

THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY

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Please Reply To: 18600 SW 157th Avenue, Miami, FL 33187

August, 1981

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Nancy N. Miller

TO : HikaNation Hikers

Some Post-HikaNation News:

When Monty returned to Utah this summer, he found the hiking staff made by Gomer in a pile of debris at a mountain lodge. Isn't that a fateful find!

Butch, Rex and Mary stopped for a four-day visit here in Miami and stayed with the Kerns.

John Stout is giving programs on HikaNation in Seattle this summer.

Ed Deschene is hiking the summer hikes with Monty. Tim Geoghegan is with them now, and John Mills just joined them to research a new section of trail and continue his work on a Colorado-area guidebook.

Any material you have for the Hike Historian, Bill Knox, should be sent to him at: 1001 North Evans, Bloomington, IL 61701.

If you have not written your thank-you's, please get them in the mail right away. Please add the following companies to your list of manufacturers to be thanked: Mead Corporation-Container Division, PO Box 306, Ft. Smith, AR 72902-Mr. James Murray. (They supplied the cardboard storage boxes.) Nike, BRS, Inc, 156 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833. Mr. Trip Allen.

We still have HikaNation belt buckles. Many of you have not subscribed to the HikaNation Quarterly, and this will be your vehicle for getting news of all the hikers as well as keeping up with plans for HikaNation '83. To subscribe please send \$4 to the above Miami address. If you wish to receive a handsome brass belt buckle, send \$20.

But these items are not the main reason for my writing. There's a burden I want to share with you, and, in fact, believe that it's something you would want to know about.

As late as last winter, Jim thought that there was a reasonably good chance of getting an additional \$10,000 in support money for the hike. It was desperately needed to finish the hike with the same kind of organizational quality that had been typical from the beginning. By the end of February, it was apparent the money would not be forthcoming, and we had to slice the budget terribly to reach what we hoped would be a break-even point when the hike was over. In spite of this pressure, Jim did not want the arrival celebration to be any less than fitting; he wanted it to be a proper recognition for all of you. During his hikes with you he learned that you too were expecting the same kind of appropriate event. He was caught between not wanting to let you down and the stark facts of the budget. Immediately after the arrival celebration, the small deficit we could see coming we thought could be handled through the sale of belt buckles. But back in Miami several weeks after the hike, we began to see bills coming in that we hadn't expected. The final fuel bills were unanticipated. There was a deficit in the arrival celebration costs (we didn't have a registration fee as we did in San Francisco). When the hikers announced they wanted to walk all the way to the Atlantic, we organized logistical and planning support at the last minute in two states, but these folks wanted to be reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses, something we had not anticipated since no other state route planners had requested reimbursement. And these expenses were quite large. (Delaware - \$550, Maryland - \$100). We had a large order of patches to pay for, rockers, belt buckles, printing, phone bills, etc. But now the event was over, and there was no one to turn to for help. The bills have stopped at Jim Kern's desk. And the total to date is right around \$3,000. That might be hard for

some of you to believe, but bear in mind that it took \$60,000 to provide support services for the hikers as they crossed the country, and that doesn't count all the time (and personal expense) contributed by the state representatives, Mike McReynolds, Tom Floyd and Jim Kern, all of whom contributed their time. And of course Monty's efforts were largely a labor of love.

Really, no one but I know just how much Jim Kern put into making this hike possible for each of you, and it would hurt me to see him have to come up with this \$3,000 deficit out of his own pocket. I am biased since I work for him, but it seems his recognitions along the way were little enough, although he certainly never complained about it.

I would like to propose a simple solution. Could 60 hikers each send me \$50? This letter is going to sixty hikers in the hope that each of you can do this. I know that for many of you such a request represents a very large sum, particularly coming unexpectedly like this. But I am sure that each of you can agree with me that the request isn't unreasonable. And I just can't think of a more equitable way to settle the matter. It seems the right thing to do. By now you have each settled into differing lifestyles and the immediacy of the hike will slowly recede from your mind. But your memory of this once-in-a-lifetime experience will always be with you. I hope this appeal won't reach you too late to have it's impact.

We are already planning HikaNation '83. Monty has volunteered to make it happen one more time. But a lot of other things will have to happen too. A single sponsor will have to be found to put up \$90,000 (or two or three sponsors could divide this sum), and the hikers will have to put up a registration fee of \$1,000 each. (We estimated that it cost AHS about \$1200 to keep each through-hiker on the trail.) General Foods is considering the matter right now, and if they can't reach for it, Carl Byoir will look for an alternate. These are the kinds of sums required to do the job right and avoid the kind of financial trauma Jim had to deal with from the beginning. So, when you consider the \$30 fee you paid, I hope my request doesn't appear unreasonable to you. Please send your check to me at my home address: 6747 SW 57th Terrace, Miami, FL 33143, made payable to the American Hiking Society. After I have given everyone time to respond, I will write and let you know the result. If you'd like to send along some news of you for your fellow hikers, I'll spread that too.

May our trails meet again. It's been a pleasure for me to work with all of you.

Nancy