



Indianapolis Hiking Club



65th Anniversary
1957 - 2022

Indianapolis Hiking Club Logos

1957 - 2022



2007 - 50th Anniversary



2008 - 2021



1957- 2007



2016 - Bicentennial State Park Hikes



2022 - 65th Anniversary

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1957 - 2022



A legacy of fitness, conservation, and friendship

Cover Photo by Karen Zimmerman

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Beginnings

Once upon a time (January 23, 1957) in a far distant land (Indianapolis) a group of enthusiastic outdoor hikers gathered and created the Indianapolis Hiking Club. The meeting convened at 8 PM and adjourned at 9:55 PM. 10 people met and started the Club. They were a group who had been hiking as “Indiana Hostelling” and had been working on the completion of the Yellowwood Trail.

A motion was proposed by Mary Hufford and seconded by Martha Rogers to start a new club named the Indianapolis Hiking Club. This passed with a 10 to 0 vote. The Club was founded to “encourage a love of nature through the promotion of outdoor recreation in the form of hikes and outings.”

Our lives are governed by money and by rules. Each of the 10 attendees at the 1957 meeting pledged to donate one dollar, so that the Club might “start on a strong financial footing.” Kay Zissis was appointed as a temporary chairman. Several other interesting and important decisions were made at this first meeting. The first was that a \$0.10 fee would be charged for all adults on each hike; second, a small committee was created to draw up a Club constitution.

The second meeting of the Board of the Club was held one month later at the home of Bill Murphy and dinner was served.

The first hike was held on Sunday, February 3, 1957, in Holiday Park and was led by Bill Murphy. The second hike was on the next Sunday at Brookside Park; it was led by Frank Zissis. It was four to five miles, and a hot chocolate drink was served after the hike. The first hike in a state park occurred on April 14, 1957, in Turkey Run. Membership increased during the first year and reached a total of 82 members by December 1957.



The Board

The Club has always been a completely volunteer organization with no paid officers or staff. It is governed by a Board of Directors, who meet monthly to oversee all Club business. The first officers elected in September 1957 were President - Bill Murphy; Vice-President - Al Moos; Treasurer - Edgar Stresino; Secretary - Ethel Rush; Pathfinder - Dave Klinkose; Directors - Bob Murray, Joe Sutton, and Martha Rogers; Social - Berta Wilson; Membership - Gertrude Noecker; Publications - Mary Alice Oval; Public Relations - Don Heppensteel.

Constitution and Bylaws

The Club constitution was adopted on July 24, 1957. The Club constitution has been regularly amended, the last occasion being two years ago. In 1986 the first bylaw was approved; it was to create a nominating committee for future Board elections. Currently there are 6 bylaws to oversee over 2,000 annual hikes and activities of over 500 members.

Rules

The Club has never had an extensive list of rules, but some rules have been in existence for a long time. In 1964, the Board ruled that all hikers must always stay behind the hike leader. In 1974 the board banned smoking on Club hikes. In 1977 the power of hike leaders was increased by the Board. They could now alter the published length and course of the hike, for example due to adverse weather conditions. In December 1995, the Board decided that hikers should walk behind the leader, unless the leader gives them permission to go ahead. In 1999 it was clarified that

hike leaders do have the authority to cancel hikes. In 2009 the Board ruled that all hikers should depart from the starting location at the same time. In 2013 the Club adopted a policy to address privacy of members' personal information. Members can request that no personal information be published.

Major Challenges for the Board

Ongoing challenges for the Club have been difficulties in recruiting new hike leaders and new younger members. Historically, articles in local newspapers and magazines were the primary means of outreach, and copies of these articles are available on the Club website. Possibly the greatest challenge to the Club has been COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, when hikes were stopped for two and a half months. When hikes resumed, social distancing, wearing masks, and leaders doing the sign in were all required. The Club weathered the pandemic, with no reports of anyone becoming ill from a hike.

Over the years some personal behavior choices have challenged the Board. In 1968 a Club member reported another member for stealing fruit and vegetables from a private property during a hike. The outcome is not known. Members have been reported to the board for talking while the hike leader read the Club release. There have been complaints about hike leaders not keeping to the published speed of a hike and frequent board discussions regarding members claiming miles not honestly hiked and earned. A few years ago, an incident report had to be created after a hiker swore at the leader after a hike.

Communications

Evolution Over Time

Communication between Club members has evolved in step with technology developments. Initial communication was direct personal contact or by mailed written documents. In 2000 the schedule was made available on the Internet by Reba Wooden and a fully functional website was developed by Bob Hackenberg and Ed Wright in 2004. In June 2012, the Club took another step forward, with the momentous development of a Facebook page. Also, in 2012 the Club made communication between members simpler with the creation of Yahoo email groups. With a single mouse click an email could be sent to most Club members, although some club members found it difficult to join this email group. The Club has now switched and is using Google groups, which has made it much easier to send broadcast emails to almost all members.

Up until 2017 the Club data manager manually entered into a database each member's name and mileage for almost 2000 hikes every year. What a tedious task! A major improvement occurred in 2017, allowing individual hike leaders to enter hike information for each hike directly into the Club computer database. This was an amazing change. At present almost 95% of hike leaders enter mileage for hikes they lead into the Club website, greatly relieving the Mileage officer of this workload.

Trail Blazers and Hike Schedules

The Trail Blazer is an annual summary of Hiking Club activity. It has been published every year since 1968. This is largely due to the untiring dedication of one member, Bill Larrison, who produced the Trail Blazer annually for 43 years without the aid of a computer. Today we can produce the Trail Blazer directly from the website database in a fraction of the time it took Bill to prepare it. The first edition said, "This first attempt to record a history of our activities is in recognition of the fact that many of our members have expressed a desire for such a report. During the year ending October 1, 1968, we had 5 overnights, 1 bus trip, 1 family picnic, our annual Christmas party, and 4 Club socials, plus our regular Sunday hikes. We are attaching to this report a membership attendance record, and a list of our scheduled events during 1968 showing the attendance at each hike."

Hike schedules have been published since the creation of the Club in 1957. Originally published every month they were later published every two months. The layout of the schedules and the description of the hikes has changed very little over time, except the length of the schedule has grown over the years from one page to almost 20 pages.

Finances

Review of Club documents and records never identified any discussion of financial stress or worries. The first financial report that has been found was published in October 1969. "For the previous 12 months total income was \$1836 and the Club ended the year with a healthy bank balance of \$422.35." To keep up with the times and help protect board members, an auditing committee was first used in 1986 and continues annually to the present day.

Annual membership dues were \$1.50 in 1960. By 1972 they had increased to \$2.00. In 1989 dues were \$7.00 (\$10.00 per family). In 2011 annual dues were \$20 for an individual and \$30 for a family. These amounts have not changed.

Many Club members are probably not aware of fees that new members were charged. In 2016 the one-time \$10 new member fee was eliminated, as was the \$10 reinstatement fee paid by former members who were rejoining the Club.

