

# The Connecticut Section Of The Green Mountain Club

## The Trail Talk

VOL. XXXVIII NO. V

January 2006



### The President's Message

Happy New Year to all GMC members and their families. Since we are a four season club and hold activities all winter I would like to remind all hike leaders to be prepared for bad weather and make wise decisions as to when to cancel an activity. Members and friends it is your responsibility to check with the activity leader if you plan to attend and there is a doubt in your mind concerning the weather. I would like to encourage all leaders to hike with at least 3-4 people in case of an emergency.

Dressing in layers with extra mittens, gloves and socks are very important. Hand and foot warmers can be purchased at any sporting goods store should be a staple for your winter backpack. Even though you may not feel thirsty it is very important to drink fluids.

Since in the winter we can have a full cloud cover it is also necessary for leaders to carry a compass and take readings if there is concern as to the direction of the trail. Remember if you do not see a BLAZE for five minutes turn back to the last blaze you saw. Remember stay together never lose sight of the hikers in your group. Carry a whistle if lost or in danger use distress signal – 3 short whistles – stop-repeat.

#### Direction by the SUN

The Sun will always rise in the East so if you are hiking North to South the sun should be on your left side. (East) If you are hiking South to North the sun should be on your right side. (East) In the middle of the day N –S hikers will have the sun in front of them, S –N hikers will have the sun behind them. The sun will always set in the West N-S you should have the sun on your right side, S-N the sun should be on your left. Let's get out and enjoy the winter and be safe.

Carol A. Langley



### Ragged Mountain Sunday, December 11, 2005

Our intrepid group met at 9 am and contemplated the 8 to 10 inches of snow blanketing the ground at Ragged Mountain. We decided that we would give it the old GMC try and started out. The trails had only seen a little use since the snow fell on the 9th, and we moved slowly; it took us about an hour and fifteen minutes to reach a spot noted to be 1.2 miles into the hike. The views of Hart Ponds were spectacular on this clear, sunny day, and we remarked on the concentric circles of ice that were beginning to form on the water. We pushed on to the summit, noting that on this hike last year we encountered many other hikers at the top (in contrast to today, when we saw a total of 3 other people!)



We continued on, climbing over rock, slipping and sliding in the deep snow, and finally reached the north end of Wassel Reservoir where we stopped for a brief lunch. We attempted to push on from here, but once again this year the poorly-marked trail was our undoing.

(We realized afterwards that the Metacomet relocation had swallowed the blue-and-red trail that we were seeking, but at the time this was less than clear.)

After about 40 minutes of fruitlessly casting about for the blue-and-red trail, we realized that feet were getting cold and legs tired, so we decided to forge due east on an old woods road. After 40 minutes or so we arrived at the parking area, where Lora proceeded to lose her trusty thermos. May it rest in peace. The group then retired to the leader's house, where we were warmed by hot apple cider and lots of sweets. Jack and Lora resolved to go back and hike the blue-and-red from the other end at some point and figure out where we went wrong!



Hikers: Jack Sanga, Sandra Hassan  
Leader: Lora Miller

**Club Information**

<http://www.conngmc.com>

**Officers & Executive Committee**

**Carol Langley—President**

(860) 621-2860, [cosmical14@yahoo.com](mailto:cosmical14@yahoo.com)

Dick Krompegal, 1st Vice President, Trails & Shelters

(860) 667-4205, [rkrompy@aol.com](mailto:rkrompy@aol.com)

Sarah O’Hare, 2nd Vice President, Activities

(860) 563-7018, [seohare7@yahoo.com](mailto:seohare7@yahoo.com)

Jim Robertson, Director To GMC

(860) 633-7279, [jrobert685@aol.com](mailto:jrobert685@aol.com)

Secretary, Position Open

Jack Sanga, Treasurer

(860) 648-9614, [jsanga@cox.net](mailto:jsanga@cox.net)

Marge Hackbarth, Reporter to the Long Trail News.

