

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER



96th Anniversary

Annual Report

November 12, 2017

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

MISSION STATEMENT

Through our broad range of activities and programs, the Connecticut Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club encourages people to enjoy and appreciate the natural world. We believe that successful conservation depends on this experience. The Connecticut Chapter promotes the protection, enjoyment and responsible

use of the Appalachian Trail in Connecticut as well as other trails, rivers and byways within the state in cooperation with other maintenance organizations. We believe that the mountains and rivers have an intrinsic worth as well as provide recreational opportunity, spiritual renewal, and ecological and economic health for the state. The members of the Connecticut Chapter of the AMC form a network of users and stewards who protect these areas and educate others as to their use.

Adopted May 1993

**APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB
CONNECTICUT CHAPTER
2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Chair:	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Vice Chair:	<i>John Grasso</i>
Secretary:	<i>Jocelyn Eppich</i>
Treasurer:	<i>Al Puches</i>
Past Chapter Chair:	<i>Bob Guenther</i>
Appalachian Trail Chair:	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chairs:	<i>Susan Grant, Mary Ann Gleba **, Rick Merritt*</i>
Communications Co-Chairs:	<i>David Roberts, Jim Scheef</i>
Conservation Co-Chairs:	<i>Andrew May, Russ Charest</i>
East of the River Chair:	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Chair:	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Excursions Co-Chairs:	<i>Peg Peterson, Phil Wilsey</i>
Fairfield County Co-Chairs:	<i>Tom Carruthers, David Roberts</i>
Family Activities Chair:	<i>Janet Ainsworth, David Bellemare**</i>
Flatwater/Coastal Chair:	<i>Barry Gorfain</i>
Member-at-Large:	<i>Bea Holt</i>
Member-at-Large:	<i>Open</i>
Membership Chair:	<i>Alison Terjek</i>
Mountaineering Co-Chairs:	<i>Pete Gajdosik, Kurt Zoner</i>
Newsletter Editor:	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
Northwest Camp Co-Chairs:	<i>Tom McGrath, Rod Parlee</i>
Program Chair:	<i>Michelle Baughman</i>
Webmaster/Technology Chair:	<i>Jim Scheef</i>
Whitewater Co-Chairs:	<i>Mark Schappert, Dennis Wigg</i>
Young Members Chair:	<i>Alison Terjek</i>

* Stepped down during the year

** Elected to position during program year

CHAPTER CHAIR'S REPORT

A favorite painting in my office includes this quote, "Of all the paths you take in life, make sure some of them are dirt." Primarily, what binds us together as Chapter members is our collective love of the outdoors. Our community chairs and activity leaders participate in a wide range of ways for recreation, education, stewardship, maintenance, and conservation of our great Connecticut outdoors.

Please take time to read all our committee activity summaries – from bicycling, to white water and flatwater paddling, mountaineering, excursions, young members, membership, conservation, education, program, Fairfield County Group, East of the River, and more! If you've never visited our NW Camp, it's a jewel – and a great spot for hikers, snowshoes, owl prowlers and even meteor watchers.

We have an amazing group of volunteers who maintain, protect and when necessary, reroute, clean up, and act on behalf of our wonderful Connecticut section of the Appalachian Trail. Each year, two major events focus on the AT: “Give a Day to the AT” which includes stewardship projects; and “AT Day” with hikes on and around the AT, bicycling, paddling, mountaineering and then collectively meeting at the Grand BBQ. Kudos to all involved.

In 2017, our chapter continued its financial support for the Youth Opportunity Program (YOP) in New Haven. As our immediate past chair Bob Guenther describes, “YOP is the club’s program to reach out to urban youth and introduce them to outdoor adventures that they otherwise wouldn’t experience. YOP trains leaders (typically teachers); pays for equipment; and provides lodging and transportation to the outdoors both nearby and distant. Beyond teaching outdoor skills, YOP also teaches important values, such as personal responsibility, cooperation, and appreciation of nature.” Our Chapter’s Vice Chair John Grasso is leading a group to identify areas of scholarship we may be able to implement in the future for other purposes.

We are part of the larger Boston-based Appalachian Mountain Club. Our Connecticut Chapter leaders meet regularly with other chapter leaders. In 2017, the collective focus has included identifying ways to make the outdoors welcoming and accessible; integrating conservation into many activity areas; and preparing for a migration to a new website. Our own Janet Ainsworth was elected into a Regional Director position with a direct line to AMC, its Executive Director, and staff. She continues to represent us admirably in so many ways.

While our chapter has successfully grown our presence on social media to expand participation in our programs and activities; those same social media tools provide options for activities that may lack experienced leaders and commitment to the safety of its participants. It will be a challenge into the future to ensure our brand is known and embraced by a next generation of joiners and leaders to ensure our mission can carry forward.

If you have expertise in social media, would like to lead family hikes, help with our education programs, or want to help pull together a big event in Connecticut next year – we have opportunities for you now.

In 2018, Connecticut will host the club’s Fall Gathering, a weekend-long event that brings together members from all twelve chapters for excursions, meetings, meals, bonfires, and camaraderie. The Fall Gathering is a major undertaking and requires a major investment in planning, coordination, communication, and execution. We are fortunate to have Bea Holt at the helm of that event. I hope as many of you as possible will consider volunteering.

Thank you to our Executive Committee members who provide direction to their respective areas of activity. Of special note, please be sure to thank Michelle Baughman for her oversight of this event – it is a lot of work to pull together; and Jim Scheef who has given a vast amount of volunteer time to all our web and communications endeavors.

In closing, it has been my privilege to serve as your chair. Hope to see you outdoors!

Cindy Butts, Connecticut Chapter Chair

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER ANNUAL GATHERING – 2016

The 95th Annual Gathering of the Connecticut Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club was held on November 13, 2016 at Saint Clement Castle, Portland, Connecticut.

Bob welcomed all to the Annual Gathering noting a good turn-out for this year's Annual Gathering. Based on the positive feedback we received after last year's Annual Gathering, we decided to hold it here at St. Clement Castle once again. Bob asked the audience to share our thoughts on how the day went with Michelle Baughman the Program Chair or any other Executive Committee member. Representing the club this evening is Kevin Breunig who heads communications for the AMC. Bob thanked Kevin for making the trip from Boston to join us. Bob then gave us some history of the Connecticut Chapter.

