

# Long Trail NEWS



Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

WINTER 2016





# Long Trail NEWS

The mission of the Green Mountain Club is to make the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people by protecting and maintaining the Long Trail System and fostering, through education, the stewardship of Vermont's hiking trails and mountains.

## Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

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Cover photo: Snowy woods on Long Trail.  
Photo by Jocelyn Hebert



PHOTO BY MARY KEENAN

### Solstice Hike to Butler Lodge on Mount Mansfield

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On a gray, cold Saturday last January, former GMC President Richard Windish and I climbed Camel's Hump from the Huntington side. Although we packed snowshoes, there was little snow, and we used our winter spikes the entire way. A stream of hikers flowed around us all the way up and down the trail, and an unscientific head count suggested that as many as a hundred hikers climbed the mountain that day.

While the lack of snow last winter probably drove many skiers to the hiking trails, the number of people we saw confirmed that winter hiking has grown tremendously in popularity in the last few years. The Green Mountain Club is paying attention to this trend and is carefully considering how it affects our management of the 500 miles of hiking trails in our care.

Why the recent surge in winter hiking? Many Vermont hikers have always used snowshoes to enjoy their favorite summer hiking trails in winter, but snowshoes become nearly useless in icy conditions. These days most winter hikers use winter spikes to navigate steep packed trails and icy summits. This simple footwear is easily pulled on over regular hiking boots to deploy an array of small pointed spikes that provide terrific traction (although crampons are still recommended when hiking in areas where ice forms on slopes). Their use has revolution-

ized winter hiking. I still remember the first time I wore spikes. I took ten steps up an icy trail, stopped, and said out loud, "Wow, four-wheel drive!"

In addition, modern technical clothing has made it possible to spend long days in the winter woods in comfort. Backcountry skiing is a parallel trend in winter mountain sports, and for many the choice of spikes or skis is just a matter of which equipment is best suited for the conditions of the day.

What does this trend mean for the Green Mountain Club's management of the Long Trail System? Our governing philosophy has been to maintain our trails primarily for summer and fall hiking. We advise hikers that the trail, shelters, and privies are not maintained for winter use, and we encourage caution and preparedness. Winter use obviously increases risks in many ways, not the least of which is that the white blazes of the Long Trail and the Appalachian Trail, while decidedly the best choice for summer use, are hard to follow in snowy conditions. We routinely receive suggestions to change our blazing system to make the Long Trail safer to use in the winter, but the blazes remain the standard white. Meanwhile, the increasing number of winter hikers and backcountry skiers may mean more emergency rescue situations.

Increased winter trail use also affects the club's camps program. The Wheeler Pond camps in Barton have always been popular in

the winter. Bryant Camp, a historic ski lodge that the club renovated this fall, will be available to the public by reservation, and we expect its main use will be in winter. Bolton Lodge, also under GMC management, will be renovated and rented next season, and is expected to see heavy winter use.



In my youth a majority of Long Trail shelters had wood stoves that kept them cozy on a winter night. Unfortunately, carelessness and misuse of these stoves by guests burned many shelters, and the need for firewood stripped the surrounding forest of wood. Still, we may want to consider returning stoves to selected shelters on the Long Trail to facilitate more comfortable winter camping.

As the popularity of winter hiking and backcountry skiing increases, shelters, privies, and trail management will need to adapt to this growing demand.

When you take to the trails this season, please be prepared. Wear and bring proper equipment and clothing (no cotton!), tell someone where you are going, and have a firm bailout plan in place. But most important, have fun!

— JOHN PAGE, PRESIDENT



XXXXX

PHOTO BY SHERI LARSEN





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## Mountain Views

### Women on the Long Trail Patrol

Great to see the recent articles about women and the Long Trail. The Green Mountain Club was also a leader in hiring women for the trail crew. The summer of 1975 was my second summer on the LTP, and GMC's first with women as part of our crew. There was a period of adjustment, as I remember our new crew members wanted to change our longstanding weekly menu plan! Other than that, I don't recall it being a big deal, and we went about our business as usual.

—TOM BROIDO

### Thank You GMC Visitor Center Manager Amy Potter

Wanted to thank you again for all your help planning my LT adventure. We had a great time, despite two days of rain. Really appreciate all your tips and suggestions! Planning another section further north next year, so you very well may hear from me again. You sure made it all easier.

—LAURA KOLODZIEJ

### Nice Work Caretakers

Just wanted to say thank you to your Taft Lodge and summit caretaker. They helped my son and me off the top of the mountain today during a fast-moving storm. Couldn't have asked for a nicer person.

—JASON

I just hiked Camel's Hump and Mount Mansfield on September 7 and 8 respectively, and found both of your summit stewards to be excellent. Additionally, the trail conditions and alpine warning signs, cairns, rock paths and just plain string were all very well done. Thanks for all the hard work.

—ED

I just wanted to say thanks for a great stay. Tim, the caretaker at Taft Lodge the night we were there, was great! The GMC caretakers and staff, in my experiences, have always been friendly and helpful. It makes for a nice stay and experience, even if we don't stray very far from home to "get away."

—ALEX

### East Dorset Trail Work

I went out on the East Dorset Trail with Danna this morning. The plan was to connect with the VYCC [Vermont Youth Conservation Corps] and LTP [Long Trail Patrol] crews. I wanted to let them know I appreciated all the work they did for us this summer on that trail, and to have an opportunity to meet all of them. After working with the VYCC crew for the morning, I hiked out down the length of the trail. So, I got to see the work the LTP completed. Please extend a sincere thank you and my gratitude for the great job the LTP crew did on the East Dorset Trail. The rock work sections look fantastic, and the two sets of rock stairs should be functional for years to come. Thanks for the support and effort on that trail. It's truly appreciated.

—DAVID FRANCOMB

GREEN MOUNTAIN & FINGER LAKES  
NATIONAL FORESTS, DISTRICT RANGER

### Letters from Home

I wanted to let you know that I just read the article about the Wheeler Pond camps in the *Long Trail News*. I was thrilled to see what a good job was done in writing the article, and to read about my family. It was a wonderful way to have a good teary, happy cry and be so proud of my family's legacy. Thank you so much, and good job!

I am hoping that my husband and I can get over there soon, and that I can get my Mom and Dad there before the place is torn down. We just recently celebrated their sixty-fourth wedding anniversary last week, and we got talking about the camps. We shared that the camp was not in good shape, and talked about the foundation issues. My Dad told us that he dug the holes for the posts for that camp along with my Uncle Dick. Good memories and good conversation....

Again, thank you—I can see that you are much involved, appreciate your passion for Vermont and its hiking and beauty. Truly the Northeast Kingdom is a very special place. I love going back there.

—JOANNE GAFFNEY SWEENEY, KINGFIELD, MAINE  
(FORMERLY OF WATERBURY)

**Long Trail News welcomes your comments.** Letters received may be edited for length and clarity.

GMC reserves the right to decline to publish those considered inappropriate. Not all letters may be published.

Send to: Jocelyn Hebert, [jhebert@greenmountainclub.org](mailto:jhebert@greenmountainclub.org) or

Letters to the Editor, GMC, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677

# Skylight Pond Trail to Skyline Lodge

From childhood I have dreamed of heading into the Alaskan bush, building a cabin, and wintering there. I haven't done it, but I take comfort in knowing that a few places in the Green Mountains capture the essence of how I imagine the Last Frontier.

My favorite place on that short list is Skyline Lodge and Skylight Pond in the Breadloaf Wilderness on the Green Mountain National Forest. For two glorious summers after high school I worked for the Green Mountain Club as the Skyline Lodge caretaker. In that brief time I realized my childhood dream of living in the mountains, if not the Alaskan bush.

My winter visits to Skyline Lodge, however, invoke the most powerful memories. Winter is by far my favorite season there. The feeling of leaving civilization behind sinks in as soon as car wheels hit gravel on Forest Road 59. The trailhead is located at Steam Mill Clearing, named after a sawmill that

once operated nearby. The area has a remote, wild feeling year round, but I find it more so in winter.

The road may not be plowed all the way, requiring additional travel by snowshoe or ski to the trailhead. Make sure to factor this into your planning because of the short daylight hours of winter. And, take a headlamp and extra batteries just in case. Also, consider contacting the U.S. Forest Service in advance for a road update.

The 2.6-mile Skylight Pond Trail ascends gently to the Battell Mountain ridge, owing to many switchbacks installed in the early 90s by Forest Service trail crews. Frontcountry stresses begin to melt immediately, even before reaching the sign at the boundary of the Breadloaf Wilderness.

Tributaries of the New Haven and Middlebury Rivers capped with snow and ice provide one of the few sounds in the snow-muffled woods. As you gain the ridge the forest changes from leafless



mixed hardwoods to deep green spruce and firs, a contrast heightened by the snow covered landscape.

After hiking two tenths of a mile from the junction with the Long Trail, you are there. Skylight Pond, still and silent, comes into view first.

Soon you will see the vaguely distinguishable shape of the lodge ahead. In past winters you knew you had company by the telltale wisp of smoke rising from the chimney. The wood stove is long gone because of excessive cutting of the slow growing mountaintop forest.

Today you must be prepared to stay warm with what you carry. Make sure you have plenty of warm layers, food and water, or a stove and fuel to melt snow or ice. If you are new to winter travel, contact an experienced trip leader from the local GMC Bread Loaf Section. It is also wise to travel in groups in winter. Like many places along the trail, this area is remote, and you may not encounter other hikers should you run into trouble.

Today I have the privilege of caring for Skyline Lodge as GMC's volunteer shelter adopter. Like my father did with me, I take my children to Skyline, so they too can feel the power of wildness and remoteness. I hope that by spending time living simply in the woods they will develop a strong sense of stewardship, and become wilderness ambassadors who help teach others the value of these precious refuges in our increasingly developed world.

