

# The Trail Talk

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4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road  
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

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## *President's Message...*

*Fall is here and we will be sharing the woods with hunters so please keep this in mind, try to hike on Sundays as there is no Sunday hunting in CT. If you are hiking in neighboring states it is required that everyone in the woods wear an orange vest and or hat. Some states are now imposing fines on hikers for not obeying the new law. This time of the year the weather in New England can be fine when we start off and turn nasty quickly. Please be prepared with gloves, hats and whatever it takes to be comfortable. Fluids are still a necessary item even when the temperature has dropped.*

### *Annual Dinner Meeting:*

*The date has been set for Saturday March 20, 2004 in Cheshire Grange, Cheshire, CT. More information in next newsletter. Save the date!!!*

*Have fun and be safe. Hope to see you on the trails.*

*Carol A Langley*



**Long Trail Maintenance  
May 16 - 18**

As usual for these 3 day work trips in Vermont, on Friday people kept arriving at various times after driving north from Connecticut. Nanette Roina, Bill Brodnitzki, Gary Gustavson and I met at Route 9 and Somerset Road then drove the 9+ miles of dirt roads to the trail head, arriving around 11:00. Zig zagging around moose droppings, we walked the 3+ miles to the Kid Gore Shelter flagging the unmarked trail as we walked for the others that would follow. Clear, cool weather. Great view at the shelter. After setting up our gear for the weekend we walked north for about 1.5 miles to a vista, clipping and inspecting the trail. On the return trip we walked our proposed relocation. About a third of a mile in length, it has been flagged and is on the schedule for the Forest Service to review for their approval. Later Jack Sanga, Ginny Waller, Marilyn Plowman & Steven Keri strolled in. Steve had hiked the 7 miles in from the Wardsboro Road so could inform us of the condition of our section of the trail north.

Saturday morning we woke to a clear sky and 30 degrees. About 7:30 Frank Maine, Timmy Dean and Douglass Pallindino arrived after spending the night about a mile down the mountain.

We split up into several work groups. Gary, Jack, Frank, Timmy and Steve wanted to get to the top of Glastenbury Mountain on this clear day. That's an 8 mile round trip and about 1,000 feet gain in elevation. They cleared about 9 fallen trees, blowdowns, some with a hand saw and some with a chain saw. The top of the mountain still had patches of snow and ice. The top of Glastenbury has a fire tower on it. Climbing the tower gives a 360 degree view of southern VT, NY, Ma including a great view of Mt. Greylock and off into southern NH. The tower is scheduled to be refurbished in 2004. The funding is available and the planning is underway.

Doug walked about half way up the mountain doing trail work. Marylyn and Ginny spent the day closer to the shelters cleaning the trail and working on drainage. Nanette, Bill and I worked on a long time contemplated short relocation to get around a boggy area about ¼ of a mile south of Kid Gore. Oooops, I mean Trail Adjustment. It is called a "Trail

Adjustment" not a "Trail Relocation" because relocations need approval from the Forest Service in The National Forest, where our section is located, - a years long event. This 30 yard Adjustment fell into the category of "It's easier to get forgiveness than to get permission". Anyway we need to go back in the fall and blaze a few trees in the Adjustment. About mid day we were joined by Dave Hardy, Director of Field Programs for the GMC.

Sunday morning started with a good sunrise. Not as spectacular as our trips in October when the sun rises directly in front of the shelter. After a hard days work on Saturday everyone was ready to hit the trail for the return trip. After cleaning the fireplace, sweeping the shelter, etc., we all headed out. Thanks to all for a very successful trip and the mountains of work done.

Workers- Frank Maine & Tim Dean, Doug Pallindino, Ginny Waller, Marilyn Plowman, Jack Sanga, Bill Brodnitzki, Gary Gustavson, Nanette Roina, Dave Hardy, Steven Keri.

