



Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

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President's Message Spring 2016

Our biggest event of the year, the Connecticut Section annual dinner and meeting, is just a few days away. This is always a great opportunity to meet and re-connect with other Club members. We will be meeting again this year at the Grange Hall on Wallingford Road in Cheshire, Connecticut on Saturday April 2 starting with a social hour at 5:00 pm, and the Grange's roast beef dinner served at 6:00. Our guest speaker following the dinner and annual meeting this year is Felicia Ortner of The Bear Reality, talking about bears in the Northeast. If you haven't already made your reservations, there's still time! Contact Marianne Valley, 300 Granite Road, Guilford, CT 06437 or m_valley@att.net.

We learned last month about the passing of long-time Connecticut Section member Caroline Smith Warner of Bristol at the age of 103. Although Caroline had been living in skilled care facilities for a number of years, she hiked into her late 80's, and had led many GMC activities on the Tunxis Trail, around the Colebrook Reservoir, and at other spots in Western Connecticut.

Although Mother Nature may still have a few surprises left for us, it appears Spring is here. With it comes the start of our trail maintenance season. Incoming Trails and Shelters vice president Mike Shaw has scheduled two weekends, *April 22-24 based at Story Spring Shelter*, and *May 13-15 based at Kid Gore Shelter*, to prepare our 12 miles of the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail in Vermont for the hiking season. There's always plenty to do, and these weekends are always fun, so please consider joining us for one or both.

See you on the Trail,

Jim Robertson

Club Information
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Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President.

The Trail Talk is published four times a year, Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. 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:

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Membership

When filling out the form to join or renew, circle the **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:
The Green Mountain Club
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904
(802) 244-7037, http://www.greenmountainclub.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Get a new member today!

SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL!!

We are now on Meetup. Please contact Alina Badus at alina.badus@gmail.com or Jim Robertson jrobert685@aol.com if interested

HIKE LEADERS

All reports must be sent in a Word Document in Times Roman 11. Reports sent from I-phones or I Pads will be returned. Thank you!
Carol A. Langley & Celia Campbell-Mohn

BEAR FACTS

Leave a candy bar wrapper in your pocket?
Bears can sniff it out, like a bloodhound.
Backpacker Magazine
April 2016

BE SAFE NOT SORRY

Yes, Spring is in the air but remember the nights are still very cool. Keep that hat, extra pair of socks and gloves for just in case. It is a lot easier to cool down than to warm up!!!!

Mohawk Trail November 7, 2015

Autumn can be the best time of the year for a long hike but sometimes not. This may have been one of those hikes that would have been more enjoyable during another season. With much enthusiasm we began our trek on the Mohawk Trail at Lake Road. If not for the abundance of newly painted blazes it would have been difficult to follow the path. The trail was invisible due to the freshly fallen leaves. Hiking along in ankle-deep leaves slowed our pace as we couldn't see what was under foot. We could see, however, what was above, as within the first mile we saw a hunter perched high in a tree. A wave to acknowledge our presence was unnecessary as our blaze orange attire made us quite visible.

We were enjoying this woodland walk as it brought us over some hills, across a stream, a view of Cream Hill Lake and a wetland pond with evidence of recent beaver activity. Reaching Mansfield Road, a sign directed us to a relocation of the trail that brought us to our lunch stop at the Pine Knoll Lean-To. From here it was less than a mile to Music Mountain Road where the Dean Ravine section of the trail began. Visiting Dean Ravine was the purpose of this hike and it was spectacular. The trail followed the brook, descending steeply to the bottom of the ravine where the waterfalls and rock ledges were a sight to behold. A visit in the spring would be a better time to visit, with the greening up of the woods, wild flowers blooming and the snow's runoff making the waterfalls more impressive.

