

As a hiker he has always liked high vantage points. In the Hollywood Hills he would climb to the top and see Los Angeles spread out below him. "One time I was there and there was an earthquake. The whole hill shook. I could hear the car alarms going off. It was a different feeling than being in a building. You didn't have to worry about something falling on you."

In Henderson County he would wade with other cousins in the streams on the land. The eastern continental divide goes through it. His grandparents also took him to Sliding Rock and have Kentucky Fried Chicken picnics at the Mt. Pisgah picnic area.

Eventually, the beauty of the appalachian mountains lured him here permanently. He moved to the family farm in 1996. The trails in Los Angeles were more like firebreaks, and life in Western North Carolina was more attractive than southern California.

Caring for his ailing father and then his grandmother took most of his time, but eventually he was able to hike on his own in Pisgah Forest. He went on his first CMC hike after a teller at Bank of America told him about the club in 2004. It was a half-day hike to Runion near Hot Springs. He was hooked.

"The club hikes on new trails. They do shuttles and key swaps."

He still likes hikes with vantage points, and he enjoys the social aspects of the club. "There is a combination of people you know and meeting new people."

"I met my wife in the club. We met on the News Year's Day hike and the next New Years Day we were on our honeymoon." Of course, she enjoys hiking too. Now he and his wife (Kathy Kyle) hike most weekends.

When Michael is not hiking he enjoys reading about American History. He also enjoys traveling. He began traveling after finishing college at UCLA. He got a one-month Eurail pass, and toured throughout Europe. He went back several years later with his cousin to see Eastern Europe. He has also traveled in the Mid-east, Asia and Central America.

He and his wife are planning a self-guided hut to hut trek in Switzerland this summer where there will be many high vantage points, and who knows they may meet another CMC hiker on the trail.