



Volume L, Issue III; July to September, 2018; Fred Clark, Editor

President's Message, June 2018

I had never visited the Grand Canyon until this spring's trip organized by Jim Moore and Mandy Brink. People had said that photos don't do the Canyon justice; you have to see it in person to get a full appreciation for its beauty and grandeur. I am now a believer. What a fantastic place and a fabulous trip. We had a group of 15, thirteen of whom backpacked from the South Rim down the Hermit Trail to Monument Creek campsite for two nights. On our day in between, we walked down to the banks of the Colorado River at Granite Rapids. Definitely a place to put on a list for a return visit in the future.

Three of us attended the GMC's 108th annual meeting at the Hulbert Outdoor Center in Fairlee, Vermont on June 2. Mentioned among the reports and presentations of the Club's activities over the past year and plans for future years were intermediate and long-term planning for capital projects fundraising, especially to invest in Long Trail repairs and improvements in northern Vermont, development of an endowment to fund summer trails and shelters caretakers (current funding can sometimes be precarious due to fluctuations in government contributions), and acquisition of the remaining Long Trail lands that are still held by private owners. Stay tuned for more information.

And, finally, our Section trail maintenance season has kicked off. Vice President Mike Shaw led a group of six into Story Spring Shelter in early May to work our northern trail section. The walk-through revealed less winter damage to trees than we had seen in the previous few years, so most of our efforts were clipping back hobble bush, blackberries and other small tree branches encroaching on the trail corridor. Mike has our next planned to Kid Gore Shelter on June 15-17.

See you on the trail,
Jim Robertson

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INQUIRIES: Please direct all inquiries regarding the Connecticut Section to the President.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE: *Trail Talk* is published four times a year in March, June, September, and December. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Articles and activity

reports must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Article and activity reports must be sent in a Word Document in Times New Roman, font size 10. Reports sent from iPhones or iPads will be returned

Send articles and activity reports to:

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MEMBERSHIP: When filling out an application to join or renew your membership in the Green Mountain Club, circle **Connecticut Section** on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

Dues:

Individual Adult	\$45.00
Family	\$60.00
Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income	\$25.00
Sponsor (Individual/Family)	\$75.00

Send annual dues to:

Green Mountain Club
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

NEW MEMBERS: The Connecticut Section welcomes these new members who recently joined. See you at our upcoming events!

Mathew Jobin
Al Prudhomme

WANT TO HELP THE CONNECTICUT SECTION REDUCE EXPENSES AND SAVE TREES? Just send an e-mail to the Editor, requesting that you be e-mailed *Trail Talk*, rather than having it mailed to you. You'll receive *Trail Talk* sooner, too.

SPECIAL THANKS to member Charlotte Hitchcock. Each issue she facilitates the e-mailing of *Trail Talk* by reducing the file size of the attachment.

Hammonasset Beach
Tuesday, February 14, 2018

It was a lovely sunny day at the beach. The State has been working very hard and has paved most of the walking trail. Started out by myself with plans to connect with Joe Conaci. I headed east to Meig's Point. Reaching the farthest point I was very pleased to see two seals sunning themselves on the rocks in the harbor. A gentleman who was out there doing photography was kind enough to share his photos of the seals. Along the jetty leading to the harbor there were several Pin-Tail ducks who gracefully danced on the waves.

When I returned to the Nature Center in hopes of meeting Joe, I went inside to take advantage of the in-door plumbing. Apparently, they are keeping the building open and staffing it with senior volunteers. Joe was nowhere in sight, so I went out to the island and had lunch. While there I had the opportunity to watch a Harrier Hawk swoop over the marsh grass in search of a snack.

As I started my return trip to West Beach, I met up with Joe. He had taken all the sights and was returning to his vehicle. We chatted a few minutes and went our separate ways.

