

The Trail Talk

VOL. XXXVIII NO. V

July 2009



In Memory of

ALLAN NOAM WILLIAMS
APRIL 1, 1948 – JUNE 26, 2009

Allan was a member of the CT. Section of the GMC for over 20 years. He was an active environmentalist and was the founder of the DEP Bookstore in Hartford. Allan retired from the CT Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) after 28 years of service. During this time he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award and was credited with being the driving force behind the state's Flood Warning System.

Allan was also activity in fund raising for the GMC. During the 1980's the club formed the Long Trail Protection Fund which would enable the club to purchase land along the trail. Allan was the organizer of a Walk-A-Thon, phone-a-thon, and other fundraisers that were held in the Hartford Area and raised approx \$140,000 for this cause. The club is very grateful for Allan's work and dedication to the causes he embraced and supported.

The CT. Section of the GMC would like to express our sincere sympathy to Allan's family.



Trail Crew Rocker

A Trail Crew Rocker is awarded to those earning 50 points or more working on trail maintenance.

Andy Gagner
 Ashford, CT

Donations

Phillip & Ellen Blumberg
 Hartford, CT

William & Gerry
 Brodnitzki
 Norfolk, CT

David & Regina Chatel
 Willington, CT

Richard & Leslie Chandler
 & Family
 West Hartford, CT

Sherrill & Ruth Collins
 Tolland, CT

Richard & Aida Cyphers
 Glastonbury, CT

Andy Gagner
 Ashford, CT

George Jackson
 Glastonbury, CT

Sam Molinar
 Granby, CT

Jack Sanga & Family
 South Windsor, CT

Donald Woodbridge
 Amenia, NY

New Members

Warren Azano &
 Judyth Pendell
 West Hartford, CT

Thomas J. Heisler
 Berlin, CT

Jane Thielen
 David de la Parra
 Sherman, CT



The Trail Talk

Club Information

<http://www.conngmc.com>

Officers & Executive Committee

Carol Langley—President

(860) 621-2860, cosmical14@yahoo.com

Dick Krompegal, 1st Vice President, Trails & Shelters
(860) 667-4205, rkrompy@aol.com

Jim Robertson, 2nd Vice President, Activities
(860) 633-7279, jrobert685@aol.com

Laurene Sorensen, Director To The GMC
(401) 965-6724, laurenesorensen@gmail.com

Dan Zelterman, Secretary
(203) 230-9108, daniel.zelterman@yale.edu

Jack Sanga, Treasurer
(860) 648-9614, jsanga@cox.net

Laurene Sorensen, Reporter to the Long Trail News
(401) 965-6724, laurenesorensen@gmail.com

Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President:

Carol A. Langley

67 Pondview Drive

Southington, CT 06489

(860) 621-2860, cosmical14@yahoo.com

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:

Dick Krompegal

142 Churchill Drive

Newington, CT 06111-4003

(860) 667-4205, rkrompy@aol.com

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 \$ 40.00

Family \$ 50.00

Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income \$ 22.00

Nonprofit or Youth Group \$ 50.00

Business or Corporation \$150.00

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/

Section 2 of the AT in PA

April 17th -19th, 2009

The gang was able to head out of CT by late morning, early afternoon. The wise car took I 84 and ended up at the cabin at around 5:30. The not so wise car took I 95 and ended up in a lot of traffic. Either way, we were all to the cabin by 7:15 where we enjoyed a community dinner. After dinner, we had a lazy evening, visiting and relaxing by the fireplace.

