

# Chapter Communications Training:

## Event Calendar & Chapter Webpages



# Let's work together!

- The Events Calendar is a snapshot of everything going on under the Ice Age Trail Alliance umbrella!
- Chapter webpages help us direct Trail enthusiasts to YOU and are one of the first impressions people have of your chapter.

# Topics Covered in this Training

- The WHY and HOW of creating “social-media ready” events.
- The WHY and HOW of sprucing up your chapter’s webpage.
- The supporting document with step-by-step instructions related to the information on the following slides is titled: *Managing Chapter Information on the IATA Website*

# Social-Media Ready Events

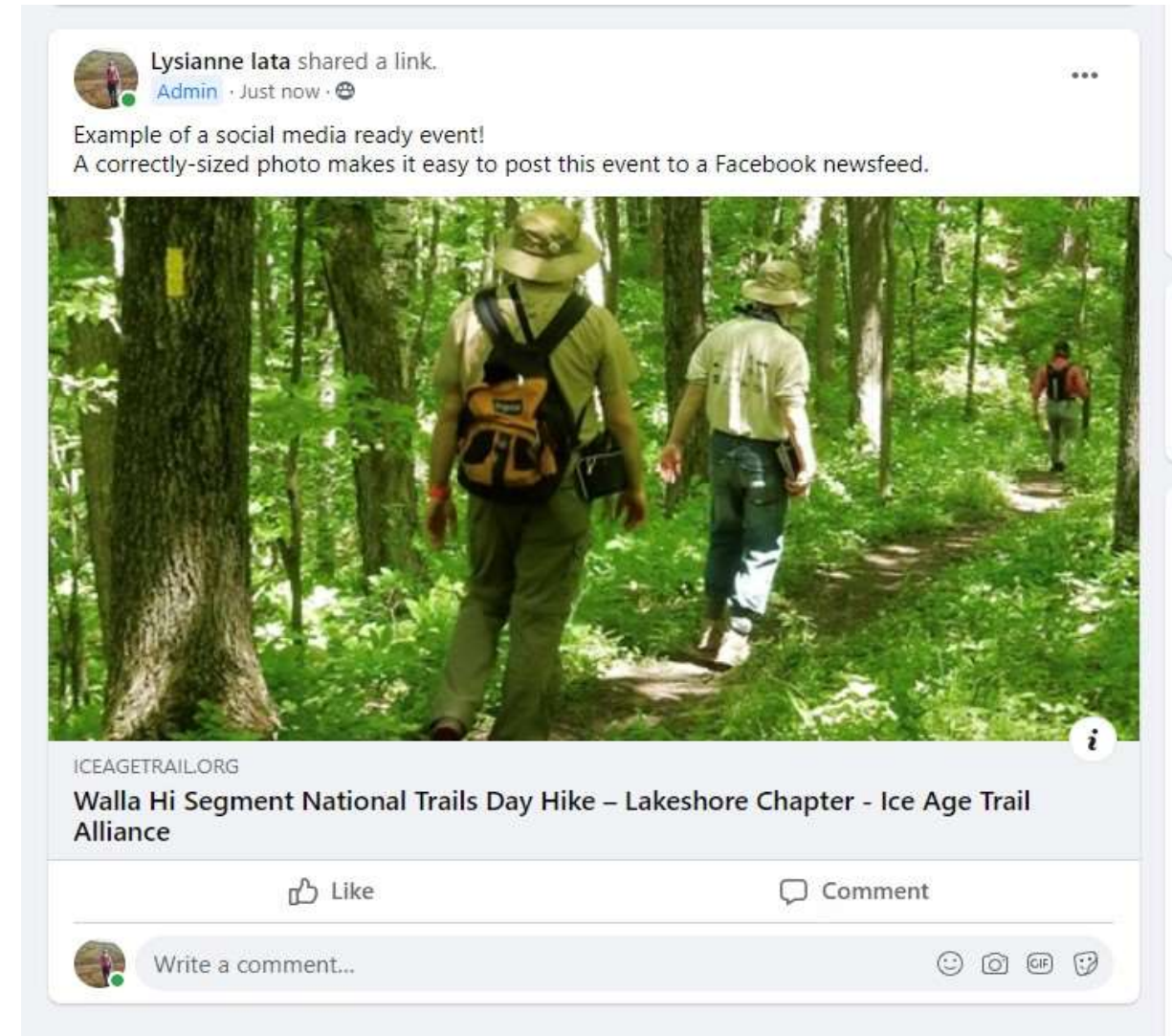


# Why Make Events Social Media Ready?

- Take advantage of a quick and easy way to promote chapter events to a larger audience.
  - The IATA's 64,000 social media followers are eager to be in the know.
  - Important event details are all in one place for easy sharing across many platforms and many people.
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# Social Media Ready Events Are:

- Eye-catching – large photos are appealing.
- Clickable – and takes people directly to the complete information.
- Shareable (this example was posted into a private group, so the share option was turned off).



