



Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

Volume LIV, Issue II April to June 2022 Fred Clark, Editor

President's Message

Spring 2022

Connecticut Section Annual Dinner and Meeting – In the last edition of *Trail Talk*, I expressed cautious optimism that we might be able to hold our annual dinner and meeting indoors again in 2022. Alas, that did not pan out. Around the time we would have had to fix a date with the Cheshire Grange, the COVID-19 Omicron variant was spreading rapidly, so we made a decision to shift to an outdoor dinner and meeting. As of now we don't have a set date or location. Please be on the lookout for a separate communication with details.

Trails & Shelters – The GMC has several major construction projects planned for 2022 including those listed below. There are no specific dates yet but when the schedules become clearer, we'll communicate them, particularly the work on Kid Gore Shelter.

- Major renovations of Kid Gore Shelter and Seth Warner Shelter
- Construction of a new shelter on the north shore of Stratton Pond
- Construction of the replacement Bromley Mountain observation tower
- Replace five more privies along the Long Trail
- Rebuild Beaver Dam Cabin on Wheeler Pond, starting in September

Trails and Shelters VP Mike Shaw will be communicating the schedule for our Spring work weekends on the Long Trail over the next few months.

Membership Renewals – The GMC is having some issues with maintenance of its membership database and its communications for annual membership renewals. When working properly, the GMC sends an email renewal reminder 6 to 8 weeks prior to our membership expiration, and a postal mail reminder 3 to 4 weeks prior.

Each month we receive a membership update of Connecticut Section renewals, non-renewals and new members. Over the past year we noticed that many Section members were curiously showing up as Lapsed, or being dropped from membership completely. After some investigation we found that the GMC was not sending renewal reminders in many cases. Fred Clark has been doing a thorough cross-check between the Section member list he uses for distributing *Trail Talk* and the GMC office's member lists, identifying dozens of errors and oversights which we've forwarded to the office for correction.

If you unexpectedly stop receiving correspondence from either the main GMC or from our Section, please let me and Fred know.

GMC rental facilities – We had a great trip to the GMC's Bolton Lodge in northern Vermont in late January despite frigid weather conditions. Bolton is one of three rental cabins that the Club maintains and all of them get significant use. The cabins have become so popular that it's difficult to book two consecutive weekend days at any of the three. We already have the Hadsel-Mares cabin on Wheeler Pond near Barton Vermont booked for a two-night midweek stay in early March 2023. As the time draws nearer, the event will be added to our Connecticut Section event calendar.

See you on the trail, *Jim Robertson*

Green Mountain Club Information

<http://www.greenmountainclub.org>

(802) 244-7037

Connecticut Section Information

<http://www.conngmc.com>

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

New Members: The Connecticut Section welcomes these new members who recently joined:

Todd Fox

Josh Valinsky

Julie Leroux

Scott Hasz

Michelle and Robert Haines

We look forward to meeting you at our upcoming events.

Publication Schedule: *Trail Talk* is published four times a year in March, June, September, and December. Please e-mail activity reports to the Editor at fpclark1@comcast.net no later than the fifth day of the publication month. Activity reports must be a Word Document sent as an attachment.

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

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

You may also join or renew online at:

<https://www.greenmountainclub.org/>

Special Thanks to member Charlotte Hitchcock. Each issue Charlotte facilitates the e-mailing of *Trail Talk* by formatting the layout and reducing the file size.

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.

Calendar of Events:

Upcoming events are listed here:

<http://www.conngmc.com/newwiki/doku.php?id=start>



ACTIVITY REPORTS

Mooween State Park, Lebanon
December 28, 2021
by Mandy Brink

What a great hike to offer for kids. We had four of them: **Lily** and **Luke Brink** and **Logan** and **Jamison Kumpf**. Starting from the parking lot, we decided to hike the loop down by the water first. We had hiked a little bit down the trail when we hear the kids shouting, there's a basketball court. Sure enough, there in the middle of the woods was a basketball court. It turns out [Mooween State Park](#) in Lebanon, Connecticut was a summer camp for boys that ran from 1921 to 1960. Sadly, it closed due to financial problems. By the basketball court were the remains of the Great Hall. According to memories posted online, the Great Hall was used for mealtime and next to it was the social hall that was used for social events at the camp. The adults that included **Linda** and **Don Hagstrom**, **Sarah O'Hare**, **Tom** and **Patty Adams**, **Marianne Valley**, **Alice Valley**, **Patrick Kelley**, **Alyssa Kumpf** and me, explored the remains while the kids passed a football on the basketball court. There were several chimneys still standing that were fun to see.