Leaving the ravine we started on our last two miles over Barrack Mountain. As we began ascending steeply over rocky terrain we came across a National Scenic Appalachian Trail Geologic Survey marker embedded in the rock. The marker was a remnant from when the Mohawk Trail was the Appalachian Trail many years ago. As we continued our ascent the whine of the race cars at Lime Rock Speedway could be heard. The drone became louder the higher we climbed and at some open ledges we were able to see the racetrack. Ascending more steeply, the trail became even more difficult. The rocks continued to be hidden under the thick layer of leaves and pine needles. Whatever mental and physical strength was in reserve we needed it now to make it to the top of this mountain. At the summit, at 1,230 feet, there were impressive views across the Housatonic River Valley. Thinking the toughest part of the trek was behind us, we began our descent. This downhill was more treacherous than the climb up. It was extremely slow going. With much care we eventually made it down safely, very grateful for the level ground, at last! Tired and happy, we reached our end at Warren Tpke. This nine mile hike would have been better suited for another time of the year but the day's adventure was a memorable one.

Hikers: Don Hagstrom, Sarah O'Hare

Old Furnace State Park Hike November 29, 2015

This small state park is quite a fine. It was the first time many of us had been there. The first warning in the book is that there is a spot that can be a dangerous water crossing but for us it was a warm sunny day and the water level was low. We met at the trail head and started our hike by hopping over the boulders across a bubbly stream. The waterfalls, while not a roaring one, was pretty enough. We had a nice climb up Half Hill to the Ross Ledge. There were views of both Half Hill Pond and Ross Pond. We learned that while there is a clearly blazed blue trail, there are many other trails in the park. It would have been fun to take more time to check out some of the other trails, perhaps another hike in the spring. From above we saw a strange looking area bordering the pond. At first we thought it was the pond because it looked like gray water but it turned out to be a parking lot way below. We walked down to check out both the pond and the boat launch. We thought it might be fun to do a summer hike for both a hike and a paddle. We walked to Squaw Rock Rd and back, stopping along a rock wall for lunch. While the park is named for the Old Furnaces that once operated in that location, we did not see any signs of furnace remains. With a few extra explorations our mileage for the day was 5.3 miles.

Hikers: Mandy Brink, Tom and Patty Adams, Gary Griffin, Don Hagstrom, Jim Robertson and George Jackson

Nayantaquit Trail – Nehantic State Forest December 27, 2015

We were certainly not bundled up for this hike. As a matter of fact by the time we hiked up the first hill, we took off one layer and hiked in our shirts. It was gray and had been raining in the morning but by the time we met at the trail head the rain had stopped. While it continued to be foggy and gray, it was warm and delightful to be out. We reached our high summit of Nickerson Hill at 452 ft. It was gentle ups and downs for the day. We hiked the loop and decided to take the extra mile out to Uncas Pond. Tom, Patty and Finn departed for the cars as Finn had a big day at the Mystic Seaport in the afternoon. For being a little guy, Finn led the pack and hiked at a decent pace. We stopped at the picnic area by Uncas Pond and had a snack along with fun conversation. It was a quick walk out at this point. Again, much like we found at Furnace State Park in November, there are many other trails that could be explored in this area as well as some nice paddle spots. We hiked about 6.3 miles which would earn us ummmm, maybe one cookie on this post Christmas cookie hike. Thanks for the great company everyone.

Hikers: Mandy Brink, Cathryn Dolan, Jim Fritz, Jim Robertson, Tom and Patty Adams, Finley Lemons

Northwest Cabin Dec. 11-13, 2015

After clearing water bars along Undermountain Trail I arrived at the cabin at 3:30. Getting the fire going was the first order of business. I then collected enough kindling and started an outside fire so those coming in could see the flames. By 6:15 there was still no one in sight. I decided to flash my headlamp in the direction of the Bog Trail where they should be coming from, nothing. Just as I went upstairs and crept into my sleeping bag to stay warm I saw headlamps out the west window, now whom could that be? Then I heard voices and laughter from none other than Mandy and her two scouts and dog Cooper. So now where is Mike, Adam, Kim and Tori? Mandy and the girls settled in.