Hikers: Carol A. Langley and Joe Conaci

Rockland Preserve
Tuesday, April 3, 2018

The weather forecast was not very promising: 39 degrees and cloudy. Joe Cocanci met me promptly at 10:00 at the parking lot off Rte. 79. We started on the Orange Trail, then the Green Trail up and over the summit of 630ft. It is amazing how much we depend on the sun to keep us in the right direction. We did a couple of back tracks but Joe the Boy Scout leader kept us on the trail in the correct direction. I generally have a good sense of direction but today I had to pull the "Old Age Card" and just follow Joe.

All was quiet as we visited Cowan Pond. Now just where is the San Houston Trail? That is supposed to take us to our lunch spot at the Boy Scout Camp area. After a few turns we arrived. These boys did a good job: a nice fire ring, picnic tables and even a privy, what more could a hiker ask for!!! Just as we were finishing up lunch, a few ice crystals began to drop from the grey sky.

We only went a short distance when the rain started. Time for the rain gear and pack covers. By the time

we reached the Orange Trail, which leads to the parking lot, the rain was really coming down. Just a note to hikers who may use these trails on the weekends: beware, there are now bike trails crossing over the hiking trail.

Thanks for joining me Joe and keeping me in the right direction, since my old compass was not working.

Hikers: Carol A. Langley and Joe Conaci

Grand Canyon Trip
April 13 to 17, 2018

My dad has for years told me I have to hike the Grand Canyon before I die, and a couple weeks ago I finally did, together with 12 other members of the Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club.

Friday, Hermit's Rest to Monument Creek

We started out at Hermit's Rest on the South Rim, and took Hermit Trail down into the canyon. The trails throughout the canyon were very smooth and gentle compared to what we're used to in the Northeast. They were also very different in being open the whole way, and of course by being in a western desert, with mostly unfamiliar flora and fauna. The most notable aspect of Grand Canyon trails, however, is the fact that pretty much around every corner you're in front of a new view which would by itself be world famous if it were anywhere else.

The steepest part of Friday's hike was right at the beginning, dropping down from the rim on switchbacks. I actually got off-trail briefly, by missing a switch, but recovered quickly. After a couple miles or so of switchbacks, the trail heads north along the eastern side of the Hermit Creek side canyon, losing elevation more gradually. Early in this section is Santa Maria Spring and Santa Maria Shelter, a real nice place to take a break in the shade and the only place to refresh water before Monument Creek. The day wasn't particularly hot, but there were no clouds, and almost no trees, so a shady place to rest was always welcome.

Eventually the trail gets to Breezy Point, whence it drops down some switchbacks called Cathedral Stairs.

After the stairs the trail runs pretty straight and flat to where Hermit Trail ends at the intersection with

Tonto Trail. We then headed east on Tonto Trail, which was the easiest trail of the hike. I started pushing myself in this section, because it was easy and we were nearing camp. That was a mistake; I ended up bonking. After recovering I continued towards camp. We were pretty spread out by then, but I was with a couple other hikers when the trail dropped into a drainage and I became convinced we were on the wrong trail. In retrospect I think this was at least partly due to fatigue, because after consulting the map I had a mental image of how the trail intersections and turns went which wasn't what the map actually showed. I was sure we had veered off of the Tonto Trail onto the Granite Rapids spur when in reality we hadn't gotten to that intersection yet. Eventually it was all figured out, though, and we all made it to Monument Creek Campsite. The whole hike was 9.3 miles and about a 3500 feet elevation loss.

Monument Creek Campsite is in a side canyon containing Monument Creek. The creek was flowing nicely in the campsite area, but not downstream of there, which had caused some concern when we were approaching and could see the dry creekbed below us. The creek is named after the Monument, a 250 foot high stack of rocks. The campsite has very sandy soil; I ended up putting rocks on my tent stakes to hold them in. That first night the sky was clear and we watched a narrow but dense star field slowly rotate above us.

