

# GAZETTE

Newsletter for the American Long Distance Hiking  
Association West  
FALL 2016 ISSUE 3



## 2016 ALDHA-WEST GATHERING

*Join us for our annual celebration and Triple Crown ceremony!*

SEPTEMBER 30–OCTOBER 2, 2016,  
CAMP AUGUSTA, NEVADA CITY, CA

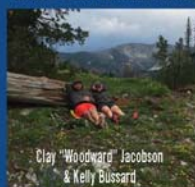
"GOING TO THE MOUNTAINS  
IS GOING HOME."

~ John Muir

### Keynote Topics and Speakers:

Photo credit: Shawn Forry

#### IDAHO CENTENNIAL TRAIL



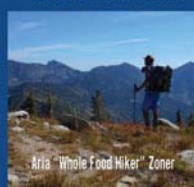
Clay Woodward, Jacobson  
& Kelly Bussard

#### BIGFOOT TRAIL



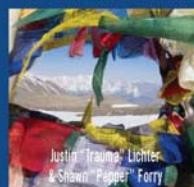
Mary Fireweed Kwart

#### HOT SPRINGS TRAIL



Aria Whole Food Miker Zoner

#### GREAT HIMALAYA TRAIL



Justin Trauma, Lichter,  
& Shawn Forry



ALDHA-West presents the official "Triple Crown of Hiking" to hikers who complete PCT, CDT, and the AT. Applications must be submitted by September 1, 2016.

For event information and to register,  
visit [www.aldhawest.org](http://www.aldhawest.org)



## 2016 ALDHA-West Gathering

### Aloha-West theme at the ALDHA-WEST Gathering!

Ever told a friend you're an ALDHA-WEST member only to have them think you're part of a Hawaiian themed club? We have, too. Hence, this year's Triple Crown Award dinner theme: Aloha-west. We'll have a luau, decorations, music, and tropical beverages. Bring your coconut cups and let us know if you're allergic to pineapple! -*Snorkel*

The 2016 ALDHA-West Gathering will be held at Camp Augusta near Nevada City, California, September 30-October 2, 2016. Featured presentations and activities include:

- Idaho Centennial Trail - Clay "Woodward" Johnson & Kelly Bussard
- The Bigfoot Trail - Mary "Fireweed" Kwart
- Hot Springs Trail - Aria "Whole Food Hiker" Zoner
- Great Himalaya Trail - Justin "Trauma" Lichter & Shawn "Pepper" Forry
- 2016 Triple Crown Awards Ceremony
- Screening of the film: "Trail Magic, The Grandma Gatewood Story"
- Hiker Olympics
- Raffle
- Great food and beer!



Camp Augusta is about 65 miles Northeast of Sacramento, CA

For more information check it out at <http://aldhawest.org/event-2185758>  
Don't miss this great celebration. Space is limited -[register today!](#)

### Special President's Message, from AW President, Whitney "Allgood" La Ruffa

Greetings from the CDT,

It has been a little over three months on trail for me now. As I wrote this I am about to head into the Winds. The trip so far has been everything I had hoped for, and more. Waiting 20 years between big thru-hikes makes them that much better and I am savoring every moment.

As many of you know I am a people person and I have been traveling with a great group along the trail. A few board members even joined me along the way. "Freefall" hiked the entire state of NM with me, and our VP, "Snorkel", came and suffered through the snow of the southern San Juans to keep my morale up.

I am traveling now with two Germans, and I am amazed at the number of international hikers I have met. So far I have been in the company of Germans, Israelis, Koreans, Spaniard and a Belgium. Apparently the CDT is the international hikers wonder.

I look forward to being home in a couple of months spending time with the family and catching up with all of you at the Gathering. Until then have a great hiking season and take care of those feet. Oh and if you want to follow my journey my blog is at [thedagodiaries.com](http://thedagodiaries.com)

Happy trails,

Allgood

Sent from my iPhone.

*This message was received July 21<sup>st</sup>. Since then "Allgood" has now completed over 2300 miles and is currently moving on through Montana.*



Allgood, atop Colorado's Mt Elbert June 27, 2016

## ALDHA-West Non-Profit Status

### *A Plea for the Future of ALDHA-West*

Dear ALDHA-West members,

In the past few years, ALDHA-West has grown in size and relevance, and has inspired hundreds of new long distance hikers to pursue their dreams safely, responsibly, and with the knowledge and love of a great community behind them.

