

Long Trail NEWS



Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

FALL 2018



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: Early morning sighting of a bull moose on Mount Abraham summit in 2017. Photo by GMC Caretaker Scout Phillips.



Autumn on Mount Mansfield. Photo by Gus Billard.

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From the President

It is a special honor to be elected the 43rd president of the Green Mountain Club, the principal protector and maintainer of the Long Trail, the Vermont Appalachian Trail, and the Northeast Kingdom trails. I appreciate the opportunity to lead such a valuable and esteemed Vermont institution. In my first *Long Trail News* column, I'll tell a little about myself and my connections to the Club and the Long Trail.

Born in Proctor, I attended school in Rutland and then Burlington before moving back to Rutland, where I finished my early education and high school. I've lived in Vermont all of my life except for the four years I was in college and two on active duty with the U.S. Army.

A degree in economics led to my early career in association management in Montpelier before joining the Howard Bank (today TD Bank) in Burlington. I completed my professional career in 2014 with 21 years as the Vermont Deputy Commissioner of Banking, and concluded a 23-year military career with the Vermont Army National Guard in 1993. My wife Mary and I live in Shelburne, and we have four married children and eight grandchildren.

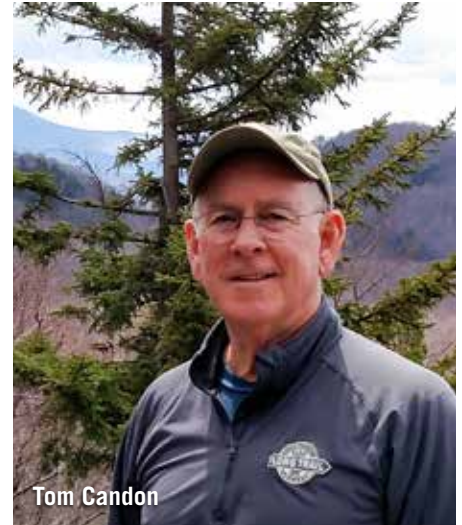
I was first introduced to the Long Trail when I was a Boy Scout in Rutland. I can remember hiking north from U.S. Route 4 for an overnight adventure. It was a great outing, but I must admit that the most memorable part was a *very* close encounter with the trail when our assistant scout leader lost his wedding ring and we spent a fair amount of time combing the trail for it. If memory serves, it was never found. I section hiked the Long Trail from the Massachusetts border to the Canadian border, completing the final stretch in

2010—an amazing adventure that I am looking forward to repeating.

When the GMC celebrated its 100th anniversary, the club conducted a Long Trail relay with section hikes along the entire length of trail. To complete my end-to-end, I joined five of the section hikes. During the relay I met a group of volunteer hike leaders who were clearly invested in and devoted to the trail. Former GMC President Jean Haigh led my last leg to Journey's End. Jean, then-Executive Director Ben Rose, and then-Director of Trail Programs Dave Hardy made such positive impressions on me that I just had to become a GMC volunteer. I started as a board member, then went on to serve as secretary and vice president, as a member of the executive committee, and for the past three years as chair of the trail management committee.

As chair of the trail management committee I was fortunate to see first hand much of the extensive planning needed to maintain our trails. Visiting sites to evaluate maintenance projects has been a valuable education. More importantly, I had a front-row seat to the late Dave Hardy's brilliance, savvy, hard work, and most indelible trait—his indomitable desire to ensure that the Long Trail System would be a foremost hiking experience for future generations. I look forward to doing my part to build on Dave's invaluable contributions.

At GMC's 108th Annual Meeting in June, John Page concluded his three-year term as president by passing the gavel to me. One of many significant accomplishments during his term that will guide me and GMC for the next five years is the newly adopted strategic plan. It will be a continuous topic of discussion and focus during my presidency,



and I look forward to working with staff, officers, board members, committees, and other volunteers to reach our goals.

For 108 years the Green Mountain Club's purpose has been to develop and maintain a hiking trail system in the Vermont mountains. The club works hard to ensure your hiking experience is memorable and enjoyable. But we need your support. If you are a member who has yet to participate on a section outing or volunteer to help on a trail workday, I encourage you, as I did, to make it a goal this season to get involved. Along with the staff and volunteer leadership, I will be available to answer questions and listen to recommendations.

Autumn is the perfect time of year to grab your backpack and head for the hills. Share time on the trail with a friend—they will certainly want to repeat the experience, and may be inclined to join the thousands of GMC members and volunteers already supporting our trails today.

—TOM CANDON, PRESIDENT



Wheeler Pond in the Northeast Kingdom



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Mountain Views

Three Magical Weeks on the Trail

We received the [end-to-ender] certificates last week and are absolutely thrilled! My daughter Amanda is going to sew her patches on her pack right away. And both certificates will get framed and hung on the wall soon. Heck, I wouldn't be surprised if Amanda brings hers to hang in her dorm room when she goes away to college in a couple of years. She is that proud of her accomplishment. And she should be—it's a tough hike!

Thank you so much for making this happen. We fondly remember our hike every day. And your stunning magazine never fails to bring smiles to our faces as we fondly remember all of the wonderful things that happened during those three magical weeks last summer.

—BRUCE YOUNG

Thundering Falls Boardwalk

Thank you so much for all your hard work on this amazing section of trail! My cousin was in a near fatal car accident over two years ago, and has been relearning everything. Before the accident, she would spend a month here with me over the course of a year, hiking and skiing and enjoying Vermont. This past week was her first time back since the accident and I was so excited to keep doing the things we love to do together—the ADA [wheelchair accessible] boardwalk section of the Appalachian Trail from River Road to Thundering Falls was just perfect. Her mechanical wheelchair fit perfectly, there were pull-offs so people could pass us, and she felt like she was in the middle of the woods and got to see a stunning waterfall. It was an amazing experience for her, me, and her mother.

Once again, so much gratefulness for all the hard work that you do.

—MERISA SHERMAN, KILLINGTON



MUT running

PHOTO BY GREG MAINO

I Married the Man, and the Pond

The enclosed check is to be used for present and future expenses at Stratton Pond. In 1971 when I married Robert Humes I also seemed to marry Stratton Pond, being from then on for many years part of Worcester Section annual work parties. Bob, as past president of the main GMC and also of the Worcester Section, kept me active in one way or another in GMC until his death in 1991. I hope this donation can help both with caretaker costs and especially with your proposed rerouting and new shelter and campsite plans.

—MRS. ANNE HUMES, KENNETT SQUARE, PA

Healthy Ridgeline

We wanted to send you a hearty thank you for hosting our group last Friday. It was exciting to see the Mansfield ridge looking so healthy. GMC's stewards do exemplary work with admirable dedication, all most evident to us as we enjoyed our walk from the Forehead to the Chin.

Speaking for the [Waterman] Fund, it was most rewarding for us to see how our support benefits that incomparable alpine ridgeline.

Again, thanks for giving us such a wonderful day! All the best, and carry on...

—LAURA WATERMAN

MUT Running Attracting Young People to Mountains

I wanted to acknowledge the significance of Rob Rives' article on trail running in the last *Long Trail News* issue and offer my support. (Disclaimer: I worked with Rob as a member of GMC field staff last summer, and he convinced me on my first day to continue the tradition and try the Mansfield-Camel's Hump challenge. It was awesome.)

Rob's perspective on MUT [Mountain/Ultra/Trail] running and use of the LT comes at a time of transition for the GMC. I'm talking about the issue plaguing many of Vermont's and our country's oldest groups and organizations: median age. How does the GMC facilitate making the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the lives of the *young* people? I think Rob may have a clue.

The MUT community is young, energetic (enough to run 100 miles, in fact), and has a very strong sense of family. I don't quite know how I feel about holding an Ultra run on the Long Trail just yet, but welcoming this community into ours is an essential move in the right direction for our organization. Run, walk, skip, or hop, the Long Trail is for everyone, and the black flies bite 'em all.

—JORDAN ROWELL

Donating from your Retirement Account: How to Increase your Impact

Many Green Mountain Club members choose to give to the club in addition to dues, and I am often asked the best way to do so. My answer: support the club in a way that is meaningful to you and your family, and that works for you.

Financial needs and situations are fluid, so it is important to review your options each year. One simple, often overlooked, yet frequently advantageous way of giving is through your retirement account. Folks tell me that when they started saving for retirement years ago they never dreamed they would be able to give back so much to organizations that embody their values, like the Green Mountain Club.

Donating through your retirement account may increase the amount you can give GMC, which will increase your impact on the trails and the people like you who cherish them.

Once you turn 70½ you must start taking required minimum distributions

from a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or incur substantial financial penalties. Normally these distributions count as taxable income to you, but also beginning at age 70½, you can make gifts directly from your IRA to any public charity. Known as charitable rollovers, these count as part of your required minimum distribution but are not considered taxable income to you. That's a big benefit, particularly if you don't itemize deductions on your individual tax returns. You can also set up monthly distributions from your retirement account.

If you are age 70½ or older, please consider donating directly to the Green Mountain Club from your retirement account.

If you have questions, call me at (802) 241-8322, or email adicocco@greenmountainclub.org.

If you have questions about other ways to give, such as planned giving or charitable



Alicia DiCocco

gift annuities, I would be happy to answer them too. But I always recommend discussing any change in donations with your financial advisor as well.

—ALICIA DICOCO
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Frost Trail: A Favorite Footpath up Mansfield

In my quest to complete all 88 side trails managed by the Green Mountain Club, I look forward to discovering places I've never seen, and sometimes finding a new favorite route up a mountain I've hiked many times before.

With each hike I am surprised and delighted by the distinctive features and qualities of a trail, even when it originates at the same point as other side trails.

The Stevensville parking lot on Mansfield's west side near Underhill is the origin of three such trails. The Nebraska Notch Trail, Butler Lodge Trail, and Frost Trail each climb to different elevations along the approach to Mansfield and its ridge. The Nebraska Notch Trail rises gently south of the Forehead to the Long Trail. The Butler Lodge Trail climbs more steeply east, directly up to the lodge. The Frost Trail winds its way north, changing character steadily and dramatically from bottom to top before breaking out of the woods and reaching the Maple Ridge Trail.

After hiking the Frost and Maple Ridge trails for the first time last fall, I have approached Mansfield's summit from every

possible trailhead. The Frost Trail route to Maple Ridge has become my preferred path up Vermont's highest peak.