# Social Media Ready Events Include:

- Event title
- Event description
  - Hike description, event particulars, location details
- Date and time
- Venue or meeting place
- Organizer/contact person name, phone number and email address
- Any related files, such as registration forms, maps, etc.

The screenshot shows a website interface with a blue header containing the navigation links "Explore the Trail" and "Our Work". Below the header is a grid of event listings. The central listing is for "TRAILTESSA: BE BRIGHT (ON YOUR OWN) SUMMER SOLSTICE HIKE", dated "June 19 - June 20". It features a photograph of three hikers on a trail. The text below the photo reads: "Be BRIGHT: Saturday, June 19 and Sunday, June 20, 2021 Trailtessa Retreats: super fun events designed by women for women. Re-discover YOU with plenty of permission to be. BE YOU: Bold. Audacious. Strong. Adventurous. You get to choose to be any way you want to BE. Our Trailtessa events are open to women and girls of ALL [...]". To the left of the main listing, there are partial titles for other events: "2021 Dane", "2021 Dane", "2021 Dane", and "2021 D...". To the right, there are partial titles: "Walwo...", "Walwo...", "Walwo...", and "Walwo...".

# Event title:

Recommended: Event Title followed by full chapter name

## • Examples:

- Annual Meeting – Lodi Valley Chapter
- Trail Improvement – Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter
- Land Stewardship – Dane County Chapter
- Snowshoe Hike – Superior Lobe Chapter

### SUMMER SOLSTICE HIKE – INDIANHEAD CHAPTER

June 19 @ 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

*INDI, Trade River Trailhead, 2933-2925 150th St  
Frederic, WI 54837 United States + Google Map*

We will be heading out on the southern portion of the Gandy Dancer State Trail/Ice Age National Scenic Trail for an out-and-back morning hike of approximately 7- 7.5 miles total. Surfaced in 1995 with crushed limestone, this multi-use trail provides a smooth, hard surface for bicyclists and hikers. Built on a former railroad corridor, the [...]

[Find out more »](#)