We were up and on the road early on Saturday. All was well till Mandy went on her memory of getting to Wind Gap from last years trek. Being directionally challenge, well she blew right by the exit and had a brief back track before getting it right. After staging a car, we headed off to drop Carol and Bill at the Smith Gap Rd where they began their 2 mile uphill climb to the AT. The rest of the gang headed to Little Gap to begin the days trek. The day started with a straight up boulder climb but it wasn't to too bad and in no time we had reached the ridge. Now Mandy had advertised this event as easy and flat. What was lacking in elevation was compensated for in rocks. Rocks, rocks and more rocks. Section 2 is not the most exciting section but it had to be done. It was a nice day of hiking along, stopping for rests and a few views. We had a nice lunch and Jack was particularly thankful for the tuna sandwich Mandy had made for him. What it lacked in mayonaise, it made up for in tuna. Dan insisted there was a 3pm nap in his contract and sure enough, at 3pm we stopped for a snack and he settled in on a nice pile of rocks for a nap. After Dan's snooze, we headed for the Leroy Smith shelter. We joined Carol and Bill at the campsite there and made a village of tents in the nice tent site there. Everyone was fighting sore feet from all the rocks so we checked out the damage, put the boots away for the day and settled in for dinner and a campfire.

Sunday morning we were up bright and early. The weather for the whole weekend was exceptional. Most hiked in shorts. It was warm and sunny. Sunday was a 5 mile trek out to Wind Gap. Not bad at all. During the weekend, we met two through hikers who had left GA on Feb 5th. We also met some weekend hikers like ourselves. Again flat with many rocks, we made it out to Wind Gap with no problems. We still have five miles of Section 2 to add to Section 3 but were happy for the 16 miles we hiked on this very lovely weekend. We grabbed our cars. Ross was staying in PA to do two more weeks in PA. The rest of us headed to a restaurant for a nice lunch before driving back to CT. Thanks to all of you who came so far to hike this section with Mandy. The company was so appreciated and grand fun.

*Backpackers: Laura Brink, Jack Sanga, Carol Langley, Bill Falconer, Ross Linius, Dan Zelterman, Don Hagstrom
Leader: Mandy Brink.*

The Trail Talk

Mattabesett Trail Maintenance April 26, 2009

Not going through my normal routine of eating at Guida's before the day, and starting earlier than normal, caused more havoc than one would think. Everybody's schedule was off. We weren't in a race so some ate breakfast, making our start a little later than planned.

We spotted cars at Rt. 68 then drove to Rt. 17, the southern end of the CT section of the Mattabesett. We cleared brush and inspected to Paug Gap. There several left us because the day was much hotter than one would expect so early in the year. The rest of us continued north. We now started to blaze in addition to normal clipping brush and taking blow downs off of the trail. A land owner near the top of the mountain in this section erected a high fence to keep motorcycles and hikers off his property. We should relocated this section away from the fence in the future.

In the early afternoon we met several hikers walking south searching for us. They intended to join the work group but arrived late. Now, commenting about Mary being late is like stating the obvious, like the north star points to the north pole. However, to have others be late was a little odd. This hike was getting curiouser & curiouser.

We gladly finished by mid-afternoon on this very, very hot day.

*Workers: Dan Zelterman, Beth Schwartz., Kevin Vann, Mark Schofield, Carol Langley, Mary O'Neill, Jim O'Brasky, Jack Sanga, Dick Hart, Henry Smith
Leader: Dick Krompegal*



M&M Trail Backpack May 9-10,

By request, this was a backpacking redo of Section 15 of the M&M Trail. After staging Big Red in Farley MA, we returned to the Co-op store at Moores Corner in North Leverett. A quick visit for supplies and renewing local acquaintances then we were on the trail.

The first .4 miles is a road walk leading to a power line that rises abruptly into the hills. Another mile and we entered the woods on the way up Diamond Match Ridge. The trail is well marked and with chatter we missed the stone boundary marker for the towns of Leverett, Montague and Wendell. After crossing Red Brook the hike turned into a scat identifying session with bear, moose, horse and owl droppings at every turn. No, the animals were not seen. Soon Ruggles Pond was viewed thru the foliage. At the North end, the remains of an old CCC camp is now the setting for the Wendell State Forest Park with picnic areas, outhouses, sandy beach and a dam. A little further at 6.4 miles is a shelter for six, with fire pit, wood, a spring and a .2 mile walk back to the outhouses. With the promise of rain we elected to stay in the shelter in which Mary set up her new tent leaving room to spare for Woody, Don and Bill. No sooner than the evening meal, with individual menus, was consumed the rains and winds came. It was later noted that a mini tornado had struck nearby.

