

Outdoor Club

of



South Jersey

May Newsletter



May Calendar Photo - "Great Egg Harbor River" by John Dolphe

President's Message

Joe Fabian

Hello all:

The good news is that COVID is increasingly under control in our area. Spring has arrived and many club events have taken place. I still receive some complaints but will not go negative. This is my monthly opportunity to give an inspirational message.

We have many long time members, some are no longer with us and some have returned, like Mike and Alison Baker. They are a couple of former hiking leaders who have been away for several years in New Mexico. Mike was a former club President and a genuine outdoorsman. He knows the Latin names of plants and participated in studies of toads, snakes, plants, and the like. They are vagabonds, often traveling the country in their large RV. They were excellent leaders and wonderful people who might be talked into leading hikes again.

I want to speak about a few long time members who are no longer with us and contributed to the foundation of our club as steady, dependable hands. Recently, we learned of the passing of Jean Stelmaszyk on January 29, 2021 at age 97. I last saw her about 5 years ago when we ran into each other. She was upbeat, even though she was soon entering a nursing home. We remember her contribution to the club as a hiking leader and Membership Secretary. Her address and phone number were unlisted, so she was difficult to find when members had a complaint! I often would answer the members who complained about not receiving their printed Trekker schedule. I would copy mine and mail it out to them. Often the problem was that they neglected to renew their membership.

Another passing of note is Kent Ringo who was one of our founding members. He passed away at age 95 in North Carolina. He and his wife Caroline once helped us when we a group of bats move into our garage one summer night. She was not afraid of anything, even when facing cancer.

Joe Fabian President OCSJ President@ocsj.org

Vice President's Message

Barbara Berman

OCSJ is always looking for members to become more involved. If you have any ideas that could improve the operations of our club, we would love to hear from you. Not only are we continuously looking for leaders to run our events, but there are also behind-the-scenes activities in which help is needed.

If you wonder how the club is organized and how it runs, or what leaders do, please join us at a monthly board meeting. We meet the 2nd Thursday of every month. Because of Covid-19, we are currently meeting on Zoom. An email with the Zoom link is sent out the afternoon of the board meeting. We will be limiting participation to the first 10 members who respond to the Zoom invite. It's your club, and we welcome your input and involvement.

Barbara Berman Vice President OCSJ vpocsj.org

Activity Chair's Message

Frank Pearce

The threat from Covid-19 has decreased, but there are other threats. Tick season is in full swing. It is not limited to hiking. Apply insect repellent before any outdoor activity. Shower upon returning and perform a tick check. If you spot a tick, remove it and cover and save the tick in transparent tape. This will make it easier, if needed, for medical professional to identify the type of insect. Monitor the area of a bite for any signs of infection.

Do not forget the sunscreen. This is especially important when paddling. The water acts as a reflector. Stay hydrated, do not wait until you feel thirsty. Follow these simple steps and stay healthy and safe.

Do not forget to remove your name from activities if you cannot attend. When you do not remove your name, you prevent someone else having a chance to participate. There are consequences for not being considerate. You can have your privilege to attend events canceled for periods of time based on how often it occurs.

Stay safe, consider others, Frank Pearce hornet71@verizon.net

Interesting Finds Along the Way....

"The Grave"

Guest Contributor: Jeff Heilbrun



One of the more unusual remnants of 19th century Pine Barrens civilization is the gravestone of Mary Louisa Atkinson in Greenwood Forest Wildlife Management. Just a few of the 18 people who I led on the May 11 hike actually braved the final hundred feet through the thick underbrush to the terracotta memorial. The most that anyone could read from the crumbling brick, even years past, is:

"Sacred to The Memory Of ...Mary Louisa Atkerson...Born July...Died...N...13th 1872 Age...Lay Away (Your Lit) tle ...Dresses...Darling Used to Wear...For She Nevermore Will Need Them For She Is Climed The Golden Stairs...Gone But Not Forgetting."