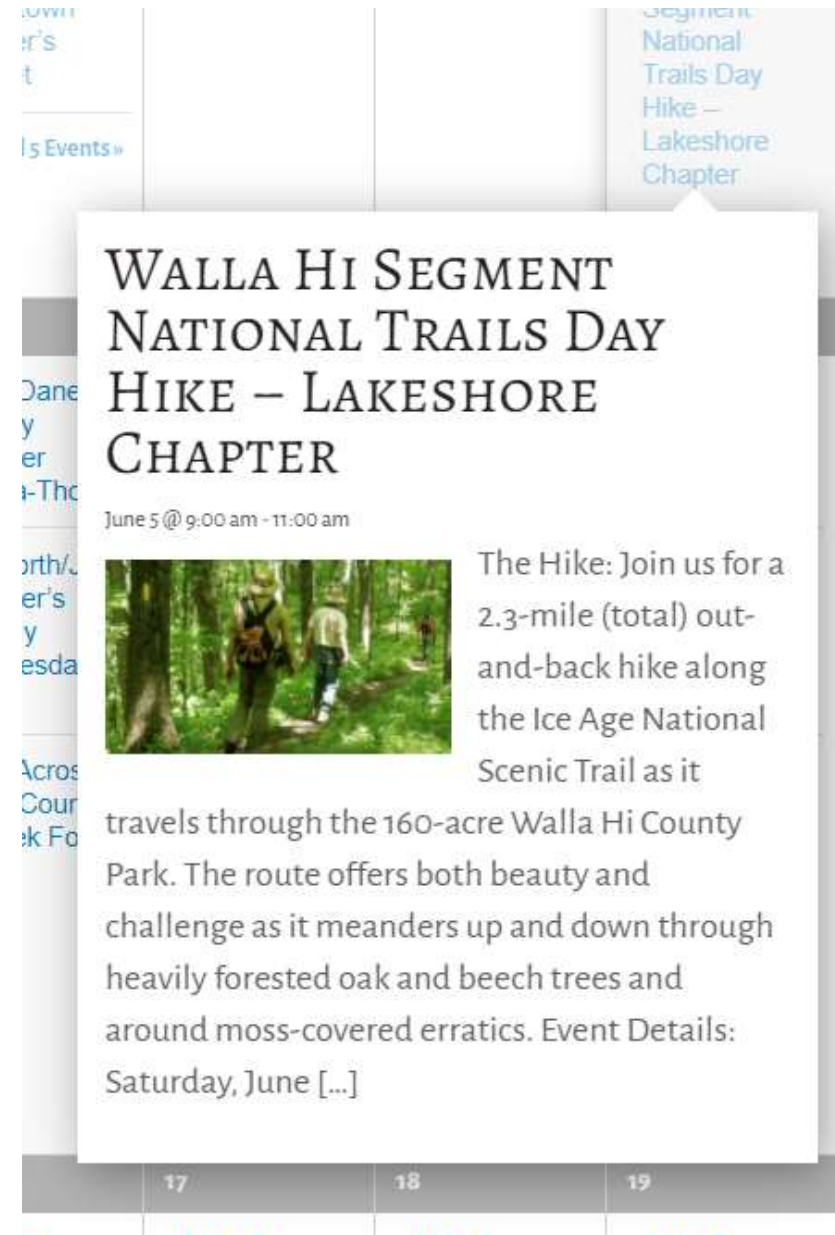




# Hike description:

- A hike (or event) description that helps newbie hikers know what to expect.
  - Segment highlights
  - Distance
  - Terrain (rocks, hills, woods, or prairie)

**TIP:** Use the **segment summary** in the Guidebook to create hike description.



The screenshot shows a webpage for a hike event. At the top right, there is a navigation menu with the following items: "National Trails Day Hike - Lakeshore Chapter". Below the menu, the event title is displayed in a large, bold, serif font: "WALLA HI SEGMENT NATIONAL TRAILS DAY HIKE - LAKESHORE CHAPTER". Underneath the title, the date and time are listed: "June 5 @ 9:00 am - 11:00 am". To the left of the text is a photograph of two hikers walking on a dirt path through a dense forest with tall trees and green foliage. To the right of the photo, the text reads: "The Hike: Join us for a 2.3-mile (total) out-and-back hike along the Ice Age National Scenic Trail as it travels through the 160-acre Walla Hi County Park. The route offers both beauty and challenge as it meanders up and down through heavily forested oak and beech trees and around moss-covered erratics. Event Details: Saturday, June [...]"

# Event description headings

- Organize information under quick, easy-to-read headings:

## THE HIKE:

Join us for a 2.3-mile (total) out-and-back hike along the Ice Age National Scenic Trail as it travels through the 160-acre Walla Hi County Park. The route offers both beauty and challenge as it meanders up and down through heavily forested oak and beech trees and around moss-covered erratics.

## EVENT DETAILS:

Saturday, June 5, 2021, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. We expect the hike to take about 1.5 hours. Bring water and mosquito repellent. Light-weight hiking pants and long-sleeved shirt (layering) are recommended.

