

The trip was full of magic, some involving people, some animals, some just the chance of being in the right place at the right time—always good magic.

Patrick M. Enright, finished Trail in 2013

Ice Age Trail

Thousand- Milers

14

*New
Thousand-
Milers!*

2013



*Thomas J. Schneider • Dale R. Cardwell • Tobin L. "Tobi" Clark • William J. Luedtke
Paul R. "Hiking Dude" Kautz • Drew R. "Papa Bear" Hendel • Patrick M. Enright
Melanie M. "Valderi" McManus • Adam Hinz • Kehly M. Johnson • Jared D. Wildenradt
Tess Mulrooney • Larry "Uncle Larry" Swanson • Matt Kaufmann*

2013

How to Earn a Thousand-Miler Certificate

The IATA recognizes anyone who reports having hiked the entire Trail and completes a recognition application as a "Thousand-Miler." The IATA policy operates on the honor system, assuming anyone who applies for recognition has hiked all 1000+ miles between Potawatomi State Park and Interstate State Park. To qualify, it is necessary to have hiked all current Ice Age Trail segments and connect all Trail segments by walking the connecting route of your choice. Not considered are issues of speed, length of time from start to finish, sequence, direction or whether or not one carries a pack.

Visit iceagetrail.org to obtain a Thousand-Miler application.

Photo on front cover (Plover River Segment) by Dave Caliebe; back cover (Red Cedar Lake taken from the Tussockia Segment) by Don Erickson; inside back cover (Gibraltar Rock Segment) by Jo Ellarson.

Thousand-Miler Program

The Ice Age Alliance (IATA) established an official Thousand-Miler program in 2002; however, recognition is given below to all who have hiked the entire Trail including the road connections. Names in bold are thru-hikers. Names in the tan box are the newest Thousand-Milers; their stories are told in this book.

Thousand-Milers through the Years (bold = thru-hikers)

Jim Staudacher (1979)

Rev. Harry J. Gensler, S.J. (1983)

Ken & Sally Waraczynski (1983–1989)

Tim M. "Ya Comi" Malzhan (1991)

Clarman "Salty" Salsieder (1995)

Tom Menzel (1996)

Mark & Kathy Vincent (1997)

Dave Kuckuk & Yukon (1998)

Thomas E. Warth (1994–1999)

Nate Menard (1998–1999)

Mark Wickham (1998–1999)

Chris McCrackin (1998–1999)

Justin LeMay (1998–1999)

Matt McCrackin (1998–1999)

Mark "Tony" Califf (1998–1999)

Earl Davison (1999)

Mary Pokorny (2000)

Sharon Dziengel (2002)

David Kolosso (1995–2002)

Clint A. "Lint" Bunting (2003)

Luke Klobberdanz (2003)

Pat L. Witkowski (2004–2005)

Gary "Lindy" Lindberg (2005)

Dale & Penny Schaber (2003–2005)

Antony "Tony" Stretton (2002–2006)

Kathy Clavette (2002–2006)

Lynda Stuber (2002–2006)

Anne Riendl (2002–2006)

Frank Evans (2000–2006)

Allen D. "Tortoise" Shoup (2006)

John P. Bauer (2006)

Edward C. Talone (2006)

Barbara A. "Tadmore" Voigt (2004–2007)

Sharon S. "Tripalong" Bloodgood (1987–2007)

Irene S. "Tagalong" Cline (2000–2007)

Jason "Sticks" Dorgan (2007)

Mike Rotter (2003–2007)

Barbara F. Leetzow (2005–2007)

Lyle Lidholm (2002–2008)

JoAnn Parks (2003–2008)

Dawn Matott (2003–2008)

Mark Cook (2004–2008)

Wayne Prior (2004–2008)

Craig Sanford (2007–2008)

Daniel & Barbara Seitz (2008)

Timothy "Rex" Obukowicz (2008)

Ken "Whistler" Schoenike (2003–2009)

Jane M. Stoltz (1993–2009)

Chet "Gray Ghost" Anderson (2009)

Russ & Clara Marr (2009)

James R. Brenner (2003–2010)

Dave A. Caliebe (2010)

Donene Rowe "Ice Age Three Erractics"
(2003–2011)

Linda J. & Lowell B. Lamont "Ice Age Three
Erractics" (2005–2011)

Sylvia Oberle (2003–2011)

Ruth Sommers (2006–2011)

Christine M. "Dancing Dove" Miller (2011)

Thomas D. "LRRP" Teeples (2011)

Rita Fox (2009–2011)

Ginger Lee (2005–2012)

Dianne Genz (1999–2012)

Paul Birrittella (2012)

**Meredith J. "Nimblewill Nomad" Eberhart
(2012)**

Nick Huige (1996–2012)

Rick and Roberta "Buzz & Frieda" Bie
(2004–2012)

Gerald M. Hegeman & Lakota (2007–2012)

James P. Cousin (2010–2012)

James A. Johnston (1999–2012)

Cheryl Gorsuch (2008–2013)

Ann Vogl (2008–2013)

New for 2013

Thomas J. Schneider (2011–2013)

Dale R. Cardwell (2011–2013)

Tobin L. "Tobi" Clark (2013)

William J. Luedtke (2007–2013)

Paul R. "Hiking Dude" Kautz (2013)

Drew R. "Papa Bear" Hendel (2013)

Patrick M. Enright (2013)

Melanie M. "Valderi" McManus (2013)

Adam Hinz (2013)

Kehly M. Johnson (2013)

Jared D. Wildenratt (2012–2013)

Tess Mulrooney (2010–2013)

Larry "Uncle Larry" Swanson (1963–2013)

Matt Kaufmann (2009–2013)

Thomas J. Schneider

My favorite part of the Trail has nothing to do with the hike. It has to do with building the Trail. I have worked as many hours building the trail as I did hiking it. I have many new friends I work with to improve the trail. It doesn't matter your station in life outside the project...just work as a team, have fun, and don't get hurt. The payback is when someone walks by and gives you a compliment about how nice the Trail is.

Highlights and Reflections

I first heard of the Ice Age Trail through a fitness program at work, where teams of four virtually hiked the Trail. Later that year my wife mentioned the Trail, and there was an article in the Merrill newspaper about a Mobile Skills Crew (MSC) project at the Grandfather Falls Segment. I volunteered for it and for every MSC project the remainder of the year. My actual first hike on the Trail toward my Thousand-Miler completion was September 25, 2011, with my wife in St. Croix Falls.

I started out section hiking the trail by riding my bicycle to the west end of a segment and hiking east back to my truck. Doing this one day I met Dave King and later the same day Tom Teeples, who was thru-hiking the Trail. Later I shuttled with my motorcycle instead of my bicycle. As I got farther from home I camped.

I really liked hiking in early October. The colors were splendid, and I saw a lot of wildlife. I had to ford a few rivers, and the leaves piled up like powdered snow on the trail. I found wisdom in a Bohemian cemetery on a road section: "We were once like you, you will be like us."

