

August 1999

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

An Active Summer for an Active Section

Despite the early heat and humidity, we've had quite a summer. It's been very gratifying to see and hear of the large turnouts for several Connecticut Section activities this year. We had 14 members at the Story Spring work weekend and banquet on June 18-20, ten participants for our family campout at Ten Mile River at the end of July, 12 hikers on a Sleeping Giant State Park hike in early August, and eight workers for an unscheduled work weekend at Kid Gore August 13-15. I want to extend special thanks to those newer Section members who have joined us in the past two years, and have been leading a number of diversified activities this year: VP of Activities Ken Williamson, Jack Sanga, Sarah O'Hare, and Steve Stevenson. These folks, along with our long-time trip leaders, have provided for an active summer schedule.

After two work weekends based at Kid Gore Shelter, and one weekend based at Story Spring Shelter, led by our VP of Trails and Shelters, Dick Krompegal, our section of the Long Trail is looking good and getting compliments from hikers. Thanks to those who supported the trail clearing efforts: Ken, Jack, Sarah, Steve and his son Brad, Marge Hackbarth, Frank Maine, Ginny Waller, Karen McHose, Bill Healy, Norm Sills, and GMC at-large member Bill Brodnitzki.

At Story Spring in June, Dick and Marge planned a banquet for Saturday evening, after completing work. With contributions from many, we had a feast of hot dogs, watermelon, quesadillas, pizza, salad, Dutch oven apple crisp and libations. I arrived with my two daughters too late to do any trail work, but in plenty of time to eat. The kids said later, "Dad, this our best camping trip ever!"

Dick organized the trip to Kid Gore in August on short notice after receiving reports from the GMC that severe thunderstorms had created several blowdowns on our section of Long Trail. Well, the blowdowns were minimal, at least in the southern five miles, but the trail did need a good brushing for blackberries and hobble bush, and the waterbars got a good cleaning. We met lots of folks on the trail, including a few southbound through-hikers, and received some satisfying thank-yous for our work.

There's lots more in store for the Fall!!! Check out the schedule.

See you on the trail!

Jim Robertson

Work Party at Story Spring June 18 - 20

By Saturday night 15 people had arrived at the shelter to share in the trail work and enjoy the wide variety of food cooked on the open fire. Leader Dick Krompegal and Marge Hackbarth arrived first on Friday followed by Sarah O'Hare. Dick went off to do some brushing on the trail going north while Marge and Sarah gathered wood. Stories in the register, of moose and bear sightings, made us make 2 trips to the beaver ponds on the trail going south.

By afternoon the ranks were swelled by Jack Sanga, Ginny Waller, Ken Williamson, Karen McHose, Frank Maine and the Stevensons, father Steve and son Brad, who impressed the group with their meal of fresh corn and hamburgs wrapped in foil and cooked on the fire. A hiker, Woodstock, joined in the camaraderie as Jack and Brad kept piling wood on the fire. The smoke got in our eyes but the bugs kept away. Everyone had pitched a tent to leave the shelter for the through hikers. Brad even brought his portable laptop computer to play a video game.

Saturday morning, as we snacked on Sarah's blueberry muffins, we heard how Frank and Jack were attacked by snowshoe rabbits during the night - a herd of them, thumping the ground all around their tent. After breakfast, and the tales, all walked south to work the trail out about 3 miles. All except Frank who was asked to clean and clip brush around the shelter, and he gathered a big pile of fire wood for the picnic that evening. Sarah and Dick blazed. Marge cleaned some waterbars. The rest of the group cleared the trail with loppers and swizzle sticks. Later in the morning, Dave Hardy, Director of Field Programs, caught up with the group. About 11:30, with the planned work finished, everybody headed back north to the shelter.

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The late afternoon and evening was devoted to feasting. Refreshment runs were made to Arlington. Hot dogs and baked potatoes were cooked on the fire while Frank delighted everybody by making pizza baked on a backpacking oven. No pizzeria could rival his pizza which featured mozzarella cheese, tomato sauce, black olives, anchovies, chopped green peppers and onions, pepperoni, fresh basil and oregano. Jack made tacos filled with refried beans, lettuce, salsa and cheese. Sarah cooked an apple cake in a Dutch oven over the fire - tasted good to everybody except Sarah. By the time we were stuffed, Jim Robertson arrived with his daughters Kerry and Brenna. Jim brought some salad and dressing. The children were fascinated with the fire where they roasted hot dogs and toasted marshmallows. Later, Norm Sills arrived then snacked on watermelon and some of Frank's pizza.

