

Our SB6K Journey - Jim and Judy Magura

While I have been a member of CMC for a while, I didn't realize CMC had challenges until talking with a fellow hiker who mentioned it to me in late 2016. I took a look at the challenges and decided that the SB6K challenge looked fun and obtainable. I printed off all the documentation, created a spreadsheet so I could start tracking what I had already accomplished. Wow, I had three hikes already completed and 37 to go.

In early 2017 I mentioned my plans to my friend, Sharon Smith. She said ok, I'm in! Having partners really makes a difference. Sharon and I started bagging some of the peaks. In the late summer, much to my surprise my husband, Jim, announced to me that he would like to also participate. By the way, he was not in when I first proposed the idea, he wanted to think about it for a bit. So I just added a column and started logging our hikes and motivating him up and down the mountain tops with some fine meals after the hike.



This also meant that I had to retrace some of the hikes. No good deed goes unpunished!

Sharon and I had decided we wanted to complete this challenge by the 2018 Annual Members dinner so we can receive our accolades and patches at the dinner. This is in hopes we will inspire more to participate in the challenges, especially the SB6K. I have already inspired my son, Joe Magura, to take the challenge. By April 2018 Sharon and I had eight peaks in the Smokies remaining plus Jim had several more to do to catch-up. By early August I was wondering if I would be able to finish in 2018. Then I connected with Bob Debrecht on a hike to Mt. Kephart and I was inspired to continue. We tried to plan a trip with Bob but the timing was just not right. Then on Aug 26th I was telling my son about the peaks I still needed to summit. He had already hiked most of the peaks in the Smokies but not with peak bagging in mind.

This set the plan in motion to do an initial 3 day, 2 night backpack trip to complete the peaks starting at Cosby. In the meantime, on Sept 1, Jim and I decided we could do Big Cataloochee starting at Pin Oak Gap in one day and we gained some great Smoky experience. For the balance of the 7 peaks in the Smokies, Jim didn't like the ascent from Cosby as compared to our previous experience tackling Cataloochee from Pin Oak Gap. Jim convinced Joe we should start from Pin Oak Gap and add another day to our plans (4 days, 3 nights). With reservations made, early on Sept. 21, 2018, Joe, his friend Patty, Sharon, Jim and I left Maggie Valley to start the rest of our journey. We celebrated our first summit of our hike at Luftee Knob (photo). We had great weather, met a lot of backpackers and had four days of great hiking. What an experience! I celebrated my last SB6K peak (Old Black) on Sept. 23, 2018. But Sharon still had one more to go and Jim had 2 more to go.

On Monday Sept. 24th we spent the last night at the Laurel Gap Shelter on our return so Sharon could bag her last peak at Big Cataloochee. Jim still had two more peaks to bag, Craggy Dome and Chestnut Bald. With a scheduled hike to lead from Douglas Falls up to the MST near Greybeard Overlook on Sept. 29th, I knew Jim would be able to complete Craggy Dome. Now there was one more peak Jim needed (Chestnut Bald). On Oct. 3rd, Jim, Sharon and I started off our hike via route 215 up the MST to summit Chestnut Bald and return via the Flat Laurel Creek Trail. It was a great day. Weather was perfect and views were outstanding. Jim wrapped up his final SB6k peak with a beautiful hike planned by Sharon while enjoying warm fall temperatures.

This has been a great adventure for the three amigos! But not done yet, I will continue to support my son and his efforts to complete the challenge too!

Now onto the next challenge, P400 & start logging the MST/AT.

Judy Magura