2017 CLUB NEWSLETTER

What's New!

Greetings! Welcome to 2017 and another great year of hiking. Our club enjoyed a successful launch last year and ventured out on numerous treks here in the Pikes Peak region. This year, we have another exciting schedule, with more hikes and more variety…truly something for everyone.

This year, we'll explore many new locations, such as Aiken Canyon, Roxborough State Park, and even an exciting climb up Devil's Head Lookout Tower. We've added some local spots you may have missed, such as Palmer Park and Pulpit Rock. Those up for a challenge will enjoy climbing Grayback Peak and Mount Esther. Of course, we'll also do the Manitou Incline and Pikes Peak again. Some locations are carried over from last year, but with all-new routes, such as Castlewood Canyon and Cheyenne Mountain State Parks. Additionally, some hikes are simply back by popular demand, including Seven Bridges and a climb up Mount Rosa. The complete 2017 Hike Schedule can be found on the last page of this newsletter…look it over and mark your calendars.

Soon after our club started last year, we formalized the club's name, launched an all-new website, rolled out our first newsletter, produced business cards, and even wrote an article for a contractor newsletter at Schriever AFB.

As it turns out, that was just the start! As we prepare for this year's hikes, we now have an online store with shirts, hats, mugs, and much more. See Page 2 of this newsletter for more details and thank you for any support your provide. We are also running full-color advertisements in the Fort Carson, Peterson AFB, and Schriever AFB newspapers. My wife Sondra is a Graphic Artist by trade; she produced a very professional ad, which you can check out on Page 4. One of my goals for this club is to reach out to the military families here in the Pikes Peak region. After all, they are only here for a short time and would benefit from the experience and new friends found in this organization.

Please read this newsletter for important information on hiking rules, weather conditions, privacy policies and required waivers. If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to drop me a line. I look forward to seeing each of you on the trail this year!

Rob Jackson
Club Organizer
robert@mountaintrailshiking.com

Making New Friends, Seeing New Places!
(Horsethief Falls, July 2016)

Club Website

https://www.mountaintrailshiking.com

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Membership Form / Waiver

If you hiked with us last year, you may recall filling out a membership form and waiver. You can expect the same this year, and I ask all members to complete a new form each year.

The waiver portion of this form is for you to acknowledge that hiking, as with any outdoor activity, contains some element of risk and that you accept responsibility for incidents arising from participating in these activities. Hiking is low-risk compared to many other outdoor activities, but it is important that you understand your role. I will only lead you on hikes in which I have already completed and know the route. I have first aid training and a healthy respect for foul weather and other dangers, so you are in good hands. Still, no one knows your limitations and physical condition better than you, so it is vital that you never undertake a hike that you are not fully prepared to accomplish.

Privacy Notice: Although I request your contact information, you can be confident that only the member's name and those listed as additional members within their household may be shared as part of Club business; sample uses may include hike participant lists and member identification in club photographs. No other information will be shared with anyone, either within or outside the Club.

I will ask you to complete this form on your first hike with the club each year. When you receive the form, I encourage you contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

PART 1: MEMBER INFORMATION

Disclaimer on Information Sharing: Only the member's name and those listed as additional members within their household may be shared as part of Club business; sample uses may include hike participant lists and member identification in club photographs. No other information will be shared with anyone, either within or outside the Club.

Primary Member Name (Last, First)	List Additional Household Members Below
Mailing Address (Line 1)	
Mailing Address (Line 2)	
City / State / Zip	
Email *(you may list additional email addresses on the reverse side)*	
Telephone	

PART 2: WAIVER AND RELEASE

I acknowledge and agree that hiking activities carry inherent risks associated with my participation therein, of which I am fully aware. I voluntarily assume the risks associated therewith, which may include health risks and/or bodily injuries, including but not limited to death, whether they occur or arise during or after my participation in hiking events.

In consideration for being allowed to participate in hikes organized by the **Mountain Trails Hiking Club**, I hereby release, waive, indemnify, covenant not to sue and hold harmless the Mountain Trails Hiking Club and its organizers, members, participants, and volunteers.

I HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT BY AGREEING TO THIS RELEASE I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL THE TERMS CONTAINED HEREIN AND AM GIVING UP LEGAL RIGHTS THAT I OTHERWISE HAVE FOR INJURIES OR DAMAGES INCURRED DURING AND AFTER MY PARTICIPATION IN MOUNTAIN TRAILS HIKING CLUB EVENTS. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE TERMS OF THIS RELEASE SHALL SURVIVE THE CONCLUSION OF HIKE ACTIVITIES SUCH THAT I AM RELEASING THE RELEASEES FROM ALL CLAIMS THAT MIGHT ARISE AFTER THE EVENTS TAKE PLACE, WHETHER KNOWN OR UNKNOWN AT THE TIME I PARTICIPATED IN HIKE ACTIVITIES.

I warrant and represent that I am at least 18 years of age, or if I am signing this Release on behalf of someone under 18 years of age I am that person's legal guardian and have legal authority to execute this Release on his/her behalf.

I agree to the terms and conditions set forth above as it applies to myself and each household member listed on this form.

PART 3: SIGNATURE

SIGNATURE	DATE

CLUB USE ONLY:

RECEIVED BY	DATE

SAMPLE

Hike Club Store!

Shop now at: http://www.cafepress.com/mountaintrailshikingclub

It's here! The Mountain Trails Hiking Club store is now open for business! Visit the link on the left to see over 20 unique items available.

I've set the prices at "no profit" so no commission is being earned, only the lowest prices. Exception: I did add a minor markup on several men's items as I feel that men's and women's clothing should be priced the same.

I plan to have a few common items available for sale on each hike. However, for the best selection in colors and sizes, I recommend you order from the website.

Show your Club Pride today!

Basic Rules of Hiking

While hiking itself is little more than walking in nature, participating in an organized group involves a few considerations. Please note the hiking rules below and do your part whenever you participate with the club:

- Do not leave anything on the trail…if you bring it with you, take it out again. This includes food waste. Also, do not remove anything natural you find on the trail. If you find a rock or leaf fascinating, leave it alone so that others may enjoy it as well. Want to do something extra? Picking up trash you do come across would be going the extra mile to improve the trail for others.

- Keep at least one other hiker within sight at all times. This will avoid halting the entire group while we locate a lost hiker.

- Be courteous to other hikers, especially those in our group. Not everyone enjoys hiking the same way; some want to socialize while others may prefer the peace and quiet of the forest. Partner with like-minded members so that everyone can enjoy the hike. Also, try not to tailgate…spread out and share the trail with others. This is not a race, so enjoy the pace!

- Don't take unnecessary risks. Watch your step and stay away from ledges and overhangs. Injuries are possible, but you can minimize the risks by being smart.

- Be responsible with your dog. Most of our hikes are dog-friendly, but remember that some club members may be allergic or otherwise not fond of barking dogs. When bringing a dog, keep them on a leash and give ample space between you and others in our group.

- Come prepared with comfortable clothes and appropriate supplies. Healthy snacks are encouraged for most hikes, but may not be necessary for shorter outings. However, you should always have water or similar beverage as dehydration occurs quickly on the trail.

- Do not attempt any hike for which you are not prepared to do. While it can be fun test your limits, if you cannot complete a hike, you risk cancelling the trip for others (we do not allow hikers to return alone). Start with easier hikes and gradually work your way up.

- Leave wildlife alone. We will frequently see deer, rabbits, squirrels, and birds. Take photos, but please give them space, we are in their home. Encounters with more dangerous wildlife (snakes, mountain lions, black bears) are rare, but if it happens, do not panic, but rather understand how to handle such encounters.

- Be on time. Whether you meet at the designated carpool location or drive straight to the hike site, please be considerate, plan ahead and be on time for hike starts.

Autumn Break in Emerald Valley
(Pipeline Trail - October 2016)

Weather Conditions

Hikes are scheduled months in advance, so there is no way to predict what the weather will be like when that day comes around. We live in a location which enjoys year-round sunshine, so you can expect Mother Nature to be cooperative most of the time. However, there will be occasions where the weather will affect our club activities. It's important you understand our policies regarding weather.

