

Long Trail NEWS



Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

FALL 2022



Your Perfect Fall Hike | Burrows Trail Rebuild | Painting Camel's Hump

Long Trail

N E W S

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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Contributions of manuscripts, photos, illustrations, and news are welcome from members and nonmembers.

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FRONT COVER: Emily Hollander fills in a new checkpoint with crush on the Burrows Trail.
Photo by Anna Gardner.

CONTENTS

FALL 2022, Volume 82, No.3



PHOTO BY SYLVIE VIDRINE

Cheers! Shea "Legacy" Dunlop toasts her parents at the completion of her End-to-End hike in July 2022. Shea's mom Sylvie designs the *Long Trail News*!

FEATURES

6 › YOUR PERFECT FALL HIKING WEEKEND

by Angela Hilsman

8 › BURROWS TRAIL REBUILD BEGINS

by Anna Gardner

12 › PAINT CAMEL'S HUMP WITH ME!

by Kati Christoffel

DEPARTMENTS

3 › From the President

4 › Mountain Views

5 › Trail Support

14 › Field Notes

18 › Trail Mix

20 › Volunteer Awards

22 › Land Stewardship

23 › Journey's End



From the President

Fifty years ago I was spending my summer as the Green Mountain Club caretaker on Camel's Hump at the old Gorham Lodge. Little did I know that the experience would lead me to a lifetime of hiking, backpacking, and involvement with and commitment to the club.

In June I presided over my first annual meeting as President of the GMC Board of Directors. It was exciting and wonderful, albeit a tad strange feeling after two years of Zoom meetings, to have everyone back together, live and in person! But all agreed it was great to see everyone again and catch up on GMC news in person. In my remarks I reflected on how the club has changed in my five decades, and where we stand now.

The GMC budget in 1972 was tiny and was managed largely by volunteers. It has since grown to a complex budget of \$2.7 million. We wrapped up the successful capital campaign begun in 2019, raising

\$4 million to fund special projects and strengthen the club's endowment and financial security. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Deputy Director Alicia DiCocco, her staff, and the campaign committee led by GMC Vice President Nancy McClellan, we achieved our goal and then some, ensuring improved operations, financial stability, and a margin of safety going forward.

In the '70s the club rented an office in Rutland with two full-time employees. Ken and Alice Boyd ran the caretaker program out of their South Burlington home, driving 14 caretakers to and from sites from Stratton Pond to Sterling Pond. Today, many of our 35 seasonal employees spend their days off at the Back Forty Lodge, behind our 40-acre headquarters complex in Waterbury Center.

In 1972 every privy on the Long Trail was a pit privy, laboriously dug by volunteers as deep as one can in the stony soils of the Green Mountain range. Today



Howard VanBenthuyzen

we are on the cusp of eliminating the last pit privy. They are not a safe form of waste disposal, and recently they have been filling in just two or three years at busy sites. Our crews replaced pit privies at Stoney Brook and Old Job Shelters with moldering privies this year, with the remaining four privies slated for the 2023 season.

In short, then, much has changed in the GMC and the Long Trail System since my days at Gorham Lodge. And, I think, all for the better! We came through the pandemic with balanced budgets (eight in a row!), have completed an impressive capital campaign, and are in the second consecutive season of extremely busy trail and construction work.

For the future, new initiatives will strengthen and diversify the club, and ensure that the Long Trail System and the club are open and welcoming to everyone. These include diversity, equity and inclusion orientation for new staff and board members; exploring ways to manage visitor use in our most popular areas; and increased collaboration with our agency partners to ensure that cooperative management continues to guide the maintenance, preservation and improvement of the Long Trail System.

The GMC is growing to meet its mission to make the mountains of Vermont play a larger part in the lives of the people. Our continuing success and the world class quality and protection of the Long Trail System are a tribute to our members — thank you for being here.

—HOWARD VANBENTHUYSEN
GMC BOARD PRESIDENT

GMC—THEN AND NOW

1972	2022
2,200 members	9,800 members
436 miles of trails	~500 miles
2 paid staff, mostly volunteer run	19 fulltime staff, 35 seasonal employees, ~1,000 volunteers
14 caretakers, who carpooled with Ken and Alice Boyd	We still staff 14 caretakers, though locations have changed slightly
<i>Budget: tiny</i>	<i>Budget: \$2.7 million</i>
<i>Membership dues: \$2</i>	<i>Membership dues: \$45</i>
<i>Overnight fees: 75¢ for nonmembers, 50¢ for members</i>	<i>Overnight fees: \$5 for nonmembers, free for members</i>
10 sections	14 sections
No rental cabins or land ownership	3 rental cabins, with one more coming (back) soon; owns about 3500 acres outright
<i>Headquarters: Rented space in Rutland</i>	<i>Headquarters: 40 acres in Waterbury Center, with a renovation coming in 2023</i>
Every privy was a pit privy	Only 4 pit privies remain, replaced with more than 60 composting and moldering privies



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Nancy McClellan, *Vice President*
Nancy Thomas, *Treasurer*
Caitlin Miller, *Secretary*

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Caretaker Loves Her Job

I have been section hiking the AT in New England over the years and have completed over 500 miles including over 110 miles in Vermont.

I just wanted to put in a good word for

Eva, your caretaker at Stratton Pond. She is friendly, helpful and knowledgeable. I saw her engage with children and adults and support their curiosity of wildlife. She provided information, advice, and support to enhance a hiker's experience, whether a seasoned thru-hiker or a group of fairly inexperienced teens or young adults out for an overnight. She seems to love her job.



—JIM ELLIS

(A.K.A. GIARDIA JIM—NOT BECAUSE I HAVE HAD IT
BUT BECAUSE I AM SUPER CAUTIOUS)

Vermont Hospitality is Appreciated

I wanted to give a shout out to the great state of Vermont. I left Ohio three weeks ago with the intention of hiking the Long Trail from Maine Junction to the Canadian border. Turns out I'm not in great hiking shape and my knees aren't what they used to be. After five days and 45-ish miles I decided to cut my hike short. While the state of Vermont is extremely beautiful, the people are also pretty rad.

I spent a few days hitch hiking around Vermont and staying at various inns. I found the hitching to be super easy, and with few exceptions, the people of Vermont went out of their way to be friendly to me. My hike didn't go according to plan, but the hospitality and warmth of the people I encountered made up for it. The Long Trail is no joke. I've hiked the entire AT, and the LT is as hard as anything on that trail. Nonetheless, I had an amazing and unforgettable experience in the Green Mountain state. Had a great time and hope to return in the near future. Good job Vermonters.

—JEFFREY BARTOLOMUCCI

VIA FACEBOOK, LONG TRAIL
HIKING—GMC COMMUNITY



Join the Community!
Scan this QR code with
your smartphone's camera.

Another Memory of Hugh and Jeanne

After spending a cold, miserable night at Stratton Pond Shelter, I started up Stratton Mountain in a wintry mix of rain, sleet and snow on the morning of May 20, 2006. I was section hiking the Appalachian Trail southbound. I was nearly at the summit when I was startled to see a woman, dressed in warm clothing and big boots, standing a few feet in front of me. "You look terrible," was her friendly greeting. As I approached her, she said she was going to the spring for water. Then she commanded that I go to her cabin near the tower and bang on the door. Her instructions were that I should tell her husband he was to let me in to warm up. I had run into Jeanne Joudry.

At the cabin I was greeted warmly by Hugh Joudry. He quickly began arranging their small cabin to make space for me near the warm stove, while also adding a few sticks to the fire. Soon the water pot was boiling and Hugh was making tea for us. While this was going on he explained why the Joudrys were living on Stratton's summit. Soon Jeanne returned carrying two gallons of water. For the next 30 or 40 minutes we had a wonderful chat about older people like us enjoying trails and mountains. I do not recall how old they were, but I was 70 at the time. In my many decades of hiking this was the most unexpected trail magic provided by two unforgettable trail angels.

Best wishes to Hugh and Jeanne.

—GEORGE SHEEDY

Keep sharing your Jeanne and Hugh memories! Sign the digital card:
bit.ly/HughandJeanneCard

Oops! We Goofed

We missed a newly minted Side-to-Sider in the Summer issue. COREY PERKINS completed all 88 side trails, picking away

at the list with intention in winter 2020 and finishing up in June 2021. Congratulations!



WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS! Email us at gmc@greenmountainclub.org OR
Letters to the Editor, GMC, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677

The Green Mountain Club Meets its \$4 Million LONG TRAIL LEGACY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN Goal

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS launched the ambitious Long Trail Legacy Campaign at the GMC Annual Meeting in 2019 with four goals: adding \$2 million to the club's endowment, including a \$1 million fund to support the caretaker program; improving the condition of the rugged northern Long Trail; completing land protection deals; and finishing the GMC Headquarters Plan by replacing the dilapidated Herrick office building in Waterbury Center.