(203) 237-0560

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](mailto:cosmical14@yahoo.com)

The Trail Talk is 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:

Dick Krompegal

142 Churchill Drive

Newington, CT 06111-4003

(860) 667-4205, [rkrompy@aol.com](mailto:rkrompy@aol.com)

**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	\$ 35.00
Family	\$ 45.00
Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income	\$ 20.00
Nonprofit or Youth Group	\$ 50.00
Business or Corporation	\$125.00

Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road

Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

(802) 244-7037

<http://www.greenmountainclub.org>



**New Members**

Cynthia McMahon

Litchfield, CT

Malcolm Dickinson

Stamford, CT



**Sleeping Giant State Park**

**Sat. November 5**

Call me Ishmael. Melville had Mt Greylock to inspire his whale of a story and we had the Sleeping Giant. It was unbelievably nice weather for November. Everybody and their little brother was outside to enjoy the day. Park attendants, in training for an off Broadway production of *Le Miserables*, barricaded the parking lot. Swarms of boy scouts from miles around (and their accompanying parents) appeared like insects, complete with their little black fly costumes. We spent the day dodging screaming tykes, always managing to travel in the opposite direction that they did. We walked out on the lavender trail, a color that is always in good fashion sense.

The day’s tour included a river walk, a visit to the abandoned rock quarry, lunch on a stone wall, and a climb up the tower. Lora’s home baked cookies were a big hit at lunch time, demonstrating her culinary talents as well as those on the trail. Carol and Henry needed to do some garden work back home and they took a shortcut back to the parking lot after lunch. This loss of 1/3 of our group maintains Dan’s reputation as a “loss leader.”

Following lunch it was decided to take the blue Quinnipiac Trail after being repeatedly promised that there was only one big climb at the beginning. Memories are fallible and promises are made to be broken. The single big climb seemed to continue most of the afternoon. We caught up with the boy scouts and all of their younger siblings at the tower. There was a brief search for memorials to Mr. Webb and Mr. Barker, foreman and engineer of the tower. We walked out on the road, glad for the easy way back to civilization and accompanying creature comforts.

*Hikers: Carol Langley, Henry Smith, Richard and Leslie Chandler, Lora Miller*  
*Leader: “Call me Dan” Zelterman*



## The Trail Talk

### Backpacking in NY Nov 11-13th, 2005

What a beautiful weekend we had for our trek on the Appalachian Trail in New York. While Carol and Sarah staged cars, Mandy beat Dave at a game of Acey Ducey. We started out Friday afternoon with a hike into the Dennytown Rd Campsite. It was quite littered and Carol and Henry started to clean up while Sarah, Mandy and Dave gathered firewood for an evening campfire. It was a delightful, cool, clear night. Dave and Mandy once again hit the Acey Ducey board where Dave skunked Mandy. We enjoyed dinner, dessert and relaxing by the campfire. Dave roasted weenies on a stick and boy did they look good.

On Saturday morning we headed out for our trek to the Graymoor Friary. It was downright hot when we were hiking up a mountain with the pack. This trip had to be the most accommodating trip Dave Chatel has ever hiked on. It came complete with a tag sale on Old Albany Rd. We couldn't resist, so we dropped our packs and hike down the road to check it out. Henry found several books to purchase. Dave wheeled and dealt for two pieces of garden equipment to take to Kid Gore Shelter. He offered \$5.00, the lady wanted \$6.00. Mandy offered to pay the other buck but got a lesson from Dave in wheeling and dealing at tag sales. We walked away with the two for \$5.00. Those became Dave's hiking poles and from hence forth, we got many unusual stares and comments about his interesting hiking equipment. I (Mandy) felt very safe hiking with Dave because it was obvious that no one was going to mess with Dave and his lethal looking poles.