—PETE ANTOS-KETCHAM



Skyline Lodge

PHOTO BY JENNIFER WRIGHT



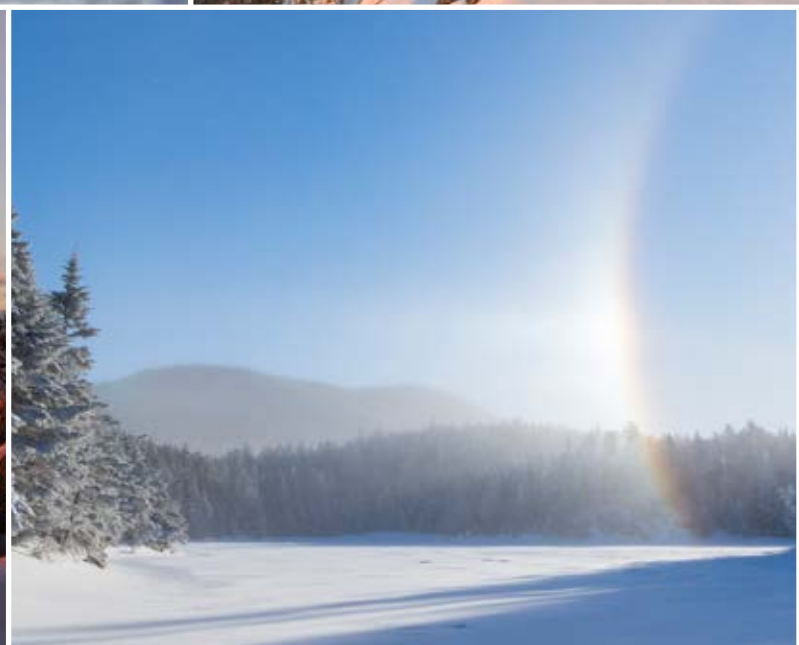
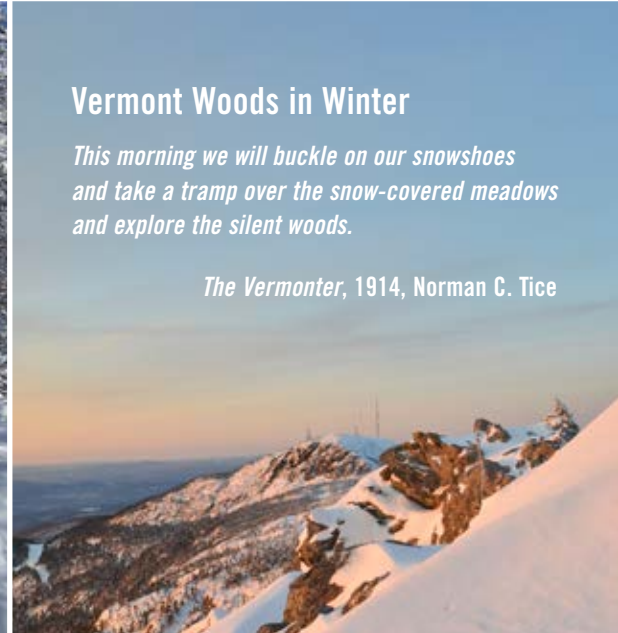
# Winter in the BACKCOUNTRY



## Vermont Woods in Winter

*This morning we will buckle on our snowshoes  
and take a tramp over the snow-covered meadows  
and explore the silent woods.*

*The Vermonter, 1914, Norman C. Tice*









# FROM STUMP to SHELTER



## PHASE I

Plant trees. Harvest 90 years later.



## PHASE II

Hire a helicopter (\$6,900). Schedule airlift, and hope for blue sky.



## PHASE III

Utilize backcountry carpentry skills developed over the past century. Lift oldest surviving shelter on the Long Trail. Don't drop it.



Couching Lion Farm



## PHASE I Harvesting the Trees

In 1926 Will Monroe, a retired psychology professor and an early Green Mountain Club pioneer, planted 5,000 evergreen seedlings in hardscrabble pastures and meadows at his Couching Lion Farm on the eastern shoulder of Camel's Hump. Ninety years later GMC's construction crew stood with chainsaws in hand, looked up at the tall trees, and selected a few for a very special purpose: replacing decayed logs at historic Taft Lodge, the oldest surviving shelter on the Long Trail.

Will Monroe lived at Couching Lion Farm from 1925 until his death in 1939. In addition to his work building portions of the Long Trail—including the stretch from Route 125 to Camel's Hump known as The Monroe Skyline—he was an avid naturalist and gardener. He planted a variety of trees and shrubs, including plantations of Scotch pine, red pine, Norway spruce, white spruce, and European larch. He wanted the farm to be used and enjoyed by the public, so he willed the land to the State of Vermont upon his death. While the gardens and farm buildings are long gone, the tree plantations remain as part of Camel's Hump State Park, and have been sustainably managed over the years by the State.

When it was time to find logs for Taft Lodge, GMC worked with the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation seeking trees to meet strict historic preservation requirements. A quick trip to the lumber yard was not an option. The species had to be white spruce, and the logs the right length, diameter, and taper from large end to tip. It turned out that Monroe's spruce seedlings had become trees that were just right.

It is hard to say whether Professor Monroe ever thought about how the trees he planted would be used. But it is a safe bet he would have been satisfied that they were used to repair one of the most popular shelters on the Long Trail, so hikers who share his love of the trail and mountains can take shelter for many years to come.

—MIKE DeBONIS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





## PHASE II

### The Airlift

When the logs arrived at Green Mountain Club headquarters in Waterbury Center, the GMC Construction Crew stripped the bark and loaded them onto a trailer by hand, using shovel handles and webbing to lift each of the 500- to 700-pound lengths. Then the logs were hauled to the Midway Lodge parking lot at Stowe Mountain Resort. The next step was to get them up the mountain to Taft Lodge. That would take a lot more than shovels and strong backs. We needed a helicopter.

August was the driest on record for much of Vermont, and dry weather and clear skies were what Carl Svenson from JBI Helicopter Services needed to fly from New Hampshire to the mountain. But on August 31 at 5:30 a.m. the email to all involved said: *Airlift Cancelled or Delayed; update at 0615*. The weather was raw, rainy, and windy—the kind most people don't enjoy standing around in. But this operation years in the making was big, and anticipation ran high. Everyone was in position, waiting to spring into action. Minutes turned to hours. All eyes were on inboxes, waiting for an update. At 11:15 a.m. it came: *Airlift Cancelled*.

The crew went to work again to move the staged logs and supplies out of the parking area to a location nearby until the airlift could be rescheduled. With every passing day the weather became less predict-

able, and the window to fly in the logs and complete construction before winter shrank. Thankfully, the September 22 rain date was in stark contrast to the previous date—cool, crisp, and clear. Carl, an ace pilot with twenty-six years of experience, had the skill to ease loads weighing up to 1,600 pounds into a clearing slightly larger than a one-car garage.

The construction crew and caretakers at Taft Lodge donned their hard hats, ear plugs, and eye protection, and patiently waited for the first load, while others were posted on the Long Trail north and south of the lodge to warn approaching hikers.

A sudden oscillating roar in the distance announced Carl's approach with the first load to scout the drop zone. He circled, returned much lower, and hovered directly over the zone. The powerful downwash made everyone crouch to avoid being blown over. Leaves swirled and flew in all directions. Workers felt the deafening sound pounding between their ears and in their chests. Carl hovered for about two minutes while the load stabilized before expertly placing it inches from the shelter.

As Carl flew off for the second load crew members rushed to clear the drop zone. Minutes later the oscillating roar returned with more than 1,550 pounds of logs from Couching Lion Farm, the longest measuring twenty feet. Peering out the window, Carl steadied the helicopter and carefully lowered the logs. Success! And he was off for the final load.

—LENNY CRISOSTOMO  
GMC DATABASE MANAGER







## PHASE III

### Restoring Taft Lodge

Construction crew members Justin Towers and James “Turtle” Robertson watched the helicopter fade into the blue and white sky from their post at Taft Lodge.

We all knew Taft from hiking the Long Trail and through our jobs at the Green Mountain Club over the years. Turtle—so called because he wore an oversized pack on his Appalachian Trail thru-hike, fell on his back, and couldn’t get up—was the caretaker there in 2013. None of us imagined that someday we would be a team restoring the most iconic shelter on the trail. No pressure!

Taft Lodge was built on the east side of Mount Mansfield at 3,650 feet (just below the Chin) in 1920, and is the oldest shelter on the Long Trail System. The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation deems it “perhaps the most significant historic structure associated with the Green Mountain Club and outdoor hiking in Vermont,” and a high priority for sensitive historic preservation.

The rustic log building, maintained by the Green Mountain Club, is owned by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. It is listed on the Vermont State Register of Historic Places, so renovation had to follow strict requirements to keep the shelter historically accurate.

The most pressing task was replacing portions of the two bottom rows of logs on the front side. They were so rotten we could almost tear them apart by hand. Snow (which I understand Vermont used to have in great quantity) was the biggest culprit. It piled against the entryway of the lodge, became packed by foot traffic, and slowly melted into the wood, saturating and rotting the logs.

How do you replace the *bottom* logs of a shelter? You lift the building!

We notched six-by-six-inch pieces of lumber to build lifts for the jacks on each side of the shelter. Then we built sawhorses to hold our new logs level at the elevation at which they would be installed. We had to remove the shelter’s flooring and detach the front porch to reach the rotted logs.

To improve the appearance of the joint where the ends of two logs met, Justin thought to cut squinted halflap joints, which are basically 45-degree angle cuts into the log ends enabling the two pieces to lock together. Once the building was lifted and the old logs removed, we used a combination of pry bars, ratchet straps, and a sledgehammer to coax the new logs into place.

Carpentry is tough work, and it is even tougher on a mountainside nearly two miles from a road. But Green Mountain Club backcountry construction crews have extensive experience repairing historic shelters; crews have been honing backcountry building methods since 1917 when Dunsmore Lodge, the first shelter on the Long Trail, was built.

With the logs replaced, the porch reattached, and Taft reopened, we were ready to pack out. We did not have helicopter support on this end of the project, so we had to pack our tools out over a treacherous shortcut between Taft and the Stowe gondola. (Thanks to the folks at Stowe Mountain Resort and to everyone else who helped us out of the woods!)

Justin and Turtle, as GMC crew members before them, worked hard on this and every other project we completed this season. Our work took us all over the Green Mountain State, and I am grateful to have shared this experience with these two tough, adaptable, and enthusiastic friends. Our next stop is Bryant Camp, where we will work until the cabin is finished or snow flies—whichever comes first.

—KURT MELIN

CONSTRUCTION CREW LEADER



Kurt, Turtle, and Justin



PHOTO BY GUS BILLARD



# Restoring Historic Bryant Camp in Bolton Valley

Tucked into the forest of Bolton Valley are two backcountry cabins with a special place in the history of outdoor recreation in Vermont. After many years of use and neglect, the Green Mountain Club, the Friends of Bolton Valley Nordic & Backcountry, the Vermont Land Trust, the Catamount Trail Association, and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation are collaborating to restore the cabins and revive their role in the rich hiking and skiing traditions of Bolton Valley.

In 1922 Edward S. Bryant bought 4,000 acres of forest land in the Joiner Brook drainage. Bryant, a conservationist and skiing pioneer, saw the potential of the property as a downhill skiing destination. In 1928 he helped GMC select a site for a Long Trail shelter near Joiner Brook to replace deteriorating Dunsmore Lodge, the first Long Trail shelter, built in 1917 as a basecamp for cutting the trail north to Mount Mansfield. Volunteers from GMC's Burlington Section completed Bolton Lodge, the new shelter, later that year.

## Skiing Comes to Bolton Valley

While Bolton Lodge was being built, Bryant turned to building a ski area in Bolton Valley, and to raising three cabins (Lower, Middle, and Upper) to lodge his guests.

He recruited friend and skiing legend Otto Schneibs to cut the trails, which probably were among the first Alpine ski trails in Vermont. The new ski area was initially used by Bryant's friends from New York and, later, the Bolton Ski Club. Of Bryant's three cabins, only Upper Cabin—today called Bryant Camp—remains.

Upon his death in 1951, Bryant's Bolton Valley property was sold to Plant and Griffith Lumber Company in Jonesville. Bryant Camp remained a local skiing destination, and the Long Trail and Bolton Lodge remained under the care of the Green Mountain Club.

In 1963 Plant and Griffith Lumber sold 8,000 acres of their Bolton holdings, including Bolton Lodge, to local farmer Roland DesLauriers. He and his son Ralph constructed an access road up the valley, developed ski trails, and opened the Bolton Valley Ski Area in 1966.

