

The Trail Talk

July 2003

Club Information: 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

Trail Talk: 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:

Grace King
653 Marrett Road
Lexington, MA 02421
Kangti@excite.com

Membership Dues: Annual dues are as follows:

Individual Adult	\$ 30.00
Family	\$ 40.00
Senior (70 or older)	\$ 20.00
Nonprofit or Youth Group	\$ 40.00
Business or Corporation	\$100.00

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 05677-9904

Website: <http://www.conngmc.com>

Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

President's Message

Summer Activities

Summer has finally arrived allowing us to get out and participate in the many activities planned by our leaders. Those of us who are leading activities during the summer should make sure that everyone who is attending an event is prepared for the weather and has plenty of water. During hot humid days we need to set a pace that has a comfort zone for everyone. If you are a hiker, biker or canoeist on one of our trips and are having difficulty please advise someone immediately.

Secretary Position

Steve Keri has had to resign as our section's secretary due to other commitments. The club thanks Steve for his time as secretary.

This is an important position however not very time consuming since the main club has taken over the responsibility of membership. It is necessary for the club secretary to be in attendance at the Executive Board Meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of the month from September to June. Each month the meeting is held at a different member's home.

Would you consider helping your club to fill the position? If you are interested, please call Carol at 1-860-621-2860 for further details. Thanks you in advance for helping your club.

Enjoy the Sun,

Carol A. Langley

**A.T. Mass Kellogg Road - Rte 23
April 13**

After all the rain, we had a crystal clear day for the hike. The group met at the parking lot off Rte 23 in Monterey, MA. We then drove a couple of cars to Kellogg Road to start the hike.

The trail was easy as we climbed up June Mountain, which was named for Benjamin June who actually lived there many years ago. As we hiked along many birds sang along with the woodland trees as they rustled in the breeze to serenade the attentive ear. Some of the bird songs we heard were from the Black & White Warbler, the Cardinal, the Chipping Sparrow and a Hairy Woodpecker whose drilling sounded like he was using a jack hammer.

Along the trail we found an old twisted foot bridge which spanned a deep ravine. This turned out to be a great place to get some group photos and the bridge actually held us as different hikers snapped photos.

Lunch was enjoyed on an outcropping of rocks over looking the Housatonic River with a view of the Taconic and Catskill Mountains to the west. After lunch everyone seemed to slow down so when we came upon the Tom Leonard Lean-to it was naptime for some of us. Ken climbed upstairs into one of the bunks and stayed for a while. I elevated my legs since my knees were bothering me and wrapped them in a cold bandana from the icy brook nearby. Others scouted out the tent platforms, which has a great view. The log book is always interesting material when one stops at a shelter/lean-to.

Next we skirted the edges of icy gulch that still had plenty of snow and ice. As we peered over the edge, we could feel the cool drafts. This was very refreshing and soon we had reached Rte 23. On our way to Kellogg Road, we stopped and had pizza since everyone had a long drive home.

Hikers; Henry Smith, Sarah O'Hare, Ken Williamson, Lora Miller, Michelle Porsche, Carol Langley

**Mattabesett Trail Maintenance
May 4**

We met at Guida's restaurant for refreshments. The main task today was to walk as much of our section reviewing the Connecticut Walk Book description for the next edition due out in 2004. We started at Rt. 17 and walked the 7 miles to Rt. 66. The trail is so wide because of motor cycles that there is not much clipping of brush. Not as much trash on this day either. Wonderful sunny, cool spring day to enjoy the views from the cliffs.

We visited Marge Hackbarth later for coffee and good conversation.

Attending -
Norm Sills, Lora Miller, Carol Langley, Henry Smith.

Dick Krompegal



**Long Trail Maintenance
May 16 - 18**

As usual for these 3 day work trips in Vermont, on Friday people kept arriving at various times after driving north from Connecticut. Nanette Roina, Bill Brodnitzki, Gary Gustavson and I met at Route 9 and Somerset Road then drove the 9+ miles of dirt roads to the trail head, arriving around 11:00. Zig zagging around moose droppings, we walked the 3+ miles to the Kid Gore Shelter flagging the unmarked trail as we walked for the others that would follow. Clear, cool weather. Great view at the shelter. After setting up our gear for the weekend we walked north for about 1.5 miles to a vista, clipping and inspecting the trail. On the return trip we walked our proposed relocation. About a third of a mile in length, it has been flagged and is on the schedule for the Forest Service to review for their approval. Later Jack Sanga, Ginny Waller, Marilyn Plowman & Steven Keri strolled in. Steve had

South Dakota
June 4-10

hiked the 7 miles in from the Wardsboro Road so could inform us of the condition of our section of the trail north.

Saturday morning we woke to a clear sky and 30 degrees. About 7:30 Frank Maine, Timmy Dean and Douglass Pallindino arrived after spending the night about a mile down the mountain.