In the process, it has come to the Board's attention that our organization's status as a fraternal organization (a 501 (c) 7) has become a hindrance to the time, energy, and resources our organization has to power our many events throughout the year.

In light of this, our Board Members, especially Naomi Hudetz, former President Phil Hough, and member Richard Hunt have spent months researching the legal and financial changes associated with switching ALDHA-West's tax status. We hope that you will take time to review the hundreds of hours of work they have put into this before our General Meeting vote on Sunday morning during the Gathering.

For those wondering about the pros of switching ALDHA-West's tax status, please read below:

#### ***How it helps ALDHA-West members:***

-your membership dues and donations to ALDHA-West will be tax deductible, just like your donations to trail organizations like the PCTA.

-your donations to ALDHA-West become eligible for corporate matching (so your company can double your donation).

-you can legally write ALDHA-West into your estate planning.



### ***How it helps us grow as an organization:***

- We can become a more serious partner in the management and land use processes that impact trails and hiking.
  - We can better serve our trail organization allies as they meet pressures from increased trail usership.
  - We can accept cash donations from corporate partners instead of relying on gear donations and raffles to fund the bulk of our programs.
  - We become eligible to apply for grants that will allow us to pursue hiking related issues that are not under the mission of other trail organizations (hiker etiquette, safety, leave no trace etc.).
  - Our board members can meet with potential donors on behalf of ALDHA-West at events like the Outdoor Retailer show using official non-profit status.
- How it helps ALDHA-West volunteers:

-our members and board donate hundreds of hours and thousands (yes! Thousands!) of dollars of their \*personal\* income because we believe in the good work that ALDHA-West does. This model is not sustainable. By earning 501c3 status, our volunteers can deduct expenses from their taxes and spend less of their personal money on ALDHA-West business.

I sincerely hope you will take the time to read and understand the changes. We look forward to seeing you at the Gathering!

Snorkel (VP and Interim President of ALDHA-West)

### **[Bylaws for Membership Approval](#)**

## ALDHA-West Officer and Board member Opportunities

This Fall at the Gathering ALDHA-West will elect/reelect 2 officers, Vice President and Treasurer and 3 board positions. The Treasurer position will be vacated by Brian “Tomato” Boshart. This Board has been very busy expanding the outreach of ALDHA-West with Winter Rucks in Idaho, Oregon and Colorado as well as helping sponsor PCT Days at Cascade Locks, OR. Three Board appointees, Web editor, Gazette Editor, and Multimedia Specialist, have worked hard to keep the website up to date and getting the Gazette out in a timely manner. If you have a talent/skill as a social media/event marketing specialist we could really use you as a board member, or appointee.

With all the hard work the Board does throughout the year there is still plenty of time to get out and do what we so passionately love to do – hike.

- Whitney “Allgood” La Ruffa is currently thru-hiking the CDT.
- Liz “Snorkel” Thomas hiked the West Highland Way in Scotland is currently hiking on the Great Divide Trail in Canada with ALDHA-West Board Member at Large Naomi “The Punisher” Hudetz.
- Kate “DropnRoll” Hoch hiked the Heyduke Trail, and then rode her bike 380 miles back to the starting point!
- Tim “Deadhead” Spillane, besides spending days on trail crew in the Psayten Wilderness of the North Cascades, also hiked on the Bigfoot Trail as well as sections of the PNT and PCT.
- Christopher “Freefall” Sanderson spent two months on the CDT as well as some time on the Bigfoot Trail, he also spends much of his free time doing trail work on the PCT.
- Brian “Tomato” Boshart spent time in Jefferson Park and lots of day hikes.
- Joe “Tatu Joe” Kisner is currently thru-hiking the CDT.
- Scot “SoFar” Forbes did a section of the PCT, “just Etna to Seiad and then also farted around on the Bigfoot Trail. . .”
- Charles Baker, Co-Editor of the Gazette, spent time in the Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri, and then headed west to Wyoming for more trail time.

So you see, being involved with ALDHA-West doesn't mean giving up your passion and opportunities to be out on the trail and hike.

## Unfinished Business



*Wrapping up Unfinished Business, L to R: Tyler "Nomad" Goodman, Becca "Rattles" Goodman, Helen "Suds" Beelen, Dana "Double Dip" Loutey, Eric "Ricky Bobby" Kuipers, and Jillian "Radish" Webster.*

"Yo, Suds," "Double Dip" unceremoniously threw her gear into the trunk of my car and clambered into the passenger seat, "how've you been?"