We pulled into the Graymoor Friary in later afternoon where they allow hikers to use the ball field for camping. What a delightful place. It had a nice pavilion with picnic tables, benches, a nice fire pit, extra fuel and water for the hikers. The Brother in charge of the hikers came to give us a welcome and told us the history of the friary. The grounds were beautiful with lots of old stone work, stone buildings, serenity gardens and such. It was a peaceful place to spend the night. Some of us didn't even bother with our tents, we just slept in the pavilion with an almost full moon shining brightly. The evening ended with the bully game of Acey Ducey where Mandy skunked Dave to be the victor.



On Sunday morning we were greeted again by the Brother from the friary with a loaf of delicious zucchini bread. After eating a nice breakfast, we headed out for the Bear Mt Inn, our final destination. Sunday was probably the warmest day for hiking and we were down to single layers. We met at the Hemlock Spring Campground for lunch and then headed down St. Anthony's Nose to the Bear Mt Bridge. What a treat to go across the Hudson River on the bridge. It was so

pretty and there was a delightful breeze as we walked across. From there we walked through the zoo and into Bear Mt Park which was filled with activities. Sarah and Carol stopped and bought some fresh cider, then we loaded up our packs and headed back to Rt 301 to get the other car. I (Mandy) thank you all for coming and making it a delightful backpacking weekend. Mileage for the weekend was somewhere between 18-19 miles.

*Backpackers: Mandy Brink, Dave Chatel, Carol Langley,  
Henry Smith and Sarah O'Hare*



#### REMINDER

March 18, 2006

The CT Section Of The  
Green Mountain Club  
Annual Meeting, Dinner And  
Guest Speaker & Presentation

See reservation form attached to this newsletter



### Quinnipiac Trail November 19, 2005

In years past exploring the Quinnipiac Trail had been limited to that section which follows east through the popular Sleeping Giant State Park. Today, beginning in the park, our group ventured west instead. We crossed over Rt. 10 and after following the blue-blazed trail on a road for a half mile we turned off into the woods and began our first climb, to the summit of Rocky Top. The gradual ascent took us past an old stone foundation and hearth. Here we paused for some exploring of the remains and for a group photo session.

Onward and upward, then down, the descent bringing us out onto more roads. These road walks were relatively minor, a prelude to the pleasant walk in the woods that followed. Another climb, to the summit of York Mountain, revealed a view south to New Haven and beyond, to Long Island and the Sound. The trail continued along the ridgeline passing the junction with the Regicides Trail and with more good views south and west, of West Rock Ridge and Lake Watrous. Our descent brought us to a road where the trail appeared to have divided. One of two options was the easy way along the gentle path and the other, a challenging balancing act across a narrow dam and spillway. Needless to say, a few just had to experience the more fun option.

One last ascent awaited, short, steep and rocky. The summit of Mad Mare's Hill was to be our lunch stop. The actual

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summit was unclear so we stopped at a rocky outcropping for our mid-day break. Refueled and refreshed we continued on, the trail passing through a laurel grove. Much to our surprise we walked onto the grounds of the remains of an old stone cottage and what we surmised had been a patio with garden terraces. The decorative stone walls and steps partitioned the areas. With a little creative imagination the place was charming and alive, flowers blooming, gaiety in the air. And with her own creative imagination the old iron tool Regina found nearby will become a useful ornament in her own garden. David happily (dutifully?) carried the heavy and rusty old thing those last two miles to our waiting cars. The decision for the traditional post hike pizza was unanimous. It was well deserved after the 7.5 mile hike.



*Hikers: Regina and David Chatel, Laurene Sorensen, John Bensenhaver, Matt Golec, Doreen Scott  
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



### Pequot Trail December 17

It was the weekend before Christmas and only two hikers took to the trail to get away from the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations, of baking, organizing the gift list and battling the traffic at the mall. The quiet of the woods was a welcome change. However, the snow-covered trail was anything but quiet, it was crusty and crunched loudly with each step. With the sun shining strongly at just that wrong angle we were blinded and couldn't see the blazes. It wasn't a problem to follow the trail, though, for the fresh deer tracks showed us the way. Hiking along a power line section took us to a rock ledge that overlooked wetlands on either side. Here the birds were numerous. We frequently heard crashing sounds but was unable to see either the creatures we thought were thrashing through the ice-covered marsh or the trees and branches that we thought were falling. The noises were a mystery.