Development of these primary goals was guided by key themes in the 2017 Strategic Plan: protecting and managing the trail resource, and achieving operational excellence.

Despite a massive pandemic-shaped wrench in our plans, GMC persisted, and reached our goal in June.

In any capital campaign, the focus is naturally on hitting the financial goal. And we should be proud of that. But most impressive is how we did it.

The campaign was steered by a volunteer committee and staff members who repeatedly adjusted plans as the pandemic forced changes in interacting with one another and communicating with donors. At first we paused fundraising as the nation's focus was rightly on public health. Still, support was amazing, with gifts from nearly 1,000 supporters.

The campaign was anchored by a major gift from David and Nan Rothberg, who have supported the club and the trail for decades.

“The Long Trail has been a backpacking favorite of Nan’s and mine since we were freshmen in college. Our two sons and several nieces and nephews were introduced to overnights in the great outdoors via the Long Trail. We now look forward to introducing our new (and first) grandchild to this American treasure soon!”

— DAVID ROTHBERG ON WHAT THE CLUB MEANS TO HIM AND NAN

We launched the public phase of the campaign in the summer of 2021 with Long Trail Day, the club's annual peer-to-peer fundraiser. We challenged hikers to raise at least \$272 (\$1 for every mile of the trail) and, boosted by a generous match, raised \$70,000 as Long Trail enthusiasts joined in celebratory hikes and treats.

As Lizz Lach, who raised money that day, explained, “[While thru-hiking in 2018], I realized how much work GMC does for the *whole* trail. I couldn’t believe what went into sawing through major blowdowns on ridge lines, carrying materials and bear boxes miles in to shelters, and obviously the glamorous work of caring for privies.”

The campaign would have been impossible without Nancy McClellan, Long Trail Legacy Campaign Committee chair; campaign director Alicia DiCocco; and committee members Lee Allen, Amy Kelsey, Steve Klein, Sheri Larsen and Martha Stitelman. Also essential were consultants CPG Enterprises, Inc. Nancy received the 2022 President’s Award at the GMC Annual Meeting in June for her dedication.

Campaign funds are already improving the northern Long Trail and permanently protecting vulnerable portions of the trail. Groundbreaking is planned for the remodeled headquarters building this spring. We look forward to keeping the GMC community informed about the exciting results that this historic investment in the Long Trail will produce.

— MIKE DeBONIS



Your Perfect Fall Hiking Weekend

Kent Pond near Killington. Photo by Todd Wilkinson.

Fall in Vermont is, to say the least, iconic. Mountainsides glow fiery reds, oranges and yellows as maples, beeches and birches ready for winter. Whether you're a visitor touring rural Vermont or a local looking for a fresh perspective, here are three ways to spend a day leaf peeping.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL: Short and Sweets

Hike

The Long Trail and the Appalachian Trail, which follows the LT for the first 100 miles north of Massachusetts, are the backbones of Vermont's hiking scene. Head to Sherburne Pass, near 4,000-foot Killington Peak and the junction where the footpaths fork, and climb to **Deer Leap Overlook** (3.5 miles, 650' elev. gain.)

In early October you'll catch peak foliage you can share with the whole

family. Park in the small trailhead lot next to the Inn at Long Trail on the north side of U.S. Route 4, or in the large lot on the south side of the highway if the trailhead lot is full. *(Use caution and listen carefully as you cross the wide highway here; visibility is poor.)*

The fairly short but rugged Sherburne Pass Trail provides impressive views of the Coolidge Range and Sherburne Pass on its ascent to the AT; then just a few steps southbound on the AT take you to a left turn onto Deer Leap Trail. You can return to your car from Deer Leap the way you came, or make a loop by continuing along the Deer Leap Trail back to the AT, then following the AT northbound back to the Sherburne Pass Trail.

Eat

If you're short of time post-hike, stop at the **Inn at Long Trail** for a piece of history before driving on. The inn has been serving hikers, skiers and leaf peepers since 1938.

Enjoy a seasonal dessert at **Rosemary's Restaurant**; we recommend the inn-made maple crème brûlée or apple crisp a la mode (*Open Fridays and Saturdays from September 23 to October 15, opens at 5 PM.*)

Explore

Ready for a late night? Head to the award-winning **Hathaway Farm & Corn Maze** (10 AM - 5 PM, closed Tuesdays, \$10-15). This year's Bloomin' & Buzzin' theme corn maze highlights pollinators, and is complete with maze games and challenges. Not into getting lost? Hathaway Farm hosts a top-ranking pumpkin patch. You can also tour the livestock barn, housing pot belly pigs and donkeys, singing chickens, and Flossie the cow; try the mini-maze designed for toddlers and youngsters; shop the farm store for Hathaway's maple syrup; and roast marshmallows during Moonlight Madness (*Saturdays, 5-9 PM.*)

CENTRAL VERMONT: Choose your own Adventure

Hike

If you're touring central Vermont, you'll want to catch the foliage in the first two weeks of October, particularly via the **Jerusalem Trail**. Start your day ascending this 2.4-mile side trail to the Long Trail, which passes through a large maple grove spouting vibrant reds in the fall. When you reach the Long Trail, choose your own adventure: head north to foliage views at Stark's Nest (*6.8 miles round trip*) or south for views from Mount Ellen (*8.4 miles round trip*).

Explore

Following your hike, choose your own adventure again. Head west on Vermont Route 17 to historic Middlebury, where you can visit two of Vermont's 100-plus covered bridges – Pulp Mill and Halpin – before exploring the state's culture at the

Vermont Folklife Center. Or, wind down with cider, live music and freshly picked apples at **Happy Valley Orchard**.

For a particularly scenic commute, the newly reintroduced **Ethan Allen Express Amtrak Train** offers daily train rides from New York City to Burlington and back with stops in Middlebury and Rutland.

To the east is the beautiful Mad River Valley, with the picturesque towns of Warren and Waitsfield. Cruise the 35-mile **Mad River Scenic Byway**, and visit a few more of Vermont's historic covered bridges, Pine Brook and Great Eddy.

Tour the autumn landscape on one of the world's oldest horse breeds with a scheduled ride through **Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm**; the experienced staff will match one of their horses to your experience level for a smooth adventure that suits your pace (*Year round, by appointment, \$100-185 per person.*)

Eat

Afterward, grab dinner at the **Hyde Away Inn**. On a warm night, enjoy their outdoor dining, complete with a swing set, giant Jenga game, and fishpond with an underwater view *Trout Cam* for the kiddos.



Vermont Icelandic Horse Farm

NORTHEAST KINGDOM: A Quaint Vermont Experience

Looking to explore northern Vermont? The Northeast Kingdom's peak foliage typically runs from late September to early October, and the place to be is **Wheeler Mountain in Barton**.

Eat

If you're heading north from the Lyndon area, start your day at **Café Lotti** in East Burke. While the nitro brew is Lotti's signature drink, grab a hot espresso – brewed in the owners' fire-engine red, Italian-crafted La Marzocco – to warm up during the drive. Owners Linda and Johnny Lotti take pride in their Italian heritage, so you'll want one of their cannoli as well.



Wheeler Mountain in Barton

PHOTO BY KRISTIN MCLEANE

Coming south from Newport? Fuel up with homemade donuts and hot coffee at **Martha's Diner** in Coventry. This '50s-style diner opens at 6:00 a.m., seven days a week, so you can get an early start on the crowds.

Hike

From either stop you'll have a half-hour drive to the Wheeler Mountain trailhead on Wheeler Mountain Road, off U.S. Route 5 (the trailhead lot is the second parking lot on your right). The Wheeler Mountain Trail offers a 4.4-mile, out-and-back hike that gradually climbs through the woods following the ridgeline, leading to an easy walk over open ledges with expansive views. On the trail, watch for Jay Peak, Mount Mansfield, Lake Willoughby, and Mount Pisgah—all painted in autumn's warm hues.

Explore

After enjoying the NEK's fall foliage, drive 40 minutes to St. Johnsbury for food, fun and fur. Yes, *fur*. The annual **Dog Mountain Fall Dog Party** on October 1 offers delicious eats (for humans) from Tacos Del Reino, Rocky's New York Style Hotdog Cart, and Makin' Maple. There'll

also be live music from blues artist Shrimp Tunes, raffles, and a magic show. And bring your pets, because dog contests and an agility course are part of the festivities. *Free; 12-4 PM.*

Finish the day at the **Fairbanks Museum's Bears & Brews** on October 1. Sample beers from the finest nano- and micro-breweries in Vermont and New Hampshire. This event not only features great beer and fresh food, you'll get to talk with the masterminds behind the local flavors, explore the museum, and take in a planetarium show. *\$10-55; 4-8 PM.*

Not in the area on October 1? Don't worry—you can still find fall fun. Grab lunch at the **local farmers' market** (*St. Johnsbury, through October 26, 9 AM-1 PM; Danville, through October 9, 9 AM-1 PM*); then watch *Hocus Pocus* on the Danville Green on **October 15** at 6:00 p.m. or head to New England's largest corn maze, the Great Vermont Maze, until **October 10**.