Up until 1980 any member achieving a total of 2000 lifetime hiking miles was given a lifetime free membership. This generous gift was then rescinded by the board in 1980, after only one member, Don Beulah, had attained this achievement. In retrospect this was a good move since by 2021 hundreds of members had hiked greater than 2000 lifetime miles!

Hikers have always carpooled to travel to hikes.

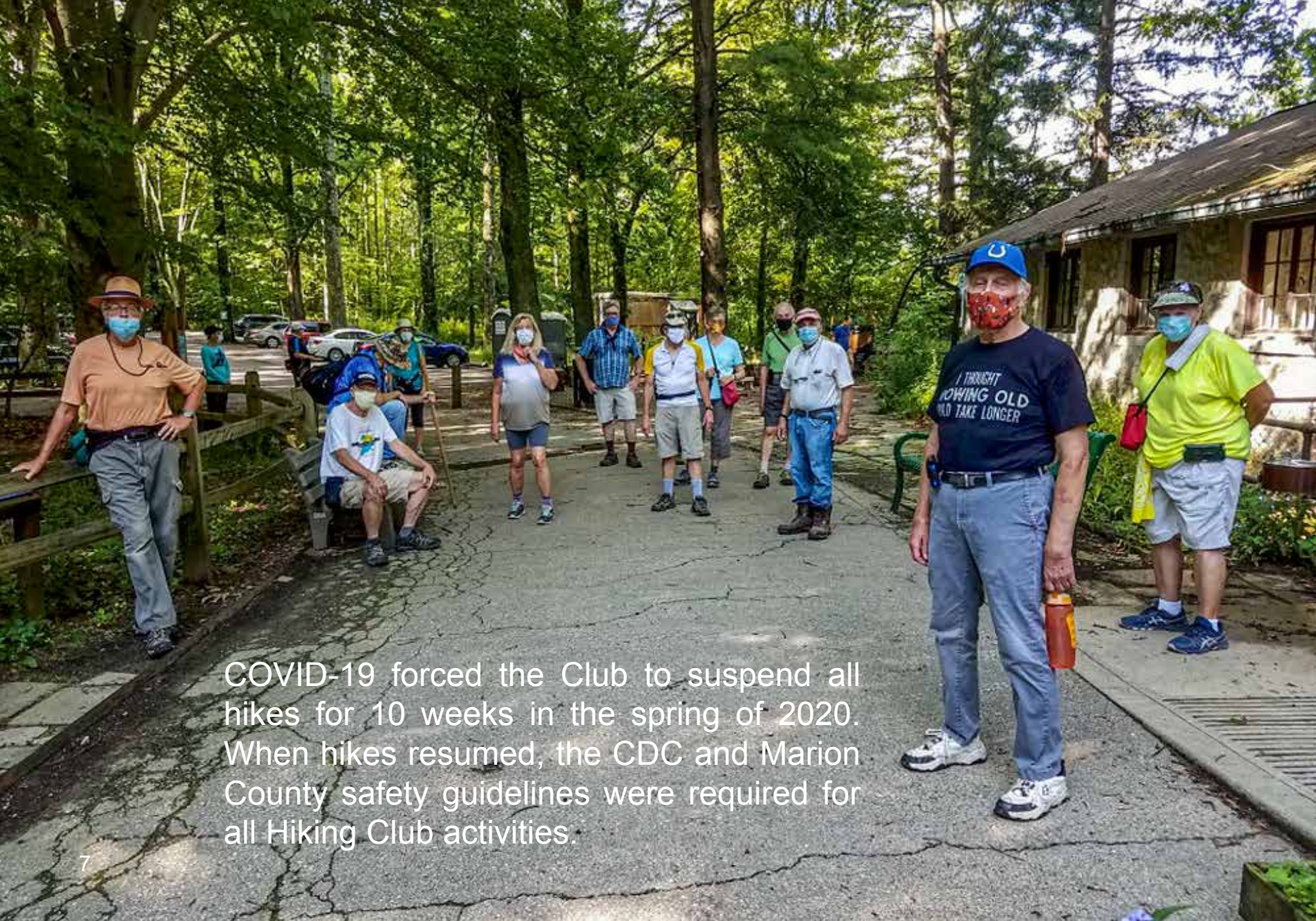
For many years they usually met in the car park at the State House in downtown Indianapolis. Riders were required to pay the car driver; initially this was one cent a mile. By 1976 it had inflated to 2.5 cents per mile, and by 1985 to \$0.45. This payment was still required in 1991.

Absolutely nothing in life is free. From its creation in 1957 each hike member was charged \$0.10 for every hike that they attended. This fee was paid to the hike leader and remained unchanged in amount until its cancellation in March 1989. Ed Lavagnino reports that compliance was outstanding. Payments for trips in early years were amazingly cheap: as an example, hikers were charged \$1.00 per person per night for an overnight hike in McCormick's Creek State Park in 1960.

In 1985 hikers were asked to pay a fee of \$2.90 for name mileage award tags; this fee was discontinued in 1990, after which the award tags were provided for free.

Postage for the Club schedule was \$0.03 in 1960, increasing to \$0.06 to mail the one-page schedule in 1969. In comparison in June 2021, it cost \$268 to print and \$157 to mail the 18-page schedule and 2/3 of the Club members don't receive the mailed schedule. The charge for the 40th anniversary banquet was \$16.00 per person in 1996.



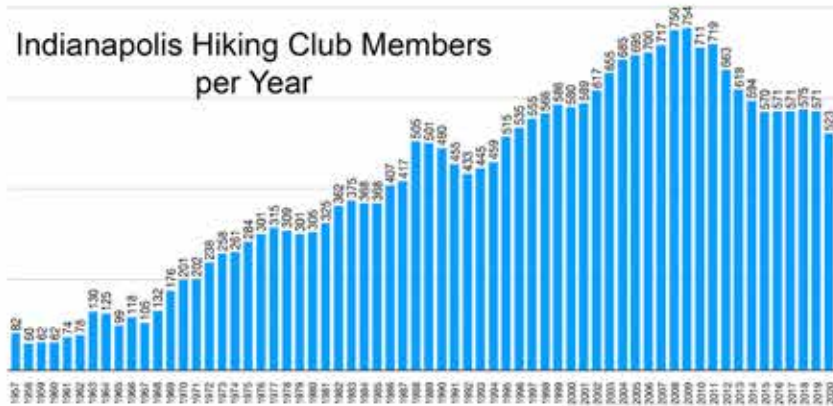


COVID-19 forced the Club to suspend all hikes for 10 weeks in the spring of 2020. When hikes resumed, the CDC and Marion County safety guidelines were required for all Hiking Club activities.

