



TREKKERS

KEEP ON TREKKIN': TREKKERS ALUMNI CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2006

VIEW FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT



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As people from around the state continue to learn about Trekkers and our mission to serve young people in MSAD #50, I get lots of questions about the effectiveness of the program on the lives of students growing up here. I must admit I hate this question, simply because nine out of ten times the person wants to hear statistics: how many students who enter the program drop out of school, graduate high school in four years, go on to college, etc. Because we have students in the program for six years, it's easy for us to accumulate these types of statistics, but I reluctantly share them, even though they're very positive numbers. I feel sharing statistics somehow cheapens the Trekkers experience. It's very difficult for me to sum up in numbers the richness of the six-year experience in a way that people outside the Trekker community could truly understand. It is hard to explain that Trekkers is about relationships, and relationships are hard to measure quantitatively.

One of my life mentors once shared with me that "**programs don't change lives, relationships do,**" and I know this to be true in my work with all of you. I've received e-mails and letters over the years sharing with me how new relationships formed with local adults, people from other cultures in unique regions of the United States, and with the outdoors have all had an impact on who you are as individuals and how you see the world.

I hope you know that the hundreds of students (like yourself) with whom I've personally had the privilege of working with over the last nine years, truly have impacted my life in many profound ways. Based on what I've learned about who I am through our relationship, I consider you some of my greatest teachers.

My hope in creating our Alumni Connection Newsletter is to help keep this relationship growing, to keep your connection to Trekkers fresh, and to let you know we are still here for you if you ever needed anything. All of you helped set the foundation for everything that we are currently offering to students through Trekkers. For instance, during the 2006 program year (that started back in September) we will offer the following opportunities: **leadership training weekends for juniors and seniors, an expedition to New Orleans to help the victims of Katrina, an expedition studying the American Revolution in Boston, the history of the Constitution in Philadelphia and many historical sites in DC, our rites of passage and 41-hour solo experience for seniors, our college-career expedition for juniors, our signature trip to Acadia for seventh-graders, a two-week expedition in the summer for eighth-graders, a trip to explore the Continental Divide/Rocky Mountains in August, and a wilderness trip that will include summiting Katahdin and canoeing on rivers in northern Maine. Other initiatives include Big Trek/Little Trek: our peer mentoring program for younger students, Sunday night dinners/conversations with various ages, and an abundance of one-on-one tutoring and mentoring for students who need a little extra help.**

I can tell you that all the above would not have been possible without the tradition and high standards all of you set for the program over the past nine years. We owe you a great deal of credit for the current success we've had with the program. I hope you feel pride in having been a part of the Trekkers experience. As you know, our motto has always been, "Once a Trekker, always a Trekker." With this in mind, I hope you will visit our website (www.Trekkersonline.com), access the Alumni Connection, and let us know how you're doing and what you're up to. I personally would love to hear from you.

In the meantime, I hope this newsletter finds you doing well. My hope is that you continue to seek "balance" in your life as you strive to put your passions into action in all that you do. Although I miss all the journeys we had together, I trust the relationship we created through these adventures will stand the test of time.

Enjoy the newsletter and please stay in touch!

Your friend,

Don

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE TREKKERS ALUMNI CONNECTION!

The Trekkers website, www.Trekkersonline.com, now gives alumni the ability to update contact information, download the Alumni Connection newsletter, and submit material for use in upcoming newsletters. To access these options, just click on the Alumni Connection icon located on the lower left-side of the Trekkers homepage. Our goal is to help alumni connect with the Trekkers program in order to keep up-to-date with current events. We look forward to hearing from everyone!



LETTERS

Showcasing community feedback, the letters section is a place where alumni can inform Trekkers about their newest adventures and life-events. To submit a letter, please visit the Alumni Connection page online.

I have been greatly impressed with the work of Trekkers with middle and high school level youth in our district. It is so rare to find an organization that is so well thought of and has such a positive and long-lasting influence on young people.

-Judith Harvey
Superintendent, MSAD #50

Many of my students, past and present, have been Trekkers members. It is obvious to me who these students are. By the time they are seniors, many... are the ones interested in taking on the extra challenges, seeing how different ideas fit together, prefer working in a positive, collaborative atmosphere, and have developed a deeper degree of compassion and insight to the world around them.

-Margo Murphy
GVHS Science Teacher

Being a leader in this program has not only helped me to better young people's lives, but it's also helped me to become who I am today... it's an honor to be able to help young people get through those hard times in their lives...

-Britta Sturks
Senior Trip Leader



UPCOMING EVENTS

This section features upcoming Trekkers programs and future community events.

