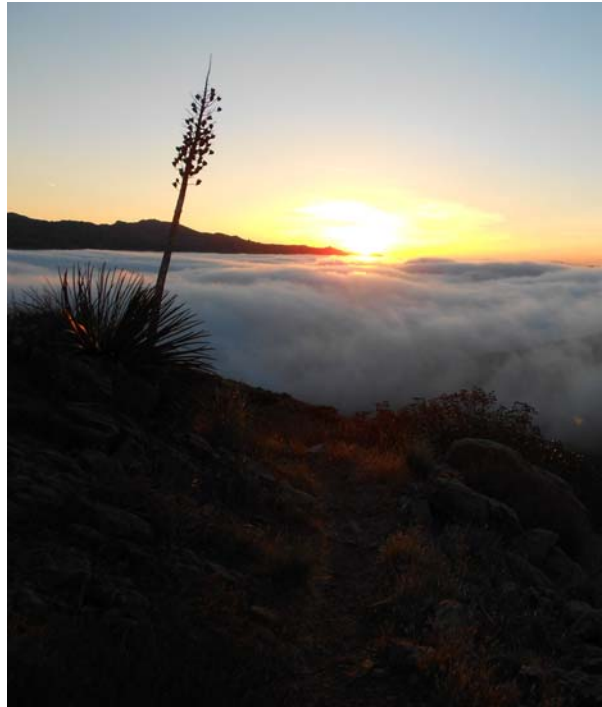
5:22, half the sky, east to west, has lost its stars, and china-plate whites of various densities are moving up in the east.

5:27, reds and yellows and a fine spectrum of pinks glaze the under bellies of small dense clouds while saturating and illuminating from within the wisps of fog hanging low, turning them neon.

5:51, the process gives up another event – the stars, even into the still-blue west, wink out, one by one. The sky above in every direction shows no dark, only a spectrum of light arching in fine display, edge to edge, east to west.

5:54, another event, sudden and unexpected, rays of actual light launch – that's the word – skyward. A fine introduction for things to come.

5:57, dawn, but odd, I've never really noticed this before. -- Actual sunrise can't be seen, only Intense, blazing, almost-painful light on the eastern horizon. The sun is up but I can't look at it, only its effects. The corona of white intensifies, arching east to west. Shadows, long and intense, stretch westward. And again, again, again, the warmth from a warm white sky of day.



Remember to renew your membership. Membership renewal is every September coinciding with the Gathering. You can renew through the web at <http://aldhawest.org/shop/>

ALDHAWest, being an all volunteer organization, is in need of content contributions for the Gazette publication and the web site. Most topics of interest to long distance hikers will be considered. Be sure to send pictures to be included in your material. We are capable of working with almost any formats that can be sent to us, although we do prefer electronic forms for ease of editing. To send material or for further information contact: Gazette Editor at <http://aldhawest.org/contact-gazette-editor/>

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