

# The Connecticut Section Of The Green Mountain Club

## The Trail Talk

VOL. XXXVIII NO. IV

January 2007



### The President's Message

We have a busy New Year ahead of us. On March 31, 2007 we hold our Section's Annual Dinner Meeting at the Grange Hall in Cheshire, CT. We have three months of activities scheduled by our dedicated activity leaders for every weekend, except Easter. Thank you to all the hard working members who make it possible for all of us to enjoy the great outdoors with friends.

June 8-10, 2007 the Annual Directors Meeting will be held at the Hildene Estate in Manchester, VT. This is the first time in the 39 years that the Ct. Section has been in existence that we will be one of the hosting sections.

The Bennington and Manchester sections have secured the location and planned the food menu for the weekend. Details of the weekend, activities, menu, cost and registration form will be in the Spring Issue of the Long Trail News. I hope that many of our members will be able to attend this great event where all 14 sections come together for socializing with old friends and the opportunity to make new friends.

The plans are in place but now we need people who are willing to help with setting up and taking down tables and chairs, preparing food trays for lunch on Sat., registration and of course clean up. I will have sign up sheets at our annual meeting for our members who would like to help. Plan to make a weekend of it and have fun.

See you on the trail,

Carol A. Langley

**Sat. Mar. 31 CTGMC Annual Dinner  
at the Cheshire Grange.  
See enclosed flyer for details  
and reservations.**

### Mattabesett Trail Maintenance August 13, 2006

We all met at Guida's for a brunch. We then drove to Paug Gap and walked south finishing the blazes started earlier in the year. We then drove back to Guida's for a mandatory ice cream break. Over to Black Pond then walked our relatively new relocation north. We cleared the trail and blazed south to north.

Thanks for the hard work.  
*Susie Hufstader and her dad Jonathan Hufstader,  
Sarah O'Hare, Dan Zelterman.  
Leader Dick Krompegal*



### Metacomet-Monadnock Trail November 4

The Notch Visitor Center meeting place was reached earlier than anticipated. With no Dunkin Donuts near, the carload of Henry, Carol, Sarah and Don was directed to Atkins Farm stand for refueling while Bill awaited the arrival of Dave. On this brisk and sunny morning we loaded gear and ourselves into the Big Red Van and left on time for the trailhead. Section 7 of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail begins on Rt. 47 in Hadley, MA and greets you with a rugged climb to Titan's Piazza, the first of many rewarding vistas. Rattlesnakes have been reported here but not on this day. The restored Mt. Holyoke Summit House offered views from Hartford, CT to the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire and the meandering Connecticut River Valley. More can be seen and identified with binoculars. This area of the state park has been dedicated to Joseph Allen Skinner who first brought the silk industry to the U.S. in Northampton, MA from China.

About a half mile later a sharp descent of 300' brings us to Taylor Notch. From here the range rises and falls over peaks known as the Seven Sisters with elevations up to 1000+ feet. Most of the leaves were off the trees and excellent viewing in all compass directions was our reward. By noon a suitable site

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### Club Information

<http://www.conngmc.com>

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The Trail Talk is 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

When filling out the form to join or renew circle the Connecticut Section on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

#### Dues:

Individual Adult \$ 35.00

Family \$ 45.00

Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income \$ 20.00

Nonprofit or Youth Group \$ 50.00

Business or Corporation \$125.00

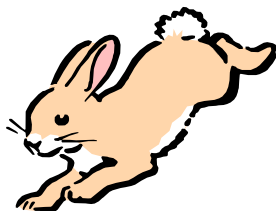
Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club

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on one of the peaks was located for lunch and the now famous Sarah Cookies. With tummies and minds satiated with food and wild tales of just about anything we continued the conquest of the Holyoke Mt. Range. Carol spotted hawks being chased by crows and a group of brown thrashers foraging on their flight south. Fallen leaves hid many a rock shard and root that Bill took the complimentary fall on. Mushrooms were not on the menu so Henry regaled in identifying the many distant mountains. Dave, who is a past thru hiker of the M&M Trail, recalled those adventures. Don was at home with cooking utensils and their myriad of uses by scout groups on and off the trail. Some moaning and groaning followed us to Mt. Hitchcock, the sixth of the Sisters. Bare or Barre Mountain, depending on which map used, is the highest prominence before the final steep descent to the Visitor Center. This mountain has been carved out for military use and still has a radio beacon on top. The views here are 360 degree spectaculars.