We split up into several work groups. Gary, Jack, Frank, Timmy and Steve wanted to get to the top of Glastenbury Mountain on this clear day. That's an 8 mile round trip and about 1,000 feet gain in elevation. They cleared about 9 fallen trees, blowdowns, some with a hand saw and some with a chain saw. The top of the mountain still had patches of snow and ice. The top of Glastenbury has a fire tower on it. Climbing the tower gives a 360 degree view of southern VT, NY, Ma including a great view of Mt. Greylock and off into southern NH. The tower is scheduled to be refurbished in 2004. The funding is available and the planning is underway.

Doug walked about half way up the mountain doing trail work. Marylyn and Ginny spent the day closer to the shelters cleaning the trail and working on drainage. Nanette, Bill and I worked on a long time contemplated short relocation to get around a boggy area about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile south of Kid Gore. Oooops, I mean Trail Adjustment. It is called a "Trail Adjustment" not a "Trail Relocation" because relocations need approval from the Forest Service in The National Forest, where our section is located, - a years long event. This 30 yard Adjustment fell into the category of "It's easier to get forgiveness than to get permission". Anyway we need to go back in the fall and blaze a few trees in the Adjustment. About mid day we were joined by Dave Hardy, Director of Field Programs for the GMC.

Dick Krompegal



Our beautiful trip the Black Hills began with a delay in our flight, but we arrived in Rapid City quite excited. After joining with Sharon who had flown in from New Mexico and Chuck who had come from New York, we headed for Elk Mountain Campground in Wind Cave National Park. As is usual for a GMC function, we managed to crawl into our tents just as it began to rain.

On Thursday, we packed up and headed for Custer State Park. After setting up our wet tents, we headed out to hike the Harney Peak Range. We hiked to Little Devils Tower and then onto Harney Peak, the highest peak in South Dakota. (Editor's note: highest peak east of the Rockies) We managed to see the beautiful view of the Black Hills before the clouds rolled in and believe it or not, it started to snow. Hiking this peak was a 10 year long goal for Mandy, so it was quite a highlight moment.

The next day started with a Lantern Tour at Jewel Cave National Park. After passing the duck waddle test, we lit our lanterns and headed into the cave. We got to see a few bats hanging out. Afterwards, we hiked the Canyon Trail in Jewel Cave before heading up to Wind Cave National Park where we toured a different type of cave. This cave has a wonderful display of 90% of the world's boxwork. Most of this day it rained but it didn't matter as we spent a good part of it in caves. We ended the evening by heading to Mt. Rushmore for the evening program and lighting ceremony. It was a touching ceremony and the perfect ending for the full day. Thanks to Mandy's wonderful sense of directions, we got to see all aspects of Custer State Park by moonlight, trying to find our campsite.

On Day 3, we packed up and headed for Crazy Horse. Once a year they allow the public to hike right up to the face of this amazing statue. We were lucky enough to be there on one of those days. We hiked up in the rain and once again encountered snow at the top. After touring the visitors center, our group split, with some doing Bear Country and others heading to Wall Drug on our way to Badlands.

There was never a trip that had more layering of clothes, off and on. After freezing at Crazy Horse, the Badlands was 88 degrees and we were all donning suntan

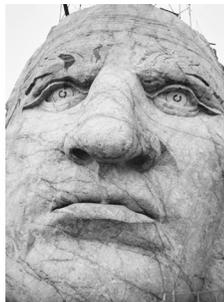
lotion. We set up camp at the Cedar Pass Campground. We spent our last two days exploring the Badlands. We could always spot the trail across the prairie by following the bobbing bright yellow hat. We did a wonderful 10-mile hike across Badlands on the Castle Trail and Medicine Loop Trail. The big variety of wildflowers throughout the prairie were spectacular. The evening ended with a program at the campground on the geology of the Badlands. After a sound defeat for Jack at the hands of Mandy in a game of Rummy, we headed to bed.

Our second morning, the girls decided to do some horseback riding across the prairie. We met some real nice South Dakotans who did the trail rides. Grace had the most spirited horse, Sunny. It was hard to figure out who was the boss, Grace or Sunny. We also went out to the Big Pig Dig, where students from the School of Geology, are doing an archeological dig on ancient pig bones. We saw the Prairie homestead an original dugout homestead that also has one of the worlds few white prairie dog towns.

Other highlights of the trip included the beautiful Needles Highway. We saw lots of wildlife including bison, mule deer, pronghorn, prairie dogs and magpies. Our last night was spent in Rapid City with the traditional GMC pizza. We retired to our rooms to try and repack and stuff our things back into our backpacks, that is, except for Jack who bonded with the UPS office. So is anyone interested in a trip to Glacier National Park in Montana?

