

*A hiker named Harry Von B.  
Would roam through the desert with glee.  
He'd glide through the cactus  
With the ease of long practice  
But "why?" is what no one could see.*

Author Unknown

I went on my first hike with SAHC in December 1984. It was billed as an off-trail loop hike through Tucson Mountain Park, starting and ending at Gates Pass. It was an unusually cold winter day with a near-gale-force wind making it colder. The leader was a white-haired man, who was charging around like a wild man, getting things organized. He was wearing a front-zipper jump suit, unzipped to the waist. His white chest hair was blowing in the wind, and his eyes were blazing. It was Harry von Bergen.

On the hike we came across a full rack of deer antlers. Our youngest hiker was very interested in them, and Harry assured him that they were fair game, since we were at that spot outside the boundaries of Tucson Mountain Park. The young hiker fastened the antlers to the top of his pack and carried them out. As we descended to Gates Pass, a Sheriff's deputy was parked waiting. When he saw the antlers, he beckoned the hiker over and said "I'll take those antlers." Harry was morally outraged, but was dissuaded from making an issue of it.

Another winter hike Harry led was to Bighorn Peak on Pusch Ridge. We started from Catalina State Park on the north side of Pusch Ridge. With no trail, it was a case of route finding up the steep slope. The entire north side of Pusch Ridge was covered with six inches of wet snow from a recent storm, so we slipped back two steps for every three steps we took forward. When we eventually got to the top, we found that the entire south side of Pusch Ridge was free of snow – all melted. Harry had brought us up the most difficult possible route under perhaps the worst possible conditions. The more verbal abuse we heaped on Harry, the more he cackled with glee, so we gave up and joined him in enjoying the sunshine and the view.

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