

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wilderness Status for Glastenbury Mountain Area?

Our section of the Long Trail in southern Vermont is located entirely within the Green Mountain National Forest, which is currently classified as a multi-use forest for recreation, forest products' harvesting, etc. In late 1998, the federal government acquired the last major private land holding to the northwest of Glastenbury Mountain from a member of the Scott family (of the Scott Paper Company). With this acquisition, some groups in Vermont, including the Green Mountain Club began a grass-roots effort to have the Glastenbury Mountain area, including the Long/Appalachian Trail from just north of Route 9 to the Arlington-West Wardsboro Road, designated as a Wilderness area.

The GMC' s Board of Directors voted unanimously on March 20, 1999, to support Wilderness designation for the Glastenbury Mountain area. Since the vote, an informal "Vermont Wilderness Alliance" has been meeting monthly to plan. The GMC is the lead organization for the Glastenbury Mountain area, and hopes to take congressional staff members and others on tours of the area later in the summer. Senator Jim Jeffords (R-Vt.) has indicated to the GMC that no legislative action will take place until after the November 2000 elections.

Wilderness designation would have some impact on our ability to perform trail maintenance, because motorized equipment and vehicles are prohibited in wilderness areas. This would preclude the use of chain saws (although we use them infrequently), but would also prohibit snowmobiles from traversing to the top of Glastenbury.

We' ll keep you informed as this process continues.

Spring Trail Maintenance

Work has started on the Long and Mattabesett Trails for the year. Dick Krompegal led a crew including Marge Hackbarth, Frank Maine, Jack Sanga, and Ken Williamson into Kid Gore Shelter for the annual May work weekend on the southern section of the LT, and a group including Marge, Sarah O' Hare, Art Runnels, Bob Schoff, Steve Stevenson, and Herb van Winkelen on the Mattabesett in early June. Thanks to all these volunteers for their support of the trails!

Jim Robertson

Mattabesett Trail Maintenance April 11

Substituting for Dick Krompegal I led this trip. We met at Guida' s Restaurant at 9:30 a.m. and, as suggested by Dick, spotted a vehicle at Reed' s Gap. We then drove back to Black Pond and hiked from here South to Reed' s Gap.

Swans are back on Black Pond again this year. Heard many birds, saw quite a few wildflowers, and had some great views. Very little clipping had to be done. We did pick up a half a bag of "people trash".

On the down side the trail is being badly eroded by trail bikes. We saw a few of these pass by as well as a couple of ATVs. There is also a great deal of "visual pollution" from Black Pond up to the radio tower. There must have been a sale on ugly rust colored spray paint! Arrows on trees and rocks every 5 to 10 feet!

A gorgeous day, no bugs, and I welcomed a GMC member - new to our section, and her brother. Thanks for a good trip.

Rubbish picker-uppers: Erin Mahon and her brother Colin Mahon

Leader: Bob Schoff

Mattatuck Trail Hike

April 25

The Mattatuck Trail Adventure or how to follow a trail on a 23 year old map with ambiguous directions.

We began from Peterson Memorial Park in Wolcott with 4 GMCers. The weather was perfect. In the beginning the trail was well marked, traveling through some of the most picturesque terrain the group has seen in CT. This was certainly the sweet spot of spring - the trees were beginning to green and the annoying flying bugs were still dormant. As with many trails in the suburbs, some trail time must be spent on paved roads. This was no exception. We took an extended sojourn through a residential area, got a bit confused, but eventually found our way back to the trail.

Exactly at noon we arrived at Buttermilk Falls, a 20 foot cascading waterfall, where we ate lunch. Perfect planning on our leader's part. The general consensus was that this was one of the best lunch spots. We know how important lunch can be!

The trail took us by a cave which was thought to be one of the Leatherman's shelters during his 365 mile circuit which took 34 days during the 19th century. (for more information on the Leatherman: <http://lady.esslink.com/~channy/leatherman.html>).