Information was accurate at press time, but subject to change. For online links and directions, view this article on our blog: greenmountainclub.org/blog

Rehabilitation of Historic BURROWS TRAIL Commences

BY ANNA GARDNER



Tens of thousands of hikers (and dogs) climb the Burrows Trail on Camel's Hump each year, and it shows. "I could see the trail widening and where people were stepping," said Kathryn Wrigley as she pointed out a section of the trail about four feet wider than it was a few years ago. Popular hiking trails saw an enormous increase in use during the surge of outdoor recreation during the

pandemic, and the Burrows Trail was hit harder than most.

Kathryn, a forest recreation specialist for the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (FPR), and Keegan Tierney, Green Mountain Club Director of Field Programs, considered the flow both of hikers and water as they studied every inch of the 2.1-mile trail to plan a three-year, \$750,000, top-to-bottom rehabilitation.

In June the GMC's Long Trail Patrol broke ground on the largest trail rehabilitation project in the club's modern history. A typical trail improvement takes two to six weeks and fixes small stretches of trail. Crews from five organizations will spend 116 weeks in three seasons on the Burrows Trail to mitigate the effects of erosion, climate change, and increasing foot traffic.

Justin Towers joined GMC in February as the full-time coordinator managing the Burrows Trail crews and more than 300 work sites. With a \$250,000 allocation from the Vermont Legislature and a \$210,000 Enhancement of Recreation and Stewardship Access (ERSA) Trail Grant, GMC and FPR hope to tackle the whole trail at once, though about \$290,000 more will be needed. The all-in approach is almost unprecedented in Vermont, but should work well for this and other popular steep trails in bad condition.

Formerly known as the Huntington Trail, the century-old Burrows Trail goes straight up the fall line of the mountain, which is also the easiest route for water to flow down. Heavier and more frequent rain from climate change has worsened the cobble-lined streambed the trail has become. The project will also address excessive widening, up to 20 feet in places, caused by increasing traffic and hikers trying to avoid mud or pass others.

Planning

Kathryn and Keegan started planning in 2018, initially for a two-week project focused on waterbars scheduled for 2019. Instead, Kathryn proposed rehabilitation of the whole trail, and the idea was a hit. They first considered re-routing sections of the trail below 2,500 feet. However, wet soils, a series of drainages, and scientific study plots that couldn't be disturbed, all precluded major relocation, so they decided rehabilitation on the current route was most efficient. They also planned to keep the trail open to hikers throughout the rehab.

Since they hadn't planned such a large project before, Kathryn and Keegan studied a similar trail project on the Crawford Path in the White Mountains, also a historic Eastern fall-line trail. They learned they would need a lot of money and multiple trail crews working together to accomplish such a big job quickly. They drafted a budget based on the Crawford Path budget that accounted for the cost of materials, the varying skill levels of crews, and more.

In 2021 Kathryn spent eight days on the Burrows Trail, painstakingly identifying more than 300 sites for work. She adopted a hiker's mindset to envision

PHOTO BY ANNA GARDNER



Kathryn Wrigley Pointing Out Trail Widening

why they often stepped off trail, widening the main treadway and creating social trails, and she looked both uphill and down to conceive a good design. "It can sometimes be difficult to pinpoint what is causing a particular trail 'problem,' until you turn around and see a large rock or poky branch that is deterring the downhill hiker from staying on the trail." Using the ArcGIS Collector app

"It can sometimes be difficult to pinpoint what is causing a particular trail 'problem,' until you turn around and see a large rock or poky branch that is deterring the downhill hiker from staying on the trail."

she recorded waypoints at each site, with photos to document conditions, adding notes specifying repairs and construction: waterbars, check steps, staircases, and widening.

Kathryn also noted required skills to help allocate crew time and assignments. Youth and volunteer crews can brush

in social trails and repair waterbars, but professional crews like GMC's Long Trail Patrol are needed for skilled and strenuous rock work.

Partnerships and Funding

The size of the Burrows project means that GMC and FPR will call on volunteers and long-standing partners: in addition to the Long Trail Patrol, the Vermont state trail crew; the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps; the Northwoods Stewardship Center Conservation Corps; and the National Community Conservation Corps. Partnerships yield new ideas, opportunities and approaches. "We have a robust system of trails for various user groups and a strong network of non-profits and contractors who support the development and maintenance of those trail networks," Kathryn said.

The \$460,000 already secured for the project is an amount that's unheard of for such a small linear footage of trail, according to Keegan. GMC continues to apply for grants and was recently awarded a \$30,000 grant from Athletic Brewing's "Two for the Trails" Fund. The club is also actively seeking private funding to complete the project. **If you support sustainable management and maintenance of our trails, you can make a gift today.**



PHOTO BY ANNA GARDNER

Long Trail Patrol and Vermont Youth Conservation Corps crew members work together.

Work Progress

The ambitious top-to-bottom approach to the project is necessary to promptly counteract the effects of climate change, storms and heavy use.

The goal of all trail improvements is twofold: steer water off the trail; and steer hikers onto a durable treadway. So Justin's crews consider both the path of water and the behavior of hikers. "I follow what the water is doing, and assign tasks to slow it down, which reduces erosion," said Justin. Addressing hiker behavior, Kathryn visualizes what the hiker sees when upward and downward bound, and determines how to make the durable path appealing.

Stone is the most common durable material in Vermont, so most rehab work is rock work, requiring lots of highly skilled manual labor. Crews find, dig out, move, and set rocks one by one, using strength, strategy and time. Though it may take a full day to set one rock, setting rocks precisely ensures they will stay put for decades.

Burrows crews frequently employ

highlining, a technique in which a heavy stone slung beneath a strong cable (highline) strung between trees slowly travels along the line, braked or pulled by tension applied by a Griphoist. Highlining is easier, quicker and safer than wrestling rocks on the ground, and it avoids damaging land by dragging rocks along a mossy forest floor.

This summer Justin's crews started at the top of the Burrows Trail near the Hut Clearing, working their way downhill for maximum effectiveness. Diverting water from the trail at its top reduces flows all the way down. Of course, at higher elevations crews must take special precautions. The top of Burrows is in the subalpine zone, so fragile vegetation must be protected when quarrying and moving rocks.

Crews camp at their backcountry "spike" site five days a week, and work in sun, rain, heat and bugs. The job is challenging, but also rewarding. GMC Long Trail Patrol member Emily Hollander recalls her first time

highlining rocks as memorable. And, says coworker Max Millslagle, "It's a legacy project, which is neat. It's cool to think that this stuff is going to be here 50 years from now."

What's Next

Trail crews will continue working their way down the Burrows Trail over the next three seasons. The three-quarters of a mile closest to the top of the trail, approximately 100 work sites, should be complete by the end of the 2022 field season, but there are many variables, including weather, staffing, and funding, that can affect progress.

Since the Burrows Trail Project is an intense, expensive, large-scale project happening in a short timeline, it is setting a precedent for future trail maintenance and management. Many other historic fall-line trails in the Northeast present serious deferred maintenance challenges, but have no money to meet them. Most can't be replaced by new routes. "Rebuilding these routes in place and improving their sustainability using the techniques we are using on Burrows allows us to preserve these historic trails without affecting their character or difficulty," said Justin.

One third to one half of the Long Trail needs major repairs or upgrades to withstand higher traffic and increased storm intensity, according to Keegan. The same strategies used on Burrows Trail will likely be used on the Long Trail as well.

Restoration of the Burrows Trail will prove once again the value of long-term cooperation like the partnership of FPR and GMC, which has leveraged funds, expanded the number and types of trail crews working on the Long Trail System, and made long strides in a new direction for trail rehabilitation. Keegan hopes the project will also inspire more people to

Crews are repairing or constructing 300 sites, including:



- 24 stone-armored drains
- 14 stone staircases
- 121 waterbars
- 117 areas of excessive width
- 20 areas of excessive erosion
- 3 areas with multiple treadways



◀ Burrows staircase before

get involved—to work, volunteer, donate, and advocate for maintaining our backcountry assets and resources.