TREKKAPALOOZA

Trekkapalooza is the kick-off fundraiser of Trekkers' capital campaign for a **new bus**. The event features local youth bands competing for a cash prize and the title of "Bus Band." Trekkapalooza takes place on February 4, 2006 at the Strand Theater in Rockland, ME. The show starts at 7:00 pm; tickets are \$7.00 at the door. Tie-dye concert t-shirts will be on sale for \$12 each. All ages welcome, chem-free.

RIDE THROUGH HISTORY

February 17th marks the start of this year's Ride Through History Expedition. Offered to freshmen, the 10-day trip strives to expose students to a variety of historical events which have had a large impact on the development of our nation. Students work together to choose the particular historical events explored. Cities of interest include Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and D.C.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Trekkers' first-ever leadership training weekend for Junior and Senior Trekkers is happening soon! The program is focused on developing and enhancing marketable skills, such as dealing with different personalities within a group setting, how to facilitate consensus decision-making, how to lead group games, and MUCH, much more. Leadership training will be held at Camp Kieve in Nobleboro.



SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNI

Spotlight provides a glimpse into the different careers and life-paths taken after the Trekkers experience.

Emily Lord, Trekkers class of 1998, recently visited Central America as part of the "Ecotourism and Sustainable Development in Costa Rica" class at the University of Vermont.

"In the last couple of decades, tourism has grown tremendously in Costa Rica, and they've therefore developed greatly in some of the most precious, beautiful, and equally fragile parts of the country. The tiny nation is only the size of New Hampshire and Vermont combined, but it hosts 5% of the world's biodiversity and about 500,000 species... Our class sought to analyze the growth of tourism in the regions we visited and whether the sites we specifically visited were developed with a mind for the future. We spent two and a half weeks traveling about the San Jose region in central Costa Rica, down to the Pacific coast, and further south to the Osa Peninsula. [The trip] rekindled my interest in speaking Spanish and provided me with a few great destinations, should I ever get enough money to make it back there!"



FLASHBACKS



TREKKERS HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights features articles written by Trekkers students, sharing experiences from recent expeditions.

Peter Anderson, who shares his thoughts (below) on the Gulf Coast experience, was part of the recent Trekkers Katrina Relief Expedition. The group of ten sophomores traveled to parts of Louisiana and Mississippi to lend a hand, doing their part to clean up the path of destruction left by Hurricane Katrina last September. Anderson, who attended St. George School, now studies at Islesboro Central School.

“Going on this most recent Trekkers trip, the Hurricane Relief Effort 2005, had a big effect on me. Not only has it allowed me to reconnect with some of my older friends, but it also allowed me to connect for the first time with people who I didn’t know. Helping people rebuild their lives is great... we were doing some of the most important community service I could ever think of doing. I felt like I was doing something really important, no matter how small the job.”



ALUMNI QUICK-TAKES

Recent news from alumni, including new jobs, moves and school transfers, engagements, marriages, births, and much more! To submit your new endeavors for Alumni Quick-takes, please visit the Alumni Connection page online.

CLASS OF 1998

Taylor Stenger recently returned from active duty in Iraq, where he flew robotic spy planes. **Ryan Rosie** is living in Dafter, Michigan with his wife, Crystal. The couple is expecting their second child. **Brian Franklin** recently announced his engagement to Jessica Arnett. He is currently a junior at the University of Maine in Orono. **Sara El Hashem** is studying at American University in Washington D.C. She spent the past two semesters abroad in Lebanon.

CLASS OF 1999

Mike Percy is currently taking classes and working as a firefighter in South Portland. **David Wilgus** has returned to Maine after a college semester in Arizona. He is currently enrolled at the University of Southern Maine and is rooming with his brother Jesse... look out!! **Justin Gale** was promoted to Specialist and is currently serving in Iraq. **Abi Kelly** is back at Reed College in Portland, Oregon after spending a semester soaking up the sun (and some classes) in Hawaii.

CLASS OF 2000

Loralie Franklin is enrolled at the University of New England, where she is studying sports medicine. She hopes to make the softball team this spring. **Albert Emery** is studying at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, Georgia. **Heather Watts** and **Juliette Laaka** are enjoying their first year at Colby-Sawyer College in New London, NH. Say “Hi!” to **Emily Taylor** at Maine Screen Video while supporting the local economy! **Wendy Warner** has ventured to Cazenovia College in Cazenovia, NY .

TREKKERS

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DONATE NOW!
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SNAPSHOTS

Smile! A section for photojournalism, featuring Trekkers around the globe! To submit a photograph, please visit the [Alumni Connection page](#) online.



THE BEAUTIFUL PACIFIC COAST OF COSTA RICA, CENTRAL AMERICA

Photograph generously shared by Emily Lord. Thank you!



TAYLOR STENGER'S PROMOTION TO SPECIALIST, BAGHDAD, IRAQ

Photograph courtesy of Taylor Stenger. Thank you!