

The Connecticut Section Of The Green Mountain Club

The Trail Talk

VOL. XXXXI NO. IV

October 2008



The President's Message

There is an old saying "Safety in Numbers". The safe number that outdoor clubs are adopting is 4. Why the number 4? If someone becomes injured or ill there is one person to stay with the injured person and two people to hike out for help. If there are only two, know your location and call for help. Many times in the mountains there is no cell phone service, do you know what to do in an emergency?

The GMC and the AMC both offer SOLO Wilderness First Aid classes. For info on classes held by the GMC please refer to your latest issue of the Long Trail News. These classes are held in Vermont at the GMC Headquarters, Waterbury Center. In CT, the AMC offers the same SOLO Wilderness First Aid class at White Memorial Conservation Center in Litchfield. This is a two day, 16 hour class – from people who have taken the class they say it is definitely worth the money and time invested.

For info in CT go to education@ct-amc.org or call Dale Geslien (203-778-3651).

Fall time is here and with it comes hunting season. Being in the woods anywhere in New England you should be wearing "BLAZE ORANGE" VEST, HAT, GLOVES, etc. We need to be visible to those out there with hunting equipment waiting for something to move. DON'T MAKE YOURSELF A TARGET!!! Please do not wear WHITE hats or gloves.

Let's get out and play in the great outdoors!!!

See you on the trail !!

Carol A. Langley



New Members

Robert Andrew
Glastonbury, CT

Dennis Himes
Vernon, CT

William Jankowski
Mystic, CT

The Ives Trail, Part 1 7/13/08 Mike Cunningham

Suppose They Gave a Hike and Nobody Came.

One of my non-paying jobs is the Chairmanship of the Ives Trail Task Force. The Ives Trail Phase 1 is not completed yet. There are a few hurdles yet to be overcome, but the idea is that it will go from Ridgefield's Bennett's Ponds area to two Ridgefield open space areas into undeveloped Wooster Mountain State Park then follow some old woods roads and cross a privately held area into Danbury's Tarrywile Park, the largest wholly owned by the city city park in Connecticut, then around a couple of reservoirs in Bethel and through a large open space area in Bethel called Terre Haute. Phase 2 involves going from that Bethel open space area into adjoining Redding open space with existing trails and connecting up by trail into Devil's Den in Weston. When completed Phase 1 will be 15-18 miles and Phase 2 would add another 12 or so miles, but first we need to finish Phase 1. This 15 or so miles includes three road crossings. The road crossings make convenient divisions for the parts of the trail. This hike was on the part from Bennett's Ponds to Route 7.

This section includes several good views, a long section within sight of the pond (there used to be two separate ponds

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The Trail Talk is published four times a year in January, April, July and October. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Reports of activities and articles must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Send articles to:

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Membership

When filling out the form to join or renew, circle the Connecticut Section on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

Dues:

Individual Adult \$ 35.00

Family \$ 45.00

Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income \$ 20.00

Nonprofit or Youth Group \$ 50.00

Business or Corporation \$125.00

Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road

Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

(802) 244-7037, <http://www.greenmountainclub.org>

Connecticut Section Of The GMC

Post & Receive Messages, Photos, Other Activities

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ct_green_mountain_club/

but beaver activity has made them into one), several bridged streams and a couple of un-bridged streams, a limestone spring, the site of Charles Ives' summer lean-to, an old chimney, and one long steep uphill climb to the highest spot in Ridgefield. Not too shabby for a five mile hike.



I have been leading hikes for about 10 years for various organizations and have a couple of times had it happen that no one shows up. I was a bit concerned because I had only put this in as a GMC hike. The GMC does not have many members in Western CT. There are not many GMC hikes in Western CT. I'm not sure which is the chicken and which the egg, but I had invited two hiking buddies (one of whom is not a GMC member) and members of the Ives Trail Task Force. Two GMC members had emailed me saying they were not coming because of other obligations. The hiking buddy who is not a GMC member and one member of the Task Force showed up.

So we all griped about the AMC (we are all AMC members) and I talked up the GMC as we hiked along. We had a good time enjoying the mostly sunny and breezy day and finished the five miles in a bit over two hours.

The Bennett's Pond area is very popular and we met another group on top of Pine Mountain and were passed by a runner and her dog, but once we got past the Ridgefield/Danbury line we saw no one else. So went my first time leading a GMC hike.