I originally assumed that the Frost Trail was named for Robert Frost, the well-known poet, Vermont resident, and a Long Trail hiker himself. I learned, however, from Robert Hagerman's book *Mansfield, the Story of Vermont's Loftiest Mountain*, that the trail's namesake is Harold P. Frost. Frost built a compass device and mounted it on the porch of the Mount Mansfield Summit House, enabling him to identify mountains visible from the Mansfield ridgeline. According to Hagerman, "By 1953, when Frost described his hobby of some seven years for the Green Mountain Club's *Long Trail News*, he had charted 60 different mountains by name and angle."

Starting in the woods, the Frost Trail begins with a moderate ascent, the footpath covered this time of year with a blanket of soft and colorful leaves and the distinctive aroma of autumn. It gradually becomes steeper and winds its way by sections of mossy carpet, sheer rock walls, and trees that change from mixed hardwoods to

shimmering and stunted birch and ever-shrinking spruce and balsam.

After almost a mile the trail emerges from conifer-scented woods onto the first of several large rock outcroppings that offer expansive views of the Champlain Valley and the western slopes of the Green Mountains. An increasingly exposed scramble climbs further until it reaches the Maple Ridge Trail, where stone cairns guide the way.

You can continue on the Maple Ridge Trail for another mile or so to the Long Trail at the Forehead, at which point you have the option of turning left (north) to the Nose and Chin, or right (south) towards Wallace Cutoff and Butler Lodge.

You might feel compelled to turn from the Maple Ridge Trail before you reach the Long Trail, however, when you encounter two alluring options. Just under half a mile along the Maple Ridge Trail you reach the intersection with the Rock Garden Trail. Another half mile further is the intersection with the Wampahoofus Trail. These two slightly more technical trails feature abutting vertical rock faces and narrow crevices, and lead south toward Butler Lodge.

I still viscerally recall the excitement I felt as a child when I first hiked Mount Mansfield—my first alpine summit—as the trees became shorter, the air colder, the wind more bracing, the terrain more imposing, and the views more distant than I'd ever seen. Certain trails have a magical quality that make you feel, in just a few miles, like you are traveling to a strange and faraway land.

As I approach my last undiscovered blue-blazed pathway to the Long Trail, I feel somewhat wistful, but I've hiked long enough to know that each time out I will experience something new—a different season, a unique loop—and again feel the sense of wonder I had when I first began to explore the Green Mountains.

—DOUGLAS LLOYD, BURLINGTON

Maps to get you there:

Mt. Mansfield and the Worcester Range
Vermont's Long Trail Map



Doug Lloyd on Frost Trail

PHOTO BY JOCELYN HEBERT

Arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer

Forever Changing Vermont's Forests

I was fresh out of forestry school and working as Maine's Urban and Community Forester in 2002 when the news hit that emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) (EAB) had been discovered in Michigan. Sixteen years later, EAB has devastated ash trees in more than 30 other states, including Vermont.

The metallic emerald-green beetle, measuring a quarter to a half inch long in its adult state, burrows into ash bark, leaving an S-shaped gallery and cutting off the flow of water and nutrients. Healthy ash trees typically die three to five years after the first symptoms of infestation. What we've learned in sixteen years is that most infested ash trees will die. This alarming news has us wondering how the appearance of Vermont's forests will change, what ecological impact the loss of the ash trees will have, and how hikers will be affected.

Vermont is almost 80 percent forested, and ash trees (black, green, and white) comprise about five percent of our forests. Five percent might not seem like much, but that's about 160 million trees. Areas with high concentrations will be hit hard, leaving a more noticeable gap in the forest.

Stands of ash and individual trees can be found along the Long Trail, Appalachian Trail, and Northeast Kingdom trails. One notable area near the Quechee-West Hartford Road on the AT has a high concentration of mature ash.

Unfortunately, once the EAB is established, very little can be done to stop its spread. Chemical treatment of individual trees is possible, but expensive and impractical for a forest. Harvesting of ash trees is also ineffective.

The EAB infestation can cause high concentrations of blowdowns and threaten hiker safety. We can remove hazardous trees near shelters and at trailhead parking areas, but we have never managed hazard trees along the trail. It might be an impossible task, given the potential magnitude of EAB destruction.

For now, the club and its landowner partners will monitor conditions and address infected ash trees where they threaten hikers.

As a licensed forester, I know Vermont's forests are diverse and resilient, and will persevere despite EAB. But as a hiker, the loss of ash in the forests and our communities is difficult to comprehend. While there isn't a happy ending for Vermont's ash, we have learned a lot from neighboring states in the last 16 years, and we can apply this knowledge to slow the spread of EAB and enjoy our ash trees for as long as possible.

—MIKE DeBONIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



PHOTO BY JOCELYN HEBERT

Healthy ash trees near Devil's Gulch.

What can you do to help?

- Learn to identify ash trees.
- Learn to identify EAB.
- If you think you have found EAB, visit vtinvasives.org for more information on EAB and to report your sighting.
- Don't move firewood. EAB typically spreads only one to two miles a year naturally, but it can move sixty miles an hour when transported as firewood.



Affected Ash Tree



Emerald Ash Borer

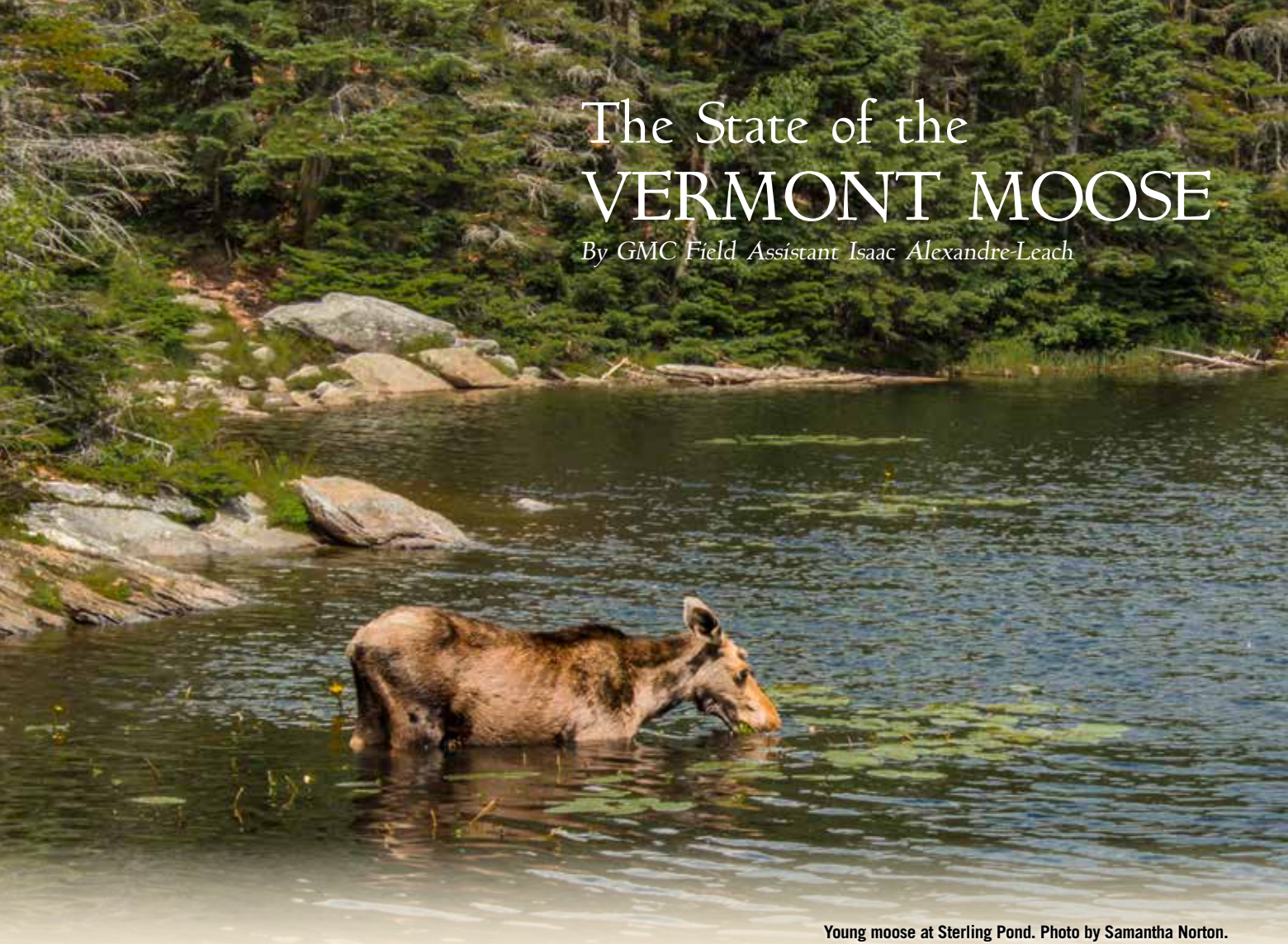
Photo Credits:

Left: Emerald Ash Borer, Leah Bauer, USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station, Bugwood.org

Right: Emerald Ash Borer, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org

The State of the VERMONT MOOSE

By GMC Field Assistant Isaac Alexandre-Leach



Young moose at Sterling Pond. Photo by Samantha Norton.

Whether you grew up in Vermont or are here for the first time, seeing wildlife on our hiking trails is a treat. There is a special pleasure, though, in spotting one of our most famous and elusive inhabitants: the moose.

Sighting a moose is, to me, a rather stunning, reverential affair. They are elusive—almost mythical—and then suddenly so large and real that it takes a moment to adjust to their presence.

Moose are already a rare sight to Long Trail hikers. Their population is relatively small, they avoid people when they can, and they blend into the trees amazingly well. The moose population in the Green Mountains is now threatened, further reducing a hiker's chances of seeing one.

Many people took notice this spring when Vermont announced it would issue only 14 permits to hunt moose, limited to bulls (male moose), and only in the

far northeastern corner of the state. This steep reduction in permits, down from 80 last year and 141 in 2016, is part of an effort by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to establish a healthy population across the state while allowing

**“To relieve irritation
moose may rub their fur
off against trees, exposing
the weakened animal to
lethal cold.”**

sustainable moose hunting, which many value as an important part of Vermont culture, and a source of food.