Dick Krompegal

*Editor's note: This article was cut short unintentionally in the last Trail Talk. My apology.*

**Our club's big Thank You to Ginny Waller for donating a pair of loppers for future work. Thanks!**



**Long Trail Maintenance  
June 20 - 22**

Rain Didn't Stop The CT Section Crew. There are no wimps in our section! Nine stalwart workers including three delightful children age 6, 7 and 10. Olivia and Drew, children of Jack Sang and Kaelin Hester, granddaughter of Bill & Gerry Brodnitzki reported for duty. Frank Maine was the first to ar-

rive in the dark Thursday night when he was able to stay in the shelter with other hikers. The rainy weather seems to have slowed down the thru hikers. Those that passed through often preferred tenting to thwart the black flies which were horrendous. Trails & shelters VP Dick Krompegal and Marge Hackbarth joined Frank Friday afternoon. Mother Nature gave them a break and turned off the monsoon like rains they encountered on I91 in MA so it was dry when they pitched their tents. Frank & Dick went north to clear blowdowns & to clip brush as far as Forest Road 71. Marge stayed at the shelter as the official greeter for hikers and members.

Using Marge's tarp Jack and Bill erected a rain proof awning over the picnic table. The adults spent the evening snacking and drinking. The kids quickly bonded. The adults had wisely brought a book for Olivia, an audio tape for Drew, and playing cards and jacks for all. Frank was a great favorite with the kids in playing jacks. Mrs. B, as Drew respectfully called her, played "Go Fish" with him and Kaelin. The sun went down in a ball of fire so everyone had a comfortable, dry night.

Saturday was mostly dry so a lot was accomplished going south to the vista above Lydia's Rest, about 3.5 miles out. With his trusty chain saw Frank removed more blowdowns. At least 10 blowdowns were removed over the weekend. Accompanied by their father and grandparents all three children helped clip and walked the whole 7 miles round trip. Bill & Dick refreshed the blazes on the way back to the shelter. Marge cleaned waterbars but was only able to do about a mile of trail. We need a new waterbar specialist.

All got back to the shelter in time as Mother Nature went back to her old tricks. The hot dog roast had to be abandoned and Dick boiled the franks. Marge thought they were better than the usual charred dogs. The children and their caregivers went to bed early. The remaining crew stayed up late talking much of the evening. Frank's friend Mario Santori had hiked in for the evening and helped added to the conversation. Retiring to the tents in the rain was not fun.

By morning Mother Nature changed her mind again and turned off the deluge. We were able to pack out soggy tents and equipment Sunday morning. Did it feel great to sleep in a dry, soft bed at home.

Many thanks for another great weekend of work.

Written By Marge Hackbarth

Workers include Olivia, Drew & Jack Sanga, Kaelin Hester accompanied by Gerry & Bill Brodnitzki, Frank Maine, Mario Santori

Dick Krompegal.



### Lower Mahoosac Range July 4-5

I decided to get into the woods for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday weekend and hike solo, so prior to the trip I mapped out a two-day loop route on the rugged Mahoosac Range in northern New Hampshire.

After a two mile road walk from the parking lot on Rte. 2 and the A.T. trail crossing in Shelburne, I started a 3.1 mile, 2700 foot ascent of the Peabody Trail through a grove of hemlock, hobblebush, maple beech oak and white birch trees. The quiet of the early morning hours and pockets of fog between the mountain ranges felt peaceful and relaxing, yet eerie with only the occasional rustle of a chipmunk and the chirp of a sparrow.

With the haze sun waking up and an increase in temperature and humidity, the mosquitoes became more active and started to feed. So I put on my headnet and continued to ascend to my first view and absorb the picturesque slopes of the Carter-Moriah Range and the Androscoggin River in the distance. A nice breeze helped keep the mosquitoes at bay while I listened to the chirps of sparrows and thrushes entwined within the rushing of water from the Great Falls below and thought now this is really living. I continued to ascend just as the sun burst open from behind the

low gray clouds, and entered a muddy area where the south branch of the Peabody Brook flows, and spotted a mink scurrying off and wedging itself behind rotten logs and hobblebush. I stopped and tried to pursue it for a snapshot opportunity, but the sweat pouring into my eyes blinded my vision.