Darkness has moved in the night was still and quiet when suddenly we see headlamps shining to the south towards the Bog Trail. Mike and his group had arrived. After dinner it was time to settle down.

Mandy and her dog Cooper slept outside under the stars since it was such a mild night. Around midnight Cooper has his head up and has a low growl now what is out there. Kevin Burke had decided to hike in at night since it was such a lovely clear and warm evening. He quickly had his tent out on the platform.

Chef Mike was up at the crack of dawn and had his backpacker stove fired up on the outside picnic table. The crew was treated to wonderful rolls and other breakfast goodies. In record time everything was cleaned up and our group headed out to climb Mt. Frissell.

Cooper stayed up front as he didn't want to miss a thing. A steady pace had us peeling off outer garments before we started our climb. When we reached the summit we took a short snack break. At this point Kim and Tori decided to return the way we hiked in. Mike wanted to find the tri-state marker which we did then it was decided to hike on to a plateau where there would be a great view.

Just below Brace Mt. Having an old hand-drawn map from 1961 I saw a marking for an old jeep trail which we followed out that led us to the Mt. Washington Rd. This was a cake walk after the climbs so we talked and walked and soon were back at the cabin.

Plans were to hike Bear Mt. and watch the Full Moon rise however the clouds had moved in. However some hikers just needed to do more so Kim, Mike and I did hike out and climb Bear Mt. returning just before dark.

Kevin aka "lumber jack" was busy splitting wood for the outdoor fireplace when we returned. It was a lovely evening around the fire. Snacks and treats were shared by all.

Once again Chef Mike has his backpacker oven fired up and has two egg pies ready that were consumed in short order by all. This boy knows how to cook. You are hired for this Dec. 2016.

Then it was clean up time, restock wood we used, clean ash from the stove, sweep the cabin, etc. This was a great group and everyone pitched in the door was shut and we were on the trail at 9:30 to return to the Undermountain Parking Lot.

Thanks for joining me: Mandy Brink, Sabrina Slack, Cassandra Cini, Kevin Burke, Kim Sullivan & Tori, Mike & Adam Shaw and trail dog Cooper. L Carol A. Langley



Rocky Neck State Park
Jan. 1, 2016

A lovely day greeted three hikers for this annual New Year's Day hike. Jim, Kaz and I left the parking lot and headed down the road through the campground and picked up the Red Trail just the other side of the river.

As we hiked we exercised our brains as well, recalling old members from the 1980's & 1990's and places we had hiked. We picked up the White Trail which led us to Rte. 156. We then hiked along the Blue with great views of the cove below and the ocean in front of us. We arrived at the Pavilion just around noon and found a picnic table in the sun. This Pavilion was built in 1936 and the main beams are trees from all the state parks that existed at that time, Jim was very patient as Kaz and I went down memory lane during the late 1940's and early 1950's when Ice Cream was 20 cents, a cone and a soda was 10 cents a drink!!!!

Our lunch had treats of Christmas Cookies that Kaz brought and homemade fudge from the leader. See what you missed!!! It was such a lovely spot and warm that we could have spent the afternoon there but we moved on.

Our returned trip was on the boardwalk along the ocean. There were many people there even an Amtrak employee looking for seals on the rocks.

The CT. Section held its' first New Years in 1990 and was led by Liz Koster, from Southington who has now passed on.. I took over in 1991 and have led one every year since.

Hope to see you next year!!!

Kaz Ryak, Jim Robertson & Carol A. Langley



Hammonasset Beach State Park
March 5, 2016th

Several of us met at the Nature Center parking lot on a bright, sunny but chilly day. It was nice to see old and new friends, even though the dogs decided right away they would not be friends. Thor even managed to escape from his leash and spent some glorious time enjoying his freedom and running all over the parking area.

After he was recaptured, we hiked the Meigs Point rocky beach trail and the two woods trails, hoping to see some harbor seals: several had been spotted during the previous week. We didn't see any, unfortunately, but we did spot several red-winged blackbirds and what we think might have been a juvenile bald eagle. A walk on the beach and on the boardwalk, followed by lunch, completed this easy outing. I'm so glad nobody took me up on the swim suit challenge!