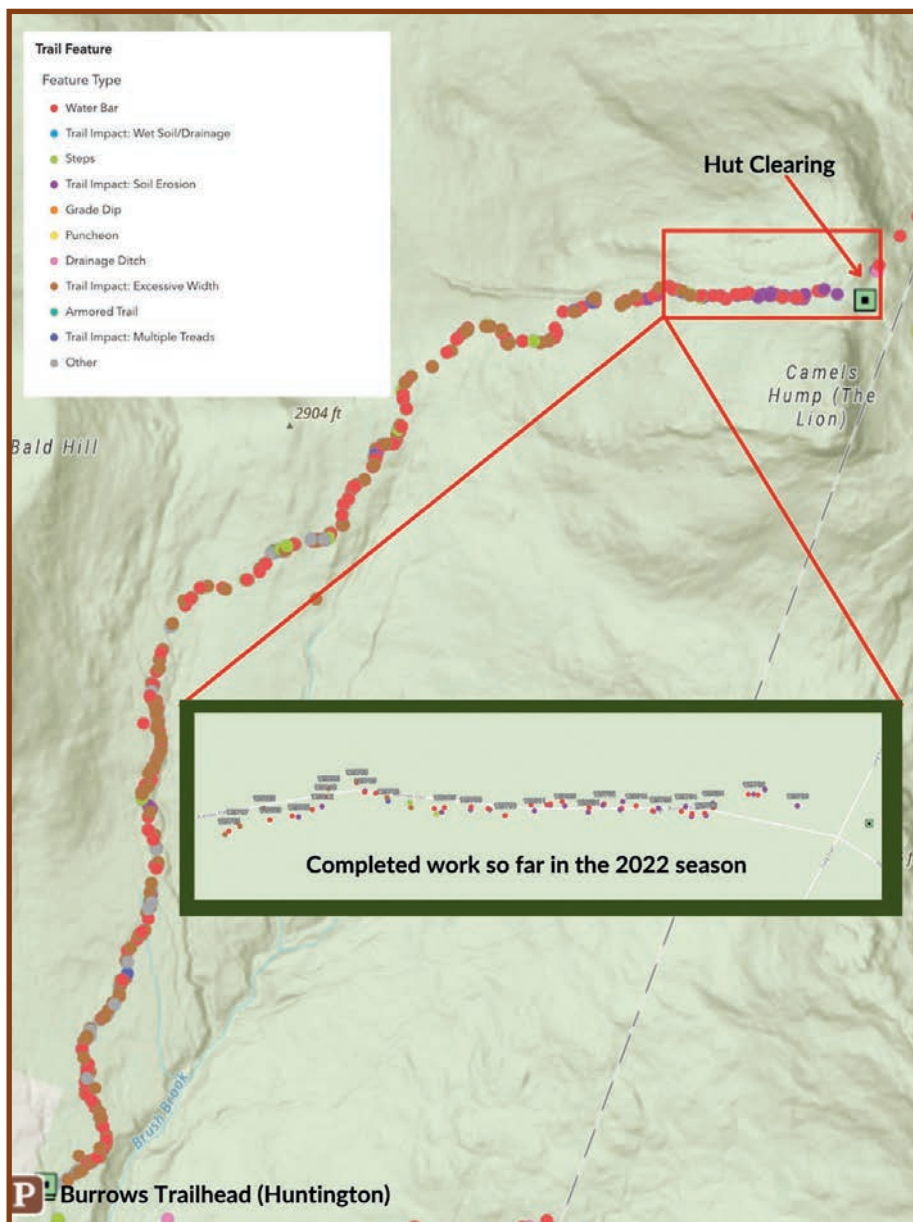
Trail improvements and awareness create more opportunities and new ways get people out on the trails, embodying the Green Mountain Club's century-old mission statement "to make the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people." Free trails welcoming all hikers are an extraordinary resource. We ask hikers only to "Please stick to trails, walk through mud [rather than around it], and remember that many people enjoy this place—so leave it better than you found it," as Kathryn says.

To read updates on the Burrows Trail Project or to support our work, please visit www.greenmountainclub.org/burrows-trail-project.

Anna Gardner served as a Burrows Trail Project Content Creation Intern, working with both GMC and FPR this summer. Anna was out in the field



with the Burrows trail crews two to three days a week, capturing photos and videos and sharing weekly updates on GMC's social media and website, helping the club document this historic project. Anna is heading into her senior year at UVM's Rubenstein School, where she is studying for a degree in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. In her spare time Anna enjoys freeskiiing and spending time at her family camp in the Adirondacks.



This map shows the 300 individual sites Kathryn plotted for work, as well as the crews' focus thus far.



◀ Burrows staircase after



◀ Burrows check steps before



◀ Burrows check steps after

SIDEBAR PHOTOS BY ANNA GARDNER

Paint Camel's Hump

THERE ARE MANY WAYS that folks like to connect to the outdoors. My favorite way is by painting it! Let's paint a beautiful fall view of Camel's Hump together. These instructions are a guideline to create your own version of this scene. If you want to switch something up, do it! Your painting will look a little different from mine no matter what, so let your creativity take the lead. Suggested supplies are below, but use whatever you have around—colored pencils, markers, or other types of paint also work!



Suggested Supplies:

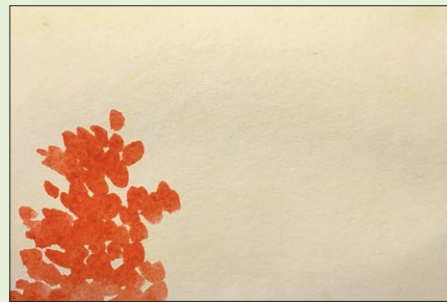
- Watercolor paint
- Watercolor paper (At least 140lb weight for minimal buckling)
- Three brushes (small, medium, and large)
- Painters tape (tape the edges of your paper to keep it flat, and leave a clean edge)
- Rag for blotting your brushes
- Water jar



Scan this QR code for a real-time video of Kati painting this scene.



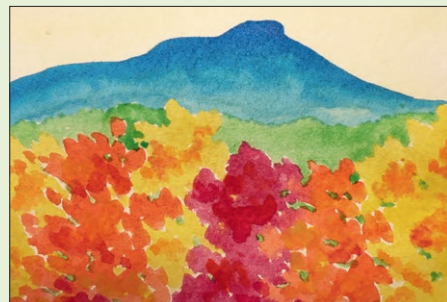
1 Using your largest brush, paint your entire paper with watered-down yellow paint. Try not to leave any puddles on your paper—it will take longer to dry. Before starting, let your background dry completely.



2 Start by adding the colorful trees to the foreground. Using your medium brush and orange paint, make a cluster of dabs, overlapping the dabs as you go. Rotate your wrist to get marks that go in different directions. Making your tree shape a little uneven will make it look more lifelike! Leave a few spaces in between leaves to let the background show through.



6 Using the same leaf-dabby technique as before, add some of the other two colors into each of your trees. It's ok if your trees aren't completely dry— as the paint bleeds, it might make some interesting marks!



7 Use your medium brush and light green paint, and fill in the middle ground space, and some of the spaces you left between your leaves.



10 Make some tree trunks and branches with your small brush and black paint. I like to make some disconnected lines—thicker and in the middle of the tree for trunks, and thinner and more flowy for the branches. Some of these branches are behind leaves and so aren't visible; that's why I don't connect all of my lines. Finally, sign your painting and carefully peel off the tape.

with Me!

BY KATI CHRISTOFFEL



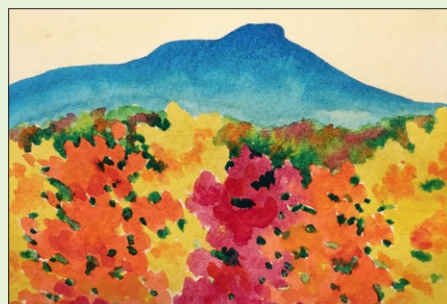
3 Make more trees! They should take up a little more than half of your painting. To make your painting more interesting, your trees should be slightly different heights and shapes from each other. I started with the orange trees, then the red, and yellow last. This allowed the marks time to dry before adding colors next to other colors.



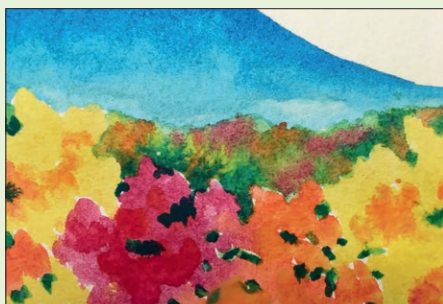
4 Using your medium brush and blue paint, sketch out the shape of Camel's Hump. Start on the left about an inch above your trees with a line that gradually goes up and to the right. Near the middle, go up a little more steeply then flatten out, then go up steeply and flatten out once again. Make almost a right angle straight down for the peak, then let the line wander down gradually to the right side of your page.