Red Cedar Lake is quite beautiful. Daisy, a four-legged friend along on the hike, took a dip in the water. The camp was purchased by the state in 1989 and was originally called Red Cedar Lake State Park. Former campers petitioned the state to have the name changed to honor the former camp and in 2000, the name was changed to Mooween State Park. The word mooween is the Mohegan word for "bear."

After the water loop, we headed back to the basketball court for a snack before heading to do the second big loop. We learned that, despite our map showing about 4 miles of hiking, there are all kinds of trails that could offer a good 10 miles. We learned that the red trail is very winding and twisting. Thankfully, Tom had his *AllTrails* map, which told us the red trail was 9 miles so we did a quick bushwhack to join the trail that would take us back to the parking lot. We had done 4 miles and that was a good amount for the kids. Our other three furry friends for the walk included Harley, Arlo and Bella. This is a beautiful park and certainly will be worth going back to do more exploring

Northwest Park, Windsor
January 4, 2022
by Carol A. Langley

When this hike was listed, I had allowed 3 different days because of New England winter weather. So we chose Tuesday, January 4 because it was the best day.

Sarah O'Hare met me on this beautiful clear blue sky day with temps in the 20s. From the [Northwest Park](#) entrance on Lang Road we walked up the dirt Old Farm Road passing chickens clacking, sheep baying, and pheasants spreading their wings, showing their colors. The goats were dancing around in their pen. A nice place to bring those grandchildren.

Soon, we saw the purple blazes for the Brookside Trail. The Purple Trail meandered down a hill until it reached a small brook where it took a turn and started back up the hill. Soon we were back on Old Farm Road, passing by the old tobacco barns that are still standing but are in sad shape. We reached an intersection which was confusing to both of us. However, we continued on.

After a distance, we found ourselves facing the dam at Rainbow Reservoir. But the trail ended, so it looked like a little bushwhack to get where we wanted to go. After a short distance, we saw the black blazes that would lead us to the Dinosaur Print. Now we knew where we were. Shortly, we connected with the Pink Rainbow Reservoir Trail and were hiking along the ridge until we came to another road which led us to the Blue Pond Trail. Following the trail just a short distance, we found a viewing stand with seats on each side.

Lunch time. The cold kept all of nature quiet. The only noise of the day was planes coming in for a landing at Bradley International Airport. The droning noise we heard was caused by the flaps on the wings lifting up for the plane to slow its speed to prepare for landing.

After lunch we connected with the Yellow Wetlands Trail which led us to a side trail bringing us to our cars. Sarah's phone registered just about 6 miles. A Nature Center and the [Connecticut Valley Tobacco Museum](#) are also in the park.

Bolton Lodge, Vermont
January 25-27, 2022
by Jim Robertson

We had cold temperatures plus a wind chill, but clear skies and great snowshoeing conditions for this trip to the GMC's Bolton Lodge in northern Vermont.

Mandy Brink, Mark Blanchard, Barb Kelly and Jim Moore joined me for the two-day event. We congregated at the Bolton Valley Resort base lodge just after noon on Tuesday, grabbed a quick lunch in the snack bar and loaded our packs and three tow sleds with food and gear. From the large amount of equipment, we might have been mistaken for an Arctic expedition but we like to be comfortable and eat well. And with weather this frigid, consumed calories don't count. Mandy, Barb and Jim M opted to take the main backcountry route, called Broadway, from the Bolton Nordic Sports Center to the lodge, an easy traverse downhill for about 1.5 miles. Finding the start of Broadway can be tricky so Mark guided the group to a point where the route was obvious. He then followed the leader back down the access road to parking at the Catamount cross-country ski trail crossing, where the two of us hoofed it uphill 2/3 miles to the lodge, all arriving at about the same time.

We got the wood stove going with tinder and kindling we'd hauled and some wood that the previous renters had courteously left inside.

Soon the chill was dissipating and we set about arranging bunk spaces and cooking supplies. After a few appetizers, Mandy's chicken rice soup warmed us for the evening which included games of Outdoor trivia (which contains some questionable "official" answers that were inferior to those we offered) and Smart-Ass which Mandy had brought along.