With all the planned work completed, Sunday morning was spent cooking a leisurely breakfast, packing, and taking some short hikes to explore the area for those who had not been to Story Spring Shelter before. We packed all the tools and equipment out the half mile to our cars. The sun had burned the clouds away and since it was still early, Ginny, Ken, Jack and Norm decided to drive up Mt. Equinox.

Thanks for the work and good picnic.

Workers: Ginny Waller, Karen McHose, Sarah O'Hare, Jim, Kerry and Brenna Robertson, Jack Sanga, Steve and Brad Stevenson, Ken Williamson, Norm Sills, Frank Maine, Dave Hardy,

*Written by Marge Hackbarth
Embellished by Dick Krompegal*

After Work Party Trip To Mt. Equinox June 20

I've wanted to see the top of Mt. Equinox for several years but it seems whenever I am in the area it's either raining, cloudy or the road is closed due to many feet of snow. For once however the weather cooperated and Sunday was a great day to put the top down and cruise to the top. Norm had a different idea, thinking that it would be preferable to hike to the top. He almost had me talked into it but I was able to resist the challenge this time. Jack and Ginny also joined me for a trip to the summit.

Great ride to the top with lots of vistas and, since we didn't follow Norm's suggestion nobody broke into a sweat. After reaching the top we took a short 1 mile stroll to the vista overlooking Mansfield Center. The view from the summit, and along the way, is quite impressive although I know I will appreciate it much more the next time as we will take Norm's suggestion and do it the "right way."

*Ginny Waller, Norm Sills, Jack Sanga
By: Ken Williamson*

Maintenance Tools

Our section has been in need of new swizzle sticks for several years now. Swizzle sticks are used on trail maintenance trips to clear brush from the path. In an e-mail dialogue with Dave Hardy I asked him if he had any suggestions on where to buy them. He informed me that the main club had several they could give to our section. Dave brought two to the June maintenance trip. Thanks!

By Dick Krompegal

Mattatuck Trail Hike June 27

The group was to meet at the blue trail marker on Rte. 6 in Thomaston. Half the group found it. The other half met at the same wrong place, at Reynolds Bridge, about three miles east of where the hike was supposed to begin. Having decided that the leader was pulling a no-show, they decided to hike on their own. With the heat and humidity on the rise they hiked to Balance Rock, a scenic overlook with a good view of the Naugatuck Valley. Then after eating lunch and observing the vultures circling they decided to turn back and call it a day.

Meanwhile, the first group started out hiking into Black Rock State Park and within a mile began the ascent up Black Rock, the trail was steep and eroded. The Black Rock Lookout has an elevation of 800 ft. Gradually descending north we crossed several streams desperate for rain. Leaving the Mattatuck State Forest we entered the Army Corps of Engineers area. At one point we donned sticks to protect ourselves from the possibly attacking goshawks nesting in the area. Signs posted brought us to attention! However, we saw

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none. The heat and humidity was taking its toll and the mosquitoes were quite bothersome. At one stream we were pleasantly surprised to encounter no bugs so we lingered, refreshed ourselves in the cool water and skipped stones.

The trail followed into the White Memorial Foundation land passing several ponds. We concluded our hike on Rte. 63 in Litchfield having hiked 10 miles. The group, fatigued and overheated stopped for burgers and salad, deviating from the usual pizza.

*Hikers: Karen McHose, Steve Stevenson, Bryan Stevenson
The Lost Platoon: Dick Krompegal, Carol Gosnell, Lili Aramli
Leader: Sarah O' Hare*

Sleeping Giant State Park August 7

A cooler and drier day gave relief from the heat, bringing twelve hikers out to Sleeping Giant State Park in Hamden. The park is a network of eleven trails totalling 32 miles of rocky and, in some places, very rough terrain.

The group began the ascent by way of the Tower Path, the only easy trail in the park. It led up to the Stone Tower where we enjoyed the view, the clear day allowing us to see as far as Long Island. Dick and Bob, our resident nature guides, pointed out the soaring vultures with explanations comparing them with hawks.

The summer of intense heat and drought was evident in the park. The impact had left the undergrowth wilted and dying, and the trees were dropping their leaves as if it was autumn.

For the next several hours we hiked the various trails, deciding at one point to split up so a select group could enjoy the challenges of the most difficult trail. After a few misunderstandings and lack of communication the groups finally met up with one another. Deciding we had had enough, we headed to Sergio's for the GMC tradition of pizza and beer.