I took a brief break amongst the hemlock and beech trees; splashing water on my face to cool down. Leaving the gurgling of the brook behind, I finished off ascending the Peabody Trail and entered a vast and thick spruce grove that surrounds Dream Lake immediately became engulfed in a feeling of remoteness. My first thought was that this is definitely an attraction for moose and sure enough for the next half-mile there were very large moose prints in the mud.

Lost in thought with the distant sound of bullfrogs croaking, I went on my way climbing the feeder trail until it connected with the A.T. and proceeded south-west hiking around Dream Lake and dodging piles of fresh moose dung.

As I started to descend into a creek saddle, I came across fresh bear prints in the mud and immediately became excited at the idea of seeing a black bear, then thought highly unlikely since bears have a keen sense of smell and hearing, and is probably long gone. Continuing to hike along the muddy trail and remote trail, I was jolted out of the "lost in thought" mode again by a high-pitched screech and started mimicking it. As I came closer to the area of where the screech came from, I saw for a split second the break of a Bald Eagle from the top of a spruce tree. A feeling of awe came over me. It was the first time I saw an eagle in the wild. I just stood there feeling numb for a while.

I continued along the A.T. with the image of the eagle taking flight still in my head and climbed to the top of Wocket Ledge, the spur of Bald Cap Mt. at 2800 feet took in the view and cooled down with the breeze. Descending down the trail, I checked my temperature gauge and it read 86 degrees. I could hardly wait to get to a cold spring to cool myself off. It was now 1pm.

About half way down my descent, the

trail edged along Paige Pond, literally crossing over a 30-yard long sturdily built beaver dam. I stopped to admire their work while moving towards Trident Col tent site to spend the night. Coming along the edge of the trail, I spotted three garter snakes and made an attempt to photograph them, but as usual they slithered under leaves and debris. After a short climb out of the col, I came to an open face exposure of the first of three pinnacles that make up the Trident Col Peak with a spectacular view south encompassing Mt. Crag, Middle Mt. and First Mt. which makes up the slope that borders the Peabody Trail. With a nice breeze blowing, I took a break and absorbed the surrounding area. The calmness came over me.

Moving on after an hour of lingering, I arrived at Trident Col tent site where I set up camp and freshened up at the spring. Then I headed back out to the open face exposure to take in more view and let my thoughts wander. After relaxing a while, I turned in for the night and dozed off to the sounds of nature.

I woke the next morning to the sounds of sparrows and the buzzing of black flies, and took my time with breakfast and packing as usual, then set off ascending the A.T. 700 feet out of Trident Col to a pinnacle of Cascade Mt. I felt grateful for yet another rewarding view and being up close to wildlife. Coming down from the pinnacle, the A.T. mended through a field of wood fern, hobblebush and the occasional weathered white birch, which made for a nice contrast of texture and balance. As I came out of the field of fern, I ascended into the cool shade of a spruce and hemlock grove, which was welcomed relief from the heat and humidity, then a quick descent into a swampy col and an ascent through a mix of hemlock, spruce and beech trees to the top of Cascade Mt.

Descending from the top, I followed the trail through a boggy col. The col being very buggy, I donned my headnet and received instant comfort. Leaving the col, I began the ascent of Mt. Hayes following the winding trail which took me up steeply from 1900 feet to 2600 feet.