One day in March 2012, I had walked all day in the rain and cold. I planned to tent camp, but I was so cold I drove home instead. I did this a couple more times. When your body gets really cold and wet, your brain slows down and thinking goes out the window.

I read the information about the Stewart Tunnel at the picnic table on the south end, but it told nothing about how long the tunnel is. I used one hiking pole against the wall and one on the floor. This was OK until I found there were pilasters, and it was "tick, tick, tick..." then nothing. But rationality kicked in and told me trains can't turn sharp corners.

Lots of people helped me along the trail. The owners of the Otter Lake Bait shop, Butch and Kathy Kuester, let me park my motorcycle at their home while I hiked from Cornell back to the bait shop. In Albany, after

a hike, Dan Stephenson gave me a ride back to my truck when my motorcycle would not start and later invited me to his house, where we were able to get the bike started.

A waitress at the Eagle café thought I looked stressed, so she gave me an extra glass of lemonade and told me to rest and rehydrate. When I lost my truck key near Kewaunee, Jim gave me a ride back to my motorcycle. I retraced my steps in the rain and eventually found it by the side of the road—what luck?!

Late in August 2012, I thought I'd hike from Merrimac to Langlade County where I had last left off. My wife and son dropped me off with my overweight pack at the ferry, and I started hiking north. I made it to Levee Road near Portage on day two. My feet were blistered to the point of bleeding. A woman offered me a ride; I spent the night in Portage at a motel, and the next day my wife picked me up. In September, I returned to the Trail, hiking in sections. Playing leapfrog with my motorcycle and truck was easier than carrying a heavy pack.

I wore snowshoes when I hiked in Portage and Waupaca counties in March 2013. My friend Gary joined me. I continued south in April, still on snow-covered trails. I met Pat Enright on his attempt to hike the entire IAT that year.

I finished the Trail May 31, 2013, in Sturgeon Bay with my wife, for she had been with me when I started in 2011. I hiked through town and into Potawatomi, and my wife met me at the tower. As we were taking some finishing photos, a park employee told us about the plaque on the rock facing away from the tower. We had not realized it was there.

Each segment has its merits and disappointments. You can read this report and all the other reports written about the Trail, but in the end, your tale about the Trail will be like no others.

My suggestion would be to walk the Trail in all four seasons.

2013

Age when completed
64

Personal info
Merrill, WI
Retired
Trailwide Chapter member

Hike description
Section hike: various directions
Started: September 25, 2011, Interstate State Park, Polk County
Finished: May 31, 2013, Potawatomi State Park, Door County



2013

Age when completed

68

Personal info

Shell Lake, WI

Retired

Superior Lobe Chapter
member

Hike description

Section hike: various
directions

Started: September 5,
2011, Interstate State
Park, Polk County

Finished: June 28, 2013,
Potawatomi State Park,
Door County

Dale R. Cardwell

I had hiked on several parts of the Ice Age Trail before I decided to hike the whole length. I considered the sections "pearls" because they were so beautiful, and I decided to "string the pearls together" by section hiking from west to east.

Highlights and Reflections

Some of the most interesting and beautiful parts of the Trail were the Kettle Moraine, the Devil's Lake area, Lodi Marsh, McKenzie Lake area, Manitowoc and the Straight Lake area. Other parts of the Trail I enjoyed were the following: Interstate State Park, the Chippewa Lobe section, the Taylor County sections, Lincoln Hills, the Hillbilly Hilton, the Wisconsin River Dells, the Dells of the Eau Claire River, the Mekan River, the walk along the Wisconsin River levees, the Janesville sections, the Point Beach section, Ahnapee State Trail section and Potawatomi State Park.

Hiking was more difficult than I expected, but it was gratifying. I sought trip planning advice in St. Croix Falls, Taylor and Langlade counties from chapter coordinators of the Indianhead, Highpoint and Langlade chapters. In addition, for my hike of the Southern Kettle Moraine, Jim Stevens from Madison spotted me. My wife, Sandra, spotted and picked me up for about two-thirds of my section hikes. My dogs, Molly and Boots, hiked with me on many trails.

It was fascinating to see the wildlife: beavers at work, large groups of cranes

making a thundering sound by clacking their wings, deer, turkeys and bear. Seeing the diversity of Wisconsin on foot was special.

In summary, I began my hike on Labor Day 2011, and hiked primarily during fall 2011, spring and fall 2012, and spring and summer 2013. I hiked 78 days and averaged about 14 miles per day. My longest day hike was 28 miles, and the shortest was 2 miles. I camped overnight 25 times while backpacking and staying in state parks and day hiking. I stayed in motels 24 nights and commuted from my home in Shell Lake for the rest of the nights. I hiked in heavy rain and snow at least 13 days; two-thirds of those days were in spring 2013. I was honored to have my daughter and two grandchildren, ages 7 and 8, hike the last 3 miles with me to the eastern terminus in Potawatomi State Park. I am looking forward to hiking on new sections of the Ice Age Trail as they are finished.

[Note: Dale has also skied 33 Birkebeiners, and in 2012, he climbed Mt. Rainier in Washington, 14,410 ft.]



Tobin L. "Tobi" Clark

Late in my trip, I was excited each morning to hear what sound would wake me. Awakening in nature has given me a new appreciation for it, allowing my senses to fully appreciate all nature has to offer. As I got closer to the western terminus, I was excited to have this amazing challenge draw to a close. I was also a little sad that I would not be awakened by Mother Nature for a long while, or at least until my next great outdoor adventure.

Highlights and Reflections

Point Beach State Park was one of my first highlights on the trail. Up to this point the weather had been horrible, my feet were killing me, and I wondered what I had gotten myself into. The first long road walk was a killer. After Tisch Mills, I had a cousin rescue me for the night. Once I hit Point Beach, the weather started to break and warm up. The 10 miles of trail in the park were some of the most beautiful. This was a major turning point in my hike, and my spirits began to lift.

In the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest, my good friend Chris Benda walked with me. The state natural areas were bursting with spring flora; it was awesome. We saw rare plants like pasqueflower and prairie smoke, which was not in bloom yet.

I can't think of a better way than to "walk" into the IATA Office in Cross Plains for my very first visit.

I arrived at the Thalackers' near Montello with a bag of morel mushrooms I had picked, and Gary cooked one of the best meals I had on the trail. They let me stay in a hunting apartment nearby. It was a great feeling to lie in bed and hear the rain hitting the roof of the garage and not the roof of my tent.

On a warm afternoon, I saw two women doing something to a trail post. As I got closer I saw that they were volunteers painting a yellow blaze white. Confused, I found out I was walking into the middle of an MSC project. Tim Malzhan strode up in his classic red hard hat and offered to pick me up at the end of the day to join the group. I enjoyed good food and much needed company—including three thru-hikers of years past.