It was 6:20 on a Saturday morning, the cloudless sky bright to my sleep-filled eyes. I rubbed them, yawned, and started the car.

"Hanging in there," I said, unsure how to encapsulate the last ten months into a palatable synopsis.

Ten months give or take a few days, since we'd reached the northern terminus of the PCT. It felt at once impossibly long ago and yet as if we'd only just made a resupply stop in town.

The July sun rose above the trees as we drove, leaving Seattle's city limits, the roads empty and quiet. We curved off the expressway into a suburb north of the city to meet up with a four other thru-hikers from our year. We were headed out to hike a 109-mile stretch of the Pacific Crest Trail from Steven's Pass to Stehekin, through the Glacier Peak

Wilderness. Last summer's Wolverine Fire, encompassing over 62,000 acres at its height, closed off this section of the trail for several weeks, forcing hikers to wait it out or, as we did, take the ferry from Chelan to Stehekin and continue our hike from there.

"Nomad" and "Rattles" greeted us in the parking lot of their apartment building, followed by "Ricky Bobby", recently flown in from Michigan to complete the section, and "Radish" who'd driven up from Bend to join the adventure. After working out a few travel logistics, we piled into a couple cars and headed out, our voices betraying giddy excitement.

The year seemed to melt away as we fell back into the routine of the trail. It was awkward at first. Our packs were weighty, our ankles contorted, unaccustomed feet stumbling over stone and soil. But after an hour it felt like we'd never left. We moved quickly, stopping to bandage up hotspots and threatening blisters, tending to some pains and ignoring others. Complaining equally about the long climbs and the steep descents; the thickets of vines and thorny shrubs overgrowing the trail; the blow downs and loose rock; the mosquitoes and bees and gnats and the thousands of insects for which we didn't have names.

It was the happiest I'd been all summer. Even in those arduous afternoons when I had to remind myself that I signed up for this, I couldn't help grinning like an idiot. Reintegrating into the "normal" world after my thru-hike proved difficult, and being back on the trail among friends to whom I didn't have to explain myself was invigorating.

We rehashed our favorite trail memories as we rounded the majestic Glacier Peak, coveted one another's snacks, and slowed down in the late afternoons to forage the almost-ripe huckleberries and salmonberries and wild blueberries. Our conversation quickly fell into the trail routine: how many miles are we going to hike today? Is

everyone staying regular? How many pastries are you going to get at the bakery in Stehekin? *How* many feet of elevation?! I was thinking Ramen with peanut butter—what are *you* having for dinner?

We spoke about our more recent adventures, but how nothing quite added up to thru-hiking. About how we'd come to relish the nomadic lifestyle, even in its loneliness; pushing our limits, physical and mental every day. Waking up on the shores of reflective alpine lakes and hitching into remote towns for pancakes and beer and cresting difficult passes only to be rewarded with another incredible vista. How special the ordinary things became—a clean load of laundry, a shower, a cold soda, an apple—we learned to savor the small pleasures.

People choose to thru-hike for myriad reasons—the physical challenge, the beauty of nature, the accomplishment in itself, mental and emotional healing from military deployment or addiction or a broken heart. “I’ve never finished anything I’ve started,” another hiker confided as we neared the monument at the Canadian border last fall. “Not school, not work projects, not a relationship. This will be the first *real* thing I feel proud of. The first real thing I’ve finished.”

When I left the southern terminus last spring, I didn’t know why I was hiking. Not at first. With only two short backpacking trips and a handful of hikes under my belt, I was walking into the unknown. But I knew I had to do something. I didn’t like myself and I didn’t know what to do about it.



*Glacier Peak above Milk Creek*

The PCT seemed just crazy enough, just vast enough, just difficult enough to challenge the way I was thinking about myself and other people and to help my question of the fundamental ways I was operating in the world. And it was the hardest thing I’d ever done.

After a month or so, the physical difficulties fall to the wayside. You know you can make that fifteen-mile climb. You know your legs and shoulders and hips and feet can put up with a beating, and even as you test your limits, nothing seems completely out of reach. But the mental and emotional fortitude vital in reaching the northern terminus nearly broke me, and there were weeks when I wanted to quit every day. The effort of fashioning a person and a soul I wanted to live in entwined itself with the twelve-inch swath of dirt beneath my shoes, and the trail became a part of my story, a foundation on which to build a new self.