Climbing towards the top of Mt. Hayes, I came across a garter snake and more signs of moose in the form of dung. Finally I reached the top of Mt. Hayes dripping in sweat, and welcoming a breeze, I slipped off my drenched shirt, chugged some water and rested. Soon, I dozed off to the sound of silence. Awakening short after, I followed the A.T. descending off Mt. Hayes through a buggy spruce and hemlock grove in rugged terrain towards Rte. 2. Coming off one of several stone staircases on the southwest side of Mt. Hayes, I almost stepped on another garter snake that was stretched out across the trail, startling it to retrieve under rotten logs and debris. A few hundred yards down the trail I came to an open ledge with a view of the Androscoggin River below and spent some time looking out at the hazy landscape. The sun was now high amongst the cottonball clouds and the temperature was now up to 90 degrees.

The trail flattened out a little at 500 foot elevation, so I took a break for about an hour, listening and watching wildlife, and even though having seen only the usual suspects, I did not want to leave the woods. Finally I reached the bottom of the trail where it turns onto an old logging road that took me back to Rte. 2 and so ended my two day journey in the lower Mahoosac Range.

*Parking is available on Rte. 2 at the A.T. trail crossing in the town of Shelburne, New Hampshire. Follow the white blazes north across the Androscoggin River and then bear right onto North Road for about 1 mile. Access to the Peabody Trail will be on your left, just pass a horse farm. Parking passes may be obtained at Pinkham Notch Visitor Center on Rte. 16 just south of Gorham. The cost is \$5.00 per pass.*

Steve Keri



**Ragged Mt. Full Moon Hike  
July 12**

As we entered the woods the gentle breeze we had felt all day ceased. Following an old woods road for a short distance we found the red dot trail, which we would follow to the Plateau of Ragged Mt. As we move along we saw two deer grazing in the late afternoon sun. The heat of the day was gone and it was going to be a pleasant hike. We passed by some high points but we moved on since it was not our planned spot to watch the sunset. Just before we reached our plateau we met two rock climbers with sandals and skinned toes, no water, not sure of the way out with night closing in and at least 2-3 miles to go. We gave them directions and a bottle of water and off they went.

Finally reaching our planned destination we were cooled by the gentle breeze from the west as we sat and watched the sunset and the sky changed colors from pink to crimson and finally sank below the horizon. During this we had a little serenade from a bluebird and them some chatter from a Cedar-Wax Wing in the bushes. Time for the headlamps and to find the full moon. Just on time the moon rose yellow and huge, what a great view we had from the rocks. Then we saw fireworks from Harbor Park in Middletown on the Connecticut River. What a great way to spend a Saturday night. We really took our time leaving so we finished up quite late at around 10:00. Thanks for all that joined me. Let's do it again.

Hikers: Doreen Scott, Matt Golec, Craig Pocock Marie Lorenzo, John Bensenhaver, Karen Santos, Sarah O'Hare, Leslie & Richard Chandler, Carol Langley



**Canoe/Raft/Hike Barryville, N.Y.  
July 25-27**

The last one to arrive at the bungalow house was myself. The others arrived earlier and had a nice campfire burning and an intense game of scrabble going. It was early to bed as we all had traveled a distance and some had worked.

The river was moving fast as we had our CRASH course in water safety from the Indian Head Canoes & Campground. Ken and Sarah took off and down the river. Jack and Carol took off and in the river they went. Two minutes later the river is rushing over us as we are under the canoe. Next I see Jack being swept down the river hanging onto a canoe filled with water. All that was visible was Jack's YELLOW hat and then he was gone. And there I was with a canoe paddle in hand wedged against a rock. This soon drew the attention of people camping at Cedar Rapids Campground, but no one seemed to know how to get this lady out of this river. There were strong currents, rapids and many rocks so I didn't dare just try to float down the river.