Recently, moose in Vermont have been challenged by two threats: brainworm and winter ticks. Brainworm, which is carried

by white-tailed deer without harming them, often affects the central nervous system of moose, leading to behavioral distortions that may kill the moose directly or require killing it for human safety. Brainworm cases, tied to the density of deer populations, are most prevalent in southern Vermont.

Particularly shudder-inducing for parasite-conscious hikers are winter ticks, which thrive in warmer and less-snowy winters. Later snowfall means more time for ticks to find moose hosts. When spring comes early, sated ticks dropping from a moose land on hospitable forest duff rather than snow, permitting them to reproduce rather than die. Tens of thousands can cover a moose, feeding on its blood. To relieve irritation, moose may rub their fur off against trees, exposing the weakened animal to lethal cold.

Given all of this, how can moose hunting be justified? Research has

indicated that if the density of moose populations is reduced, the population of ticks may decline enough so more moose will ultimately survive the winter. In areas with viable moose habitat, the state hopes to establish population densities between 0.25 and 1.00 moose per square mile. Densities are currently in that range only in and near Essex County, where some hunting can continue. While fourteen moose is not many, they can provide about twelve thousand meals of meat, according to the Fish and Wildlife Department.

Also, while seeing moose is exciting, there can be too much of a good thing, especially in moose-heavy habitats like the Northeast Kingdom. In the early 2000s the moose population in Vermont swelled to more than 5,000 compared to around 1,650 today. An increase in hunting permits was required to limit over-browsing and destruction of other animals' habitats.

What does all this mean for hikers? If you hope to spot a moose, check out the growing trail system in the Northeast Kingdom, managed by the GMC's Northeast Kingdom Section. There are moose along the Long Trail corridor too. The area along the ridge of the Green Mountains is estimated to support 388 moose, almost a quarter of the state's population.

Cedric Alexander, the wildlife biologist leading the Fish and Wildlife Department's moose project, helpfully provided tips for spotting moose. First, although moose often favor low-elevation wetlands that provide nutrient-rich foods, they also tend to avoid human activity. They spend most of their time at middle- and higher-elevations, which helps explain the ample piles of moose droppings on ridgeline trails and provides some opportunities for viewing.

Second, moose are most active at dusk and dawn, and in cooler weather, so time your hikes accordingly. Finally, and most important—if you want to spot a moose (or most wildlife, for that matter)—keep quiet. Hike silently and keep group size small. Don't forget to look around, too. I've certainly walked past a quietly grazing moose without noticing. While wild animals should never be approached, Alexander added that bulls should be given extra room during rutting season, from mid-September to mid-October, when they are most aggressive. The same goes for cows with young calves in May.

A final note on moose conservation, lest you feel frustrated that ticks and hunting permits are beyond your influence. From July 2016 through June 2017, Vermont recorded 20 moose deaths from ticks and brainworm, and 15 from unknown causes. Vehicles killed 48. Wherever moose are active, stay alert on the road!

Moose aren't so different from hikers: They eat constantly, hate crowds, and can smell horrible. As climate change brings warmer and dryer winters, our common battle with ticks may be just beginning. Although recent years have been challenging for moose, this would not be the first time they have suffered a decline. As recently as the 1960s the species was nearly extirpated in Vermont.

The story of moose in Vermont is changing, but not ending. Through some adaptation on both of our parts, we may continue to spot each other on a cool ridgeline many years from now.

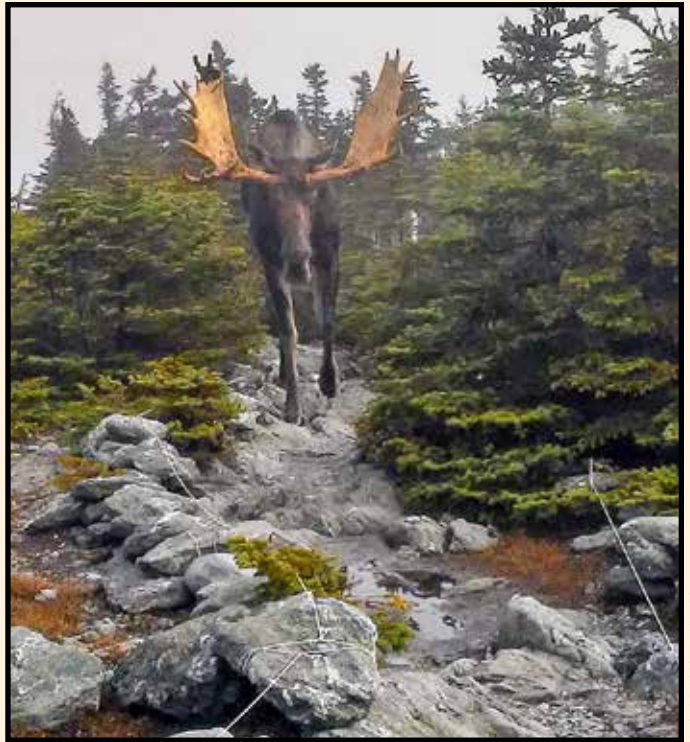


PHOTO BY SCOUT PHILLIPS

Bull moose protecting fragile vegetation by staying within the string while walking south along the Long Trail on the Mount Abraham summit.



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA NORTON

Young moose at Sterling Pond



PHOTO BY ARM TURCOTTE

Moose tracks



The Wonders of AVIAN ARCHITECTURE

By Martha Leb Molnar

Osprey dropping a branch before reaching nest. Photo by Jocelyn Hebert.

Am I as capable as a bird? Can I build a simple nest? Not a pendulous one like a Baltimore oriole's, nor a giant osprey's. Just a little cup, such as many native birds build by the hundreds of thousands in our woods.

I forage for materials, returning with twigs, dried grass, earth, moss, a feather, rotted wood, old leaves, bark, a ragged piece of newspaper, and milkweed pods, and lay everything on the kitchen table.

Trying to imitate birds, who have only their beaks to work with, I try using just two fingers. I decide their beaks must be better designed than any two of my fingers.

Using eight fingers and two opposable thumbs for most of an afternoon, fortified by coffee and chocolate, I manage to weave an embarrassingly small object vaguely resembling a nest. I hang it between two branches, and place two of the smallest eggs I can find in the uneven depression. The thing wobbles dangerously but stays put.

Within three days, following a heavy rain, the nest is gone. I find the mess of construction materials and eggshell shards in the rapidly growing grass.

I can no more build a seemingly simple bird nest than the complex house we live in.

Bird nests, it turns out, are anything but simple. They are intricate, strong, and beautiful. They range from eagles'

nests—as big and heavy as a car—to a hummingbird's—as tiny as a thimble. They require complex engineering and impressive craft, making birds the master builders of the animal world. That it

“Bird nests...require complex engineering and impressive craft, making birds the master builders of the animal world.”

should be birds with their beaks, direct descendants of dinosaurs, rather than, say, bonobos or orangutans, with hands much like mine, is mystifying.

How do birds do it? And how do they know what to do?

Birds do it because they must. The nestling stage is the most vulnerable time in their lives. The variety and creativity of nests results from the arms race between the birds' adaptations to reduce predation, and the evolutionary selection pressure on predators to increase it. An extreme example is swifts, which for safety, nest deep in caves with no materials for nests. So they build nests entirely from strands of

saliva. Vireos decorate the outside of their hanging nests with bits of paper filched from hornets' nests, so they look like hornet nests, serving as a defense.

Birds are incredibly creative not only with construction but in the choice of sites, from grain elevators and steeple tops to mailboxes and discarded shoes. Increasingly, they choose to live with us rather than in the wild. Not just Barn Swallows and Chimney Swifts, but also phoebes, rock doves, corvids, and even falcons, ducks, and geese. All take advantage of food and nesting sites we provide directly or indirectly.

As a result, nest materials are also changing. The Great Crested Flycatcher used to incorporate shed snakeskin, but these days uses plastic wrap. Orioles weave nests from the fibers of the previous year's milkweed stems, but apparently their concept of fiber is flexible: naturalist and author Bernd Heinrich reports in *The Nesting Season* that he found an oriole nest near a boat landing in California made entirely of blue fishing line.

A common nest in our woods, easily glimpsed from the Long Trail or Appalachian Trail, especially after leaf fall, is the classic cup: a robust bowl with an insulating lining, strongly supported and anchored, often with spider silk, well above ground. In this relatively secure environment that also conserves body heat,

chicks take longer to mature than species raised in less sturdy nests. Since longer maturity is linked to greater intelligence, these birds are considered the brainy ones: jays, blackbirds, warblers, crows, finches, sparrows, and hummingbirds.

Cup nest materials include just about everything: roots, stems, twigs, leaves, lichen, flowers, fruit, and mud. The lining may incorporate feathers, down, and wool. The nest is bound together by interlocking its materials.

A naturalist watched a hummingbird build her nest. She chose strands of hemp, placed them crosswise on a branch, then picked up loose ends and flew clockwise around the branch until she created a small cushion. She added more material, forming a cup through a sequence of body, head, wing, and bill movements. She shaped the inside by turning, twisting, and pressing her breast against the bottom and sides. Finally, she covered the outer wall with gray lichen for camouflage. Hummingbirds routinely use spider silk, a brilliant choice because it's stronger than steel and stretches up to 40 percent of its length without breaking, ideal for binding a nest that must expand as chicks grow.

The amount of work is astounding. Tits collect some 3,000 lichen flakes, 600 silk spider egg cocoons, 300 sprigs of moss, and 1,500 feathers to build a five-inch cup nest, with a pair working together for four weeks.

Most elaborate of local nests is that of the Baltimore Oriole, our weaver bird,

whose nest you might glimpse hung high in trees. It is woven, knotted and stitched from grass using some 10,000 stitches, similar to the construction of baskets. Building these resilient yet light creations takes both engineering and gymnastics.

"The variety and creativity of nests results from the arms race between the birds' adaptations to reduce predation, and the evolutionary selection pressure on predators to increase it."

How do birds know how to build these mind-boggling structures? Are they hardwired to build nests, or does it require learning? If I were a Baltimore Oriole, would I instinctively know how to weave a perfect hanging nest?

Nobody really knows. Studies reveal "a clear role for experience," especially among builders of the most elaborate nests. Experienced builders drop fewer blades of grass. Also, techniques vary from bird to bird, and even in the same bird from one nest to the next. A bird may build from left to right once, and from right to left

another time. A genetic template would direct the same sequence each time.

