

The Trail Talk

VOL XXXVII NO. I

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Club Information: Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President:

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Trail Talk: Published four times a year in January, April, July and October. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Reports of activities and articles must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Send articles to:

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Membership Dues: Annual dues are as follows:

Individual Adult	\$ 30.00
Family	\$ 40.00
Senior (70 or older)	\$ 20.00
Nonprofit or Youth Group	\$ 40.00
Business or Corporation	\$100.00

Dues are payable by December 31 for the following calendar year. Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

Website: <http://www.conngmc.com>



President's Message...

Our Club is growing again with the year ending showing a membership of 102. We would like to welcome our new members in the past year:

*Peter Dabbs
Donna J Mourar
Sandra Hassan
Marilyn & Walter Plowman
Douglas S. Hutton
Polly Silva
Frederick A Iannotti
Chuck Rexroad
Benjamin Laureano
Kevin J Ryan*

Hope you can join us on some or all of the up coming activities for late winter and early spring. Let's keep our club growing by staying active and inviting our friends and family to join us. If you have question about planning an activity please contact me or any other leader for their help. New leaders and ideas are always welcome.

Carol A. Langley

**Long Trail/AT Maintenance, VT
August 15 – 17, 2003**

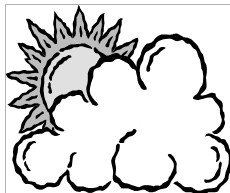
Mother Nature was more kind this trip and let us arrive & depart without a downpour. However, some unfortunate workers on Saturday did get caught in a thunderstorm while a few got back to the shelter before the cloud burst. Sarah O'Hare, Laura Richardson and Dick Krompegal worked Friday going south clipping. Marge Hackbarth visited the beaver pond and found three uncommon plants insectivorous, pitcher plants and round leaf sundew and blue bottle gentian. Jeff Fenelon, a veteran of the Black Brook Bridge construction project, Frank Maine and his friend David Balaski, arrived later Friday. Frank's generosity with his food and beverages earned him favoritism with the through hikers. One left an accolade for Frank and harsh words for two of the ladies in our group. Our revenge was noted in the log of his ingratitude. Working in mud left by the previous rains wasn't easy.

On Saturday everyone except David, who cleaned up the camp and gathered firewood, went north blazing, clipping brush & cleaning the waterbars. Jim Robertson arrived early Saturday, dropped his pack in the shelter then set to work too.

Heeding the advice of Sarah we erected a tarp over the picnic table before we left for work. The birch bark gathered by David made it possible to build a fire with damp wood. He also made some wonderful two pronged sticks to roast our hot dogs. Frank kept boiling fresh corn. Four hikers who were much nicer than the previous night's group enjoyed sharing all of our goodies. Thanks to Frank the wading pond created at the spring was dismantled and the spring was restored to its original shape.

Sunday all but Frank and David went to Grout Pond where some hiked and others had a swim in the crystal clear water. Dick & Marge elected to go down by Rt. 7 and ran into the mother of all detours- it was the 226th anniversary of the revolutionary battle of Bennington, Aug 16, 1777.

Thanks To All The Workers-
Laura Richardson, Sarah O'Hare, Frank Maine, David Balaski, Jim Robertson, Jeff Fenelon, Dick Krompegal
Written By Marge Hackbarth



**Mattabesett Trail Maintenance
September 20, 2003**

After breakfast at Guida's we spotted a car at Black Pond then drove to Rt. 68. Our main task for the day was to walk from Rt. 68 to Black Pond comparing the write-up in the walk book to the actual trail. A new edition of the blue Connecticut Walk Book will be out this year so all changes in the trail description have to be updated. We also clipped & picked up some trash.

Thanks to Sarah O'Hare, Ken Williamson.