*Hikers: Carol Langley, Henry Smith, Dave Welles,  
Sarah O'Hare, Don Hagstrom.*

*Leader: Bill Falconer*



### Backpacking On The AT in Vermont. Mad Tom Notch to Cold Brook Rd November 10-13, 2006

Friday was a sunny beautiful day and we headed to Vermont mid morning. After staging cars we decided to hike into the first shelter even though we were getting a later start. We had a quick lunch at an adorable local diner before hiking. So at 3:30 we left the trailhead at Mad Tom Notch and started our 4.5 mile hike over Peru Peak (elevation 3300ft) and onto the shelter. It was a good climb uphill and needless to say we got to do the last hour in the dark. It certainly offered variety to the hike. We arrived at the shelter around 6:15. What a nice shelter it was, very spacious with a low lying protective roof. The evening was warm, we cooked dinner, visited a bit and then had an early night to bed, but only after a few rounds of Acey Ducey.

On Saturday we were up early to head to Little Brook Shelter, about an 11 mile day. It was sunny and unseasonably warm. The guys were hiking in shorts and we were all in short sleeve shirts for a good part of the day. We hiked past Griffith Lake and shortly afterwards, got to cross a neat suspension bridge. The day was a good variety of ups and downs on a very wet, muddy trail. The Little Brook Pond was a charming pond with a huge beaver dam at the end. The shelter was a little ways past this. We arrived in camp early enough to clean up in the brook and enjoy the quiet beauty of the pond. Jack must be taking notes from Sarah on backpacking cooking because he sure did do some elaborate cooking for his breakfasts and dinners. We had an awesome campfire, a few



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more rounds of Acey Ducey and a nice relaxing evening. Dave spoilt us by bringing all the fixings for smores. They tasted really good too.

On Sunday we woke up to a bit cooler weather but still not bad. The day was gray, cloudy, misting a bit with the threat of rain. We headed out early for an 9.5 mile day. This day was actually more challenging than expected. A few of the ascents were straight up and a good workout. One favorite part was walking through the pine forest when we stumbled across a village of cairns on the trail. It was fascinating. There were cairns of all sizes and designs made of white rock. Of course we had to add a few of our own. At one point our view was clouded out but was still beautiful because we were high enough above the clouds that it was clear and we could see the mountain peaks peeking through the clouds. We arrived at the Minerva Hinchey shelter in the late afternoon. Dave and Jack built a huge bonfire which we enjoyed just a bit before it started to rain really hard. Fortunately this was a nice updated shelter that had some tables built into it so we were about to stay dry and cook altogether. It started to downpour after dinner so we had an early night to bed.

On Monday we were on the trail by 7:03am, late according to Dave's 7am starting time. We hiked out to Cold Brook Rd, about 7.5 miles. It was again a gray day with some rain misting in light showers on occasion. We got to go across a neat swinging bridge over a sizable river which was pretty cool. Otherwise we hiked through some more mud and puddles, heading towards the cars and pizza. Mileage for the trip was 32-33 miles.

