

# TRAILS

AUGUST 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PERMIAN BASIN OUTING CLUB

## TRIP REPORT—CLOUDCROFT, NEW MEXICO

### Special points of interest:

- *Cloudcroft trip....when we say it was a "cool trip"....we mean it*
- *September trip to the Davis Mountains scheduled*
- *Movie Night?*

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What can I say.....weeks of 100+ degree temperature in Texas...then 9,000 feet of mountains in New Mexico!

Our friend Chris Cherry and I left for Cloudcroft Friday morning in the gathering heat of West Texas and prepared to start climbing some 6,000 feet into the high mountains of New Mexico. Chris had just returned home from a year in Afghanistan and had plenty of stories to tell while we traveled. Chris had been part of an American company who was tasked to help train the Afghan police who were primarily fighting the Taliban. From everything Chris was telling me, it ain't pretty over there! Anyway, Chris and I managed to get to Cloudcroft

around mid-afternoon and as soon as we got out of his truck we breathed in COOL AIR! Several of our group were already in camp. Brandon Hawkins had arrived much earlier and had his high tech hammock already strung between two willing pine trees. He had already paid his camping fees and completed a nice nature trail hike. He had photographed a ferret on the trail and was asking everyone what we thought it was. He eventually took the picture to one of the Ranger Stations and told them that he had photographed a ferret to which they replied "no you didn't." After he showed them the picture they replied, "yes you did!" We're still trying to figure out what kind



Uhhh....this isn't it...

of ferret it is but it definitely is a ferret. Speaking as a former National Park Ranger, we don't know everything....almost....but not quite. My little adventure started with innocently asking the volunteer campground host, the one riding around in her little golf cart collecting fees, if I could set my tent up down in the canyon and

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### A new idea....

In the spirit of free thinking, we, as a group in our Cloudcroft camp, thought of an idea. A year or so ago we had a viewing of an early Kevin Costner movie, *Fandango*, as part of an upcoming trip to the Davis Mountains. The trip didn't come off as planned but we

had a great time "at the movies." At Cloudcroft we considered a plan to pick a Saturday once in a while to have more movies at Sibley...such classics as *Blazing Saddles*, *Dumb and Dumber*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Airplane*, etc. You know, high brow stuff. We could repeat

bringing refreshments, pop popcorn, etc. We had a ball the last time that we did this...and a large crowd too. It doesn't have anything to do with the outdoors but since when did that stop our group from getting together.

What do you think? Let me know.

## CLOUDCROFT TRIP REPORT (CONT....)

away from the rest of the camp..(a habit of mine....eccentricity....). She looked dumbfounded and said that no one had ever asked her that. (A side note...she was a very sweet lady...if not uninformed). After thinking about it for a moment she said with conviction, “no you can’t do that.” I was a bit dismayed but decided: “the rules are the rules.” After some internal debate and talking to my fellow club members....and seeing that the canyon *was* National Forest and open to anyone....I set up my tent down in the canyon anyway....more on that later....

On Friday night, after everyone had arrived (about 16 people in all) we

**“AT SOME POINT,  
HANGING IN  
THERE JUST  
MAKES YOU LOOK  
LIKE AN EVEN  
BIGGER LOSER.”**

built a wonderful campfire and sat around until all hours (to be **precise**, 10:30 p.m. ....we were told under no uncertain terms that our fire had to be dead out and doused by 10:30 p.m.!) We had a great time and Sammy was “in full bloom”....you had to be there to understand.... We were good little boys and girls and had our fire out by the appointed time and were whispering by this point. The rules were reinforced by a quiet drive-by of a golf cart, forces wielding spotlights, etc. We slinked back to our tents under the watchful eye of our camp guards... ..camp hosts. I felt like we were re-living a scene in *The Great Escape*. I began to realize that I was going to have to get down to my tent **without** the use of a flashlight! If you’ve ever walked through the woods *with* a flashlight....you see my predicament. I didn’t want to get the whole troop in trouble just because I wanted my way so....I took very small steps...in the dark...sans flashlight....down a very steep canyon....and finally made it to my tent. A four minute hike took about 30 minutes....but I won!...(I sneaked back up the next morning with my tent in tow....I decided that I had made my point but didn’t want to go through the dreaded dark walk on Saturday night). On Saturday morning