*Leader: Sarah O' Hare
Hikers: Bob Schoff, Jack Sanga, Kim Proia, Dick Krompegal, Steve Stevenson, Ken Williamson, Brooks Truitt, Fred Zanowski,
Farah Bagadia, her sister Uzma Saudager and Bikash Behera*

Historic Lebanon Green August 14

Our small group ventured out with umbrellas in hand, but the rain stayed away. We visited the War Office, Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. House, Beaumont House, and Trumbull House. Also dropped in the Historical Society to see its new exhibits. On all of these tours, we learned many interesting, unique facts from the guides. When we finished, the sun finally came out and we had our fill of colonial history for the day. Hope some of you will visit Lebanon next year for our tercentenary.

*Leader: Arlene Rivard
Hikers: Sarah & Mike O'Hare, Bob & Becky Rivard*

New Members

Joe Dumelin, North Haven
Joan Dunham, North Branford
Gladys C. Prendergast, Cresskill, NJ
Kim Proia, Glastonbury
Bill F. Rousseau, Vernon
Arthur Singer Family, North Stonington
Heather Van Deusen, Fairfield
William J. West, Ivoryton

ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

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September - October 1999

Saturday, September 4 - Day Hike, Leg 3 of 4 for the Nipmuck Trail. Total distance will be 6 - 8 miles.

Leader Jack Sanga (860) 648-9614, e-mail: jsanga@aol.com

Saturday, September 4 - Orienteering, Huntington State Park, Redding, CT. We will form a team to compete in a WCOE orienteering event. No experience required, training provided. Combine hiking and map reading skills to create the ultimate treasure hunt. A great family event so bring your spouse and kids. Contact leader for meeting time and place.

Leader: Steve Stevenson (203) 270-6131, e-mail: stevenson@k12.wcsu.ctstateu.edu

Friday - Sunday, September 10 - 12 - Trail Maintenance. Trip to our section of the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail in VT. Base out of the Story Spring Shelter, 1/2 mile from parking. Day trips to do work. May combine with a picnic. Call by September 7.

Leader: Dick Krompegal (860) 667-4205, e-mail: rkrompy@aol.com

Sunday, September 19 - Trail Maintenance, Mattabesett Trail. Meet at Guida' s at 9:30 a.m. for breakfast. Will leave for work at 10:00 a.m. Bring work gloves and garbage bags. Other tools supplied.

Leader: Dick Krompegal (860) 667-4205, e-mail: rkrompy@aol.com

Saturday, September 25 - Day Hike, Mohawk Trail. Cornwall Bridge to Johnson Road, 11 miles. This hike has several steep climbs.

Leader: Ken Williamson (860) 535-2622, e-mail: Ksub@aol.com

Friday - Sunday, October 1 - 3 - Trail Maintenance. Work the southern part of our section of the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail. Base out of The Kid Gore Shelter, day trips to work, good views, very remote. Call by September 28.

Leader: Dick Krompegal (860) 667-4205, e-mail: rkrompy@aol.com

Saturday, October 9 - Day Hike, Leg 4 of 4 for the Nipmuck Trail. Total distance will be 6 - 8 miles.

Leader: Jack Sanga (860) 648-9614, e-mail: jsanga@aol.com

Saturday - Sunday, October 9-10 - Family Backpacking Trip to Silver Hill on Appalachian Trail near Cornwall Bridge. Large camping area, pumped water, outhouse. Call for meeting time and place.

Leader: Jim Robertson (860) 633-7279 (h), (860) 285-4688 (w), email: jroberts 685@aol.com or james.e.robertson@us.abb.com

Saturday, October 16 - Day Hike, Wadsworth Falls State Park. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at park on Route 157, Middletown. 3 to 5 mile hike.

Leader: Marge Hackbarth (203) 237-0560

Sunday, October 17 - Day Hike, Narragansett Trail. Lantern Hill to Pendleton Hill (N. Stonington) 10.6 miles.

Leader: Ken Williamson (860) 535-2622, e-mail: Ksub@aol.com

Saturday - Sunday, October 23 - 24 - Backpacking. A pleasant visit to somewhere in Vermont. Shouldn' t need snow shoes yet.

Leader: Ken Williamson (860) 535-2622, e-mail: Ksub@aol.com

Saturday, October 30 - Day Hike, Shenipsit Trail. 9:30 a.m. start. A repeat of last April' s easy hike on the Shenipsit Trail, off Rte. 94 in Glastonbury. Bring the children to look for garnets!

Leader: Sarah O' Hare (860) 5637018, email: SEOHARE@aol.com

Sunday October 31 - Trail Maintenance, Mattabesett Trail. Meet at Guida' s at 9:30 a.m. for breakfast. Will leave for work at 10:00 a.m. Bring work gloves and garbage bags. Other tools supplied.

Leader: Dick Krompegal: (860) 667-4205, e-mail: rkrompy@aol.com