*Hiker: Mandy Brink, Ron Sanga,  
Jack Sanga and Dave Chatel.*



### Nehantic Trail November 26, 2006

What a unusually warm November day and great for a hike in the great outdoors. We had a great turn out. I'm not sure if it was just a need to be out on such a gorgeous day or if everyone had eaten a bit to much turkey. Regardless, it was good to see everyone. We began our hike on the road to Green Falls. It was an easy hike and we enjoyed some botanical lessons from Grace's friend, Dave. We stopped and had lunch at the top of Mt Misery and had a nice view of the valley. Jim Robertson departed here and the rest of continued on. At places the trail was a bit challenging because of mud and poorly marked blazes but we did ok. We certainly didn't want to be the ones who might ruin the reputation of the club by getting lost. Our goal was to get to Hopeville Pond State Park before dark. Jack bet Mandy a banana split that we'd end the hike in the dark and of course he was wrong. We managed to get done in the daylight.

From Mt Misery, the trail was flat, but fairly long so we had a snack stop along the way. After getting to the cars, we went for the usual pizza and manage to polish off three larges with no problem at all. Thanks all for making it a delightful day. It was nice to visit and talk with everyone while we hiked. We hiked 12 miles for the day.

*Hikers: Ron Sanga, Jack Sanga, Sarah O'Hare, Grace King,  
Dave Taylor, Sandy Hussan, Jim Robertson,  
Dave Wells, Dan Zelterman  
Leader: Mandy Brink.*



### Ragged Mountain Saturday, December 9

Our group met at 9 am and departed promptly at 9:05. We were pleased at the clear weather, especially given that this same hike on the same weekend last year was conducted in 8 inches of fresh snow! We set off clockwise along the preserve loop trail, stopping periodically to admire the views of the Hart Ponds and shedding layers of clothing as necessary. At Small Cliff we paused to reflect at the memorial to a climber who had fallen to his death 3 years ago. Then we continued on, taking the blue Metacomet Trail to scramble up and down a few rocky areas. We quickly reached the bare summit of Ragged Mountain. Laurene noted that she had been up to the area previously, but by climbing the rocks from below...this was her first time to hike to the top on the trail.

We left the summit and started the rocky, gradual descent, pausing for lunch overlooking Wasel Reservoir. (The leader was pleased that this year she finally knew how to finish the hike on the preserve trail, instead of having to bail out on an old woods road as she had done the last two years.) The group followed the blue trail until it connected again with the preserve trail and completed the loop, returning to the parking lot at 1 pm. Snacks followed at the leader's house for those who were able to attend. Thanks to all for a beautiful day!

*Hikers: Don Hagstrom, Fred Clark, Laurene Sorensen,  
Ken Williamson  
Leader: Lora Miller*



### Tunxis Trail December 17, 2006

It was no more than a few minutes into the hike when it was realized that the leader was following the wrong blue blazes. Beginning at the Rt. 20 Tunxis Trail crossing, traveling south, the group followed the blue "NO ATVs" signs rather than the more familiar painted blue blazes. Ed,

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having recently hiked this section, took the lead as we bushwhacked our way westward to the true Tunxis Trail. Here the path took us through many hemlock groves, Mt. Laurel arbors and crossed many brooks. The trail was gentle, aside from the many walk-arounds or climb-overs of large, recent blowdowns. Those blue "NO ATVs" signs dotted the trees along the way as well as on intersecting side trails.

At the five mile mark Ed and Don shortened their hike by turning onto the unpaved Pine Mountain Road to walk the mile to where Ed had left his van. The rest of us hiked on and upward to the summit of Pine Mountain, elevation 1391 feet, then followed a little path to a ledge where we settled in for lunch. The views on this warmish and sunny December day were of Springfield, MA and what was thought to be Bradley Airport. The leader heated water on her stove and we all had hot beverages and shared a potluck of various goodies brought by many for a little Christmas indulgence. Fueled by our rest and lunch we made our descent of Pine Mountain where the trail took us by some old stone cellar holes with a large beaver pond beyond. Reaching the base of Indian Council Caves we explored the caves, actually just crevices in a huge rock jumble. A large nest was perched on a ledge above, a curiosity of the leader for she remembered it years ago on a previous hike. A return visit in the spring should reveal what bird nests there. The trail climbed steeply over the caves then became a little more varied in its terrain. Our energies on the decline (except Jack's for he still has his youth for a few more years), we slowed at the many ups and downs over the last two miles. After nearly ten miles of hiking we came out onto Rt. 219 and literally piled into the waiting car for our shuttle back to Rt. 20.