In 1921, our fledgling organization held four activities. This year, the Connecticut chapter's level of activities remains among the highest of the 12 AMC chapters. This past year, a total of 100 hike leaders led more than 600 hikes, including several multi-day trips. More than 170 members spent more than 8,000 hours maintaining the 52 miles of the Appalachian Trail that cross the Northwest corner of our state. In fact, thru-hikers on the AT have commented on the good condition of the Connecticut stretch of the AT. Our mountaineering group offered 75 events and now has 275 followers on Facebook. The Fairfield County Group drew an average of 70 people — often many non-members -to its 10 gatherings featuring speakers and slide shows. This is just a sampling of what our volunteer-led activities span. I encourage you to read the activities committees' annual summaries contained in the report and to become involved whatever your area of interest. Meanwhile, chapter finances are in excellent shape. Our membership number is growing and stands at about 8,300.

As active as our members are, there remain many opportunities to participate as we could use more family hike leaders and a co-editor to assist our veteran newsletter editor, Darcy Witham. We also need a co-chair for Membership East of the River.

At the club level, AMC's camps, huts, and lodges have enjoyed ever increasing popularity, particularly family and teen wilderness programming. This past summer AMC's newest facility, Breakneck Pond in Harriman State Park, opened offering Nutmegger's another great place to enjoy the outdoors.

Bob recognized the following CT Chapter members who have passed away during the year and asked for a moment of silence. These are the following: Brian Riordan, George Ripley, Henry Sauer, Marjorie Hawley, Mary Dorpalen, Michael Holzman, Norman Sills, Michael See, Paul Hudak, Paul Palmer, Sandra Wilson, Chip Tuthill, Pat Wasserman, Dick Whitehouse and Julie Linberg

Bob introduced Janet Ainsworth who presented Alison Terjek with an Appie of the Year award, Dave Boone presented Darcy Witman with the second Appie of the year award, then Jim Scheef presented Dennis Wigg with the Lifetime Award.

Bob then recognized the Executive Committee saying it would be impossible for the chapter to be successful without the many hours of effort and planning provided by our volunteers. The Chapter Stewardship Award is given annually to members who lead 5 or more-chapter activities or who donate 30 or more hours of time to chapter programs.

Those volunteers who are with us tonight are listed in the Program. Bob asks the Executive Committee to stand. All year long, they are out leading trips and donating many hours to other important work.

Dave Boone, chair of AT Committee, was introduced to present the 2016 Trails Committee Award. David Boone, commended the many thousands of hours of work of the AT Committee volunteers. Dave read the names of the 2016 winners of the Pychowska Award and the Hart Award, and directed everyone's attention to the Program in which all winners of the 2016 Trail Awards are named.

Bob recognized the past Chapter chairs in attendance: Judy Besancon, Dale Geslien, Tim Linehan, Janet Ainsworth, Anne Bailey, Ledge Clayton, David Cullen, and Trish Niece. Dave Moore, Marty Griffin and Jim Morrow were

recognized for completing their 50th year of membership, five decades in the AMC. Dave Cullen distributed the 50-year pins and individuals completing their 25th year of membership during 2016 were sent their 25-year pins via mail.

Bob then thanked the program committee and friends for arranging today's events: Chair Michelle Baughman, Wilda Wyse, Sean Coughlin, Jessica Downs, Barrie Vogel, Jim Scheef and Darcy Witham all devoted substantial time to organizing this event.

The members of the Nominating Committee who blessed this year's Executive Committee slate were thanked for volunteering. Those serving are Bruce Laroche, chair, Barbara Beckerman, Skip Frey, and George Shott.

At 7:24pm the business portion of the meeting was called to order for the 95th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Bob called for a motion to accept the Secretary's minutes of the 2016 Annual Gathering set forth in the Annual Report, which motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously without revision. Bob next called for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as set forth in the Annual Report, which motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously without revision. Bob asked Bruce LaRoche, Chair of the Nominating Committee, to introduce the slate of nominees for the Executive Committee. Bruce read the following names and positions and asked each person to come forward as he read their names:

Chapter Chair	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Chapter Vice Chair	<i>John Grasso</i>
Secretary	<i>Jocelyn Eppich</i>
Treasurer	<i>Al Puches</i>
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Appalachian Trail Chair	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Susan Grant</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Rick Merritt</i>
Communications Co-Chair	<i>David Roberts</i>
Communications Co-Chair	<i>Jim Scheef</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Russell Charest</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Andrew May</i>
East of the River Chair	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Chair	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Phil Wilsey</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>Tom Carruthers</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>David Roberts</i>
Family Activities Co-Chair	<i>Janet Ainsworth</i>
Family Activities Co-Chair	<i>Open</i>
Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Chair	<i>Barry Gorfain</i>
Member at Large	<i>Bea Holt</i>
Member at Large	<i>Open</i>
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Mountaineering Co-Chair	<i>Peter Gajdoski</i>
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Newsletter Editor	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
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Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Mark Schappert</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Dennis Wigg</i>
Young Members Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>

Bruce then called for a motion to accept the slate of nominees, which motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

The meeting was then turned back to Bob who made a pitch for more volunteers for our committees. He noted our Leadership Training School is excellent as he attended a training this past June and was impressed by the thorough job that Keith Spaar, Janet Ainsworth, and Dale Geslien did directing people to the chapter webpage for further information.

Bob noted the tradition of the red hats. Back in 1951, then chapter chair John Herr was concerned that the chapter membership had grown so large that not everyone knew who the chapter chair was. Thus, developed the tradition of awarding a red hat to the chapter chair so that members could identify him or her. There were 500 members back then. There are just short of 8,000 members now. Cindy Butts was then presented with a red hat for becoming the new Chair.

With no further business on our agenda this evening, Cindy made the motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded. The Annual Business Meeting was concluded at 7:33pm.