5 Color in the shape of your mountain, using more saturated color near the top and using more water and less paint towards the bottom. The top edge of your mountain should be a stronger blue and the bottom should be more watery. This creates the illusion that the mountain is far away! Using the tip of your brush, make the bottom edge of Camel's Hump bumpy, for the tops of the middle ground trees.



8 Sprinkle dabs of red, orange, and yellow into the light green while it's still wet. This is called wet-into-wet technique, and it makes the trees farther away look softer. Dab some dark green near the edges of your trees to make them stand out a bit more from the background.



Notice how the dark green has bled up into the light green—it almost looks like tree branches!



9 Use your small brush and black paint, make two small floppy "V" shapes to create some birds flying overhead—the middles of your "V"s should be thicker than the tapered edges of the wings.

Show Off YOUR Artwork!

Email a photo of your painting to gmc@greenmountainclub.org, or post it to social media and tag [@greenmountainclub](https://www.instagram.com/greenmountainclub) and [@watercolorwanderer](https://www.instagram.com/watercolorwanderer) for a chance a prize from GMC! We'll pick a random winner from all submissions received by November 1.

LOVE KATI'S ART?

Visit watercolorwanderer.com and mention the LTN for \$25 off a custom painting or 25% off a virtual painting class. Conditions apply; contact Kati for details.

About the Artist

Kati Christoffel is a watercolor artist based in Burlington, and a former GMC Caretaker. She loves being outside anywhere, but Stratton Pond is her favorite place.

Kati paints Vermont landscapes, and loves painting outdoors. You can follow her adventures on Instagram at [@watercolorwanderer](https://www.instagram.com/watercolorwanderer), and go to her website, www.watercolorwanderer.com to commission a painting or join a painting class.





The Varying Roles of GMC Caretakers

From Stratton Pond to Mount Mansfield's Summit



Kate Songer

BY SUMMER'S END the GMC's two Long Trail Patrol crews, its backcountry construction crew, and 14 caretakers are furiously ranging the state, doing trail work, coordinating a helicopter airlift, conducting the summer-to-fall staff transition, so they are not readily available. Still, we caught up with two caretakers, between stirring poop and chatting with hikers, to get a unique look at the job.

Since 1969 GMC has positioned summer caretakers – formerly known as ranger-naturalists – at 14 high-use and fragile sites along the Green Mountains. We still have 14 sites, many the same. But the caretaker role has grown and changed as the outdoor recreationist community has evolved.

KATE SONGER returned to GMC for her second year, serving as the lead caretaker on Mount Mansfield. And **EVA GERSTLE**, also a returnee, monitors Stratton Pond by canoe, squarely in the middle of the fabled “AT bubble,” when most Appalachian Trail thru hikers pass through.

How would you describe your job?

KATE: In addition to privy duty, greeting and educating hikers, and maintaining seven side trails, I am responsible for the wellbeing and performance of five other caretakers in an emotionally demanding job. I make the schedule for the mountain. Usually we have a caretaker at the mountain visitor center and another on The Chin [the true summit]. I schedule group work days, vital for big projects like replacing puncheon and stringing long stretches of trail. I feel a special responsibility to deal with the extra-gross stuff: poop, vomit, etc. Yep.

EVA: This is my second year as Stratton Pond caretaker. Eight privies in my range, six molderers and two composters, require consistent maintenance. I greet hikers and overnights at Stratton Pond Shelter and Stratton View Tent Site, collecting fees and enforcing guidelines on where folks can hike and camp.

We're in the midst of a major transition at the pond, so I did a lot of research about the area's history and natural qualities. I talk with hikers about the “old days” when the site was owned by International Paper

(today it's the Green Mountain National Forest), and was logged and covered by trash. I explain how GMC's management plan focuses on restoration of the pond shore, and the welfare of the loons, beavers, herons, and plants here.

What makes your site unique?

KATE: Mount Mansfield is the highest peak in the state, so it's very popular. People can hike many side trails, drive the toll road to the visitor center, or take the gondola to the Cliff House and hike to The Chin from there. We get mostly day visitors who may not be familiar with backcountry or hiking ethics, so our alpine vegetation education is vital. One-hundred-five of Vermont's 110 acres of alpine vegetation are on Mansfield, where **eight endangered plant species are often almost underfoot on heavily trafficked trails (see photo, opposite page).**

EVA: Stratton Pond is the busiest overnight backcountry site in Vermont, and an iconic site for many Vermonters who remember hiking here decades ago. It's on both the AT and the LT, so we get lots of thru-hikers. It's also a relatively simple backpack with a few loop hike



Stratton Pond Caretaker Eva Gerstle canoes to Stratton View to collect overnight fees.



PHOTO BY KATE SONGER

View from Trail of eroded black crowberry on Mount Mansfield, June 2022

options, so we get many weekenders and kids too.

For ten years we've been implementing a new management plan focusing on the pond's ecological health. We've closed and relocated trails away from most of the pond's edge, and moved campsites away from the fragile shoreline. Many visitors have both old maps and old memories, and I try to explain why the new plan prioritizes conservation.

What are some of the challenges of your job?

KATE: I have to remind myself not to fall into an us-versus-them mentality with visitors who are new to the mountain. I try to greet everyone who comes up the toll road, which is sometimes 450 in a morning. That can get exhausting, especially when many of them don't want to hear my spiel about alpine vegetation. Also, as a woman on the trail I sometimes get questions or microaggressions. I like to be feminine; I often wear earrings and skirts or dresses, but I also carry puncheon on my shoulder and have authority on the mountain.

Working as a caretaker is a really weird job. You're mountain frolicking, talking to a lot of strangers, telling them about cool plants, stirring poop while it's raining, and doing strenuous trail work. Sometimes it doesn't feel like work. Other times it feels extremely exhausting, both mentally and



PHOTO BY KATE SONGER

Closeup of eroded black crowberry on Mount Mansfield, June 2022

physically. But knowing I have the support of my coworkers and boss, Nigel Bates, GMC Field Supervisor, to get through the hard times helps a ton.

EVA: One challenge for me is the size of the range I cover, and figuring out how to prioritize everything. I have to accept that I won't get to everything, but when I have a composting run going at a privy, I really have to stir it every week, and one of my composters is an eight-mile hike each way.

Also, no matter how many signs we post at privies, people continue to pee in the composters. That adds so much liquid that a composting run takes much longer – eight weeks rather than six – and the material is heavier and harder to move, since we have to add so much bark mulch to soak up moisture.

Another challenge is effectively yet firmly communicating the relocations and trail closures at Stratton Pond, which some folks don't agree with or think don't apply to them. People remember hiking all the way around the pond in the '70s and '80s, and even ten years ago.

Some plants can grow only in the first seven feet from the shoreline. Those were just getting annihilated, and dirt from the trails was washing into the pond. But the new plan works. I can paddle along the east shore where we closed the trail eight years ago, and the regrowth is impressive.

Some folks ignore me, ignore the

signs, and even make up lies when I try to redirect them from hiking around the pond or from pitching rogue camps. I try to keep it fun, though: sometimes I'll intercept hikers on a closed portion of trail and ask them to swim back to the established camp. Many are up for it!

What do you want hikers to know most about visiting your site or the Green Mountains in general?

KATE: AllTrails (a common hiking website and app providing user-generated information) is often inaccurate, and doesn't have enough information for all the little-used side trails on Mansfield. Get a map, use TrailFinder, and do your research.

"Plants grow by inches and die by feet"—a good reminder to always watch where you step in the alpine zone or on shorelines.

EVA: If the privy says don't pee in it, please don't! We've had several "privy emergencies" this year where bins filled, and we were racing the clock to complete a composting run with too much moisture.

Also, if you think it's just you hiking around the shoreline, peeing in the privy, or stepping on vegetation on the summit, so it won't have an impact, remember you're not the only one doing so. We see about 100,000 visitors on Mansfield every year and, 40 to 60 overnights at Stratton Pond every weekend. We all play a part in protecting this wonderful natural resource.



Eva "inverts the cone" at the open-air moldering privy at North Bourn Pond.



Mid-Season Update

IT'S ANOTHER BUSY field season here at GMC, and we're in the midst of it all as this issue goes to print. I'll have a full season report in the winter edition, but here are a few highlights of the season so far:

The **Long Trail Patrol crew**, led by Byron Bixler and self-nicknamed The Picks, spent much of the summer working at Stratton Pond, finalizing an LT/AT relocation as well as the spur leading down to the Willis Ross clearing. They also completed the corridor leading up to the future Stratton View Shelter. Elsewhere, they spent two weeks completing a relocation on the Bucklin Trail. As for their counterpart, the **Long Trail Patrol crew** on the Burrows Trail, led by Sam Kenney, you can get a detailed update on their summer on page 8, as well as the Volunteer Long Trail Patrol's work on page 17.