Oh—how to describe the help from Joe Jopek of Antigo?! He explained the maps of Langlade County and cached water for me as well. As many told me, if you get help from Joe, you may end up on the radio, and I was happy to do a short interview on a morning talk show. I frequently felt like a Trail spokesperson. Every time I stopped in a store, restaurant, or

bar, I found myself explaining what I was doing and talking about the Trail to patrons.

A ford at New Wood River in Lincoln County was one of my most memorable challenges. I could see that the river was running over its banks and moving fast. I slowly waded in, and the cold water was quickly over my waist. Four or five feet from the shore, my hiking sticks and my legs were vibrating from the strong current, and my backpack began to take on water. I knew I must retreat and rethink the situation. Back on shore, I took my pack off, stowed my hiking sticks, and tightened my sandals. I tried again, slowly wading in, carrying my pack over my head. The water was up to my chest, and suddenly my feet were washed out from under me. I struggled to keep my head above water. My adrenaline kicked in, and luckily I grabbed some alder branches along the bank and pulled myself to shore. Scared, out of breath and wet, I collapsed on the same shoreline I had just left. As I knelt there exhausted, badly shaken and being eaten by mosquitoes, I realized that I had made it not 15 feet from the shoreline and nowhere near the other side of the river. At this point it was more about survival than completing a segment of trail. A story to finish in person...

I live on Lake 32 Road near Timberland Ski area in Cumberland. What an exhilarating feeling it was to hit Trail I knew very well. Walking home from the Trail was a wonderful feeling.

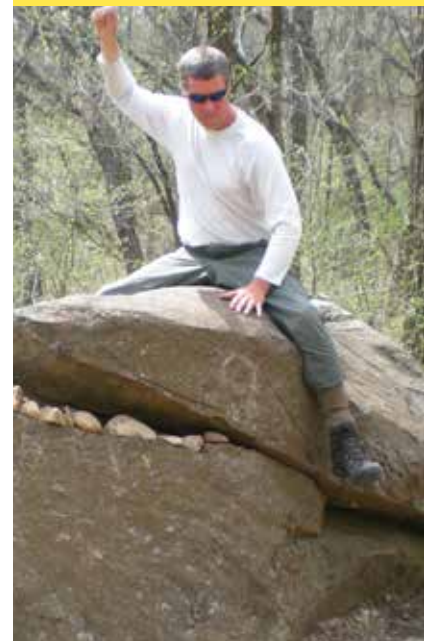
On my last day, local members Chet (Gray Ghost), Don E. and Dale C. joined me for the final 7-mile push. Chet had mentored me on thru-hiking, and it was a real pleasure to walk the final steps with the man who had helped so much to prepare me for this big adventure. The end of the Trail was a highlight in itself. I was joined by family and friends, who helped me celebrate this magnificent accomplishment. The hike was very challenging and educational, and something I can be proud of.

2013

Age when completed
40

Personal info
Cumberland, WI
Superior Lobe Chapter
member

Hike description
Thru-hike: westbound
Started: April 7, 2013,
Potawatomi State Park,
Door County
Finished: July 18, 2013,
Interstate State Park,
Polk County



2013

Age when completed

38

Personal info

Milwaukee, WI
Assistant principal
Waukesha/Milwaukee
County Chapter
member

Hike description

Section hike: various
directions

Started: April 1, 2007,
Pike Lake Segment,
Washington County

Finished: September
28, 2013, Mondeaux
Esker Segment, Taylor
County



William J. Luedtke

There is not enough space to explain how much the Ice Age Trail has changed my life for the better....After reading this, it should be clear that the IAT will forever be a part of me.

Highlights and Reflections

Having spent seven-plus years hiking the Ice Age Trail, it's hard to consider completing the trail as an "accomplishment." My wife, Gloria, and I stumbled on the Trail while going for a nature hike at Pike Lake. Two weeks later, while doing the same at Lapham Peak, I observed yet another brown sign with yellow lettering. This led me to view the IAT website and order a map. With each subsequent "in and out" 3-mile hike, my obsession with completion grew.

I remember finishing bus duty at my high school and hopping in the car to beat the sun going down to hike the Blackhawk Segment of the Southern Kettle. What a big deal it was to finish hiking the Northern Kettle at Glenbeulah! I remember frustration setting in when I realized some sections were closed during deer hunting.

Fast forward to January 2013. My wife and I had completed all sections within a 3-hour drive. I had just created a Thousand-Miler account and set up a hiking weekend with Jared Wildenradt and Todd McMahon. This fateful decision spurred me to finish all 375 miles remaining. I tried to appear as a veteran to these gentleman, plunging straight into 10-plus inches of unpacked snow with snowshoes. This was the first trip in which I completed over 14 miles in a day.

At the end of the trip, I met another hiker who would grow to be an inspiration: Gail

Piotrowski. She made sure I knew I had to have my vehicle *completely* off the county road when parked (T-Man kindly reminded me that I had to get it towed when I parked on a fire lane). She also (within 10 minutes of our meeting) assured me I would finish my Northwoods miles that year.

There is not enough space to explain how much the Ice Age Trail has changed my life for the better. I am now more confident, something that has made my role as an assistant principal slightly easier to handle. My wife and I have bonded with a hobby that allows me to exercise (I've lost over thirty pounds because of the Trail) and gives her the chance to develop her passion with photography.

The life stories Jared and I shared are not appropriate to write down in this format. The laughs we shared covered in ticks and sopping wet 15 miles in could not be faked. A shout-out to Kevin Doxtater for talking me into an 18-mile day that probably was closer to 23. No hiker should miss the chance at a day in the woods with Kevin. I can't wait to learn that Tom Wallschlager has joined us in the rank of the Thousand-Milers.

After reading this, it should be clear that the IAT will forever be a part of me. I hopped at the chance to do a 15-mile road walk with T-man on a recent weekend. I am truly blessed to have seen so much beauty (and a

few glimpses of bears). It's the friends I've found that make the IAT more than just "any trail." I plan on starting to chip away at the North Country Trail this year. It's been difficult to start because even though I'm "finished" with the yellow blaze...I keep coming back.



Patrick M. Enright

The trip was full of magic, some involving people, some animals, some just the chance of being in the right place at the right time—always good magic.

Background and Highlights

Background

Upon retirement I wanted to do healthy things I didn't have the time to do while I was working. It was also important to contribute to my community, although ironically I wanted time away from people too.

I'd enjoyed plenty of time on local sections of the Ice Age Trail over the years, researched what the trail was about and only had to convince myself and my wife that I could/should do it. After hearing a presentation by Dave Caliebe and Tom Teeples, I put a plan in motion.

In addition to raising funds for the Waupaca County Senior Nutrition Program, I also wanted to enjoy my adventure, partly by trying to avoid the most severe weather elements and the bugs. That's why the bulk of my trip was in the spring and fall. I couldn't find any other people crazy enough to go with me, and I am extremely pleased I did it solo. Who else would have put up with me for that length of time?