M&M Section 18 & 19

After a long ride everyone met at the ending trailhead on Monument Rd. in Richmond, NH. With gear and passengers loaded in Russ's vehicle we headed to Mt Grace to stage the vehicle and start Section 18 of the MM Trail. The trail started with a steep ascent and passed thru a pine scented ridge area. An old wood road was washed out and descended to a blueberry field. We all had our fill before continuing on. At about two miles we crossed Robbins Road and began a reroute of the ever ascending trail which passed some glacial potholes. Reaching an overlook of Richards Reservoir revealed an unspoiled emerald shoreline which could have had moose or beaver sightings. We saw neither but did see horse, deer and moose droppings on much of the trail. At the north end of the reservoir a bog area had a side trail to a scenic beaver dammed area. Lunch was conveniently declared at another blueberry site. After crossing a number of streams that fed Tully Brook, the trail ascended Mayo Hill with views of Ball Hill and Mt Monadnock. Briefly the trail entered NH and then meandered back to White Hill in MA. A steep

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descent led to a long private driveway and then Bliss Road. At about seven miles a state blue boundary marker in a stone wall was seen. White property and trail blazes were mixed and were confusing here. Finally, we reached RT 32 and the start of Section 19 at the Trustees of Reservation Royalston Falls kiosk.

A half mile into this section the Trustees shelter is located along Falls Brook. Settling in for the overnight we agreed that the reroute has added at least 2 miles to section 18. The shelter was in good condition but a night long deluge was not helpful for sleeping. Morning revealed that Falls Brook was now three times as wide from the storm. The trail reentered NH along the brook which had many interesting glacial pot holes. Another beaver dam backed up headwaters to the brook, but no sightings. A long uphill reached the top of Hill 1246 and then descended to the un-maintained section of Monument Road. The Trailhead was reached after about a mile on this dirt road where the trail manager resides at #38.

Due to a previous commitment, Sarah started the hike very early Sunday morning. A cell-phone call confirmed she was approaching RT 32. A quick detour on the way back to the Mt Grace staging area uncannily timed her arrival at the Trustees kiosk. A brief rest and she was off on Section 19. After dropping off Mike, Russ and Roger, Bill returned to Monument Rd to pick up Sarah. Soon she appeared finishing these two sections in record time as a day hike.

It has been confirmed by the trail manager that section 18 is at least 2 miles longer than the 7.4 miles advertised in the Trail Guide due to reroutes. Next Mt Monadnock, Summit.

*Hikers: Mike Cunningham, Russ Charest,
Roger Hibbert, Sarah O'Hare
Trail Leader: Bill Falconer*



Maintenance Trip On The AT/LT In Vermont August 8 - 10, 2008 Story Spring Shelter to Arlington-Wardsboro Road

If you read this then you are sworn to secrecy. If you are unable or unwilling to comply then read no further. Much depends on keeping this information away from the public eye. Hiking careers could be ruined if word gets out. There is a secret trail (henceforth referred to as ST) that connects the Arlington-Wardsboro Road with the Story Spring Shelter on the LT/AT. This ST provides quick, convenient, and easy access to parking. Keep this information under your hat. If word gets out then people will be hauling in beer and using the shelter as a party site. We don't want that to happen.

Members of the maintenance crew parked and used the ST to haul in brush loppers, paint buckets, and other awkward

pieces of equipment needed to clear brush and blaze. And beer and wine, of course. We hard-working GMC'ers also need our creature comforts! What were you thinking: that we are going to use the shelter to party? C'mon now.

Allen, Dan, and Dick arrived Friday afternoon in time to survey the shelter and environs. A 7-foot long board was hauled up to the shelter to replace a rotting one in the center of the picnic table. Later that evening, Frank, Joe, Dean, and Mohammed (Mo') arrived.

Among those attending Friday's overnight at Story Spring were 11 members of various British military branches who were section hiking south to North Adams. There were also several AT through-hikers headed both north and south. The shelter was quite full and tents were spread out across the land. Several through hikers arriving later kept walking on. We were thanked by the through hikers for our maintenance efforts in keeping the trail clear and well blazed but criticized for the muddy conditions. After dark there was a lot of rain to add to the already muddy trail. "Not my department" said one of our crew.