In the late 1960s Gardiner Lane of Bolton, an avid backcountry skier and GMC



member, established the cross-country ski center at Bolton Valley Resort. The cross-country center incorporated Bryant's earlier trails and numerous newer groomed and backcountry trails. The resort rented Bryant Camp as an overnight facility for skiers, and it developed a loyal following.

## Misuse and Decline

Bolton Lodge suffered from the paved access road to Bolton Valley Ski Area. Its proximity to the road eliminated the wilderness experience of the Long Trail, and increased incidents of misuse and vandalism. GMC relocated the Long Trail away from the Joiner Brook Valley and Bolton Lodge to a western ridgeline in 1984. After the reroute, Gardiner Lane maintained Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp for winter use. Later, others associated with the Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry Ski Center took over. Without Lane's careful and dedicated protection, it is unlikely that either Bolton Lodge or Bryant Camp would be restorable today.

## Protection of Bolton Valley and a return of hiking to the valley

In February, 2011, the public learned that much of Bolton Valley Resort's land, including Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp would be sold to a private interest, and that public access to the area would be prohibited.

A group of community members and Bolton Nordic skiers formed Friends of Bolton

Valley Nordic & Backcountry, and sought to protect the land from development. The group elicited help from the Vermont Land Trust, and worked with the trust for fourteen months to raise money to buy the land. The land and its two historic shelters were transferred to the State of Vermont and added to Mount Mansfield State Forest in 2013.

## Bryant Camp Restoration

Restoration of Bryant Camp began this fall. Contractors John Rogers and Sons, Inc., lifted the shelter and improved drainage before the GMC Construction Crew under the leadership of Kurt Melin stepped in to start renovation. The camp will receive a new wood stove, chimney, wood shed and efficient backcountry privy. Future plans include a connector trail to the Long Trail.

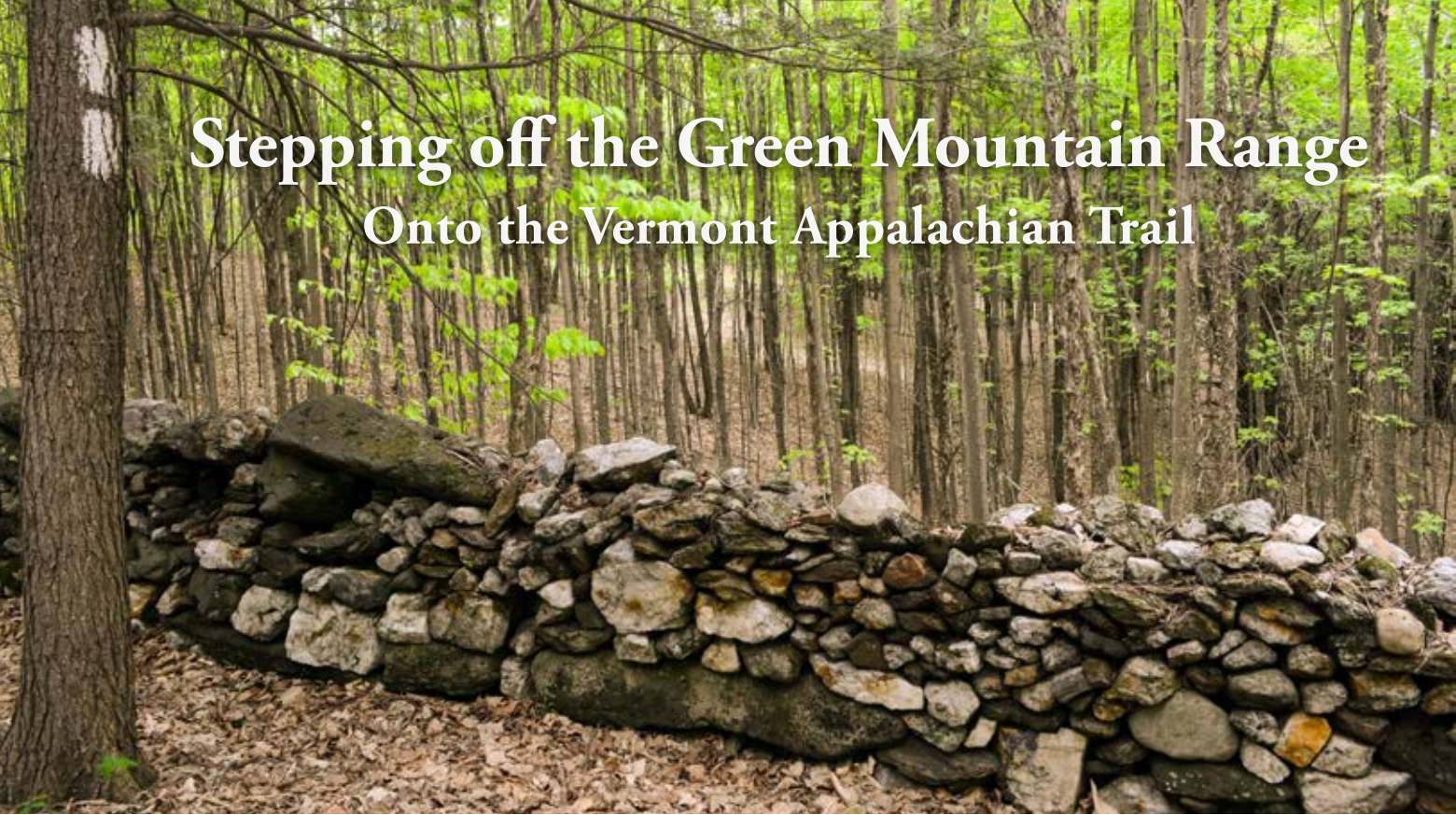
Under a cooperative agreement with the state, Bolton Lodge and Bryant Camp will be maintained by the Green Mountain Club, and opened for public use. Please check the website, [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org), for updates or to learn more about how to support maintenance of these historic cabins.

—MIKE DeBONIS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Researched history for this article was compiled from GMC archives and the Bryant Camp project Section 106 Review Report required by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its amendments.*



# Stepping off the Green Mountain Range Onto the Vermont Appalachian Trail



**“Now and then I have tested my seeing friends to discover what they see. Recently I was visited by a very good friend who had just returned from a long walk in the woods, and I asked her what she had observed. ‘Nothing in particular,’ she replied. I might have been incredulous had I not been accustomed to such responses, for long ago I became convinced that the seeing see little.”**

—*THREE DAYS TO SEE*, HELEN KELLER

One day it occurred to me that, although a native Vermonter, I had yet to set foot on the Vermont Appalachian Trail, so I grabbed my pack and set out to discover what I had been missing.

*I had three days to see the trail.*

My trek began at the Inn at Long Trail at the crest of Sherburne Pass. From the inn I climbed half a mile on the Sherburne Pass Trail (the former Long Trail) to Old Maine Junction. From there, the trail turned east toward New Hampshire and, eventually, Mount Katahdin in Maine. I would end 44.0 miles later in Norwich Village. As I hiked, I compared the unfamiliar footpath to a trail I knew very well, the Long Trail.

The highest point on the Vermont Appalachian Trail is 2,650 feet and is reached at the height of the land on the north shoulder of Quimby Mountain. Compare it to 4,395-foot Mount Mansfield, the highest point on the Long Trail, and it sounds like an easy climb. But getting there took some effort. I realized I would need bursts of energy to get over many small summits with short, steep ascents. Surprisingly, the under 2,600-foot

crowd was a tough one. Or maybe it wasn't so much that they were tough, but that the east-west trajectory over the ridgelines, instead of along them, meant they just kept coming.

Knowing that the elevation of the Vermont AT is significantly lower than most of the Long Trail, I expected to miss the long-range panoramic views we see from high peaks like Mount Abraham, Camel's Hump, Mount Mansfield, and Jay Peak. While this is one of the characteristics that make the Long Trail so special, I hadn't considered how the lower topography of the Vermont AT provides scenery not experienced along much of the Long Trail. Rather than looking down from panoramic vistas, you feel more part of the landscape as you emerge from the woods again and again, popping into pastoral clearings offering beautiful short-range views reminiscent of a Sabra Field painting. Rolling hills and valleys, isolated farmhouses, gravel roads, and pastures are frequent sights along the way.

The Green Mountain Club, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and the Green Mountain National Forest maintain thirteen

open areas along this stretch. Colleagues have described and praised these open spaces, but still, I was unable to imagine them. I soon discovered many are cleared hilltops with small woody trees and shrubs, blackberry bushes and milkweed, set off by the occasional solitary maple, hawthorn or apple tree. At each one I felt compelled to pause—to look out and imagine another time, when century-old stone walls enclosed pastures and farmers tended livestock and crops in the valleys below.

As I crested one open area I found a bench with a carving on the seat that read: “VT Relax and Enjoy.” And on a nice day, that's just what you do.

**“...you feel more part of the landscape as you emerge from the woods again and again, popping into pastoral clearings offering beautiful short-range views...”**

The clearings not only enhance hikers' experiences by providing beautiful views, but sustain habitat crucial to wildlife dependent on them. Bobolinks and Savannah sparrows rely on them for nesting, and black bear, white-tailed deer, and turkey use them to



forage. Maintaining these areas also helps suppress woody invasive species such as honeysuckle and buckthorn, and non-woody invasives like garlic mustard and black swallow wart. Hikers can become vectors that unintentionally carry and spread seeds from these aggressive plants.

While the GMC's Long Trail Patrol, directed by Land Stewardship Coordinator Mollie Flanigan, reclaims and mows the open areas, GMC's Ottauquechee Section maintains the trail and shelters. In 2011 the club, and therefore the O-Section, assumed responsibility of the entire 45.3 miles of the Vermont AT, 22.6 of which were previously managed by the Dartmouth Outing Club.

As I crossed Woodstock Stage Road I met long-time O-Section members Heinz and Inge Trebitz and Dave Newbury preparing for a walk-through to check the condition of the trail. They were heading west (AT southbound), but Heinz asked me to look for blowdowns as I made my way east toward Cloudland Road.

I kept an eye out for Heinz, but instead of finding nuisance trees in the path, I noted the generally soft treadway, and how the trail sometimes followed old farm and logging roads. There was no rebar embedded in face rock. There was no need for hand-over-fist climbing or glomming onto exposed tree roots to pull yourself up steep inclines. Sheer kneebreaker downhill either do not exist, or went unnoticed. I did, however, notice switchbacks.

The absence of fallen trees, rocks, roots, and for the most part, mud, allowed me to look up instead of down. I admired striking hardwood trees with robust canopies, unseen on high ridges of the Green Mountains. I noticed how morning light illuminated perfectly crafted spider webs between tree branches and how a single maple leaf levitated, suspended by an almost invisible thread of spider silk. I stopped to peer at rusted and twisted barbed wire, confined by the growth of an old maple tree, and I wondered: "Is the barbed wire girdling the tree, or is the tree girdling the barbed wire?"

Accompanying natural wonders were manmade ones, like the vibrant moss-covered stone walls recurrently seen along the trail. An impressive set is just east of Pomfret-South Pomfret Road, lining the remnants of the King's Highway, a historic road built in the mid-1700s under King George III of England. This wall did seem

grander than the others—taller, more substantial—built for a King.