Wednesday morning dawned clear and cold (-3 degrees F on a thermometer hung outside the Lodge door). We enjoyed blueberry pancakes, *real* Vermont maple syrup, juice and coffee, then geared up to venture out on snowshoes. The morning's goal was Buchanan Shelter near the Long Trail because we hadn't been able to reach it during our storm-shortened trip to Bolton Lodge in 2020. With plenty of daylight and packed trails we had no trouble ascending to Buchanan via the Beaver Pond and North Ridge trails. As we climbed higher, away from some marshy areas, we spotted moose prints along the trail, probably from the day before. The temperature at Buchanan registered zero degrees so we sat for a bit, had some drinks and took a few photos before starting back down.

Mandy, Barb, Jim M, & Mark on the Beaver Pond Trail;
photos by Jim R.



Our return route looped around along the Moose Ski trail through some frozen marsh and unbroken snow until we reached the lodge. After three hours outside in a subzero windchill we were ready to warm up and eat again.



Destination Buchanan Shelter: Jim M, Mark, Barb & Mandy

Following lunch of sandwiches and zucchini sausage soup and a short rest, we were out on the backcountry trails again, this time on a network of several short routes near the lodge. The intrepid leader led the group up a snowy ridge but apparently missed a left turn that would return us to the warm cabin, finding himself at the edge of a fairly steep unmarked area that a lone skier had bushwhacked through. Sometimes the first shall be last; the entire group executed an about-face and Mark, with his superior land navigation skills (and a GPS), pointed and said "The Lodge is over there." With the humbled leader now at the rear of the line we made an exhilarating drop and sidehill slab and found our way to the Loki Loop, which is the main circuit of the network, and eventually down to Broadway. The parallel Grand View trail provided a beautiful woodland walk back up to the Lodge, where late-afternoon shadows had started to envelop the structure.

The warmth of the wood stove was welcome as we enjoyed Barb's and Mark's appetizers followed by Barb's beef stew for supper. The evening activities included more Outdoor trivia and Smart-Ass games, with the latter being highly competitive and hilarious right up to Mark's victory. Tired after a good day of snowshoeing, all of us agreed on an early "campers' midnight" just after 8 pm. Outside temperature had dropped to -4 degrees; by morning it was below -10 F. Those of us who had to go out to answer nature's call overnight were treated to brilliant stars – Orion rises directly in front of the lodge, and the last quarter

moon rose about 3 am – but no one tarried long outside.

By morning it was below -10 F, but sunny and not very windy. We feasted on scrambled eggs, bacon and warm drinks before packing up for the easy trek down 2/3 miles to Mark's and my cars, which fortunately started effortlessly despite the cold. Mandy said she really enjoys the route we take to and from the lodge, because it's essentially downhill all the way from the resort. Thanks to the whole crew. Everyone pitched in with food, supplies, cooking, the fire and the other contributions that make trips like this so much fun.

**Sleeping Giant State Park, Hamden
February 2, 2022
by Carol A. Langley**

Marianne Valley and I arrived at [Sleeping Giant](#) at the same time so we walked over to the Horse Trail and put on our snowshoes. Plenty of snow, so here we go. Other people had been out but the snow was not crusty or icy; just right for snowshoeing. When we reached the pastures, we



saw 7 horses enjoying the outdoors and the beautiful sunshine. We snowshoed along until we came to a confusing intersection. There were some new blazes in some spots but then there were none. We are okay. We are following the snowshoe prints.

Wrong. Suddenly in front of us there are Red Blazes. Checking my map and Marianne's phone we were still confused. Instead of continuing on and getting into a mess, we decided to follow our footsteps out. Suddenly, I recognized the stonewall and knew where we were but we decided to take a lunch break. Finding a nice log in the sunshine, we had some nourishment and then decided to snowshoe out and walk the Horse Trail another time. Marianne took the lead and set the pace for the return trip. Maybe she will lead the hike on the Horse Trail this spring.

Black Rock State Park, Watertown
February 6, 2022
by Carol A. Langley

Sarah O'Hare and I arrived at the same time to an icy parking lot but a beautiful blue sky with the temp at 16 degrees. We both had maps for [Black Rock](#) but with the snow and ice it took some time to locate the trail we wanted. The first order of the day was to put on our ice stabilizers but getting to a picnic table safely was a challenge. Are we ready, let's go!

Sarah spotted a bridge she remembered from a previous trip here. We started the Blue/Orange which would lead us to Black Rock. The trail was an icy challenge, so we moved on up the grade in low gear, taking several breath breaks. Finally we reached the top and took a short snack break. It was a beautiful view, so always thinking ahead my thought was this would be a great fall hike and probably a lot easier.

After climbing down and crossing the bridge, we came across Black Rock Pond. Because of our cold winter temperatures the pond had several fisherman and children ice skating. I did not feel comfortable crossing the pond so we hugged the edge and soon found a pathway leading to a road and Blue/Yellow blazes. We crossed the road to what is normally an old dirt road which follows a lovely brook.

