

Meet Marcia Bromberg - January 2012

By Danny Bernstein



Marcia Bromberg became CMC President at the beginning of the year. I immediately saw that she's going to be a great, active president and will continue to be an asset to CMC.

Marcia had just come back from a New Year's weekend trip in Mobile, Alabama. "A group of women get together every year at the end of the year. We all worked together at Tulane University and grew up professionally. We also saw each other's children grow up," Marcia said.

I had the good fortune to sit down with her in her West Asheville neighborhood.

People around here are always asking. "Where do you come from?" Where do you feel you come from?

I grew up in Miami but I don't feel like that's my home town. I've lived all over.

Tell me about your life after Miami and before CMC

I went to Emory College in

Atlanta and majored in math. I got married after college and followed my husband as he developed his career. While moving around, I got an MBA with a concentration in Finance.

We then moved to New Orleans where I started working as an administrator at Tulane University. I was there for 16 years. By the time I left, I was the Chief Financial Officer at the University.

And then you moved to Asheville?

In 1994, I moved to Asheville to open up a PJ franchise coffee shop. I knew the woman who started the franchise in New Orleans but it wasn't a good fit for Asheville. The coffee shop

was situated in a strip mall in North Asheville and it didn't work out. I struggled for a year and a half and lost a lot of money.

I then continued working at universities and educational nonprofits, first at the University of Wisconsin in Madison as the Chief Financial Officer, then at Wesleyan College in Connecticut. I ended my professional career in 2005 and celebrated it with a five-month driving trip with my second husband, Bill. I met Bill hiking out west and he still lives in Albuquerque. We travel well together.

I have two daughters, both living in New York City, and a granddaughter.

Marcia came back to Asheville in 2006 and now lives in West Asheville. She loves her neighborhood.

When did you join CMC?

I joined CMC in 2006. I figured I'd learn new hikes and meet other hikers. My first hike with CMC was the infamous half-day bee sting hike. But I came back. After a while, I realized that I should lead hikes.

The bee sting hike refers to a Sunday half-day hike. At the beginning of the hike, a new hiker who was allergic to bees, got stung but didn't say anything. He had a bad reaction and the EMTs needed to be called.

What kind of hikes do you like?

It's all about me! By that I mean that I don't have to take care of anyone else any more - not children or parents. I wanted to lead hikes that fit into my lifestyle. So I wondered why CMC doesn't do more Saturday hikes. Also, couldn't we start some hikes later?

I went to the Hiking Committee and offered to do a survey on hiking preferences. I found that people wanted Saturday hikes. At that time, there was an all-day Saturday hike scheduled only for the last weekend of the month.

At Marcia's instigation, the club added another Saturday hike which we call a 3/4 day hike. It starts at 10 A.M. and is no more than 7 to 8 miles.

Now, Marcia is going through a year's worth of hike reports to see whom we serve. For 1/2 day hikes, she had reports for 31 hikes and 400 different names. From that, we can see that CMC serves a lot of people. She's planning a survey to CMC members on what they're looking for in a hiking club.

Marcia started up the ladder as a Councilor-at-large, then VP and now President.

What do you think you can offer as President?

Our mission is to promote hiking in Western North Carolina. I care about the CMC mission. We need to understand and serve our members.

We need to find new volunteers to lead hikes. I hate to see dates on the hiking schedule without a hike because we couldn't find a leader. I would like to try family hikes and maybe do scavenger hikes. We also need to improve our connections with the press.

If you could choose one hike to take visitors on, (regardless of the difficulty), what would you choose?

- 1. Climb up to Black Balsam off of FS 816. Then from there, you can continue on the Art Loeb Trail as far as you want.*
- 2. NC 215 on the Flat Laurel Creek Trail. You can intersect Sam Knob Trail, go up to Sam Knob, up to Little Sam Knob and back on the MST. On the way, you can go up Devils Courthouse.*

What other causes are you involved in?

I'm on the Asheville Greenway Commission and I am their representative to the Buncombe County Greenway Commission. We're working to create Greenways and trails throughout the county. This gives many ways for people to feed their body and minds.

I'm now past president of Manna Food Bank. I just finished my term as President. At Manna, I was part of a team that worked to find an Executive Director. I changed the Manna Board to make it a working board.

If I have any extra time, I like to garden. I eat out of my garden all summer. I love my neighborhood. When I don't hike, I like to walk through West Asheville.

What is the message you want to send out to CMC folks?

We're an all-volunteer organization. We need you. Come and work with us.