Membership

The annual number of Club members rose steadily from 82 in 1957 to a record of 754 in 2009. It has fallen slowly since then, down to 523 in the COVID-19 year 2020. It has been suggested that the high peak in 2009 was due to Bill Larrison paying the membership fees for many older members who had ceased hiking but still wanted to remain connected with the Club.

Indianapolis Hiking Club Members
per Year



Indianapolis Hiking Club Annual New Members



*Covid 19

The average number of annual new members from 1967 until 2020 is 63.





Club members are known for their loyalty. Many have been members for over 45 years. The top 10 longest members:

- * Frances Ellison 56 years
- * Nell Larrison 55 years
- Susan Huizinga 54 years
- * Jerry Johnson 54 years
- Ed Lavagnino 53 years
- Phyllis Cassetty 52 years
- Jo Ann Jones 50 years
- * John Jones 50 years
- * Bill Larrison 47 years
- Marsha Hutchins 46 years
- *Deceased

Milestones for Number of Yearly Hikes Lead by a Member

1985	10 hikes	Libby Moore
1990	50 hikes	Avis Shipman
2001	75 hikes	Bill Larrison
2005	100 hikes	Rich Peck
2009	150 hikes	Glee Crowder
2015	200 hikes	Glee Crowder
2017	300 hikes	Glee Crowder

Celebrations and Social Activities

Since the creation of the Hiking Club in 1957, social gatherings have provided a very important and much-loved part of the Club activities. The very first social gathering was in spring 1957. In the early years scheduled social gatherings and meetings of the Club occurred almost every two months. These were always associated with eating and almost always with a slide presentation.

It has become a Club tradition for hikers to meet informally for coffee, lunch, or dinner after a hike. The "lunch bunch" has been meeting almost every Thursday after the Eagle Creek hike for more than 35 years.

The first documented Christmas celebration (now Winter Banquet) was held at Roberts Dining in 1972 and members were asked to bring an exchange gift worth \$0.50. This annual event was canceled in 2020 because of COVID-19. The only previously recorded cancellation of the Christmas party was in 1977 and it was due to the "terrible condition of the parking lot" at the scheduled venue.

The annual Club picnic has been held for many years. The location has been in Eagle Creek Park since at least 1989. It has always been a pitch-in event, with the Club providing meat and drinks. Hikes in the park precede the eating.

Some unique social activities have been: attending an opera in Cincinnati, bus tours, touring the Indiana Governor's mansion, pie making competitions, museum tours, square dancing, and a musical on an Ohio riverboat. In 1983 a beauty pageant was held at the Gnaw Bone hike. No record of the winner has been found.

Mileage award patches were first given out in 1970.

The Club has celebrated five major anniversaries. Bill Larrison was the master of ceremonies at a 25-year anniversary banquet held at the Lakeshore Country Club. The 30th anniversary was celebrated at the German American Club. The Lord's Prayer was sung by Rosita Genovese and dance music was provided by the Paul Burton Trio.

The 40th and the 45th anniversary banquets were held at the Primo Banquet Hall. The chairman of the organizing committee for the 40th celebration was Win Pulsifer.

The 50th anniversary was recognized by the Indiana Governor and the Mayor of Indianapolis who declared January 23, 2007, as "Indianapolis Hiking Club Day." A hike in downtown Indy on January 23 ended at the Indiana State House with the cutting of an anniversary cake. A celebration party was held at Crosspointe Baptist Church. Dinner included roast sirloin beef and tilapia with crabmeat. At the gathering there was a special recognition of the lifetime contributions to the Club of Bill and Nell Larrison. The celebration ended with singing of Club song.

Rambling romances have resulted in numerous betrothals, after the happy couples met on a Club hike. "Best of all, on a hike at Christian Park in 1977, I met a man who would become my best friend and husband - Allan Pekar." (Marsha Hutchins who joined in 1975.) There are stories of a marriage proposal occurring on a Club hike at the bottom of the Grand Canyon and of a justice of the peace being asked to join an official Club hike to conduct a wedding ceremony during the hike.

Hikes

Hike Locations

“We have visited places we would have never found on our own.” (Shirley and JC Overton who joined in 1977 and 1971). “Without the Club, I would not have hiked on my own to such fantastic destinations as the Smokies, Rockies, Cascades and the Grand Canyon.” (Nanette Tate who joined in 1988.)

65 years of continuous hiking started on Sunday, February 3, 1957, at 2 PM in Holliday Park, Indianapolis. The first hike outside of Indianapolis was at Bloomington caves in March 1957. Always seeking adventure, the Club had its first overnight gathering at McCormick’s Creek State Park in June 1957.

The Club has held several international hikes. A hike in the Black Forest in Germany was listed in the schedule in 1984 at a cost of \$1300 to \$1500 per person. There were hikes in Bavaria, Germany, in 2010 and 2013, along Hadrian's Wall in 2014, in southern England in 2017, and in Yorkshire England in 2018. A hike in the Highlands of Scotland is scheduled for 2022.

Many destinations are revisited frequently. In July 1957 the first of many overnight hikes was held in Turkey Run State Park. Bradford Woods has long been a favorite destination for hike leaders: the first hike there was in May 1957. The first out-of-state hike was at Mammoth Cave in Kentucky in September 1960. Gnaw Bone Camp is located midway between Columbus and Nashville, Indiana. Hikes have occurred at Gnaw Bone annually since 1971. Most

of these have been overnight. They have been greatly enjoyed by members, often accompanied by their grandchildren. Jean Ballinger organized the first Smoky Mountain trip in 1998 and these have occurred annually since then. These are extremely popular with highlights being eating and playing euchre.

June 1978 was the 1st time that two different hikes were scheduled on the same day. These were at Tippecanoe Battlefield at 9:00 AM and along the White River canal at 2:00 PM. Since then, the number of hikes offered has increased significantly and there are often “competing” hikes on the daily schedule. Currently there are as many as ten hike choices in a single day.

A survey of club members in 1992 indicated that 92% preferred trail hikes with a length of 5 to 7 miles and the preferred travel distance to the hike was less than 50 miles. Three mph was selected as the optimal hiking speed. Some like to go faster. “I remember right from the beginning I wanted to be as fast as Ben and Avis Shipman.” (Michele Kestle who joined in 1991.)

Some previous hike locations not now frequently seen in our schedules include Yellow Birch ravine, Mississinawa reservoir, Lake Maxinhall, Kal-haven trail, Myakka State Park, Warren Dunes State Park, Micantigny Park, and downtown Chicago.

Largest Turnout for a Hike

The largest number of hikers participating in a single hike seems to vary greatly from year to year. During the period

1968 to 1985 this number ranged from 40 to 75 hikers. As part of the Club's 2016 project of hiking in every state park in Indiana, 143 people hiked on New Year's Day in the White River State Park - a club record!