Bill arrived Saturday morning, in time to get to work. Mo' did quick work on replacing the board on the picnic table. We then split up and went in three different directions. Frank, Joe, Dean, and Mo' cleared and blazed the ST to where our cars were parked. (You are still sworn to secrecy about this!) Dick, Bill, and Dan set out north along the AT/LT clearing and blazing 3.6 miles out to the Arlington Road. Allen, needing some exercise and fresh air took off on a 10 mile run. Dick, Bill, and Dan later met up with him and his car so there was a beer run to THE Arlington General Store. Not just any store but THE store.

Saturday night brought much eating and drinking. There were 4 dozen (count 'em!) ears of corn, a package of hot dogs with buns. Unfortunately there was no mustard. We had to make due with chili salsa. Yeah, we were really roughing it! The through hikers going north included two from Israel who had us all singing Havah Negilah after a while. The corn was generously supplied by Frank. Despite much concern that 4 dozen ears were too much, all were consumed by the maintenance crew and the through hikers. Ditto the dogs. Dean built a huge fire that took care of husks and cobs. OK, maybe it was a little like a party. But only a little. Remember that you are still sworn to secrecy.

Sunday brought a new day and we marched out to our cars along the freshly cleared and blazed ST. Several garbage bags of trash were hauled out. Allen offered to shuttle an LT end-to-end hiker to his mail drop. On Sunday? Yeah, on Sunday. Go figure.

*Crew: Frank Maine, Joe Landor, Mohammed Khadeer,
Dean Dickinson, Allen Freeman, Bill Brodnitzki,
Written by: Dan Zelterman
Leader: Dick Krompegal*

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Sleeping Giant September 13, 2008

Yes, it is a giant and by all reports, still sleeping. With news of federal bailouts of banks and mortgage agencies, all attendees of the hike agreed that we were also too large to fail and in need of federal support. Unfortunately, none was forthcoming. The giant, although much larger in size, appeared to rest on sound footings. When former President Nixon was warned of a financially weak corporation that was too large to fail, he reportedly said "Tell it to get smaller."

Having said all this, it was a fine day for a hike. We hung out at the parking lot for 20 minutes to allow for late-comers and some warm, friendly introductions. It had rained the night before, leaving some very wet and slippery footing. Spills and thrills were frequent during the day. In a related accounting scandal, we lost count of who went down and how often. Fortunately, bruised egos seemed to be the largest failures of the day. Our paths crossed with the Hartford Hiking Club who claimed to have backpacked through our section of the AT/LT earlier in the summer. A cross-group debate about the best privies ensued.

But enough small talk, let's eat! We had lunch when we reached the stone wall on Chestnut Lane. The mealtime discussion centered on those not present, and even some who were. A leisurely return hike included a view of the old quarry. We introduced ourselves to a potential recruit whose email address included the code for a deranged person. (Clearly, she would fit right in with us.) Audry, Tim, and Dick went directly back to their cars following the quarry tour. Sarah, Don, and Dan didn't know when to quit and took a brief detour to visit the golf course. All hikers were accounted for.

*Hikers: Sarah O'Hare, Don Hagstrom, Dick Krompegal,
guest Audry Reinholdt, guest Tim O'Connor
Leader: Dan Zelman*



The Saugatuck Trail 9/7/08

Since Hurricane Hanna was bearing down on Connecticut & Sarah was the only person to indicate any interest in joining the hike, we mutually decided to postpone it for a day. We probably could have gotten the hike in but it was terribly muggy and we didn't want her to have to chance getting caught in the storm on the drive home.

The Saugatuck Trail is the newest trail in the Connecticut Hike Book-West Edition. There is a newer blue blazed trail but that will not be in the book until the next edition. That's for another hike. This is a trail made up of a couple of older trails. I had hiked these older trails before they became the

Saugatuck and I had hiked the entire trail after it became a blue blazed trail but not the entire trail all at one time so I was looking forward to this hike myself.



There are some difficulties with timing in that one section is closed between February & July due to nesting goshawks. These critters will attack passing humans who get too close to the nest. Since they have rather fierce talons it is a good idea to stay away. The

other part of the problem is that much of the trail is open to hunting during the season which runs from the second Saturday in September until the end of January. So in order to get the hike in it must be between August 1 and (this year) Sept 13 or a Sunday in the fall or early winter.