After what seemed like an eternity Jack appears walking along the river, a Ranger, and a life guard. Still all talk and no action. Legs starting to feel numb from the rush of water that was hip deep. Finally, Jack and the lifeguard were able to reach me and I was escorted to a rock where we all waited to be shuttled back to shore in a canoe by a brave Ranger who knew just how to get to us and get back to shore. We were informed that we could not get back in the canoe because of liability rules. So we were given a "BIG BLUE ARK" it was a rubber raft but needed 6 people to force it down the river. JACK THE MAN and CRASH CAROL paddled away. The rapids were now fun but still water was a different story, so I tied the raft to Ken & Sarah's canoe and we paddled away. This was fun for a while then it became a drag for the canoe so we were set free and after paddling for 15 miles we finally made it to our take out point and the school bus that would shuttle us back to the campground.

The river was quite a challenge but would have been enjoyed more with less people. It was like I-84 and I-91 at rush hour. We then feasted on an all you could eat barbecue and had a few games of horse shoes before settling around the campfire for beer and popcorn.

Up early and dined on a gourmet breakfast thanks to Sarah. Pack up and drive to High Point S.P. in New Jersey. Well Jack was the only one who reached the tower on High Point since he was ahead of us and the leader was misled. Out we hiked to CR 519 where we had spotted a

car. Dairy Queen stop and then it was on to I-84 East and the end of another adventure for the GMC.

Hikers/Canoers/Rafters, Sarah O'Hare, Ken Williamson, Jack Sagna, Carol Langley

### Mount Jefferson (or Lost in the Fog) August 2

It was shaping up to be a classic hike in the White Mountains. There were 7 people who had expressed a firm interest in going. One by one they dropped away until there were only 3 hardy souls who would actually brave the elements and pit their might and muscle against the formidable Mount Jefferson.

Like all well planned and well scouted GMC trips, this one was meticulously planned. Which means nobody showed up when or where they were supposed to. I was the first to arrive on Friday. I had checked out both drop locations. We were going to end up at Castle Trail just off of Rt 2. That one was easy to find. We were going to start from Caps Ridge off of Jefferson Notch road. The map used to locate this was a little off. However, through dogged perseverance I did manage to locate the trail start.

Saturday morning was cloudy and rainy as we went to breakfast. By the time we were done with breakfast, 8:00 ish, we had determined that it would be just the three of us. We dropped one car at Castle Trail and headed off to Caps Ridge. We were on the trail by 8:40. By now it had stopped raining, however, we started out in the fog and the mist.

The climb to the top was only 2.5 miles with a gain of about 2700 feet. The most challenging part of the climb was trying to stay on the trail. Once we were above the tree line, you couldn't see more than 50 - 60 feet. Often the first hiker couldn't see the last hiker. I am proud to say we only took one wrong trail near the top. I think that is some kind of GMC accuracy record. (Maybe we were lost more often than we realized in the fog).

We were at the summit by lunch time,

where we ate our lunch, and had another group take our picture. You can see us standing proudly in the middle of no where.

Around 12:30 we began descending via the Castle Trail. At first, the decent was through a boulder field making footing treacherous. The rocks were still wet and slippery. This was slow going. About 20 minutes into the descent, the clouds parted and we were treated to a spectacular sunny view of the other mountain tops around us. Unfortunately, none of my companions could be convinced to race back up the mountain and take pictures. SIGH. We do have several pictures of us hiking in the sunshine.

The Castle Trail is about 5 miles long. It seemed that in the first 2.5 - 3 miles from the summit we dropped the full height of Mt. Jefferson. The last 1.5 to 2 miles was more like hiking on flat ground. Towards the end of the hike we went through an immense raspberry field. Mandy sampled many of the berries, but Grace and I were saving room for supper.

Back to the car around 4:30 - 4:45. Pick up the other car and back to the hotel. A quick shower for each of us and then out for the final supper at the Grille. We all reflected upon the day and contrasted the hiking in the clouds and the fog with the previous years where there has been nothing but sunshine. We all decided that it was a nice experience, and a side benefit was that we didn't spend 6 hours in the brutal sun. Everyone actually had water left at the end of the hike.

After checking out the location for next years hike, next year we decided that it will be Mt Monroe.

Hikers: Amanda B, Grace K, Jack S.