We had been on the trail a mere half mile when we came to an impasse. Flowing through the rock ledge was a fast and furious waterfall, draining one swampy area into the other. The rocks and logs normally assisting in crossing were slick with ice, as was the steep climb up the other side. A deer was glimpsed ahead, she had had no trouble making it across. To the left and right the wetlands widened and our attempt to make it around by another approach was impossible. We did, however, learn the cause of the mysterious crashings. The warmth of the sun was melting the thin ice layer and would

cave in loudly amongst the dried cattails and reeds. We gave up our attempt at crossing, returned to our car on Rt. 165 and drove south to Lincoln Park Road to begin again. A few miles of the Pequot Trail will have to be hiked another time, in a dry season.

The trail was slippery, making for a slow walk. The woods were pretty yet we were often not far from civilization. After ascending gradually to an unimpressive Rose Hill at 330' we passed a farm with horses that appeared to want our attention. The trail then followed through the Rose Hill Wildlife Management Area and we felt somewhat safe from the two hunters close by for we had on our orange vests. Leaving the Wildlife Management Area brought us down to a road where we road walked for a mile taking us to the Mashantucket Pequot Burial Ground. We paused here, sat on a bench and took in the solemnity of the cemetery. Old stone markers and new, modern headstones with personal effects showed a dramatic contrast in the native culture's memorials to their departed through the centuries. Upon leaving the fenced burial ground, perched low and just off the trail, was a Red Shouldered Hawk. We watched him until he tired of our stares and whispers and took flight. It was very soon afterwards that we left the woods and turned onto Coachman Pike where our car was waiting.

*Hikers: Carol Langley, Sarah O'Hare*



### Testone Boulder Trail, Torrington Sunday, January 8, 2006

We were not at all sure what to expect from the trail, given the heavy snow earlier in the week. Earlier weather forecasts had called for flurries late in the day, but a steady snow shower at 8 am lead one prospective hiker to cancel and the remaining two of us to view the drive with some concern. Fortunately we were able to reach Torrington safely and begin our hike.



About 6 to 8 inches of snow still covered the ground, and a hard ice crust on the surface made for slow going. The morning snowfall still blanketed the tree branches and clung to the trunks, obscuring the blue blazes in many sections. In many places we were the first hikers to use the trail since the snow, so we didn't have any helpful tracks to follow, but we managed to find our way. The beauty of the snowy landscape was marred by snowmobile noise. Fortunately the weather did clear up and it

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was beautifully sunny, though still cold, at the end. The trail markings disappeared at the last turn, but some locals pointed us to the woods road that led us back to the parking lot. At that point we decided that we were cold and tired enough that we would plan on finishing the trails some other day.

*Leader: Lora Miller  
Hiker: Mary O'Neill*



### Backpacking A.T. Greylock Sept. 23 – 25, 2005

Only two hikers joined me on this backpacking trip Henry Smith and Dan Zelterman. Our small group met at the Greylock Community Club in N. Adams where we parked Dan's car.

Since it was noon when we arrived in Cheshire we had lunch at a little Deli on the trail where the AT crosses over a Rails/Trails. Nourished and full of energy I dropped off Dan and Henry at the trailhead and parked my car at St. Mary's Church. We found out there is bus service that stops at the trailhead.

Packs on our backs we started out at 1:30 in the heat of the day and the trail went up, up, up. The trail ahead seem to go on forever but it was just 4.4 miles to the Mark Noepel Shelter. It took us 3 hours to do the climb. Views were very limited because of the leaves. The shelter was quite large and sleeps 16 hikers plus there are two tent platforms. Dan chose a tent platform while Henry and myself claimed our bunks before others arrived. The water source is a bit of hike down the side of the mountain to Bassett Brook. The latrine is back up the hill from the shelter and sits perched on some rocky rocks making one wonder if they would be safer in choosing a tree. We were all very tired from the drive up and climb to the shelter so our lights went out when the sky turned dark.