Many nests are camouflaged. Lichen on a titmouse nest in a lichen-covered tree works well, as does a robin's messy nest of trailing grass and loose leaves, which look like debris. But birds don't change the camouflage materials when nesting on our buildings, even though a lichen-covered nest is highly visible against paint. What does that say about their ability to learn and adapt?

On the other hand, many birds incorporate aromatic plants in their nests to deter parasites and mosquitoes, and they use what they find around them. They also adapt the structural materials available. Around here ravens use knobby twigs broken from poplars for platforms, but in Alaska where there are no trees, ravens used steel welding rods pilfered from a construction site. Adaptation, clearly, but is it adaptation through the process of evolution, or through individual learning?

We don't know. And so we're left with a mystery leavened with admiration, spiced with a bit of envy. Which makes the nests we find all the more fascinating.

Martha Leb Molnar, formerly a journalist, is an author, VPR commentator, and public relations professional. She's a foul weather writer only, since good weather in any season finds her outdoors gardening, biking, swimming or skiing.



Cup nest with twine and a strand of tinse!

PHOTO BY KRISTIN MCILANE



Hummingbird nest

PHOTO BY DONALD OWEN, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION, BUGWOOD.ORG

Rainy Day Trail Friends

Red-spotted Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) eggs hatch in water. The aquatic larvae eventually climb onto land, and spend several years in the juvenile 'eft' stage. Efts are orange and can be seen on the footpath in many areas along the Long Trail, especially on cooler, rainy days. Efts return to water as adults, changing to an olive-green color. Their tails becomes flat again to support an aquatic lifestyle. Look for adult newts in the shallow water along shorelines of backcountry ponds and lakes like Stratton Pond, Little Rock Pond, and Griffith Lake.





Kingdom Heritage Lands Trail System

Final Steps of the Bluff Mountain Ridge Trail

By Jean Haigh



After eighteen years of planning and hard work, completion of the Bluff Mountain Ridge Trail is in sight, and the Northeast Kingdom Section is elated.

In one of the biggest land deals involving multiple partners in this country's history, Champion International Paper Company sold nearly 300,000 acres of land to conservationists in Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York in 1998. Approximately 132,000 of those acres were in rural Essex County in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. The complex land deal led to the eventual conservation of its properties, the birth of a new Green Mountain Club

section, and a new hiking trail system in the Kingdom.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Essex Timber Company, The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Housing Conservation Board, and Vermont Land Trust cooperated to purchase the sizable tract and divide it into three parcels: the 22,000-acre West Mountain Wildlife Management Area; the 26,000-acre Silvio O. Conte Wildlife Refuge; and an 84,000-acre working forest operated by Essex Timber Company, with recreational easements that created a wonderful opportunity to expand hiking in northeastern Vermont.

The long-range management plan for the conserved lands stipulated that all "corridor-based" recreational uses, like hiking, bicycling, snowmobiling, and horseback riding, must have designated corridor managers. In 2000, enthusiastic local Northeast Kingdom hikers formed GMC's 14th and newest section, the Northeast Kingdom Section (NEK Section). The following year, expanding upon its 90-year history managing the Long Trail System, the Green Mountain Club expressed its interest to the ANR in becoming the official corridor manager for hiking trails.

Since then, NEK Section members have crawled over and under downed

trees, pushed aside dense hobble bush, slogged through bogs, and fallen in brooks as they searched for and flagged trail options. They bushwhacked mountains big and small from the Canadian border to Island Pond until they found the best footpath routes. Dave Hardy, GMC's late director of trail programs, joined many scouting hikes in his classic style, often clambering contentedly over rocks and through swamps in Birkenstocks.

We settled on a 15-mile trail passing over Gore Mountain, Middle Mountain, and the Bluff Mountain ridge range, with a 2.5-mile side trail that would eventually lead to Unknown Pond. In 2004 we submitted a draft management plan with the proposed routes to the ANR, which approved it early in 2009.

GMC contracted with the NorthWoods Stewardship Center (NWSC) in East Charleston to begin trail building in 2011. Their backcountry crew of young men and women, with NEK Section volunteers, put loppers, hazel hoes, and rakes to the ground. It was a long anticipated and exciting time for the club's youngest section.

As grant money became available from the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation (FPR), progress continued, one step at a time. While we waited for funding, we put in time



As long time NEK Section member and volunteer Susan Winsor said: "Thank you, trail dreamers, trail builders, and trail supporters." For me, completion of this trail will be a dream come true.

MAP BY MOLLIE FLAUNGAN



TRANSCENDING TREELINE

Rebuilding Bromley Mountain Observation Tower

By Jocelyn Hebert

On a stifling July day, GMC Manchester Section President Marge Fish and I enjoyed a welcome oasis at the Inn at Long Trail in Killington. As we sipped our iced tea, Marge told me about the section's fundraising efforts to replace an observation tower that once stood on the summit of Bromley Mountain in Peru.

Accessible on the Long Trail, the wooden tower rose 40 feet above the 3,281-foot summit and drew thousands of hikers over its 50-year life before it was deemed structurally unsound and torn down in 2012. Removal of the tower changed the hiking experience. It created a sense of loss in the hiking community and roused the Manchester Section to action. Today, Marge and fellow fundraising committee members Phyllis Lewis and Katie Brooks are leading the campaign to finance a new tower.

Fred Pabst Jr., founder of Bromley Resort, built the observation tower in the early 1960s to give summer tourists a reason to ride a new double chairlift to the summit. But the 1970s hiking boom brought tourists who bypassed the lift and used the Long Trail to reach the

summit. The tower became a destination for them as well.

A 50-year resident of southern Vermont and longtime GMC volunteer and trail ambassador, Marge was

"It gives one a sense of freedom and power. It inspires a sense of wonder and awe in the vastness of our world."

saddened by the fate of the tower. She and her family first climbed Bromley, and the tower, in 1973. They repeated the hike two or three times a year, creating a treasured family tradition.

Before the tower was built, and since its removal, the summit provided partial views of the surrounding area, but they were interrupted by trees, the chairlift headworks, a ski patrol hut, and other resort equipment. The tower's 40 feet put hikers above all that where the views were spectacular.

School groups and scout troops

from nearby towns once scrambled to the platform for the admired multi-state views, and as kids do, for the fun of it. But what else did these children experience? What do most of us experience when we transcend the densely forested Vermont landscape?

Phyllis, a retired Manchester Elementary Middle School teacher of 28 years, took her classes up the mountain to identify trees, and up the tower to name mountaintops as far as they could see, instilling a sense of science and geography that maps and books alone could not. Phyllis recalled how climbing above the treetops affected her students. "It touches your spirit," she said. "It gives one a sense of freedom and power. It inspires a sense of wonder and awe in the vastness of our world. Our senses move far deeper than the intellectual knowledge of our surroundings."

Observation towers occupy a special place in the hearts of mountain ramblers of all ages. Katie used to join locals on the platform to watch Fourth of July fireworks in several towns at once. Long Trail and Appalachian Trail thru-hikers savored sunsets and sunrises and searched

the night sky for meteors. And everyone enjoyed the spectacle of fall foliage lending color to hundreds of square miles.

"The last time I was on the tower it was fall," Phyllis recalled. "The mountain ash was in full bloom, and the tree canopy was a brilliant red. I have not seen a display like that since the tower was removed; but I hope to see it again, and to share that vision with others."

Volunteers in Action

After the Bromley tower was demolished, Marge and other Manchester Section members brought the question of replacing it to the GMC Trail Management Committee. It took time to negotiate with the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation (the landowner) and Bromley Mountain Resort (the leaseholder), but with patience and persistence the Manchester Section was finally ready to raise money and now has less than \$100,000 to go toward their goal of \$262,000. The fundraising campaign has created a new awareness and appreciation of the Green Mountain Club in and around Manchester.

The project plan for construction of a new tower 20 feet north of the original location includes permitting, a design with engineering plans, and endowment of long-term maintenance. The 40-foot steel tower and viewing platform will resemble the old one, with a projected lifespan of 100 years and stair treads designed for year-round use.

For more than a century, passionate trail volunteers like Marge, Phyllis, and Katie have provided the spark and support behind significant trail projects like this one.

You can help rebuild the Bromley Mountain Observation Tower by donating online: greenmountainclub.org/bromley. Or by mailing a check with "Bromley Tower Account" written on the memo line to: Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677.

The Bromley Mountain Observation Tower fundraising committee hopes to reach its goal by the end of 2018.



Original Bromley Tower



Marge Fish on Observation Tower



Katie Brooks adjusting goal status



Elimination of Pit Privies in the Backcountry

As more and more hikers venture into the backcountry the need for sustainable backcountry sanitation is pressing.

Seventy-three privies are managed and maintained by Green Mountain Club caretakers, staff, and volunteers on the Long Trail System and the Vermont Appalachian Trail. Of those, 17 are traditional pit privies. Pits served their purpose once upon a time, but they can't keep up anymore. And we can't keep up with them.

In many locations it's impossible to find new places to dig pits, so GMC plans to convert the remaining pits to moldering privies, a more environmentally friendly sanitation system.


The graphic to the right explains the basic differences between the two systems. The moldering privy is better, but conversion of 17 privies is not simple or inexpensive.

The typical cost of conversion to a moldering privy is between \$5,000 and \$10,000, depending on location. In the Green Mountain National Forest and on the Appalachian Trail (a unit of the National Park System) the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires structures to be accessible. Power tools are prohibited in federal wilderness areas, and remote locations might require airlifting or carrying materials long distances into the forest, sometimes over rugged terrain.

Although the conversion of all remaining pit privies to moldering is a big job, the initial cost will eventually be recovered because digging new pits and moving privies will no longer be needed. Add the environmental and sanitary benefits from improved waste management in the backcountry, and the effort will be priceless.

To learn more about the Green Mountain Club's backcountry waste management program or to support our effort to eliminate pit privies from the backcountry, please visit our website at greenmountainclub.org/privyproject.

The Case FOR Sustainable Waste ON THE Long Trail



The pit privy was once the standard waste repository system in the backcountry. With recent increases in trail and shelter use, the need for a more ecologically sustainable waste management system is urgent.