When morning arrived, the roar of swollen brooks and dripping trees hastened breakfast and repacking so that we were on the trail by 6:45. Lynn's Brook and Falls were running full as we climbed to the top of Jerusalem Hill. A long wood road down was gurgling from the nights rains.

Luckily a bridge is in place over the Mormon Hollow Brook. An old dam and ruins was worth investigating before crossing Mormon Hollow Road. From here the trail has been rerouted along roadways to the Millers River since last year. Previously this was a very scenic and historical manufacturing area walk to the River. Nevertheless, Section 15 was worth revisiting.

The final half-mile uphill to Big Red was anticlimactic.

*Hikers: Mary O'Neill ,
Woody Woodbridge,
Don Hagstrom
Leader: Bill Falconer*

The Trail Talk

Housatonic Range Trail Saturday April 25, 2009

The map of the Housatonic Range Trail shows a 6.4 mile trail. However, the southern terminus is at the summit of Candlewood Mountain which requires another 1.5 miles (or 2.0 miles if exploring the Kelly's Slide Loop Trail) back to the Rt. 37 crossing and parking area. Completing the entire trail was our objective today. Beginning at the northern terminus on Gaylord Rd., we crossed a brook and began our ascent to and around the boulders at Straits Rock. This short section was loaded with ticks and, fortunately, we left them all behind here where they troubled us no longer. But then we traded one concern for another, the sun. We underestimated the strength of a sunny day in late April when the trees withhold the unfurling of their leaves and the only shade was one another's shadow. Despite hats, sunscreen and plenty of water, we all began to lose our energy by noontime. Our hopes of completing the trail were dimming.

Once we reached the crossing at Rt. 37 we paused to reconsider our original plan. Jim suggested, to everyone's agreement, that we push on another 0.7 mile to Pine Knob and weigh our options once again. These woods afforded us shade - at last! - for the trail ascended through conifers. We were then met with the challenge of the day, The Corkscrew. A bypass trail was available but our adventurous group could not pass up an exciting opportunity to climb up, over and through the tumbled boulders, slabs and steep ledges. Jim, who climbed effortlessly (or so it appeared), became our guide and brought us all up safely. Then, upon our arrival at what we thought was Pine Knob, we once again considered pushing on to the summit of Candlewood Mountain. With most of us running short on water and all of us running low



on energy we decided to head back. Candlewood Mountain and the Kelly's Slide Loop Trail, with its views of the Housatonic River, would have to wait for another day. Besides, Alfredo's Pizza in New Milford held a

more urgent calling!

*Hikers: Mary O'Neill, Jim Robertson,
Bill Falconer, Don "Woody" Woodbridge
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*

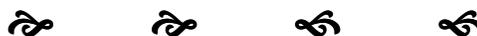


Tunxis Trail Loop Saturday May 23, 2009

This hike was scheduled to continue the efforts of completing the Southington Region of the Tunxis Trail that was started last year. This time our approach was from the trailhead on Lake Avenue next to Lake Compounce Amusement Park. As so often our hikes begin with an ascent and a groan, the Compounce Cascade Trail was no exception. This was a challenging trail, ascending along and crossing Cussgutter Brook with its many waterfalls. Along this one mile trail Bill's keen eye for detail spotted a lone Lady Slipper. Not just any Lady Slipper but a YELLOW Lady Slipper! A rare sight in Connecticut! At the trail's terminus we turned south on the Compounce Ridge Trail, following for 1.5 miles to Libby's Lump at the junction with the Tunxis Trail. Here we paused for lunch and a rest.