“Let’s just keep going,” “Radish” called out our final morning, hiking in the last four miles as a group. “Rainy Pass is only another eighteen miles!” We laughed, seriously considered it for half a moment before realizing we didn’t have enough food, work and family routines to return to, and flights to catch.

We clambered onto the bus to Stehekin and then the long ferry down Lake Chelan, our shorts sweat-stained and rank, legs scraped and bruised and sore, tired but happy smiles catching our chapped lips. We parted ways, slinging our packs one more time over weary shoulders. “See y’all up the trail,” I said.

*Helen “Suds” Beelen PCT ‘15, is a first time thru hiker, and currently lives in Seattle, WA.*

“The long distance hiker, a breed set apart,  
From the likes of the usual pack.  
He’ll shoulder his gear, be hittin’ the trail;  
Long gone, long ‘fore he’ll be back.”  
— M.J. “Nimblewill” Eberhart



## Mount Rainier and PCT Days

I made my first summit attempt on Mt Rainier at the beginning of August, but turned around due to weather 1100' short of the summit. With an amazing weather window and availability of my climbing partners, "Stagg" and "12 oz", I figured I had just enough time to squeeze in a climb before PCT Days.

"Stagg" and "12 oz" hiked the PCT the same year as I did (2011). Though we never actually hiked together on the trail, we've been on a bunch of mini adventures together since. The powerful bonds formed through long distance hiking never cease to amaze me.



*Stagg, 12 oz. and DnR on the summit of Mount Rainier, 8/10/2016*

We had a great summit, climbing all night and topping out just before sunrise. I got back home to Portland Thursday night and crashed hard. Having lost an entire night of sleep, I should've been exhausted for PCT Days, but the excitement of spending a weekend with my trail community re-energized me. And wouldn't you know, at PCT Days I ran into a guy I'd seen while climbing Rainier. What a wonderfully small world we play in!

*Kate "Drop n Roll" Hoch is ALDHA-West Secretary and managing editor of the AW web site.*



## PCT Days at Cascade Locks

Just a quick note to thank those of you that helped at the PCT Days event. What a phenomenal time! This was probably the best year by far and with the increase marketing we did between the PCTA and ALDHA-West, we had a fair amount of traffic and interest at our booth. Thanks to DNR for helping out with food and everything



*Activity at the AW booth*

else! And to Freefall, your "Who Wants to be a Thru-Hiker" show during the Friday Night Welcome Party was a huge hit! Thanks to Beaker and Dragonfly for helping with staffing the booth and helping with errands, and for the huge platter of cookies! Virgo, I know you were busy filming the event, but, thanks for always coming by and asking if we needed help, it's appreciated. Thank you to So Far for driving the van with all our gear out to the event early Friday morning. And a special thanks to Rudy "Cascade Hiker" Giecek and Shannon "Snuffy" Cunningham for covering the booth on Saturday.

The weather was great and the amount of thru-hikers took even organizer Jason "Neighbor J" Waicunas and the PCT Days crew by surprise, they ran out of thru-hiker bracelets early Saturday morning. We experienced this too as we ran out of food for the Sunday morning

thru-hike breakfast within 45 minutes and they were still coming! We had planned for 75. Good improvisation by "Sneaky Elf" breaking out the Oreos and pretzels to go with that juice and coffee. Oreos in a bowl and add milk, breakfast, right? Lisa "Helicopter" Seely with Triple Crown Coffee also supplied us with a second 3 gallon coffee decanter. We served over 120 cups of coffee.



PCT Days campers on Thunder Is. and, Cascade Locks, OR

We picked up 15 new or renewing ALDHA-West Memberships. We also had an email sign up sheet that had about 2 pages of names/emails on a legal size note pad.

Allgood - we let some thru-hiker drive your van back to Portland. No one knew who he was but he seemed ok. We told him to drive slow because he doesn't have a drivers license.... hope he made it!

(Just kidding, Daybreaker and DNR made sure and took the van with everything back to your place)

*Ed note; Whitney "Allgood" La Ruffa, ALDHA-West President, is currently in Montana finishing his thru hike of the CDT. See President's Message*

*As many as **90 percent** of wildland fires in the United States are caused by humans. Some human-caused fires result from campfires left unattended, the burning of debris, negligently discarded cigarettes and intentional acts of arson. The remaining 10 percent are started by lightning or lava. (<https://www.nps.gov/fire/wildland-fire/learning-center/fire-in-depth/wildfire-causes.cfm>)*

## Drought Alternative to Cooking with a Stove

We are all aware of the dry conditions along many of our western trails. Fire danger is extreme in most National Forests, campfires are virtually taboo and alcohol stoves banned in some of the National Forests. So what alternative is there for food prep?

