

I don't think that I am a typical Ice Age Trail hiker. I started hiking as a way to support my husband's attempt to hike the entire IAT. Hiking and being outdoors are two things I enjoy, so going along on his hikes was no hardship.

Most of the time, I was part of a group (Get Off The Couch). I hiked some roads alone, but almost none of the segments solo. The fellowship and the fun I found in a group kept me returning to the trail time and again.

I didn't consider myself a serious IAT hiker. I never tracked or recorded my miles hiked. With no intention of becoming a 1000 miler, why would I? Turns out, my husband was keeping track. At the East Twin River trailhead, he informed me that I had hiked 400 miles already. I was astounded! I was always too busy having fun to realize how far I had hiked. More and more miles hiked, each 100 miles coming as a bit of a surprise. I was still treasuring the smiles without counting the miles.

I hiked multiple segments multiple times before hiking some even once.

At around 950 miles of hiking, I decided I'd complete the trail. My husband had finished in October of 2021, and he became my support as I concentrated on hiking the segments I had not yet been on. Most were hours from home, of course. That required my commitment, I realized, and THAT was when I became an IAT hiker.

The memories, the fun and the friendships I found on the trail are gifts to last a lifetime. I'm so grateful for that!

I could easily have written a one word essay. Community. That sums up my whole experience over three years and 1140-ish miles.

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