

# The Trail Talk

VOLUME XXXIII NO. II

APRIL 2001

**Club Information:** Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President:

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**Trail Talk:** Published six times a year in February, April, June, August, October and December. 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:

Grace King  
653 Marrett Road  
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**Membership Dues:** Annual dues are as follows:

Individual Adult	\$ 27.00
Family	\$ 35.00
Junior (under 18)	\$ 7.00
Organization	\$ 35.00

Dues are payable by December 31 for the following calendar year. Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club  
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road  
Waterbury Center, VT 05677

**Website:** <http://members.home.net/gmc-ct-section>

## Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

### President's Message

*It appears that spring may finally be here!*

*Time to warm up the boots, put the snowshoes away, and hit the trail. Take a good look at the upcoming schedule and join us on an activity.*

*I, along with 57 others enjoyed the annual dinner. We were treated to a great social hour, a fine meal, and an interesting guest speaker. The minutes of the business meeting are included in this issue of the Trail Talk. I want to thank Sarah O'Hare for all her efforts in making this a fun event. I do have concerns however, about the future of this event.*

*This year was different from recent dinners in that we actually made a very small profit. This is due, primarily, to the donation of the food (as well as set up) for the social hour by Sarah O'Hare and Marge Hackbarth. Thank you.*

*We also had many guests at the dinner and although I didn't count them all I am sure that the guests outnumbered the members. Now there is nothing wrong with having a lot of guests but it does bring up a question. Is the annual dinner, in its present form, something that we want as a club to continue?*

*We are required by the by-laws of the club to hold an annual meeting each March. Would the membership be better served by changing this to a picnic in August? Pot luck dinner in March? Perhaps just a meeting with snacks? Please let me, and the other members of the executive board, know your feelings on this. We are open to your suggestions.*



## Annual Meeting & Dinner



President Ken Williamson thanked the executive board for their service this year along with Webmaster Allen Freeman. Special thanks were given to Bob and Arlene Rivard for their many years of service to the GMC and the Connecticut Section, most recently as coeditors of the newsletter. They were roundly

applauded by those in attendance. He reported the position of Secretary remains open and solicited volunteers for the position as well as noting that a current non-member of the section expressed some interest in the job.

**Director's Report** Jim Robertson summarized GMC Board of Directors meetings over the past year, including the \$1.3 million fiscal year 2002 budget, the Club's increased lobbying efforts in the Vermont legislature, the initiative to buy 50 acres adjoining the headquarters in Waterbury Center and build permanent field staff housing, and the revision to the Long Trail System Management Plan. He passed on thanks from the GMC office and board for the volunteer trail work we do.

**Alternate Director's Report** Norm Sills reported on the 90th birthday party of GMC. There were also several hikes scheduled. He along with 7 others climbed Camel's Hump, led by two women in period costumes (long skirts, umbrellas, wicker picnic baskets, etc) who wanted to demonstrate how women climbed mountains in 1910. It was a fun hike and for him, the highlight of the weekend.

**1st Vice President - Trails and Shelters Report** Dick Krompegal provided the statistics on Long Trail maintenance in 2000 with total of 396 working hours. He reported that the trail is in good shape. On Caughnawaga Shelter he has received reports that the roof is leaking so we need to tar it on the May maintenance trip. He also discussed about GMC Headquarters concern's with the shelter, and the possibility that they want to remove it. The 2 shelters (Kid Gore and Caughnawaga) are very close causing sanitation problems. He also reported working closely with the GMC to get a

project to work on this year instead of clipping the same trees all the time. Possibilities include building a bridge over Black Brook, waterbars just south of Story Spring shelter and repairs to Caughnawaga Shelter.

He also provided the statistics on Mattabesett Trail maintenance in 2000 with 110 combined working hours. He reported the trail is in good shape with the need to blaze from Rt. 68 south to Paug Gap. He presented Trail Crew Rockers to Sarah O'Hare and member-at-large Bill Brodnitzki who does considerable work with our section. He also informed his nominations for the GMC Buchanan Award being Art Runnels, Frank Maine and Jim Robertson.

