

Alonzo Stagg 50/20 Hike – Morning of Hike Primer 2024

Please read these final hints and hike instructions in preparation for your hike.

Check In - All participants (hikers AND staff) must check in with your Unit Registrar. If you haven't, please do so.

Label Gear - Mark the outside of your daypack and (if you have one) your duffel bag with your name. **Also** put a 3 x 5 card **inside** your daypack/duffel with your name, Troop / Crew #, and home phone #.

Take a Seat - Please be reasonably quiet. Put on your Ribbon and number over your outside clothing. Study your route directions – every hiker and staffer needs a set of directions. If you can, go to the bathroom now.

Label Electronics - All electronics, including cell phones, should have your name and home phone number on them, or you will have almost no chance of getting them back if you misplace them.

Secure Your Keys and Wallet – If you carry them, keep your keys and wallet in a spot where they cannot fall out while you are trying to retrieve/exchange other items.

Money - You should have no need of money on this hike. If you insist, \$10.00 is certainly more than enough.

Drink Water – and maybe eat some snacks.

Weather Forecast

Will be updated during the Announcements.

Clothing Considerations (mostly for 25-50 Mile Hikers)

Dress in layers. You need to decide what to wear and 25-50 Milers need also to decide what to leave in your daypack or duffel bag - 25 and 50 Miler duffel bags (only!) will be transported to the rest stops in advance of your arrival. **Do not overdress** - if you have to strip clothing off because you're too hot, you'll have to carry it 5 to 9 miles before you can drop it off. Dress down to the point of being uncomfortable when you first step outside, and you should be OK when you start hiking hard. **But do not way underdress either** - if you are cold while hiking hard, you will have many miles to go before you can get additional clothes. Note that the trails may be very windy (especially at Chain Bridge, along the Potomac, and at Key Bridge), and you will likely be walking directly into the wind at times. Small items that you can carry in your pockets or very light daypack that can help you stay warm are hats or headbands, gloves, a light face-mask, sunglasses or snow goggles. If you are unsure what to wear, talk to someone who previously has done the hike.

Brief Set of Assembly Announcements

Once most hikers are checked in, we will have a brief set of announcements, organize into groups of 10 – 20 hikers, and head out. To avoid crowding, each group will be separated by 1 minute. For the 25 + 50 milers, the 50-Milers will depart first, then the 25-Milers. Groups who wish to hike fast should leave last. There will be no mad rush to the door by any group to be "first" on the trail.

Buddies

Note that **all Scouts must have a buddy during the entire hike**, and that starts right at the beginning, before you leave (no Scout hikes alone!) The starting groups will naturally spread out very quickly, so you can't wait to get a buddy. Note that **buddy groups are limited to doubles or triples** – larger groups may be made of groups of 2's or 3's, but a "quadruple" is actually two doubles – not a "buddy group" of 4. "Buddies" must stay together - you cannot have one hiker drop off to go to the bathroom or a store, and you hike on

thinking he will catch up or join another group. **The buddy pair or buddy triple always stays together, all the time, all the way, whether it's for 10 miles, or 50 miles.** So try to have a buddy or buddies that hike at your speed. If someone drops out of your buddy group (can't continue), leaving you without a buddy, you must get that person taken care of FIRST, and then find another buddy group to join. Ask for help using a cell phone (use the **Emergency Procedures Sheet!**)

Other Cardinal Rules

- A. **Don't carry a heavy daypack** - The farthest the 20, 25, and 50 Milers will have to walk to a support station all day long is about 8 miles (to the first station). 10 Milers only have to walk 5 miles to their only Support Stop. For all other hikers, all of the other stations are only 6 miles or so apart - you don't need a lot of stuff to make it that far. Also, you don't need a gallon of water - that's 8+ pounds for very little benefit. Be smart – it's mid-March, this isn't Death Valley, and there will be plenty of liquids at the support stations.
- B. **Don't "chase the jackrabbit"** - Set a reasonable pace that will not burn you (or your buddies) out.
- C. **Stay on the trail** - Avoid detours to 7-11's, Starbucks, or McDonalds unless you are having a blood sugar crisis - and if you do, avoid sodas, coffee, or super-caffeinated "energy" drinks like "Red Bull."
- D. **STAY RIGHT** on the trails; **don't hog the trail** - Avoid collisions with speeding cyclists coming up behind you - they will be going very fast, and will give you only a very brief warning half a second before they run you over if you don't move. No more than two people side-by-side. **This is likely the single most violated rule during the early stages of the hike, when everyone is still chattering with each other. Stay focused!**
- E. **Keep your music volume low** - If you are listening to music on a digital device, **make sure the volume is low enough that you can hear verbal warnings from cyclists and runners.** Scouts - That means what an ADULT would consider a reasonable volume!

- F. Don't stare at your phone while Hiking – Stay focused!
- G. **Absolutely Do Not Litter!** - Carry trash and dead batteries with you to the next trashcan.
- H. **KNOW THE DIRECTIONS** - We will have people stationed at various critical points, but **you are supposed to have the directions and hiker-help-maps, and you are expected to know the route, and follow it.** If you get lost, follow the instructions on the **Emergency Procedures Sheet.** Note that there will be "Tail-End Charlie" adults and cyclists behind you, so they will be coming up eventually and can help you **AS LONG AS YOU STAY ON THE TRAIL** or can call in to tell the Hike Administrator where you are (or at least where you think you are).