Highlights

- Observing the seasonal changes in Wisconsin during the spring and fall: The first few days in April required snowshoes and horrible weather resulted in a short retreat to home after just 10 days on the trail. When I returned, I was greeted with the arrival of sandhill cranes and spring wildflowers from the beginning of the Southern Kettle Moraine all the way to Sturgeon Bay. In the fall, I witnessed the exploding colors of browning ferns and changing maples, aspens and oaks and the movements of animals as days got shorter and the nights colder. For the first time, I realized all of these gradual changes at a pace that can only be achieved on foot.
- Learning to appreciate the now: As much as I thought I needed a plan, I quickly lived out the sage advice of many to "plan but be flexible," which greatly reduced the need for a plan. In fact, I soon realized the plan was really about the moment. My favorite part of the Trail was almost always the part I was on when I was being asked.
- The resources that helped me accomplish

the task included maps, trail guide, hiker-to-hiker notes and even a list of trail angels that increased my comfort level in spite of my inexperience.

- Appreciating my wife, family and friends who encouraged me along the way: At the start I said one of the reasons for doing this was to be away from people. It became clear to me that you don't really do this alone. Every day I was reminded of people who were rooting me on and there for my success. Words of encouragement, donations to the cause and practical logistical support were available and ongoing. What I gained in self-reliance was outweighed by ongoing generosity.
- The occasional meeting of other hikers: Tom, Carolyn, Dub, Anje, Jim, Mike, Mel, Carla, Papa Bear, Hiking Dude, and Phil. Not all were thru-hikers, but all were lovers of the Trail.
- Getting back to my campsite after taking a shower and finding a cooked breakfast waiting there for me dropped by an anonymous trail angel, who later turned out to be Anje. She also left some beers and trail mix for me to find at the end of my next day.
- Losing my mosquito head net at a time when it was needed and finding one lying on the ground on a beaver dam a day later. It had been left by Buzz Meyer, who had been following my blog.
- Trail angels who provided me with a place to lay my head or pitch my tent: Harry and Susan, Kris and John Jensen, the Thusius family, Carl and Tracy, the Fett family, Kayla, and various taverns and campgrounds along the way.
- All those who provided me with water and heard my story. I always looked forward to those chance meetings.

2013

Age when completed
61

Personal info

Waupaca, WI
Retired, Waupaca County
Health and Human
Services
Trailwide Chapter
member
Walked for Waupaca
County Senior
Nutrition Program
fundraiser
Trail journal: <http://iceagetrailhiker2013.wordpress.com>

Hike description

Section hike: various
directions
Started: April 1, 2013,
2nd Ave., Portage
County
Finished: October 2,
2013, Interstate State
Park, Polk County



2013

Age when completed

51

Personal info

Eden Prairie, MN

Website developer

Trail journal: <http://hikingdude.com>

Hiked to promote Boy Scouts of America's ScoutStrong PALA program

Hike description

Thru-hike: westbound

Started: August 3, 2013, Potawatomi State Park, Door County*Finished:* September 28, 2013, Interstate State Park, Polk County

45 hiking days plus 10 days without hiking due to an extreme heat warning at the end of August and 3 more nonhiking rest days

Hiking partner

Drew R. "Papa Bear" Hendel



Paul R. "Hiking Dude" Kautz

A newly constructed section of the Plover River Segment features an amazing pair of boardwalks and some great rock steps placed by trail volunteers. The amount of effort just to keep hikers out of the swampy sludge was herculean. Here's a big thank you to the IATA folks who pushed this part of the trail through during 2013!

Highlights and People Along the Way

The essence of hiking is to leave life behind, if only for a few hours, and explore the world around you using only the power of your body. It is feeling your lungs labor and your muscles tighten and relax. All your senses bring new information into your brain. Being a Hiking Dude is being on the move, covering ground, challenging your body, and renewing your soul.

I hiked along the 1,100-mile Ice Age Trail from August 3 to September 28, 2013, walking from Sturgeon Bay in northeast Wisconsin to the Minnesota border at Interstate State Park near St. Croix Falls, WI.

The adventure started with a beautiful, starry night and me sleeping under it. I decided to forego setting up my shelter and just sleep in the open. This would be the only night I did this for the entire trail, so I'm glad I did. Dark, quiet, and a warm breeze made for a terrific, restful night once the excitement of starting a new adventure wound down.

The biggest challenge of the trail was finding places to stay at night, although there was never a night when I didn't find one. I wound up sleeping indoors more often than outdoors thanks to the hospitality of people I met along the way and prearranged stops with family and Internet contacts. I'm a Boy Scout volunteer and emailed troops along the trail to ask about visiting. I stayed at a scout camp near Elkhart Lake, with scout families in Manitowoc and Janesville, and at a scout hut in Medford. Ed, a goat rancher in Lubin, met me in the only restaurant in Gilman after two miserable wet days in the Chequamegon National Forest and on a long roadwalk. He put us up in his house and shuttled us to our vehicle. Brian and Karen east of Polar stopped us at night on the road and told us to stay at their house. Gary and Mary Jane north of Packwaukee let us stay in their beautiful pine forest. Lee and Lori north of Devil's Lake let us camp in their yard. Karl and Ann in Monticello let us camp in their yard and cooked hamburgers for us. Jon and Nancy in Waupaca hosted us for two nights and took us

boating on their lake.

The many towns, parks and farms the Trail passes through or near made for some interesting experiences—for example, I never had to filter water or dig a cathole! More meals were eaten at restaurants, bars, diners, and taverns than expected, which meant meeting many more people than expected. I left my cellphone in a stranger's convertible when shuttling back to my car, but with help from a friendly Verona police officer, I contacted the stranger, and it was returned.

After a rest break, we noticed a lone walker coming our way carrying an umbrella. Many people would think this strange since it was bright and sunny, but I've used my GoLite umbrella for sun and heat protection, and it is super! When we finally met, it turned out to be Matt, an Ice Age Trail Alliance staffer, and he had the same umbrella! We met him again at the Ice Age Trail Alliance in Cross Plains.

A newly constructed section of the Plover River Segment features an amazing pair of boardwalks and some great rock steps placed by Trail volunteers. The amount of effort just to keep hikers out of the swampy sludge was herculean. Here's a big thank you to the IATA folks who pushed this part of the Trail through during the past year!

Entering Interstate State Park, I was excited the end was near, but the last mile or so takes F-O-R-E-V-E-R winding through the park! Upon finally reaching the western terminus with its plaque on a big rock, I had one more surprise. My good friend Duncan was waiting to congratulate us on our completion. All the pictures I've seen of people at the end of the Trail are sunny and cheerful and feature a big celebration. No one finishes in cold rain with the Trail inches deep in water, soaking wet feet, and soggy clothes. Well, we did! Alas, no need to find a place to camp. No planning tomorrow's hike. No wondering what excitement the Trail will bring. Just profound gratitude to all the folks who make this trail—and my opportunity to enjoy it—possible.