To assure the location does not become well known nor a "Weird New Jersey" cause célèbre, the route in was not the same as our route out. To further the site's anonymity, the name of the 150 year old town where Ms Atkinson was laid to rest, will not even be given.

Jeff Heilbrun Hiking Leader

Note: We welcome and encourage you to contribute your findings, musings, or stories of your adventures with the OCSJ! Thanks to Jeff, for being our first contributor.

BIKING

www.meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey/
Message from the Cycling Chair:

Neil Kornhauser



This past month had its share of ups and downs weather-wise, so many rides got cancelled. Even with the cold and rain, we still had 30 bike rides in the month of April. The evening rides have started up; we have rides on Mondays and Wednesdays, but given the bad weather, some happened on Tuesdays and Thursdays! Thank you to Paul Beatty and Eugene Resnick for leading these rides. As the weather becomes more predictable, we will hopefully add more evening rides.

Paul Beatty led an adventure to the Atlantic Highlands/Sandy Hook area for a great 35-mile ride on the coastline with spectacular views of the ocean. Our

trail rides in the woods are still happening and going strong. A big thanks to Mike Engel for leading those adventures.

Thank you to Colette Walker for our longest ride of the season so far, a 46 miler on which some of our members enjoyed pork roll, egg, and cheese on a bagel! A very big thank you to our newest leader, Kristin Fesko for leading her first ride! Lastly, thank you to all our other leaders for stepping up to fill our calendar.

Monthly DIY Tip:

We have been using the online waiver for almost a year now and it is working out very nicely. Our bikers do not miss the paper sign in sheet at all! It only takes 30 seconds or less to sign in and it is highly recommended that you sign it immediately after you RSVP for the ride. It is easy to forget to sign it days after you have RSVP'd. Leaders also do not enjoy "waiver shaming" the day before the ride.

As always, thank you and see you on the road and trails.

Neil Kornhauser nkornhauser@gmail.com

TRAIL MAINTENANCE

www.meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey-Hiking/

Message from the Trail Maintenance Chair:

Ro Mason



The OCSJ trail crew continues to clear and blaze our favorite hiking trails and work on two new ones. We assisted Russell Juelg of the Franklin Parker Preserve with trimming the popular Red Trail and we worked on the Mt Misery Trail in Brendan T Bryne SF and we replaced several failing footbridges on the Batona. We also assisted Jason Howell of the PPA with trimming the new 18 mile Tupelhocken Trail in Wharton SF and worked with Jason on a new 3 mile trail in Pemberton along the Rancocas Creek that has yet to be officially named.

On May 4, we took a well-deserved rest day and several of the crew hiked 7 miles into our group campsite in BTB SF where we spent the night enjoying great camaraderie and tasty treats around the campfire. The highlight of No Trail Work Tuesday was Dave Bicking bringing us a delicious pizza at 10 pm after hiking the 7 miles during the day with the crew and leading his Moorestown hike in the evening.

Thanks to the crew for your hard work and dedication and for keeping the trails open for our hiking community to enjoy!

*Ro Mason is our Trail Representative. To volunteer, email
Ro at romason@comcast.net*

HIKING

www.meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey-Hiking/

Message from the Hiking Chair:

Evelyn Minutolo



Good News! We have gained a few new leaders, which means more hikes. If you are on the fence about leading, please consider stepping up. If you have led 6 hikes in a year and want to go on a hike that is full, you can contact the leader and ask to join, it is up to the leader, but there is a good chance you can go on the hike! Good reason to become a leader too!

Ticks are OUT, so please check yourself after hiking. Spray your boots and pants before you go.

I am also excited to hear of more hikers picking up trash as they hike and people becoming aware of the *Leave No Trace* policy which means nothing, not even biodegradable items are to be tossed into the woods. Carry out your apple cores and banana peels. I encourage you to bring a bag on your next hike and pick up some trash.

Reminder: Please be considerate of your fellow hikers and try to cancel at least 24 hours in advance. Sometimes people are signed up for more than one hike at a time, which also causes problems for other hikers.

I truly appreciate all our leaders do for the club; we cannot do it without you! Let us Go Hiking!