Jocelyn Eppich, Secretary



**TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2014 AND 2015**

	2015	2016
Cash at January 1	\$151,073	\$154,212
Revenue Collected:		
Joy Street dues allocation	27,984	27,726
Program activities	20,743	19,031
Contributions	100	1,489
Reserve funds- sources (1)	4,559	6,280
Share of initial memberships	1,670	1,510
Leadership Training	12,215	12,390
Merchandise sales	120	281
Interest and investment income	<u>(4,143)</u>	<u>10,121</u>
Total revenue collected	\$63,248	\$78,828
Expenditures:		
Cost of program activities	24,495	20,157
Youth Opportunities Program- New Haven	0	10,000
Cost of Merchandise	90	162
Reserve funds- uses (1)	5,036	17,489
Committee operating expenses:		
Bicycling	298	792
Conservation	945	1,157
East of the River	190	0
Education	8,406	12,013
Excursions	285	244
Executive	10,632	10,809
Flatwater	17	44
Membership	512	474
Mountaineering	402	973
Trails	7,771	8,151
Whitewater	<u>1,030</u>	<u>1,160</u>
Total expenditures	\$60,109	\$83,625
Cash at December 31	\$154,212	\$149,415

**TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2016 AND 2017**

	9/30/16	9/30/17
Cash at January 1	\$154,212	\$149,415
Revenue Collected:		
Joy Street dues allocation	18,610	18,776
Program activities	11,985	13,176
Reserve funds- sources (1)	6,255	4,535
Share of initial memberships	1,330	1,550

	Leadership training		7,358	5,829
	Contributions		389	2,490
	Merchandise sales		216	280
	Interest and investment income		10,120	16,931
	Total revenue collected		\$56,263	\$63,567
Expenditures:				
	Cost of program activities		12,171	15,838
	Youth Opportunities Program-New Haven		0	10,000
	Reserve funds- uses (1)		17,139	5,573
	Committee operating expenses:			
	Bicycling		310	293
	Conservation		75	669
	Education		8,657	8,344
	Excursions		148	7
	Executive		14,076	8,304
	Flatwater		43	0
	Membership		474	450
	Mountaineering		49	132
	Programs		161	0
	Trails		5,652	5,932
	Whitewater		789	74
	Total expenditures		\$59,744	\$55,616
Cash at September 30			\$150,731	\$157,366

**TREASURER'S REPORT
RESERVE FUNDS**

(1) Reserve funds are cash set aside by the Chapter for a specific future use or spending objective. Sources of such funds are often grants, gifts, or contributions, but can also include funds set aside from the Chapter's operating budget. A summary of the Chapter's reserve funds is as follows:

		12/31/15	12/31/16	9/30/17
Reserve funds:				
	AT Handicap Accessible Project	\$5,176	\$5,176	\$5,176
	Other Trails Memorials/Grants	13,214	4,545	5,898
	Duren and Simons Memorial Scholarships	4,579	2,040	-350

	Whitewater reserve	6,451	7,029	10,512
General fund:		124,792	130,625	136,130
Total cash:		\$154,212	\$149,415	\$157,366

Al Puches, Treasurer

Appalachian Trail Committee

The Chapter Appalachian Trail (AT) Committee is responsible for the maintenance and management of the Appalachian Trail and its side trails in Connecticut, including the adjoining public lands, in partnership with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Connecticut DEEP, and the National Park Service. Our accomplishments this year included:

- 107 individual members of the Chapter contributed 8,872 total hours to Trail activities.
- A group camping registration system was instituted, using ATC's "AT Camp" program. The registration site allows groups to see if other users intend to stay at a specific location on a specific date. The use of AT Camp will help eliminate overcrowding at campsites and assist groups in planning their AT excursions.
- In response to serious overuse and abuse by non-hiker day users occurring in the South Gate area, the Committee created a "Visitor Use Management Plan" for the River Road area between Skiff Mountain Road and South Gate in Kent. The plan was reviewed by NPS and presented to the Town of Kent. Key to the visitor controls were closing River Road to vehicles, and closing the former High Bank" campsite. Signage was improved along River Road. These actions resulted in exceedingly little misuse and damage in the area. On a similar note, the continuing volunteer presence at Bulls Bridge resulted in the most "normal" season there in years.
- Chip Ward of West Simsbury agreed to serve as Corridor Monitor Coordinator. Last season, Corridor Monitors visited/found 377 monuments and recovered 128,437 feet of boundary.
- An initiative to re-roof our trailhead signboards was continued, with new signboards constructed at RT 41 trailhead and Sages Ravine campsite. A new "Welcome to Sages Ravine" sign was installed at the AT/Paradise Lane junction above Sags.
- The "Welcome to the Appalachian Trail in Connecticut" pamphlet was updated, and 10,000 copies were printed.
- The Committee voted to provide picnic tables at all shelters: our less developed campsites would not be provided with tables. Because of Boy Scout service projects this season, picnic tables were built and brought into Stewart Hollow, Mt. Algo, Limestone Springs, and 10 Mile shelter.
- In May, a large fire on Schaghticoke Mountain caused the trail between Bulls Bridge Road and RT 341 to be closed for several days. It took four days to extinguish the fire. The fire burned 154 acres, and disrupted many rattlesnake dens. Fortunately, the Trail and Schaghticoke campsite were not significantly damaged.
- We were awarded a \$2,500 grant from REI, and a \$1,500 grant from ATC/LL Bean which we are using to purchase and install bear boxes at all our camps and shelters. This season, boxes were installed at 10 Mile Shelter, 10 Mile camping area, Schaghticoke campsite, and Silver Hill. Part of this initiative includes improved signage on the purpose and use of the boxes.
- Several new section maintainers were trained and appointed: the sections are Rands View to Iron Bridge, Iron Bridge to RT 112, St. Johns Ledges to Skiff Mountain Rd., Skiff Mountain Rd. to RT 341, and the NY/CT border to Bulls Bridge Road. Furthermore, improvements this season included rehabbing the privy and tent platforms at Sages Ravine, replacement puncheon on Paradise Lane and Mt. Algo shelter, a new chum at Stony Brook, and compost bins switched out at Stewart Hollow, 10 Mile, and Limestone Springs, and re-blazing and brushing on nearly all sections. In addition, 284 blowdowns were removed, 15 new rock water bars were installed, 26 rock and 11 log steps were built, and 111 fire rings destroyed.
- Biweekly weekday work parties were instituted, to attract participants who might not attend Saturday work parties. These mid-week efforts have been well received, and mainly consist of retired volunteers, who have come to refer to themselves as the RETREAD (Retired Elite Trail Reconstruction, Ecology, and Downed tree) crew. Non-retirees also welcome!