The Saugatuck Trail follows the paths of Redding's Ravine Trail and Reservoir Trail into Weston. It goes through Land Trust land as well as the property adjacent to the Saugatuck Reservoir. Some of it is on high ground and other parts go close to swampy areas. There are enough hills to make it interesting. It is 6.9 miles and took us about 3 ½ hours to complete including a few short breaks.

Along the way we saw a deer and a small salamander (not a red eft) as well as an assortment of squirrels and chipmunks. We also saw several American Toads and one Tree Frog. There were some magnificent old trees and some nice views of the reservoir. There were some raging torrents and two bridges were covered with debris from the 5-7 inches of rain the previous night. We even saw an assortment of other hikers! That's a rarity.

We also saw some remains from the village of Valley Forge, which was destroyed in the making of the reservoir in the late 1920s.

*Hiker: Sarah O'Hare
Leader: Mike Cunningham*

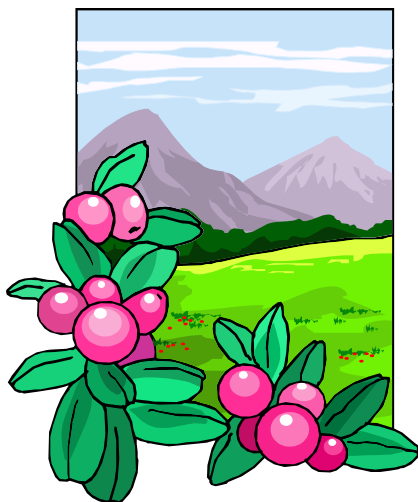


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MM Trail

The threat of a soggy weekend and cancellations did not deter the completion of the M&M venture, which started 2 ½ years ago. M&M Sections 20, 21 & 22, including an overnight, did indeed encounter some rain and the after effects of Hurricane Kyle.

The Big Red Van was staged at Gap Mt South parking lot in Troy before returning to the Monument Road starting point. From the trailhead in Richmond NH, the hike was along dirt roads until Grassy Hill was reached. A missed turn here required a correction and once into the woods a feeling of relief prevailed. The headwaters of Tully Brook and a pond were passed before the ascent of Little Monadnock. During a snack break, including the Sarah's traditional homemade Peanut Butter Cookies decorated with M and M's, the drumming of a ruffed grouse was heard. The summit of Little Monadnock is now grown over since Bill last hiked it. A vista further on the trail would have afforded a view of Grand Monadnock on a clear day. Blazes led to Old Troy Road, an old unused tote road, which turns into Prospect Street in Troy, NH. An abandoned Railroad Station and few dozen buildings surround the village green marking the end of section 20.



The trail followed RT 12 for a mile to Quarry Road then entered the woods to ascend Fern Hill. A side trail leads to the parking lot where Big Red was staged. Dry clothes replaced damp and camping gear was retrieved. Before morning, predicted by the hooting of an owl, rain ceased. A light breakfast, restored camping gear, repacked daypacks

and it was back to Monument Road to retrieve Miss Subaru for the next staging point on Bullard Road. Back on the trail, the ascent of Gap Mt was steep. No grand views were available from Gap Mt, as published in the guide, due to fog. The descent through boulders and a swamp led to RT 124 and the end of section 21 on the outskirts of Jaffrey, NH.

Lunch Break on a stonewall started the final section of this trek at about 1500 feet. Almost immediately, the climb to the 3165 foot summit of Grand Monadnock began. A woodland start turned into a stairway of boulders for the last mile from the site of the Old Halfway House.

Sun briefly shone near a ledge area at the 3000 elevation to the cheers of hikers. And just as quickly, clouds and rain

replaced it. The summit was not reached but seen as hikers were scrambling down. After a brief ceremony and with safety in mind, we descended the wet stairway of boulders with a commitment to return for the last 200 feet. At the Old Halfway House junction it was decided to return by way of the Old Toll Road to soothe weary bones. The welcomed sight of Big Red and dry clothes at the Gap Mt North parking lot meant a celebratory pizza was not far away.

End to end hikers, Sarah and Bill, completed this 122 mile GMC dream hike, coaxed along on each section by the famous Peanut Butter Cookies and a desire to complete the Trail.