PIT PRIVIES

PIT PRIVIES have an anaerobic chamber that is approximately 14 cubic feet in size and can contain 80 GALLONS OF RAW SEWAGE. This waste has the potential to leach into the ground, pollute the watershed, and spread pathogens to hikers and wildlife alike.



MOLDERING PRIVIES


MOLDERING PRIVIES utilize a double crib system which SLOWLY AND COOLLY COMPOSTS waste over time. Caretakers move the privy seat back and forth over an active and resting crib as they fill and decompose, typically over the course of 3-5 YEARS.

Pit privies have to be moved frequently. The task requires at least 4 PEOPLE FOR A FULL DAY OF LABOR, which is a strain on STAFF AND VOLUNTEER RESOURCES.



Moldering privies require little maintenance to function efficiently. They produce a HARMLESS MIXTURE OF COMPOST and wood shavings that can be removed from the campsite and scattered on the ground or given a shallow burial.

Moldering privies are a safer and more environmentally conscious solution. CONVERTING THE LONG TRAIL'S PIT PRIVIES TO MOLDERING PRIVIES will reduce the risk of watershed and wildlife contamination, improve the hiking experience for trail users, and help leverage the work of our trail maintainers.



To help our work, please visit greenmountainclub.org/donate



New ADA accessible moldering privy at Clarendon Shelter

GMC Managed Privies on Long Trail and Appalachian Trail



Long Trail Patrol

This summer the Long Trail Patrol was led by newcomer Ryan Baxter, who joined us after working many seasons with the Adirondack Mountain Club. The patrol is in the midst of 17 weeks of maintenance along the Long Trail and Appalachian Trail.

In the greater Mount Mansfield area, the crew stabilized an eroded section of the **Frost Trail**, completed a section of new puncheon on the **Hell Brook Trail**, and finished installing waterbars and stone steps, and hardening tread on the **Sterling Pond Trail**. More waterbars were added to the **Bucklin Trail** on Killington Peak while routine maintenance on others was done. The crew also rehabilitated the **Long Trail** along Stark Mountain and stabilized tread and improved drainage on the **Monroe Trail** on Camel's Hump at three sites.

A club-wide effort was made to clear approximately 100 blowdowns in the **Breadloaf Wilderness**. GMC staff, Burlington and Bread Loaf section members, and U.S. Forest Service staff rallied to cut and remove trees obstructing trails in the wilderness throughout the summer.

This fall the crew will complete deferred tread maintenance in the **Breadloaf Wilderness** and work on open areas along the **Vermont Appalachian Trail**, maintaining views, controlling invasive species, and dispersing brush piles from past work.

Volunteer Long Trail Patrol

The Volunteer Long Trail Patrol was headed this year by Rosalie Sharp, crew leader, and Alivia Acosta, crew coordinator. They worked with volunteers to harden the saturated **Branch Pond Trail**. In the final two weeks of their summer season they guided volunteers in the first phase of trail hardening on the **Long Trail** from Dunville Hollow to Consultation Peak. This work will continue into the 2019 field season, which will include a push to begin the reroute and site improvement planned around **Stratton Pond**.

Construction Crew

The Construction Crew was led this summer by Kurt Melin, in his tenth season with the GMC. Kurt and the crew started the season with minor maintenance projects on **Bryant Camp** and its privy and woodshed. They also coordinated a volunteer work group to improve drainage around the camp foundation. The crew then moved downhill to **Bolton Lodge** to put final touches on the woodshed and complete small interior projects.

Eight years after **Tucker Johnson Shelter** was lost to fire, a long-planned replacement is in progress. This summer the crew set concrete foundation piers and built a new accessible moldering privy on site. Shelter construction will be led by Manchester Section volunteer Jonathan Bigelow, who will work with a group of volunteers this fall to have it ready for the 2019 hiking season.

After deconstructing and removing debris from the pit privy at **Clarendon Shelter**, the crew built a new accessible moldering privy. And, thanks to a generous donor, the floor of **Cowles Cove Shelter** was replaced and a new tent platform was constructed.

Caretakers

Despite uncertain funding at the beginning of the year, the caretaker program operated a successful summer season that continues into the fall. Caretakers were stationed at

the traditional high use sites, including **Stratton Mountain**, **Stratton Pond**, **Little Rock Pond**, **Griffith Lake**, the **Coolidge Range**, and **Sterling Pond**. Caretakers also conducted the usual monitoring and education programs in the alpine zones on **Mount Mansfield**, **Camel's Hump**, and **Mount Abraham** and at their associated shelters. Stabilizing and diversifying funding for the caretaker program remains a priority as we plan future seasons.

—KEEGAN TIERNEY
DIRECTOR OF FIELD PROGRAMS



Long Trail Patrol crew members (l-r) Alissa Hevesh, Clara Kuhn, and Isaac Bernstein



VLT crew leader Rosalie Sharp teaching volunteer to use a crosscut saw



2018 Summer Field Staff: Back Row L-R: Group Outreach and Field Coordinator Lorne Currier, Bella Kline, Michael Dillon, John Plummer, Ryan Baxter, Bryan Stolzenburg, Isaac Bernstein, Jack Burnham, Rosalie Sharp, Abby Orosz, AnnaLisa Mayer.
Middle Row L-R: Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney, Marla Davidson, Alivia Acosta, Nikki Robitaille, Elsa Chinburg, Silas Monahan, Maggie Doubman, Kerry Miller, McVitty LaPointe, Stevie Raymond, Field Assistant Isaac Alexandre-Leach.
Front Row L-R: Kurt Melin, Field Supervisor Ilana Copel, Hugh and Jeanne Joudry, Gable Krebsbach, Hannah Corbin, Dillon McQuade, Alissa Hevesh, Clara Kuhn.
Not pictured: Julie Higgins and Ashley Wood.

Impressive GMC Caretaker

Our Little Rock Pond caretaker helped George Becht after he took a bad fall on the trail. Below is an excerpt from a thank you note he sent to GMC.

Gable immediately began to evaluate my situation and administered first aid. He did a neurologic evaluation and determined I was okay. Later he came to me and repeated the neurologic evaluation. The next morning Gable checked me again.

I decided to change my plans and hike out via Homer Stone Brook Trail. Gable was hiking out on that trail for his days off, and offered me a ride. We were picked up on Route 7 by the ridgeunner from the Killington area. I went to the Express Care in Bennington. When I described the first aid care Gable administered, the doctor said Gable did everything correctly—thank you Gable.

Gable hosted 45 hikers at Little Rock Pond shelter and tenting site that evening. I watched as he cheerfully accommodated the hikers as they continued to arrive during the evening. I was totally impressed with Gable. He is professional, compassionate, caring and it is apparent he loves being a GMC caretaker. Gable brings great honor to himself, his family, fellow caretakers, and the Green Mountain Club.

—GEORGE BECHT, SARASOTA, FL

Compliments to Field Staff

My compliments to Ilana for hiring such a nice group of folks. The trail crew members were working incredibly hard [on Sterling Pond Trail] when I came across them both going up and hiking down, plus they were very pleasant and explained to me just what they were doing. The new caretaker staff were all gung-ho and very friendly.

—SHERI LARSEN, GMC VICE PRESIDENT

Shout Out to Ashley

A shout out to GMC caretaker Ashley. We saw her at Cowles Cove Shelter, then Montclair Glen, and then on the summit of Camel's Hump. She was informative, funny, and helpful. We enjoyed her laugh and her engagement with the trail!

We were doing just a section hike from Appalachian Gap to Smugglers' Notch. It was lovely! Going up the Forehead was a bit intense. What a beautiful trail. We are thankful.

—ROSS COLEMAN

Thank you, Jack Burnham

I want to sincerely thank Jack and let you all know what a huge help he was as well as a calm presence following my fall at the summit of Camel's Hump. He was the first to assist our group with first aid and I believe guidance about obtaining help from Backcountry

Rescue. He, along with a Backcountry Rescue member Jake who happened to be hiking in the area, helped me physically start the descent at the direction of Backcountry Rescue rather than to have to wait until the whole team could get to the clearing. Jack and Jake were so calm and competent and worked well together to help me.

With great appreciation,

—DIANE BLAIS

Awesome Trail Magic Alert!

A hiker who stayed at Butler and Taft lodges recently had such a good experience she sent packages to Butler Lodge caretaker Hannah Corbin and Taft Lodge caretaker Dillon McQuade. This photo is of them being very thankful for the thank you.

—ILANA COPEL, GMC FIELD SUPERVISOR



Dillon McQuade and Hannah Corbin



KEEGAN TIERNEY

New Director of Field Programs

The Green Mountain Club welcomed Keegan Tierney as director of field programs in June. Executive Director Mike DeBonis recently sat down with Keegan to get his thoughts after his first month on the job.

MIKE: Can you recall your first memory of hiking on the Long Trail while growing up in Vermont?

KEEGAN: I grew up in Lincoln and Starksboro, so Mount Abraham was a fixture in my daily life. The first vivid memory I have of hiking on the Long Trail was going up Mount Abe and being confused about why there was a building [Battell Shelter] so far up the trail, and wondering who lived there. I was pretty young...

MIKE: You've spent many years working on conservation and trail projects in Vermont, with 11 years at Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. What motivated you to make the change and take on the director of field programs job?

KEEGAN: The idea of working in the trail community has been a goal for me since my first taste of trail building in college. I have always kept my eye on the club as one potential avenue for that. Having the opportunity to work in this role was unexpected, but when it presented itself there was no way I could not throw my hat in the ring.

MIKE: After a month on the job, has anything surprised you about the club or your role?



Keegan Tierney (center, in green shirt) on Bluff Mountain Trail partner site visit

KEEGAN: I had spent a fair amount of time over the years working in parallel with Dave Hardy through my role at the Conservation Corps, so I developed a fair grasp of his roles and responsibilities. The one thing I didn't have a great handle on was the dedication, the commitment, and the size of the volunteer effort that helps make managing this network of trails possible. It's reassuring to know that group is there, but I wish there was more time in the day to meet all those folks as quickly as I would like to.

MIKE: What do you see as the biggest challenge facing the Long Trail?

KEEGAN: This is a question I think about a lot, and I think the answer that I would give wearing all the hats I wear in life—as a town selectperson, as a small community non-profit board member, or here at the club—would be the same: getting the next generation engaged is the most important thing we can do. As long as there is a group of folks passionate about the trail I don't believe there is any other challenge that can't be overcome.

