

From the Pittsburgh Business Times

:<http://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/print-edition/2013/04/19/duquesne-club-encourages-active-living.html>

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT: Apr 19, 2013, 6:00am EDT

Executive Living: Sports

Duquesne Club encourages active living with Adventurers program



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Since taking the job as health and fitness director at the **Duquesne Club** in November 2011, [Bonnie Hoolahan](#) has been encouraging members to think beyond the gym. With the Adventurers Club, a program she established in 2012, Hoolahan has been planning unconventional outings for members, ranging from a caving trip to Laurel Caverns to dog sledding at Nemaquin Woodlands.

Originally from the North Hills, Hoolahan has a bachelor's degree in sports science from **Ohio University** and a master's degree in adaptive physical activity from Slippery Rock University. Her previous experience includes working as the athletic coordinator for a Naval air station in Key West, Fla., and as sports director for the Mission Valley YMCA in San Diego.

What is the Adventurers Club?

"This was something I started when I came to the Duquesne Club. So many times when you are at the gym, you have your headphones in and you're not really engaging. I wanted to create a program that would get members out of the gym, but would still have them doing something that was active and fun. Over the last year, we have gone skydiving, rock climbing and rappelling, and dog sledding. It's still new, so members are getting used to it, but I do have people that keep coming on multiple trips."

How do you decide which activities to offer?

"For the Adventurers Club, I try to pick high-adventure activities, the kind of things people wouldn't normally do by themselves and things that I think our membership base would be interested in. Skydiving, for example, is one of those adventures that so many people have on their bucket list, but maybe wouldn't necessarily have the time to plan on their own."

What is the benefit of going on one of these group adventures?

“It’s convenient because members have the chance to do something they may have always wanted to do, but they don’t have to go through the trouble of planning the trip or getting a big group together. If you plan it yourself, you are always more likely to postpone it, but if someone else plans it and it is a set date, you’re more likely to set that time aside and commit to going.”

What trips are you planning in the future?

“I am currently planning a whitewater- rafting trip for late spring and a zip-line trip for the fall. I am always looking for places that offer a unique activity, but are at a drivable distance. We are limited by location, but we are also really lucky because there are so many great things to do in western Pennsylvania. This summer, I want to plan kayaking trips on the river with Kayak Pittsburgh. This is a really unique opportunity we have in Pittsburgh, and I hope this is an activity we could do on a more regular basis.”

If you could plan your dream adventure for members, what would it be?

“It would either take us to New Zealand or Costa Rica for a zip lining, mountain climbing, scuba diving, multi-inclusive adventure. I would want to take a group to a place that is really known worldwide for its adventuresome treks. I would love to plan a long trip where each day could have its own, new adventure. I think that would be an amazing opportunity.”

What is your goal with the Adventurers Club?

“The goal is to get more people to bring their family members and really make this an adventure for them. Hopefully, they find something they enjoy and can maybe stay with in the future.”

Carpenter Legal Search president hits trails — by dog sled

Lori Carpenter, president of Carpenter Legal Search Inc., said in the winter she and her husband, Stephen Casbeer, are always looking for fun things to do that will get them outside.

A Duquesne Club member for more than 11 years, when she read about the opportunity to go dog sledding in the club’s newsletter, Carpenter was immediately intrigued.

“As trite as it might sound, what got me interested in going dog sledding was that it was something very different and unique,” she said.

Carpenter said she didn’t know what to expect, but the dogs were clearly well-trained and visibly excited to pull the sled.

“It was really interesting to learn about and see how these dogs perform as a team,” she said. “It doesn’t feel inhumane because you can see the excitement of the dogs.”

The trainers explained to them how the team works and left time to pet the dogs after the 30-minute ride. Carpenter said she is interested in going dog sledding again and is looking forward to more Duquesne Club outings.