Evelyn SunsetWaterfall@aol.com

For more information on the 7 Principles of Leave No Trace, click the link....

[click here](#)

Backpacking/Camping Trips

www.meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey-Hiking/

Message from the Backpacking/Camping Chair:

Kevin Drevik



Backpacking is back and we have got trips going on. In April/early May, we had two trips: one in Virginia with seven people for 4-days and one in Pennsylvania lead by Tom Kerbaugh. On both trips, the first night had some major storms and winds, but everyone was able to survive.

In May, we have a beginner backpacking trip in Pennsylvania with a lot of folks attending and in June, we have a trip to Vermont for 3-days, 17 miles. These should be fun!

For 3rd quarter, we are looking at a one-week trip in New Hampshire in early August, and in September, we have a 3-day weekend trip to New Hampshire. I have also been asked to schedule another beginner's backpacking trip in September as well, so I'm working on that.

Lots of fun out in the woods. Get outside! Kevin

*If you would like to organize a trip or for backpacking information, contact Kevin at KDrevik@aol.com

KAYAKING

www.meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey-Canoeing/

Message from the Kayaking Chair:

Frank Pearce



Canoe/Kayak season has started on a limited basis. Charlie Keys has stepped forward to get the activity started. We are looking for new leaders. The familiar faces from the past are taking a well-deserved break.

If you are coming on a paddle, do not forget the sunscreen and plenty of fluids. If you need to cancel your RSVP, please do it as early as possible to give someone else the opportunity to come.

You will notice limits on trip size, there are many reasons for this such as safety and limits on parking. Remember that shuttles are not considered part of the activity due to insurance issues. Participation is an individual choice, however, those that participate should be willing to help with the shuttle and not just take advantage of it.

Do not forget to thank the leader and consider becoming a leader. New leaders are always welcome. Contact me if interested, and we will arrange for the process to become a leader.

See You on the Water, Frank Pearce HORN71@VERIZON.NET

Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Trips

www.meetup.com/Outdoor-Club-of-South-Jersey/

Cross Country Ski Chair: **Vacancy - Volunteer Needed**

Annual Cape May Outing June 18-20 THE CHALFONTE HOTEL

LIMITED TO OCSJ MEMBERS

Contact Jim Bodnar for details and availability. JRBodnar@verizon.net

For more information and a trip application, please use the following link:

<https://ocsj.org/TRIP-DETAILS>

Spotlight on: John Del Vacchio

by Vera Stek



John Del Vacchio is a relatively new member of the Outdoor Club, but when he heard that a membership secretary was needed, he was quick to offer his services for that job. He is also a ride leader.

It was not that long ago that John was barely able to move. Far from being the biking, skiing, scuba diving athlete he had been previously. He was feeling that there was no chance for him to resume that kind of lifestyle. Lucky for him, there was a doctor who thought differently, and after a complicated surgery, John was back on his feet again. Although he cannot do all the physical activity he was used to, he's found that biking is not only rewarding, but also quite comfortable for him.

Here is his story:

Q. Tell us a little about yourself.

JOHN: I was born in Broomall, PA, and I am 61. I am a speech-language pathologist and work at the New Lisbon Developmental Center. I live with my 19-year-old daughter.

Q. When and why did you join the Outdoor Club? What made you step up to fill the need for a new membership chair? Do you have any plans in that regard? How has the pandemic interfered with your activities?

JOHN: My daughter was to go away to college in the fall of 2020, and to prepare for that I bought a hybrid and joined OCSJ in June of 2020. The benefits of belonging are numerous, but for me the strongest allure is the sense of teamwork. I consider each a ride a mission and during and after the ride the sense of joy and accomplishment is awesome. I wanted to become membership secretary because I learned the club has been in existence since 1967 and I felt compelled to help perpetuate it.

I am considered an essential worker at my job, so it has been business as usual. I have led a few rides and I am still in that learning curve. Neil, Andre, Fran, and Paul make it look simply, but there are a lot of moving parts. I encourage others to volunteer to lead rides.