Drew R. “Papa Bear” Hendel

Thank you to the IATA Staff in Cross Plains who let us shower and do laundry at the office and stayed late! That assistance was greatly appreciated! Thank you also to the awesome property owners who allow the Trail to cross their land. Thank you all for making my first long-distance thru-hike possible!

Highlights and People Along the Way

Being from the Seattle area, my favorite parts of the IAT were the fantastic, friendly people of Wisconsin and the beautiful rural scenery. We stayed with several people my hiking partner, Paul Kautz, had previously contacted, as well as his family. We also stayed several times with strangers we met in or near towns. All told we slept in the house or camped on the property of approximately 11 families we had not known previously. Truly amazing, wonderful, warm people we met everywhere we went in Wisconsin.

Some highlights from my hike:

- I enjoyed walking past all the farms. I liked seeing the wild turkeys and seeing and hearing the cranes.
- Midday on a warm road walk leaving Manitowoc, we came upon a small retail dairy—Pine River Dairy—with a sign saying “25-cent ice cream cones”! I so enjoyed the break in the shade with a cone!
- I tried and enjoyed cheese curds for the first time.
- Unlike the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) and Arizona Trail (AZT), I was surprised and pleased to occasionally find a bar near the Trail on a hot, humid afternoon. They were great places to rest, eat, drink, hydrate and

avoid the sun and heat for awhile. One nice surprise was finding Dot’s Tavern near Montrose when we were looking for water and a place to camp. We ate and drank there, and they let us camp on a nearby lawn.

- I enjoyed the side trip to New Glarus Brewery.
- We received a nice care package from someone following our hike via Paul’s blog while we were on the Tuscobia Trail. Nice surprise!!
- I have been doing volunteer trail work for several years on the PCT near Seattle with the North 350 Blades. I’ve never built a bridge, but I know how much work is required just to maintain and improve existing trail. I was constantly impressed with the huge amount of work done by MSC and others to maintain and improve the Trail. They do an amazing job!!

Thank you to the IATA Staff in Cross Plains who let us shower and do laundry at the office and stayed late! That assistance was greatly appreciated! Thank you also to the awesome property owners who allow the Trail to cross their land. Thank you all for making my first long-distance thru-hike possible!

2013

Age when completed
56

Personal info
Bellevue, WA
Basketball referee
Trailwide Chapter member

Hike description
Thru-hike: westbound
Started: August 3, 2013, Potawatomi State Park, Door County
Finished: September 28, 2013, Interstate State Park, Polk County
45 hiking days plus 10 days without hiking due to an extreme heat warning at the end of August and 3 more nonhiking rest days.

Hiking partner
Paul R. “Hiking Dude” Kautz



Age when completed
52

Personal info

Sun Prairie, WI
Freelance writer
Dane County Chapter member
Trail journal: <http://epiciceagetrail.blogspot.com>

Hike description

Thru-hike: eastbound
Started: August 31, 2013, Interstate State Park, Polk County
Finished: October 6, 2013, Potawatomi State Park, Door County (36 days 5 hours)



Melanie M. “Valderi” McManus

I drew my trail name from one of my first memories of Wisconsin, when my mother took my four siblings and me hiking along the Parnell Tower Trail in the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest. As we marched through the woods, my mom made us sing “The Happy Wanderer” with her. So Valderi I am. As in that catchy refrain “Valderi, Valdera, Valderi, Valdera-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, Valderi, Valdera, my knapsack on my back.”

Highlights and Reflections

In 2009, I began hiking and running segments of the *Vía de la Plata*, a famous 1,000-kilometer pilgrimage trail in Spain. I had no idea there was a trail just as compelling—the Ice Age Trail—in my own backyard. When I realized this, I immediately made plans for a thru-hike.

I enjoy trail running and am friends with Jason Dorgan, who set the Ice Age Trail thru-hike record in 2007. I wasn’t really keyed into what Jason was doing at the time, as I was busy running around after my three children. When I learned what the Ice Age Trail actually was a few years later, I figured I’d run the trail like Jason did.

And so my odyssey began one hot, humid August morning in Interstate State Park. I’d lined up support from a wide variety of family and friends, who took turns daily being my crew. They’d meet me at various spots along the way, waiting to see if I needed food, water or other supplies. At night, I stayed either with family and friends or at inns and hotels. I loved everything about my adventure except contracting cellulitis on the bottom of each foot—two very painful experiences!

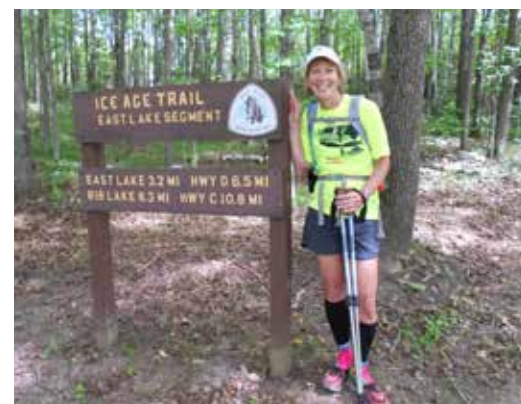
Some of my fondest memories and biggest triumphs:

- Discovering the beauty and diversity of our state.
- Enjoying the solitude of the North Woods.
- Seeing three bears—from the safety of a car.
- Hiking through a culvert under the Interstate.
- The creative signage, like the turn marked by a blaze placed on a cross-country ski.
- Running past a herd of bugling elk one foggy morning.
- Trail magic!
- Never seeing a single tick.
- Making it through the Kettlebowl without getting lost, when every other thru- and section hiker I met said they’d gotten turned around there. (Thanks, Joe Jopek, for the Kettlebowl tutorial at your home

the day I had to take off and go to Urgent Care.)

- Being able to eat everything and anything I wanted and still lose weight. (Thru-hiking the Trail is the best diet there is!)
- Discovering all of the beautiful sections of Trail close to my home that I’d never known about before, like the Marquette Trail and the Janesville Arboretum.
- Meeting many wonderful people who are members and volunteers with the IAT.

I could go on and on. My adventure was a life-changing experience, and I hope to continue to spread the word about this wonderful state treasure of ours for many years to come.



Adam Hinz

2013

I wish I could go on and on about all the support I received that allowed me to truly absorb everything I was experiencing. My only regret is that I finished and had to leave the Trail!

Highlights and Reflections

This was probably the single greatest experience of my life. I met so many great people along the way that it is too hard to single out one. I've forged friendships that will last a lifetime. I was invited into complete strangers' homes and welcomed as a member of their families. My only regret is that I finished and had to leave the Trail! Thanks to all the many individuals who work and care for it. Obviously I could not have had this experience without them.

The first time I saw a bear on the Trail I was filled with so much joy and fear; all I could do was look for another for days. Every time I saw a shadow in the woods I got a shiver of anticipation. Being this close to nature was the ultimate high; the woods seemed to accept me as a part of its family. Animals stopped running away from me and instead just looked at what I was or minded their own business. Even an elusive bobcat took a few minutes to check me out as it crossed the street. It did not run—instead it slowly skulked back into the woods without much concern. Truly amazing!

