



Fundraising Up Whitney



THE THIRD OF SIX READER TEAMS LED BY SIERRA MOUNTAINEERING INTERNATIONAL

In April, more than 40 readers summited Mt. Whitney in the largest mountaineering fundraiser ever staged on U.S. soil. Result: \$280,00 (and counting) to help Big City Mountaineers mentor more urban teens. Thanks to all who participated, as well as sponsors DeLorme, The North Face, LOWA, and Liberty Bottle Works. Watch for a complete report—and your chance to join next year's climb—in the January issue.

Wanted: Reader Experts

Have you hiked every inch of your local trails? Know the all-time best campsites, views, and fishing spots? We're looking for knowledgeable backpackers to join our Readers' Choice 2014 advisory panel. Get involved at backpacker.com/readerschoice.

BACKPACKER® Million Mile Month



The weather is perfect, mountains are snow-free, kids are still out of school: August is prime time for hiking, and we want you to join the fun. All month, we're rallying BACKPACKER readers to collectively accumulate one million trail miles. Go for a hike on your own, with friends, with a group—it doesn't matter where or how—and send us your miles, photos, and stories for a chance to win gear from Mountainsmith and other great prizes. After every hike you do in August, go to backpacker.com/millionmilemonth and log your totals.

First Night Out

Nancy Carmack, **Scottsboro, AL**

→ **THE TRIP** Unicoi Gap (GA) to Deep Gap (NC), Appalachian Trail, November 2012 This steep, 30-mile section of the AT passes over ridgelines with endless views.

→ **THE IDEA** Carmack, 63, has long been a dayhiker, but "I need my motel room and a hot shower," she says. But over the last few years, her siblings (brother Rick Greif, 60, and sister Cindy Bendall, 65) discovered backpacking together on the AT. Finally, after hearing enough of her sibs' chatter about their adventures, Carmack emailed them both:

"You guys are having too much fun without me. I'm coming next time." The siblings hit the next REI Garage Sale, even bringing their mother along. "She was proud that, 50 years later, we were finally venturing into the outdoors again as a family," says Carmack.

→ **WHAT I LEARNED** "It's never too late to start backpacking, and you will never regret rediscovering who your family members are and spending more time with them," says Carmack.

→ **UP NEXT** The trio plans to hike across the Smokies this fall.

RICK GRIEF
NANCY CARMACK
CINDY BENDALL



You Said It

What's your most memorable backpacking wildlife encounter?

"I saw a moose coming down Minnesota's Superior Hiking Trail. I dropped my pack and grabbed my camera. After a few minutes, I turned around to see a black bear dragging my pack off the trail!"
—Zach Johns, Hibbing, MN

"I was setting up my tent during rutting season in southern Utah when I heard what sounded like a Clydesdale clomping along. That elk stomped and hooped at me for a half-hour—the longest in my life."
—James Lisonbee, Cedar City, UT

"I was sitting underneath a large hickory tree when I felt a nut hit my head. A 200-pound black bear was 6 feet above me, coming down."
—Will Shoup, West Point, VA

"The too-close mountain goat at the Lake Ellen

Wilson pit toilet at Glacier was an experience."
—Justin Grigg, Missoula, MT

"A black bear tried to get underneath our tent at 3 a.m. in Washington's Glacier Peak Wilderness."
—Greg Kendall, Tacoma, WA

Most popular states for hiking at Backpacker.com Colorado (#1), California (#2), North Carolina (#3)