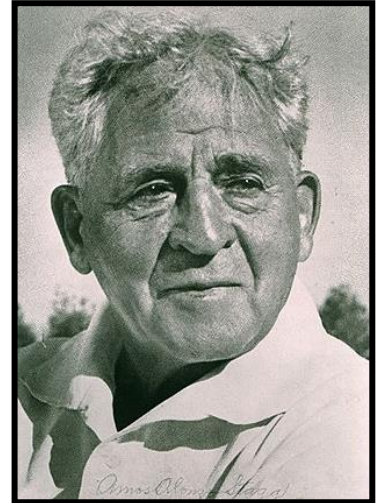
At Support Stops

- A. Check In FIRST.
- B. If you forwarded one, grab your daypack or duffel from the pile, change socks, get and/or dump clothing and other items (batteries, snacks, and/or first aid stuff if you have your own). Treat any blisters and hot spots.
- C. Get food and drink; refill your water bottle. The rest stops will **not** be able to provide any medications such as Advil, Tylenol, etc. This is because your medical records are being kept by your Unit, not by the Hike Staff. If you will require any medication during the Hike, you need to bring your own, and self-medicate.
- D. Hit bathrooms if available. Even if you think you don't need to go, you should always try. It may be a VERY LONG WAY to the next bathroom. The cue sheets list the locations of all known bathrooms on the routes.
- E. IF YOU ARE **CONTINUING** ON THE HIKE, shift your daypack back to the daypack pile that will be transported to the next stop (there will be a sign). If you are **QUITTING** the hike, keep your daypack with you. When you are ready to depart, tell the staff either that you are **CONTINUING ON THE HIKE**, or you are **QUITTING THE HIKE.** **Please do not tell people you are "leaving"** - that is meaningless, because it can mean either of the two options. Whatever you say (**Continuing** or **Quitting**) is what will be recorded on the Check-Out sheet - forgetting to tell us that you're **QUITTING** is NOT AN OPTION, as it means we will eventually notice that you are missing, and will have to stop everything to find you. That can be very difficult if you're at home, napping, or hanging out at the Mall.

ALSO, DO NOT QUIT THE HIKE EXCEPT AT A SUPPORT STOP. This is critical, because otherwise we will have many staffers (and Police) searching for you when you don't show up at the next Support Stop! This is especially important because the hike is going through sections of Arlington and it may be tempting to just walk home if your house is close to the trail, or to call your parents to come pick you up. **YOU MUST NOT DO THAT!**
Be SAFE! Have FUN! GOOD LUCK! HIKE ON!

Who was Alonzo Stagg???

Alonzo Stagg was one of the legendary early coaches in football. He still has the third highest victory total in the history of college football, and the Division III Football Championship is named the Alonzo Stagg Bowl in his honor. Coach Stagg was renowned for his absolute integrity - at least twice in his career, opposing coaches asked him to referee important games when the referees failed to show. He is a recipient of the Boy Scouts of America's Silver Buffalo Award for his outstanding service to Americas' youth.



While a football coach, he instituted the 50/20 hike as the opening day of fall practice – an effective means to ensure that his players would stay in shape over the summer (if you didn't finish, you were cut). [It is likely that Coach Stagg picked up the idea from President Teddy Roosevelt, who in turn may have picked it up from President Lincoln, who is alleged to have stated that every American man should be able to walk 50 miles in a day with 50 pounds on his back. President T. Roosevelt challenged the Marine Corps to complete a 50 mile hike in 20 hours – a challenge that was accepted by the Marine Corps Commandant.] Other groups picked it up, and the event became known as an Alonzo Stagg Hike. President Kennedy again chal-lenged the Marine Corps to complete a 50/20 hike (again accepted by the Commandant), and also promoted it while in office. It became a very popular event after his assassination (in fact, **the Hike is also known as a "Kennedy March" in his honor**, notably in Europe). After Coach Stagg died in 1965 (at 103 years old), there was a foundation dedicated to his memory that promoted the hike, and administered awards. That group (friends and former players) faded away in the mid-1980's.

Troop 647 used to run Alonzo Stagg hikes back in the 60's and 70's. In 1995, one of their ASM's (Jack Robertson, since deceased) suggested it as a shakedown event for a combined 111/647 1996 Philmont Crew. Troops 111 and 647 co-administered 50/20 or 25/10 hikes for about the next 5 years. In 2002, the hike became an invitational event within Chain Bridge District, and has been run ever since as a joint event by the participating Units. At present, we are widely considered to be "the" national authority on Alonzo Stagg Hikes, certainly so in the BSA.

The Alonzo Stagg Foundation used to award a medal to anyone who completed an approved 50/20 hike – a tradition that we have continued. All medal recipients 1996-to-present are posted on the Troop 111 website. Will you be so listed after today? (or someday in the future?)