MIKE: So, how will the club meet this challenge?

KEEGAN: If the club maintains itself as an open and welcoming group, the trail will do the job of getting people engaged and keeping them passionate. Trying new things can be intimidating, and the outdoors is less and less familiar as our population becomes increasingly urban. I think if the club embraces people at their comfort level and brings them into the fold, we will keep the organization strong, which means the trail will thrive.

MIKE: From trail maintenance to building restoration, privy construction to backcountry stewardship, you have a lot on your list this summer. What projects are you most excited about?

KEEGAN: *All of them.* In all seriousness though, I have already been out to look at a potential land protection acquisition which would require a reroute of the Long Trail. The idea of helping to protect the last few miles of trail is very exciting. I'm also just eager to get out there and work with and get to know the people who maintain the trail.

MIKE: Well, you can't work all the time. When you're not on the trails, what occupies your time?

KEEGAN: My other passion in life is building things. My wife has the design sense to make sure I build beautiful things. Right now we are working together to resurrect an 1840 English barn on our property that we disassembled in 2014.

Great Women's Backpacking Weekend

BONUS: SEVEN MILES OF SOLITUDE

Baby steps. That's how I've learned to accomplish goals in life. My latest success was gaining the confidence to hike seven miles of the Long Trail solo to my front door following a GMC women's backpacking weekend this summer.

It wasn't my first time joining the club's backpacking workshop. Baby steps... Last summer I took my teenage daughter so we both could experience a backcountry adventure in a safe way. I knew we would be guided by expert GMC leaders in the company of other women, and it seemed like a great way to reconnect with the wilderness.

I spent more time in nature when I was younger. I was a Brownie and a Girl Scout, and I have childhood memories of camping at campgrounds with my family. In college I took mini backpacking excursions on the Long Trail with friends and did some winter camping in the Green Mountains. Now I'm trying to find ways to reconnect with nature while raising three kids, working, and celebrating nineteen years of marriage.

Water filtration. Check. Bear bag. Check. Hand shovel. Check! The GMC's female trip leaders reviewed everything in our packs to make sure we had all we needed before we started our ten-mile trip.

We hiked five miles, ascending Laraway Mountain on the northern section of the Long Trail. Some chatted away while others took in the experience quietly. The Long Trail is pure serenity.

Fresh air, green foliage, and babbling brooks create a meditative state that encompasses you. Yeah, this is what it's all about, tuning out in nature.

The beauty of hiking is that everyone can travel at their own pace. Group hikes have one leader in front and another following behind as a sweeper. You can push your limits on those uphill climbs or go a slower speed toward the back of the group. We moved together but spread out on the trail with periodic check-ins to see how everyone was doing.

We meandered down the other side of Laraway and arrived at Corliss Camp, where we practiced setting up our tents. Then we

made the rounds as a group and learned about each other's shelters—the weight of the tent, the space, the style, what worked, what didn't. Pretty cool to see roughly ten different versions.

After the tent tour we began the evening routine of purifying water, preparing meals, and after-meal cleanup. Our evening entertainment included watching each other attempt to “lasso” bear bags up in the trees to keep animals from eating our breakfast. After a fun-filled day it was lights out.

The next morning I studied the five mile return route on the *Long Trail Map*. I thought to myself, it's not enough, I'm not ready to get off the trail yet.

I had time to review my options as we hiked out to the parking lot. From there, I could hike home on roads, grab a ride with someone, *or* get back on the Long Trail and hike another seven miles to my doorstep.

I began to think through logistics, using the experience gained from the women's backpacking weekend, to decide if I could go on. I had plenty of food. Water—I had plenty

of that too. Rain gear. Check. First aid kit. Check. A can-do attitude. Check!

My third option—getting back on the trail—seemed like a gift, just waiting for me to accept it. I decided to take it and hike home alone. I climbed the steep, I filtered my water, and cooked up some lunch to enjoy on an overlook.

Seven miles of solitude. To put it simply, it was heaven on earth.

As I rounded the final corner on the trail, I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude for what the GMC women's backpacking trip had returned to me: confidence, backed by knowledge, to be comfortable in nature again.

—LYNN LEHOULLIER

Lynn also attended GMC's map and compass workshop and received a wilderness first aid certificate after taking GMC's SOLO Wilderness First Aid course. Her business, Johnson Hardware, Rental, Farm & Garden, is a GMC corporate sponsor.



2018 women's backpacking group at Corliss Camp

Green Mountain Club Outdoor Programs

At GMC we are always looking for ways to help you have fun, be safe, and learn more about the outdoors. Educational workshops are added to our website all year, so be sure to visit greenmountainclub.org periodically to sign up. Workshop full? Ask to be added to the waiting list.

Workshops may include SOLO Wilderness First Aid, Map & Compass, Cold Weather Trekking, Intro to Backpacking, Long Trail End-to-End Panel, Wild Edibles, Birding and more.



108th Annual Meeting Honorees

Paul Kendall, Doug McKain, Sheri Larsen, and Ken Hertz

The Upper Valley-Ottawaquechee Section hosted the 2018 Green Mountain Club Annual Meeting, and organized a great weekend for members with help from other volunteers and from club staff members. The meeting, the club's 108th, took place June 1-3 at the Hulbert Outdoor Center in Fairlee.

In addition to attending the membership and board meetings, attendees could choose from a rich palette of activities and workshops including guided local hikes; development, communications, and trail maintenance workshops; late evening fireside storytelling; yoga, birding, and trail running; and an after dinner presentation by photographer and Arctic adventurer Stephen Gorman.

The essence of annual meeting is bringing together GMC members to socialize but also to honor and praise the work done over the previous year. This includes a celebration of outstanding volunteers. Below are the 108th Annual Meeting honorees:

Honorary Life Membership Award

The Green Mountain Club's highest honor, the Honorary Life Membership Award, was presented this year to Montpelier Section member **Paul Kendall**.



Paul Kendall and his wife Sharon Rives

For several decades Paul has steadily and quietly provided leadership and financial support to many of GMC's major land protection and trail building projects. Paul has also served on the board and on the long range planning, land protection, and land conservation committees.

Securing permanently protected Long Trail passages through the Lamoille and

Winooski River valleys was one of the club's top priorities and biggest challenges in the Long Trail Protection Campaign. It required complex land acquisitions, major fundraising, and rerouting of the Long Trail which would have been difficult without Paul's vision and leadership.

"Paul has a way of breaking down complex issues to their core elements," said Mike DeBonis. "As a new executive director, I sought Paul's advice about how to gain support to finish the Winooski River Long Trail Relocation project. Paul listened carefully, and provided critical feedback and—more importantly—the motivation I needed to get out there and do the work to get the project done."

Paul and his wife, Sharon Rives, have led a life of volunteerism that extends well beyond the GMC. The Braintree Mountain Forest came into being when they donated a 1,547-acre land parcel to the New England Forestry Foundation. Through a collaboration with the Rochester/Randolph Area Sports Trail Alliance, this area is now a wildly popular destination for backcountry skiing. Paul and Sharon also support community improvement and education initiatives abroad. They established a scholarship that helps El Salvadoran high school students attend universities and has enabled dozens of students to gain professional skills greatly needed in their communities.

The Green Mountain Club thanked Paul for his extraordinary support of the Long

Trail System, and was honored to present him with Honorary Life Membership.

President's Awards

Doug McKain

In addition to serving on the GMC's Board for many years, Doug McKain has been a major contributor to the publications committee since 2009, acting as chair for five of those years. Doug helped the club expand its publications program to reach more audiences and to compete in an increasingly important digital market.

Doug edited *50 Hikes in Vermont* and two regional sections of the *Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont*, and has contributed to almost every other GMC print publication.

"Doug's contributions over the years go far beyond specific projects," said Operations and Publications Coordinator Matt Krebs. "I can always count on him to provide thoughtful insight to any question or problem that might come up."

Sheri Larsen

Sheri Larsen has been a stalwart presence on the GMC Board, and in the field as a trail adopter, for many years. These efforts alone merit celebration, but Sheri's professional experience inspired her to



Doug McKain



Sheri Larsen

volunteer in a less traditional way as well.

For three years Sheri monitored activities of the Vermont Legislature using her experience in government relations to identify bills that could affect the club. Her weekly updates to staff and volunteer leaders summarized the most important legislative developments, and identified which bills the club should follow.

The GMC does not employ a professional lobbyist, so engagement at the statehouse is conducted by volunteers and staff members. Sheri's work has helped them direct their efforts most effectively.

"This is invisible, behind-the-scenes work that Sheri volunteered to do without any expectation of recognition, which is exactly why I want to recognize her," said GMC President John Page.

Ken Hertz

Ken Hertz came to GMC headquarters and scanned every page of every edition of the *Long Trail News*, which has been published since the 1920s and is the primary historical record of the club. Few had access to this record, so Ken set out to create a searchable database.

"I spent my first several years as *Long Trail News* Editor sifting through hard copies researching information," said Jocelyn Hebert. "Since Ken scanned every *Long Trail News* page in GMC history, my job has become infinitely easier. He drove to GMC on Fridays for a year, spent an hour scanning each time, then drove home and spent another two to three hours processing the day's results. That's how great our volunteers are."

Ken followed that by scanning every page of all 28 editions of the *Long Trail Guide*. GMC's goal, substantially advanced by Ken's enormous efforts, is to build an archive page on the GMC website housing these and other historical resources for the public to enjoy.

Ken also has helped maintain a digital archive of Montpelier Section history on the section's website.



Ken Hertz

John Page said it best: "We rely on volunteers to do a wide variety of things that our staff just doesn't have the time, or sometimes the expertise, to do." Without 108 years of volunteers like Paul, Doug, Sheri, and Ken, the GMC would pale in comparison to what it has become. Thank you to all of our 2018 honorees and all of their predecessors!



Board Report

The Green Mountain Club Board of Directors met briefly on June 3, following the 108th annual membership meeting hosted by the Upper Valley-Ottawaquechee Section at the Hulbert Outdoor Center in Fairlee.

Outgoing President John Page called the meeting to order. Before passing the gavel to incoming President Tom Candon, John thanked outgoing board members Lee Allen, Marge Fish, Paul Houchens, Doug McKain, and Mike Wetherell for their service.