In its first year in 1957 the Club hiked 26 times. In 1959 there were a total of 50 hikes, about one a week every Sunday. The number of annual hikes averaged about 50 until the 1980s. 1983 was the first year over 100 hikes were scheduled. A new record was set in 1995, with 515 hikes. In 2003 the club did more than 1000 hikes for the first time. In 2008 the Club exceeded 1500 hikes. Apart from 2020, which was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with only 1622 hikes, the club has offered more than 2000 hikes every year since 2010, about 5.5 choices for every day of the year.

Schedules

The hike schedule was published monthly until 1972, after which it was published every two months. It was not until 1972 that the length of each hike was regularly given in the hike schedule. Over the years, the hike schedules came to include the map location of the hike meeting site and the cell phone number of the hike leader.

Special Hiking Events

Back Roads Across Indiana

In 2003 Tom Kapostasy started a series of 10 hikes, spread over a couple of years, whereby hikers would hike all the way across Indiana. Each hike was approximately

20 miles long. 25 hikers completed the entire journey from one side of the state to the other.

Indiana Bicentennial State Park Hikes

2016 was a special year in Indiana, because it was the 200th birthday of the state and the 100th anniversary of the establishment of McCormick's Creek, the first state park in Indiana. As part of the celebration the Indianapolis Hiking Club scheduled hikes in every one of the State's 25 parks. 258 of our members attended at least one of these hikes in 2016. In total, club members hiked 14,115 miles in the parks. 35 amazing and really dedicated members hiked in all 25 and an additional 18 members hiked in 20 or more of the state parks.

Unique Hikes

In the schedule, many hikes are described, at least partially, by their location. This is not always true and there have been some unusual hike names. Examples include "loiter leisurely hike" - for photography; "idiots delight" - a 41-mile hike in 1989; "zig and zag"; "evening rejuvenator"; "shades of death" - 5 ravines and 10,000 steps; "Ritters here we come"; "Hot day, slow hike"; "Better than Therapy"; "Anarchy Hike" - everyone who shows up gets a chance to decide what direction to go; and, "Inside Indiana" - seeking ways to hike inside on a cold January day.

In the past, fit young children were frequently seen on hikes sprinting ahead of their jealous parents. In 1970, 40% of hikes had over 10 children on each hike.

Other traditions include a wildflower hike every Tuesday in April. "Our lives are made richer and fuller by our hiking friends. Troubles are shared and joys are doubled. We also learned the names of 225 wildflowers!" (Don and Barbara Tipton who joined in 1987.) Winnie Ballard, the wife of Indianapolis' former mayor Greg Ballard, participated in a wildflower hike. In April 2012, book club hikes were started, and the first book discussed was "A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf" by John Muir. Regular book club hikes have been scheduled monthly since 2014.

Joint Hikes with Other Clubs


Hikes with other clubs were not uncommon in the early years. In fact, the club scheduled joint hikes with the Louisville Hiking Club for 11 years in a row, from 1968-1979. The very first was in May 1961 at Versailles State Park together with the Louisville hiking club. It was very successful with an attendance of over 120 people

Pet Hikes

Dog hikes were initially allowed but then banned in 1975 because of unpleasant incidents related to angry dogs. No more dog hikes occurred until 2010, with the April schedule showing a "Mutt Strut for our members with canine friends." Occasional regular dog hikes were restarted in 2013 with owners having to accept specific regulations. The report of this new experiment was "our first pet hike in early December wasn't really a fair trial, since it had one big dog, one little dog, and cold lousy weather, and, oh yes, five hikers." It was nice to hear the second dog hike was a success. Even a "loaner dog was available for Cherie

Voegel to use." Pet hikes continue to be scheduled but not as frequently as some might wish - about 1 pet hike every two months in good weather. We need more pet lovers to step up and lead hikes.



A group of hikers is seen from behind, walking along a dirt trail on a desert ridge. The trail is lined with saguaro cacti and low-lying desert shrubs. In the background, a vast valley stretches out under a cloudy sky, with distant mountain ranges visible on the horizon. The hikers are wearing various outdoor gear, including hats, backpacks, and trekking poles.

Besides the annual trip to the Smokies and frequent trips to neighboring Kentucky and Illinois, over the years the Club has visited many out-of-state locations, including: Los Angeles, CA (3 times), Tucson, AZ (3 times), the Cascades, Gettysburg battlefield (3 times), annual Florida hikes for snowbirds, Glacier NP, Aspen (2 times), Upper Peninsula, MI (2 times), Hocking Hills, OH (5 times), Sleeping Bear Dunes, MI (2 times), Washington, D.C. (2 times), Big Bend NP, Mackinac Island, MI (2 times), Boston, MA, Isle Royale NP (Bill Larrison's favorite place), New York City, Grand Canyon NP, Yosemite NP, Lake Tahoe, CA, Upstate NY and Alaska. Also, Rocky Mountain NP (3 times), Black Hills and Badlands NP, Grand Tetons NP, and Door County, WI.

Hike Leaders

Quite amazing is the amount of time that club members donate. One essential activity is the willingness to lead hikes. In 1980 four club members each led greater than five hikes in the year. These included Marsha Hutchins and Mary Kidwell. By 1998 Avis Shipman was leading 50 hikes a year and in 2005 Rich Peck led over 100 hikes. Glee Crowder holds the record having led over 300 hikes in 2017.

By 2010 there were 55 club members who each led more than 10 hikes in the year. The willingness of club members to lead hikes has continued to increase and in 2020 there were 22 members who each led over 25 hikes.

Hike Participation

Number of Hikes Completed in One Year

Mary Kidwell completed 50 hikes in 1982. A new record of 100 hikes in a year was set by Joe Wilhelm in 1983. The current record for hikes finished in one year is over 500 by Glee Crowder in 2009. Participation in hiking continues to increase every year. By 1980 only three hikers had completed more than 50 hikes in one year. This has increased steadily over the years; by 2010, 109 hikers completed more than 50 hikes in the year. In 2020 36 hikers completed more than 100 hikes in the year and eight achieved a remarkable 200+ hikes in the year.

Hike Distances

"The IHC influenced me to get into top physical condition

and I did several mini-marathons, formerly done only by crazy people." (Tom Hollett who joined in 1994.)

Longest hike

In 1989 10 people completed a 41-mile hike; a wagon provided cookies, punch and watermelon which were very much appreciated. Jill McFall was one of these hikers. In November 1999, a new hike distance record of 43 miles was established. In 2006 six hikers set a new long distance Club hike record of 62 miles (100K) by hiking from Washington, D.C. to Harpers Ferry, WV, in one very long day. This record has yet to be broken, but it has been tied by ten other Club members (16 in all) on the same hike. Most recently, in 2019 Rita Bymaster tied her own record for an incredible 10th time and Theresa Ray for the 4th time.

In 2015 three Club Members, Mary Bruss, Kathy Hough and Kae Ramey, completed El Camino de Santiago, the ancient 500-mile pilgrimage route across northern Spain. We followed their progress with daily updates on the Club website.