- Hazard trees continue to be of concern as forest health continues to decline. Hazard trees were removed from Paradise lane group site, 10 Mile Hill view, Brassie Brook campsite and Stony Brook campsite.
- The summer Ridgerunner program had the best season in recent memory. Our gratitude goes to our new AMC Southern New England Trail Supervisor Andrea Franklin, Ridgerunner Coordinator Ryan Rhodes and his team of conscientious and hardworking ridge runners, who made over 6,000 hiker contacts, did significant routine trail maintenance and developed a strong relationship with our CT volunteers. Impressive trail reconstruction was accomplished by an AMC Teen Trail Crew in the Thayer Brook area.
- The Committee represented AMC-CT at the ATC Biennial Conference in Waterville, Maine. At that meeting six CT AT volunteers were recognized with the NPS "Silver Award" for contributing 25 years of volunteer service to the Appalachian Trail: Walter Daniels, Elaine LaBella, Jim Malumphy, Bob Poitras, Ann Sherwood, and Russ Waldie.

The Committee is grateful to our dedicated Section Maintainers, Boundary Monitors, Trail Patrollers, Natural Heritage Monitors, and all Chapter members who participate in our work parties and other efforts. Projects to improve the Trail go out nearly every weekend. Please consider coming with us soon.

*Lana Bluege
Bob Poitras
Rich Cady
Walt Daniels
Henry Edmonds
Lisa Luca
Bernadette Ellegard*

*Ray Bracone
Gene Grayson
Ann Sherwood
Leo Kelly
Elaine LaBella
Chip Ward*

*Jeff Glans
Paul Reder
Sue Spring
Jim Liptack
Adam Lippman*

Russ Waldie

*Andrea Franklin - AMC Regional Trails Supervisor
Cheryl Bryne - ATC Trail Management Assistant
Adam Brown - ATC Stewardship Conservation Manager*

Dave Boone- AT Committee Chairman

Bicycling Committee

RIDE COORDINATOR: Mark Kiley, our bike rider coordinator has done a great job this year keeping all rides for our web-site, entering rides in our trip system and leading several rides. Tom Ebersold and Susan Grant have served as back up. Tom also kept our ride leader list up to date.

RIDE LEADER TRAINING: Tom Ebersold conducted a ride leader training early in the season with Mary Ann and Susan in attendance. We had 4 people attend.

TUESDAY & THURSDAY EVENING RIDES: out of Manchester continued to attract many participants. Bike leaders included Judy Borrmann, David Waldburger and Rick Merritt. Judy extends the season for the faster riders from early spring to mid fall.

THURSDAY EVENING RIDES: were successful again this year with two rides each week averaging 10 to 20 riders with many going to dinner after the ride. Leaders included Finlay and Mary Ferguson, Mark Henebry, Wayne Chapman, and Mary Ann Gleba.

WEEKEND BIKE TRIPS: included only one trip this year - Hampton Beach, NH. The leaders were MaryAnn Gleba, Bruce Ebbets, Tony Calabrese and Annette Calabrese.

WEEKEND DAY BIKE RIDES: were less numerous this year. Our current active leaders continue to reach out to riders to become leaders suggesting they lead one to two rides a year. Saturday morning rides out of The Bike Shop continued for a second year in South Windsor led by Andrew Johnson.

RIDE LEADER APPRECIATION was held on October 29.

BICYCLING COMMITTEE:

Susan Grant, Co-Chair

Mary Ann Gleba, Co-Chair

Communications Committee

Communications continued to produce the chapter's Weekly Upcoming Events list, which goes out each Tuesday and includes all events through the following two weekends. It also features upcoming special events. The Weekly provides readers with a convenient one stop list of events and helps to reduce the number of individual activity notice emails.

Communications also promotes all of the chapter's special events including Fairfield County Group's ten speaker dinners each year, Give a Day to the AT, AT Day, Spring Dinner, Annual Gathering, and training events run by the chapter's Education Committee.

The main system used by the chapter to promote its events, in addition to the club's activity listing system, is Constant Contact, which is used to create and send out email notices. The chapter now has over 4,600 individual email addresses on Constant Contact, and in aggregate it's various email lists there have over 6,000 addresses. In addition, the chapter has been making increased use of Meetup and our Meetup group now has over 2,000 members. Our Facebook group also continues to be very active with over 700 members.

Communications works closely with a number of other committees and particularly with our Webmaster and Newsletter Editor.

David Roberts – Co-Chair

Jim Scheef – Co-Chair

Conservation Committee

Our Conservation Committee enjoyed another active and productive year. As in years past, most of our time, resources and efforts were spent - thanks to Co-chair Russ Charest and his energy savings display board - on tabling. We could spread the AMC message at events throughout the year and across the state. We represented the chapter at North Haven Earth Day, Hamden Earth Day, Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA) Mattabessett Trail dedication, Naugatuck Green Festival, Cabela's Environmental Fair, Connecticut Transit & Health Fair and, it is anticipated, the Connecticut Chapter Annual Gathering. These efforts support the club's Cleanest Watt Campaign. The cleanest watt is the watt that is never burned.

Like last year, which was the centennial of the National Park Service (America's Best Idea), we enjoyed presentations designed to draw attention to our national parks and their desperate need for more resources. Intrepid traveler David Roberts presented to a packed, rapt crowd pictures and stories from some of his many travels in public lands. David's talk was especially relevant because he highlighted the beauty of some of the smaller and lesser-known parks. These parks need and deserve our attention and resources as well as the large popular parks. As Doestevsky wrote, "Beauty will save the world." We also heard from Lauren Cosgrove, Find Your Voice senior coordinator for the National Parks Foundation, which is the nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting, protecting, and preserving our national parks.

In January, we had our annual Legislative Preview Panel. We were fortunate enough to hear from Eric Hammerling, executive director of CFPA, who served as the moderator. Other participants were Alicea Chamut, water steward for the Connecticut River Conservancy, Jamie Howland, energy analyst for the Acadia Center and Dr. Melissa Everett, energy program manager for Connecticut Clean Water Action. Most of the discussion was about ways to improve Connecticut's energy grid by promoting efficiency and renewable. All panelists agreed that we could achieve this clean, efficient energy grid without major financial outlays and without the need to despoil the White Mountain National Forest with massive transmission lines bringing hydro power from Quebec. As of this writing, one bright spot was the inclusion of "Passport to the Parks", which was part of the bipartisan budget being voted on in late October. In return for a \$10 surcharge on vehicle registrations, residents driving vehicles with Connecticut license plates will be admitted free into the parks, including the largest, such as Hammonasset Beach, Rocky Neck and Sherwood Island.

