

The Trail Talk

January 2003

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://home.attbi.com/~gmctsection/>

Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

St. John's Ledges to Rt. 341
September 29, 2002

This was a section of the trail that had dreaded doing, since for some reason I thought that the trail was on the side of Ledges and difficult to climb. The trail was in good shape and the rock climbing was an enjoyable challenge. One part has several rock stairs that were created by A. T. volunteers who dug these rocks and placed them in a staircase formation.

Sarah O'Hare and Henry Smith were my hiking companions on this lovely day: the peaceful day was interrupted by cannons or black powder guns being discharged across the Housatonic River where some type of early American re-enactment was being held.

There were a few strange people out this day. One woman was looking for her husband who was hiking in a north-south direction and she was walking south-north. They apparently did not judge their distance well. She thought they had about a 5 mile hike. Henry figured it to be about 11 miles. The next guys were looking for a scout troop. Then came the jogging-running man whom we approached since we thought he had lost someone also. He was fine and didn't need our help.

As we started to hike down into the valley, we heard a Pileated Woodpecker. Henry who had identified the bird tried hard to get a sighting but was unable. Suddenly we found ourselves in a clearing which was a cow pasture with a stream running through it. Henry who had hiked in sandals was walking in the cool water to reward his tootsies.

This past Summer I had seen an article in the Hartford Courant about Pond Mt. Natural area which was near Macedonia Brook State Park. After riding a bit on back roads we found the place. It has a nice trail which goes around Fuller Pond. This pond is a spring-fed, glacial lake of exceptional depth and clarity which has been used for several research projects in recent years. The water was crystal clear, like glass.

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Riding back to Rt. 341 we saw the same man who has been jogging on the trail. However at the moment he was limping badly. We drove up and I said to him looks like you could use some help now. So he jumped in the backseat. He had injured his Achilles tendon before he even got to the ledges so I can only wonder how he dragged himself down. He introduced himself to us, turns out he was a chiropractor who had just moved here from Minnesota. We never know we will meet on the trail. Another interesting day on the A. T. and another section done. Thanks for joining me, Sarah and Henry.

Carol A. Langley



Long Trail Maintenance Trip October 4 - 5, 2002

The weather forecast was iffy for the weekend but it actually turned out to be very good weather for a 3 day backpack and work on the Long Trail in Vermont. During the drive from CT to VT we went through drizzle, then cold rain, but just as we arrived at the trailhead the rain quit. Bill Brodnitzki, Dave Chatel and I hoisted our tool laden backpacks up onto our shoulders then started the three mile hike into the Kid Gore Shelter, our base for the weekend. Hiking past an old, old beaver pond we noticed new cuttings and fresh stored saplings, the beaver's food pantry for the winter. Arriving at the shelter, elevation 2,800 feet, we were in very cool, damp air and clouds.

After rolling out our sleeping bags to claim a spot on the bunks we set off to inspect and work the trail north. As we passed by, we peeked into the nearby Caughnawaga Shelter, built in 1931 by the boys from Camp Najerog. Continuing on it was agreed to walk over the proposed trail relocation, flagged last fall, since neither Bill nor Dave had been over it. After suggestions on "Where It Would Be Better" to route it in several sections, after getting lost several times, and after about twenty minutes, we popped back out onto the Long Trail about a

third of a mile north of where we left it. Working our way back in the fog and clouds we solved many of the worlds problems during our banter. After snacks, dinner and wine we settled into our sleeping bags early, partly because our conversation was getting stale, but mostly to get warm.

It poured rain during the night but then Saturday morning we awoke to what appeared to be clearing skies and realizing it had warmed up during the night. While eating breakfast we were visited by a mature person favoring his left arm. It was obvious he just got up because of his dress and no pack. After several false starts at a dialogue he finally asked if we had any Tylenol. Eventually we learned he had been camped in the area for 3 days with a very painful and partially useless left arm, tolerating it by drinking brandy and panhandling Tylenol from hikers passing by. From all his quiet and accent presented description it sounded as if he could have a dislocated shoulder. After some discussion Bill loaded him down with more pain reliever then Dave, Bill & I packed our equipment for the day then headed off south to work, agreeing we would check in on him when we returned.

We clipped and cleaned the trail the 4 miles up to the top of Glastenbury Mountain, elevation 3,748 feet. Only occasional clouds flowed by and the cool temperatures and moderate wind made it a great day to work. However, now on top of the mountain the wind was at gale force making it cold. Dave ventured to the top of the fire tower for the view. Looking up to try to hear what he was hollering down to us we could see his jacket billowing and flapping in the wind creating visions of having to pick him up in the next county on the way home. Bill stepped out into the woods to . . . well to inspect something, saying when he returned that he could feel the ground rising and falling under him as the wind tried to pull the trees up by their roots. After a very short stay on top of the mountain we started our 4 mile walk back to Kid Gore. We examined a short boggy area to get some ideas on how to get the trail up onto higher and dryer ground - a project for 2003.

