SCOV Hiking Club Orientation Outline

I. Before Hike: Welcome Center

a. Introductions

b. Sign Liability Waiver

c. Why Hike?

i. Joy/Beauty/Fun

ii. Physical Fitness

iii. Social Interaction

d. The Club

i. Started in 1994

ii. 350 (plus or minus) Members of various levels and abilities

iii. Mostly residents of Sun City Oro Valley

iv. Annual dues of $10 (Jan 1 to Dec 31)

v. Hikes are year-round

vi. Has officers, guides and members with specific responsibilities (e.g. website, email communications, picnics, nominations, special projects, trail maintenance). All are volunteers.

vii. Has a website packed with tons of essential information including hike lists, both current and for the past 12 months. It also offers credit card payment options for dues and club events. **SCOVHiking.org**. Spend some time checking it out so you can take advantage of everything that is there.

e. Hike Listings

i. Hikes are posted on the 15th of the prior month on the Club website, **SCOVHiking.org**. Example: March's hikes will be posted February 15. Hike destinations are selected and entered by individual guides. Hike descriptions are listed on the website for all scheduled hikes.

ii. Hike Ratings and Descriptions (C/6mi/1300'/$3/8am)

1. D hike: up to 4 miles and less than 500' elevation gain

2. C hike: 4+ to 8 miles or 500-1500' elevation gain

3. B hike: 8+ to 16 miles or 1500-3500' elevation gain

4. A hike: over 16 miles or over 3500' elevation gain

iii. Unless you are an experienced hiker and have recently hiked in the Tucson area, start with D hikes and work your way up. (Treadmills don't count!)

iv. Bring money to pay your driver if you carpool. Correct change is appreciated.

f. How to Sign-up/Cancel

i. Call or email hike leader to sign up for hike no later than 4pm on the day before the hike.

ii. At least 4 people are required for every hike

iii. Frequently there are a maximum number of hikers for a particular hike. Many hikes fill up early so don't wait till the last minute to sign up

iv. Hiker cancellations should be no later than 4pm the day before the hike

g. Where We Meet for Hikes

i. Usually originate from behind the Welcome Center unless specifically stated otherwise (e.g. Desert Oasis or Catalina Vista)

ii. Hikes LEAVE at starting time. BE EARLY for introductions and to form carpools

h. Guide Responsibility

i. Leads hikes, organizes carpools, sets pace, responsible for safety of group

ii. Remember, guides are volunteers

iii. Decides where to hike, the day, starting time, hiking speed, etc.

iv. May refuse to take you on a hike if you are not prepared or known to be fit

v. May check to make sure you have plenty of water and adequate gear, clothing, and footwear

vi. Some guides employ a tail guide (sweep) who will keep an eye on the hikers at the end of the line. They will always stay behind the last hiker.

i. Other Information

i. Guides need drivers for carpools. Drivers are compensated.

ii. Drivers require park passes at many hike locations (e.g. State Parks, State Land Trust Land, National and Regional Parks/Monuments)

iii. Hikers need to have permits to hike on State Trust Land (information on webpage).

iv. Hiker miles are recorded and logged on the Club website. Awards are made at various mileage levels (100, 250, 500, 1000, etc.) The club has logged over 500,000 miles.

j. Today's Hike

i. Catalina State Park (covers 5,500 acres)

ii. Will be about 3 miles

iii. Will begin at Equestrian Center

k. Questions

II. Trailhead: Equestrian Center

a. Before We Hike: The desert is a unique environment with possible additional dangers.

i. Water bottles/reservoirs, always a necessity, even in cool weather

ii. Adequate footwear, boots or sturdy hiking shoes; tennis shoes not recommended and may not be allowed

iii. Poles are optional, but very useful for pushing away thorny branches and helping with water crossings. When not using your poles, keep at your side with the tips down.

iv. Separation breaks/sanitation

1. Stay away from waterways

2. Pack your paper out

3. Bury/cover solid waste

4. Hydrate often; don't avoid drinking

v. Questions

III. First Stop: Water Tank

a. Water reminder - Bottles vs Bladders

b. Gear - Be prepared

i. Backpack or Fanny pack/Water belt - weight on hips, comfortable, get it fitted

ii. Poles, collapsible, cushion non-slip tips

iii. Boots/shoes, comfortable (may need ½ size larger) broken in, extra shoelaces

iv. Socks, wool/liners, avoid cotton

v. Wide-brimmed hat

vi. Pants recommended, zip offs are nice

vii. Gloves: light, heavy or leather depending on hike

viii. Layers: windbreaker, fleece, long-sleeved shirt, short-sleeved shirt

ix. Other: Sunglasses, bandanna, cooling towel, etc.

IV. Next Stops

a. Basic First Aid Kit: Guides have a robust kit, but hikers should carry basic items

i. Bandages, Mole skin, antiseptic, NSAIDS

ii. Comb/tweezers, duct tape, small scissors or knife

iii. Extra electrolytes (powder, gummies, etc.)

iv. Spare energy bar

v. Club tag and/or med ID bracelet (keep information current)

b. General

i. Whistle

ii. Cell phone (for emergencies only)

iii. All Trails or Gaia suggested; GPS (optional)

iv. Toilet paper and plastic bag

v. Sunscreen

vi. Salty Snacks

c. Safety

i. Sunburn: sunscreen (even in winter) and keep covered, sunglasses

ii. Dehydration: drink, drink, drink

iii. Falling: look down, slow down on rocks

iv. Uphill has right of way

v. Mountain bikers – Although hikers have right-of-way, we generally yield to bikers

vi. Contact with desert plants: be aware

vii. Contact with desert animals: deer, bighorn sheep, snakes, bees, etc.

viii. Contact with other animals:

1. Horses - Many trails are multi-purpose. Hikers yield to horses; stay on one side of trail

2. Cattle

3. Dogs off leash

ix. Foot injuries, take care of your feet, avoid blisters, trim toenails

x. Medical conditions. Tell guide of special needs (examples)

xi. Hiking is a group activity; be mindful of the welfare of your fellow hikers. Your actions affect the safety of fellow hikers.

d. Other Dos and Don'ts

- Do find hikes and leaders that you are comfortable with.
- Don't stop suddenly or block other hikers on the trail.
- Do maintain adequate distance between hikers. This is especially important going downhill.
- Don't be reluctant to ask the hike leader for a break to attend to sanitary needs, adjust clothing and/or drink water.
- Do bring problems to hike leader's attention. Don't be hesitant to communicate!
- Do have fun, talk and enjoy your fellow hikers, but avoid controversial subjects.
- Do carry out what you carry in, no exceptions (like orange peels or apple cores).
- Don't wear strong scents.

V. Club Activities

- Two picnics (Spring, Fall) - Mileage Awards
- Annual Meeting (March, aka Wine and Cheese Party)
- Philanthropic activities - donations, signage, trail maintenance, etc.
- New Year's Eve special hikes
- Once-a-Year Hikes - may require overnight stays
- Travel Hikes - Grand Canyon, other National Parks, other countries. Recently Kanab, UT, Silver City, NM, and Hawaii.
- Club website is vital resource **SCOVHiking.org.** Contact webmaster Richard Babin if you have questions about or problems with the website. Richard.babin@gmail.com or 520-989-3321.

VI. Questions