Well not today; it was a sheet of ice.

Did we stop? No sir, we continued on! A short distance in we saw that what was once open land is now full of condos. We continued on trying to walk on the sides where there was some safe footage. We made it to the end where the trail meets up with the Mattatuck Trail just below Route 8. We did only 4.5 miles but our hips, knees and ankles were not happy. Black Rock is a lovely place to hike but not this winter. Look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Shenipsit Trail, Tolland
February 9, 2022
by Sarah O'Hare

Making our way north on the Shenipsit Trail, our 8th hike in the series of hiking the length of the Shenipsit brought together **Jim Robertson, Don Hagstrom, Tom and Patty Adams, George Jackson, Kevin Burke**, and me, as well as Arlo and Molson, our trail pups. After skipping over a 2.5 mile roadwalk through a commercial area, we started at the Route 74/Tolland Avenue trailhead in Tolland. The first 2 miles

followed along the eastern shore of the Shenipsit Lake Reservoir. The map made it appear that the trail followed closely along the shoreline but, in reality, the lake was quite a distance from the trail. From the ice-covered lake the ice shifting was audible. Jim commented that this was known as ice singing. The wide path along which we hiked was most likely a former cart path or farm road and was also ice-covered.

The next 2+ miles was a pleasant walk along country roads. It seemed never ending until, at long last, the trail turned into the woods. The snow-covered trail hadn't yet seen human foot traffic, only wildlife had passed through, their tracks numerous as they crisscrossed through the woods. After passing the northern shore of Lake Bonair, we crossed Route 140 into Ellington and hiked up Hopkins Road where we ended our hike. Another 5.5 miles of the Shenipsit behind us and 11 more to go.

Hammonasset State Park, Madison
February 14, 2022
by Carol A. Langley

Marianne Valley, Fred and Lisa Clark joined me on this bitter cold day with winds that had the snow swirling around us and in our faces. At [Hammonasset](#), the ocean was a sea of rolling white caps. The wind had made designs with the snow in the sand. We imagined drifting sand dunes in Colorado, Arizona, and frosty ski slopes here in the Northeast. It was a magical time to be at the beach.

As we walked along the path leading to Meigs Point we did not meet another soul. (I wonder why ???) When we reached the beach at Meigs Point, the snow had several footprints. We guessed that some were deer, bobcats and raccoons. The sea otters were hiding in their homes. Who would be out on such a cold windy day? Only some GMC hikers. However, as we were standing there, a male marsh hawk dive bombed a sea gull who was invading his space and getting a little too close to his female partner. The sand looked like waves from the wind blowing it around. On our return to the Nature Center, Fred and Lisa left for home to care for their ailing cat.

Marianne and I continued out to Leetes Point where the many trees provided a wall and we hardly felt any of the wind. I found a nice bench in the sun and we took advantage of it for our lunch spot. I had brought along Heart Shape cookies filled with strawberries for

this Valentine's Day. Some are still in my freezer.

As soon as Marianne and I walked past the Nature Center and connected with the trail, the wind howled at us and we found ourselves walking with our heads down. A gentleman passed us who was trying to run but after a few steps he had to stop only to try again and finally give up and just walk as we did.

Upon reaching our cars we saw a flock of seagulls huddled together on the asphalt facing into the strong winds. The reason for this is that the wind blows over them and doesn't rustle their feathers, helping them to keep a constant body temperature. The sun-warmed asphalt also helps.



Winter at the beach: Carol Langley, Fred & Lisa Clark; photo by Marianne Valley.

**McLean Game Refuge, Granby
February 22, 2022
by Carol A. Langley**

Sarah O'Hare was my hiking companion for this day. Everyone else listened to the weatherman and stayed home. We started hiking on the Blue Trail. We were only on the trail a short distance when evidence of snow and ice was in front of us. Do we stop? I don't think so. It will get better. Some spots were dry leaves but they became fewer and fewer. Finishing the Blue Trail, we planned to join up with the North Purple Trail. When we reached the old dirt road that we had to cross, it was a sheet of ice. Looking around to find a place to cross, I found a couple of tree roots that were above the ice and dry. Safely across we hiked up the hill on the Purple Trail. We found that most of the higher ridges that got some sunlight were in better condition but, as soon as we were in the valley where there was more tree cover, the trails were snow and ice covered. We met one lady and her dog when we were in the area of the farm tractor/spreader. We did not see another soul as we hiked along. Reaching

another wood road on the south side of the refuge, we were relieved to see it was clear. We walked along until we saw the blue blaze for the trail leading down to Spring Pond. We had our lunch break on two logs alongside the pond. Just as we were finishing up, we saw raindrops dancing on the pond but it was just a warning of what was coming so we hiked on without rain gear. Reaching the north side of Spring Pond, we saw where they have put in a filter system just before the pond drains into a brook. This should be fine now we will be on the road and it will be easy. We had not gone 100 feet when the ICE was covering everything. It was a challenge to cross the first bridge but Sarah found some rocks that we could use to get safely over.