Refreshed, we set out north on the Tunxis where, after a mere mile, it ended and became the Bobcat Trail. Along this trail a woodpecker tapped loudly, Tanya found a toad, and a pair of ravens scolded us furiously as we passed through their nesting area. Then, turning onto the Compounce Ridge Trail, we discovered numerous Pink Lady Slippers. As we descended the Compounce Cascade Trail, the final leg of our hike, the rumbling of the nearby roller coaster could be heard above the riders' screams of delight (or fright?). It was a reminder that our quiet woodland walk was soon coming to a close.

*Hikers: Richard Chandler, Tanya Chandler, Bill Falconer,
Don Hagstrom
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



Long Trail / Appalachian Trail Maintenance May 15 - 17, 2009

For several years in a row now the gate on the gravel Forest Service Road 71, which gives a reasonable approach to our section of the trail to start work, was not open for the year yet. Therefore, preplanned, we drove around to work the northern end of the Ct section of the Long Trail.

Except for Frank Maine, who arrived at Story Spring Shelter Thursday, we arrived on Friday from late morning to early afternoon. After setting up tents and snacking, several of us worked north clipping and removing "blow downs", fallen trees across the trail. We worked the section from the shelter to Forest Service Road 71.

Saturday we set off to work south of the shelter. We worked on trail drainage, removed many blow downs with a hand saw and muscled more off of the trail. We also clipped brush and

The Trail Talk

removed a lot more with a swizzle stick. After working south for about 2 ½ miles we decided “That Was That” - we were tired and the clouds looked more threatening all the time. Several of our work party left. The rest of us spent the night in a few showers but the rain let up just in time for breakfast.

Three of us drove to the northern end of our 12 miles on the Wardsboro road then worked south for a while.

*Workers: Peter Finch, Dan Zelterman, Mark Schofield,
Frank Maine, Kevin Vann, Jim Robertson
Leader: Dick Krompegal*



Long Trail / Appalachian Trail Maintenance June 12 - 14, 2009 Lucked Out!

Ever changing as it was, the weather forecast for southern Vermont looked dire for some, or all, of the weekend. It had been raining in all of the northeast for days & was going to rain, on & off, as far as one could see. “Let’s Take A Chance.”

Some of the work crew were already in VT. Some of us started from CT early Friday morning. Careful not to stomp on the many salamanders, out in force on the wet ground, we slogged in on the unmarked side trail to Kid Gore shelter, our base for the weekend.

Several of our work crew were already at the shelter clearing the vista with views off to . . . well, we always debate if it’s eastern Vermont or western New Hampshire. Whatever, it’s a long way. After the rest of us set up our tents and sleeping bags we headed north clearing blow downs with a chain saw, clearing trail drainage and clipping brush. In addition to our group we were accompanied by millions of “Black Flies” eating legs, hands, head and any other exposed skin. Sunny afternoon with no rain - YET.

With eight in our work crew, to start work at seven o’clock Saturday morning, we split up into two work groups. Several just marched the 4 miles to the top of Glastenbury Mountain to work their way back toward the shelter and to report if there were any catastrophes requiring the rest of the crew. The rest of us started to work our way south removing more blow downs, working on drainage and clipping. Most of us worked to NEAR the top of the mountain to remove, with the chain saw, a large tree crossing the trail. Since some had not been to the top of Glastenbury, they continued to the fire tower. Sunny day, no rain YET. We all worked our way back

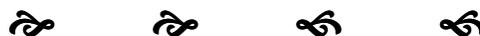
to the shelter in a scattered fashion. Because of the size of our work crew, and the Herculean effort by all, we finished rather early.

During the day Saturday we were joined by 3 more workers bringing the crew up to eleven. After a snack and rest we started to work on the vista, again. After much debate, a decision was made to take down a very distressed tree since we had Frank’s chain saw. Removing the distressed tree also improved the view. During a break we were joined by a passing Appalachian Trail thru hiker, who just happened to have been the neighbor of Bill Brodnitzki’s at one time - I think Bill planned the “Chance Encounter”.