All of our hikes begin fairly early in the morning, which not only beats the crowds, but also beats the heat and/or afternoon thunderstorms. My goal is that (for most hikes), we are done before noon. There will be some hikes which are longer and may push into afternoon, but most hikes will be done by midday. For those rare days which have rain in the morning, we will generally still hike. You can make a personal choice if you want to stay home because of rain or snow. There are times where I will postpone if we are planning a high-elevation hike which receives unexpected snow. I will be scheduling hikes for all seasons, but our winter hikes will be at lower elevations and will be more susceptible to schedule changes.

Make no mistake…where I do not mess around is thunder and lightning. Overcast and rain is one thing, but once we have thunder and lightning, I will cancel the hike (if it has not yet started) or return to the vehicles by the most direct route (for hikes in progress). This could mean we do not reach the destination of some of our summer hikes. Set aside your pride, the mountain will still be there for next time. I need you to know and accept that I will never compromise the safety of anyone on our hikes, and I expect club members to fully cooperate should the occasion arise in which I cancel or terminate a hike due to potentially dangerous weather.

Pikes Peak Climb

Are you ready for a really big challenge? This year, we'll hike up Pikes Peak via the Barr Trail on Saturday, September 16th. This is a one-way hike and participants will have a ride down. This is a serious and difficult hike; in fact, it's the only hike we have which is rated a "10" on the difficulty scale. In my experience, whenever we have a very tough hike, it's common to have members who overestimate their ability or simply want to give it a try without knowing if they are prepared. This hike is 12+ miles long and climbs over 7,000 feet to the summit of 14,114 feet. As you know, the oxygen is very thin above the tree line. I expect we'll only have a limited number of participants from our club.

Last year, I climbed this mountain for the first time, and did so through Pikes Peak Challenge, a fund-raiser to support the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado. Over 400 hikers participated, and each participant had to raise at least $200 in pledges. This requirement may have dissuaded more of our own club members from participating; however, this was necessary as I needed to learn the route, gauge the hazards, and prepare for this year's trek. This year, we will be on our own, as I have scheduled this climb one week after the Pikes Peak Challenge.

I'll provide more details this summer, and will encourage interested participants to take on other peaks and difficult hikes to demonstrate their ability. This one will require advanced sign-up and a very early start. In fact, I intend to stay in Manitou Springs the night before as we will begin well before dawn.

Please let me know if you are interested in climbing Pikes Peak this fall. It's a difficult, but rewarding experience and you'll never look at the Peak the same way again.

Newspaper Ad

As part of our outreach program, I have placed a full-color advertisement in the Fort Carson, Peterson AFB, and Schriever AFB newspapers. A copy of the ad is shown to the left. The rates are slightly expensive, but at least we're getting the non-profit rate.

I hope to have this ad run at least three times over the summer, and look forward to any responses from interested military members and their families.

I think you'll agree, my wife Sondra did great job creating this professional-looking ad! She also designed the club logo (and does a lot of other things behind the scenes!) I could not run this club without her support.

Nutrition and Hydration

The Mountain Trails Hiking Club is a day-hike club, but that doesn't mean you don't need to pay attention to what you eat and drink, both before and during the hike. Here are some helpful tips:

Nutrition

Not all calories are created equal. According to the American Heart Association, the main fuel for your muscles comes from carbohydrates. Select easily digestible carbohydrates to eat before exercise so you don't feel sluggish. The act of hiking can suppress your appetite, so plan to feed yourself anyway as calories play an important role in regulating body temperature.

Before You Hike: As stated above, carbs are key. Fuel yourself with a light breakfast like eggs, whole grain non-sugary cereal or oatmeal. Other ideas include whole-wheat toast, low-fat yogurt, whole grain pasta, brown rice, fruits, and vegetables.

During Your Hike: Snacking throughout a hike is equally important, especially if you start to take on longer hikes. Try to snack at least once an hour, in addition to your routine, full meals. Nutrient dense day hike snack ideas include:

- Trail mix
- Nuts and seeds
- Peanut butter
- Crackers
- Cheese
- Beef jerky
- Energy bars
- Granola bars
- Fresh or dried fruit
- Sandwich

If you like fruit, consider picking durable fruits like an apple, instead of a banana that may end up squished in your pack. And for dried fruit, be aware that your stomach re-hydrates the fruit to digest it, so if you don't replenish your body with enough fluids, dried fruit could end up dehydrating you and making you feel light-headed, which reverses any benefits altogether. When selecting dried fruit and granola bars, look for options that don't have any added sugars, as high sugar levels can work against you, sparking a short burst followed by an epic energy crash.

