

Dim Sum & Bowling
By Susannah Yung

While winter is still here, it is time for indoor activities. For people who don't favor winter sports, AO dim sum bowling is quite a place to hang out with new and old members. .

The restaurant I picked this time is a different one, and most of the participants liked the place. As the reservation was made for the busiest time of the lunch hours, I was glad to see most people came on time. Most people played two games at the bowling alley, and some stayed for more bowling afterward.

Being a volunteer for the event, it makes me feel good to see so many people turning up and having a good time. The event is a success.

It's a great experience to organize an AO event. It offers me an opportunity to practice my leadership skills, develop teamwork with the co-organizer, and meet new AO members.

I would like to thank Kenny Eng & Bell Yee for giving me the opportunity to be an AO event organizer, and to share my experience with everyone.

Note: Above article was submitted after the deadline for the Spring Issue; hence it reads dated.

Complaints?
By Bell Yee

Recently I ran into an AO member on the subway. After exchanging hellos, she made a comment I'd heard many times before. "Why does AO do the same things over and over again and why do we go to the same places all the time?" So I countered by asking her to help organize an event. And silence fell.

We strive to organize inexpensive group activities. Is there anything wrong with that? We cannot invent new places to go...that's the bottom line.

Of course we have some daredevils who suggest AO host a skydiving event. First of all; you jump tandem with an instructor – it disqualifies as a group event right there. Secondly, I don't understand the logic of jumping out of a perfectly working airplane. And thirdly you will pay dearly for such an event.

In the last five years we only added a one-time new event suggested by Jayne. She hasn't been active in organizing events since, and we'd love to get her to do her Ropes Course again. Or I guess we'd have to do it without her.

Yes, AO is always seeking people to help out...we are a club of volunteers, after all. Please contact us with your ideas and suggestion.

Summer began with Cincip 07 on Saturday June 9th with a turnout of about 70 people. Participants feasted on BBQ burgers and hotdogs, fried chicken, corn-on-the-cob, fruit salad, soft drinks and spring water. We had our usual volleyball set up, however weren't too successful in starting a softball game. Weather was mostly sunny and some of the tennis players wound up with sunburns. Cincip broke up at about 7:00pm.

Two weeks later on Saturday June 23rd was our Whitewater Rafting on the Lehigh River in Pennsylvania. Twenty-two rafters got wet. It was a wee bit hairy that morning as half of the group was running late in getting to our rafting outfitter. One participant got quite agitated about the waiting, however cooler heads prevailed and we did wait and started rafting a little bit later.

The weekend after the rafting was a camping trip to Rudd Pond, a favorite destination over the last several years. This year our sibling club Asian Outdoors Boston did not attend. But we did have about a dozen people, including some newbies getting the first-time taste of camping. Saturday was the usual side trip up to Bish Bash Falls. On the way back from Bish Bash, we wanted to buy fresh corn at a farm stand on route 22. Yet the farm stand was no longer there – so we opted to go for supermarket corn instead. Back at the campsite, some worked on preparing a pasta dinner while others ran around gathering firewood. Every camping group has its pyros and we are no exception. Eager to get a bonfire going, we amassed plenty of firewood. But the great forecast we had for this weekend turned sour: a thunderstorm started right after dinner and squelched the fire. By the next morning; the fire was still smoldering. After breaking camp, some of us went directly home while others hung around and rented bikes to ride the nearby Harlem Valley Rail Trail.

The following Saturday, July 7th, was a bushwhack hike on the lands of the Ellenville Conservancy. A lot of the people who RSVPed chickened out when the day came. Not sure whether it was because of the warm weather forecast or not.

July 14th was scheduled for Kayaking at Annsville Creek; a tributary of the Hudson River just north of Peekskill. Event was cancelled due to poor response.

The next Saturday, July 21, was Biking on the North Country Trailway with about twenty people. Unfortunately one member of our party suffered a nasty spill and broke his collarbone after he lost control on the trail and crashed. It reminds all of us that outdoor activities can be hazardous if we are not careful in what we do.

The following weekend was supposed to be a camping trip to Lake George but it didn't happen. Forecast of thunderstorms throughout the weekend led to the cancellation. It's one thing to have some rain on your camping trip and another to be accompanied with lightning. We tried to resurrect it on the very next weekend but a similar forecast wiped out that one, too.

On Saturday August 11th we ran our annual Cedar Creek Canoe Trip. We had been concerned that creek was running high and fast because of the raining before. A fast current makes steering very difficult and running high means tree branches over the creek would have been low – low enough to crash into. But it did not happened that way. Luckily, the creek was low before the rainy day – so it became a normal run on Cedar Creek. Three people bailed on the trip, but we still had twenty-five adventurers paddling. And the great thing is that nobody flipped!

For the weekend of August 24th-26th; we had to cancel, resurrect, and cancel again our camping trip to North Lake in the Catskills. North Lake is a great place to camp out. There are miles of hiking trails with spectacular scenic views in the surrounding mountains, as well as a sizeable fresh-water lake with fish and two beaches to go swimming. The two consecutive calls for cancellation was because of a changing weather forecast indicating thunderstorms and heavy downpours. Yet in the end seven of us decided to take the risk, hoping the storms would not strike. We got up there at dusk on Friday; set up our tents, schlepped out for dinner and then went to sleep. Saturday after breakfast, some of us headed out with a sandwich and drink for a short hike while others went swimming as the temperature was about ninety degrees in the hazy sun. The water in the lake felt cold at first, yet before long it became a great relief from the heat. Everybody came back early and we had dinner. After sunset, about eight o'clock, winds started to blow--an ominous sign of an approaching storm. About half-hour later the sky was flashing, followed by approaching thunder. Quickly we scrambled into our two cars and abandoned our campsite. And then the storm was in full power: heavy rain and crackling thunder and close-by lightning. It was scary big time! But in less than an hour the storm passed by; thunder could still be heard but sounded far away and receding. The rain stopped and the air was cooler and refreshing. We drove back to our campsite and everything was still there. The tents held up; however, when we ran for cover, some of us forgot to zip up windows and doors. So some of our gears got wet. Luckily, there was a nice breeze after the storm and things dried up quickly. It was quite an experience; we won't be taking such chances again in the future.

Up and Coming Events

Saturday – September 22nd – Beach Party & Lobster Cookout

Saturday – September 29th – Annual Shelter Island Bike Tour

For October we got hikes and other bike outing coming up – stay tuned.