Near the end of dinner it started to sprinkle off & on. Later in the evening and at night there was a more steady rain. It stopped just in time for breakfast on Sunday morning. After a few chores, cleaning the shelter and packing up, we all hiked the 3 plus miles back to the cars. A few of us stopped in Wilmington, VT for a second, and late, breakfast.

The work done over the weekend I think was impressive. We worked about 6 miles of trail all together, removed about 20 blow downs by handsaw or chain saw, did a very impressive job on trail drainage, clipped brush from the trail so it is very wide and worked on the vista in front of the Kid Gore shelter - a never ending task.

*Workers: Dave Chatel, Andy Gagner, Bill Brodnitzki,
Carol Langley, Henry Smith, Frank Maine,
Dean Dickenson, Mark Schofield,
Peter Finch, Dick Hart,
Leader: Dick Krompegal*



Bigelow Range Maine, June 9 – 14, 2009

There is a reason it is called Bigelow. And there is nothing little about Little Bigelow. But more on this later.

The adventure began when Mary showed up at Dan’s place in the pouring rain with carefully manicured acrylic nails and high-heeled boots. All perfect for some serious AT travel, of course. We arrived at the trail-town of Stratton but there was no room at the inn. Apparently there was a major wind farm construction going on nearby and a large number of workers were staying in town for the paycheck. Ever alert, Mary saw another motel with a Vacancy sign and we snagged the last available room for miles around. It turned out to a modest suite of rooms and a kitchen. More on this later, as well. It rained all night.

On a grey and drizzly Wednesday morning our hiker shuttle took us out to the Middle of No-Where along some rough and

The Trail Talk

unpaved road. Poor Mary sat in the back, bouncing along with the owner's huge white poodle and complained of smelling of 'dog' for days afterwards. Trees were down along the route and we all had to get out and pitch in for a series of serious road maintenance. (Note to Dick Krompegal: Does this also count towards our club's trail maintenance hours?) We arrived in the Middle of No-Where about 10 am. Amid light rain we reluctantly got out of the warm, dog-smelling shuttle vehicle and hit the trail. Of course there was considerable debate as to which was the proper direction. An election was held and by a vote of 2 to 1 we set off, our driver cast the deciding vote.

Pretty early out, Dan starts getting obnoxious, insisting that Mary adopt a trail name. After all, Dan has a trail name ("Dan") and felt that it was important for Mary to have one also. "It's part of your hiking identity" he argued. "Just call me Mary" she pleaded helplessly. "No, that's not good enough" he continued to berate her. "Look" she finally said, "My name is Mary. It is what it is."

And henceforth she became: It Is What It Is (IIWII, for short).

Anyway. First day out and we are thinking, this ain't too bad. Nice level trail. Not so much as a puddle. A noon-time lake with a sandy beach for lunch. Cross a couple of roads. Hey, I can do this. Camp at West Carry Pond Lean-to. Not a soul in sight. Eat dinner. Watch the sun set on the lake. Catch a couple of z's. Nice. Real nice.

It's Thursday and somebody put a couple of mountains in the trail. Nothing nasty, mind you, but a bit of a wake-up call all the same. These apple granola bars taste like sawdust. We get to the Bog Road parking lot and there is cell phone service. Great! There's time for lunch, a snooze, and a quick phone call home. Happy campers.

We enter the Bigelow Preserve and somebody changed the game plan. Suddenly everything is vertical. The trail is smooth from zillions of marching feet. Half-way up "Little" Bigelow somebody conveniently put a lean-to. Thanks, MATC (Maine Appalachian Trail Club)! Another nice lean-to with skylights and a privy to write home about (A two seater! Windows with curtains! Ample supply of paper! Wow!!) The nearby stream had several bathing pools ("Tubs") in which to soak. Dan managed to get one foot into the frigid water. We will never know what he was thinking when he convinced himself to put the other foot in as well.