In 1968 the Club scheduled its shortest hike ever, a one mile walk in downtown Indianapolis on Christmas Eve to view holiday window displays.

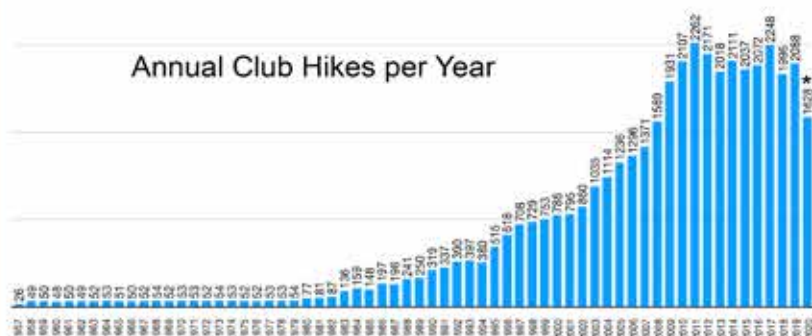
Although not official Club events, four members through-hiked the entire Appalachian Trail (2,190 miles) across 14 states in one year. Notably: Carol Barnes (only woman to through-hike the trail 3 years in a row), James Kendell (hiked it twice), Lee Bohner (hiked it twice), and Jim Dashiell completed it once. Congratulations to all four for their phenomenal achievement.

Number of Members Who Hiked More than 50 Hikes

	50-100 hikes	101-150 hikes	151-200 hikes	Over 200 hikes
1970	0	0	0	0
1980	3	0	0	0
1990	33	6	0	0
2000	33	23	4	2
2010	56	28	15	10
2020*	49	20	8	8

* COVID 19

Annual Club Hikes per Year



* COVID 19 - Hikes suspended for 2 1/2 months

Hike Mileage

Over the years members have continued to break records for the number of individual miles hiked in a year. Achievements by some hikers have been quite remarkable. "New walking shoes every year and larger feet. I enjoy the people that I meet." (Mary Lester who joined in 1988.) If one looks at the maximum number of miles hiked in any year, the honor is given to only three hikers in the last 38 years. Joe Wilhelm hiked the most annual miles from 1982 to 1993. Tom Patterson led for almost 11 years from 1995 to 2015 (Robert Corya was the leader in 1996). The leader for the last 15 years is Glee Crowder. She was almost overtaken by Curtis Hinds in 2015. Toward the end of the year, Glee had surgery and fell behind Curtis. She had a spurt in the last couple of months, finally beating Curtis by only about 50 miles.

Most Miles Hiked in One Year by a Member

1968	180 miles	Bill Larrison
1979	500 miles	Cliff Hoard
1983	1000 miles	Joe Wilhelm
1993	2000 miles	Tom Patterson
2008	3000 miles	Glee Crowder

By 2020, 32 members had hiked between 10,000 and 20,000 miles. 17 members had hiked over 20,000 miles (10% of the distance to the moon)

	10,001 to 20,000 miles	20,001 to 30,000 miles	30,001 to 40,000 miles	Over 40,001
1990	3	0	0	0
2000	14	2	1	1
2010	23	6	4	1
2015	27	6	4	1
2020	32	7	7	3

Lifetime Miles Hiked by One Person

Joe Wilhelm was the first person to achieve total lifetime miles hiked of 5000 miles and 10,000 miles. Tom Patterson was the first to achieve total lifetime miles hiked of 20,000 miles, 30,000 miles and 40,000 miles. Sadly, Tom passed away in 2007. "Joining the Club has been one of the best moves I've made in my life. It has kept me active and vibrant well into retirement. I would do it all again." (Tom Patterson who joined in 1975.)

In May 2018, Glee Crowder broke the Club's lifetime mileage record of 42,590 miles set by Tom Patterson back in 2007. In 2021 Glee achieved a lifetime Club hiking record of 50,000 miles. This is equivalent to walking twice around the earth at the level of the equator. Glee achieved this in only 20 years, having joined the Club when she turned 60 years old in 2000. "When she finally hangs it up (her shoes that is), who knows how many miles she will have accumulated," said David Kincaid in a tribute poem to Glee.

Curtis Hinds owns the record for hiking 10,000 lifetime miles in the shortest time. He reached this mileage in less than five years between 2014 and 2018.

First Member to Achieve a New Lifetime Mileage Milestone

1972	1000 miles	Alois and Dora Buchler
1984	5,000 miles	Joe Wilhelm and Marjorie Bergman
1989	10,000 miles	Joe Wilhelm
1995	20,000 miles	Tom Patterson
2001	30,000 miles	Tom Patterson
2006	40,000 miles	Tom Patterson
2019	45,000 miles	Glee Crowder
2021	50,000 miles	Glee Crowder

Lifetime Mileage Leaders

Glee Crowder	48,769 miles
Tom Patterson*	42,590 miles
Allen Roberts	41,443 miles
Jill McFall	35,864 miles
Rick Kinnaman	33,470 miles

Lifetime miles hiked by September 2020
Deceased*



Achievement Awards

In 2006 the Board established a new program proposed by Ron Craig to recognize significant achievements in hiking and trail maintenance during the Club year, which runs from October 1 through September 30. Initially there were 10 awards, most related to hiking, including participating on the longest hike, hiking more than 1,000 miles in a year or leading more than 50 hikes. The award categories have been expanded to 12 to recognize members who recruit the most new Club members and individuals who the Board feels deserves special recognition. The winners of the 12 awards (usually 40 or more members) are recognized at the annual Winter Banquet in early December. Winners typically receive a gift of hiking apparel sporting the Club logo and their names are published on the Club website.

Signs That Times have Changed

The May 1957 hike schedule is clearly aimed at the men. It says, "go for a walk on Sundays - take your wife with you!" It is unlikely that the hike schedule would contain similar remarks now.

In April 1986, the club created separate men's and women's social groups. The women's group "went ice skating" and the men's group attended "a night at the fights." Wow!



Humor and Stories

During its 65 years the Club has had many outstanding presidents. The award for the president with the best humor must go to Bruce Meyer. Some quotes from his letters printed in the schedules from 2001 to 2002 are given below:

- We give advice because we want to help.
- Don't accept candy from strangers or Oreo cookies from hike leaders.
- Stop and smell the roses-unless you have a fever.
- Don't try to hide broccoli in a glass of milk and don't try to baptize a kitten.
- If you want to express appreciation to board members, hugs are nice, steak dinners are better, but volunteering to lead new hikes is best of all. The first time the Pathfinder asked me to lead a hike "I was so horrified that I sputtered and started and babbled and turned him down. My conscience got working on me and I agreed to lead a hike. It was a wonderful delight. It is a great way to repay the Club everything that it offers."
- You might be a hiker if: "bring water and lunch" is part of your vocabulary.
- You think "Gnaw Bone is a place and not an action."
- You know what "F/NS/3-3.5" means.
- I would love to be below-average. The average American gains more than 5 pounds at Christmas time.