*Hikers: Fred Clark, Don Hagstrom, Ed Myers, Jack Sanga,  
Donald Woodbridge, Dan Zelterman  
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



### Mattabesett Trail The Reservoir and Bear Hill Loops December 2, 2006

The advantage of hiking this section of the Mattabesett Trail is that the mileage can be tailored to the hikers' needs. Part 1 of today's hike, the Reservoir Loop Trail, is a 1.6 mile blue and yellow blazed trail beginning on Brooks Road in Middletown. The gentle trail took us through old-growth Mountain Laurel areas bordering the east side of Asylum Reservoir. It crossed the blue blazed Mattabesett Trail twice before ending at Reservoir Road. To complete the loop we turned onto the Mattabesett Trail which became more challenging for there were many rocky ascents and descents. A few rocky outcroppings provided rest stops with views. Upon completion of this first part of our hike it was estimated that the entire loop was approximately four miles in length.

Arriving back at Brooks Road, extra clothing layers were shed and left in our cars. Part 2 of the day's outing was the Bear Hill Loop Trail which provided many mileage options. We began by following the Mattabesett Trail with the intention of returning on the blue and yellow blazed loop trail. Again, our hike passed through long arbors of old Mountain Laurel. As we passed our first Bear Hill Loop Trail intersection the lunch hour was upon us. Bear Hill was our destination. We knew we were close for we located the two Bear Hill geological survey markers. Bill insisted that there was a third but no one was keen on bushwhacking through tick infested undergrowth to find it. We eventually arrived at what was thought to be Bear Hill. Lunch conversation revolved around healthy eating and the nutritional sins of all the cookies that were passed around. It didn't stop us, however, from eating our fill.

Refreshed from our noontime rest we continued along only to arrive at what was thought the true peak of Bear Hill. At the next crossing of the Bear Hill Loop Trail it was decided that here would be our return spot. We turned onto the loop trail to return to Brooks Road once again. This section of the main and loop trails was estimated to be approximately 3.5 miles. Upon mentioning going out for a post hike pizza, all thoughts of improving our eating habits vanished and we gave in to our craving at the nearby Tommy's Restaurant.

*Hikers: Fred Clark, Bill Falconer, Donald Woodbridge  
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



### Ashuwillticook Bike Trail Oct. 15, 2006

This trail is one of the nicest that I have ridden so far. Drive time from CT., is 2 hours, miles are 76, the drive is mostly back roads and very pleasant. It starts in Lanesboro, MA. on Rte. 8 across from the Berkshire Mall where there is ample parking and at several places along the way into Adams.

The day was cloudy, cool and windy. Henry Smith and Dick Arnold rode up with me and Sandra Hassan met us there. While the guys checked out the bikes to make them travel ready Sandra and I spotted a car in Cheshire.

This trail passes through several marshes and along the Cheshire Reservoir, where there are benches and picnic tables encouraging the rider to stop, relax and take in the view of the mountains. The scenery is breath taking, in the west is Mt. Greylock and in the east is the Hoosac Mountains. The tower on Mt. Greylock was visible and the colors of the trees created a beautiful picture. As we rode with the wind blowing, clouds building in the north, mountains standing tall on each side of the trail the riders experienced Mother Nature in a grand setting.

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Crossing Rte. 8 the trail became more wild as we rode through marshlands on both sides - the mountains remained in view. Stops were made to check for wild herbs and mushrooms. When we reached Cheshire where the bike path crosses the AT we found a picnic table to have lunch. "Holy Cow" - did you see that - the wind ripped the label off Henry's water bottle. Now how strong did the wind blow and how fast did Henry run to fetch the label? One will never know!!