All seemed to be going well on this trip until 3 pm when the rain decided that Noah had it easy. Buckets and buckets. Sheets. Total wetness ensued. IIWII (aka "Mary") insisted

that we press on. So onward and upward our brave heroes traveled, up "Little" Bigelow at what we later calculated to be about 0.8 miles per hour. That is, much less than one mile per hour. Gentle reader, in case you are thinking that you can crawl on all fours at about that speed, that is just about what we found ourselves doing. Through the mud. Wet. (Note to overnight backpackers: How much does your light-weight tent and sleeping bag weigh when wet? Perhaps the Campmor catalog should supply this data as well.)

After just a little over 5 miles we dragged our wet selves into the Safford Notch Campsite, in between Little and Big BIGelow mountains. The Maine Conservation Corps were building beautiful stone stairways. (Thanks, guys!) The side trail between the AT and the campsite went through some mighty huge stone formations and sections that could have used a snorkel and flippers, had we packed these essential items. The evening sky cleared and warm comfort food was consumed by our cold and wet travelers. A male ruffed grouse made several attempts to start his chain-saw as we fell asleep.

Saturday, we began early. Up. Up. And Up BIGelow. Past some of the largest rock formations we had ever seen. Past pockets of ice and snow, held over by popular demand from last winter. A view called the Old Man was a rock face that went from down in the trees, and lost up into the sky. At our fraction of a mile per hour speed we crawled our way to the top of Avery Peak on BIGelow, just as the sun came out! See the attached photo. Flagstaff Lake is man-made and flooded two towns in its creation. (Not to worry, the inhabitants had almost 20 years warning.)

We had just enough time to take a picture when the storm clouds rolled in. And this ain't gonna be pretty above tree line. Time to bail, we decided in unison. Down the Fire



The Trail Talk

Mystic River Paddle May 30, 2009

Warden trail we went. Mary's time in the Air Force apparently trained her to fly downhill. It was steep. And rocky. And muddy. Spills and thrills! That last apple granola bar never tasted so good! Near the parking lot we met a nice couple from Canada who gave us a ride into town. The motel room we stayed at the first night was still available and a hot shower never felt quite wonderful, thank you. We went into town for the biggest Saturday night dinner ever and slept like the living dead afterwards.

On Sunday we drove home at a leisurely pace, stopping at LLBean to try out a canoe or two, and at the New Hampshire State Liquor Stores for some liquid refreshment.

*Mary O'Neill
Leader: Dan Zelterman*



Cockaponset Trail, South and North Pattaconk Loops Tuesday, June 2, 2009

The southern half of the Cockaponset Trail afforded us a figure-eight loop when joined with the North and South Pattaconk Trails. The morning was a cloudy one threatening rain. No matter, for we were enthusiastic about going hiking during the work week. The birds, too, showed their delight for their songs and calls followed us the entire morning.

Years ago George was the trail manager of a portion of this section of the Cockaponset Trail. He was pleased to find the trail in continued good condition. Further along, many multi-use trails caused a bit of confusion and backtracking. Little time was lost, however, so we made a short extension on the Cockaponset to a yellow-blazed trail that was to lead us to the site of a former collier's cabin and charcoal burning area. All that we could see were the chimney remnants nestled in the undergrowth. Retracing our steps back to the blue-blazed trail we then picked up the North Pattaconk Trail which followed the western shore of the Pattaconk Reservoir. We found a suitable spot with a water view and took our lunch break.

Our last leg of the hike was along the South Pattaconk Trail. Here we saw Mountain Laurel just beginning to bloom. Before long we came to the junction with the main trail where we had started and it was but a few steps back to our cars. It was estimated that we hiked about seven miles.