The **Backcountry Construction Crew**, led by Scout Phillips, has been marching us closer to our goal of replacing all pit privies on the Long Trail. They buttoned up 2021 privy work at **Melville Nauheim** and **Kid Gore** shelters and installed new privies at **Old Job** Shelter and **Stoney Brook** Shelter. They installed a new roof at **Kid Gore** with support from the Connecticut Section; jacked and plumbed **Puffer Shelter** in anticipation of roof work to be completed by the Burlington Section; and prepped and coordinated a successful helicopter drop at the **Sunrise Shelter**.

Volunteers have been instrumental this season in supplementing our construction work, and we look forward to completing several high-profile projects with their help this fall.

Look forward to final season details in the next issue.

—KEEGAN TIERNEY,
DIRECTOR OF FIELD PROGRAMS



PHOTO BY EMMA SERECAN

Caretakers receive a materials drop at the new Seth Warner site. GMC conducted a helicopter airlift in late August.



PHOTO BY SCOUT PHILLIPS

Backcountry Construction Crew members work on the new moldering privy at Old Job Shelter.



PHOTO BY KEVIN HART

Crew Lead Byron adds crushed rocks to "geocells" on the Willis Ross spur trail relocation at Stratton Pond.



PHOTO BY LIZ PALMER

A group of high school students from Overland Summers helped carry lumber to the Old Job site to build a new privy.

Volunteer Long Trail Patrol Returns after Two Years

Volunteers Learn More than Just Trail Maintenance

After a two-year pandemic hiatus, the Green Mountain Club re-introduced the **Volunteer Long Trail Patrol** for six weeks this summer. One of six volunteer crews run in partnership with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, this unique trail crew lets people from all over the world try trail crew life in one-week hitches on the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail in southern Vermont.

How does a volunteer crew differ from a pro crew, you may wonder? In terms of work, not much, says GMC Volunteer and Education Coordinator Lorne Currier. “The quantity or speed of the work may differ, since there is a learning curve, but the quality level and type of trail maintenance is really the same as a professional crew.”

This year’s VLTP spent the season on a three-section “turnpike,” hardening about 100 yards of muddy, boggy trail in Dunville Hollow, about 3.5 miles south of the crossing of Vermont Route 9 east of Bennington. The project consisted of two sections of “half pike,” consisting of a single retaining wall backfilled with crushed rock and mineral soil, and one section of traditional turnpike, crushed rock and soil contained between two walls. Crews ranging from four to six people were led by GMC newcomers Dylan Mark and Maya Heikkinen, who provided training and supervision for safe and skilled rock work.

Volunteers came from all walks of life, from college students through retirees, with a common interest in outdoor recreation and conservation. Janet Anderson, a volunteer during week five, is a recreation technician on a national forest in Ohio, where she manages campgrounds and 90 miles of hiking and cycling trails. Her team mostly cuts brush, so she joined the GMC crew partly to gain knowledge of trail construction for her team. Some other volunteers had been Long Trail Patrol members in seasons between 1988 and 2021, and some had no experience.

VLTP weeks run from Thursday evening through Tuesday, to increase access for those

holding jobs. Maya and Dylan took a hands-on approach to training, changing slightly each week as they learned and adapted to skill levels in each crew. They conducted formal tool safety training each Friday. However, most training took place on the job. “We found that having people start work earlier, rather than watching us do endless demonstrations, is the better way,” explained Dylan. “It allows us to make progress on the project while they are learning.”

It’s seriously tough work, not for everyone, according to Janet. “I’m familiar with trail work, but I’ve never used a rockbar quite like this,” she said. “At first, I felt like I’d been deadlifting for an hour.” Crew leaders encourage breaks and ergonomic tool use to reduce overwork and risk of injury.

The short hitches are another challenge. Trail crews become tightly bonded teams, and must learn each other’s strengths and solve problems together. It can be tough to forge such bonds in just a few days, though by day four of week five volunteers were comfortable leading a post-lunch stretching session and speculating on the tools they would most want to replace a human limb.



VLTP member, left, and leader Dylan Mark admire their nicknamed rocks creating a new retaining wall.



Week Five crew members Andrew, Maya, Janet, Will, and Emily pause from their work while leaders Maya and Dylan look on in the background.

Dylan and Maya looked for opportunities to connect each new crew to the work by volunteers who had preceded them. To lighten the mood while working hard, each crew nicknamed the rocks they set. “I look forward to visiting Will, Burrow, Scooch, Spike, Gumdrops and others when I hike through in the future,” said Kristen Pizarro, a volunteer in weeks one and two.

With challenge come great learning opportunities, Kristen observed. “VLTP is an opportunity to work with teams of people in true collaboration,” she explained. “There are not many places in life where people really problem-solve organically, and can speak up and contribute ideas but also value and listen to input from other people. I had that experience on the trail crew this year, and hope that future volunteers will come in with the same open and willing mindset that volunteers had this year. That experience is what makes me most want to return to the crew next year.”



“Their work will give hikers a dry and firm tread to walk on for decades into the future.” — Keegan Tierney

PHOTO BY CHLOE MILLER

PHOTO BY PETER HEINRICH

PHOTO BY MAYA HEIKKINEN



Sections Help Build Trail Support and Community

Bennington Section Helps Launch Inaugural Bennington TrailFest

HAVING BECOME AN OFFICIAL Appalachian Trail Community in 2021, Bennington celebrated with its first annual **Bennington TrailFest** on July 30 this year. The festival celebrated Bennington's energized downtown, only five miles from the Long Trail/Appalachian crossing of Vermont Route 9 in Woodford, as well as the hikers who pass through or nearby.

About two hundred attended, of which 40 to 60 were LT or AT thru or section hikers. Volunteers shuttled hikers to and from the crossing, and hikers received all the comforts of home: camp sites, short term backpack storage, a charging station, free showers, a meal, and coupons for downtown businesses.

"A lot of people are interested, not only thru hikers but folks who just like going out for a day, or to an overlook for an hour," said Tracy Lind, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's New England

Regional Manager. "A lot of folks are also interested in protecting the greater landscape. This is a fantastic turnout."

Green Mountain Club Bennington Section volunteers set up a table with maps and guidebooks, photos, and demos of backpacking and hiking gear. They demonstrated proper food storage techniques, including bear bag hangs and bear canisters. Ann and Billy Lyons hosted a Hiker Chat Q&A session, and a Leave No Trace Master Educator led activities based on the seven LNT principles.

There were "tons of compliments from hikers who are getting a terrific impression of Bennington and helping impact our local economy," said Jonah Spivak, AT Community volunteer and local business owner after the TrailFest. "We have set the stage for an annual event."

— SILVIA CASSANO, BENNINGTON AT COMMUNITY COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR



Bennington members



Bennington member Billy Martin hosts the Hiker Chat



Northeast Kingdom Section Hosts Second Annual Brighton Trails Day

BRIGHTON TRAIL DAYS is an annual event to celebrate and introduce folks to the Kingdom Heritage Trail System, a 20-mile network championed by the late Jean Haigh and other GMC Northeast Kingdom Section members, taking place close to the anniversary of the original grand opening in June, 2019. This year a few dozen hikers gathered under the Brighton Town Pavilion and joined volunteers for guided hikes around Gore Mountain, Middle Mountain, Bluff Mountain, the North Branch of the

Nulhegan River, and the Shoreline Trail on Spectacle Pond.

According to John Predom, NEK Section President, "The weather was fantastic, the atmosphere was blissful, and as always, it was great to see all the happy faces. None of this would be possible without our amazing GMC NEK volunteers!" He said Cathi Brooks had proposed Brighton Trails Day partly to honor Jean after her passing.

The Kingdom Heritage Trail System opened 20 years after GMC submitted a



Hiking Trail Corridor Management Plan to the State of Vermont. The proposal envisioned a network of foot trails connecting the existing paths on Bluff Mountain in Island Pond, Gore Mountain in Avery's Gore, and the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Brunswick. Volunteers from the Northeast Kingdom Section maintain about 40 miles of trails, including the 20-mile Kingdom Heritage Trail and trails on Mounts Pisgah and Hor, and on Haystack Mountain and others.

Caretakers Create Junior Caretaker Workbook to Engage Children in the Backcountry

By Eva Gerstle

Last summer as a caretaker at Stratton Pond I noticed lots of kids and families used the four-mile, relatively flat hike to the pond for first-time backpacks. They often arrived early in the day, with plenty of time for exploring, swimming, and enjoying unstructured play.

