



LISTENING AND enjoying the inner forest involves signing up at the beginning of the trail. Linda Besant (above) registers day hikers on Ramona Falls Trail. Happy wanderers Naomi Allender, Vi Johnson and Katie Bretsch (left) stretch their legs, opportunities and smiles on a rain-soaked path.

Keep Listening

Women opt for the wilderness

The campfire shouldn't be just another hot stove.

But sex role stereotypes can intrude in the wilderness more than they do in the city, according to Keep Listening trip leader Marcia Munson.

To escape the stereotypes, Munson recommends leaving the men at home.

Keep Listening offers the opportunity. The non-profit organization based in Sandy creates wilderness experiences for women only. With expertise included.

"We don't see wilderness survival as being caught on a cliff in a snowstorm with nothing but shorts and tennis shoes," Munson stressed. "We focus not on relying on a lot of gadgets, but on developing an understanding of the kinds of problems hikers can face."

Munson and Linda Besant, trip leaders, and three other women began the program in January, 1977, with the aid of Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funds. The parent group, Women's Wilderness School, also sponsors Northwest Passage, a program of lectures, beginning hikes and short camping trips for Portland area women.

All participants had had a lot of camping experience with and without men.

"Many women don't have the opportunity to experience the wilderness in all-women groups," Munson observed. "Many are intimidated by mixed groups. Many have hiked with men and felt they couldn't keep up."

"I'm a real slow hiker. I can hardly keep up with a lot of women. We always take time to enjoy our surroundings and learn about what we're doing."

Most of the Keep Listening trips are geared to the backpacker with little or no experience. Emphasis is placed on

survival skills, including using map and compass, determining the best campsite and learning when and how to build fires.

"We hope to help women gain confidence in their own abilities to do physically demanding things; confidence to live away from conventional civilization."

"The experience helps make women aware of what their needs really are," Munson said.

In turn, the Keep Listening instructors teach the corresponding needs of the wilderness.

"We teach people the skills to backpack without having an adverse impact on the environment," the 1972 Lewis and Clark College graduate explained. "One careless person can have the effect of 10."

"The label on everything says it's biodegradable. It is — if you wait long enough. Biodegradable means it will break down in 90 days," the biology major said. "Ninety days in water is long enough to kill the larvae and algae."

Munson has a vested interest in teaching people to backpack carefully, she admitted.

"There aren't many places not already laced with logging roads. If we can get more people interested in wilderness preservation, we'll get more people writing to their congressmen, which will get more legislation..."

Summer, 1978, wilderness trips will continue into September and October. A two-week outdoor survival school in the Deschutes National Forest Sept. 2 will culminate in a two-day solo experience, a new twist in the Keep Listening format.

"We don't normally encourage people to hike by themselves," Munson said. "My philosophy is that it's not good to force a situation like that unless people are ready."

A less demanding trip Sept. 22-27 will take beginning and advanced hikers in a circle around Mt. Hood.

Women with extensive mountaineering experience may choose to share skills and leadership techniques at an Outdoor Leadership Seminar Oct. 6-14 in the Malheur National Forest.

The final tour on the schedule is by bicycle through the Gulf Islands off Washington Oct. 23-30.

Keep Listening organizers hope

eventually to add cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, rock climbing and possibly river rafting to the itinerary. Fees are charged for each trip and scholarships and work exchanges are available.

The group hopes to bring the outdoor experience within reach of all women. It's an experience Munson is qualified to recommend.

With a background of camping, hiking and skiing in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, Munson has taught ecology, backpacking and skiing for Clatsop Community College, Multnomah County outdoor schools and the Girl Scouts.

And, to relax after a Keep Listening tour, she packs her gear and heads back to the wilderness.

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Liquor agency plans to continue penalties

Persons caught gambling or engaging in criminal activity in liquor-serving establishments, even though they may not be convicted, will still be penalized by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, the agency announced Tuesday.

The liquor control agency said suspension and cancellation of licenses is a tool for keeping gambling and organized crime out of Oregon and adopted the long-standing policy as part of its administrative rules.

District attorneys and law-enforcement officials have urged the commission to continue penalizing establishments caught with gamblers on the premises as a deterrent to crime, one OLCC official said.

In other action, the commission was told by OLCC staff that small convenience markets lead the list of groceries in the number of liquor sales to minors.

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