*Hikers: George Jackson, Bill Falconer,
Don Hagstrom, Mark Schofield and his pup, Ping
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*

After a week of rain, it was so nice to see the sun come out for our day of paddling. It was actually a picture perfect day with sun and warm temperatures. We launched from the Mystic YMCA and headed towards the Mystic Seaport. It was early enough in the paddling season that we did not have to fight a lot of bigger boat traffic. We paddled past the Seaport where we saw the Charles Morgan which is the only remaining wooden whaling boat. It is out of the water for a 3 year renovation and is quite impressive in size. We passed by the little lighthouse there and headed on our way. As we entered Old Mystic, we decided to go as far as we could as the river narrowed. Jack made it the furthest in his kayak till he was stopped by a very shallow, rock area. We headed back and stopped for a quick snack. There was lots of water life on the water during our paddle. We saw many swans with their cygnets and a variety of ducks.

Hunger struck as we were heading back to the Seaport so we pulled in and had a nice lunch at a local seafood place. It was fun to see the various boats docked along the river. The water was quite a bit higher going under the bridge as we headed back to the Y. We battled the wind a bit on the trip back but got a good workout as a result. We docked back at the Y at 3pm and all agreed it has been an awesome paddle. We paddled a total of 8 miles

*Paddlers: Mandy Brink, John Oertel (guest), Jack Sanga,
Grace King, Dick Hart, Dave Koerber,
Dave and Reginal Chatel.*



The Trail Talk

Mattabesett Trail Sunday June 7, 2009

Another successful CT Trails Day hike on our section of the Mattabesett Trail. And once again it was well attended by GMC members and new friends. The day was sunny and warm, allowing for many rest stops on the long and gradual ascent from Reed Gap to the ridge. There were the usual wildlife sightings of toads, snakes (including the colorful Eastern Milk Snake), and various raptors. Vivek, visiting from India, offered an insight on the wildlife encounters in his native country. Where we have wild turkeys foraging in our forests, they have peacocks. Snakes, too, but bigger! And on the more dangerous side, hikers need to be on their guard for monkeys attacking for one's lunch bag! More frightening, however, is the need to keep a keen eye open for leopards who will take the hiker as lunch! Imaginations ran wild with these scenarios!

Let's return to the kinder and gentler Connecticut forest....at our lunch break on Beseck Ridge overlooking Meriden, we could see New Haven and other various landmarks. Hidden from the kayakers on Black Pond, the resident pair of swans and their cygnets were seen from above as we descended the ridge back to our cars. With ice cream treats on our agenda we quickly loaded into our cars and drove the short distance to Guida's for refreshments. Thanks to all for exploring the Mattabesett Trail on CT Trails Day!

*Hikers: Terry Edelstein, Donald "Woody" Woodbridge, Don Hagstrom, Bill Falconer, Jim Meigs, Lenny Kochanowski, Tom Marston, Jim Hall, Vivek Amrute, Kishore Kumar
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



The Long Trail Mad Tom Notch - VT 140 July 10-12, 2009

Singer/song writer, Paul Simon, once sang "I can gather all the news I need on the weather report." This line ran through my mind during the days leading up to this much anticipated trek on the Long Trail. With all the rain in June and into July there was a glimmer of hope that the sun would eventually shine again. And at long last, Mother Nature changed her tune!

Our group of nine hikers and one dog gathered early Friday afternoon at the northern trailhead at VT 140. As we drove down to Mad Tom Notch we became acquainted and found we were a mix from five states: CT, MA, NY, NH and of course, VT. As we stepped onto the trail we immediately began an ascent, climbing steadily to the summit of Styles Peak and continued on to Peru Peak. Many thru-hikers had

already settled in at the Peru Peak Shelter so we continued on a short distance to the Griffith Lake Tenting Area where, as darkness was closing in, we set up camp. Not long after we were comfortably settled in our tents, Turtle, the caretaker, made a visit and requested some assistance. It seemed that some campers were enjoying an illegal campfire across the lake. Her attempt at locating them was unsuccessful for they would put out their fire and disappear into the darkness. Woody and I accompanied her in her search but once again they had disappeared. It was just as well for the two of us had no authority and were uncertain as to our role if we were to confront the campers. We concluded that we were along only for safety and support. Upon our arrival back on our side of the lake the fire had been rekindled. Turtle, determined to at least collect their fees, decided upon approaching them in the morning. How it was resolved was never learned. The late night walk around the lake, although fruitless in its purpose, turned out to be pleasant. The stars shone brightly and many constellations could be seen. The clear sky was assurance of good weather for Saturday.