Arriving back we found somebody clipping brush in front of the shelter which is done to maintain the view. Not

unexpected because of our E-mails, after introducing ourselves we found he was Tim Gore, Harold M. (Kid) Gore's grandson. Tim and I had been in touch for several years by E-mail but it was the first time we had met in person. Tim is the Adopt-A-Shelter person for the Kid Gore Shelter. Tim operates Camp Najerog, a summer camp. The boys from camp Najerog helped build not only the Caughnawaga Shelter in 1931 but also the Kid Gore Shelter in 1970. We also met up again with our Tylenol consuming invalid friend. He appeared to be somewhat better and in less pain. We discussed tentative plans for him to go out with us the next day. After some solid and liquid refreshments a fire was started. A little surprising on this near peak foliage weekend, we weren't joined by anybody else, but there were others in the area.

Sunday morning we were treated to a spectacular sunrise. In the cold air the reservoir, about 5 miles away down in the valley, had a fog layer over it with wispy tails rising with sun painted pink borders. In our view also, the few clouds over the mountains about 40 - 50 miles east also had pink borders and other picturesque appearances. After breakfast we did a few chores in the area then Dave & Tim went off to clip more brush, Bill attended to other chores while I blazed the trail for over a mile north. On my return I discussed the departure plans with our new found friend with the gimpy arm. He decided to go out with us. I carried his pack so we could join the others. Tim had left earlier. We cleaned the shelter then started our 3 mile walk out. On the way out we met a group of three men who appeared to be just wandering around carrying fishing poles and rifles - what a combination. Bill drove our new friend up to the trail into Stratton Pond, about 6 miles north on dirt roads. Bill found out his name was Claude, living in Montreal but originally from Belgium.

Another very successful work trip was completed.

Participants: Tim Gore, Dave Chatel, Bill Brodnitzki
Leader: Dick Krompegal

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The Non-Cider Cider Hike October 9, 2002

Six people, four from GMC with two having dual membership and two from AYH met at the commuter parking lot and drove to the trail head at Guiffreida Park in Meriden. Marge opened the trunk to get out the equipment. Oops. A Senior moment. She forgot the cider! Since rain was threatened for the early afternoon, it was decided to do the hike first rather than go back for the cider. Sarah O'Hare led Dick Krompegal and Ken Williamson up the steep Chauncey Peak and along the ridge. The view from the top was spectacular but the autumn foliage was disappointing. Coming down the first peak, they rejoined Marge and the two AYHers at the end of the Lake trail.

All of us then set off briskly up to Mt. Lamentation until we reached the Yellow Bus Circuit Trail down the mountain back to the Lake Trail and the parking lot. All's well that ends well as Shakespeare said. We had the hot mulled cider and delicious cookies back at Marge's house as the rain began to coat the windows. The good news is that Ken announced that he hadn't smoked a cigarette in six weeks and one of the AYHers expressed interest in joining our fine club.

Marge Hackbarth

Silver Hill Camping October 19-20, 2002

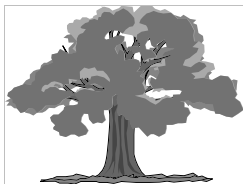
We had a good turnout for our annual trip to the Silver Hill camping area on the Appalachian Trail in Cornwall. Despite rain early Saturday and lingering mist in the afternoon, 11 GMCers camped. Due to the weather and other commitments, we all got a late start, with the last of our group arriving near dusk. As my crew ascended the hill, we met Carol Langley who had returned to retrieve a plastic sled full of extra gear she had left along the trail. At the camping site, we found a large contingent of Boy Scouts from a troop in New Milford, numbering 20 when all their stragglers finally arrived.

After dark, a nearly full moon began to shine through parting clouds. The kids found the usual entertainment with the water pump, but the porch swing is now "grounded", the victim of a rotted support stump. Flashlight tag also occupied our

younger folks for a while.

By morning, the sky was clear, although some fog covered the Housatonic River Valley. After breakfast, we packed up and hiked down the hill, Drew and Jimmy leading the way. Kevin and Allison headed home to Norwalk and the rest of us stopped at the EXPANDED Berkshire General Store in Cornwall for sandwiches, snacks, and ice cream.