Participants: Jack Sanga, Mandy Brink, Grace King, Regina Chatel, Chuck Brock and Sharon Hutchins

Editor's Note: The photos from this trip are posted in <http://groups.aol.com/gmcct>



Metacomet Trail June 7

This nine mile section of the Metacomet Trail is its most northern section in Connecticut and promised to be a challenging one. A challenge it was as rain began before we even set foot on the trail. Richard and Leslie were the only hikers to brave the weather, we all assumed that the rain would be arriving later rather than earlier. We spent some time ruminating about whether we should attempt it. We did. We entered the forest in Tariffville, the trail taking us immediately down to the banks of the Farmington River. A Great Blue Heron awed us with its impressive landing across the river just as we arrived at the river's edge. The river was fast and furious from the previous weeks' rainfall. The trail followed the river closely for just a short distance then turned toward higher ground. We ascended gradually to the ridgeline where there would have been a fine view of the river, Simsbury and Granby if not for the light rain.

The trail was rather rugged as it followed a ridgeline all the way to Suffield. Many opportunities for spectacular views to the west were marred by the clouds and the rain. The rain only continued to get heavier with each mile. The only bright spots along the trail were the wild flowers, the Wild Columbine and Yellow Flag (an iris) in particular.

We were beginning to feel ready to give up the hike but the hike was not quite ready to give us up. There was still another mile to go and we were getting soaked and chilled. Seeing Rich and Leslie's car through the trees was a welcome sight! We hurried along to seek the shelter and heat it would soon provide us. This trail is to be hiked in fine weather and so it will be scheduled again, with hopes of more people joining us.

Hikers: Leslie and Richard Chandler, Sarah O'Hare

**A.T. Mass. Beartown Mt. Road - Rte 23
June 29**

On this early summer day as Lora, Henry and myself were driving to the meeting place our first sighting of wildlife was a beautiful red fox walking along side the road by the Colebrook Dam.

Polly Silva and Laura Richardson pulled into the parking lot right behind us, in minutes Ken Williamson flies into the parking lot in his bright red jeep with Sarah O'Hare hanging on. After shuffling people and packs we took off with Henry in the jeep with Ken and the girls in my Honda. A short ride on some back dirt roads and we were on the trail.

The younger folks and those with long strides picked a moderate pace while I took the snail's pace and listened to the birds and admired the lush green ferns that bordered the trail as it weaved itself through the forest. Our first stop was at the Mt. Wilcox Lean-to North. Henry, myself and some other folks have stayed at the Mt. Wilcox Lean-to South 12 years ago this September on an autumn overnight. While there some took advantage of the privy, others read the log book looking to see if there was an entry by Sue Spring our thru hiker but none was found. Sarah found a plastic with a white substance which we could not identify so BRAVE KEN stuck his finger and tasted the mystery substance... We guessed it was baking soda. And now we have a mystery on our hands, why baking soda in the shelter? To put out a fire? To deodorize the shelter? To make a paste for bug bites? This mystery we did not solve.

In the bushes we heard a fluttering and bird song, which Henry quickly identified as a pair of redstarts involving in a mating ritual. As we reached the top of the ridge from the shelter we heard thunder of the distance. Plans were we would hold up in the next shelter that was only 1.8 miles if the storm got serious. The storm fell apart and the few drops of rain weren't even felt with the canopy of trees. Our thru hiker was Earl who was happy to see the Sun and said he was actually taking it easy this Sun-

day to enjoy sights and sounds since when it rains all there is to do is hike, sleep and eat. The gentleman told us about some Lady-Slippers he saw ahead on the trail but we never found them. He must have really been looking. He was from Ohio near PA border. Our next thru hiker was a young lady who was in a big hurry to get to Pickham Notch by the end of July, we didn't even get her name.

We enjoyed our lunch on the ledges that gave us a view of Mt. Everett and the distant Catskills. After lunch the cameras came out and more photo shots were taken. Our next stop was Benedict Pond where I soaked my feet, Henry took a nap, Ken went off to scout out a boat launch as there were people canoeing and kayaking on this lovely pond. At the pond we also had the opportunity to see a large snake sunning itself after dinner (because of a large bulge) in the mid section. At the pond we saw Newts, which start out as Salamanders.

Our next thru hiker Chameleon as well as his friend Cliff Hanger whom we met a short distance down the trail were wearing sarongs to keep them cool. Cliff Hanger was a bit under the weather stating he thought he had Lyme disease. Refused our help to get medical attention.

On the last section of trail, Henry, Ken and Lora were ahead and saw a deer but those who were in the rear had the opportunity to see bear scrapping on a beech sapling. Pictures were taken to prove this story and it looks like he was a big one.

We retrieved the cars and off to Great Barrington to have ice cream and relax before long drive home. See you all in the fall for the next section of the AT in Massachusetts.

Hikers: Sarah O'Hare, Laura Richardson, Lora Miller, Henry Smith, Ken Williamson, Carol Langley





**Grace King
The Green Mountain Club
653 Marrett Road
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