We can thank farmers of the past for gleaning stones from fields and stacking them into stone walls—or more accurately, stone fences. Had I read Tom Wessels' *Reading the Forested Landscape: a Natural History of New England* before my hike, I would have known that stone fences were intended "to keep farm animals in, or out, of the open landscape they enclosed" rather than marking boundaries between properties.

According to Wessel, stone fences incorporating small rocks (as small as a fist) indicate that adjacent land was used for cultivation. Farmers regularly gathered rocks heaved to the surface of fields by freeze and thaw cycles, and added them to nearby stone fences already built to protect crops from livestock. Walls built with only large rocks suggest they were used to fence livestock in pastures or out of hayfields; it wasn't necessary to cull stones from those areas.

I stopped and set up my tent at three of the four shelter locations: Stony Brook, Winturri, and Thistle Hill. Their lean-to designs resemble many shelters on the Long Trail. I could not pass the spur trail to the fourth, Happy Hill Shelter, without at least a short visit. And, I *cannot* be the only hiker whose first impression of Happy Hill was that it is adorable. Built of logs and stone by the Dartmouth Outing Club in 1998, it resembles a chalet rather than a lean-to, and appears the perfect home for a tiny woodland family.

The shelters may be similar on both trails but a feature that is truly unique to the Vermont AT is Thundering Falls Boardwalk. Beginning at River Road and heading west, it

is the only universally accessible trail on the Long Trail and the Vermont AT. The 900-foot walkway passes through the Kent Brook floodplain, ending at an impressive 140-foot cascade and the site of a historic mill.

Hiking along the edge of fields, down old woods roads, and over lower hills without technical terrain allowed me to slow down—to use my given senses to appreciate the intimacies of the trail. If Helen Keller lived today, I could give her a vivid, descriptive report of this walk in the woods that would surely please.

It may be easy to dismiss the Vermont AT as lacking challenge; to view it as simply an AT thru-hiker exit out of Vermont. But after three days on the trail, I found it to be a nice change of pace. I felt as if I was passing through a friendly neighbor's backyard, taking a shortcut home.

—JOCELYN HEBERT  
LONG TRAIL NEWS EDITOR







# Forest Openings on the VERMONT APPALACHIAN TRAIL

Many of us know New England was only twenty percent forested around the turn of the twentieth century, and it is now closer to eighty percent. The Upper Connecticut Valley landscape still has patches of pasture, wildflower meadows and shrub lands, the legacy of our agrarian forbears, but natural succession constantly presses the landscape toward forest.

Keeping areas open usually requires maintenance, often at substantial expense and energy. So we might ask, if the landscape wants to grow trees, why should we try so hard to prevent it? It's a reasonable question and one Long Trail and Appalachian Trail managers in Vermont must regularly return to.

Before the axe, ox, and tractor subdued the original New England forest, natural disturbances such as wind, fire, beavers, and disease created openings where less shade-tolerant plants could take hold, even if only temporarily. These openings provided important habitat for myriad critters. Nowadays much land is covered by the constructs of our modern world—right to the edge of the forest—so this important middle ground is often lost.

With thoughtful management we can create areas where birds, bugs, and other wildlife can thrive. But it's not just about the critters. Our pastoral landscape helps make

living here so wonderful. Sweet summer hayfields, livestock at pasture, and well-used weather beaten barns are parts of the imagery that plays large in the Upper Valley's charm. They also add a valuable dimension to the experience of hiking among the hills.

Anyone who has logged miles on the Long Trail or Appalachian Trail quickly understands the classic phrase, "long, green tunnel"—those stretches of shady, unbroken canopy where the view is mostly stems and leaves. We can't deny the intimacy and solace of those spaces. Indeed, they form the essence of most hiking hereabouts. But breaking into a sunlit hillside meadow with a long valley view can be a special moment that makes hiking even more enjoyable.

Hikers in the early days of the LT and the AT encountered much more active agriculture than we do. Even when lands were being identified for a permanent AT route in the 1980s and early 1990s, many pastures now disused were grazed. A few pastures and hayfields between Killington and Norwich are still used by farmers with special use permits from the federal government. But the rest were left to grow as they might, which in most cases included the proliferation of non-native invasive plants as well as trees.

For many years management partners and some stalwart volunteers worked dili-

gently to keep various fields open, usually through regular mowing. More recently shifting priorities, shortages of money, and the dynamic landscape itself combined to make it increasingly difficult to keep up. In 2013 staff from the Green Mountain Club, the Green Mountain National Forest, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy developed a method for assigning values to each of more than two dozen openings on the Vermont AT from Shrewsbury to Norwich. Assessments were based on six criteria related to wildlife, views, management concerns, and cultural attributes. The results helped establish management priorities to make the best use of our funds. Now our job is to decide how to manage each opening to make it as attractive and useful as possible.

In the meantime, we are working to reopen and maintain a few open areas each year using mowers, bush cutters, and chainsaws. This fall GMC's Long Trail Patrol spent eight days reclaiming Woodward Hill in Bridgewater, Dupuis Hill in Pomfret, and Howard Hill in West Hartford on the Vermont AT. The U.S. Forest Service also mowed the Pratt House clearing in Shrewsbury.

—MATT STEVENS  
APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY  
CONSERVATION RESOURCE



Dupuis Hill

PHOTO BY MOLLIE FLANIGAN



## A HIKER'S SCAVENGER HUNT

### Natural Wonders to Look for on Your Next Hike: "Frog-icles"

As you add and remove layers of clothing this winter in a constant dance to regulate body temperature, consider the forest creatures around you who have no high-tech gear to control theirs. How do they survive the cold?

Five frog species in Vermont employ a fascinating strategy. Wood frogs, Cope's gray tree frogs, eastern gray tree frogs, spring peepers, and western chorus frogs enter a frozen state to survive the winter.

As temperatures drop and ice crystals start to form on the frog's skin, its liver produces glucose, a kind of antifreeze circulated in its blood that prevents its cells from freezing and its tissues from dehydrating. As freezing continues, ice crystals form between the cells of the frog, but not within them. Eventually the frog stops breathing and its heart slows to a stop. The frog remains in this frozen state for the entire winter, even through occasional freeze-thaw cycles.

Once spring returns and the temperature climbs, the frog thaws and its heart starts beating again. There are many things about this process that science has yet to discover, including what signals the heart to start beating again!

—MOLLIE FLANIGAN  
LAND STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR

## Profile on a GMC Conserved Land

The Green Mountain Club manages more than eighty tracts of land totaling more than 25,000 acres. These lands protect not only a permanent route for the Long Trail, but also the natural and cultural resources that make the Long Trail a place worth exploring and a vibrant home for humans, animals, and plants.

**NAME:** Atlas Timber Tract

**LOCATION:** Jay and Richford

**OWNER:** Green Mountain Club

**SINCE:** 1991

**SIZE:** 1,110 acres, one of the largest properties under GMC ownership and management

**TRAILS:**

Long Trail: 3 miles, Doll Peak to north of Route 105

**STRUCTURES:**

Shooting Star Shelter, originally built by the Long Trail Patrol in 1934, and rebuilt in 2001 after being destroyed by heavy snow the previous winter

**LANDSCAPE FEATURES:**

- **Summits:** Doll Peak (3,409 feet), Burnt Mountain (2,608 feet) and, North Jay Peak (3,438 feet)
- **Water:** Headwaters of Crook Brook, Jay Branch, Leavitt Brook, Lucas Brook, Mountain Brook, and Stanhope Brook, all of which feed the Missisquoi River, which flows into Lake Champlain
- **Special Habitat:** Mast stands of American beech trees, high elevation wet meadows, and subalpine krummholz that provide breeding habitat for the bicknell thrush

**LAND MANAGEMENT:**

Atlas Timber Tract is enrolled in the Conservation Program of Current Use and is being managed for:

- Protection and enhancement of recreational experiences
- Conservation, protection, and enhancement of natural resources
- Enhancement of native wildlife habitat

**STEWARDSHIP ANECDOTE:**

The Atlas Timber Tract has eleven miles of backcountry boundary line that need to be monitored and maintained. Dedicated GMC volunteers have worked to keep up with maintenance, but the rugged and remote eastern boundary had not been visited in many years. This fall, thanks to a grant from the Davis Conservation Foundation, GMC's Long Trail Patrol was able to spend a week locating and remarking fading blazes along the boundary line.

—MOLLIE FLANIGAN  
LAND STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR



PHOTO BY MOLLIE FLANIGAN





**E**xploring the Green Mountains in winter is a unique experience, and winter is the favorite time of year for some hikers. But days are shorter, the weather less predictable, and extra care and equipment are required for safety. The rescue incidents below illustrate these facts.

### Rescue on Mount Mayo

Two hikers on an endurance hike in January, 2016, got separated from their group, lost the trail for a period, and one became too exhausted to continue. An extensive rescue effort helped the hiker back to the trailhead.

**ANALYSIS:** As often happens, a cascading series of events contributed to this situation: a hiker pushing hard on a very difficult hike; inability to keep the group together; and a decision to keep hiking a remote trail despite a poor weather forecast (heavy rain and high winds). The margin of safety is small in the winter, and it is unwise to push the envelope. Know your capabilities. Always turn back if weather or visibility deteriorate. Always keep a group together, or establish clear check-in points.

### Miscommunication

In March a Long Trail hiker in Glastenbury decided to cut his hike short, and called a friend for an early pickup. When the hiker did not show up the friend called 911. It turned out that the pickup location was not made clear, and the friend waited at a location different from where authorities found the hiker.

**ANALYSIS:** This common scenario often frustrates searchers. Make sure you know the bailout locations along your hike, and how to describe them clearly should you have a change in plans.

### Group Separated and Unprepared

Also in March four hikers were ascending the Burrows Trail on Camel's Hump. As it started to get late, two turned around and returned to the trailhead. The other two continued but were unable to finish before dark, and they were not carrying headlamps. They called 911 for assistance, and volunteer rescuers hiked in and helped them out of the woods.

**ANALYSIS:** This was a classic case of: a) underestimating the time needed to complete a hike, b) not keeping the group together, and c) being unprepared (no headlamps).

—NEIL VAN DYKE  
VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
SEARCH AND RESCUE COORDINATOR

## Winter Hiking Safety Quiz

How prepared are you for winter hiking? Take this short quiz compiled by GMC staff and volunteers to see if you're ready for winter fun in the snowy backcountry.