John welcomed incoming members Bob Fish (representing the Manchester Section), Amy Kelsey (general director), Rich Minogue (Bennington Section), Mike

Peckar (Worcester Section), Bruce Yelton (Bread Loaf Section), George Longenecker (Montpelier Section), and Nancy McClellan (general). He introduced Kenna Rewcastle, a UVM PhD student, as a non-voting board fellow.

Treasurer Steve Klein reviewed the financial statement for fiscal year 2018, which ended April 30. The club finished the year with a surplus of \$3,231, which was transferred to the operating reserve. Unaudited results showed revenues of \$1,504,672, expenditures of \$1,698,717, and net distributions from endowment and restricted funds of \$196,414.

The board approved the nominating

committee's slate of officers for 2018 to 2019: Tom Candon, president (first year); Sheri Larsen, vice president (first year); Steve Klein, treasurer (fifth year); and Ed O'Leary, secretary (first year).

The board approved changes in the signature authority policy to enable the executive director to appoint a staff designee to sign checks in his absence.

Dates set for future board meetings were: September 22, 2018 at GMC headquarters, after the volunteer appreciation picnic; January 5, 2019; March 23, 2019; and June 1, 2019. All GMC members are welcome to attend meetings.

—LEE ALLEN, SECRETARY



Managing in Perpetuity

Did you know that the Green Mountain Club is not only a hiking club and maintainer of the Long Trail, the Vermont Appalachian Trail, and the Northeast Kingdom trails, but also a land trust organization?

In 1986 the club launched the Long Trail Protection Campaign, a bold vision to protect the land the Long Trail traverses, in order to ensure a permanent route for the trail and preserve the landscape that creates the Long Trail experience.

Thirty-two years later, the campaign continues to seek opportunities to protect the footpath and landscape, but the club is also taking a strong look at the true nature of the work we've accomplished.

GMC's Land Conservation Program currently:

- Monitors more than 17,600 acres of land conserved under 64 conservation easements.
- Manages more than 3,400 acres of land in 15 properties we own.
- Holds 19 trail rights-of-way, protecting 6.4 miles of Long Trail System treadway.

- Collaborates in the stewardship of more than 10,000 acres on the LT/AT and AT corridors in Vermont with the Green Mountain National Forest and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, including 19 open areas.

- Manages 305 miles of boundary lines with the help of 65 volunteer corridor monitors.

- Works to protect the approximately 6.5 miles of Long Trail that remain on private property, which we hope to buy someday from willing sellers.

When GMC developed a new five-year strategic plan in 2017, responsible stewardship of the Long Trail System and Appalachian Trail land and easements was identified as a primary goal. GMC intends to employ careful review and, where appropriate, adoption of Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices to meet that goal.

The Land Trust Alliance is a national organization that leads the land trust community by establishing management practices for the industry, distilled in their Standards and Practices guidelines. Land

trusts that adopt all the Standards and Practices can become accredited by the Land Trust Alliance, in a rigorous process that demonstrates that the organization meets the high standards for non-profit management and land conservation.

Over the next five years, GMC plans on reviewing the guidelines and making sure that the Land Conservation Program is managed to those high standards.

The Standards and Practices are comprehensive in scope, covering everything from how an organization is managed to conservation easement and fee land stewardship. Policies include:

- Monitoring conservation easements at least once per year using consistent monitoring protocols and record keeping procedures.
- Developing written land management plans for each conservation property, following through on the implementation of the plan, and updating it as needed.
- Determining contingency strategies for conserved properties in the event that the organization can no longer manage them.





Mollie Flanigan

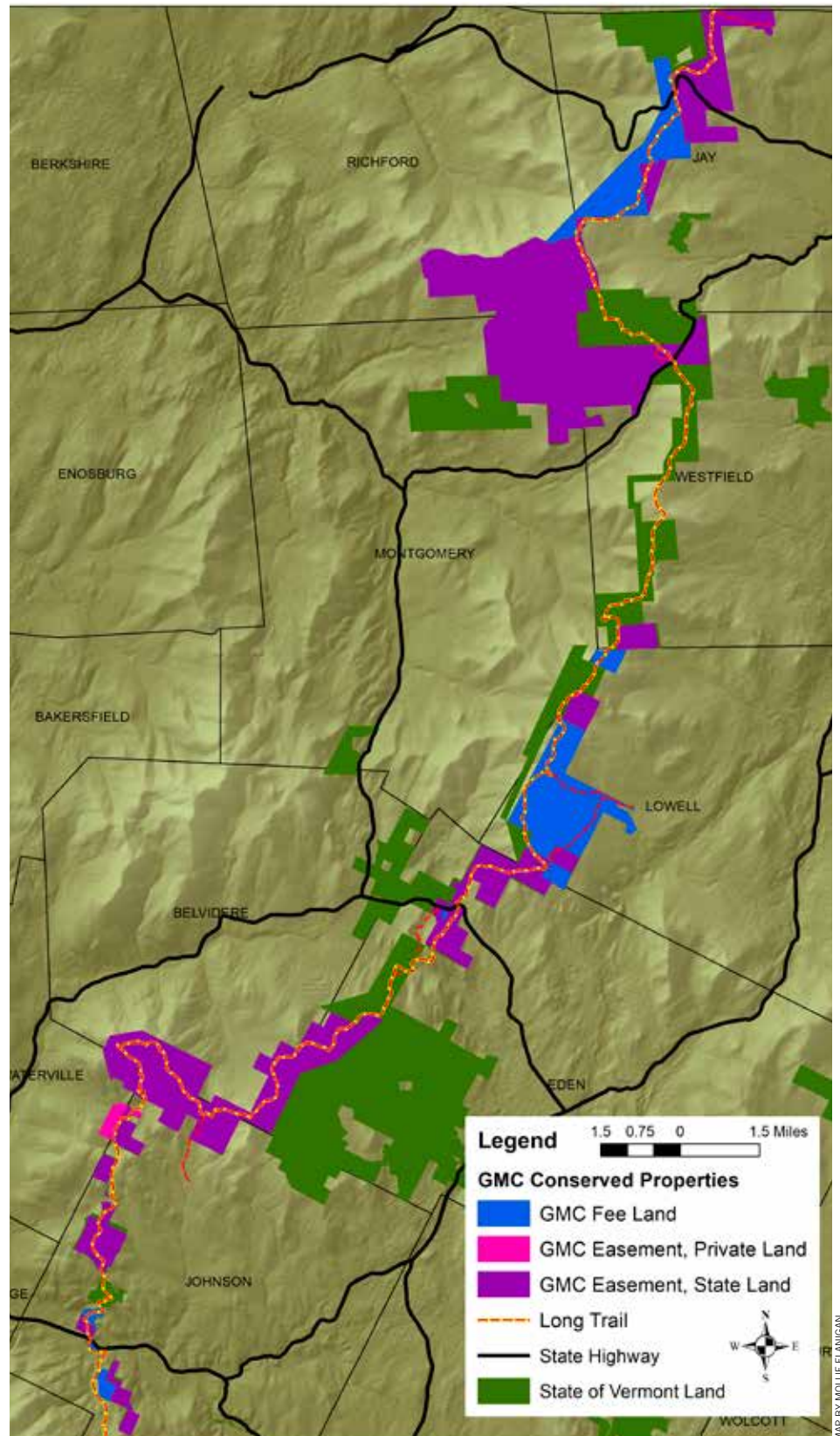
One year into the strategic plan, the Land Conservation Program is well on its way to meeting the plan's goal. Within the last year a new database was created to track properties that have been protected and lands that are conservation priorities for the Club. The database houses all the basic information about the property (where it is, why it was protected, how the project was funded) as well as how the property is monitored, and any stewardship considerations or challenges that exist on the land.

Also within the last year the Program has fully integrated ArcGIS, a computer mapping software, into the data management system. Now staff are able to track properties and projects by geospatial data, which has created new efficiencies in program management.

The Green Mountain Club is proud of the bold vision, hard work, and generous support that has protected the majority of the Long Trail System. Permanent protection of the Long Trail System remains a high priority, but the Club must recognize that that goal does not just mean legal protection, but ongoing stewardship of the land in perpetuity. With GMC's new five-year strategic plan, we are embracing and evaluating that work. Doing so will enhance the Long Trail experience for hikers and meet our responsibilities as a land trust organization.

—MOLLIE FLANIGAN
LAND STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR

GMC Land Conservation Program Conserved Properties in Northern Vermont.



Section Directory

Bennington

Maintenance: Harmon Hill to Glastenbury Mountain
President: Lorna Cheriton, (802) 447-1383
E-mail: chertop1@comcast.net
Website: meetup.com/gmcbennington

Brattleboro

Maintenance: Winhall River to Vt. 11 and 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: Winooski River Footbridge 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 Stratton-Arlington Road
President: Jim Robertson, (860) 633-7279
E-mail: jrobert685@aol.com
Website: connngmc.com

Killington

Location: Rutland area
Maintenance: Vt. 140 to Maine Junction
President: Herb Ogden, (802) 293-2510
E-mail: hogden@vermontel.net
Website: gmckillington.org

Laraway

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

Manchester

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

Montpelier

Maintenance: Camel's Hump to Winooski River Footbridge and Smugglers' Notch to Chilkoot 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: Cathi Brooks, (802) 626-8742
E-mail: cathibrooks@aol.com
Website: nekngmc.org

Northern Frontier

Location: Montgomery
Maintenance: Hazen's Notch to Canada
President: Ken Whitehead, (802) 933-5352
E-mail: mrsswhitehead@gmail.com
Website: gmcnorthernfrontier.org

Upper Valley-Ottawaquechee

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

Sterling

Location: Morrisville/Stowe/Johnson
Maintenance: Chilkoot Pass to Lamoille River
President: Greg Western, (802) 655-6051
E-mail: gw60031@hotmail.com
Website: gmcterling.org

Worcester

Location: Worcester, Massachusetts
Maintenance: Stratton-Arlington Road to Winhall River
President: Ram Moennsda, (603) 767-2962
E-mail: shivratri@gmail.com
Website: www.gmcwoo.org



Sections

The Green Mountain Club welcomes five new section directors to the board:



Rich Minogue

Bennington Section

Rich Minogue

Rich Minogue has been living in southern Vermont since 2002. Before that he and his family lived in the Adirondacks.

His outdoor interests include kayaking, downhill skiing, hiking, and camping with his travel trailer. Rich and his wife, Berta, have traveled to or through 29 states in the past two years.