Al Drahobl was leading a hike in the Smoky Mountains when they came upon a creek that was too high to ford. Al told the other hikers that he was going to go upstream to see if he could find a suitable place to ford the creek. About 20 minutes later Al showed up on the other side of the creek. Tom Hollett shouted to Al and pointed upstream "How far up?" Al replied with a gesture pointing to his chest and said, "This far up!" (He had fallen in the creek up to his chest).

Humor and Stories (cont'd)

Dora Beuhler was a strong-willed lady who was careful to do things correctly. In advance of a hike she wanted to do at Camp Attebury, she acquired permission. So, the day came and Dora started out with her group of hikers. As they moved down the path a soldier stepped up and said that they could not go through that area because a mock war was going on. Undaunted, Dora, who spoke with a German accent, replied, "Vee have permission, Vee have permission" and continued forward. Again the soldier warned them not to continue. In response, Dora took out her white hankie, tied it to a stick, and continued down the path waving the white flag, and shouting "Vee surrender, Vee surrender."

Bob Pedigo, a longtime member of the Club, was also a WWII hero, and a history buff. Among the hikes he led, he often took us on a hike which included a stop a Round Hill Cemetery on the south side of Indianapolis to show us the grave site of Sgt. John George. Sgt. George, as a young boy, was the drummer boy for Gen. George Washington during the Revolutionary War.



Logos, Mottos, etc.

The very familiar logo of a man with a hiking stick first appeared as a heading on the initial Trail Blazer in 1968.

Name tags for Hiking Club members were first produced in 1963. They were designed by Marilyn Longmire. Club vests with logos were first sold in 1977. Also in 1977 and 2020, Club car window decals were sold for \$1.00 each.

In September 1974, the Club board voted to approve the Club motto "Happiness - one step at a time." This was suggested by Bill Larrison.

In 1978 all past presidents were given a commemorative pin. This was designed by Win Pulsifer. It was like the Club patch but included the phrase Past President.

The Club song was composed by Win Pulsifer. It is sung to the tune of. "The Happy Wanderer"

Outreach

The Club frequently makes donations to different organizations. For example, in 2015 the Club donated to Hoosier Hikers Council, Eagle Creek Foundation, Indiana State Historical Library Foundation, Meals on Wheels, Knobstone Hiking Trail Association, Indianapolis Cultural Trail, B&O Trail Association, and Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary. The total amount contributed was \$1,500. Hike members frequently work on trails doing cleanup and repairs. The first recorded such activity was in 1972.

In 2021 Ned Lewis was recognized by local media for completing 8000 hours of volunteer work in Eagle Creek Park; these included trail maintenance, building bridges, and participating in the creation of the ornithology center.

At the Christmas party in 2016, 455 pounds of food and \$475 were donated for local food pantries.



Quotes

Humorous, inspirational, and challenging quotations have been included in many of the Hiking Club schedules and Trail Blazer publications.

May 1957 – “simplest way to get exercise is to use your legs more in walking.. “

July 1957 “Does the summer heat make sleeping a task for you? Do you pace the floor in the middle of the night trying to solve your personal problems? Whatever your type of insomnia may be, we have the remedy. Not sleeping pills, not soft mattresses: just hiking with us several miles. Try it. You’ll sleep soundly, we guarantee, even on hard State Park camping grounds.”

1968 Trail Blazer “May all your hikes be the kind you dream of.”

1976 “Variety is the spice of hiking.”

1977 “In our tense everyday world, there is true relaxation in hiking along the beautiful trails of our Hoosier State.”

1981 April schedule “the biggest bargain in outdoor recreation - the Indianapolis Hiking Club, only \$0.10 a hike.”

1981 “We can relax along a shady cool forest trail during summer - enjoy the blaze of autumn color in southern Indiana - meet the challenge of “Ole Man Winter” - and watch the land spring back to life in April and May.”

1981 “The best remedy for a short temper is a long walk.”



People

Major Contributors

Bill and Nell Larrison were perhaps the most outstanding members of the Hiking Club. They are largely responsible for the Club's remarkable success over 65 years. They became members in May 1964. By 1968 Bill was the president of the Club and Nell its secretary. By 1975 Bill had reached a total of 1500 lifetime miles hiked. In 1968 Bill Larrison set a Club record of 30 hikes and a mileage record of 180 miles hiked. In 2001 Bill became the first person to lead 75 hikes in one year. Bill was on a small committee that designed the Club patch with the two circles. For over a half century almost everything concerning the Club had Bill and Nell's imprint on it. They remained members until their deaths. The April 2011 schedule of the Hiking Club contained the following notice: BILL LARRISON 1917-2011. "Bill Larrison, Hike Leader, Publications Chairman, Club Historian and 'Father figure' to so many passed away after a major heart attack, on January 23rd, 2011." On March 17th, 2019, we lost Nell Larrison who was 104 years old. Nell was our Club's 2nd longest tenured member with 55 years. In 2012, three memorial benches were donated to Eagle Creek Park in their honor. These can still be seen outside the Discovery Center and the Ornithology Center.

Bill and Nell always appreciated the help of other Club members. "The Hiking Club is our family. We are so proud of the way the current officers and members are maintaining Club traditions and goals." (Bill and Nell Larrison).

The membership roster in 2020 listed 75 Club members

who had been members for more than 25 years. These members represent the backbone and history of the Indianapolis Hiking Club. We salute them.

In 2017 the Club celebrated the outstanding example of four 90-year-old women who were still hiking: Joanne Applegate, Anna Gehring, Mary Lester, and Betty Shookman.



Bill and Neil Larrison





Safety

1986 saw the introduction of an important new safety feature in the Club schedule. A hike rating system was developed by Ron Craig. This has been continued until the present time. Every hike is ranked based on the terrain (hilly, mixed, or flat), the surface (natural soft, packed dirt or paved), and the projected walking speed in mph. This allows hikers to identify hikes that are potentially beyond their physical ability.

Personal Injuries

Club members have always hiked with an awareness that there are associated risks and over the years there have been many tumbles with ligament strains, fractures, and other injuries. Club members always stay with an injured person to provide warm comforting support. The Club can proudly state that it has never lost a hiker (at least not permanently.) Every hike has a leader who is responsible for the sign in, leading the hike, setting the pace, and, most importantly, the safety of hikers.

Traditions

A magnificent strength of the Hiking Club is its many traditions. Club members enjoy and respect each other's company. Almost every world problem has been solved by our discussions occurring on the hikes. Major conflicts within the Club are rare.

We love to return to familiar hiking locations. We have long tracked members participation, mileage, and hikes. Many members enjoy seeing all this information.