Hikers, Bill Falconer and Sarah O'Hare



MANSFIELD HOLLOW PADDLE JULY 12, 2008

This turned out to be a great day – we started with Henry coming to my house to load up the canoe – a new person, Bill Heath, a friend of Don Hagstrom met at my house also. Plans were now to leave and meet Dick Hart in Portland who would be waiting along side the roadway of Rte. 66 with paddle, life jacket and necessary gear for the day. He was there and very visible and was soon safe in Dick Heath's car. It was a long ride on back roads, finally we pull up to the parking at 9:30 in the morning and there is barely a space to park. It turns out there was a fishing program for children in foster care sponsored by the State of CT.

The day was already hot and humid so it was better to get in the water and paddle around then stand in the dirt parking lot. Jack, Bill, Dick, Henry and I paddled around as Jack kept contact with Mandy via cell phone as to her location – finally, here she



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comes. We decided to paddle the upper half and went through the over flow pipe since there was plenty of water from the recent rains.

We paddled along the west side of the lake identifying plants and birds, NATURE BOY, aka Henry Smith, was our guide. Jack spotted the area where we could get out and walk the dam so we pulled our water craft onto a sandy beach. The group hiked up to the dam and across while I played in the water building rock cairns.

The sun was getting hotter, in the 80's. Thank heavens for a breeze – now to find a little island that we could have lunch on where there wasn't any poison ivy. Jack, knowing the area, found a cove, however, the mucky shore was ready to suck us in up to and over our ankles. Paddling hard we pushed ourselves onto dry land and with the help of Jack to pull us in further, we avoided the muck. We found a grassy knoll with a cool breeze and the shade of the trees that made for a pleasant lunch spot. As the group had their lunch and socialized, Henry went off in search of mushrooms, since this was the season with all the rain and humid weather.

Back on the water the gentle breeze had now turned into a strong wind that we had to fight to get out of the cove and try to circle around to get back. Mandy and Jack found a small passage way and avoided the wind. Henry and I, Dick and Bill in the other canoe, were paddling with all we had to make any headway. As we turned the corner and headed in a Northerly direction the wind was at our backs – much better. All too soon the day of paddling was over – we had to wait for parking spaces to pull out our canoes and load them up on the ramp. Next stop, UCONN'S Dairy Bar. Did we use up all those calories? Is this justified? We all indulged. Great day - great friends- thanks for joining me.

Paddlers: Dick Hart, Bill Heath, Jack Sanga, Mandy Brink, Henry Smith and Carol A. Langley



Backpacking the AT in Vermont Vermont Route 12 to the NH Border October 11 & 12, 2008

What a way to spend my birthday, hiking in Vermont on a warm sunny day, clear blue skies and the fall foliage at its peak. It was spectacular. Since it was just Laurene and myself, we decided to head up early on Saturday morning. After staging cars, we had a quick bite of lunch before hitting the trail to hike over Dana Hill. It was warm enough to hike in shorts and tee shirts. This section of the trail was tricky at times as there were many old side roads that looked like the trail and the trail itself had faded markers that were fairly spaced apart. Several times we had to backtrack to get ourselves back on the AT, but hey, it wouldn't be a GMC event if we weren't lost for at least a little

bit. The day was filled with beautiful green meadows surrounded by mountains of beautiful colors. We got into Thistle Hill Shelter just as the sun was setting. There was one through hiker there, Grisley, who was kind enough to have a fire already going for us. We settled in and enjoyed the warm fall night with the moon almost full above us and the fire glowing.



On Sunday morning we were up bright and early. We hit the trail about 8am and hiked for quite some time before we ran into anyone else. The day before was quite the opposite as there were a lot of day hikers out. On one hill there was a large Adirondack chair so we stopped, rested and enjoyed the view. From there we hiked into the village of Hartford, VT, where we stopped at the general store for a nice healthy snack of cold drinks and french fries. We started the gentle ascent up Griggs Mountain, our destination for the day being Happy Hill Shelter. We arrived at this very neat shelter at 2:30 pm. The shelter was opened on both sides, made of stone and had a neat loft. It was pretty neat and we enjoyed lunch there. Deciding it was too early to stop for the day, we decided to push on the last 5 miles back out to the cars. I suppose at the moment, the allure of a hot shower was too much, although when driving home that night, looking at that full moon, I felt a bit sad that I wasn't back at the shelter spending the night. We hiked out to Norwich, VT and to the cars. We were pretty pleased that we felt pretty good for having just hiked 14 miles.