By Dick Krompegal

**Kid Gore Work Trip, VT
October 3 - 5 2003**

Unseasonably cold temperatures and rain didn't faze nine members who joined Dick Krompegal Friday. Arriving early Dick took advantage of the dry weather to blaze north to the vista. Sarah O'Hare, Laura Richardson and Kevin Karl did trail maintenance. Marge Hackbarth did cleaning and trimming in the shelter area which boasts a beautiful view. Our reward was a brilliant red glow in the sky Saturday morning- of course that meant rain was coming. Dave Chatel, Grace King & Jack Sanga did some serious improvements of the view and chopped down one big tree.

Friday, after dark, Ken Williamson arrived to applause from all who marveled at his skill in finding the route in the near dark. The evening was spent sharing food. Jack really knew how to prepare an interesting meal- grilled steak! Many found their equipment somewhat inadequate for the cold, damp miserable night. Saturday the weather deteriorated as the day went on. Member Don Woodbridge, who was doing this section of the Long Trail, waited around the shelter for his cousin Nancy Linher & her dog to join him. Marge was sure she would never show in the lousy weather. Don even started south to Glastenbury Shelter on Saturday but again convinced Nancy would come, he returned to Kid Gore. Amazingly late Saturday afternoon Nancy and her dog pulled in.

Despite the pouring rain the real gung-ho members set off to work clipping brush & to blaze before it started to rain. After working Saturday, now raining, the prospect of another cold night, especially with soaked boots, convinced half of the group to bail out. Those that stayed found the temperatures a little lighter but the air was cold & damp.

Sunday morning was dry so Don & Nancy continued on their hike. The remaining three members quickly packed up before Mother Nature changed he mind. It was a

strange day for the three mile hike out- sunshine, clouds, a little rain and one cloud that dumped sleet on us.

Many Thanks For The Help-

Sarah O'Hare, Laura Richardson, Grace King, Ken Williamson, Dave Chatel, Kevin Karl, Jack Sanga, Don Woodbridge, Nancy Linher

Written By Marge Hackbarth
Dick Krompegal

**Silver Hill Camping
October 11-12, 2003**

Another great weekend for our annual trip to the Silver Hill camping area on the Appalachian Trail in Cornwall! Despite coinciding with Columbus Day weekend, only one other hiker, an AT section hiker from Maryland, camped with us. My crew, including Brenna, her friend Kelsey, and Jimmy arrived first, and set up camp. We were soon joined by Kevin, Kathy, and Allison. The kids explored the usual attractions - the wooden swing, the big climbing rock, and the water pump (a failing seal made it tough to prime) - and migrated from tent to tent as the afternoon wore on. After dinner, as darkness set in, a waning full moon rose over the Housatonic River valley, but we retreated to our tents fairly early, while our Maryland friend chose to sleep under the stars..

By morning, the sky was clouding up, but we had time after breakfast to hike north up Silver Hill for some photos and acorn collecting. Returning to the campsite we finished packing and hiked down the hill, reaching the vehicles just as the rain started. Kevin, Kathy and Allison headed home to Norwalk and the rest of us stopped at the Berkshire General Store in Cornwall for sandwiches, snacks, and ice cream.

Backpackers: Jim, Brenna and Jimmy Robertson, Kelsey Champagne, Kevin and Allison Karl, Kathy Steffens

**AT Mass: Tyringham - Beartown Rd.
October 19, 2003**

Once again the weatherman predict showers for Sunday a.m. with clearing in the afternoon. As I reached Fairview Rd. in Monterey I saw Dan Zetterman waiting and five minutes later Sarah O'Hare arrived with a car full. We planned to hike from north to south, as it would be safer to be ascending rather than descending with the weather conditions.

The trail was very muddy as it meandered through a boggy area. We crossed several puncheons and fields

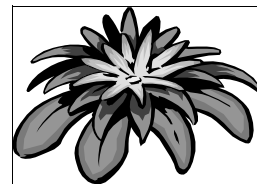
over bob-wire fencing. After crossing Jerusalem Rd., we started a steady climb over Cobble Hill. Leveling off we followed Hop Brook for a while where we found a nice campsite and gravel beach. As we reached the Shaker Campsite we decided to keep moving as all that was there was a "Privy" which was not adequate coverage from the weather for 5 people.