As we face continued budget cuts at local, state, and national levels, we would welcome and need anyone's and everyone's involvement in any capacity that they see fit. As Isaac Newton said, "If I see far, it is because I stand on the shoulders of giants".

Committee Members:

Russ Charest Co-Chair

Andrew May Co-Chair

Dr. Jamie Lee

Bob Andrews

Janet Ainsworth



East-of-the-River Committee

East-of-the-River remains a very active group of hikers. Tuesday and Thursday hikes are varied and found in all parts of Connecticut with occasional hikes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Our dedicated hike leaders vary the terrain from urban hikes, beach hikes, rail trails, to many of the higher points in the hills of our state. We continue to explore new trails to add our inventory of hikes.

There are two levels of hikes: one is a more challenging hike and the other is a more moderate hike of under five miles. The more moderate hikes are often called “alternate hikes” by the group. There is both a more challenging hike, as well as, an alternate hike on most Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. Attendance for hikes varies and sometimes consists of small groups but can also be a larger group of as many as 30.

We have other events such as our annual “cookie swap”. This year it is scheduled to take place at “The Arbors” in Manchester on December 12. After the hikes, small groups often go for pizza, ice cream or coffee at nearby establishments. Our learning on each hike could include identification of tree species, wildflowers, historical buildings, and landmarks.

Come join this friendly group for one or more fun filled hikes.

EAST OF THE RIVER COMMITTEE 2017:

Ray Phillips, Chair



Education Committee

On the weekend of November 18-19th 2016, the Education Committee conducted a 2-day leadership training at White Memorial in Litchfield and a Wilderness First Aid Training. 19 hike leaders were trained and 23 attended Wilderness First Aid training.

In April of 2017, Wilderness First Aid course at White Memorial in Litchfield was attend by 35 people. Training consisted of 16 hours of various first aid topics and scenarios. SOLO provided the instructors for the weekend. Next door our one-day LTS was going on in the Mott-Van Winkle classroom where 19 new hike leaders learned A to Z on what it means to be a hike leader for the AMC. The annual June single day Leadership Training at Sleeping Giant trained 16 new leaders.

Education Chair Keith Spaar and Janet Ainsworth participated in a Train the Trainer program at the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center (CHOC) in New York's Harriman State Park. The Outdoor Leadership Development Committee (OLDC), chapter volunteers and Leadership Training & Risk Management staff created the curricula for two of these weekend sessions. The hiking skills track was held on a September weekend at CHOC; leadership was scheduled in mid-October at Prindle Hill in Massachusetts. Participants not only received experiential training, but the staff and volunteers who planned the trainings helped develop an extensive curriculum that participants received in paper and electronic form. These sessions were the first, but it is hoped that more will be held in future years. The students, already activity leaders/trainers, will return to their home chapters with new skills allowing them to offer outdoor skills-focused programming.

Facebook, Constant Contact, Meetup, and the CT-AMC Website is being used to advertise the trainings. 2018 the Education Committee will be looking to expand its trainings to the east side of the state with Wilderness First Aid Training and Leadership Training. A Leave No Trace course will be offered in May (TBA).

The Education will be also recruiting for new Education members to assist in its training offerings.

Keith Spaar, Education Chair

Excursions Committee

In the twelve months to the end of September 2017, Connecticut Chapter Hike Leaders posted over 600 hikes along with several weekend and other multi-day trips. We added 16 new Hike Leaders from Connecticut. Almost 100 different Hike Leaders led at least one hike during the year demonstrating the depth of our group of Hike Leaders. Also, 48 of our Hike Leaders and volunteers qualified for Chapter Stewardship recognition for leading 5 or more hikes or contributing 30 or more volunteer hours. All our leaders deserve our thanks and appreciation for their efforts.

In addition to hikes led by leaders who are not part of a sponsoring group, hikes sponsored by East of the River (EOR), the Thursday Western CT Hiking Group, Young Members, and Family Activities again made major contributions. The EOR Midweek Hiking Group continued to sponsor four well-attended hikes each week, the Western CT Thursday Hiking Group generally sponsored at least one hike each week, and our Family Activities group sponsored several hikes during the year. Our Young Members group continues to contribute to our hiking totals, with nearly 100 hikes and activities in the past year with several different leaders. Several hiking-related workshops were offered by Alison Terjek (Membership and Young Members Chair) and Keith Spaar (Education Chair), including an Into to Winter Hiking Gear and a Planning Hikes in the Mountains workshop. Since Alison achieved Hike Leader Class 3 status last year, she has worked to expand our winter 4K and above hiking program. Alison led several White Mountain hikes last year including winter hikes. Sponsoring groups make a major contribution to the success of our hiking program and Excursions values highly the work not only of the Hike Leaders who lead hikes sponsored by these groups but also the work done by the group coordinators.

Although we continue to offer many mid-week hikes year-round, we have had numerous requests to offer more shorter, slower-paced weekend hikes. On some mid-week days, hikers have a choice of 5 or 6 hikes. There has been an increase in weekend hikes, but we can still use more of them. We have also seen an increase in the number of after work and/or “sunset” hikes. Hikes can be submitted on short notice within a few days of the event. Thanks to our leaders who have helped to fill these needs.

Several of our Hike Leaders, in addition to leading local hikes, led backpacking or ski trips both within and beyond the state, and Adventure Travel trips. Hike Leaders also strongly supported chapter-wide events such as National Trails Day, Give-a-Day to the AT, and AT Day, which was again run by Excursions. Our leaders listed 11 hikes as part of the National Trails Day events. AT Day has grown to be the CT Chapter’s biggest outdoor event each year. At this year’s AT Day events, we had over 155 participants for events which included hiking, biking, paddling, rock climbing, and trail work. Most events had 6-10 participants, however, Dave Boone’s popular 2nd annual Historic AT hike had 24 people. Following the events, over 135 people attended the Grand BBQ at Macedonia Brook State Park. Many thanks to our AT Day All-Star BBQ Team for making the day a great success.

Once again, the Excursions Committee sponsored the AMC’s Fall Hiking Week as well as August Camp. We thank everyone who organized and led hikes at these great events. This year, FHW was based in Gorham, NH. At least 22 “formal” hikes, as well as several “bootleg” hikes, were offered over the seven-day time period to respond to the sellout crowd. Half of the leaders for those FHW hikes were from our CT Chapter.

