

# Safety on the Crosslands Trails

by Terry Borton, Trails Chair

By attending to a few simple matters, you can keep yourself safe while you enjoy the beauty of the Crosslands Trails. Here's what not to worry about, and what to be careful about.

## **You Can't Get Lost**

Don't worry. You can't really get lost on the Crosslands Woods Trails. Disoriented perhaps, but not lost. The Woods are in a relatively small, well-defined area—about 3/4<sup>th</sup> of a mile by 1/2. The stream runs lengthways. If you get disoriented, head up hill. You'll always reach Civilization. Trails are marked, and maps are available in a basket in the Nature Conservancy Room behind the shop on the first floor. As for the Meadows Trails, it's easy to find your way. You can always see the 400s.

## **How to Protect Yourself from Hunters. Bears, Poison Ivy, and Poisonous Snakes? No Problem.**

We have way too many deer for the health of the woods, so Crosslands invites hunters to hunt deer in the early morning and late afternoon during the Fall/Winter season. Exact times and dates for hunting are posted at the trail entrances during the season. Don't get shot. Read the signs. Stay out of the woods on the dates and times when the hunters are there. ~~ There is poison ivy in the woods, but not by the trails. ~~ As for bears or poisonous snakes, no one has seen or even heard of either in the Crosslands woods. No lions either. No tigers. No "Oh my!"

## **How to Protect Yourself from Falls**

Falling is always a real danger for Seniors. In the woods there are more things to fall over, and you are harder to find if you fall, so take extra precautions.

- Know your body. If you aren't stable for a mile-long walk on sidewalks, don't try the woods. Take exercise elsewhere, like the gym or the paved paths.
- Keep an eye on the weather. The woods soil is clay, and slick when wet, especially with frozen ground underneath. Snow is beautiful, but slippery too.
- Pick up your feet. Keep an eye out for roots and steep spots. Keep one eye on the ground.
- Walk with a Buddy, or, if not, **always tell a Buddy** when you are going out, and when you'll return. Report back in.
- Use walking sticks. One stick is good. Two sticks gives you four legs. You'll be goat solid.
- Keep track of where you are on the trails so you can tell responders if you fall.
- **Always carry a charged cell phone**, with the Crosslands Emergency Number on it. **610-388-1440**. Cell coverage is not great, but cell phones do work in the woods.
- Carry a little 4" marine/sport horn, available online or at Ace. You can hear these for about 500 feet—not enough to reach from the Trails to Crosslands, but enough to alert someone else in the woods, or to help responders who are looking for you locate you.

Over

## **How to Protect Yourself from Ticks**

Treat ticks seriously. Lyme Disease, carried by tiny Lyme ticks, can make you very sick, sometimes for a long time if untreated. But with the right precautions, you can walk the woods with little danger. (I walk the trails an hour a day, almost every day, all year long. Taking the following precautions, I've never found a tick.)

- For your safety the Crosslands Trails are cut 4 feet wide, and many are mowed.  
If no leaves or grass touch you, no ticks.
- Wear a “woods-walking suit”—long socks, long pants tucked into the socks, long-sleeved shirt, a hat. If light colored, you can see any ticks. (You put on a swim suit to go swimming, right?)
- Spray your shoes, socks, pants, outside arms, hands, and hat with bug spray that contains DEET.
- You can also buy clothes impregnated with a long-lasting tick deterrent, Permethrin, or you can get a Permethrin spray that lasts a long time.
- Ticks are most lively in warm weather, but are active all year long.  
Don't drop your guard in winter.
  
- When you come in from the trail, inspect yourself carefully. A Lyme tick is black, about the size of a pin head, so they're hard to spot.
- Ticks like warm moist tender skin, so in addition to your legs and arms, check your privates, your navel, under your arms, your waistline, your hair. Feel behind your knees and any place that feels like a bite. Then shower.
- Ticks bite, suck, and then, after about 24 hours, regurgitate. It's the regurgitating that infects you, so you have about 24 hours grace time.  
That's why it's important to check yourself right after you come in.
- If you find a tick that is attached, remove it by grabbing the head (not the body) with a pair of pointed tweezers. Pull gently. You can keep it in a jar for a few days if you want to hold the evidence to show a doctor.
- Not all Lyme ticks carry Lyme Disease. If you develop a red “bulls' eye” or other large swelling or reddening, you should see the doctor. Not all infected people develop these signs, so if you feel feverish, or have flu-like symptoms or have unexplained pains, stop in and have yourself checked. Good treatments options are available. Don't put off a visit.

## **Guided Trips on the Kendal/Crosslands Trails and Off-Campus**

All trips are announced in *The Chronicle* and on the website. Various levels of difficulty. Each month a different destination.

**On-Campus Trips** are offered the fourth Wednesday of each month, winter excepted.

**Off-Campus Trips** are offered the first Wednesday of each month. Winter excepted.

**Sign up the week before on the Bulletin Board.**