It was my New Year's goal to finish the AT in NJ and VT. Many thanks to Sarah for helping me to finish NJ this spring and to Laurene for helping me to finish VT this fall. We had 22 total miles for the weekend.

Backpackers : Mandy Brink and Laurene Sorensen and the hiking hounds, Asha and Cooper



**Trail Maintenance Weekend In Vermont
Basing At Kid Gore Shelter
October 03 - 05, 2008**

**If I had a hammer,
I'd hammer in the morning!**

Jack hauled in the BIGGEST hammer any of us had ever seen. And he carried this BIG hammer all the way up to the shelter. That effort alone should grant him a GMC, Connecticut Section, Maintainer of the Year Award. At some point during the weekend all of those attending got to use the aforementioned BIG hammer. Some of us were better users of the BIG hammer than others. Unfortunately, Jack also wanted to use the BIG hammer to celebrate the sunrise on Sunday morning. This scared away all of the wildlife for miles around. It also woke up those who thought of snuggling late in their sleeping bags for a wilderness snooze. The Maintainer award has since been rescinded.

The object of all this hammering was to make a clearing in front of the shelter so that the picnic table could be sited nearby but not so close as to have the rain come off the roof onto it. Never mind that the picnic table has already taken several round trips between the shelter and a plateau several yards below. Hikers opt for convenience and carry it back up. Then GMC'ers carry it back down on their next maintenance trip. Never mind that the Connecticut Section gets credit for schlepping the heavy picnic table up to the shelter. Perhaps we should have some say in where it is situated. The tug-of-war continues.



In what had been the longest approach to the shelter, Dave walked in all the way from Williamstown, Mass. This was part of his extended hike. He arrived on Thursday and waited for us. The other four of us drove up and made use of the secret trail that Dick blazed years ago. We are sworn to secrecy. If you read this in print then you must eat the paper. If you read this on the computer, then you must be sure to press Alt-Ctl-#-F5-Del and Backspace all at the same time. If you can do that then you have more fingers than most of us.

For those who are following the Caughnawaga Saga, the shelter is now no more than a pile of sticks. It was one of the very first shelters and it has been torn down. It was listing and many brave attempts had been made to prop it up over the years. Here is a link to one of the last photos of it, while still standing and in its pre-condemned state, taken in October 2007:
<http://www.jamiecompos.com/caughnawaga.html>

If I had a paintbrush...

On Saturday, Kevin, Dick, and Dan hiked south from Kid Gore, clearing brush and painting blazes. This covered a part of the trail that we missed in the spring due to rain, late in the day. The trail looked clear and blazes were freshened. On Sunday, Dick and Dan went north a short distance to view and blaze a small "adjustment" that avoids a wet section of trail. A late-season through-hiker made a point of thanking us for making his long journey just a little easier. We now have blazed our entire section of the LT/AT in both directions, in the past 18 months.



If I had a lever...

Archimedes said: "Πα βω και χαριστιωνι ταν γαν κινησω πασαν." (In case you are not fluent in Greek, he said "Give me a place to stand and with a lever I will move the whole world." Wikipedia is the source.) Some of those timbers that were once part of proud Caughnawaga were used to move a huge boulder that was not amenable to pulverization by the BIG hammer. One Caughnawaga timber was also used to prop up the roof of Kid Gore and will continue to provide shelter to hikers for many more years to come.

Caughnawaga is no more! Long live Caughnawaga!

*Attending: Jack Sanga, Kevin Vann,
David Chatel
Written By: Dan Zelterman
Leader: Dick Krompegal*



**Mattabesett Trail Maintenance
August 03, 2008**

After meeting at Guida's restaurant Mary and I spotted a car at Black Pond then drove to Rt. 68. We headed north on the Mattabesett blazing and clipping brush all day. A vary pleasant day to work with great views.

Mary O'Neill & Dick Krompegal

October 18, 2008

I inspected and blazed the trail from Paug Gap to Rt. 17. Other than the erosion caused by unauthorized motor vehicles use this section is OK.

Dick Krompegal





L-R - Andy, Frank, Dick, Jack after a day maintaining the Long Trail / Appalachian Trail in Vermont. May 2008

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