I started this trip knowing nothing about what I was getting into. Day One, I realized at about mile 10 that my boots were tearing my feet apart. When I stopped in Algoma for the night I had a blister the size of a racquetball on my heel and about 12 other blisters on my feet. The pain was astonishing. I remember telling myself, *No matter what, you are not quitting.* The only acceptable reasons to quit were a broken leg or getting eaten by a bear. I walked with these foot ailments until I reached Two Rivers, where I found a decent selection of footwear, but it wasn't until I reached Devil's Lake that my feet had completely healed. I would have to say that was the most challenging experience I have ever had. But because I made it, I now

know there is nothing I cannot do.

One person asked me, "What was the hardest part of the trip?" I said it always feels like my day ends going up a really big hill.

During bear hunting season up north many people asked me, "What are you packing?" I would always answer, "A sleeping bag, socks and some food."

The beauty of my trip was that I had no timetable. This allowed me to really treasure every moment and every day. Some days I would walk 28 to 30 miles. Other days I would walk only 8 to 10 miles but still feel accomplished. If I came across an area where I wanted to spend an extra day or take a break from rain, I could. It was so liberating to know that my only job was to see the world (or Wisconsin) for what it is.



Age when completed
34

Personal info
West Allis, WI
Cook

Hike description
Thru-hike: westbound
Started: June 17, 2013,
Potawatomi State Park,
Door County
Finished: October 18,
2013, Interstate State
Park, Polk County

I was asked many times what advice I would give people wanting to do a thru-hike and I always said take your time.

2013

Age when completed

26

Personal info

Waupaca, WI
Wilderness field instructor
Waupaca County Chapter
member

Walked for: Homes for
Our Troops fundraiser
Trail journal: [http://
kehlymae.wordpress.
com](http://kehlymae.wordpress.com)

Hike description

Thru-hike: westbound
Started: July 29, 2013,
Potawatomi State Park,
Door County
Finished: October 27,
2013, Interstate State
Park, Polk County



Kehly M. Johnson

I went MIA for a few days as the reality of finishing my thru-hike set in. I missed the trail. I missed waking up with purpose and a destination. I missed the sights and sounds of the wilderness. I missed the way being a thru-hiker made me feel. I have never felt so strong, brave or beautiful. I felt more at home in my dirty, stinky hiker clothes than I do in my normal clothes and makeup. Maybe the feeling of loss will wear off and I will return to my old self, but maybe I don't want to.

Highlights and Reflections

My plan was to hike the entire 1000+ miles of Wisconsin's beautiful Ice Age Trail starting in August 2013 and ending around September or October. Not only did I get to hike the entire thing, but I also got to hike for a great cause, Homes for Our Troops, <http://www.hfotusa.org>. As a veteran with 6+ years in the Wisconsin National Guard and one deployment to Iraq in 2009–2010, I understand the sacrifices soldiers make while defending their country. I'm out of the military, but I still feel the need to help my fellow soldiers. Homes for Our Troops organizes the construction of homes that are adapted to allow severely wounded veterans to live independently. One of the goals of my hike was to spread the word about HFOT and inspire people to donate to this great cause.

My journey officially began with my boyfriend, Brent, and me walking the first mile(ish) of the trail in the rain. I was a bit more emotional than I had expected. I was nervous, excited and a tad homesick thinking about being away for 2+ months, but it was nothing nature and some walking couldn't fix.

I had frustrating and painful days, where it was hard to imagine finishing with my feet in such poor shape. But I also had good days, where when I needed something the most, the trail provided. I still can't believe that strangers would open up their homes to me for a night, let alone three, like wonderful Joanna did. I realized how quickly strangers can become friends and how much I took away from each experience. It still amazes me!

Each day the Trail provided in a new or different way. One day I headed into Monticello to go to the post office (0.7 miles off course). Before I even got into town a vehicle passed, then reversed to ask me about my charity. The gentlemen gave me a \$100 donation. Then while eating lunch I received a \$10 donation from a fellow veteran. I left Monticello with tears in my eyes.

The trails (and even the roads) were

beautiful. I walked through prairie restoration areas, wonderfully shaded forests, and even took a ferry. The walking felt like it was mostly uphill, which seems to be the theme of the Ice Age Trail, but my body adapted after a few weeks. Adventures aren't supposed to be easy, right?

My last day on the Trail started with a delicious breakfast and continued conversation from the night before, thanks to Gregg and Marie-Anne. As the day progressed my sister, who hiked the last part of the Trail with me, and I were joined by Wanda and then more supporters including Chet (who had helped me in my early planning stages via email), Joe and Nanette. It was obvious how much pride the Indianhead Chapter takes in its part of the Trail, and the Trail showed it. About a mile out we met Brent. He had hiked the first mile with me three months ago, so it felt perfect to have him hike the last mile with me too. Waiting at the western terminus were Lucy, my grandma, and my dad. We were greeted with signs, banners, and beer! A few hours later, we were on our way home, and it still didn't feel real. I was glad to be done with cold nights, rain, snow, wet gear, sore feet and a few rude people, but I missed the views, friendly people and sense of freedom.

The trail taught me how to slow down even while pushing myself to keep going and keep walking. I reflected on what is really important and who I really want to be. Once again, I have shown myself that I can do anything if it truly means something to me. I hear the trail calling my name already, and I hope that I can answer in the next few years, because there is still so much more I want to learn about myself and the world.

Thank you all for supporting, encouraging, inspiring and following me on my thru-hike. I could not even begin to explain what it has meant to me. Whether I met you on the Trail or we've been friends for years, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Jared D. Wildenradt

My favorite time on the trail was the western bifurcation branch. Lots of open road and easy hiking and it seemed the people in every car waved at me.

Highlights and Reflections

I had no itinerary per se—I hiked day by day. I didn't really keep a journal, but I kept the dates hiked on the Thousand-Miler checklist, and I tracked most of my hiking with the Endomondo app on my smartphone and through thousands of pictures. I tried to complete entire segments at a time, for at least 15 to 20 miles.

I don't have a trail name, as nothing ever seemed to fit. I can tell you my segment hiking was kicked off by the need to fill a gap after kicking a few bad habits. I used to be a runner, but my knees have made me slow my pace.

I started my adventure by spending many weekends hiking the hills of the Devil's Lake area and training myself to get up the steepest of the hills without stopping. The loops are perfect for not having to travel the same ground twice in one day. In June 2012, I stepped off the Devil's Lake area and started branching out to segment hiking. For the next month of hiking, I started doing "out and backs"—hiking chunks like the Lodi and Marquette segments, anything within a 45-minute drive of home. After that, I changed my pace—Aeschbach Automotive in Middleton added towing capability to my car and I bought a trailer and a moped I called the "Ice Age Cruiser." This finally allowed me to break free from out-and-back hiking.