After attending college in Louisiana and in New York he graduated with a bachelor's in education, and later received a master's in special education. In a 33-year career Rich worked with people with disabilities as a teacher, administrator, and executive director of a multi-service human service agency in Clinton County, New York. A great source of professional pride was facilitating the removal of people from institutions and returning them to community-based homes where a high quality of life was provided.

His greatest personal accomplishment was raising five children who have all become independent adults with great careers, strong commitments to family values, and a love for the outdoors. Rich and Berta have thirteen grandchildren who live in Texas, Nevada, New York, South Carolina, and Oregon.

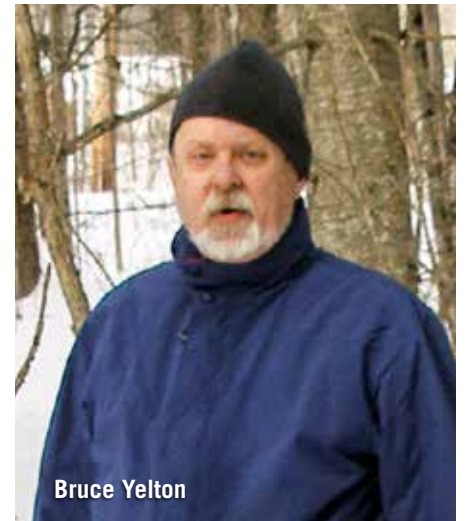
Bread Loaf Section

Bruce Yelton

Bruce has "frittered away" most of his time in universities and offices while daydreaming about being in the woods and on the streams. He and his wife, Debbie, spent their first two weeks together in the Nantahala National Forest and the Outer Banks National Seashore, and have rarely been separated since.

Bruce has traveled extensively in South America and the Caribbean. He has traveled by boat into Mato Grosso, and spent six weeks traveling from Belem to Manaus on the Amazon River. More recently Bruce has worked with the Sierra Club carrying out archaeological surveys in the Gila National Forest in New Mexico and working with the Conservation Voter group and various land conservation organizations.

The Yelton family lives in East Middlebury, where Bruce spends his time gardening and dispensing "unsolicited wisdom."



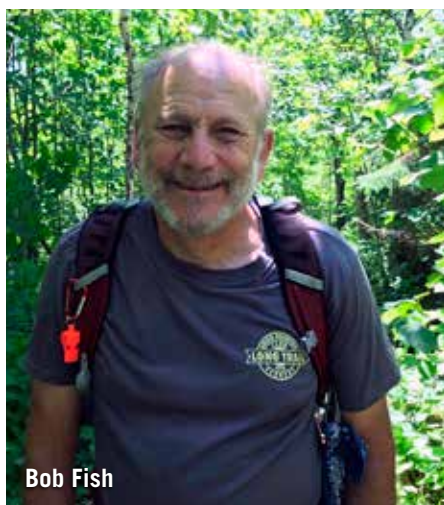
Bruce Yelton

Manchester Section

Bob Fish

Bob Fish and his wife, former GMC president Marge Fish, have lived in Londonderry for more than 40 years. A hiking family, they have been heavily involved with the club over the years.

Bob has devoted much of his spare time performing trail maintenance on the Long



Bob Fish

Trail from Vermont Route 11/30 to Peru Peak Shelter. He also spends time outdoors hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, biking, and swimming.

Now semi-retired, Bob worked for 35 years as a master chimney sweep, and for the last seven and a half years as a consultant and instructor in the chimney sweep industry. He has a bachelor's degree in American history and a master's degree in education.

Montpelier Section

George Longenecker

George Longenecker was elected to the GMC board in 2018. A GMC member for more than 40 years, he's also served as section president.



George Longenecker

George is retired from Vermont Technical College, where he was a professor and chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Social Sciences. He is a writer and photographer, and his poems have been published in journals including *Atlanta Review*, *Seneca Review*, and *Whale Road Review*. He is president of The Poetry Society of Vermont.

George enjoys Nordic skiing, kayaking, and hiking. His travels have taken him to arctic Alaska, the Colorado Rockies, Nevada's Great Basin National Park, Utah's Zion National Park, La Mauricie Nation Park in Quebec, and California's Channel Islands. He's hiked the Long Trail end-to-end, as well as the Appalachian Trail in Vermont and New Hampshire.

George serves on the budget committee and conservation commission for the town of Middlesex. While living in Marshfield he served seven years on its select board, including two years as chair. George and his wife, former board director and president of the Montpelier Section Cynthia Martin, live in Middlesex, where they garden and enjoy the Vermont woods. Cynthia and George met on a GMC hike, and have a daughter, Julia, who has accompanied them on many treks.

Worcester Section

Mike Peckar

Mike's lifelong passion for trails started as a child when his dad dragged him onto

the Long Trail at Sherburne Pass. It was sealed at age 17 when he summited Denali in Alaska. He grew up in Connecticut, graduated from Lewis & Clark College in Oregon, and then moved to Massachusetts in the mid-80s. In 1990 he married Rachel and settled in West Boylston, Massachusetts, where he works as an information technology consultant and has almost finished raising three future trail stewards with Rachel.



Mike Peckar

Mike serves on four nonprofit boards in central Massachusetts, including Wachusett Greenways and the Greater Worcester Land Trust. He is also a Massachusetts Midstate Trail Maintainer and Sawyer.

Mike joined GMC in 2015, having been drawn back to Vermont by long-time friends and Worcester Section members. Since then, he has jumped into club activities with both feet, leading section events, serving on committees, and participating in the section's weekend-long Long Trail/Appalachian Trail maintenance trips to Stratton Pond. As a director he plans to help execute GMC's strategic plan, spend time with GMC folks on the trails, promote and improve the Long Trail, and become a Long Trail end-to-ender.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

**Saturday, September 22
1:30-4:30 P.M.**

***Green Mountain Club Visitor Center
Waterbury Center***

A day to celebrate our impressive volunteer corps—the backbone of GMC. Food and music provided. Awards too!



The World is Our Classroom: How One Family Used Nature and Travel to Shape an Extraordinary Education

Cindy Ross

Monday, October 1, 7-8:30 p.m.
GMC Visitor Center, Waterbury Center

Cindy's story began in the Rocky Mountain wilderness on a unique journey: two parents leading their young children 3,100 miles on the backs of llamas. Their Canada-to-Mexico trek showed Cindy and her husband what experiential education could do. Inspired, they continued to supplement their children's education by focusing on the natural world and travel. Join us for a multimedia presentation on raising broad-minded and empathetic children through travel and immersion in nature.

Wool Knickers and White Blazes: A Retro Hike on the Long Trail

Mike DeBonis

Thursday, October 18, 7-8:30 p.m.
Unitarian Universalist Society, Middlebury

Have you ever wondered what it was like to hike the Long Trail a century ago? GMC Executive Director Mike DeBonis will tell tales of his 2017 retro end-to-end hike, celebrating 100 years of the *Long Trail Guide*. You'll enjoy the fun of hiking the trail in 1917, but without the wool, bugs and canned fish that Mike experienced.

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Conquering the Wilderness Within

Nature has always provided me with peace, joy or inspiration. My siblings and I were fortunate to grow up near a river and sparse forest. The world seemed bigger then, the woods offering an endless supply of wonder and exploration. When I got older the forest became a place to reflect and find balance, even if only for a while.

I had always been interested in moving north, to be surrounded by nature and its beauty again. Perhaps I wanted to recreate the childlike sense of wonder that had faded over the years. Last summer, though hesitant, I found an opportunity to move to Vermont, and took it. It was out of character for me to actually chase a dream. I had everything to lose. The transition felt like leaping with outstretched arms from a collapsing bridge over a canyon, hoping to grasp the ledge on the other side. Fortunately, I made it. By the skin of my teeth, but I made it.

Then it was time to ponder: "What the hell am I doing?"

It wasn't until I set foot on Mount Mansfield that I truly understood why I was here. I recall the vibrant, uplifting songs of birds and the fragrance of trees in the crisp



Kyle Driscoll on Mount Mansfield summit

air. It seemed something penetrated my soul, lighting the darkness from within.

It took a few hikes to familiarize myself with the mountain before attempting the summit. Eventually I found the confidence to move beyond my doubts and set out for the Chin. I hope I never forget that day.

It was a bit nerve-wracking, given that I had never done anything like it before. Being on my own seemed to make it more daunting. As I pushed further up the Sunset Ridge Trail the views got better and better, to the point where I simply could not turn

back. It was exciting on the exposed rock, facing heavy gusts of wind. I finally made it to the top, where I stood looking out over the vast and beautiful scenery.

I had proven to myself that I could do it, despite the pestering, irrational anxieties that had held me back so much in life. Eventually I realized this was not a onetime goal; it was an exercise, and one I would need to repeat.

Reaching the summit liberated me from the biggest thing holding me back: myself. *I felt alive.*

I made the summit four more times that season, and with every hike I was changed. Experiences such as a momentary turnaround, an encounter with a black bear, and moments of self-reflection contributed to my relationship with Mount Mansfield. The mountain always gave me perspective on my life down below.

Sometimes the biggest hurdle is not the summit, but simply getting started. I never conquered the mountain, I only conquered myself. The mountain is simply a vantage point from which I may gain a greater perspective and a clearer view of what lies ahead.

—KYLE DRISCOLL



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◀ 2019 Long Trail Calendar

We don't think we'll ever run out of stunning photos capturing the essence of the Long Trail and Vermont's other special hiking trails. The 2019 calendar features photographs of classic trail scenes by GMC members; holidays and moon phases; and facts about Green Mountain Club and Long Trail history. Add it to your holiday gift list!

List Price: \$12.99

Member Price: \$10.39

UPDATED! Second Edition Camel's Hump and the Monroe Skyline Hiking Trail Map ▶

This waterproof pocket size map covers the Long Trail and side trails from Sunset Ledge north to Bolton, including Mount Abraham, Vermont's iconic Camel's Hump, and the Winooski River Footbridge and recent Long Trail relocation over Stimson Mountain. GPS coordinates for parking lots are a new feature.

List Price: \$5.95 Member Price: \$4.76

Purchase of these and other GMC publications and merchandise supports our work to protect and maintain the Long Trail System, Vermont Appalachian Trail, and Northeast Kingdom trails.