- 1 How much water should I drink on a winter hike verses a summer hike?**
  - A.) More
  - B.) The same amount
  - C.) Less
  - D.) It depends on my level of exertion
- 2 Approximately how many hours of daylight are there on an average winter day?**
  - A.) 7.5
  - B.) 8.75
  - C.) 10.25
- 3 True or false: Because of the low angle of the winter sun you won't get sunburned in winter.**
- 4 Which of the following are signs of frostbite?**
  - A.) White skin
  - B.) Rigid or hard skin
  - C.) Numbness
  - D.) All of the above
- 5 TRUE OR FALSE: If there are two or more people in your party, you don't need a contact person at home who knows where you are going and when you'll be out of the woods.**
- 6 Dressing in layers to suit the weather is even more critical in winter. What upper body layers should you wear or carry on a winter hike?**
  - A.) Wool base layer, cotton sweatshirt, and synthetic insulating layer
  - B.) Wool base layer, synthetic insulating layer, and wind and rain jacket
  - C.) Cotton base layer, cotton sweatshirt, and fleece jacket
- 7 How many degrees Fahrenheit colder can it get with every thousand feet in elevation?**
  - A.) 5.5
  - B.) 8
  - C.) 14
- 8 You are hiking with a friend who suddenly begins to act confused and disoriented. What do you do?**
  - A.) Tell them to stop bringing down group morale
  - B.) Give them sweet snacks, change any wet clothing for dry wool or fleece, and add outer layers
  - C.) Give them some layers to put on over any wet clothing
- 9 TRUE OR FALSE: Search and rescue teams can use my Spot Device and/or phone GPS signal to find me.**
- 10 TRUE OR FALSE: I have winter spikes, so I don't need to worry about icy trails.**

*Answers on page 23*



Excellent weather helped the field staff enjoy their time in the woods and on the summits even more than usual during a productive summer and fall.

### Early Season

The first wave of field staff covered alpine summits for Memorial Day weekend and completed a couple of field projects before the blackflies subsided. We scouted treadway improvement projects and started composting work at all our sites by early June. We then ran two back-to-back orientation programs to bring the Long Trail Patrol and caretakers to full strength by July 4. Last December's loss by fire of the Stone Hut on Mount Mansfield forced us to get an Act 250 permit for three temporary tent platforms near Taft Lodge to shelter our summit caretakers there.

### Long Trail Patrol and Volunteer Long Trail Patrol

We ran two paid trail patrols this summer plus the Volunteer Long Trail Patrol. They did outstanding work on the Long Trail near Tillotson Camp, on the new East Dorset Trail, and on the Pico West portion of Long Trail/Appalachian Trail in Mendon. They also worked on the Hunger Mountain Trail, the Monroe Trail, and the Burrows Trail. A quick schedule adjustment in early July sent a crew to replace fourteen lengths of puncheon at Stamford Meadows south of Harmon Hill on the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail. And they supported the construction crew with repairs to Boyce Shelter.

### Caretakers

The caretaker program coped with high trail use everywhere this year, due to extra media attention from an Appalachian Trail-themed movie last fall and the beautiful weather. And, almost every day this summer was an ideal hiking day.

We track alpine summit visitation, but our primary trail use indicator is the condition of our privies. The nearly seventy privies under our management, including nineteen composting, many moldering, and a few pit toilets, are in various stages of wear and tear.

All of the pits are changed every summer by roving quartets of caretakers. Compost runs require weekly turning of 200 gallons of potent bark mulch and sewage mixtures at each site. Moldering privies get plenty of care and feeding by both field staff and volunteers. The Seth Warner Shelter pit privy was moved twice this summer!

### Construction Crew

The construction crew replaced the bridge cantilevered from the cliff face on the Lake Trail early in the season, and hit their stride by summer. The crew:

- Finished Boyce Shelter reconstruction.
- Supported work to install puncheon at Stamford Meadows.
- Installed a moldering privy at Bear Hollow Shelter.
- Added a new U.S. Forest Service approved gate at the Donaldson Field open area on the Vermont Appalachian Trail in Pomfret.
- Built a new moldering privy crib at Big Branch Shelter.
- Disassembled the Hell Hollow footbridge in the Glastenbury Wilderness on the Green Mountain National Forest.
- Began restoration of historic Bryant Camp.

- Completed the Taft Lodge airlift and renovation.
- Built a new moldering privy crib at Thistle Hill Shelter on the Vermont Appalachian Trail.

### Emergent Projects

At its summer meeting, the Trail Management Committee reaffirmed its commitment to work with other stakeholders to identify strategies to preserve historic Cooper Lodge and improve its management and use.

And we celebrated the acquisition of a trail easement on the Appel property in Woodstock. The property contains Gilbert Hill, and the easement is an important link in a proposed Park to Park hiking trail connecting the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (a unit of the National Park System) with Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park. Gilbert Hill, which looms over Route 12 just north of town, was the site of the first skiing rope tow in the United States. The next steps include trail layout and negotiating with neighboring landowners for rights of way to complete the trail.

—DAVE HARDY

DIRECTOR OF TRAIL PROGRAMS



Thistle Hill Shelter Privy





# Hell Hollow Bridge Removal Powered by KILLIAN AND MOOSE

The Wilderness Act of 1964 states: “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”

It is a vital law that preserves land in its natural state, protecting places people can retreat to enjoy all that nature has to offer. It also means no motorized equipment,

machinery, or wheeled devices can be used in wilderness areas.

Given those restrictions, the Green Mountain Club faced a unique challenge in removing the dilapidated Hell Hollow Bridge from the 22,330-acre Glastenbury Wilderness on the Green Mountain National Forest. Because the bridge was in a federally protected wilderness, removal could only be accomplished with the help of The Draft Animal Power Network, or DAPNet—more specifically, Jay Fisher

and his two Percheron horses, Killian and Moose.

According to Jay, using draft animals rather than machinery has many benefits: they require no fossil fuel; they can be used to harvest their own food which, when done well, can improve soil; and they can help increase the biodiversity and economic value of forests when harvesting timber.

There are additional benefits in the backcountry. Animals can fit on narrower trails and reach places tractors cannot, causing less damage to the forest. They reduce soil compaction which prevents runoff and erosion of the terrain. Most importantly, they do not take away from the serenity that a wilderness area is supposed to provide. There is no roaring motor, just the footfall of hooves, the sound of a sled moving over the ground, and communication between the horses and driver.

In summer the usual work for Killian and Moose involves harvesting hay, logging, and weddings, so the Hell Hollow Bridge removal was a different experience and environment for the eleven-year-old mare and sixteen-year-old gelding. At about 1,700 and 1,800 pounds respectively, Killian and Moose can pull several tons under the right conditions, but in the difficult terrain of Glastenbury Wilderness the horses pulled smaller loads of 800 to 1,200 pounds.

Despite rough ground and hot weather, Jay said Killian and Moose were “energetic for this job, settling nicely into the work and giving a full day’s effort both Saturday and Sunday.” They pulled four loads each day to remove the bridge materials in two days.

The project highlighted some of the trail maintenance challenges faced by the GMC’s Long Trail Patrol. Through partnerships like this one with DAPNet, however, we can meet our challenges and accomplish the missions of the GMC and the Wilderness Act.

—AMY POTTER  
VISITOR CENTER MANAGER



Hell Hollow Bridge

# Ways to GIVE BACK and Support Your Favorite Hiking Club

If you can give back to the trail this holiday season, here are some of the ways you can help:

## \* Become a Life Member, \$1,000

Your membership will help provide financial stability today and for future generations. Life membership dues go directly into the club's endowment fund. Investment gains from the endowment are used to pay for club operations, which include maintenance and protection of the Long Trail System.

## \* Join the Ridgeline Society, \$1,000 Annually

Give an unrestricted gift of \$1,000 or more annually, and you will be included in the club's Ridgeline Society. Ridgeline Society members receive copies of all new GMC publications, and are invited to an annual hike and reception hosted by the GMC president and executive director, where they get an inside look at current club projects and initiatives.

## \* Sponsor the Long Trail Patrol for a Week, \$5,000

Since 1930 the Long Trail Patrol, the club's seasonal professional trail crew, has repaired and built trails, bridges, and shelters. The sum of public and private funds available each season determine how many crews we can employ, and for how long. By sponsoring a week of trail crew you or your business can help us keep the trail in good shape, up north as well as down south!

## \* Endow a Section of Trail or a Shelter, \$10,000 to \$20,000

These gifts are invested in our endowment fund and are a great opportunity for a donor seeking to leave a permanent mark on the trail. Endowing part of GMC's trail system is also a nice way for a person or group to memorialize a friend or family member.

## \* Donate your Vehicle to our Fleet

Get a tax break and provide the club with a vehicle to support our summer trail crews. All vehicles donated are used by staff and significantly offset our annual operating costs.

*There are many fun and easy ways to support the trail. You can also:*

\* **GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP:** buy one for a friend, and hit the trail together!

\* **PURCHASE GMC BOOKS AND MAPS:** the *Long Trail Guide* and *Long Trail Hiking Map* are a popular combination.

\* **PURCHASE GMC MERCHANDISE:** new items include Buffs, bandanas, and winter hats with GMC's logo.

\* **JOIN OR VOLUNTEER TO HELP ONE OF THE CLUB'S FOURTEEN SECTIONS:** each section maintains a stretch of the Long Trail, Appalachian Trail, Northeast Kingdom trail or side trail.

\* **ATTEND A TAYLOR SERIES SHOW OR A SKILLS WORKSHOP:** proceeds benefit our education programs.

\* **VOLUNTEER TIME:** corridor monitors, seasonal Volunteer Long Trail Patrol crews, and Thursday office volunteers are examples of individuals and groups who give back to the trail.

Visit [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org) to learn more! And, thank you for your support of GMC, no matter how large or small.

## Long Trail Guide Milestone—100 Years of GMC Publishing



We are thrilled to announce the coming release of the 100th anniversary edition of the *Long Trail Guide*!

In 1917 GMC published the first guidebook to the Long Trail as a resource for the partially built trail. The new 28th edition will celebrate not only a finished trail extending 272 miles along the Green Mountain Range, but 225 miles of side trails, and a century of Green Mountain Club publishing.

You'll find the information you've always found, with updated trail descriptions and full-color maps, plus a new quick-reference table highlighting campsite and shelter locations. The new guide will be accented with art and photographs illustrating the changes in the guide over time.

Pre-order your copy today at [www.greenmountainclub.org](http://www.greenmountainclub.org)!

**A special edition will contain a *Long Trail Guide* retrospective authored by GMC and Long Trail history writer Reidun D. Nuquist. The commemorative edition will appeal to Long Trail history buffs, guidebook collectors, and anyone who just loves the trail.**

**Check the GMC website this winter for release date.**



# WINTER WISH LIST

## The Spirit of Giving is in the Air!

Show your support for the work of the Green Mountain Club by purchasing these items, GMC publications, and memberships at our online store, [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org), or at our visitor center store in Waterbury Center or by calling (802) 244-7037.

### Quarter Zip Performance Shirt

Sport Tek® ¼ zip long sleeve performance shirt.

\$39.95, | *Member:* \$31.96

- A** Men's: Charcoal Gray
- B** Women's: Iris

### Soft Shell Vest

**C** Black soft shell vest with GMC logo embroidered on left chest. 100% polyester with microfleece lining, water resistant and breathable. Front zippered pockets.

\$44.95, *Member:* \$35.96  
Women's and men's sizes

### Fleece Jacket

For cool to cold weather, this Port Authority lightweight microfleece jacket delivers warmth without unnecessary bulk. 100% polyester microfleece.

\$34.95, *Member:* \$27.96

- D** Women's: Royal Blue
- E** Men's: Chive Green

### Performance Shirts

Gildan Brand 100% polyester quick drying performance shirts. Beige GMC logo on front left chest and Long Trail map on the back.