My original plan was to always hike solo, but the Thousand-Miler Wannabes changed that.

I ran into my first hiker on the IAT outside of Devil's Lake. He claimed he was getting in shape, and he called himself T-man. We had a short chat, and T-man gave me a card with contact info. I started hiking with him soon after. I then found the Thousand Miler Wannabes. The Wannabes group changed everything about my hiking style. This group was going everywhere on the Trail, and I joined in when I could. I even found other crazy hikers like Will and Gloria, Gail, Tess, Sean, Kassie and Andrea. This always made for more interesting shuttles, chats and hiking on the Trail. I would change my plans to hike with others. One part of the weekend adventures I always enjoyed was setting up

a base camp in a new town. One weekend I would go north, and the next weekend I would go south. One weekend we would camp, and the other we would get hotel rooms. I even stayed at a fellow hiker's place. It was good times! I turned every weekend for the past year and a half into an adventure.

The wildlife on the trail was my favorite. I have seen a total of five bears, 15 bald eagles, six ospreys, one rattlesnake, a few fox and coyotes, and countless deer and turkeys. Turtle egg-laying season was very interesting, and the frogs seem to have a few weeks where they were in force. Bugs—wow! I won't miss them at all.

Finishing the Trail was a mixed-feeling day: happy to be done and sad it was over. As I look back, I gained so much from the Trail. Great friends and great memories (and I may have even lost a pound or two). I realized I just may have to do it again, but maybe not as fast. I've geared myself for backpacking this time...see you on the Trail.



2013

Age when completed
35

Personal info
Cross Plains, WI
Desktop tech

Hike description
Section hike: various directions; hiked both the eastern and western branch routes of the bifurcation
Started: May 1, 2012, Devil's Lake Segment, Sauk County
Finished: November 3, 2013, Interstate State Park, Polk County



Personal info

Madison, WI
Project manager
Dane County Chapter
member

Hike description

Section hike: various directions

Started: April 23, 2010,
Storrs Lake Segment,
Rock County

Finished: November
16, 2013, Janesville to
Milton Segment, Rock
County

Lessons learned from the Trail:

- Trail miles can be a psychological as well as a physical pursuit.
- Any time you travel in WI, check a *Gazetteer* to see how close you are to a segment.
- Road miles are nicer in the winter and allow you to break into the woods ahead of ticks.
- Boots aren't the only footgear you will need.
- Sometimes you can feel a trail tread underfoot even if you cannot see it.
- Trail angels can assist when you face an out-and-back.
- Use a spreadsheet or map to track your progress and companions.
- The ratio of bike paths to road miles makes the connecting routes easier.
- Give of yourself, whether maintaining, building, or sharing the trail.

Tess Mulrooney

Sharing the Trail, an evening meal, or time working on a Trail project in 2013 enriched my life in many ways. For all of you who shared your time with me, I thank you for renewing my will to go on hiking. As I said at the conference in Middleton a few years ago, I would have quit if I hadn't been able to find a hiking partner. Having found 15+ hiking partners was truly a blessing.

Highlights and Reflection-

Thru hikers, like Nimblewill Nomad, are so inspirational to beginning hikers. I tried three times to connect with him while he was hiking and failed each time. My friends laughed at my innocence sending him emails, insisting that's what cell phones are for. I suppose they are, but I still prefer not to own one.

As I started hiking with others, I also learned the importance of owning a *DeLorme Atlas and Gazetteer*. I travel quite a bit for my job each spring and sat down one night with it and my maps to highlight the road miles and trail. I had been driving near the Trail for years without knowing it.

In 2013 I volunteered to work on the updates for the newest *Ice Age Trail Guidebook*. When I started the Trail, I hiked three counties without the *Ice Age Trail Companion Guide*. Then Theresa Warner showed me what I was missing; I ordered one immediately. Theresa organized a MeetUp.com event to hike at Bohn Lake and see a tunnel channel. I came home without understanding it, so it was on to David Mickelson's book, *Geology of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail*. My Irish pride came out when I read that *drumlin* and *esker* are Irish words.

Places where I stayed for 3 or 4 nights to maximize my time on the road are dear to my heart: Mishicot, Coloma, Rib Lake, Rice Lake, and Cornell come to mind. I also love the Highway 64 corridor, Polk County and Sheboygan County. When I had others with me, those special times more than made up for the lonely out-and-backs. Another highlight was coming down the hill toward Game Lake and picking out what might have been a boardwalk; I had been dreading wading through massive spring ponds. I treasure the photo Todd McMahon took of those of us sharing that moment.

The customers I support enjoyed hearing stories of my adventures and seemed to live vicariously through our conversations. I had given up yoga while hiking, as the Trail calmed me down, but I learned that

if it was likely I needed to climb under or over trees for the hike, I was much better off with some yoga stretches than going without.

An 80-year-old woman has said she will hike part of the Timm's Hill trail with me, as her family donated part of the land for it. I am starting to get people thinking of joining me for that hike, and I plan to explore Wisconsin's portion of the North Country Trail as well.

Some of my best wildlife stories involve wild turkeys. While finishing the road walk toward the Chequamegon Forest from Lublin, I came upon about 15 turkeys standing along the side of the road. The lead turkey walked boldly into someone's front yard and started pecking on a windfall apple. The other turkeys flocked to her side and found their own apples. I heard a car approaching from behind me, and every turkey dashed behind a tree to hide. As the car drove by, several heads popped out to see if the coast was clear. They resumed their eating until the next car approached, and went into hiding again. I was entranced by the show and when I finally drew even, I thanked them for the entertainment. They looked at me in all innocence, then hid again.



Larry “Uncle Larry” Swanson

How does a lifelong resident of Illinois, known as the Prairie State, end up spending a year running around the wooded, lake-filled state known as Wisconsin? As a Tenderfoot Boy Scout, I hiked my first segment of the Ice Age Trail in August 1963, at Devil’s Lake State Park. In the years that followed I became an active hiker and runner.

Highlights and Reflections

I hiked/jogged 99 percent of the Ice Age Trail in 2013, by myself. I carried no map or cue sheet, just tried to “follow the yellow blazes.” Because most sections were 3 to 6 miles, I carried only a water bottle (no camera, just my mind’s eye), kept no journal or log, just ran for fun! Every week I met someone segment hiking, day hiking or thru-hiking. My themes—“50 Years of Trail Hiking, Running and Racing on the 1000-mile Ice Age National Scenic Trail” and “IATA Ambassador”—were inspired by many. I had heard the tales of adventure told by my friend and Kettle Moraine 100 race director, Jason Dorgan, about when he ran the Trail in 22 days. At IATA conference hiker forums, I had listened to the exciting stories of thru-hikers as well as of the Thousand-Milers who took years to complete the Trail segment by segment. They and others inspired me to “just do it.”