I thought, why not create a fun, educational and low-impact nature activity for these kids? So the Junior Caretaker workbook was born, inspired partly by the National Park Service's Junior Ranger program. The 14-page book teaches Leave No Trail principles and the ecology of the Long Trail, and enables each child to add their own flair to the book. I've already inducted 15 junior caretakers who will carry knowledge of stewarding the Long Trail through their (hopefully long) hiking careers!

During two weeks of field staff training in early June, at least six caretakers and

trail crew members made the booklet a reality, using pens and paper on the porch of the Back Forty, our off-duty housing facility in Waterbury Center. The pages we brainstormed included:

- "Seek-and-Find" examples of Leave No Trace principles, featuring a detailed campsite drawing by Atlas Cooper.
- A Campsite Scavenger Hunt by Emma Sekercan.
- A Q&A on backcountry privies by Anya Steele.
- A beautiful watercolor painting of a loon on a pond, by Emily Hollander.

Our prototype complete, Emma, Anya and I wrestled with the GMC copier until we had a few dozen workbooks for our sites. We enjoyed bonding with fellow field staffers while combining creative styles, and shared an experience despite our postings at different sites on different schedules.

Northern and southern caretakers often keep in touch during the season by sending handwritten letters along the trail via thru-hikers. We sometimes shared stories of our latest Junior Caretaker graduates among other tales of life in the woods.



As I worked with kids this summer, I received positive reviews of the book from parents and children alike. I awarded a prize when a child completed the activity book, and paged through it with them, discussing animal tracks they matched and the trail tool they designed, and answering questions about privies and the Long Trail. We talked about their favorite pages and what they thought about backpacking.

The Junior Caretaker book was a great way to open conversations with shy children as they showed off their work, and the book explained caretaking principles in a fun and fresh way. "Education is the number one way to create the next generation of stewards," observed Brian Lamoureux, the southern lead caretaker. "These booklets provide kids with an avenue to learn independently or with their parents."

Find a digital copy of the Junior Caretaker booklet online, and take it on your next hike on the Long Trail System!



◀ Junior Caretaker Edda and her dad work on the booklet near the shores of Stratton Pond



◀ Field Staff relax and create pages of the Junior Caretaker booklet on an evening off during training

"Seek-and-Find" examples of Leave No Trace principles, featuring a detailed campsite drawing by Atlas Cooper.





Six Stellar Volunteers Honored

After a two-year hiatus, the club returned to an in-person annual



Nancy McClellan receives President's Award from Howard VanBenthuyssen

Nancy McClellan

President's Award

Nancy McClellan has contributed amazingly to the well-being of the club, both present and future. She first came to GMC after hiking the Long Trail with her son, and has been hooked on hiking and volunteering her time to the club ever since.

As chair of the Long Trail Legacy Campaign, Nancy led the club through a highly successful three-year, \$4 million capital campaign, navigating the uncertainty of a global pandemic, and put in countless hours of work coordinating both staff and volunteers. She also managed an impressive portfolio of donors, and solicited gifts herself to help the club meet its ambitious goal. Now Nancy has become co-chair of the club's development committee, which is charged with helping the organization meet its annual operating budget.

Most recently, former GMC Vice President Amy Kelsey had to step down, and Nancy stepped into that role, an immense help to the volunteer leadership. Her high energy and motivation make her a pleasure to work with, and her continuing contributions are highly worthy of a President's Award.

PRESENTED BY GMC PRESIDENT
HOWARD VANBENTHUYSEN

Scott Christiansen

President's Award

Since joining the Green Mountain Club and its Laraway Section in 1996, Scott Christiansen has been a dedicated trails and shelters volunteer. He has served as the section's trails and shelters chair, the section president, and the GMC Trails and Shelter Committee Chair. He spent many hours helping build Spruce Peak Shelter in 1998, and has been its adopter ever since. Today he is also the adopter of the Davis Neighborhood side trail in Johnson and the Long Trail from Corliss Camp to Tree Farm Road in Eden.

Scott has always inspired section members and friends to join hikes and help with shelter and trail work, of which he has a long resume, having contributed to: the Butler Lodge renovation in 2000; demolition

and rebuilding of Laura Woodward shelter in 2000; and construction of privies at Spruce Ledge Shelter, Corliss Camp, Roundtop Shelter, and Churchill Scott Shelter. He also helped with fly-in and installation of 200 feet of puncheon on Laraway Mountain, and is a loyal participant in his section's regular maintenance outings.

Thank you to Scott for his dedication and devotion to the Long Trail's improvement.

PRESENTED BY GMC PRESIDENT
HOWARD VANBENTHUYSEN



Edmund Guest receives President's Award from Mike DeBonis

Edmund Guest

President's Award

For many years Ed was the editor and publisher of *Ramblings*, the Northeast Kingdom Section's newsletter, before stepping down in 2021. His editorial endeavors kept the section informed and entertained. Earlier in his NEK Section tenure, Ed was the section membership coordinator, maintaining communications with the main club and regularly updating the section on membership data. During the early years of the NEK Section's existence, Ed was an energetic and effective lead liaison for the first GMC Annual Meeting the section hosted, at the Burke Mountain Ski Resort in 2004.



Scott Christiansen receives President's Award from Howard VanBenthuyssen

at GMC's 112th Annual Meeting

meeting, held June 12th on the lawn at GMC Headquarters.



In addition to his official roles, he enthusiastically participated in numerous wood stacking sessions at the GMC's Wheeler Pond camps; always offered sage advice at the NEK Section's Executive Committee meetings; and was a friendly and welcomed presence on NEK Section outings. Ed's service to the section has been invaluable.

Ed exemplifies the strength of the club's dedicated section volunteers.

PRESENTED BY MIKE DeBONIS
AT THE NEK ANNUAL MEETING

Carol Langley

Honorary Life Membership

Carol Langley of the Connecticut Section is an inspiration to hikers and backpackers, young, old and in between. A 1980 posting about a Connecticut Section backpacking trek in the Hartford Courant led Carol to an adventurous 40-plus-year tenure with the club. Carol has led several hundred GMC events—hikes, backpacking trips, snowshoe treks and canoe or kayak excursions—over those years. Leading hikes wasn't enough; she enthusiastically served her section in various positions: editor of *Trail Talk*, the section newsletter, for 18 years; and section president for 12 years.

Carol is no stranger to club awards, having received a President's Award in 2016 and a five-year service patch for her work conducting trail maintenance.

Carol is an accomplished outdoorswoman and enthusiastic leader, always eager to share her vast knowledge of our natural world and encouraging others to join the GMC.

PRESENTED BY ANDREW HOOD

Phil Hazen

Honorary Life Membership

"Everyone knows that Phil Hazen has three lungs—one for each leg, and another for talking." This longtime Burlington Section volunteer is most known for his valiant recruitment efforts, always stopping to chat with hikers encountered on trails near and far and pitch GMC membership to them.

He has served the Burlington Section as president, outings chair, trails chair, and unofficial recruitment officer. He volunteers as a trail adopter, a skilled chainsawyer, workshop instructor, and trip leader. He is a two-time President's Award recipient and holds various other honors relating to his tireless service in membership engagement and fundraising.

Phil knows that meaningful volunteer recognition is key to maintaining a motivated volunteer community, so he had custom t-shirts made for returning Burlington Section volunteers. In that sense, it is even more rewarding to congratulate him on GMC's highest honor.

PRESENTED BY TED ALBERS



Ted Albers presents Phil Hazen with his Honorary Life Membership award



John Page presents Lee Allen with his Honorary Life Membership award

Lee Allen

Honorary Life Membership

Lee Allen first came to the Green Mountain Club as a Stratton Pond caretaker in the '70s, around the time the caretaker program was born. Since then he's held many formal volunteer roles: board member, board secretary, and member of multiple committees. He also has applied his analytical skills to help the club benefit from its membership surveys, strategic planning, field staff alumni record keeping, Long Trail System Management Plan revisions, and governance policy reviews.

An avid hiker, Lee is a two-time Long Trail end-to-ender, and readily shares his experiences through presentations, leading hikes, and writing articles in the *Long Trail News*. This summer, Lee is planning a third end-to-end hike, 50 years after his first one.

With Lee's deep knowledge and experience of all things GMC, he serves as a valuable source of wisdom for staff and volunteer leaders.

PRESENTED BY JOHN PAGE



Reading the Landscape with GMC's Stewardship Assistant Dana Welch

I grew up immersed in the outdoors as a farm kid in southwestern Idaho, but after getting a bachelor's degree in sports management my career took a turn for the indoors. In the spring of 2020, as I homeschooled my seven-year-old in the early days of the pandemic, I got the itch to get another degree.