Hydration

Pre-hike, try to drink about 20-32 ounces of water. Avoid hitting the trail if you haven't pre-hydrated. Once your hike has begun, plan to drink another 32 ounces for every two miles hiked, give or take. Take frequent, small sips—even before you feel thirsty. As a simple rule, if you're only drinking water when you're thirsty, you're already behind. As appealing as a summit beer may sound, save any alcohol consumption (or sodas, tea, coffee, etc.) until after you've finished the hike and have replenished food and water levels. To replenish your water levels, drink at least 8 ounces immediately after your hike.

And don't forget about your furry friend! If you hike with man's best friend, make sure to bring along a second supply of water and container for your pup to drink from.

If you find yourself in need of water, be careful on the source. Even if the water from a lake or stream appears clean, it could house microscopic pathogens invisible to the naked eye.

Final Tips

Keep an eye on fellow hikers and don't be afraid to ask how everyone is doing. If you can spare some food or water, share your resources with any hikers who may not have come prepared. And always remember to Leave No Trace. Pack it in and pack it out because nobody likes a trail covered in wrappers.

2017 HIKE SCHEDULE

March 18 (Sat) - Palmer Park
Rating 1/3: Mesa Trail and (optional) Templeton Trail

April 9 (Sun) - Aiken Canyon
Rating 5: Roundtrip to homestead site with loop on return

April 15 (Sat) - Incline
Rating 8: Return via Barr Trail

April 22 (Sat) - Homestead Ranch Park
Rating 4: Loop hike with lake and bluff overlook

May 7 (Sun) - Roxborough State Park
Rating 6: Climb Carpenter Peak overlooking the park

May 20 (Sat) - Castlewood Canyon State Park
Rating 4: New Route! - East Canyon loop

June 3 (Sat) - Fox Run Region Park
Rating 3: New Route! - Both loops in one hike

June 25 (Sun) - Mueller State Park
Rating 5: New Route! - Cheesman Ranch loop

July 9 (Sun) - Seven Bridges
Rating 5: Roundtrip to Jones Park

July 29 (Sat) - Mount Rosa
Rating 7: Roundtrip from Penrose-Rosemont Reservoir

August 12 (Sat) - Lovell Gulch Trail
Rating 5: Loop Hike near Woodland Park

August 19 (Sat) - Devil's Head Lookout Tower
Rating 4: Roundtrip from trailhead near Sedalia

August 27 (Sun) - Palmer Trail Loop / Section 16
Rating 5: Loop Hike from Gold Camp Road

September 16 (Sat) - Pikes Peak
Rating 10: Ascent via Barr Trail; return ride provided

September 24 (Sun) - Horse Thief Falls / Pancake Rocks
Rating 3/6: Hike to the falls, then (optional) up to the rocks

October 1 (Sun) - Grayback Peak
Rating 6: Roundtrip from trailhead, overlooks Emerald Valley

October 14 (Sat) - Cheyenne Mountain State Park
Rating 5: New Route! - Cougar's Shadow loop

November 5 (Sun) - Mount Esther
Rating 6: Steep Roundtrip from Cascade-Chipita Park

November 18 (Sat) - Fountain Creek Nature Center
Rating 2: Nature Center + Regional Park lake walk

December 2 (Sat) - Pulpit Rock Sunset Hike
Rating 4: Bid a majestic farewell to season!

Schedule subject to change, especially for weather.

Details of each hike, including meeting times and locations, will be sent approximately one week prior to each hike.

Dogs permitted on most hikes, exceptions noted on hike details--please keep dogs on leash at all times.

Please read Hiking Club Rules found in this newsletter; know your own limits for hike difficulty.

Respect nature and each other--Have Fun!

RATINGS

Hikes are rated for difficulty based on overall distance, altitude, climbing involved, and terrain difficulty.

1-3: EASY - casual walks, can be attempted by most members

4-6: MODERATE - longer routes or with difficult terrain; for more experienced hikers

7-10: DIFFICULT - long hikes, usually involving lots of climbing; for fit and experienced hikers only