**F** Women's and men's short sleeve: Charcoal Gray.

\$21.95, *Member:* \$17.56

**G** Women's long sleeve: Cardinal Red or Forest Green.

\$25.95, *Member:* \$20.76

**H** Men's long sleeve: Forest Green.

\$21.95, *Member:* \$17.56

### Organic Cotton Long Sleeve Shirts

**I** Econscious 100% organic cotton men's long sleeve: Pacific Blue.

\$25.95, *Member:* \$20.76

**J** 100% organic cotton women's long sleeve: Iris.

\$25.95, *Member:* \$20.76

### Cotton Short Sleeve Shirts

**K** Anvil organic preshrunk 100% certified organic cotton men's short sleeve: City Green.

\$21.95, *Member:* \$17.56

**L** Next Level cotton-polyester blend short sleeve: Olive.

\$21.95, *Member:* \$17.56

### Little Hikers

**X** Baby Onesie

100% cotton onesies in Green with the GMC logo on the front.

\$18.95, *Member:* \$15.16

### Headwear

**M** Buff®

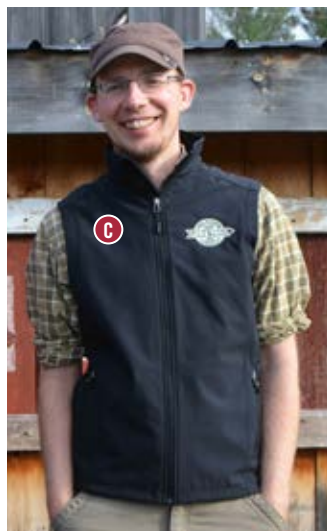
Printed with a topographic map of Vermont's highest mountain, Mount Mansfield, and the GMC logo. Can be worn at least 12 different ways. One size fits all.

\$25, *Member:* \$20

### N Baseball Cap

100% organic cotton baseball caps with GMC logo: Stone, Jungle Green, Blue.

\$18.95, *Member:* \$15.16







V



T



U



M



W



P

A

M

B

**U Trucker Hat**  
Cotton twill structured trucker hat with full-color embroidered GMC logo. Polyester-cotton blend front, 100% polyester mesh back. Dark Green.  
\$18.95, *Member:* \$15.16

**P Beanie**  
Scenic 247 cuffless toque with acrylic outer shell and polar fleece lining. Black.  
\$18.95, *Member:* \$15.16

**W Beanie with Pom**  
Chunky acrylic knit cuffed beanie with pom. Green Mountain Club 1910 wrap-around text and GMC logo. Green or Black.  
\$25.95, *Member:* \$20.76

**Accessories**  
**Q Bandana**  
Forest Green or Orange.  
\$7.00, *Member:* \$5.94

**T Nalgene Water Bottle**  
32 oz. wide mouth Nalgene water bottle with GMC Logo. BPA-free.  
\$13.50, *Member:* \$11.45

**U Travel Mug**  
Stainless Steel 13 oz. travel mug with black GMC logo.  
\$16.95, *Member:* \$13.56

**V Pint Glass**  
16 oz. glass with GMC logo on front and Hike Vermont! on back.  
\$7.99, *Member:* \$6.40



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The Green Mountain Club Board of Directors met on September 24 at club headquarters for a full morning of business, including reports from officers and staff; a review of current year finances; the fiscal year 2016 professional auditor's report; and reports and recommendations from working groups charged with evaluating club governance.

Treasurer Stephen Klein noted that income and expenditures were on target, and that the spring membership appeal had met its goal.

President John Page summarized the governance review process begun at last year's September meeting. Three working groups have been addressing the board's structure and function, the roles of the board and staff, and the club's committee structure. Groups addressing strategic planning and section strength will be established this fall.

Executive Director Mike DeBonis praised the fund raising successes of Director of Development Alicia DiCocco and the staff. He also commended Business Manager Jason Buss and Operations Coordinator Matt Krebs for reducing expenses. He also noted that the Bread Loaf Section had agreed to host the 2017 annual meeting.

Land Stewardship Coordinator Mollie Flanigan and Director of Trail Programs Dave Hardy reported on a busy season of field activity that will continue into the fall. Secretary Lee Allen presented a summary of responses and a preliminary analysis of trends identified in past membership surveys.

Brett Hodgdon of Davis & Hodgdon Associates summarized the favorable results of the accounting firm's audit of the club's fiscal year 2016 financial records. He noted great improvements in the club's internal financial controls as a result of policy and procedure recommendations implemented in fiscal year 2015, and he commended the members of the club's financial management team for their work.

The board approved motions to:

Name the former Long Trail from Stage Road in Jonesville to its junction with the current Long Trail the "Duck Brook Trail."

Adopt the Board and Staff Role Operating Guidelines developed by Stephen Klein and Mike DeBonis.

Approve a shortened list of standing committees and their chairs and members as recommended by John Page.

Approve changes in GMC's compensation and overtime policies to comply with new federal regulations.

The meeting adjourned just after 1:00 p.m. so board members could join the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic.

—LEE ALLEN, SECRETARY

## Winter in the Backcountry Photo Credits

### Left Page

- Top: C.H.Diegel Photography
- Middle Left: John Predom
- Middle Right: Nathanael Asaro
- Bottom Left: Maury Eldridge
- Bottom Right: C.H.Diegel Photography

### Right Page

- Top Left: Paul Beliveau
- Top Right: Morgan Irons
- Middle Right: Crystal Valente
- Bottom: C.H.Diegel Photography



Mount Abraham. Photo by Sheri Larsen



# Winter Hiking Safety Quiz Answers

## 1 Answer: D.

The amount of water needed depends upon a combination of how much you sweat (water loss) and the fact that cold air is extremely dry. Each time you breathe you are inhaling cold dry air, then both warming it up and humidifying it in your lungs before exhaling.

**PRO TIP:** Carry your water bottle upside down, so water near the mouthpiece doesn't freeze first and bind the cap. Insulate the bottle—an old wool sock will help a lot. Avoid using water bladders as lines are difficult to keep from freezing. Train yourself to take a drink with each break.

## 2 Answer: C.

However, the shortest day has just under nine hours of daylight. Always know when the sun will set, and remember the temperature drops with darkness. (Numbers are based on Montpelier from October 1 to February 28.)

**PRO TIP:** Lithium batteries resist cold best, but all cold batteries lose significant working life. Carry your headlamp or batteries in an interior pocket to keep them warm while not in use. Always carry extra batteries or an extra light. Do not rely on a cell phone for light.

## 3 Answer: False.

Actually, snow reflects the sun's rays, and it can increase the risk of sunburn, especially late in winter when the sun is higher and days are getting longer.

**PRO TIP:** In the open wear sunscreen on exposed skin, including a lip balm with sunscreen. Wear UV-blocking goggles or sunglasses to prevent snow blindness.

## 4 Answer: D.

A small area of hard skin with soft flesh beneath is frost nip. It can be safely thawed by putting a warm hand against it; the result later will be a tender area, like sunburn. If the flesh below the hard skin also is hard, that is serious frostbite. Go home and get treatment as soon as you can.

**PRO TIP:** To help prevent frostbite, wear mittens, which keep your fingers together for mutual warmth, use fresh chemical heating pads to add extra warmth to your boots and mittens, and regularly scrunch your toes for a minute to get your circulation going.

## 5 Answer: False.

In winter especially, ALWAYS tell a responsible and knowledgeable person where you are going and when you expect to be home. Establish check-in procedures and a plan if check-ins are missed. Make sure to check in when promised to avoid an unnecessary search.

**PRO TIP:** Housemates make great check-ins, because they will know if you don't come home!

## 6 Answer: B.

The old saying, "cotton kills," is especially important to remember in winter.

**PRO TIP:** Loose layers are warmer than snug layers, because the air between them is additional insulation. Conversely, they ventilate better than form-fitting clothing. You won't overheat as quickly when exercising, so you'll need to adjust less often, and your clothing will stay drier.

## 7 Answer: A.

The temperature drop with elevation can reach 5.5 degrees per thousand feet in a high-pressure weather system just after passage of a cold front. In other conditions the drop may be less (but there is almost always more wind higher up).

**PRO TIP:** Begin your hike wearing fewer layers, so you feel a little chilly at first. Once you start to travel, you will warm quickly. Your goal is to regulate body temperature by wearing the correct layers to avoid sweat-dampened clothes. Save warm outer layers for higher elevations or snack breaks.

## 8 Answer: B.

Confusion is a warning sign of hypothermia. At this early stage recovery is possible with proper attention. Dry clothes conserve warmth, and a quickly digested sugary snack will fuel the biological furnace.

**PRO TIP:** Rotate who is leading to keep an eye on one another. Listen and watch for the "umbles" (mumbling, stumbling, bumbling), all possible signs of hypothermia.

## 9 Answer: False.

While those devices can provide approximate locations, they don't replace good judgement. Devices and batteries can fail, especially in cold, and a GPS receiver can be off by hundreds of feet. If you're unconscious or have moved since the last transmission, help may not reach you.

**PRO TIP:** If you are tired, unsure of anything, or the weather becomes worse, go home and try for that peak another day.

## 10 Answer: False.

You may encounter an area of sloping ice where your spikes provide good traction, but an ordinary stumble would cause you to slide into trees or rocks. It is common in winters with little snow, when smooth ice forms on many slopes. And, conditions high up may well be worse.

**PRO TIP:** If you plan to travel on sloping ice, especially steep ice, take a course to learn how to use full crampons safely, and how to self-arrest with an ice axe.





# Volunteer Appreciation Picnic Highlights

Last year volunteers logged almost ten thousand hours—the equivalent of increasing the club’s staff by fifty percent. Combined with their irreplaceable knowledge and skills, their contributions of time are invaluable. GMC recognizes these volunteers each fall with a picnic at club headquarters. We had a postcard perfect day for this year’s celebration, with good food, good cheer and, most importantly, great GMC spirit! The following are snapshots of some of our most extraordinary volunteers.

finance committee, and began his first term on the Board of Directors.

Wait, there’s more! Cindy and Ira are adopters of the Dean Trail on Camel’s Hump; spent a cold day in February signing up and talking with more than eighty hikers at our Winter Trails Day; helped develop the volunteer training plan for Barnes Camp Visitor Center in Smugglers’ Notch; and coordinated weekly volunteers, managed merchandise inventory, reconciled the books and took regular volunteer shifts at Barnes Camp.

We are honored by their service.

The members of this group spent weekends and holidays providing hiking information, tours of the recently renovated historic structure, and tips on cool places to swim. They also occasionally waved their arms frantically to stop large trucks or buses from driving into the notch and getting stuck between the ledges there! In 2016 the volunteers greeted more than 3,500 visitors, and logged more than three hundred hours of service.

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS:

*Presented to volunteers who make a significant contribution to the mission of the Green Mountain Club, but who go about their work in a quiet way and maybe a little bit under the radar. Under the radar or not, their work does not go unnoticed. We are proud to recognize:*

**Hubey Folsom** for exceptional service to the Brattleboro Section and trails of southern Vermont, including maintaining the West Ridge Trail with his wife, former Bennington Section President Martha Stitelman, and some of the trails of the Windmill Hill-Pinnacle Association in Windham County.