So many things that we take for granted have been in place since the creation of the Club in 1957. Today's familiar Club schedule has a layout and provides information almost the same as the original schedule. The information provided by the annual Trail Blazer publication is almost unchanged since its inception in 1968. The familiar Club logo of a man with a stick has been present since 1968. Our motto "Happiness - one step at a time" remains widely visible on many club materials. The Hiking Club

song was written in 1976 and it is often sung at Club celebrations.

Tradition often evolves into culture, and we may often not appreciate the value of our culture. It is part of our culture that hikes always start on time and hikers always stay together. We look after each other.

Perhaps the most amazing tradition of our Club, is the incredible number of hours volunteered by our members who plan and lead hikes, serve as officers and board members, and work endless hours behind the scenes.

Relationships

"To me, the Club means communing with both friends and nature while hiking, as well as making lasting personal memories." (Narcisso Povinelli who joined in 2003.)

"We can't imagine a better way to spend our retirement years than hiking, traveling, and lunching with our friends in the Hiking Club. We love it all." (Linda and Ed Wright who joined in 2001.)

"The people and the hiking have enriched my life. My day is considerably brightened when I go on a hike." (Anna Gehring who joined in 1996.)

"The best things in life are free (or almost free)... like children and grandchildren, like hugs and kisses, like hot fudge on a sundae, like icing on a cake, and last, but not least, the Hiking Club because it makes me feel whole and happy and loved." (Pat Lawler who joined in 1986.)

"The best thing we did for ourselves was to become active in the Indianapolis Hiking Club." (Bob and Mary Ann Layman who joined in 1986 and 1995, respectively.)

"My grandson says hiking with the Club is good exercise and fun. I agree. Part of the good exercise is keeping me alive. Part of the fun is the contact with nature." (David Kincaid who joined in 1977.)

The End

That's it. That is the story of the Indianapolis Hiking Club - a group of amazing, fit, and friendly people.



65 Anniversary

Indianapolis Hiking Club

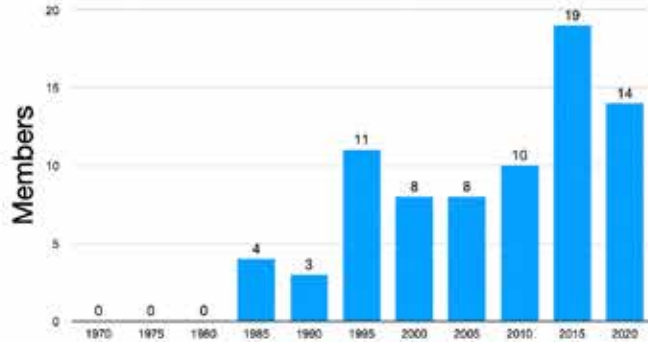


Commemorative Book Committee

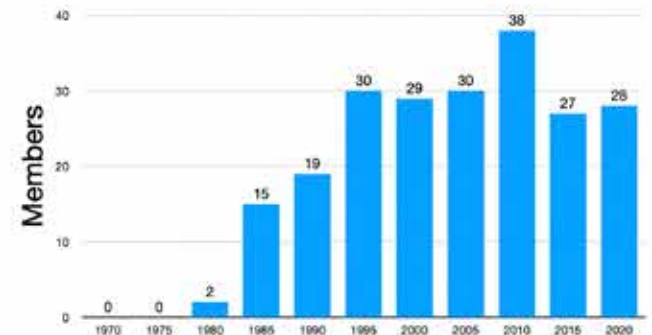
Mervyn Cohen - Club Historian
Harold Crooks
Anne Heighway
Bob Kriz
Phil Smith
Ed Wright



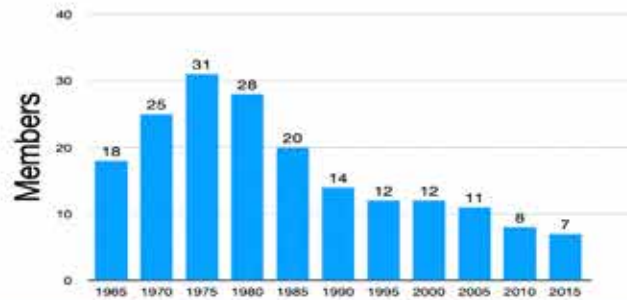
Members hiking over 1000 miles per year



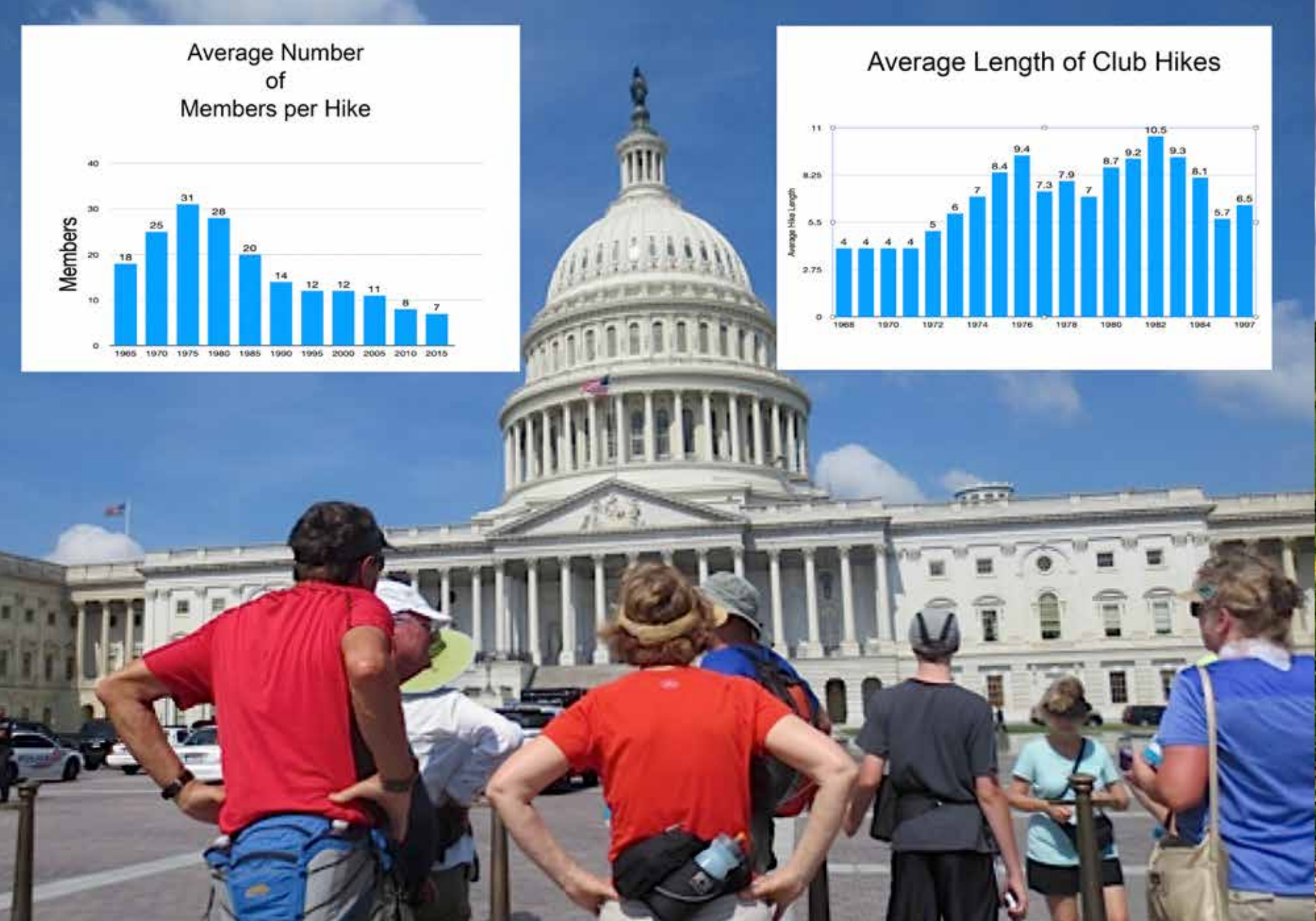
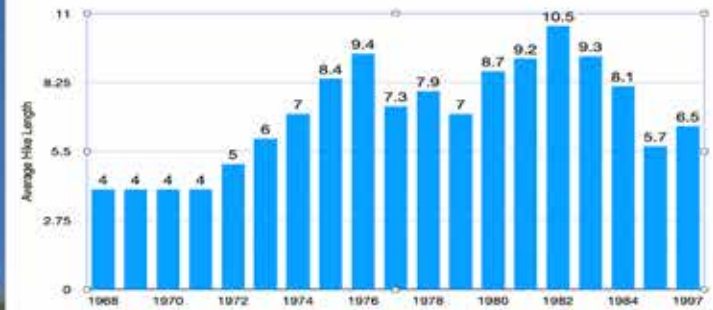
Members Hiking More than 500 Miles per Year