The night was still and quiet nothing was stirring. Around 11:00 I am awoken to loud voices and heavy footsteps. Lordy, Lordy are we being invaded by a group of rowdies. Turns out to be a couple that have just hiked 25 miles, sure glad they settled down quickly.

Morning dawns with the sun shining through the trees and who is that at the picnic table but Dan in full swing preparing his breakfast. Even though the group was up at 7:00 before we ate and packed up it was 9:00 before we started on the trail. During breakfast we chatted with the couple that hiked the 25 miles. They were traveling light no tent, no stove and only dry food.

Our hike to Bascom Lodge was very pleasant since we were up on the ridge and would have only one big climb up to Greylock Mountain. At the Rockwell Rd. crossing we took a break and indulged on chocolate and fig newtons. While taking this break we watched bikers that were riding for a cause speed by us. One poor soul lost control skidded and blew out his tire. His group soon arrived to rescue him.

The last section of the trail is rocks and more rocks, which did a number on my poor old feet. Heels were burning as I reached the Lodge, boots were off in seconds and tootsies were liberated into Teva Sandals. The Lodge was full of activity and made you feel good to see all these people enjoying the great outdoors. Lunch is served to hikers and others daily from May thru Oct. 10:00 – 4:00. We planned to take a nice break here and enjoy the warm sunshine. There was just enough of a wind for gliders we had the pleasure to watch them take off and some pick up currents from the valley below and soar in the air for quite some time.

As we strapped on packs and started down to the next shelter I knew I was in trouble my feet were throbbing. Henry and Dan bless their souls took most of my pack and it didn't help. By the time we reached the Bernard Farm Trail a decision was made to get out to the Notch Rd. eliminating a nasty climb over Mt. Williams. Upon reaching the road once again it was Teva time. Before I knew what was happening my pack was being taken off my back and I was helped into the front seat of a truck and sped down the hill to wait at the trail crossing into the Wilbur Clearing Shelter. Trail Magic at it's best. I then hiked into the shelter with Henry and Dan.

Arriving at the shelter we found a mom and son who had taken up residence or so they thought. Their tent was set up in the shelter and clothes and food everywhere. After consultation with Dr. Dan it was decided that I should advise them of camping etiquette.

Returning to the shelter being polite but stern they moved out and Henry and I moved in for the evening. Now it was time to gather wood for the evening campfire. This drew Mother and son and another Dad and son from Simsbury, Ct. Camping just isn't the same without the evening campfire. A barred owl cried for its' mate off in the west and serenaded us most of the evening, other creatures roamed the hillside breaking branches.

Morning dawned gray and cloudy with a wind and the threat of bad weather moving in by noon. It was decided that I should stay at the shelter and keeping the home fires burning while the two guys went out and conquered the climb and descent into N. Adams, which I hear with a pack, is a real killer. They returned in about 2 ½ hours, we packed up and hiked out just as a light rain started to fall. Looks like a return trip is now necessary to finish this part of the hike.

*Thanks for all your help and patience Henry and Dan  
Leader: Carol A. Langley.*

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### Heublein Tower Foliage Hike October 30, 2005

After meeting in the parking lot of Reservoir # 6 in West Hartford we took a trail north "toward" Penwood Park. We then met the Metacomet Trail and followed it south, climbing Talcott Mountain. We arrived at the tower in a windy but sunny day.

All took the mandatory climb up the tower. While on top we met another member of our club, David Amidon. After pictures we descended then had lunch at one of the picnic tables. After a short lunch, and more pictures, we climbed back down the mountain using the Metacomet trail all the way.

*Polly Silva, Deena Steinberg, Lora Miller, Sandra Hassan,  
Dan Zelterman, Richard Chandler,  
Jim and Jimmy Robertson.  
Leader: Dick Krompegal*



### Long Trail / Appalachian Trail Maintenance In Vermont September 30 – October 2, 2005

It was planned that in late summer the Long Trail Patrol and volunteers were to work in our section doing the heavy work on our long planned relocation north of the Kid Gore shelter. I had not received much information on their progress so was unsure what to expect. In addition to normal tasks our major task on this trip was to cut trees to open a vista in the relocated trail section.