Consider no stove prep. Using a leak proof container, I use Snap Ware®, you can make many of the meals you already like. Instant potatoes, ramen, and stove top dressings are no brainer, just dump into the container add water and what ever you usually do, then wait. Any pre-cooked and dried food as well as all freeze dried meals reconstitute well.

Generally it takes almost n time for stuffing or instant potatoes. Give ramen about 10 minutes to get saturated and freeze dried meals take from 10 – 20 minutes. I find it easy to start my next meal right after finishing one. Then the meal is ready whenever I am. Longer soaking doesn't make the food any soggy if you don't over saturate, I've had meals soak overnight and still be fine.

My 1l Snap Ware® container weighs just over 145 grams, about 20 grams less than my same sized titanium cook pot. Plus, I don't have fuel to carry.

I know no cook meals aren't for everyone, but consider it. On our 1013 PCT hike I was converted due to the high fire danger. I did 2100 miles on the CDT in 2014 and last year finished the AT without a stove. But, I have to admit, I never turned down hot water when offered.

*Bob "Beaker" Turner is co-editor of the Gazette and the ALDHAWest web site.*





## Business Donors

For your convenience, in the online copy of the Gazette, each logo is a link to the sponsor.  
Remember, **Luna Sandals** is giving ALDHA-West members a 10% on new sandal purchase!  
Use ALDHA10 code.



GossamerGear  
take less. do more.



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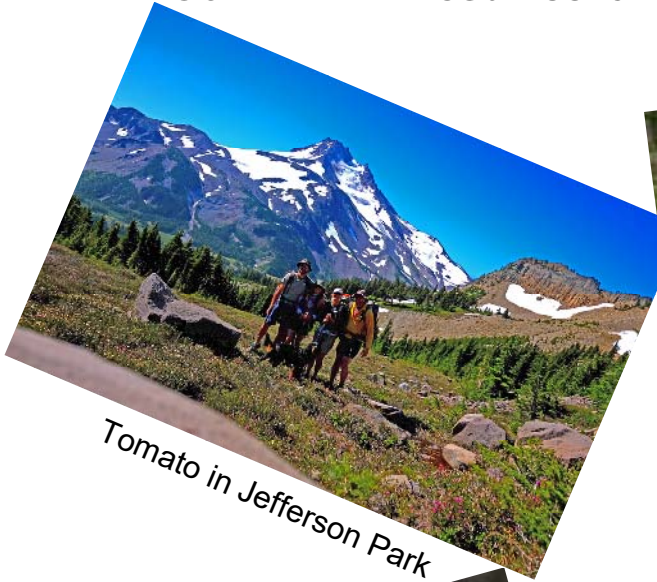
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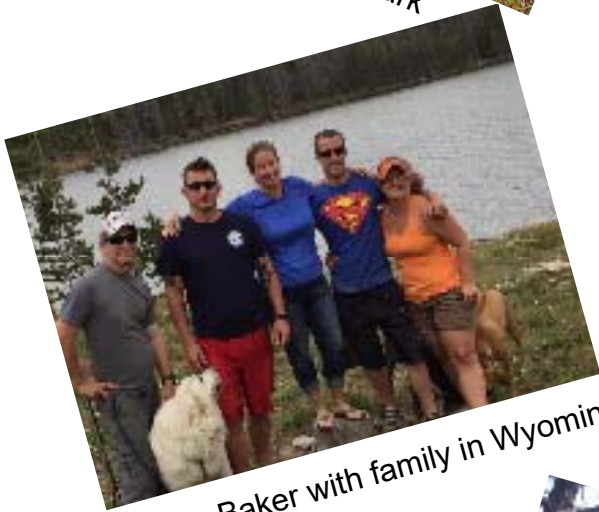
Our ALDHAWest Board hard at work this summer



Tomato in Jefferson Park



Allgood taking the easy way on the CDT



Charles Baker with family in Wyoming



Drop n Roll on the Heyduke



Freefall on the CDT

ALDHAWest is always looking for material for the Gazette. If you have a story to tell, knowledge to share or recipe you like just send them to us through [Contact](#) on our web page