

WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY

Another year ends and for the director of the IAT-QC a breeze of optimism is in the air because of ongoing developments and support from our major economic partners. In a context where the culture of hiking is still embryonic, and where access to financing is not easy as all economic sectors are forced to significant budget cuts, we find that the tourism sector continues to be a priority in a perspective of sustainable development, and that the IAT-QC is increasingly recognized as an attraction and an important tool for promoting the Gaspé region.

It is the same for the recognition of the IAT-QC on the international scene as we continue to develop toward Europe and create an increased complicity with the Appalachian Trail in the United States.

As for my part, the idea of developing more services for hikers and offering on behalf of the IAT-QC, guided excursions, is also a source of motivation, as it allows the preservation of expertise gained over the last 15 years while promoting the diversification of sources of income of the IAT-QC.

It is on these bases and with a notebook full of projects for several years to come that I will begin my eighth year as the IAT-QC director.

I want to thank the board members and our two co-presidents for their support. The same thanks go out to all the members who have participated in the trail's development over the years and so ensure that the IAT-QC can continue its long march toward sustainability.

To all, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2013.

Eric Chouinard



NEWS

Certificate of Recognition – Thru Hikers

We added to our website the procedure to obtain a Certificate of Recognition - Thru Hikers for all hikers who have successfully completed the entire section of the IAT-QC.

Link:

http://sia-iat.com/en/les_grands_randonneurs.html

The IAT-QC has also recently delivered two Certificates of Recognition - Thru-Hiker to Harold Guillemette and Marc Bélanger who have completed the entire section of the IAT-QC in 2010.



-To view the Web site of Harold Guillemette:

Link (French only):

<http://haroldguillemette.com/>

-To view the video report on YouTube:

Link (French only):

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi_CyNFCUAo&feature=geosearch

NEWS (Continued)

Sentier National au Québec :

To read the newsletter of the Sentier National au Québec (Le Trekkeur):

Link (French only):

<http://www.fqmarche.qc.ca/index1.asp?id=731>

New trails have joined the IAT

Norway

The Child Wanderer Path is a remarkable 136-kilometer footpath in Southern Norway that has recently become part of the International Appalachian Trail.

For more information about the Child Wanderer Path visit:

www.barnevandring.no

You Tube link to see the video on the Child Wanderer Path:

<http://youtu.be/OIWQuHGQqTU>

England

- England's Thames Path Joins IAT;
- England's Cotswold Way Joins IAT
- England's North Downs Way Joins IAT
- England's South West Coast Path Joins IAT

To view these articles, visit the News and publications section on the IAT-QC Website:

http://www.sia-iat.com/en/publications_communiques.html

or, visit the IAT Website:

<http://www.iat-sia.com/index.php>

NEWS (Continued)

Volunteers needed for our social networks!

Continuously updating our Facebook page, YouTube and Flickr accounts or even the development of a Twitter account is a big challenge for our small organization and we are looking for volunteers to help us with it. It could be a one-time commitment, but ideally would be continuous, to allow a monthly update, or updates at another frequency. Please let us know if you can help us for this important need.

Press review and news in 2012!

We have added recent publications in the News and Publications section of our website, including three extracts of the September 2012 edition of the magazine *Espaces* which presents an article on the most difficult hiking trails in Quebec, a list of the 10 highest mountains in Quebec and an article on top 10 excursions of three days in the province. As well, in *Géo Plein Air* magazine Simon Diotte presents three suggestions of long excursions in Quebec including a description of one of the guided excursions that will be offered in 2013 by the IAT-QC.

Espaces Magazine (French only) :

http://www.sia-iat.com/images/Upload/revue_espaces.pdf

Géo Plein Air Magazine (French only) :

http://www.sia-iat.com/images/Upload/revue_geo_plein_air.pdf



NEWS (Continued)

PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN PROGRESS:

- The project of approval of the IAT-QC as a GR Trail crossed another step as after a work meeting in the office of the FFRP at the end of October, we agreed to sign a cooperation agreement at our next meeting at the Destination Nature Salon in Paris in April 2013.



Picture : mission with the organizers of TDLG Group in the GR Trail in the Jura in France (October 27, 2012)

- The IAT-QC and the organization of the Traversée de la Gaspésie (TDLG) began discussions in order to organize a hiking TDLG, starting in 2014. The notoriety of the TDLG and its expertise could give a big boost to promote hiking in Gaspésie and the revival of a major annual event on the IAT-QC is one of the important actions of our development plan.

- During the last CA of the IAT-QC, Nov. 15, 2012, the members accepted the offer of the wind promoter Vents du Kempt in the negotiations carried out by Gaétan Roy for a financial contribution in order to adjust a small part of the trail and to support the management of the IAT-QC, namely an initial amount of \$ 10,000 for the year 2012 and 2013 and \$ 5,000 per year during 10 years starting in December 2014.

- Concerning the maintenance and the continuous improvement of the trail, we started improving the signage of the IAT along major roads including the 132, and made an agreement with *Les Ateliers Léopold Desrosiers* for the use in subcontracting of our engraving machine. So, during the Winter of 2013, they will be able to prepare the signage according to our needs and future projects.

PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN PROGRESS (Continued):

- The pilot project for offering guided excursions and services to hikers will be presented in our communications tools starting March 2013, after having agreed on the operating terms with the Sépaq and Aventure écotourisme Québec (AEQ).

- Our important projects in 2013 include the continuous improvement of the path and the GR project. As well, we plan to launch a fundraising campaign to solicit private partners for long-term basis agreements.

Eric Chouinard
Director and secretary

Journal du Trek :

IAT-QC participated in a press tour organized by Tourism Quebec, Adventure Ecotourism Quebec (AEQ) and Quebec Maritime, inviting the reporter and photographer Vincent Gaudin who has developed a specialised website on hiking and trekking. www.journaldutrek.com

The IAT-QC will be his destination of the month in March 2013 and until then we invite you to access the link to the Facebook page of the Journal du Trek:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151259283593875.469764.362666513874&type=1>

Picture of Vincent Gaudin at mont Jacques-Cartier.

<http://www.vincentgaudin.com/>



Dear members,

In this Holiday season, our thoughts turn to those who have helped make this ending year a success.

We are pleased that this Holiday season gives us the opportunity to offer our members our best wishes for health and happiness for the New Year.



*The whole IAT-QC team wishes you
a Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year 2013.*