Two- legged hikers: Michael Adamczyk, Alina Badus, Regina Chatel, Linda and Don Hagstrom, Denise Heidelberg, Ross Lanius, Margaret Norris, Jim Robertson, Karen and Dave Wells. Four-legged hikers: Molson and Thor.

**Chatfield Hollow State Park
February 20, 2016**

When I first planned this hike I had envisioned bitter cold, deep snow and hot chocolate, but February brought one of its warmest days as the temperature got up to the 50s. There was no snow on the trail, only a little ice on some of the rocks, and we got a head start on our Spring tan as the sun shone brightly through the bare tree branches. We did a nice loop through the western half of the park, visiting the rock climbing area and a pond with an abandoned but very picturesque boat. We climbed several short rises and had nice views from cliff edges. We had lunch in the sun by another pond, then stopped by the beach on the way back. Thanks to everyone who came out!

Hikers: Alina Badus, Jim Fritz, Don Hagstrom, Dennis Himes, Sarah O'Hare, Jim Robertson.

**Mt. Greylock Backpack
March 12-13, 2016**

While advertised as a winter backpacking trip, the mild weather turned this into an early spring event. We had planned to do this hike in mid-February on the weekend that turned brutally cold, so that trip was cancelled. What a change in four weeks! Six GMCers trekked up, over and down Mt. Greylock amidst no snow and just a bit of packed ice in some shady areas on the trail near the summit. Meeting on Thiel Road in the Greylock Glen area of Adams, Massachusetts, we headed up the old Bellows Pipe ski trail, past crumbling and rusting remnants of the Greylock ski area which ceased operations in the 1950's. As with every "first backpack" of the year, the climb up the trail seemed to be harder than most of us remembered, and certainly harder than our last climbs of the previous year, when a summer's worth of conditioning made the trudging easier.

We reached the summit about 1:30 and were treated to absolutely fantastic views, one of those 100-mile view days, with peaks like New Hampshire's Monadnock (56 miles away), Massachusetts' Wachusett Mountain (63 miles), and Vermont's Mt. Snow all clearly visible. Wind machines in northern Mass and southern Vermont were turning in the brisk but pleasant breeze. Several other people were milling around the summit and War Memorial tower, having walked up trails or the auto roads (which are closed in winter). After lunch

on the east side of the tower, overlooking Adams and the Hoosic River valley, we headed south on the AT, encountering the only real icy tread of the day, in the areas where the evergreens completely shaded the trail and many hikers had packed the snow down to ice.

We arrived at Mark Noepel Shelter just after 4 o'clock. A father and his two children were already set up in the shelter but consolidated in the loft to make bunk room for Mike, Kevin and Eric, and Mark. Jim nabbed a tent platform and Kevin Burke headed down into the valley, past the water source, to find a private tent site.

After establishing our sleeping arrangements, snacks, dinner, libations and the usual stories and tall tales commenced. As several of us had served time in the military, a few service stories were intermixed with yarns of the trail, camping and whatever came to mind. Kevin Breton demonstrated his usual fire building expertise, getting a comfortable fire going in the fireplace in front of the shelter. Shifting winds proved to be a nuisance however as smoke would periodically fill the shelter and chase us around the fire circle.

Overnight low temperatures dipped barely into the upper 30's, although the wind gusted a few times causing my tent fly to rattle me awake. On Sunday morning we enjoyed breakfast, broke camp and headed south on the AT to the Old Adams Road, eventually connecting to the Gould Trail back to Greylock Glen. Having burned sufficient calories, we were more than happy to stop at the Dunkin Donuts in Adams, where Mark treated us to coffee and donuts before we all headed in various directions to home. All told, a great weekend with a great group.

Trekkers: Mark Blanchard, Kevin and Eric Breton, Kevin Burke, Mike Shaw and Jim Robertson