Backpackers: Jim, Brenna and Jimmy Robertson, Kevin and Allison Karl, Jack, Olivia and Drew Sanga, Carol Langley and her granddaughters Kassidee and Marissa Drivdahl



**Heublein Tower & Foliage Walk
October 27, 2002**

Leaf peepers had been disappointed this past autumn. Trips into Vermont and the Berkshires were only fair. But late October in Connecticut on this sunny, warm day the colored foliage was spectacular. Seven people met Dick at the back parking lot for Reservoir # 6 in West Hartford. The 10 am start was appreciated especially by anyone who had to drive a long distance. Young Jimmy Robertson, accompanied by his dad Jim, led the fast hikers up the steep incline to the Heublein Tower with Marge Hackbarth ambling in the rear. Carol Langley, Lora Miller, Marianne Oursler, Laurene Sorenson and Dick quickly climbed the 120 steps to the observation room of the tower. Everybody eventually made the top for the view.

Lunch was enjoyed at a picnic table especially Laura's sugar cookies. We quickly returned to the parking lot and went our separate ways.

Hikers: Jimmy & Jim Robertson, Carol Langley, Lora Miller, Marianne Oursler, Laurene Sorenson
Written By Marge Hackbarth
Leader: Dick Krompegal

**Appalachian Trail, Section Five
November 3, 2002**

On this clear crisp day, Henry Smith, Lora Miller and Marianne Ousleu met at my home and we carpooled to the hiking destination.

As soon as we turned off Rt. 8, the roads had a coating of sand. Apparently during the night before, the higher elevations in the northwest corner of our state had a dusting of mixed precipitation making the road quite slippery in spots. We crept along for an hour before we met up with J. R. Ellis at Rt. 341.

Spotting my car on Schaghtievke we started our hike and a gradual climb up the stone work that had been done on the trail this summer by A.T. volunteers. Soon we reached our first view of the Housatonic Valley and took a fluid break.

Once we were on top of the mountain the trail was real easy so we moved along enjoying the lovely ash trees as their leaves danced silently to cover the earth. We met people along the way, some were day hikers, others overnights taking advantage of the Fall weather.

Time to find that lunch spot - the place we planned to use didn't show up until later in the hike so we made us of an out-cropping of some rocks. Henry Smith had a huge Swiss chocolate bar which he shared and Lora Miller passed around her treats of brownies. When it was time to move along Henry, J. R. and Lora were gone in a flash. I wonder how much chocolate these three consumed. Marianne and I just hiked along at a slower pace.

We were able to see where the old trail used to go through the Indian Reservation and it appears someone has made it a blue access trail.

Well probably the hardest part of this hike was the descent down the side of the mountain to Rt. 341. Even though there were switchbacks, the leaves had covered and hidden the rocks. Until you stepped on them and had to do a balancing act to stay through an up-right position.

This was my last section of the A.T. in Connecticut. Thanks to all my GMC

friends who have hiked with me over the years and helped me make wonderful memories. Next is Massachusetts.

Our 7 mile hike today was finished by 1:30. Transportation back to my car was J. R.'s pickup truck so in jumped four hikers and packs. As J. R. closed the tailgate, I said please drive carefully over the dirt road. As he shifted into first gear we all shifted forward and off we sped down the road as the trees wizzed by and the wind took our breath away. I guess he didn't hear me. We arrived in one piece, said our good-byes, took a couple of pictures and departed for home.

Thanks to Lora, Marianne, Henry and J. R. who joined on this great day.

Carol A. Langley

Mattabesett Trail Maintenance November 9

The main task for the day was to put up "No Motorized Vehicle" signs at the road crossings, and other places, on the northern end of our section of the Mattabesett Trail.

We met at Guida's on Rt. 66 at about 9:30 for a snack or breakfast. We then drove the 2 or so miles to Black Pond. With signs in hand we trekked the several hundred yards to the Mattabesett Trail. Working our way north toward Rt. 66 we put up signs at the power line crossing and at the entrance off of the road. The group then walked south to Powder Ridge clipping brush, picking up the trash and we put up a few more signs.

After work we enjoyed a pizza!!

Participants: Dave and Regina Chatel, Sarah O'Hare, Ken Williamson, Bob Schoff
Leader: Dick Krompegal



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Sessions Woods After the Great Storm November 24, 2002

Four GMCers joined Marge Hackbarth in a five mile hike of Sessions Woods and the Tunix Trail. As soon as we started up the steep road to Beaver Pond, we saw the litter under foot. The four hikers Bob Schoff and ladies Carol Langley, Laura Miller and Mary Horn O'Neill immediately cleaned the debris as they hiked. Marge recently having had a bad fall, appreciated their work especially on the stairs down to the Waterfall on Negro Hill Brook. The volume of the water was impressive. From Summer House and the Lookout Tower the clear weather afforded good views of the distant mountains of Meriden and the town of Avon.