Our first full day on the trail was to be one of long miles. After the first few miles we were treated to expansive views from the summit of Baker Peak. Leaving the summit, the trail entered the woods and began a gentle descent. The trail became muddy giving those of us from southern New England a feel of what Vermont's spring mud season is all about. Upon reaching Big Branch Brook at lunch time it was an opportune time to wash the mud from our legs and soak our toes.

Little Rock Pond was our night's destination. Woody and Bill opted for lodging in the Lula Tye Shelter while the rest of us set up camp at the Little Rock Pond Tenting Area. Badger, the caretaker, made us feel most welcome. A few in our group enjoyed a swim in the pond. After dinner some took a walk around the pond. A loon was spotted but before it could begin its evening's yodel-like call, the rumbling of thunder was heard. We all found refuge in our little shelters before the torrential rains came. The storm raged on and off for hours. All were comfortable for the duration, all except for Shadow, Bonnie's faithful Black Lab companion. His whimpering could be heard between the rumblings and claps of thunder. He had managed to wriggle his way into Bonnie's tiny tent for comfort. In the morning we all agreed that this was the most horrendous storm any of us had ever camped out in.

The storm had passed and Sunday morning we rose with hopes for another sunny day. It was a little sad to leave Little Rock Pond with its mist rising in the morning calm. But the trail was calling and we set out early. Crossing the fast running Homer Stone Brook on a narrow bridge, it was



The Trail Talk

found rather amusing that part of the bridge was held together with string! The trail began to climb gently, passing west of the summit of White Rocks Mtn. Here we came upon rock cairns, loosely built whimsical statues and structures. We added our own little rock touches in passing. The plan was to all meet at the view from the White Rocks Cliff Trail. Half the group arrived sooner and decided to just continue on to the end at VT 140. After they were relieved of their packs they returned to accompany the second group over Roaring Brook. Then it was just a short distance to our cars. It was no wonder that this section of the Long Trail is so popular, for its lakes, streams, views and the interesting people we met made for a memorable (and sunny!) walk in the woods.

*Hikers: Mary O'Neill, Donald "Woody" Woodbridge, Bill Falconer, Don Hagstrom, Mark Blanchard, Elizabeth Trail, Larry Frankel, Bonnie Ricker and Shadow
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



A Heads Up For Long Range Planning & For Those Hardy & Ambitious Enough Spring 2010

March 2010 - Nepal Trek – Looking for the trip of a life time? Be part of a unique group of individuals to travel on a two week guided trekking tour through eastern Nepal in March 2010. See the sights of Kathmandu, visit Everest Base camp and sleep in traditional tea houses. Full porter support provided. Leader will need a commitment and deposit by November 2009. For more information contact

Ron Sanga

(summitted Mt. Everest May 2008)

864-313-8255

ronsanga@juno.com.

Allen Freeman,
a member of the CT GMC,
Is hiking The Appalachian Trail From
Georgia To Maine This Year.
Follow along with his adventure on his blog at -
<http://allenf.blogspot.com>.

To see pictures of recent activities, changes to the current published schedule or unpublished events and other messages join the CT GMC groups site at -

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





**June 12 - 14, 2009. CT Section Of The GMC Work Crew.
Worked For Over 2 Days On The Long Trail / Appalachian Trail In Vermont**

The Trail Talk

**The Geen Mountain Club
Richard Krompegal
142 Churchill Drive
Newington, CT 06111-4003**