The rest of the hike was a bushwhack, climbing over logs, pushing back branches out of our way. The road was not passable at all. Needless to say, my ice stabilizers are staying in my backpack till who knows when. Finally, we reached the road to the parking lot. We can plan these hikes but OLD MOTHER NATURE is the one in charge.

**Poconos Mountain Winter Trip,
Pennsylvania
February 25–27, 2022
by Mandy Brink**

Getting off was a bit challenging. There was freezing rain and ice that stopped at noon. We waited for the roads to clear a bit and then headed west. Each car left at different times to head to Pennsylvania. My car was loaded to the max with the fun company of **Barb Kelly, Mike Shaw, Marianne Valley and Rob Valley. Dennis Himes and Maure Briggs** had the most challenging trip, having gotten within 5 miles of the cabin, only to find a tree across the road. This required backtracking back to I-84 and making a 40-minute loop around a different route. Luckily for **Kevin Burke**, he managed to get through where Dennis got stuck, just before the downing of the tree. Getting up the driveway looked to be a challenge as it was ice covered but we all made it up. The ice made for great sledding, which we did on Friday night. The kid in us all came out and everyone made at least one run down the hill on the sleds. We even had a train sled and a race or two down the hill. After sledding, it was back to the now warm cabin for snacks and games. Kevin had set up his tent, known as "the

Shangri-La,” outside. It was cold but he braved the weather. The rest of us settled inside.

Saturday we had a great breakfast, compliments of Kevin. We headed over to the [Delaware Water Gap](#) National Recreation Area for a day of hiking. We started by doing the Mt Tammany trail. It was so icy. We were very happy to have our ice stabilizers. We passed other hikers who were attempting to hike in shoes with little tread and they were having a difficult time of it. At one point, a hiker had fallen and hit her nose. Barb, Kevin and Marianne came to the rescue with supplies they had brought from their first aid kits.

At the summit it was beautiful. We could clearly see Mt Minsi across the Gap on the Pennsylvania side as well as a great view of the Delaware River. As we approached the summit, the ice was frozen on the trees with the sun shining through and it was like a land of crystals. We enjoyed lunch at the summit and then headed onward. It was a slow slippery trail down, but everyone made it safely. We took the Dunnfield Creek Trail. The fun challenge here was a water crossing with no bridge. There was a big log across the river. The guys were brave and walked across it and the girls were brave and scooted across it like they were riding a horse. Grand fun. From there we joined the Holly Spring Trail for a short jaunt before connecting to the AT. It was great to do that beautiful walk along the Dunnfield Creek with its rapid flowing

waters and small waterfalls along the way.

After 6 miles we were back to the cars and heading back to the cabin. Marianne made us a beautiful dinner of lasagna. After more games and great snacks and desserts, we were ready for bed.

Dennis cooked us a great pancake breakfast. We had to winterize the cabin and that went so smoothly with so many helping hands. The decision was made to do a hike at Promised Land State Park before heading home. This is when, I, Mandy, who camps every year at Promised Land, had a definite lapse of memory as we drove right by the trailhead we were supposed to be at and landed us on the snowy, ice-covered roads of the Lower Lake equestrian area. Not wanting to go any further for fear of getting stuck, we parked where we were and did a hike on the Hemlock Trail for a couple of miles. It was a pretty walk on untouched snow and very blue skies. Of course, after the hike, driving out, we passed right by the trailhead we wanted to hike, and I (Mandy), have no idea how I missed it on the way down. Anyway, our hiking for the weekend was done and everyone headed for home. We had a great time and made a very good decision to have milk shakes at the Zoar Beach diner on the drive back home.

Thank you to all who braved the weather to come and share in such a fun time at Mandy’s family cabin.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Upcoming events are listed here: <http://www.conngmc.com/newwiki/doku.php?id=start>.



January snowshoeing on the Backcountry Trail from Bolton Lodge to Buchanan Shelter.