

# Asian Outdoors Newsletter

## Winter/Spring 2010

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Dear AO members,

I want to thank all the organizers and volunteers who made our activities possible. This appreciation started when I helped out with little tasks. Then I realized all the numerous behind the scene work which makes our activities seem effortless. We can all contribute a little of our time and effort to help out. Please talk to one of our organizers and volunteer. You will have a different perspective on the activities, get to know more people and appreciate the activities even more. Believe me...

Karen Chan  
Editor

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**PROFILE of a member:** Every issue will feature the profile of a member here. This month's member is camp leader Don Chen. Here is his biography.

### How I Got Involved with Asian Outdoors By Don Chen

I always like nature. When I was small, I had a collection of live critters. I had many kinds of Crayfish (blue, brown and red ones). I caught frogs and toads in Bronx Park, Central Park, and Van Cortland. One time, I caught a lot of grasshoppers and they ate my mom's plant; she was not happy. We had robin, chicken, duck, turtle (I caught snapping turtle and let it go in Central Park became too vicious), rabbit, pigeon, guinea pig, hamster all while living in the project that did not allow pets! For a short time, we also had snake and a skunk (we all got nausea) I also raised and breed tropical fish and goldfish. Half of the living room was taken up by my tanks and jars. We lived near Central Park and almost every day after school, my sisters and I would go to certain spots and feed squirrels. The first time I went fishing was in Central Park at the age of five and I was excited in catching one sunfish and two minnows. From there I graduated to fishing in the Hudson River near the tennis courts for ells.

I wanted to be a veterinary, but due to my parent's financial situation I became an engineer and graduated from City College as a civil engineer. There I met up with Bell, Kenny's brother, Victor Eng and a few others. We would take the subway and bus to go fishing in City Island. Our first camping trip was to Lake Tiorati. We would take the Adirondack

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Member Profile continue...

bus from Port Authority and let us off in front of a restaurant and hike 13 miles to the campsite. We slept in two man pup tents that weigh 13 pounds. We tried a number of camping mainly in the Catskill Region. After a while, other people joined us and the number of people grew. We did some crazy things like surviving a weekend on only raw and boiled eggs to reduce the weight that we had to carry, I had my brother-in-law drop up off on Palisades near Harriman and we camp at different locations until he picked us up, I tried cooking in the rain and burn my jacket as I was shielding the fire so we can eat, pick dandelions along the road to eat for dinner.

In April, about five of us went camping in North Lake. As the bus climb higher in elevation, we started to see snow on the ground. As we arrive in Haines Fall, we hike 7 miles to the campsite as there was very limited bus to go home. We cut tree branches to have some distance between the snow and the sleeping bags, break through stream covered with ice to get water for cooking and drinking. A few of us went home the next day, but the rest of us stay for another night freezing in the sleeping bags.

When Bell, Kenny and Victor decided to form the Asian Outdoors I decided that did not want to be on the board, but just happy to do my thing in camping, fishing and other water activities. I'm happy to do these activities and especially enjoyed teaching little kids of nature. In the past, I would catch critters to show kids that a newt is not slimy but soft and dry, a snake (it was a garter snake) is also not slimy, salamanders are slimy, as well as frogs but not toads and cottontail rabbits are small but very hard to catch by hand.

Fishing is another activity that I enjoy. I believe the whole nine yard of catching, cleaning and eating. I started out freshwater fishing, but due to high mercury and other chemicals, a lot of places has put up warning of not to consume the fish. I now am mainly a saltwater person. I have caught almost every type in these water with the biggest a blue fin tuna. Next June, I will be going to Alaska for a week of solely fishing and crabbing!

Now that I'm retired, I still enjoy outdoor activities like camping, fishing, nature walk. Also, I now have a house and finally have a dog, cats and an iguana. I guess that I am still a country person living in the city.

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### Winter Wonderland at Lapland Lake

By Karen Chan

Six of us plus one big fluffy dog cross-country skied the well groomed trails of Lapland Lake Nordic Vacation Center at Northville, NY. Northville is tucked away in the scenic, peaceful south-central region of the New York State's Adirondack Forest Preserve where snow is plentiful. The trails are impeccably groomed and maintained by its owner, a former U.S. Olympic cross country skier. The serenity of the pristine woods is breathtaking with snow-covered branches on the trees. As I skied along the trails, I am lost in a world of winter wonderland. Of course, my daydreaming stops upon up hills which caused my breathing to labor! That is when I turn around and head back to the beautiful cozy lodge with a woodstove burning and big comfy leather sofa for a cup of hot chocolate. Lapland is definitely what winter is all about!



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### Jockey Hollow Hike - 17 April 2010

By Don Chen

Due to potential rain, a small group of hikers traverse the wooded rolling hillsides of historic grounds of Jockey Hollow. On that day, there was the recreation of George Washington's Continental Army spending the bitter winter of 1779-1780 complete with people dressed in that era, a demonstration of artillery firing cannons and parade. Due to the weather, we started hiking after having lunch on a five plus mile trek of rolling hillsides. After the hike, we wrap up the day by going to dinner at place called "The Store".

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### Friday Night Dinner

By Choya

The restaurant was in a good, easy to reach location. The service and atmosphere were good. It wasn't

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very busy when we arrived at 6:30. The prix fixe dinner portions were a little small, but I guess for \$19.95 we shouldn't expect much. I ordered the calamari for starter, the salmon entree and the almond cake for dessert. The almond cake was very unique. I sampled the tiramisu which was very tasty too.

They must have a pretty good wine list because I was looking at lots of wine bottles that were lined up against the wall. It was a nice decorative touch.

What I didn't like was being rushed out of the restaurant after dinner. I would have liked to stay a little longer to relax and unwind (and digest the food at least). Since the restaurant did not seem busy, I'm sure the management wouldn't have minded. Isn't that the point of the Friday night dinners, hanging out and relaxing?

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