**Mattabesetts River - Midweek Paddle  
August 6**

On this lovely August evening, Eleanor Poole and her friend Linda Steele, Henry Smith and myself put in at Rt. 160. The water was moving fast because of the recent heavy rain. This was the first time that I used my inflatable as a kayak and we really had an easy time to go around the river. As we reached a bend in the river along a farmer's field, a large broad winged hawk flew over our heads. Before we knew it we reached the rapids which we thought were part of a dam so we put out and did a small portage. Along the way we came upon some blowdowns that we could not see on our scouting of the river earlier this summer. So it was a little pushing, going over and under trees but we made it.

As we moved along on a nice flat part of the river Eleanor heard a lot of water rushing and thought there was a dam. There sure was probably a 15-ft drop with rocks below. Not a good thing. Just before the dam on the river's west bank there was an old cement slab where we pulled out. Time was ticking and the sky was darkening, where are we and how do we get out?



Henry and Linda being the youngsters scouted a place down an embankment broke away branches and cleared a path to carry down Eleanor's 16th foot canoe and mine. The water just the below the dam was anything but smooth. First Eleanor and Linda took off and did fine next Henry and Carol went and they too did just fine. Clear sailing for a bit thought we might even make the Cromwell Pub before it got totally black.

Now there were more blowdowns and Eleanor took out her flashlight. Unfortunately after several tries we decided the batteries were dead. There was a nasty blowdown and we were having a real struggle. Trying to figure out where we were I recognized a sand bar on the other side and some parking lot lights which told me we where behind Wal-Mart in Cromwell and would never make it to the Pub. Linda used her cell phone to call a friend and gave him our location. I then paddled back up to the sand bar. Because my kayak/canoe is white the others were able to see it. Doing some fast thinking I remembered an emergency light attached to my keys. Climb up the bank and starting flashing the

light soon we heard a voice say I have your location. Once again we were safe and hauled out the canoes and gear which Henry and Linda stayed with as Eleanor and I got a ride to get our cars.

Hope you enjoyed the river escapade Eleanor, Linda and Henry and thanks for join me. This next spring I plan to have a work party to clean up this river so canoeing can once again be a pleasant experience.

Carol Langley

### **Martha's Vineyard Bike Trip September 5-7**

Well once again Ken is making me write the article. I think it would probably be a more creative story if he wrote it but what are you going to do. The trip



started out with everyone taking a different ferry to MV that eventually landed all of us at the hostel near Tisbury. One group had an enjoyable day riding and beaching at Chappaquidick. The water was warm and wonderful. Another group spent the day exploring some of the towns on their way to the hostel. That evening we took the bus into Edgartown, where a good bunch of us had a nice dinner. Everyone arrived to the hostel by 9pm where we chit-chatted until lights out.

On Saturday, different groups headed in different directions with a majority of the group heading out to Gay Head and Jack headed off for kayaking lessons. At Gay Head we had lunch and then headed to the beach. Some wandered to the nudist beach (quite by accident and certainly diverse) while others headed back to the hostel and then to Oak Bluff via bus (that is except Dave Chatel, the speed rider) for lunch. We met back at the hostel at 7pm for a group spaghetti dinner that was tasty. We visited with other hostel guests and ended the evening with a competitive group game of Trivial Pursuit.

On Sunday everyone was catching a different ferry home, so after a group picture, small groups departed for different destinations. Some headed for shopping in the towns while others went to walk

through the gingerbread houses or do more riding. It's hard to say how many miles we rode but I say most people totalled between 60-80 miles for the weekend. The weather was picture perfect. We are open to suggestions if there is an interest in continuing our island series for next fall.

Biking gang: Jack Sanga, Sarah O'Hare, Carol Langley, Bill Falconer, Regina and Dave Chatel, Laurene Sorensen, Lora Miller, Adele Ferreira, Doreen Scott, Marie Lorenzo, Jennifer Golec, and Matthew Golec.