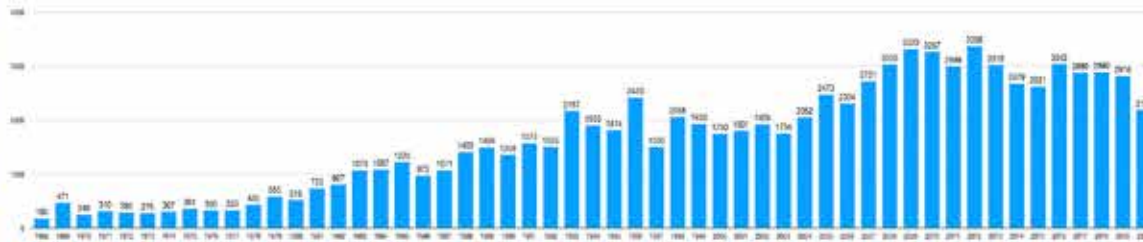
Average Number
of
Members per Hike



Average Length of Club Hikes



Most Miles Hiked by a Member in One year



Total Member Participation on Club Hikes

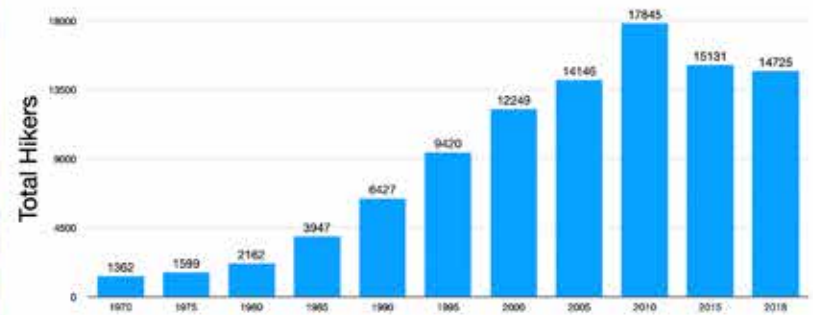
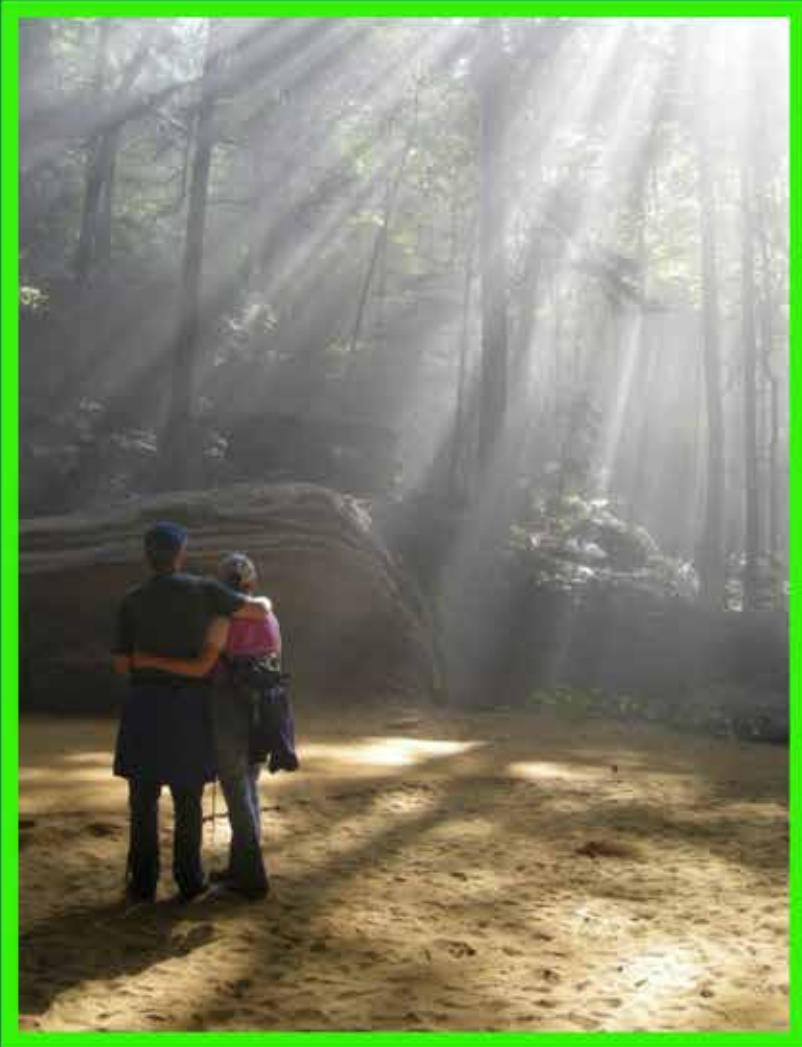




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The long-term legacy of the Indianapolis Hiking Club is less about how many years the Club has been in existence or how many hikes the Club has done or the places the Club has visited. It's about the wonderful friendships that have been made and sustained over many years.

See you on the trail!