We also thank Keith Spaar and the Education Committee, comprising mainly of Hike Leaders, for organizing the weekend-long annual Leadership Training School in Litchfield and a one-day Leadership Training Session, both of which were very well attended and which are extremely important in providing potential Hike Leaders with high quality training.

Last November, we held a Hike Leader Appreciation Party targeting our leaders in the eastern part of the state. The event was held at the Sprague Grist Mill in Baltic and was well attended by our Leaders from “far” eastern CT. Thanks to Susan Zimmerman, our EOR Alternate Hike Coordinator, and Hike Leader June Powell for their efforts to set up the venue.

This past March, we spent a couple of days requesting and organizing potential AMC hike leaders’ help for a missing hiker along the Metacomet Trail in Plainville/Farmington. We spoke with the Plainville police twice and offered suggestions and our assistance, however, we were asked to stand by while they used dogs and helicopter. We never could assist in the search efforts. We considered how to set up assistance in advance, so local police will know that we can be contacted for help with issues involving hiking trails or the wilderness.

Jim Scheef (Communications Co-Chair) continues to be an invaluable asset to the Excursions Committee and to the entire club as our Webmaster and we thank Jim for all his work. Jim has also been very helpful to the Fall Hiking Week group by his assistance to set up the new FHW website and for providing links to that site from our Chapter’s website. Earlier this year, Jim, and Peg Peterson (Excursions Co-Chair) joined with AMC’s Information Technology and Web Design departments and representatives from other AMC chapters in several webinars to help define, prioritize, and manage IT projects. We used the technique of creating user stories to capture functional requirements. Our discussions resulted in a project plan to update our databases to benefit all AMC chapters.

Our principal hike email list now includes over 4625 names. We thank David Roberts (Communications Co-Chair) for continuing to coordinate and send out our Weekly Upcoming Hikes List, which is well established not only for advertising our hikes but as a key element in promoting the chapter’s events and events run by other committees. This past year, the CT-AMC Meetup group added about 400 new members and is currently just under the 2100-member mark. Many thanks to the volunteers who maintain our Meetup group, another avenue for Hike Leaders to promote their hikes.

Behind the scenes, our Excursions committee members spend countless hours maintaining our lists, approving hikes, distributing emails, and responding to many emails from Hike Leaders, hikers and potential hikers. Their contributions are invaluable and very much appreciated.

EXCURSIONS COMMITTEE:

*Peg Peterson, Co-Chair
Phil Wilsey, Co-Chair*

*Carol Hassett
Dave Cronin
Bill Curley*



Fairfield County Group

Fairfield County Group (FCG) had another successful year. In the twelve months to the end of September 2017, FCG organized ten events, consisting of five speaker dinner meetings in Westport; and five dinner speaker meetings in Bethel. Meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month, except for July and August and alternate between Bethel and Westport. FCG's meetings feature a wide range of topics, mainly in the armchair travel category

In Westport, where meetings were held in the Saugatuck Congregational Church, FCG organized five speaker meetings, starting in November 2016 with a presentation on Cuba, by Daryl Hawk. In January, Sam Mehta presented on Turkey. The March meeting, when David Roberts was scheduled to present on France, was cancelled due to the worst storm of the winter, although that presentation was rescheduled to November 2017. In May 2017, Dave Pressler presented on Australia, and in September 2017, Bill Barnett gave a presentation on India.

In Bethel, the October 2016 meeting featured Dale Geslien with a presentation on Baja Sur, December featured Frank Keen on Polynesia and in February 2017 Ian Lewis presented on Bhutan. The April 2017 meeting featured a movie night with a showing of "Dark Glow of the Mountains" and in June 2017, David Roberts presented on Syria and Jordan. The Bethel meetings take place at St Thomas Church.

Attendance levels vary but Bethel meetings attract on average around 50 people and Westport around 70. FCG's events not only help to retain members within the club but have directly resulted in a significant number of people joining the AMC. FCG continued its communications efforts with posters and press releases for its events and has enjoyed good local media support. All FCG events are listed on the chapter web-site, included in the Weekly, and have featured regularly in the chapter newsletters. FCG email list on Constant Contact now has about 700 names. FCG events are now also featured in the chapter's Meetup group and on Facebook.

While FCG's main aim is to promote the AMC in southwestern Connecticut, FCG has also worked to do this in a cost-effective way. All speakers now present for no fee, and we have controlled our other costs carefully.

In addition to having a wonderful committee FCG enjoys the support of many other volunteers who are always willing to help out in many ways. FCG Co-Chairs David Roberts and Tom Carruthers wish to thank all of them for their contribution to FCG's success.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY GROUP COMMITTEE:
Fiona Nicholson, Al Puches, Eleanor Sasso
Tom Carruthers, Co-Chair David Roberts, Co-Chair





Family Activities Committee

The Family Activities Committee consists of two leaders. Thus, we typically offer two hikes per month during three seasons. We are always looking for more leaders. For busy families of school-aged children, there are one-day leader training sessions in April and June. Check the Education Committee tab on the chapter website (ct-amc.org) for further information. If you don't wish to lead hikes, we could always use a volunteer to plan social activities for families.

FAMILY EXCURSIONS COMMITTEE:

Janet Ainsworth, Co-Chair

David Bellemare, Co-Chair

Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Committee

We've had good turnouts this year for our wide range of events on the water. AMC members from other chapters have been joining us to sample our wide variety of venues for paddling. Connecticut offers everything from small ponds to large rivers, whitewater play areas to tidal marshes to Long Island Sound. The only thing we lack are the imposing tides of the Bay of Fundy!

Tom Ebersold led his usual variety of flatwater and tidewater trips with some interesting diversions. I am always amazed by how many miles he can squeeze out of a small body of water.

We are also working with CT DEEP to help spread their new initiative on boating safety. You will be hearing more of their slogan "Boating is Serious Fun". I like to think that it complements our own instructional session- Fun with Kayaks!

We saved one of the highlights for the end of the season. Eric Barbour led a trip on the Connecticut River to Goose Island to observe the murmuration of the tree swallows- the annual phenomenon of the birds' migratory stop in Old Lyme. It was a beautiful trip which ended with paddling back downriver after dark. It was a very unique and enjoyable experience.

Thank you to all the leaders for their hard work and enthusiasm. We look forward to seeing you out on the water.