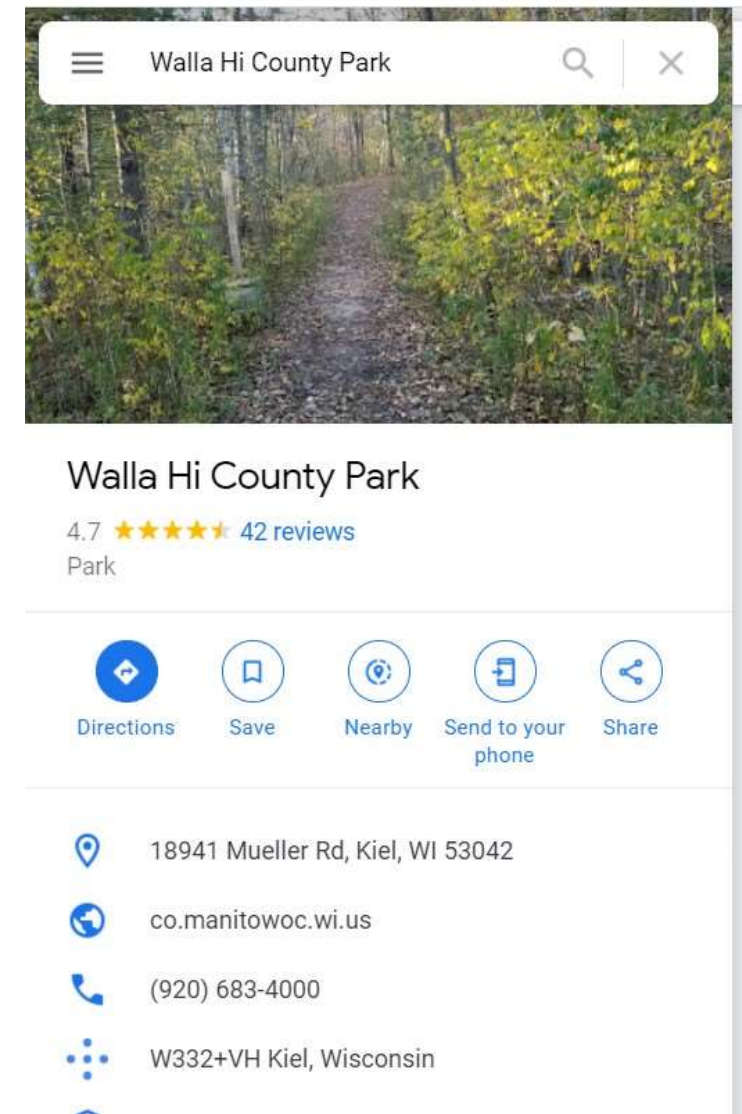
## LOCATION DETAILS:

Walla Hi County Park. Meet in the lower parking lot by the bridge.



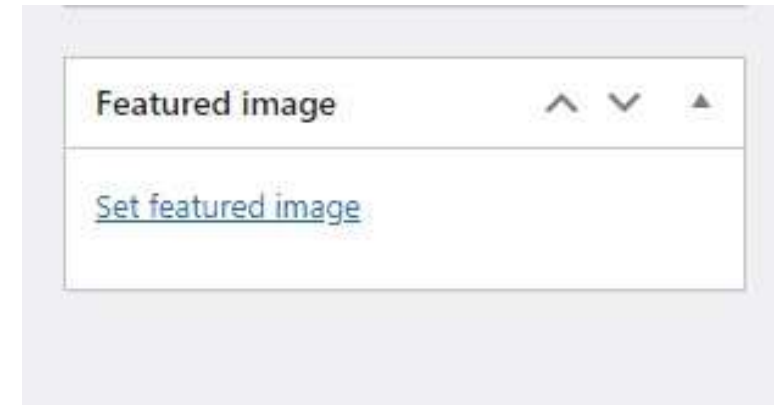
# Pro tips:

- Include a Google link with driving directions.
- Include a PDF of related Atlas map.
- Include a link to GPS information from the interactive hiker resource map.



# Featured image:

- Uploading a photo into the “Featured image” panel, is what makes an event eye-catching and appealing.
- Size the photo to a 16:9 ratio and 1200 X 626 pixel count (length by width).



# Examples: Need Featured Image

Lysianne lata shared a link.  
Admin · Just now · 🌐

Example of an event that is not social media ready.

ICEAGETRAIL.ORG  
**Lake - Hike at Walla-Hi - Ice Age Trail Alliance**  
Meet in the lower parking lot by the bridge. The hike is 2.3 miles and will take about 1.5 hours. Dave Gramling will lead the hike. His e-mail address is djgramling@gmail.com

Like Comment

Write a comment...

Lysianne lata shared a link.  
Admin · Just now · 🌐

A nicely created calendar entry, however, image was not loaded as a "Featured image".

ICEAGETRAIL.ORG  
**Summer Solstice Hike - Indianhead Chapter - Ice Age Trail Alliance**  
We will be heading out on the southern portion of the Gandy Dancer State Trail/Ice Age National Scenic Trail for an out-and-back morning hike of approximately 7- 7.5 miles total. Surfaced in 1995 with crushed limestone, this multi-use trail provides a smooth, hard surface for bicyclists and hikers.....

Like Comment

Write a comment...




# Example: Featured image correctly applied

- Easy for the Alliance to share into the Ice Age Trail Facebook Page & Group, Thousand Miler Wannabes, into Facebook and Instagram stories, and Twitter.
- Easy for the Alliance to link to when sharing calendar events in eNews.

Lysianne lata shared a link.  
Admin · Just now · 🌐

Example of a social media ready event!  
A correctly-sized photo makes it easy to post this event to a Facebook newsfeed.




