

Our Ice Age Trail Journey

During the covid pandemic, we were anxious to get outside and do something. Always enjoying hiking various trails, especially in the Kettle Moraine, we decided to start on the Ice Age Trail. We knew we would do this as day hikers, and after the first few hikes, we estimated it would take us five years to complete.

Our first hike was on September 15, 2020. Since we live in Milton, Wisconsin, and because the trail is nearby, we started with Rock County segments and connecting routes. Being familiar with the Southern Kettle Moraine area, we completed this area next. The very first hikes saw us hiking in and then coming back out to our car. We quickly realized this would take forever. Rookie mistake! So, we turned to two cars and hiked from one to the other. This worked for segments and CRs near home.

Our interest in the Ice Age Trail was nurtured by following Emily Ford and Huck as they reported on their though hike IAT journey. We began following the Thousand Mile Wanabees and Ice Age Trail Alliance Facebook pages. We talked with other hikers we met. All this helped as we branched out farther from home. We started using shuttlers. These trail angels are wonderful people. Then, on one hike in Waukesha County we ran into another hiker who was hiking alone. After talking with her, we soon joined up and completed several segments and CRs as a team. We called ourselves the Three Trail Tortugas. We truly enjoyed our hiking team and remain friends.

Along the way, we joined some chapter events. Notable were Buzz Meyer's Mondeau hike in October 2022 as well Vickie Christianson's Chippewa River hike in the same month. Marathon County's Plover River hike in June 2023 and a group event at Table Bluff in April 2022.

In Door County, we used bikes and experienced biking to a starting point and hiking back to our car. This worked well on the Ahnapee Trail. We used VRBOs and motels when necessary.

The trail is so impressive. The volunteers who maintain the trails, mobile skills crew who do so much, and the overall cleanliness of the IAT is outstanding. We have too many favorite segments to mention here, but each area of the state has those segments we would like to hike again.

We completed our 400th mile in October 2022 and really took off in 2023. On November 15th we finished at the Western Terminus at 1158 miles for us. We couldn't be happier. I finished at age 84 and my wife at 62. We feel good about that accomplishment! Our five year plan finished in three years and two months to the day.

Carol & Don Tyriver