FLATWATER/COASTAL PADDLING COMMITTEE:

Eric Barbour
Tom Ebersold
Steve Lemoine
Debbie Tedford

Barry Gorfain, Chair

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has been working to expand our chapter's online presence to increase awareness of AMC on social media. Our Annual Spring Hike and Breakfast at Macedonia State Park in Kent, CT was a success and we continue to work with the education committee to offer beginner workshops to help new members safely explore the outdoors.

After seeing the Chapter's Young Member audience grow by having a Co-Chair East of the River, I am seeking a Membership Co-Chair to help welcome new members from Eastern CT.

Volunteer Opportunity: Membership Co-Chair (East of the River)

The Connecticut Chapter Membership Committee is seeking an East of the River Co-Chair for 2018. You will fit well in this role if you love AMC and want to spread the word about the great work our chapter does.

Responsibilities include attending monthly committee meetings in Middlefield, CT (September - June, meetings include a pizza social and come with great company!) and organizing occasional weekend or weeknight socials and/or intro outings or workshops in or near Eastern Connecticut (you choose the day, time, location.)

If interested, please email Alison Terjek (membership@ct-amc.org) who lives far West of the River in Northwestern CT.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Alison Terjek, Chair

Mountaineering Committee

Recreation: This year, Mountaineering ran a total of 78 climbing events (climbs, trips and classes).

Ice Climbing: Once again poor weather conditions impacted local climbing. Luckily the weather was better up North in January and the annual Beginners Ice Climbing course / Ice Weekend in North Conway, NH was successfully held.

Rock Climbing: Indoor climbing continued Tuesday evenings at the Central Rock Gym (CRG) in Glastonbury and on Thursday evenings at Prime Climb in Wallingford. Indoor climbs were typically attended by 6-10 climbers and again we alternated our monthly committee meetings between the two gyms.

In April we moved our Thursday night climbs out of doors and through September we rotated through eight Connecticut crags. The outdoor climbs typically drew 10 - 20 climbers and for most part the weather cooperated. This year we also continued to offer Tuesday night climbing indoors at CRG during the outdoor season.

We again offered monthly day trips to the Shawangunks but attendance / interest was low, so some were cancelled. The Trails Day try-a-climb event was well-attended but AT Day not so much due to marginal weather.

Education: This year we again sponsored 6 training events. Winter classes held were Introduction to Ice Climbing and Avalanche Beacon Practice. Spring classes held were Introduction to Rock Climbing, Top Rope Set-up, Anchor Building, and Self-Rescue.

Organization: The Central Rock Gym discount continues to attract new members. The Facebook Group gained an additional 81 members (356 total) and draws new participants to our events. An official position of Quartermaster was created to help better manage club gear. We expect to end the year with a balanced budget. We had several leaders move out of state but have identified new leader candidates to replace them in 2018. In September we began training the new co-chairs John DeAngelis and Paul Hayse to ensure a smooth transition.

2018 Objectives:

Recruit new leaders to help maintain our large calendar of events and offer more regional climbing trips.

Attract new climbers to our group through introductory courses, publicize our events via Constant Contact and Facebook, and participate in Chapter wide activities such as New Member Day and AT Day.

Encourage and support members as they progress into more advanced climbing by providing a more defined continuum of training and activity.

Support the maintenance and improvement of our CT climbing areas in cooperation with the Ragged Mountain Foundation and the Access Fund.

MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE:

*Mike Adelson
Robert Gregory
Dominick Galletti
Jesse Morenz
Mark Sondeen
Steve Wall*

*Chuck Boyd
Paul Hayes
Tim Linehan
Gustavo Nava
Julia Surkis
Gary Zempel*

*John DeAngelis
Patrick Jacques
Art Morenz
Gini Kramer
Audrey Suseno
Paula Zimbrian*

Pete Gajdosik and Kurt Zoner, Co-Chairs



Newsletter

The *AMC in Connecticut*, our CT-AMC newsletter, reaches more than 8,000-chapter members through online distribution and to anyone worldwide through the Internet. The member CT-AMC newsletter showcases an update from your chapter chair, information about upcoming events, access to registration and activity leaders, and stories/articles of interest to our constituents submitted by committee chairs, participating members, and the AMC. *AMC in Connecticut* is also distributed to numerous advocates and supporters. To opt in, sign up here: www.ct-amc.org/OptIn/Index.shtm

Each newsletter is always a group effort. Committee leaders and members are all encouraged to submit and promote their activities, upcoming events, and experiences. This publication works to inform members, introduce new activities, and encourage members to participate, recruit, and give of their time.

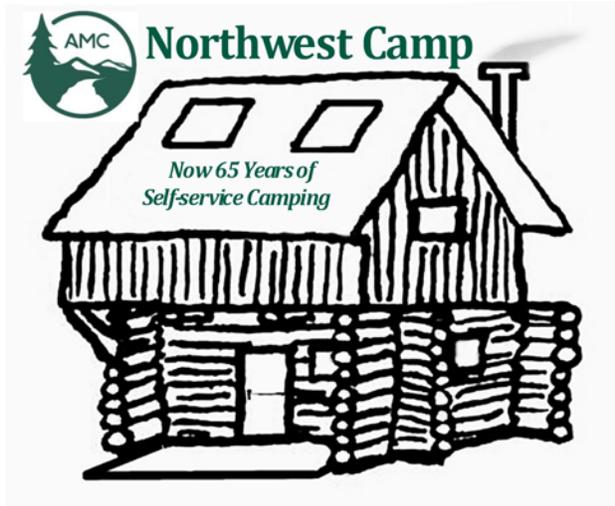
Darcy Witham is editor and producer of the publication. As a volunteer, she manages all aspects of production, including preparing initial content outlines/editorial calendars, writing, editing, and providing her highly reactive, colorful design and layout skills. Darcy also puts together several additional CT-AMC associated promotions including but not limited to flyers, announcements, brochures, posters, and advertising. Eric Stones has been on board again this year volunteering his time and expertise to production support and as copy-editor. Thank you always, Eric!

The online accessed newsletter is produced 3-4 times a year. All newsletters are archived and available online as a downloadable, printable pdf document: www.ct-amc.org.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Darcy Witham, Newsletter Committee Chair

Northwest Camp Committee



The Northwest Camp Committee had an active year managing the cabin and its surrounding 125-acres, high on the Taconic plateau. The rustic but cozy cabin is constructed of American chestnut logs, tucked away under an old-growth Eastern hemlock forest canopy in a remote and environmentally diverse area in the very northwest corner of Connecticut. The NWC Committee volunteers managing this self-service facility continue to meet the challenge of balancing the needs of its guests with a safe and environmentally responsible self-service camping experience.