Q. Do you only do bike rides with the club or do you participate in other outings? How long have you been biking? What kind of bike do you ride and what kind of equipment do you recommend for others? What is your most important piece of biking equipment?

JOHN: I have been riding bikes since I was 6 years old. For the last 6 years I rode a Trek shift 4, which is an excellent bike for its purpose; it is heavy with thick tires, it is a comfort bike. I got bored with it and that is why I bought the Trek FX4 Comp, which is a hybrid. I have a Trek Domane SL 6 on order, which is a proper road bike. I used to mountain bike exclusively, but my spine

decompensated, and I had to give it up. I sometimes bike in the woods. I plan to buy a new mountain bike and ride on smoother trails as full suspensions bikes have become more sophisticated.

Q. What is the farthest you've ever biked? Do you do any charity rides? Do you have goals such as a certain miles per week or per year?

JOHN: The furthest I have ridden so far is 46 miles. When I get my new bike, I plan to work up to a 100-mile day. For me, biking is enjoyable, and working is so structured, I do not feel compelled to set mileage goals yet.

Q. What are some important biking safety tips you can pass on?

JOHN: Clean your bike on a regular basis. When you clean it, you will notice items that need to be maintained. Wear a helmet, **DO NOT GET DISTRACTED**. If something does not feel right with your bike, bring it to a mechanic.

Q. What are some of your favorite rides?

JOHN: My favorite rides are any with OCSJ, any ride with smooth roads, minimal traffic, and good weather. We did a gravel trail ride along the river and that was an awesome day.

Q. Do you go on activity-centered vacations?

JOHN: Years ago, I was an avid downhill skier. I used to scuba dive and backpack. I have the motorhome, travel the country and dream, but working full time takes a big chunk of my day.

Q. What are some of your other interests?

JOHN: I enjoy reading, listening to music, playing frisbee and swimming. I am applying to various bike shops to become a part-time mechanic. Anytime I enter a bike shop, I get really fired up.

Q. What is something about yourself that might surprise others to know?

JOHN: I have a cat named Fritz and I absolutely enjoy his company. He is an excellent companion, and he does not speak!

Q. Anything else you would like to say about anything?

JOHN: Before my spine surgery in 2017, I was incapacitated. My spine had decompensated over time and all hope was lost. The surgeon who repaired my spine had to go through a lot of rigorous schooling and demonstrated

competency to operate. I have a lot of respect for doctors and people who are willing to pay the price to help others in need. As a result of having that surgery, my quality of life has improved dramatically. Some activities are off the table, like skiing, but biking is great because it is linear, and I can ride for long stretches with no adverse effects.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

John Kerney - Coordinator

Keep checking Meetup for updates on Social Events. If you have any suggestions for social events, contact John Kerney.

John Kerney crewkern@live.com

OCSJ Marketplace

Sell-Trade-Give

Do you have too much stuff? Want to upgrade and get some cash for your used gear or simply gift it to another outdoor lover? Have you been wanting to try something new, but do not want to commit to purchasing the equipment before you know if you will enjoy it? Well, this is the place to go!

Submit your REQUESTS and OFFERS to: j9padge@gmail.com for publication in the Newsletter and on our Website. Include a description of the item you are requesting or offering, price or terms of loan, and your contact information. All transactions will be conducted privately between the individuals.

Annual Calendar Contest Reminder:

...save your photos!

Many of you are taking and posting amazing photos of OSCJ events. There are some winners out there! Why not save your favorite pic and submit it for our Annual Calendar Contest?

If you think you have a great photo, save it to your phone, camera, or PC, so you can find it when it is time to submit your entries. Photos must be taken between September 2020 through September 2021 to be eligible for the 2021 contest.

Any questions, contact Mike Engel.

ikemengel@hotmail.com

Leaders' Banquet

Our plans for our annual Leaders Appreciation Banquet are currently on hold due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

ANNUAL MILEAGE CLUBS

Some of our members like to keep track of their annual mileage and have formed groups within the club. If you would like more information, please contact them.