David Chatel, with his important chain saw, and I met in Enfield then drove to VT. We arrived at the shelter in mid-afternoon after our 3 mile hike in over an unmarked side trail. Too late to venture vary far so we worked around the shelter. Over the next several hours arriving were Allen Freeman, Ken Williamson, Mandy Brink and Jack Sanga.



Saturday morning we all set out to work mostly in the relocation. It was immediately obvious the summer crew did finish the relocation and did some Herculean Rock Work. Arriving at the area of the proposed vista we discussed how best to tackle the task. Little by little the area was cleared to

make it safe to work in. Dave then got to work cutting the trees with his chain saw. In not too much time but after a lot of hard work the view was opened giving a great view south. Some fine tuning of the vista – a limb here, a small tree there. Hiking north about a half mile, while working on trail drainage and clipping, we arrived at the next vista with views west. After working on this vista to keep it open, we went back to the new view to have lunch. We worked our way back to the shelter again doing normal clipping and drainage work. Some work was accomplished around the shelter between rests and snacks.

Sunday morning we worked around the Kid Gore Shelter. Dave with his chain saw did some "adjustments" to the vista in front of the shelter. Everything is an "adjustment" because anything above that needs approval and paperwork. About 75 yards in front of the shelter we also leveled out several areas for future tent sites

After packing and doing a last cleanup around the area we started the 3 mile hike out. Mandy started before the rest of us. She decided to take another route back to the cars which didn't work out good for her. We spent some time searching for her. Ken and Jack went all the way back to the shelter where she was found. This time she took the best, correct route back.

Thanks for all the work.

*Mandy Brink, Ken Williamson, Dave Chatel,  
Jack Sanga, Allen Freeman.  
Leader: Dick Krompegal*



### Mattabesett Trail Maintenance November 6, 2005

Cloudy, misty day so my plans had to be altered. I was going to blaze. We met at Guida's on Rt. 66 as usual and had a snack. We then spotted cars at Paugs Gap then drove around to Rt. 17 to start our rain shortened 2 mile maintenance trip.

We did the normal picking up of trash, clipping brush but in general there was not too much to do. This section will have to be the first section worked this year to do the blazing.

With the shortened maintenance trip we decided to take a hike on the north side of Rt. 66 to Mt. Higby.

Thanks for the help!

*Lora Miller, Sarah O'Hare and Jack Sanga.  
Leader: Dick Krompegal*

# Reservation Form

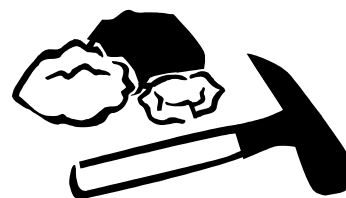
## G.M.C. Conn. Section Annual Meeting, Dinner & Guest Speaker

Saturday, March 18, 2006  
Cheshire Grange  
44 Wallingford Road, Cheshire, CT

### Agenda:

5:00 pm: Social Hour  
6:00 pm: Dinner  
7:00 pm: Business Meeting

7:30 pm: Speaker - Mitch Wagener  
"History Meets Natural History"  
"The Ecological Legacy Of Historic Stone Walls"



The price for the dinner is \$12.00 per person. The deadline for reservations is March 10, 2006. Please make check payable to "CT Section - GMC" and mail the check and this reservation form by March 10 to -

Sarah O'Hare  
111 Highland Street  
Wethersfield, CT 06109  
(860) 563-7018

Name	Phone Number	E-mail Address
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_____	_____	_____
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Total Enclosed = no. persons \_\_\_\_\_ X \$12.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Richard Krompegal  
The Green Mountain Club  
142 Churchhill Drive  
Newington, CT 06111-4003



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