**Heinz Trebitz, Nick Krembs and Bob Hagen**, Ottauquechee Section Trail Maintenance Coordinators, who have collaborated to organize and carry out

## GROUP OF THE YEAR: Barnes Camp Volunteers

*Presented to a group that actively collaborates with the club to improve the Long Trail, increases access to and awareness of the trail, and embodies the spirit of the Green Mountain Club.*

Recognizing their tremendous commitment to getting the Barnes Camp Visitor Center up and running, we thanked the visitor center volunteers: **Amy Accles, Charlene Bohl, Barbara Baraw, Deb Lane, Diane Lee, Julie Higgins and Michael O’Connor, Sara Lourie, Brian and Angela Norder, Cindy Griffith and Ira Sollace, Kathy Powell, and Christopher Rotstettis.**



Cindy Griffith and Ira Sollace

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR: Cindy Griffith and Ira Sollace

Volunteerism is embedded in the soul of GMC, and it is the foundation of a hundred years of success. The volunteer of the year award goes to those who carry the spirit of volunteerism in everything they do. This year **Cindy Griffith and Ira Sollace**, whose love for Vermont and its mountains runs deep, received the award.

Cindy is a valuable member of the publications committee involved with both print and online projects. An artist, she has also shared her work with the club in the *Long Trail News*. After retiring from a career in finance with the State of Vermont, Cindy’s husband Ira joined the club’s budget and



Barnes Camp Volunteers with GMC President John Page on the right

the big task of maintaining forty-six miles of Appalachian Trail and four shelters between Maine Junction and the Connecticut River at Norwich.

**Dave Iverson**, a former GMC summit caretaker, for volunteering to fill gaps in caretaker coverage on Mount Mansfield, year after year.

**Mary Jo Llewellyn**, a historic preservation expert who donates time and expertise to help the club meet historic preservation requirements for trail structures.

**Karalyn Mark**, a GMC archive intern who worked at club headquarters collecting, cataloguing, and housing historic materials and photographs; provided material for the Green Mountain Girls presentation by Montpelier Section President Reidun Nuquist; and helped organize the history table at this year's annual meeting.

**Paul Hansen** for creating and donating ten years' worth of monthly calendars featuring inspiring photographs of the Green Mountains for our website.

### GREEN MOUNTAIN AWARD:

*Presented to volunteers who have done exemplary work on a specific program or to someone who, over the years, has been tireless in their commitment and devotion to the Green Mountain Club. This year's awards were presented to:*

**Beth Barnes**, a Northeast Kingdom Section member who jumped in and did some heavy lifting, especially organizing a successful silent auction, to help with this year's annual meeting

**Ken Hertz**, a Montpelier Section member who scanned approximately 400 *Long Trail News* editions (from 1922 to 2015) into a digital archive, and created a searchable database. The club plans to eventually add these to our new website for the public to enjoy.

**Peter Hope**, an Ottauquechee Section member who produces and emails an extensive weekly list of hiking opportunities and other outings to both members of



Hubey Folsom, Bob Hagen, and Heinz Trebitz



Angela Marquis and Ami English



Ken Hertz, Beth Barnes, and Peter Hope with Mike DeBonis on the right

the GMC and non-members. He has spent years compiling the list of recipients, and has attracted more newcomers to GMC's O-Section than any other means the section has employed.

**Cathi Brooks**, a Northeast Kingdom Section member who worked tirelessly with Section President Jean Haigh and members of the planning committee to organize the 2016 GMC Annual Meeting.

**Bill Good**, who travels from Texas to Vermont each year to volunteer on the Long Trail, often with the Volunteer Long Trail Patrol. This year Bill switched it up and worked with the construction crew and Crew Leader Kurt Melin. Bill worked on restoring Boyce Shelter in the Breadloaf Wilderness, rebuilding the Lake Trail Bridge, and building the Bear Hollow privy.

### TRAIL BLAZER AWARD:

*Presented to relatively new GMC volunteers who have gone above and beyond, both on and off the trail, to help benefit the Long Trail and Green Mountain Club. This year's awards were presented to:*

**Angela Marquis** (now Angela Smith) and **Ami English**, Northeast Kingdom Section members who created a new Young Adventurers Club (YAC) to help get families outdoors. They also became wilderness first aid certified so they could lead section hikes and YAC outings, and supported the GMC Annual Meeting planning and logistics.

**David Hathaway**, a Burlington Section's outings co-chair who organizes the outing schedule, finds hike leaders, and leads monthly hikes. He is also the section's webmaster, another big job.



## Section Directory

### Bennington

Maintenance: Harmon Hill to Glastenbury Mountain  
President: Lorna Cheriton, (802) 447-1383  
E-mail: chertop@comcast.net  
Website: meetup.com/gmcbennington

### Brattleboro

Maintenance: Winhall River to Vt. 11/30  
President: George Roy, (603) 381-7756  
E-mail: neogeo03106@gmail.com  
Website: brattleborogmc.com

### Bread Loaf

Location: Middlebury area  
Maintenance: Sucker Brook Shelter to Emily Proctor Shelter  
President: Ruth Penfield, (802) 388-5407  
E-mail: ruthpenfield@gmail.com  
Website: gmcbreadloaf.org

### Burlington

Maintenance: Jonesville to Smugglers' Notch  
President: Ted Albers, (802) 557-7009  
E-mail: ted@ted-albers.net  
Website: gmc Burlington.org

### Connecticut

Location: Hartford, Connecticut  
Maintenance: Glastenbury Mountain to  
Arlington-West Wardsboro Road  
President: Jim Robertson, (860) 633-7279  
E-mail: jrobert685@aol.com  
Website: connngmc.com

### Killington

Location: Rutland area  
Maintenance: Vt. 140 to Tucker-Johnson Shelter site  
President: Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573  
E-mail: Griff2Vt@vermontel.net  
Website: gmckillington.org

### Laraway

Location: St. Albans area  
Maintenance: Vt. 15 to Vt. 118  
President: Bruce Bushey, (802) 893-2146  
E-mail: brbshey@comcast.net  
Website: gmclaraway.org

### Manchester

Maintenance: Vt. 11/30 to Griffith Lake  
President: Marge Fish, (802) 824-3662  
E-mail: marge.fish@gmail.com  
Website: gmc-manchester.org

### Montpelier

Maintenance: Bamforth Ridge to Jonesville and  
Smugglers' Notch to Chilcoot Pass  
President: Steve Bailey, (609) 424-9238  
E-mail: stevebailey@gmail.com  
Website: gmcmontpelier.org

### Northeast Kingdom

Maintenance: Willoughby and Darling State Forests and  
the Kingdom Heritage Lands  
President: Luke O'Brien, (802) 467-3694  
E-mail: luke@northwoodcenter.org  
Website: nekngmc.org

### Northern Frontier

Location: Montgomery  
Maintenance: Hazen's Notch to Journey's End  
President: Jane Williams, (802) 827-3879  
E-mail: janiewilliams@surglobal.net  
Website: troutrivernetwork.org/gmc

### Ottawaquechee

Location: Upper Valley, and New Hampshire  
Maintenance: Appalachian Trail from Maine Jctn. to  
the New Hampshire line  
President: Dick Andrews, (802) 885-3201  
E-mail: techcomm@vermontel.net  
Website: gmc-o-section.org

### Sterling

Location: Morrisville/Stowe/Johnson  
Maintenance: Chilcoot Pass to Vt. 15  
President: Greg Western, (802) 655-6051  
E-mail: gw60031@hotmail.com  
Website: gmcsterling.org

### Worcester

Location: Worcester, Massachusetts  
Maintenance: Arlington-West Wardsboro Rd.  
to Winhall River  
President: Ram Moenns, (603) 767-2962  
E-mail: shivratri@gmail.com



## Sections

### LARAWAY SECTION

#### New Website

The Laraway Section has launched its new website! Learn more about this section's history, and check out its outings calendar and photos at [www.gmclaraway.org](http://www.gmclaraway.org).

### BREAD LOAF SECTION

#### Youth Adventurer's Club Leader

The Bread Loaf Section welcomes Lauren Bierman as the new leader for our Young Adventurer's Club (YAC). The YAC encourages and promotes children's enthusiasm for playing in Vermont's outdoor spaces.

Lauren remembers hiking with her family in the White Mountains of New Hampshire at Thanksgiving and staying overnight in a hut with all her cousins. She remembers how free she felt in the woods and has been hooked ever since. Lauren is a trained Wilderness First Responder and a Maine State Trip Leader, and has spent six-and-a-half weeks on the Appalachian Trail with nine thirteen-year-old girls.

Young Adventurer's Club trips focus on families getting out and having fun, rather than going fast or far. Basic, progressive information about outdoor safety and stewardship is provided on each trip, and each trip has a theme or special activity. While the pace may

be set for younger adventurers (ages four to eight), everyone is welcome. Each outing will be tailored to participants, and will be fun for the whole family! See our schedule at [www.gmcbreadloaf.org/yac](http://www.gmcbreadloaf.org/yac).

—RUTH PENFIELD

### CONNECTICUT SECTION

#### Nine Days on the Pacific Crest and John Muir Trails

A group of Connecticut Section members and friends completed a nine-day trek on the Pacific Crest and John Muir Trails in California in September. Starting from Kennedy Meadows the group traversed the PCT north through portions of the Golden Trout and Sequoia-Kings Canyon Wilderness areas.

Due to prolonged drought water sources were scarce in places, but we found enough pools and small streams at most designated camping areas. The trek was highlighted by a side trip to the summit of Mount Whitney, which at 14,505 feet is the highest peak in the forty-eight contiguous states. Pictured at the summit, from left to right, are Activities Vice President and trip organizer Mandy Brink, Director Jim Fritz, Trails & Shelters Vice President Mike Shaw, Tom Adams, and President Jim Robertson. Ratty Trekker, Jim Fritz' world-traveling packrat is perched just above the summit plaque.

—JAMES ROBERTSON



Young Adventurer's Club





Connecticut Section on Mount Whitney

## NORTHEAST KINGDOM SECTION

### Group Hike on the Skyline Trail

Northeast Kingdom Section members hiked Mount Hunger and the Skyline Trail on the Worcester Range this fall. Ten people hiked the Waterbury Trail 2.2 miles to the summit of Hunger Mountain (3,539 feet), then traversed the Skyline Trail 2.6 miles to the junction of the Ridge Trail. From there, we hiked to the junction with the Stowe Pinnacle spur; some of us veered off to check out the summit. It was a long day hike, but we had good weather with cool temperatures, light wind, and mostly sunny skies. And, as has always been the case with this crew, a fun time was had by all.

—CHRISTOPHER RICE

## BRATTLEBORO SECTION

### End-to-End Bike Ride

The Brattleboro Section sponsored its annual length-of-the-state bike ride the weekend after Labor Day. Fourteen made the journey from Williston to Brattleboro.

After staying overnight in Williston, we left early on Saturday morning and enjoyed breakfast at Sweet Simone's in Richmond. Then the group split. Those looking for a challenge headed south to East Middlebury, where they began the climb over Middlebury Gap and enjoyed the new pavement on the way down to Hancock. Others headed east to Middlesex and then down Vermont Routes 100B and 100.