Leaders: Ken Williamson, Mandy Brink

### **Metacomet Trail September 13**

This nine mile hike was scheduled again after experiencing it in a torrential rain last June. The leader had wanted to hike it in good weather as great vistas were anticipated along the ridgeline from Tariffville to Suffield. As the leader's ambition was less than the group's, she dropped them at the trailhead on the Farmington River and drove to another trailhead to wait while they hiked the first two miles. After a snack and a snooze her concerns were raised as the group didn't show in a timely fashion. A search and rescue was decided and within minutes the group was found. Apparently their chatter caused enough distraction for them to take a wrong turn.

We all continued along the ridgeline, pausing at the vistas of the Farmington River, Tariffville, Simsbury and Granby. The sky was heavily clouded with rain threatening so the views weren't as clear as had been expected. In addition, noise pollution was constant, from airplanes from nearby Bradley Airport! and traffic from the roads below, all marring the quiet of the woods.

Dave had left his car at the halfway point expecting to leave the hike early but after arrival at his departure spot he decided to continue on with the rest of us. He figured he could listen to the opera through his earphones on the trail nearly as well as he could at home. Much to our disappointment

(delight?), Dave did not join in on any arias.

A post hike pizza was shared at J & G Pizza, then we departed for home.

Hikers: Dave Amidon, Lora Miller, Ken Williamson, Leslie and Richard Chandler, Sarah O'Hare

**Backpacking Trip  
Bourne Pond to Mad Tom Notch  
September 26-28**

John and Steve told me I'd better sugar coat this writeup if I ever wanted anyone to go on one of my trips again. So I suppose I should say that it was a beautiful, sunny weekend, that the trail was delightful and that despite our packs, we were light on our feet, our souls tuned into the nature surrounding us.

So in reality, what's a little rain? Who needed Stratton Pond when we had our own little lake on the trail? And certainly there was plenty of mud-slides for all of us (and I don't mean the alcoholic drink). Who notices when the sign says the trail is impassible because of severe weather and you say, lets try it anyway, how bad can it be?



Does it really matter that after hiking 14 miles you find out that they've relocated the tenting site another mile and a half up a mountain, or that at

the end of the trip you've staged your cars in the wrong parking lot. What's another mile in the pouring down rain anyway?

It all started with a late start into the South Bourne Pond Shelter. We did half the hike by daylight and the other half by flashlight. We arrived at the empty shelter and all agreed to skip the tents. We settled into the shelter and talked by candlelight.

On Saturday, for the sake of being "pure" we decided to take the Lye Brook Trail to join the AT, despite a warning that the trail had been made impassible by severe weather. We figured, "How bad can it really be?" Well it was quite the mess of downed trees

that we ended up bushwhacking through (and I promised my niece Sarah that there would be no bushwhacking), quite the challenge with packs. But we made it through and proceeded on our way. After a 13-mile day, we were very eager to get to the Bromley Tenting area. Instead we of finding the site, we found a sign saying the shelter was another 1.3 miles up the mountain and the tenting area was relocated with the shelter. We hiked a while more and after enough whining, we convinced Steve (the energizer bunny) that we needed to stop and make our own campsite for the night. It was good we did because we no sooner had our tents set up than the skies opened up and it started pouring. It rained all night.

On Sunday morning, we had a cold breakfast, packed up the wet gear and headed up Bromley Mountain. The trail was slippery rocks and roots, ankle deep mud or water covered. It was delightful hiking. Once we were soaked to the bones, we hiked out to Mad Tom Notch only to find out that we had parked our cars in the wrong parking place. We had the privilege of hiking another mile in the rain to find them. We packed up our wet soggy selves and headed for pizza. This trip was kind of like childbirth, you need some time to forget it before you want to do it again. So anyone game?

Group leader Mandy Brink, Hikers Steve Keri, John Bensenhaver and Sarah Stone.

# The Trail Talk

October, 2003

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