The hike was a series of switchbacks climbing the mountain. As we gained elevation the precipitation was changing to snow. Lora spotted a rock with a long narrow over hanging after sizing it up decided we all could fit. Henry then took a step trying to reach this rock and the next thing we saw was Henry "kissing another rock on the ground". Yes, things were getting slippery and the temperature was going down. Shivering we huddled together, Sarah didn't bake, Henry forgot the chocolate bar, where is our sugar to keep up our energy level. Yes, Lora to the Rescue homemade cake with chocolate chips and almonds. It was a short but sweet stop. Time to move on.

The trail in this area was lined Pine Needles and with Maiden Hair Ferns that had water droplets on them. As we climbed the leaves became covered with the snow. Down the other side and into a boggy area before we could hear the warnings from Sarah & Lora, Dan had his boots sucked in up to and over his ankles and had a struggle to get out of this quagmire. Making a wide turn to the right I avoided this mess. Next Sarah didn't make it crossing a brook and got her feet wet but washed off the mud. Thirteen years ago I did this section as a two night backpack trip and it was as dry as a bone.

Even though it rained all-day everyone enjoyed the beautiful fall foliage in the Berkshires. We were chilled to the bone so off we sped to Dunkin Donuts in Winsted for a hot beverage.

The following hikers endured this day Sarah O'Hare, Lora Miller, Henry Smith, Dan Zetterman, Carol Langlely



**Heublein Tower Foliage Hike
October 26, 2003**

On this iffy, cloudy day we had a good group turn out. Not the best day for viewing foliage. I decided to go the long way to the tower & explore part of a trail I had gotten lost on years before. I wanted to find out what I did wrong. We headed north on a side trail and walked almost to Rt. 185 and Penwood Park. At that point we picked the Metacomet Trail. We then followed it south to The Heublein Tower.

Several climbed the tower before we all ambled over to the pavilion to eat our lunch. The day was chilly so we didn't stay long before starting out walk back down the mountain.

Most of us ended the day with pizza and snatching some of Jimmy's calamari.

Jack Sanga took some pictures on the hike & they are at - <http://groups.aol.com/gmctt> in the pictures section, Heublein Tower Hike

Rich Chandler & friend Rich Nilson, Sarah O'Hare, Jack Sanga, Lora Miller, Jim Robertson & his son Jimmy, Steve Keri

By Dick Krompegal

Backpacking Bear MT section AT in NY November 7-9, 2003

Well according to John I have redeemed myself after the miserable Vermont backpacking trip in Sept. We were all thrilled to be a part of Regina's maiden backpacking trip. She did great too!

This weekend could not have gone better. We drove down on Friday night and stayed at the Bear Mt. Inn, a quaint old lodge on the Hudson River. On Saturday, we were up and on the trail around 8:30 am. It was a beautiful fall day. We set out to do our 10 miles from Harriman State Park, watching for trail signs carefully as leaves had covered the trail. After passing through the Lemon Squeezer, a series of rock formations, we hiked on and stopped to explore the Fingerboard Shelter.

Our destination was the William Brien Shelter which turned out to be a neat old stone shelter. We arrived there about 3pm. We shared the shelter with a group of Boy Scouts who were out doing wilderness survival. They were a friendly bunch of kids and we enjoyed chatting with them. They spoilt us with a wonderful campfire, which kept us warm as the temperatures by evening had dipped into the 20's. We were quite bundled and boy did that fire feel nice. We were privileged to participate in a flag retirement ceremony Sat evening, which was quite touching. We also had the opportunity to watch the full lunar eclipse. The sky was clear and we had a wonderful view from our shelter.