Now were these determined bikers going to let strong gusty winds and threatening skies abort the bike trip? Time to put on the gloves and if you had a ski hat put it under your bike helmet. Ready for the elements we biked on, destination Adams, MA.

In Cheshire we picked up the Hoosic River which followed the trail in and out of the marshlands for about 3-4 miles. Suddenly the trail started a steady descent through the valley protecting us from the wind. At the top of the hill was a big dam with a 10 - 15 ft drop - this quiet peaceful river became a loud raging torrent of water crashing and racing over rocks down into Adams. The river's message was hurry - hurry - can you keep with me?

As we pedaled into Adams the group admired the woodwork and craftsmanship that went into the Old Railroad Passenger and Freight Stations. Adams was the end of the trail 11.9 miles, time to turn around and bike back.

Biking back up to the dam was a challenge and someone had to walk their bike instead of riding. Upon reaching the dam we walked across a small bridge and were greeted by a gentleman full of history about the homes and the underground railroad in the area.

Reaching Cheshire our small group split up as Henry and Sandra wanted to bike on. Dick and I loaded up our bikes and drove to meet Sandra and Henry. Next mission was to find food on the drive home. We finished our day over Pizza at a Greek Rest. in Otis.



The word ASHUWILLTICOOK (ASH-OO-WILL-TI-COOK) is from the Native American name for the south branch of the Hoosic River and literally means "at the in-between pleasant river," or in common tongue, "The pleasant river in between the hills".

*Riders: Sandra Hassan, Henry Smith,  
Dick Arnold, Carol Langley*



## Case Mountain Trails January 7, 2007

The Case Mountain Trails are a series of interconnecting loop trails. They pass through hemlocks, Mountain Laurel groves and glacial rock formations following to the summit of Lookout Mountain, with views of the Hartford skyline and the western hills beyond. The loops also connect with the Shenipsit Trail and follow to the anti-climatic summits of Case and Birch Mountains. At times the map from the new and improved "Connecticut Walk Book East" deferred from that of the physical layout of the trails. And with the Trail Organizer more involved in socializing than watching for turns, the group took over the leadership role.

After about 4.5 miles six members of the group left. The remaining four continued on and completed all the loop trails, leaving the Shenipsit Trail section for another day.

*Leaders: Jim Robertson, Carol Langley, Laurene Sorensen,  
Fred Clark, Doreen Scott, Dick Arnold, Carol and Bob Hasset,  
Deena Steinberg  
Hike Organizer: Sarah O'Hare*



## Salmon River Trail January 13, 2007

On a mild and rainy winter morning four hikers ventured out for a seven mile walk on the Salmon River Trail. Beginning at the Comstock Covered Bridge (built in 1873) we followed the blue blazed Comstock Bridge Connector Trail upstream along the Salmon River. The trail turned upslope where we paused for a fine view of the river below. Continuing on our two mile gradual climb we reached the South Loop. Here we turned left and after crossing Day Pond Brook, passing some old cellar hole foundations and crossing Day Pond Road the trail became the North Loop.

Arriving at Day Pond State Park we chose the picnic pavilion for our lunch stop. With the mist-shrouded pond as our view we dined on lunch and Fred's yummy cookie treats. Before getting too chilled we set out once again. Rounding the pond we crossed over the dam, once the location of a large water wheel that powered a sawmill run by the Day family. Re-entering the woods, we soon passed a glacial erratic and then once again reached the junction of the Comstock Bridge Connector Trail, thus completing the loop section of the Salmon River Trail. Here we retraced our steps the two miles (this time downhill) back to the Comstock Covered Bridge.

*Hikers: Jack Sanga, Fred Clark, Don Hagstrom  
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*