Saturday, Monument Creek to Granite Rapids and back. On Saturday we hiked down to the Colorado River and back. There's a trail from the campsite to the river which is mostly just the Monument Creek bed. Although the creek was flowing at the campsite, soon after it dries up (goes underground?) and reappears near the river. The point where the creek/trail meets the river is Granite Rapids, which has several beaches on the south (i.e. our) side, including a nice sandy one just upstream of the rapids. We spent a lot of time hanging out, watching the rapids and the lizards, and resting in the shade of the bushes. Some of us went swimming, as well. Then we hiked back. The back and forth was only about three miles total with only about 500 feet elevation loss/gain. The temperature was the hottest of the trip, but still only in the 80s. As we were headed out we saw a couple of climbers preparing to scale the monument, and after we got back we saw a different couple of climbers doing so.

Actually, we just saw them at one point on the ascent and then on the top, since they climbed up the opposite side.

Sunday, Monument Creek to Hermit's Rest. On Sunday we reversed Friday's hike. It was cloudy that day, but very windy. I had made the mistake of not packing any chapstick. I associate needing chapstick with cold weather, so I didn't even think about packing it. I ended up with severely chapped lips, which took several days to recover from. Other than that, it was a great hike, seeing the sites from Friday in reverse and from a new perspective.

My dad was right: the Grand Canyon is not overhyped; it really is that awesome. I don't know if I'll ever get back, but now I'll be telling hikers I know that you should go there before you die.

Hike Leaders: Jim Moore and Mandy Brink.
Hikers: Jim Robertson, Rob and Marianne Valley, Tom Adams, Cathryn Dolan, Han Sherman, Mark Stone, Mike Shaw, Scott Black, Dennis Himes, and Matt Pfeiffer.
Campers: Carol Langley and Karen Palumno.
Article written by Dennis Himes

Stony Creek Quarry Preserve April 28, 2018

Many hikers will agree that autumn is the best time of the year to be out on the trail. Early spring, however, is surely the sweetest. The woodlands are returning to life as the leaves are emerging and the wildflowers are beginning to bloom. Frequent rains enable the streams to run fast and the marshy areas to rise, muddying the path. Wildlife makes themselves known by the bird songs from above, frogs vocalizing from their wetland habitat and turtles basking on warm rocks. Such was the splendor of our hike today.

The Stony Creek Quarry Preserve is divided into two sections with the active quarry in between. The Stony Creek pink granite is continually quarried, even on this day. We explored the west side of the preserve first, a generally easy walk. Remnants of the quarrying were scattered everywhere, from enormous granite slabs to small rocks. The east side of the quarry, however, was quite different. The trail was more challenging and more scenic. It passed a pond,

marshy area and delighted us with climbs in and out of gorges. After six miles we all agreed that we need to come back to explore the remaining miles of trail. Perhaps in the fall, the best time of the year for a woodland walk.

Leader: Sarah O'Hare. Hikers: Dick Hart, Gary Griffin, Don Hagstrom, and George Jackson.

Day Hike to Bluff Point, May 26, 2018

It was the perfect hiking day. There was sunshine and a nice breeze coming off the water. We started from the Bluff Point parking lot and headed over to Haley Farm. George and Don gave the group an interesting history lesson on the type of farm that had been there based on the remaining foundations of the old barns. We even had a lesson in dairy farming in Connecticut when farms were still family run.

We headed back towards Bluff Point taking a trail that cuts across and stopped at the ruins of the Winthrop family. We learned about the family there, learning that in the olden days they used different terms for what we now term Senior and Junior for sons named after their fathers. In the 1700s it was John Winthrop the Elder and John Winthrop the Younger who settled in the coastal region.

We stopped along the water for a lunch break and from there headed to Bluff Point. The views are always so wonderful there and today's views were beautiful. After enjoying the views of the lighthouse and ocean, we headed back the main trail towards the parking lot. There were lots of people out walking and lots of dogs out having a glorious day. We completed about a 7-mile loop before being back to the parking lot.