Things began to go bad when the well marked trail disappeared - gone into a pond we had to conclude. We scoured the surrounding area looking for clues. To add insult to injury, when trying to orient the map we made the assumption that the north on the map was at the top of the map - not true in this case. West was at the top of the map (we didn't discover this until later). One would think Steve, a.k.a. Inspector Gadget, would have brought his GPS - he didn't. Steve - never leave home without it! Taking surface streets we eventually made it to the drop car. We walked about 13 miles and had a total vertical ascent of 1300 feet. We finished our adventure with the traditional pizza.

Leader: Sarah O'Hare

Hikers: Stephanie Buhl, Steven Stevenson, Mike O'Hare

Trail Maintenance May 8

Our group assembled at the picnic area in Bigelow Hollow State Park for our Trail Maintenance as a small part of "Give a Day to Trails Day".

Under threatening skies and a forecast of 80 per-cent chance of rain we proceeded North on the East Ridge Trail; using it as a shortcut to get to Breakneck Pond.

At the Southern end of Breakneck Pond we changed to the Nipmuck Trail and proceeded to brush and clip it out from here to the Massachusetts border. A distance of approximately 2 miles. Lunch was here at the Mass. line and we then retraced our route back to the parking lot.

Saw a few birds, heard a lot more, saw one snake in a Laurel bush about 5 feet up.(?) Great views of an unspoiled pond and a good job done. Thanks to all who participated - 10 adults and 3 children. GMC members in attendance were:

Co-leaders: Art Runnels and Bob Schoff; Jack Sanga and daughter Olivia

Lebanon Green May 15

Our small group had excellent weather for this historic two mile loop hike. We peered into windows of the famous Revolutionary War era War Office, Beaumont House and Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. House.

Leader: Arlene Rivard

Hikers: Bob, Becky & Glenn Rivard, Marge Nichols

Will lead this hike again on August 14 at 1:00 when buildings will be open to visitors.

Annual Kid Gore Spring Trip May 22-23

Dick Krompegal and Marge Hackbarth left early Friday and discovered the favorite Dunkin' Donuts in Greenfield was closed. After lunch and a rest some work was done on the trail toward Lydia's Rest. The weather was sunny and dry all weekend, but the black flies were horrible! Jack Sanga arrived around 6:00 p.m. after a delay due to missing the directional flags. Frank Maine, who was able to get within a mile of the shelter with his Jeep, arrived at 8:00 p.m. The fellows built a fire to try to smoke out the flies but all weekend they appeared early and left late.

There was a beautiful sunrise in the morning and all left for Glastenbury Mountain. Hikers claimed there were blowdowns but they were insignificant. Ken Williamson overtook Marge on the trail. He had left home very late Friday evening and camped out. On the way to the shelter he was fortunate to see a moose. Marge was unable to go very far up the mountain and on the way back flushed a grouse off her nest of twelve eggs.

Sunday was getting cloudy so everyone left early. Dick and Jack had done some more work improving the view in front of the shelter. Frank gave Marge a rough ride in his Jeep back to the car. It was incredible that a vehicle could negotiate that rough wood road. We had a well enjoyed meal at Bickford's in Greenfield on the way home. The rain did not start until we were in the cars.

Marge Hackbarth

Granby Hiking Festival Metacomet Trail June 5

As part of Trails Day 1999, the Connecticut Section set up a GMC display at the annual "Backpacking is In-Tents" Hiking and Environmental Festival. The festival is organized by Gabe and Greg Piwonski, who have recently helped start the Salmon Brook Hiking Club in the Granby area, and have taken over trail maintenance of the Metacomet Trail from Tarriffville to Route 20. The GMC staff sent a large green display board with Long Trail photos and maps that can be attached with Velcro, along with LT and general hiking literature. We had several people stop by to chat about the Trail, Vermont, and outdoor activities in general.

In the afternoon, we took a short hike on the Metacomet Trail in East Granby. Carol Gosnell was the only one who joined me for a very pleasant walk north from Route 20 to the rocks overlooking the Farmington River Valley, Old Newgate Prison, and southern Massachusetts. We may have spent more time sitting on the many rock outcroppings than we spent walking the trail, but still managed to make a 4-mile loop. The beautiful weather, with clear skies and a steady breeze, made it perfect for hiking. Wildlife spotted included several squirrels, a chipmunk, and three hawks. Carol felt so inspired by the views that she hopes to return to the ledges to paint sometime.