On Sunday we woke up to freezing temps. After a quick breakfast, we decided we'd better get moving. We had an 8 mile stretch, which proved to be a more challenging than our 10 miles the day before as we had to hike over three mountain peaks. The last peak was Bear Mountain, which, when arriving at the top, had a wonderful look out tower with a history of the region on the walls as you climbed the tower. The view

was beautiful and a real bonus to our day. After that, we began a deep descent back down to the cars, which awaited us at the Bear Mt Inn. We went out for our traditional pizza before heading back to CT. We look forward to the next stretch, which we scoped out to learn was Anthony's Nose. Hopefully we can do that stretch in the spring. Anyway this was a real fun weekend to be out in the woods and great company too. Thanks to all who participated.

Backpackers included Mandy Brink, John Bensenhaver, Dave Chatel and Regina Chatel.



AT Hike Rt. 55 to Rt.52 November 23, 2003

I had several inquires for this hike as the weatherman promised us a fine day. By 9:15 the group had arrived and was guided by Woody (Donald Woodbridge) from Amenia N.Y. on the back roads to Rt. 55. After crossing the highway we headed down an embankment, which lead us to a small wooden bridge that crossed Whaley Lake Stream. As most little streams, this year it had plenty of water as it rushed along. Next we crossed railroad tracks and started our climb to Depot Hill. As soon as the level ground was reached the faster hikers took off in a flash and left the slower hikers to poke along and see all the different kinds of ferns, evergreen trees and vernal pools. We came across an area, which appeared to be an old Indian burial site and a ceremonial ring. Near the trail was a formation of rocks that looked just like a chair facing east where a chief would sit. On both sides of the chair formation were similar rock formations that formed a circle, each was spaced evenly from the other. The place was just below a huge outcropping of rocks where there were probably caves.

Marching along we reached the others in our group. It was just about noontime and the search was on for the perfect lunch spot. Any of you who have hiked before know that the best spot is usually found just after you have finished lunch. Well we found some great rocks and a nice view and had lunch. Lora brought her sweet treats to finish off our lunch. We had only gone a few footsteps then we found a greater outcropping of rocks and a better view! Close enough to lunchtime we decided to take advantage of the spot and discuss the problems of the world and solve some health issues before we moved on. I think we finished the sweet treats also.

Now we started a descent into a hollow where we heard

the roar of the cars on I-84. Next we climbed an embankment and soon were crossing over 84 on Stormville Mountain Rd. The next section was very easy walking alongside a field and soon the parking lot was in view. Another section of AT 7.5 miles was completed. Thanks for joining me on this fine day.

Hikers: Steve Keri, Cathy Mulburn, Donald Woodbridge, Lora Miller, Bill Falconer and Carol Langley



by Steve Keri

**Catskills: Blackhead Range
November 27-28, 2003**

Well it was one of those unscheduled trips that just happen to pop up in time for the "Work Off The TurkeyFat" hike on the day after Thanksgiving. The 4 of us (Grace, Jack, his cousin Ron and myself) headed out of New Paltz on Friday morning leaving behind the Hostel we had stayed at the night before, and drove north to the top of the Catskills in overcast skies, drizzle and fog.

Arriving @8:45am at the trailhead that is wedged between Windham High Peak Range and The Blackhead Range, we all hopped in my car and drove up and around to our starting point at the beginning of the Blackhead Range. We started hiking on a gradual climb up the mountain passing a hunter who seemed to be lost.

As we continued to ascend the red marked Black Dome trail, the drizzle now picked up to a light rain and the stone-filled muddy trail became a little slicker. According to the map, the ascend to the top of the ridge was only a couple of miles, which as far as I was concerned was good because I wanted to be on top as soon as possible to hopefully take in the views.

As we continued our ascent, Ron filled us in on his many adventures of actual mountain climbing. Seems like he retired early and had been just hopping all over the world climbing major mountains up to 20 thousand feet, and found his stories to be rather interesting, motivating me more to start a beginner's course in climbing this winter.

