

INDIAN HILL

Mom's charity hike cut short by injury

It wasn't the den of rattlesnakes she encountered that caused Denise Hill to prematurely end her 2,650-mile hike of the Pacific Crest Trail.

Nor was it the poison oak she suffered with for three weeks. Or the upper respiratory infection she battled for 10 days.

Fording ice-cold streams, skirting California wildfires and losing her way a couple of times didn't stop her. Neither did desert heat or 12 feet of snow.

In the end, what did in the Indian Hill married mother of three—who goes by the trail name Ladybug—was an unfortunate jab to the ribs from her own hiking pole. It happened when she was glissading down snow-covered Dick's Pass in California's Desolation Wilderness.

"Mentally, it was so hard because I didn't want to quit. I mean, I'm doing this for charity."

This was Hill's second Walking for Walden hike to raise money for Hospice of Cincinnati. In 2004, she completed the 2,174-mile Appalachian Trail.

Hill dedicated the hikes to the memory of her sister, Cheryl Rose Walden, who died of breast cancer in 1998 at age 44.

In April, Hill set out alone on the Pacific Crest Trail, which stretches from Mexico to Canada through California, Oregon and Washington. She encountered more snow than expected in the Sierra Nevada mountains, which made finding the trail difficult.

Along the way, she celebrated her 50th birthday at California's



Denise Hill was injured at Dick's Pass in California's Desolation Wilderness during her second Walking for Walden hike to raise money for Hospice of Cincinnati.

Provided

Mammoth Lakes with her husband, Bruce, who flew out to be with her.

After her injury, Hill took a week off in hopes she would heal and still have time to finish before the snowy season in the north.

But after returning to the trail and trying to hike 20 miles a day with a 45-pound backpack, "(The injury) just kept nagging at me. It feels like being stabbed," Hill says.

Reluctantly, she came home in July after covering 1,331 miles.

"It's a great experience. I'm not sad about it," Hill says.

"I feel privileged to have had the chance to do it. And I hope I drew some awareness to hospice."

— John Johnston

PARTY ON THE HILL: The Indian Hill School District invites the community to join it at Party on the Hill, the district's largest fundraiser.

The event will be held at Kenwood Country Club on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 6:30 p.m. to 12 a.m. and will include a raffle drawing, silent

auction, balloon chance, where people pick a balloon and take the chance that there might be a gift certificate inside. Dinner and a live band is included. The event is exclusively for adults, and funds raised at the event will go to things such as technological advancements.

"Teachers submit what they need after the fundraiser, and we use the money to support needs that the school has that aren't funded by the district," said Tammy Hill, chair of the event.

At last year's event, 450 people attended, and Hill expects the same turnout this year.

Raised around \$78,500 was raised at last year's event. This year, the event is corporately sponsored and has raised \$14,000 before the event has even started.

"It's great to raise the money for the school," Hill said. "And it was nice last year because people had a really good time."

— Meghan Goth