Sammy, Valarie, and Brandon loaded up to try their hand at a nearby trout lake, several others went for a nature walk, and Chris and I decided to take his truck down the very scenic La Luz backcountry road that goes all the way down to Alamogordo. To make a long story short, we had a blowout in Bailey Canyon long before we ever got to the La Luz trail and felt it wasn’t a good idea to continue down a rocky road with no spare. Chris and I opted to go to Alamogordo by the paved route to have lunch and look for a tire (which we were unable to find). Later, Chris dropped me off back at camp where I snoozed under a pine tree (back in my secret canyon) and watched hummingbirds fight (I had no idea they were so aggressive). The group slowly came back together at our camp to report their day’s adventures. We had an even rowdier campfire that night but, obediently, had our campfire dead out by 10:30. Several of us....very quietly....stayed up a little after our 10:30 curfew and carried on our conversations....we felt like a bunch of kids getting away with something...

Overall, it was a great weekend! I’m expecting the FBI to visit me at any moment for my misdeeds though....

## September Meeting

The next PBOC club meeting will be at our usual watering hole, Casa Lopez, located at 4415 W. Illinois, in Midland, at 6 p.m., on Tuesday, September 22nd...(the first full day of Fall!). We will be discussing the September 25th trip to the Buffalo Trail Boy Scout Ranch. We already have over 30 members signed up for this trip! I will have maps to the camp and will discuss a few items important

to all of us that are camping....more on this later.... As always, this is a great time to bring prospective new members or just to do a little visiting with other members....whether or not you plan to attend this month’s trip. We don’t bite!.....well.....Sammy sometimes has his moments.....



## September 25th Trip to Buffalo Trail Scout Ranch

As I mentioned earlier, the September 25th trip to the Scout Ranch will be well attended. We've got families, kids, old codgers (myself included), and other eccentrics. The ranch is in a beautiful canyon complete with a running stream..... with trout...large trees, a waterfall, a large pinnacle called "The Needle", and photographic opportunities galore. A couple of weeks ago, we were the only group scheduled to be in the camp. I stopped in at the ranch last month and talked to "Ranger Dan" and he said

to "make ourselves at home." For any of you that have never been to the camp, you're in for a great surprise. The entry looks like desert but once you're in the canyon, you're in a whole new world. We'll be car camping on the lower road near some rest rooms (a great relief to some) and day hiking out of camp. We've already paid the \$50 reservation fee (I don't know if we get that back or not) and the remaining fee for the weekend is just \$4 per person...one of the cheaper trips of the year! The camp is only a couple of

hours out of Midland/Odessa so gas won't be as much of a problem either. If you haven't signed up for this trip and you want to go, let me know as soon as possible. I've got to complete a roster with everyone's name to hand into the Scout office. Even if we have to recoup the \$50 we're still talking only about \$5.50/person for the entire weekend!



Me "slinking" back into camp on Saturday a.m. —photo by Roger Artley



(Write your own caption here....)

Kay and Jan doing.....something—photo by Roger

**"THAT WHICH  
DOES NOT KILL  
ME....POSTPONES  
THE  
INEVITABLE."**



Short panorama of an area Chris and I found on the way home—photo by Richard (gonna go back and explore it!)

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Brandon in his famous do...due...dew...doo rag.....bandana...

-photo by Richard

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Hawk...headed for the Bitterroot....(line from Jeremiah Johnson) - photo by Roger Artley



A small portion of our group—photo by Richard



Aggressive little dickens didn't even like me sitting under it's dish! I never knew they were so mean spirited! - photo by Richard