We were so happy to have Linda back in the ranks of hikers. It was great too having Alice and Kerry and fun to catch up with them and what they are doing. Thanks everyone for a great hike. I guess I'll still list myself as leader although without Dennis's map and George and Don's good memory of the trail system, I'm sure we would have been lost a few times.

Leader: Mandy Brink. Hikers: Jim Robertson, Kerry Robertson, Dennis Himes, Patty Adams, George Jackson, Don and Linda Hagstrom, Marianne Valley,

Alice Valley. Our four-legged friends: Arlo, Molson and Alba.

UPCOMING EVENTS

If you change your mind and will not be showing up for an event, please call, rather than e-mail, the activity leader. Some activity leaders do not have smart phones and will not receive e-mails.

JULY 2018

Saturday and Sunday, June 30 and July 1. Overnight backpacking trip in the White Mountains, N.H. Take the Zealand Trail to the A.T. Overnight at Ethan Pond Campsite. Out to Route 302, Crawford Notch on Sunday. Leader: Mandy Brink, 860-237-7426 (cell), trekeragb@sbcglobal.net. Level: Moderate.

Sunday to Thursday, July 8 to 12. Five-day backpacking trip on the A.T. in the White Mountains, N.H. Starting from Rte. 2 at the Mahoosuc Notch Trail. Distance: 25.4 miles. Plans are to drive up on Sunday, stage cars, and stay in a motel. Start hiking on Monday. Plan is to do short miles, tough terrain. Contact leader for itinerary. Leader: Carol Langley, 860-877-4449, cosmical14@yahoo.com. Level: Moderate.

AUGUST 2018

Saturday and Sunday, August 4 and 5. Overnight backpacking trip on the Long Trail. Hike into the Little Rock Pond area and spend the night. This is the site where the idea of the Connecticut Section of the GMC was conceived by Robert Poole 50 years ago. There are shelters/tent platforms and swimming. Fee charged. Leader: Carol Langley, 860-877-4449, cosmical14@yahoo.com. Level: Easy.

Thursday to Monday, August 16 to August 20. Five-day backpacking trip, White Mountains, N.H. Plans are to drive up on Thursday night and stay at local campground. On Friday we will backpack the section of the AT, going in the 19 Mile Brook Trail, over Carter Dome to Imp Campground on Friday. Friday night we will stay at a local campground. On Sunday plans are to finish the Presidential range. Options to take Cog Railway to Mt. Washington to join AT or hike up Mt. Jefferson to join AT and hike over to Madison Hut for Sunday night. Individuals are on their own to make hut reservations and recommendations are to do it soon if interested in this weekend. Madison Spring Hut fills up quickly. Hike out on Monday and home. Leader: Mandy Brink, 860-237-7426 (cell), trekeragb@sbcglobal.net. Level: Difficult.

Monday to Thursday, August 20 to 23. Four-day backpacking trip on the A.T. in N.H. Start at Lyme-Dorchester Rd. Short miles, tough terrain. Contact leader for itinerary. Leader: Carol Langley, 860-877-4449, cosmical14@yahoo.com. Level: Moderate.

SEPTEMBER 2018

Sunday to Thursday, September 9 to 13. Five-day backpacking trip on the A.T. in Maine. South Arm Rd. to Rte. 4. Plans are to drive up on Sunday, stay at The Hiker Hut, and start hiking on Monday. Long days. Contact leader for itinerary. Leader: Carol Langley, 860-877-4449, cosmical14@yahoo.com. Level: Difficult.

Friday to Sunday, September 14 to 16. Trail Maintenance Weekend at Kid Gore Shelter. Contact: Mike Shaw, 860-381-9130 call or text, msshaw2@mail.com. Level: Moderate.

Friday to Sunday, September 28 to 30. Trail Maintenance Weekend at Story Spring Shelter. Contact: Mike Shaw, 860-381-9130 call or text, msshaw2@mail.com. Level: Moderate.