

35th HikaNation Reunion Survey – Stan Adamson

Q: Why did you sign up for hike and how old were you?

Clare and I signed up as Kansas State Coordinators because we believed in the concept of a transcontinental hiking trail and wanted to aid as we could, but we could not afford to take time off for the whole hike. I was 32 years old.

Q: What is your favorite experience from the hike?

Both negotiating for thirty camp sites along the hike route, and meeting these intrepid hikers was a real treat. Lyle Bialk ran out of resources just as the hike arrived in central Kansas. When he heard there was no unemployment in Halstead, where we were living at the time, he "*carpe diemed*" by getting a job at the hospital, and he lived in our basement while earning enough to rejoin the hike. It was great reconnecting with him at the 35th Reunion.

Q: Did you have an “ah-ha moment” on the hike and what was it?

I think it was meeting people so dedicated to the principle of a transcontinental trail that they would give a year of their lives to the effort. That was truly inspiring. Our sons, particularly Nathan, were inspired too!

Q: What was your favorite state and why?

Kansas, for obvious reasons. While some think the State lacks scenery, we've been told we made up for that with hospitality.

Q: What was your least favorite part of the hike?

For us, it was the tedium of seeking camp sites, though people were surprisingly welcoming. This was a novel event that interrupted the ordinary in people's relatively predictable lives.

Q: How did the hike change you?

Again, it made the difficult or impossible seem possible.

Q: What do you tell people about your achievement now?

For years I had the photo taken at the Mississippi River on the wall of my office, and I would proudly tell folks how we helped with this amazing hike.

Q: What would you have changed about the hike?

I'd work for more publicity, and get in touch with my congressional delegation to seek recognition for the hikers.

Q: Did you pursue other hiking/backpacking afterwards?

We taught our four sons to hike and backpack in Rocky Mountain National Park, and in 1987, moved to Colorado, a place we had grown to love.

- Q: What did you learn about yourself that you are willing to share?
I learned I could become a good persuader, salesman, booster.
- Q: Did it make you a stronger person?
Absolutely!
- Q: Are you proud of your accomplishment?
Our accomplishment pales compared to those who did the entire hike, but we enjoyed the occasions when we joined the hikers, and have great memories.
- Q: What was the dumbest thing you did on the hike?
Annoying an old friend by pushing him a bit beyond the limit of his welcome.
- Q: What was your most vivid memory from the hike? Can't discuss.
The special field trip we organized to the Kansas Health Museum in Halstead. We still have the group photo of those who came on that trip on our wall.
- Q: What was your funniest moment on hike?
Hiking to "Nowata" Oklahoma (called that because when the settlers came to that place, there was "No water."
- Q: What was your most embarrassing moment on the hike?
Can't recall.
- Q: What was your nickname on the hike?
Don't think I had one, because we only hiked briefly, and put our efforts into guiding and arranging camp sites across Kansas.
- Q: Anything else you want to add?
We considered this one of the high points of our lives, and Clare and I still talk about it, and tell others about it, and the role we were privileged to play. Thanks, HikaNation!