Choosing a path wasn't difficult. I had always wanted to study environmental science, so I enrolled at the Community College of Vermont the next day. To gain experience in a conservation occupation, I joined GMC as this year's AmeriCorps Stewardship Assistant, sponsored by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

This gave me the opportunity to help with a tree inventory at the Meltzer parcel, a 1,870-acre tract owned and managed by the GMC in Lowell that includes Belvidere Mountain. Together with Forester Harris Roen we hiked and bushwhacked all over the parcel, collecting data on what types of trees, plants, and wildlife are on the property. Harris will use that data to update to the property's forest management plan.

Signs of Life

One day in late spring Mollie and I were headed back on the Forester's Trail (a Long Trail side trail) when she pointed up at a beech tree and said, "Look at the size of that bear nest!"

"Is that like a catbird, but some sort of bear-bird?" I wondered at first.

Not quite. A so-called bear nest is created when a bear climbs to the crown of a beech tree and pulls in branches to reach and eat beech nuts. Bent, broken and discarded branches form a pile that resembles a huge nest in the tree.

Once she explained, I noticed the claw marks rising up the trunk, ending where the bear had perched for its meal of oily nuts to fatten for the winter. I've since seen bear nests all over wooded parcels,



Woodrush

and have enjoyed pointing them out to volunteers monitoring the boundaries of trail corridors. The best time to spot them is late spring or fall, when the trees have fewer leaves. In addition to claw marks we saw lots of scat, but I never saw a bear.

Another time, Harris and I came across an area of hobblebush (*Viburnum lantanoides*) that appeared to have been mowed to a uniform height. We concluded that moose had browsed there, but couldn't quite pinpoint why the particular height.

We encountered several moose rubs — gouges and grooves in a small tree caused by bull moose rubbing their antlers to remove velvet, a dead layer of skin and blood vessels that nourished the antlers while they formed. Fresh rubs are common during the rut, or breeding season. Most were on striped maple trees, varying in height from about three feet to well above my reach. Striped maple is often called moosewood, because moose browse its branches, and strip and eat its bark, as well as rub its trunk.

Sights and Sounds

During my days on the Meltzer parcel, I heard the songs of warblers and wrens, and



Bear Nest

even the reclusive Bicknell's Thrush. I spotted a rare small-flower woodrush (*Luzula parviflora*), a subalpine plant species, and a black-and-gold flat millipede (*Apheloria virginensis*). One day we decided to count the number of small brooks we had to cross to return to the Frank Post trailhead parking lot. We stopped counting at 25.

It astonishes me how much life is out there if you just take a little time to look. Animals, plants and even people can go unseen when we rush. I decided to get a degree in environmental science partly so I could stop and see the wonders the world offers us that we often miss as we journey along a trail.

As my time as the GMC Stewardship Assistant ends, I will take these insights, memories and knowledge on to my next stretch of trail.

Dana Welch is completing his six-month term as GMC Stewardship Assistant as part of career pivot. He lives in Lyndonville with his wife and two children.



Why You'll Always Remember Your First Crew Leader

BY EMERSON ROBERTS

My first crew leader was called Lumberjack, or LJ for short, and he always carried a double bit ax with him. He towered over everyone with his lean, toned body with unruly long hair and a beard that was clearly a prized possession. He was my introduction to the GMC world, and boy, was he a good one.

I had decided to take a gap year after high school, and my very first adventure after graduating was volunteering with an Appalachian Trail crew in West Virginia and New Jersey. That

gap year extended and extended and extended, and I never returned to school. I was elated when I found out the next year that you could get paid for trail work. I sent in my application to the Green Mountain Club and crossed my fingers. I was hired and spent my next two falls in the most beautiful place on Earth, with the most rewarding job imaginable.

In 2018 I boarded a nine-hour bus ride from New Jersey with nothing but my burnt orange camping backpack. I'm five-foot-one, and although the bag was personally fit at REI, it still towered over me. I got picked up from the bus station by GMC's Field Supervisor, Ilana Copel, and thus began my journey.

During one of my first weeks on the trail, LJ laughed at me when I tried to build a fire. Everyone else was huddled in the shelter hiding from the wet autumn that I so tenderly embraced. I was used to well-dried Adirondack logs from my summer camp job, so I tried to build a log cabin out of damp twigs. LJ gawked, but he didn't try to stop me. In time he taught me that the bird nest method works best in the foggy Vermont mountains, and that you can dry sticks by placing them over a fire that you already have going.

I'll never forget when LJ almost died right in front of our eyes. We were all having cowboy coffee at our spike site before heading to the work site for the day. (Definition: mix coffee

grounds with water, filterless, and let the grounds settle. Pro tip: they never completely do.) While sipping on our hot, textured coffee, we heard a big crash. A birch tree fell right on LJ's sleeping hammock. He had slept in that morning, too. Got up just on time I guess. He went around frantically felling all the other dead trees around the campsite with his small ax, so it wouldn't happen again. Ever since then I always look up before placing my tent. Nature does what it wants—and our only job is to always look up.



He could move 100-pound rocks all by himself. He let me help, not because he needed the help, but to teach me how. The size difference between us was laughable, but it's not about size. It's about proper technique and a can-do attitude. He had a way of explaining things that made me realize how special trail work is. It was so clear that he was born to be a crew leader.

He encouraged me to break out of my shell when I was still just

a dewy-eyed 19-year-old who only knew one thing: that I was happy to be in the woods holding a rockbar. My small stature, my tendency to take everything to heart, my relative newness to trail work, my struggle to figure out what to pack to eat for the week—he walked me through all of it. By my second year on the trail I was confident, goofy, and always had lunch planned ahead.

I didn't really grow up with strong male figures in my life. Not only did I find my footing as a crew member, but I also found a role model in LJ. I think we can all aspire to be a little more patient, lighthearted, and dedicated like he taught me to be.

Emerson "Torch" Roberts worked as a Long Trail Patrol Crew member in 2018 and 2019. Now they're training to become an herbalist. They write about gardening to make a living. Lumberjack was Long Trail Patrol lead in 2018, currently lives in the NEK, and still builds trails.



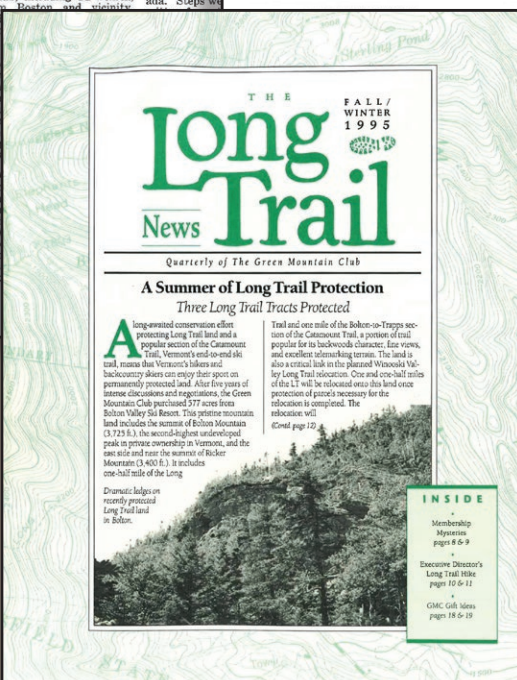
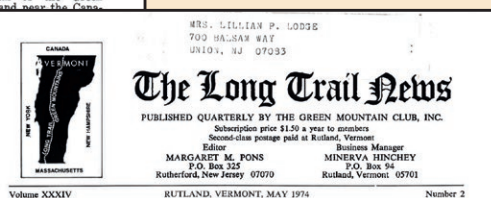
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The Long Trail News is Turning 100!



THAT'S RIGHT—the club's news has been showing up at members' doorsteps on a quarterly basis since December 1922, when it was titled *The Green Mountain News*. It was started by Edward Sprague Marsh, who served as editor until his death in 1939. The upcoming winter issue will be a tribute to 100 years of continuous publishing. Please send your thoughts and observations on the *Long Trail News* of yesteryear – and the future – by November 1, 2022 for inclusion in the special issue.

TELL US >> What does the Long Trail News mean to you?

Ken Hertz of the Montpelier Section has diligently published scanned PDFs of nearly every issue—390 available for browsing at bit.ly/LongTrailNewsArchive

We are missing one issue—Volume 12, Number 4, from August 1939. It's been missing for some time, as noted in the November 1959 issue. How cool would it be if we could resurrect it from some member's long-lost dusty attic boxes in time for the centennial? If you think you have it, please contact **Chloe Miller** at cmiller@greenmountainclub.org