As we neared the top of the range, we bagged Cole Mt. and were greeted with thick fog rolling in, windy condi-

tions and an increase in rain making for challenging conditions. I just love the feeling of being engulfed in fog- so peaceful, quiet and mysterious.

Moving along the Hemlock and Spruce covered Black Dome trail that followed the red marks up and down along the ridge, we passed through a couple more viewing spots that were totally enclaved with fog and blowing rain. The temperatures had now dropped quiet a bit and we all bundled up with more layers to keep warm and dry. I guess this is expected weather at @4,000 feet in the Catskills.

Well things were going pretty good until (according to the map) we came to the yellow trail which was supposed to take us pass Blackhead Mt and down and around the rim of the ridge to Acre Point. But the 2 tags that were marked yellow coming off the red, just abruptly ended at the top of Blackhead with no visible means of a continuing trail. So using better judgement we continued to follow the red marked trail. I didn't think it would have been a good idea to start bushwhacking in the fog and driving cold rain to try and locate the missing tags.

As we followed the red tags, the trail started descending quiet steeply and feeding off Jack's feeling that this trail was headed back towards the cars, we decided to take a compass reading on the map (by the way the map wasn't marked up to actual trail distance and icons) and it seemed we were heading in the right direction. So we proceeded in hopes of coming across the yellow trail. As we got to the bottom of the Blackdome, we did come to the yellow trail, but it was the other branch that leads straight up to the other side of the rim to the ridge. So a decision was made to climb this trail (because we didn't drive all this distance just to do a half day hike you know) and have lunch in the lean-to that according to the map, was located about half-way up.

So in the pouring rain and blowing wind, we climbed and climbed and climbed and, what? Got to the top and the sign said that the lean-to was another 1.2 miles down the Long Path and the hike distance back to the cars from where we were standing was another 5.6 miles.....this was figured out out by the team after the hike leader appeared lost and confused after he stated Where the hell are we? And someone commented that this is a typical GMC hike. (Good....I fit right in! HA! HA!).

I guess the map did not line up too well with what was posted, so we tossed the map idea, went with the trail postings, had a quick bite standing in the rain.... Noticed the clock had struck one (NO,.....nobody turned into a pumpkin), and using better team judgement we descended back down the same yellow trail we had just came up.

We probably would not have been able to finish the ridge and loop back to the cars without coming out in the dark (even though I was up for another confusing challenge) and some of

us might have been pushed to do the remaining miles, which goes against safety first for the group. Down at the bottom, we followed the red marked trail back out another 1.7 miles to our cars for a total of 7.5 mile hike...2 miles shy of original plan, (good thing part of the plan included side-escape trails). Picked my car up and went searching for a calorie-loading feed restaurant, and on Rte 23 we found one. By tire-screeching our way into the parking lot of a steak house, we all sat in the dining room, ordered something other than steak, and was entertained with background vocals of the hunter's language (sprinkled with the occasional vulgar word) coming from the bar area. Hey what do you want? This is BOONYVILLE Catskills U.S.A., and Grace showed us her pictures of her most recent trips to the Great Outdoors which included peak bagging with the AMC Boston chapter and GMC's very own Dick's Trail Maintenance.

We parted in rainy Catskill, NY and went our separate ways. Thanks to all who signed on and showed interest. There just might be more. (Oh Oh.....better get an up to date map.....heck, we just might wing it!) Until next peak, Happy Trails!

Hikers: Grace King, Jack Sanga, Ron Sanga
Trip Leader: Steve Keri

New Year's Hike: McLean Refuge January 1, 2004

At 10:00 we met in the parking lot of McLean Refuge for our Annual New Years Hike. Jim Robertson, Steve Keri, a possible new member Ray Byczko and Bill Falconer joined me for the event. We started out on the Horse Trail till we reached the junction of the Blue Trail, which would lead us to Spring Pond. After a few photos and checking out a small Cabin facing the pond, we moved on heading south around the pond and back to the woods road for a short distance. Then it was a right onto the Dark Blue Trail, which we followed until we came upon a Purple Trail. (The maps we had 1984 & 1987 didn't have the purple Trail but we hiked on). The trail following the BarnDoor Hills soon linked us with the North Trail and led us to Kettle Pond where we would have lunch. Along this trail we found an old McCormick manure spreader which the guys had quite a time checking out. The expert as to how this machine actually operated was Bill Falconer who grew up on a farm and had seen these in use. Apparently their fertilizing the land was very prosperous and now they are into spices!