The Grand Mileage Club - These hardy folks strive to hike 1000 miles per year. They report their mileage monthly to Jenny Buffington at TotallyBuff@comcast.net

500 & 750 Mileage Club - These folks strive to hike either 500 or 750 miles per year. They report their mileage monthly to Ann Palaitis at ann.m.palaitis@gmail.com.

Bicycling Mileage Club - Bikers report their miles annually to Neil Kornhauser at nkornhauser@gmail.com.

Kayaking Mileage Club - Kayakers report their miles annually to Erika Blank at powerofpink58@verizon.net.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We Need You

Board of Trustees - Interested in joining the OCSJ Board? The OCSJ Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 pm. Currently, our meetings are on ZOOM. To attend the meetings, contact the OCSJ President, Joe Fabian, at President@ocsj.org

Publicity - Are you an influencer? Love social media and publicity? We would like to get the word out and have the OCSJ appear in more places both in print and online. Contact Janine Padgett at j9padge@gmail.com with any ideas or if you would like to help.

Social Committee - Seeking fun-loving people to help plan our social events. If you would like to join our Social Committee, contact John Kerney at crewkern@live.com

Website/Computer - Help Wanted - We are actively seeking someone with website/database/computer experience. Contact the OCSJ President, Joe Fabian at president@ocsj.org

OCSJ MEMBERSHIP

There are several ways you can join or renew your OCSJ membership.

1. Go to **OCSJ.wildapricot.org** or download the Wild Apricot app to your mobile device. Click on the “**Join OCSJ Here**” button and follow the prompts.
2. Mail a check payable to: "OUTDOOR CLUB OF SOUTH JERSEY"

Our mailing address is:

Outdoor Club of South Jersey

PO Box 1681

200 Walt Whitman Ave

Mount Laurel, NJ 08054-9998

Membership Level:

- Family Member - **\$25.00** Subscription period: 1 year (No automatically recurring payments)
- Family Auto Renewal - **\$25.00** Subscription period: 1 year Automatic renewal (recurring payments)
- Single Member - **\$20.00** Subscription period: 1 year (No automatically recurring payments)
- Single Auto Renewal - **\$20.00** Subscription period: 1 year Automatic renewal (recurring payments)

Membership Questions: Please contact OCSJ at membership@ocsj.org

OCSJ PARTICIPATION POLICY

OCSJ is a member organization. Membership funds pay for insurance and other organizational overhead costs.

Prospective members and Guests of OCSJ members may try one regular activity from each of our activity sections without joining. Thereafter, they must join to be eligible to attend future events and activities.

Participants on activities that charge a fee, must be members of OCSJ, except where the trip is a joint trip with another club and the participant is a member of that club. If there is space available, members of OCSJ may bring guests on a day trip charging a fee. Participants on overnight trips that charge a fee must always be an OCSJ member.

***NOTE - PRIORITY ON ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION WILL BE GIVEN TO PAID MEMBERS AT THIS TIME.**

Any comments please contact: Joseph Fabian (president@ocsj.org)

MEETUP

To receive up-to-date club events and activities, join Meetup. It is helpful to include a photo of yourself on your Meetup profile. This is helpful for the leaders to properly identify and welcome you to the activity you are attending. Our activities are listed on the following Meetup sites.

Click Links Below to Join and View

- [* Hiking/Camping/Backpacking Events Link](#)
- [* Biking Cross Country Skiing Events Link](#)
- [* Kayaking Events Link](#)

[Note: You must join each Meetup group separately](#)

If you are planning on attending an event, do not forget to RSVP in Meetup. This is important information for the leader. Of course, if your plans change, please cancel your RSVP. Meetup will automatically send you an email if the activity is cancelled by the leader.

TREKKER

The latest printed Trekker is available quarterly from Board Members and Leaders. The printed Trekker is also available at The Print Shop, White Horse Pike in Stratford, NJ.

Contact Doug Hillebrecht at 856-309-8817

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Follow us on Instagram:

outdoorclubsj