ICEAGETRAIL.ORG  
Walla Hi Segment National Trails Day Hike – Lakeshore Chapter - Ice Age Trail Alliance

Like Comment

Write a comment...

# Pro tips:

- Do NOT re-create the wheel!
  - Once you have a good-looking, well-formatted event, keep it – you don't need to re-do it each year.
  - If you have an annual event, simply **update** the day, time, year, and hike leader.
  - If you have regular events at a work site, create a template for the event and then **duplicate** it, updating the day, time, and event leader.
  - Delete (“trash”) old events. There is no need to keep events longer than a year. (Some chapters have events dating back to 2015.)
  - Ask the Communications Manager to properly size the photo you want to use for your event's featured image.
- 

# Standard headings for trail improvement events:

**Project Description:** Provide a short description of the work you'll be doing.

## Example:

We're weeding the prairie in the Anderson Preserve along the Cross Plains Segment. Help us remove invasive yellow clover and wild parsnip. Some of this work is done pulling weeds by hand, and while some will involve using brush cutters.

**What to Bring:** Provide a short list of clothing and equipment

## Example (highly specific):

- Pulling weeds by hand: you should wear long pants, a long-sleeve shirt, gloves, and sturdy boots (you don't want wild parsnip to touch bare skin).
- Using chapter's brush cutters: you **MUST** RSVP (so we have the equipment) and you need long pants, a long-sleeve shirt, gloves, sturdy boots, and hearing protection.

## Example (general):

- Bring work gloves, sturdy boots, long-sleeve shirt and pants, and whatever water and food you want for the day.





**Schedule:** Note start and end times for your event.

If it is a full day event (i.e. 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) you may want to let attendees know that they can come for a few hours.

**Registration or RSVP request:** Who to call or email.

**Location Details:** Google map link, Atlas map PDF, etc.

## **Volunteer Service Agreement:**

- If you are new to volunteering with the Ice Age Trail Alliance, please submit the volunteer service agreement before the event.
- **Please complete** this [Volunteer Service Agreement, OF-301A Fillable Form](#).
- The National Park Service (NPS) requires every volunteer to complete a OF-301A Volunteer Service Agreement, whether you are a new IATA volunteer or a returning volunteer who has not yet filled out the post-March 24, 2020 version of this form.
- **Please email the completed form** to Dan Watson, NPS Volunteer Coordinator, ([daniel\\_watson@nps.gov](mailto:daniel_watson@nps.gov)).
- Dan will reply to you with a signed copy of the form.



# Our offer to help...

- The Communications team is ready to assist.
- Send us a list of your chapter's FIVE top specialty events (hikes and or trail improvement days) and we'll help you spruce them up with text or photos or both.
- Let's get your events ready for the summer and fall hiking (or trailbuilding) season.



# Chapter Webpages



# Advice for creating or revising webpages:

**“Your webpage is the guide to your organization, not the encyclopedia.”**

Use this as a rule of thumb when deciding what information to put on your chapter’s page.



# Pro tips for webpages:

- Format page content so it's easy for readers to skim and digestible from mobile devices.
  - Use short sentences and short paragraphs (no more than 3-4 sentences per paragraph).
  - Use headings and sub-headers to organize text by category.
- Include 2 – 3 appropriately-sized images to help break up the text.
  - Photos of trail segments and chapter members having fun convey a vibrant vibe.
- **Use correct sizing for banner image (1455 X 185 pixels)**



# Example of good info...but make it easy:

## Hikes Washington/Ozaukee

Guided hikes are one of our favorite events that we sponsor. Some of them include Spring Equinox, Earth Day, National Trails Day and Fall Colors hikes. Other guided hikes that traverse every segment, are offered from March through November, which include two moonlight hikes.

You can find details about our guided hikes on our event calendar.

**Tip:** Bullet the list of hikes and link each hike back to its event page.

- Spring Equinox
- Earth Day
- National Trails Day
- Fall Colors



# Chapter Events & Webpage Assistance:

- The Alliance Communications staff is happy to help!
- **We will:**
  - Resize photos
  - Help you with writing content for your chapter's webpage
  - Help you format event pages for signature hikes and trail improvement events.
  - Promote your events
- **Contact:** Lysianne Unruh, Communications Manager,  
[Lysianne@iceagetrail.org](mailto:Lysianne@iceagetrail.org), 608-798-4453, ext. 228