At Beaver Pond we saw a recently felled tree but no animals. The maintainers of the Tunix Trail have installed good directional signs, so we had no problem getting to Lamsons Corner and beyond. We are happy to report that the missing plank over the brook has been replaced so all got back safely to the parking lot. Thanks again to Laura for bringing samples of her baking skills.

Marge Hackbarth

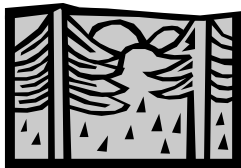
Devil's Hopyard State Park December 1, 2002

This hike was scheduled to be on the northern section of the Metacomet Trail, until a snowstorm made for a location change. Devil's Hopyard offered loop trails that allowed us to hike for as long and as far as we wished. We began at Chapman Falls, a lovely site at all times of the year. Following the Eight Mile River we crossed Hopyard Road to explore the trails on the western side of the park. Lacking a detailed map we followed poorly blazed trails, eventually returning to the trail following the river. The wind had picked up and finding a sheltered spot for lunch had become a dilemma, even the covered bridge was a poor choice. We continued on, picking up the orange blazed Vista Trail and found the shady area of a hemlock grove, a respite from the wind. Here, amid some fallen trees, we lunched, then snacked on Lora's fudgy brownies and Sarah's minty what not's.

The Vista Trail brought us to a granite ledge with a southerly view of the valley

of the Eight Mile River. We paused here briefly then continued along the loop trail which took us close to the river's edge. The path followed up-stream over boulders and exposed tree roots, we stepped carefully to avoid the icy patches. After finishing this loop we began exploring another path, the blue loop trail. Finding ourselves chilled, we concluded the day's adventure, after hiking an estimated 6.5 miles.

Hikers: Lora Miller, Ken Williamson, Regina and David Chatel
Leader: Sarah O'Hare



**Walkabout Trail/Pulaski Recreation Area
December 7**

Upon arrival at the George Washington Management Area in Rhode Island, to hike the Walkabout Trail, the forest ranger recommended we change our plans and hike in the Pulaski Recreation Area instead. Today was the opening day of shotgun hunting season and the park was teeming with hunters. We obliged and drove the short distance to the adjacent park. There the forest ranger gave us a cross country ski trail map, which differed from a hiking trail map.

Having brought various winter gear, snowshoes and skis, we opted to don only our hiking boots, as the snow was light and dry, therefore easy to walk through. Our leader, Ken, couldn't be in attendance today, so Dave decided the direction and set the pace. We began by following the Hemlock Glen Trail, a well used cross country ski trail, on which we saw many skiers. Not wanting to be confined to only the ski trails, we followed an unnamed, orange blazed trail, not shown on our map. It was to take us east into the George Washington Management Area, a five mile trail. After a quick lunch stop (it got cold fast) and giving the hours of available daylight much consideration, it was decided to return to the Pulaski Park area and explore the map's listed trails.

The day was perfect for a winter hike, sun shining and not very cold. We saw two deer run across the trail, most likely fleeing the hunters. The stillness of the snowy woods was punctuated by the breezes in the tree tops and from the chickadees and tufted titmice. And the occasional gun shot in the distance. We estimated we hiked about eight miles by the time we returned to the parking area, the forest ranger still there, waiting for our return. It appeared that the Rhode Island forest service is very cautious about hunting season. And as a reminder, please wear orange when out on the trails!

Hikers: Regina and David Chatel, Sarah O'Hare

Calling all interested travelers ---

I am looking for some fellow club members who would be interested in a 5-7 day trip to South Dakota, late next spring or early summer. It would entail flying out to Rapid City with the intent to do some beautiful hiking, camping and biking in the Black Hills. Definite activities would include climbing Harney Peak (the highest peak in SD), biking on the George Mickelson Trail and some sightseeing adventures to Mt Rushmore and possibly Jewel Cave National Park, Wind Cave National Park and Crazy Horse. We would be camping, most likely in Custer State Park. If you would like to be included in the information and planning emails, please send an email to Mandy Brink (trekeragb@aol.com). Cost will be largely dependent on airfare and car rental. Other costs are minimal.

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

Saturday March 8, 2003
Cheshire Grange
44 Wallingford Road Cheshire, CT 06410



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. Guest Speaker - Fran Baranski, "Tracking and Animal Signs"

Reservations must be in to Sarah O'Hare by February 22, 2003.

The price for the dinner is \$11.00 per person. The deadline for reservations is February 22, 2003. 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
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Total enclosed = No. persons _____ X \$11.00 = \$ _____



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The Green Mountain Club
653 Marrett Road
Lexington, MA 02421**



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