It is very important to find the best spot for lunch. So we sat along the banks of Kettle Pond. With a little breeze blowing it kept the temperature down even with the sun out. Ray fired up his Peak Stove and cooked up some noodles as the rest of us had sandwiches and snacks. No sweet treats today as our bakers were not present. Back on the trail again looking for

the junction which would lead us to our next destination-the Trout Pond. The little caretakers cabin was still there but vacant. The pond was quite high compared to the summer of 2002 when the mud flats were visible.

This lovely place was left to us by George Payne McLean who was born Oct. 7, 1857 and lived in Simsbury. His first job was a newspaper reporter. He then attended Trinity College where he became a lawyer and went to be come a Senator for three successive terms in the U.S. Senate from 1911 to 1929. During this time the Migration Bird Act was created which he was responsible for. George McLean passed on June 6, 1932 and left for us a very special place to enjoy nature at it's best. If you have not visited this refuge put it on your list for the new year.

Thanks to Bill, Jim, Steve and Ray who joined me for this hike! Hope to see you again on the trail, Carol.

Gay City State Park January 3, 2004

This hike was supposed to be a cross-country ski outing but a lack of snow kept the skis at home. There was enough snow, however, for Jim and son, Jimmy, to engage in a good natured snowball fight. The trail we followed was a five mile loop outlined in the book, 50 Hikes in CT.

Crossing the Blackledge River on a stone footbridge at the site of an old dam was one of the many highlights in the park. The yellow blazed trail brought us to a swampy area with a boardwalk, then to another feature, the shore of a beaver pond. We paused here for Jim and Jimmy to explore a bit, looking for possible signs of recent beaver activity. Continuing on, our path became increasingly more muddy and many mountain cyclists pedaled their way happily through the muck while we carefully stepped from rock to root to avoid the mud.

While cellar holes dotted the landscape throughout the park, the most impressive were the remains of the old paper mill and dry canal. After a little exploring we walked along the artificial ridge to the pond and beach. Here we stopped for lunch and enjoyed homemade goodies provided by Lora and Sarah. Retracing our steps through the mill site we headed back to our cars, walking past a youth camping area. To warm up and conclude our day together we sipped coffee and root beer at Day Break's in Glastonbury.

Leader: Sarah O'Hare
Hikers: Lora Miller, Ken Williamson, Jim and Jimmy Robertson

G.M.C. Conn. Section Annual Meeting & Dinner

Saturday, March 20
Cheshire Grange
44 Wallingford Rd. Cheshire, CT

Schedule:

- 5:00 p.m. Social Hour
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner – Roast Beef Meal (Vegetable Lasagna for vegetarians only)
- 7:00 p.m. Business Meeting
- 7:30 p.m. Speaker – Mandy Brink, "The GMC goes to South Dakota"

Our own Mandy Brink will talk about the adventure she and other GMC members took last year in South Dakota with a slides show. Don't miss it!

Reservations must be sent to Sarah O'Hare by March 6.

✂

The Price for the dinner is \$11.50 per person. The deadline for reservations is March 6, 2004. Please make check payable to "CT Section - GMC" and mail check and this reservation form to:

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

Name	Phone Number	Email Address
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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Total Enclosed= no. persons _____ X \$11.50 = \$ _____

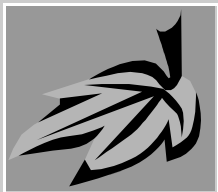
The Trail Talk

January, 2004

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The Green Mountain Club
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Lexington, MA 02421



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