The destination for Saturday night was Liberty Hill Farm & Inn in Rochester. Innkeeper Beth Kennett goes out of her way to accommodate guests with incredible home style meals and lodging. A thunderstorm passed through while we had breakfast on Sunday, and the skies cleared. Most of the riders took Vermont Route 100 down to Ludlow.

—JOE COOK



NEK group hike on Skyline Trail



Brattleboro Sction End-to-End bike ride



# 25<sup>th</sup> Annual James P. Taylor Outdoor Adventure Series

FOR MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS the Long Trail has inspired Vermonters to seek adventure in the Green Mountains and beyond. **The James P. Taylor Outdoor Adventure Series**, named after the man who first envisioned the Long Trail, brings such adventures to you through stories, photographs and videos. Join us for inspiring presentations that will transport you to mountains and waterways near and far as we celebrate twenty-five years of the Taylor Series—a great way to spend an evening!

Admission is \$5 for members and \$8 for nonmembers; kids under 12 are free. Tickets are available at the door only. Proceeds support local sections and the GMC Education Program.

**Please check the GMC website, [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org) for full calendar, updates, and changes.**



## Hiking and Other Adventures in Southern Patagonia and the Atacama Desert

*Sheri and Rich Larsen*

Friday, December 16, 7 p.m.  
GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

Last January Rich and Sheri Larsen traveled to the southern part of Patagonia, a region that lies in southern Chile and Argentina. They hiked the famous “W” trek in Torres del Paine National Park in Chile, did day hikes in the Fitzroy Range in Glacier National Park in Argentina, walked on a glacier, and



searched for wildlife. After their Patagonian adventures, the Larsens traveled to northern Chile to visit the very different landscape of the Atacama Desert. Spend an evening in South America viewing Sheri’s photos and listening to their informative narration.

## Exploring Baxter State Park

*Ryan Linn*

Thursday, January 12, 7 p.m.  
GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

The crown jewel of Maine’s North Woods is known by most as the home of Mount Katahdin—the end of the Appalachian Trail and Maine’s highest peak. But Baxter



State Park is also an expansive paradise of lakes, ponds, mountains, and streams in the deepest wilderness of New England. Ryan “Guthook” Linn has explored almost two hundred miles of hiking trails in the park. He will share highlights of backpacking and hiking there, as well as pointers for using the park’s reservation system to plan your next backpacking, day hiking or camping trip.

## Walking Te Araroa: A 3,000 Kilometer Tramp through New Zealand

*Matt Shea and Kelsea Burch*

Friday, January 20, 7 p.m.  
GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

Join GMC Field Supervisor Matt Shea and Kelsea Burch as they relate the tale of their five-month odyssey traveling the length of New Zealand on foot. Opened in 2011, the Te Araroa is one of the world’s newest long distance trails, and it is quickly gaining popularity in New Zealand, Europe, and beyond. Experience the world class beauty and astounding ruggedness of the route as it traverses city streets and forest paths, ocean beaches and mountain passes. The couple will take you from Cape Reinga to Bluff, sharing pictures, stories, and the light hearted and slightly nutty humor that made the journey possible, one day at a time.

## A Driving, Hiking, Camping Tour Along the Dalton Highway from Fairbanks to Deadhorse and Prudhoe Bay, Alaska

*Marge Fish*

Friday, January 27, 7 p.m.  
Manchester Community Library

GMC Manchester Section President Marge Fish will relate highlights and show photographs of a ten-day group tour from Fairbanks through the Brooks Range to Deadhorse via the Dalton Highway. Experiences included days hiking terrain from woods to tundra, an afternoon of paddling, an evening flight through the Brooks Range to a native village, a visit with a trapper in Wiseman, a visit with a dog sled breeder and racer in Manley, observations of the Alaska Pipeline, a tour of Prudhoe Bay, and a swim in the Arctic for the daring.



## Rock Climbing Abroad and At Home

*Andrea Charest*

Thursday, February 2, 7 p.m.  
GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

For Andrea Charest, climbing is a way of life. She has woven climbing into her job, her relationship, her free time, and even her dog’s life. Andrea owns Petra Cliffs Climbing Center in Burlington

with her husband Steve, where they have helped to grow the climbing community. When she's not working at the center or guiding—you guessed it—she's usually climbing rock or ice, sometimes with skis on her back. Andrea has traveled across the country and internationally for work and play and always returns to Vermont with a new perspective and appreciation for climbing routes in New England. She will share her perspective on life from the side of a wall and discuss some of the most impressive features our natural landscape has to offer, some in our own back yard.

### **Trail Magic: The Grandma Gatewood Story – Film and Discussion**

*Tom McKone*

Thursday, February 9, 7 p.m.  
GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

Many hikers know Emma “Grandma” Gatewood was the first woman to solo thru-hike the Appalachian Trail, but little more of her story. Following a screening of Trail Magic: The Grandma Gatewood Story, Tom McKone, executive director of Montpelier’s Kellogg-Hubbard Library, will lead a discussion of Emma’s story and other thru-hiking tales. The thirty-fifth thru-hiker to complete the trail, Tom actually met the legendary Grandma.



### **Cycling in the Himalayas**

*Ferdinand Lauffer*

Saturday, February 18, 7 p.m.  
Montgomery Town Library

Ferdinand Lauffer of West Berkshire and his cycling partner Ercan Tursun of Hamburg, Germany, met on the internet. Both wondered whether they were up for a bicycle tour in the Himalayas at altitudes above 5,000 meters (16,404 feet). They began their 1,075 kilometer (668 mile) ride in Shimla, once the summer seat of the British colonial administration, and rode through the Lahaul, Kinnaur, and Spiti Valleys to Rohtang La Pass near Manali, the capital city of Himachal Pradesh. From there they followed what is often called the world’s most dangerous road through breathtaking scenery to Leh, the capital of Buddhist Ladakh. A ride to the western Kashmiri city of Srinagar had to be scrubbed because of the volatile political situation there, so they replaced it with a week of trekking through the Markha Valley.

The Taylor Series is sponsored by GMC’s fourteen sections local businesses, and other friends of the club.

#### **\$1,000+ Business Contributors**



#### **\$500—\$999 Business Contributors**

ArborTrek Canopy Adventures • CCOOutdoorStore.com • Thread Rolling, Inc.  
Rock Art Brewery • Woodchuck Hard Cider

### **Hiking and Other Adventures in Southern Patagonia and the Atacama Desert**

*Sheri and Rich Larsen*  
Friday, December 16, 7 P.M.  
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

### **Exploring Baxter State Park**

*Ryan Linn*  
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GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

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### **Cycling in the Himalayas**

*Ferdinand Lauffer*  
Saturday, February 18, 7 P.M.  
Montgomery Town Library

### **Day Hiking in the Dolomites, Julian Alps and Tatra Mountains**

*Sheri and Rich Larsen*  
Friday, March 3, 7 P.M.  
Richmond Free Library

### **Hiking the Trails in the Worcester Range**

*Steven and Heather Bailey*  
Thursday, March 9, 7 P.M.  
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

### **The Physiology and Psychology of Wilderness Survival**

*Mark Kutolowski*  
Thursday, March 16, 7 P.M.  
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

### **History of the Whites**

*Elizabeth Kane*  
Thursday, March 23, 7 P.M.  
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

### **Interesting Vermont Plane Crashes and Stories**

*Brian Linder*  
Thursday, March 30, 7 P.M.  
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

### **Day Hiking the Lofoten Islands of Norway**

*Ashley Spooner*  
Thursday, April 6, 7 P.M.  
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center



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# The Story of the Appalachian Trail in Central Vermont

It all began with climbing a tree. In July of 1900, Benton MacKaye, a twenty-one-year-old Harvard forestry undergraduate, bushwhacked with two companions up trailless Stratton Mountain. He climbed a tree to get a view and later, according to Benton MacKaye's biography by Larry Anderson, recollected: "I felt as if atop the world, with a sort of 'planetary feeling.' . . . Would a footpath someday reach [far-southern peaks] from where I was then perched?"

In what can only be described as serendipity, James P. Taylor, an assistant school master, conceived of a footpath that would extend the length of Vermont. He did this while waiting for the mist to clear near the summit of still trailless Stratton Mountain in 1909. A man with a vision, Taylor formed the Green Mountain Club in 1910, and set out to build what became today's 272-mile trail. Completed in 1930, it was the nation's first long distance hiking trail.

Inspired by the success of the Long Trail, Benton MacKaye proposed building the Appalachian Trail in the October, 1921, edition of the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*. This might seem a rather odd venue in which to launch plans for a hiking trail. Nevertheless, the idea was picked up by the *New York Evening Post*, and the 2,180-mile AT, extending from Maine to Georgia, was completed in 1937.

The idea that the AT in Vermont would follow the southern 105 miles of the Long Trail was quickly embraced, but a connection between the Green Mountains and White Mountains was slower in coming. With the completion of the Long Trail, GMC member Willis Ross cut a twenty-three-mile trail from the Long Trail at Maine Junction north of Sherburne Pass to meet and follow a cross-country ski trail maintained by the



Dartmouth Outing Club at Vermont Route 12 north of Woodstock.

This roughly forty-six-mile connector between the Long Trail and the Connecticut River was unlike any other part of the AT. It followed a hodgepodge of logging roads and old town roads, when it wasn't climbing farm fence stiles or passing down farm lanes. The trail was more like a ramble in the English countryside than a mountain hiking trail.

The early AT was not a destination trail, and it was used mainly by the handful of long-distance hikers that passed through each year. In those days, some farmers' wives offered milk and cookies—a version of what today would be called trail magic.

Progress has a way of changing everything, and the AT was no exception. The backpacking boom of the 1960s brought more users to the trail, while the urban exodus threatened the continuity of the AT with development. The passage of the National Trails System Act in 1968 established the AT as a National Scenic Trail but left its protection up to the states, which was wishful thinking. Most states, Vermont included, did nothing.

I arrived in Woodstock with the passage of the AT amendment to the Act in 1978. That legislation granted both federal money

and broad powers, including eminent domain, to protect the AT. Just three years out of college, I was put in charge of planning and pre-acquisition negotiations for the AT in Vermont outside of the purchase boundary of the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF). In hindsight, I realize what an enormous opportunity and responsibility that was.

Nearly the entire AT in central Vermont was relocated in the 1980s and 90s under the trail acquisition program. The original route was not suitable for federal acquisition so the AT

was relocated wholesale into the woods and onto the ridges. Because Vermont's ridges run north-south and the AT runs east-west, today's route has many ups and downs, and is more challenging than our lower hills would suggest.

The AT lands outside of the GMNF were purchased by the National Park Service, so the Appalachian National Scenic Trail can claim to be the first national park unit in Vermont. The entire land acquisition cost \$5 million, a bargain compared with today's land values.

Although this stretch of the AT is now in the woods and on ridges, the abundant stone walls, cellar holes, abandoned roads, and hilltop meadows demonstrate the extent to which Vermont was once farmed.

Because of two visionaries, James P. Taylor and Benton MacKaye, you need not bushwhack up a mountain, climb a tree, and wonder what could be. The trail awaits you.

—PRESTON BRISTOW

*Preston Bristow is a past GMC President who was Vermont coordinator for the AT protection effort from 1978 to 1986. He lives in Woodstock, four miles from the AT crossing at Vermont Route 12.*





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