As a member of the northern Illinois-southern Wisconsin Coyote Running club, I encourage members to check the runs in Wisconsin near the Trail. During an MSC project, I told “Mr. IAT,” Tim Malzhan, about how I like to reward those who run the IAT for the first time with a bumper sticker and the NPS map for the Trail. Tim said I was a “good ambassador.” That gave my adventure a real purpose, and I decided to carry with me copies of the IAT brochure/map and ask people I met what they knew about the Ice Age Trail, the Alliance, and Mobile Skills Crew events. I estimate that on my hike I talked Trail with more than 100 people and handed out more than 50 Trail booklets, volunteer brochures, and *Mammoth Tales* to those I met.

My first experience on the Trail, in 1963, was at a Scout hike at Devil’s Lake. On the first weekend of October, 2013, the Scout hike celebrated its 50th anniversary. I had to be there. I handed out more than 50 map booklets that day and gave brief talks to more than 1000 youths, as I stood there for 9 hours in the rain.

After a year of sharing my Trail stories with my running buddies back home, many wanted to celebrate with me. In December 2013 I hosted a celebration on our newest segment at Gibraltar Rock and then Parfrey’s Glen and Devil’s Lake. About 40 friends and family joined me on snow-covered trails for their first experience “following the woolly mammoth.”



2013

Age when completed
62

Personal info
Loves Park, IL
Retired teacher
Trailwide Chapter member
Hiked as an “IATA Ambassador”

Hike description
Section hike: various directions
Started: August 14, 1963, Devil’s Lake Segment, Sauk County
Finished: November 20, 2013, Gandy Dancer Segment, Polk County



2013

Age when completed
27

Personal info

Madison, WI
Nonprofit administration
Trailwise Chapter
member

Hike description

Section hike: various
directions

Started: May 10, 2009,
Interstate State Park,
Polk County

Finished: November
30, 2013, Hatley, WI,
Marathon County

Matt Kaufmann

Long days and many miles required that I listen to my body to determine physical and mental limits. I learned about adapting and improvising plans. I went from struggling through a 5-mile hike with my dog in 2007 to hiking 50 miles in a single day in 2013. The Ice Age Trail is part of my comeback story.

Highlights and Reflections

Growing up along the Ice Age Trail in West Bend, WI, miles of hiking possibilities were just outside my front door. Walking the family's dogs meant traversing Ice Age Trail segments between Sheboygan County and Washington County on several occasions. Rebounding from a medical condition in 2008, I decided to hike the entire Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

I worked at section hiking during all seasons of the year between May 2009 and November 2013. My most memorable trail moments often involved long days of hiking. I

completed a 27-mile hike in Langlade County on my 27th birthday. Covering 46 miles in 17 hours, a friend and I completed Waukesha County end to end. But I didn't stop there; I covered an additional 5 miles of trail to exceed 50 miles hiked in one day.

Long days and many miles required that I listen to my body to determine physical and mental limits. I learned about adapting and improvising plans. I went from struggling through a 5-mile hike with my dog in 2007 to hiking 50 miles in a single day in 2013. The Ice Age Trail is part of my comeback story.



1000-Miler Statistics

as of April 7, 2014

There are **91** recorded Thousand-Milers since 1979

21% hiked east to west
9% hiked west to east
70% hiked in various directions

70% section hiked
30% thru-hiked

45% hiked alone for over half the Trail
37% never hiked alone

Quickest to complete the Trail:

Jason Dorgan,
22 days 6 hours
(2007)

Melanie McManus,
36 days, 5 hours
(2013)

Longest to complete the Trail:

Sharon Bloodgood,
over 20 years
(1987–2007)

Larry Swanson,
estimated 50 years
(1963–2013)

88% were from Wisconsin
12% were from Minnesota, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Maryland, Missouri and Washington

5% were under 20
9% were 20–29
9% were 30–39
8% were 40–49
21% were 50–59
28% were 60–69
11% 70 or over
9% unknown age

65% were male
35% were female
and **2** were dogs
(1 thru-hiker,
1 section hiker)

Average time to complete:

Thru-hiker
67 days

Section hiker
approximately
5.5 years

Oldest section hiker: **Irene Cline at 86**

Oldest thru-hiker:

Meredith J. Eberhart
“Nimblewill Nomad” at 73

Youngest section hikers: **Justin LeMay & Nate Menard** (Boy Scouts Troup 37) at 13

Youngest thru-hiker: **Jim Staudacher** at 20

Would you like to be a statistic?

Almost 100 individuals have hiked the entire Ice Age Trail, some in a continuous, one-season adventure (“thru-hikers”) and some in bits and pieces (“section hikers”). If you are contemplating taking on this challenge, know that planning and research are key aspects of successful long-distance hiking on the Ice Age Trail.

Please give us a call (800-227-0046) so that we can give you an overview of distance hiking on the Ice Age Trail and point you in the direction of a variety of helpful resources.

One Hiker's Statistics

Larry Swanson recorded this information about his 2013 hike:

- 1093.6 miles
- 457 miles of road connectors (and biked same in reverse)
- 103 miles of rail-trail paths (and biked same in reverse)
- 532 miles of hiking Trail (most in both directions)
- 100 days on the trail
- 0 to 100 degrees
- Snow, sleet, rain, scorching sun, ticks, mosquitoes, flies
- 10,000 miles driving
- 50 towns
- 28 counties
- 20 county parks
- 9 county forests
- 7 state parks
- 3 state forests
- 28 Fish & Wildlife and Natural Areas
- 1 national forest
- 1 National Scientific Reserve
- 50 years
- 1000 miles
- 1 million footsteps

About the Trail

The Ice Age Trail, one of only eleven National Scenic Trails, is the brainchild of Raymond T. Zillmer. In the 1950s, Zillmer promoted the idea of a long-distance hiking trail that would allow Wisconsinites to experience wilderness near their homes, rather than having to drive hundreds of miles to remote national parks. Wisconsin's Ice Age heritage was the perfect theme for such a trail, as the state is home to some of the finest examples in the world of continental glaciation's effects on a landscape. To build support for the idea, Zillmer founded the Ice Age Trail Alliance (then called the Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation) in 1958.

As a result of years of work by IATA volunteers, along with critical support from the National Park Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, county and local partners and private landowners, today's Ice Age Trail route winds more than a thousand miles from Potawatomi State Park in Door County to Interstate State Park on the Wisconsin–Minnesota border. The path welcomes those looking to explore Wisconsin on foot, either by walking, hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing. While almost 100 hikers have covered the entire thousand miles, the Trail, thanks to its many access points, is also well suited to leisurely walks and day hikes. The Trail has many segments in very remote locations, but also has many others within or just a short drive from cities such as Green Bay, Manitowoc, West Bend, Milwaukee, Janesville, Madison, Portage, Wausau and St. Croix Falls. True to Zillmer's vision of accessible wilderness, an Ice Age Trail segment can be found within 20 miles of 60 percent of Wisconsinites.



Ice Age Trail Alliance
2110 Main Street, Cross Plains, WI 53528
608-798-4453 • 800-227-0046
www.iceagetrail.org