### 2nd Vice President - Activities Report

Sarah O'Hare reported that there were 60 activities scheduled. Those included: 34 day hikes (including Mattabesett maintenance hikes), 15 overnights (including VT LT maintenance weekends), 6 bike rides, 2 canoe trips, 1 kayak/overnighter, 1 cross country skiing outing, and 1 bowling event. She reported the following members scheduled activities during the year: Jack Sanga, Richard Krompegal, Jim Robertson, Marge Hackbarth, Ken Williamson, Mary Horne, Mandy Brink, Ginny Waller, David Chatel, Stephanie Buhl, Bob and Eleanor Poole, Brooks Truitt and Sarah O'Hare.

**Treasurer's Report** Jack Sanga reported the following:

Checking \$1055.86  
Savings \$1037.55 of which \$875 is Kid Gore fund

The books were reviewed this year by Regina Chatel.

**Election of Officers** Following a nomination process the following positions were filled:

President - Ken Williamson  
1st Vice President Trails and Shelters - Dick Krompegal  
2nd Vice President Activities - Sarah O'Hare  
Treasurer - Jack Sanga  
Secretary - Open

West Woods, Guilford

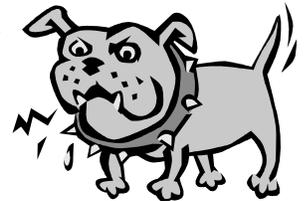
February 17

West Woods was a wonderful surprise. The 1000 acre sanctuary holds an array of natural wonders and its trails wind through seemingly endless rock formations. We began our hike along a narrow boardwalk through a marsh. Electing to follow the more challenging trails, we first followed the white trail. Snow and ice made for difficult footing as we ascended rocky outcrops. Our first point of interest, as shown on the map, was the 'Natural Monument,' an immense rock slab standing upright at the base of a massive rock ledge. At times the trail was hard to follow. Blow-downs blocked the path and sporadic blazing made for unclear directions. But at one point, to our delight, we found the trail led us through a split in a rocky cliff, just wide enough to squeeze through. We were constantly in awe of all the rock formations but continually had to be cautious of the icy trail conditions. As we approached Lost Lake, we decided the rock overlook with a panoramic view of the lake would be our lunch spot of the day. The leader had brought backpacking lunch experiments to share in return for comments and suggestions for improvement. No one ever goes away hungry after a GMC lunch break.

Our next point of interest to locate was the 'Rock Carvings.' Unsure exactly of what we were searching for, we examined every rock and outcrop for something carved in the stone. This was done solely to appease the leader, as she had looked unsuccessfully for these carvings on a prior hike. After nearly an hour, but still in good spirits, we gave up; the leader vowing to return to look further. We headed back up the white trail to reach the yellow trail, the most challenging of all the paths in the preserves. At a picturesque spot, overlooking a fast moving stream flowing into Lost Lake, we took a break. Jim shared his chocolate bar - just the boost we needed to get this challenging section underway. We soon found ourselves becoming trail maintenance volunteers

by removing many blow-downs across the trail. This path held many points of interest, one being 'The Great Fallen Cliffs.' It was just as its name implied. Ken, convinced that there was a way to climb to the top, slid his way to the base of the cliffs. It was decided that it would be better explored in warmer weather. Or so he convinced us. Probably just too ambitious an undertaking!

Other points of interest along this section included the 'Waterfall,' which we found a bit of a disappointment. The 'Rock Canopy,' an immense span of smooth rock, was dotted, to our surprise, with visual pollution - trash barrels. The real surprise was on Lori, as she grasped a tree for support on her descent and found that she had grasped a dead mouse wedged in a branch. Finding ourselves at the base of a sheer rock cliff the trail ascended along a crack from which trees had grown. Their roots had actually become the footpath. Upon reaching the top, two dogs greeted us viciously, barking madly and charging at us with their hackles up. Their owner did little to restrain them from their ferocious behavior and the little one nipped at the leader's leg. Ken was tempted to boot it over the cliff but his good senses took over and he scolded the owner instead. Another natural wonder, 'The Rift,' was one that we couldn't agree on what or where it was exactly. With so many rock formations as there were it could not be discerned. Our final trail treat was squeezing through yet another split in the rocks and finding ourselves having to then crawl on our hands and knees through a cave to be pure in following the trail. Just after emerging from the darkness, the trail made a descent and returned us to the boardwalk over the marsh and back to our cars. A full day of hiking on a rugged but fun trail found we had only hiked about 6.5 miles. As is customary, we ended the day with pizza and beer.



Leader: Sarah O'Hare  
 Hikers: Lori Helm, Ken Williamson,  
 Jim Robertson



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