Jim Robertson, Carol Gosnell

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Aliza Ben David, West Hartford
Doreen Clark, Bristol
Sharon & Tom Dooley, Wallingford
Karen L. McHose, West Simsbury
Monica Oldakowski, Burlington, VT
Karen Parent, Wallingford
Deborah A. Pfeiffenberger, New Britain
Nancy Ramos, Bristol
Jason C. Smith, Bridgeport
Terry Stearns, Suffield
Fred Zarnowski, Newington

**Work Party
June 13**

Dick Krompegal, V.P. for Trails and Shelters led 7 people on a warm humid day from Route 68 to Paug Gap on the Mattabesett Trail. Very little trash was found on the trail but bike traffic has eroded it. At the first outlook the group enjoyed a brief snack and water stop. After the hike all except one who had a family commitment went out for pizza at a place to remain nameless, as the food could have been better.

Work Crew: John Bensenhaver, Marge Hackbarth (Reporter), Sarah O'Hare, Art Runnels, Bob Schoff, Steve Stevenson, Herb van Winkelen

**ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE
July - August 1999**

The Nipmuck Trail Hike Series is back by popular demand. If you missed part or all of last year's series now is your chance. The Nipmuck Trail runs from the town of Mansfield north to the Nipmuck State Forest in the town of Union on the Massachusetts border. The Nipmuck Trail has two southern branches in Mansfield and a main trail that runs from Spring Hill to the Massachusetts border. Over the course of 4 day hikes Jack Sanga will lead us on both southern branches and the main trail to Bigelow Hollow State Park.

Saturday, July 3 - Day Hike, Leg 1 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, July 10 - 11 - Backpack over Alander Mtn., Round Mtn. and Mt. Frissel. Be the highest person in Connecticut (and you thought the 60s were over!). Stand in three states at once. Finally, camp atop blueberry laden Alander Mtn. in southwestern Massachusetts. It should be a dark night (moon rise at 3:09 a.m.), so star-gazing promises to be grand.

Leader: Allen Freeman (860) 828-6845, e-mail: AFREEMAN@prodigy.net

Saturday, July 17 - Day Hike & Swim. Meet 9:00 a.m. at the parking lot at Covered Bridge over Salmon River, Route 16, East Hampton. Bring water, lunch and swim suit. Steady but not too steep upgrade. Rain cancels.

Leader: Marge Hackbarth (203) 237-0560

Saturday, July 24 - Day Hike, Leg 2 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, July 31 - August 1 - 5th Annual Family Camping/Backpacking Trip at Ten Mile River on the Appalachian Trail in Kent. About a one mile (easy) walk from road. Camp in field. Swim, fish, collect rocks in the river. Call leader for meeting time and place.

*Leader: Jim Robertson (H) (860) 633-7279, (W) (860) 285-4688;
e-mail: jrobert685@aol.com or james.e.robertson@ussev.mail.abb.com*

Saturday, August 7 - Day Hike, Sleeping Giant State Park, Hamden. Park has 30 miles of hiking trails. Trail mileage will be determined by the group. As long or as short a hike as you like.

Leader: Sarah O' Hare (860)563-7018, e-mail: SEOHARE@aol.com

Saturday, August 14 - Slack Pack Mount Washington. I plan on traveling up Friday night, August 13 to Mount Washington. Camping at a campground to hit the trail about 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning. Plan on doing Tuckerman's Ravine. May stay at the campground Saturday night and travel home on Sunday. Get those legs in shape.

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

Saturday, August 14, 1:00 p.m. - Historic two-mile loop around Lebanon Green. Several Revolutionary War era

buildings including War Office open to visitors. Meet at east end of Green in library parking lot at intersection of Routes 207 & 87.

Leader: Arlene Rivard (860) 537-1114, e-mail: rwrivard@neca.com

Saturday, August 21 - Hike, Swim, Barbecue, Kettletown State Park on Lake Zoar in Southbury, CT. The trail is 6.3 miles, passes by the lake in a couple places, good for a carry in barbecue. If you pack in the barbecue, everyone should bring in their own food and drink. Swimming optional.

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

Saturday, August 28 - 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