The sparkling pristine stream adjacent to the cabin drains to Sages ravine and is part of the unique Schenob Brook watershed drainage basin. This rare watershed has been the target of protection for many years by numerous local, state, and national environmental organizations and public agencies. Continuously learning and sharing what makes this fragile and vulnerable property and watershed so unique is a high priority.

Productive meetings took place throughout the year and the two annual work parties (first Saturday in May & November) resulted in the completion of many tasks. For over ten years the Committee has been donating funds to the AMC/ATC Ridgerunner (RR's) program because they value the program and how the hardworking Ridgerunners monitor the AT and promote Leave No Trace. In April, the NWC Committee received a return on their investment with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Southern New England Regional Trails Supervisor, Andrea Franklin and the NWC Committee Co-Chairs. The MOU now helps the RR's become more of a benefit to the NWC Committee as they hike through and monitor NWC cabin and its surrounding property.

A Bylaws subcommittee was formed and after numerous meetings the final draft was approved by Joy Street and the NWC Committee in June. Changes include the tweaking of Job Descriptions, Titles of Officers and bringing it up to date with other Volunteer Camps and Cabins Committee's Bylaws.

The NWC Committee offers its sincere condolences to John Hicks (and family) on the loss of his wife Marge Hicks who passed away at St. Francis Hospital on January 5th. Marge accompanied John on almost every NWC work party and Committee meeting. She was a lifetime member of the AMC and will be sorely missed.

Clouds prevented viewing of the Perseid meteors, but participants were treated to a view of the International Space Station on a predicted path overhead from Bald Peak as part of the kick-off to the 9th Annual NWC Perseid Meteor Showers Extravaganza in August. The Friday night Owl Prowl included Audubon's Fran

Zygmonts' in-depth PPT presentation on Strigiformes of North America. Mr. Zygmont called in barred owls over the Bog trailhead under the dry Hemlock canopy during showers on Friday night and again Saturday morning in the sunshine. On Saturday, Rich Michna dazzled the group with his drone demo from the parking lot and later showed a panoramic video with a portable PPT projector from the drone 200' above of the cabin and the Riga plateau. All the RR's arrived for the cookout Saturday night and gave a brief talk on what they experienced for the summer and they thought the new MOU requiring cabin monitoring worked very well and recommended it again for next year. Many in attendance voiced ardent support for the RR's and stated that they would like them to stay in Sages through Columbus Day. Saturday night after a tasty cookout, cabin monitor and singer/songwriter Joel Blumert entertained the party with his classic songs made possible due to his very light-weight and packable acoustic guitar he hiked up from Rt. 41. The highlight of the weekend happened around the campfire Saturday night during happy hour after Fran Zygmont had left, NWC Committee member Rich Michna connected his Sibley's bird calling app to an HMDX speaker and with the volume cranked and with Northern Barred owls caterwauling, in flew a Barred owl 20-feet above the campfire for quite some time. The call apparently roused up many owls in the cabin area as they hooted all night and according to preceding campers they are still hooting!

The hope remains alive that this well managed and fragile piece of property, through the committee's collaborative and information sharing process will ensure and sustain its long-term health and viability for future generations to enjoy.

Submitted by Rod Parlee

Committee Roster with Volunteers

Tom McGrath (Co-Chair, Moldering Privy Committee) *
Rod Parlee (Co-Chair, Conservation Director) *
Merri Fox (Secretary) *
Donald Klein (Caretaker) *
Craig Kennedy (Registrar) *
Al Puches (Treasurer) *
Paul Thoma (Financial Liaison) *
John Hicks (Past Chair/Caretaker – Trails Committee) *
Roy Hoffman (Past Chair/Caretaker)
Carol Langley (Cabin Monitor & Green Mt Club, CT Rep)
Trent Link (Past Chair/Caretaker)
Art Mauger (Cabin Monitor) *
John Rek (Past Chair/Caretaker)
Eric Harvey
Josh Michna
Rich Michna*
Tom O'Connor
Joe Parenteau
Ethan Rain*
Tim Stalling
Angel Vega

* denotes Stewardship Award with more than 30 volunteer hours

Program Committee

The Spring Dinner was held Saturday, April 8, 2017, at the Cheshire Grange, 44 Wallingford Road, Cheshire, CT. Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Scientist Dr. Richard S. Cowles' "Conserving Eastern Hemlocks" presentation addressed the timely and important conservation issue of the significant impact that the introduction of exotic invasive pests such as the Hemlock Woolly Adelgids and the Elongate Hemlock Scales have had on the health of our forests and the intervention measures that can be taken to keep these Asian invasive pests (that have no natural predators in our environment) in check. This issue is of particular importance to the AMC because our own Northwest Camp is located in a stand of Hemlocks within a unique and fragile ecosystem. The use of systemic insecticides has been critically important for conservation of hemlocks, but these insecticides provide only a stop-gap measure to preserve stands of hemlocks until effective natural enemies are established. Dr. Cowles described the methods used to conserve the Eastern Hemlocks and discussed managing the risk of environmental contamination resulting from these pesticide treatments.

A new program was added this year as a solution to two evolving issues: AMC members' interest in attending the Spring Dinner events has increased significantly (yet our Cheshire Grange venue cannot accommodate more than 100 guests as per their fire code regulations), and a growing number of AMC members have expressed their dissatisfaction about the limited number of vegetarian meals that the Grange is willing to provide. In order to strike a happy balance between those members who love their traditional Roast Beef Spring Dinner event and those who desire more heart healthy fare, it seemed only logical that a new event should be offered. The Lodge at Crandall Park in Tolland, CT was chosen as a venue because the East of the River members had lost their Pot Luck social functions years ago, while the Fairfield County members enjoy speaker presentations on a regular basis. So, it only seemed fair that the new speaker/meal event ought to be conveniently located for the EOR members benefit as their need for these kind of events had been neglected for so long. The ticket sales for the two events were 55 Roast Beef Spring Dinner and 66 Vegetarian Soups & Stories. This is an improvement over the past situation where the Spring Dinner sold out and people who could not get tickets were disgruntled because 21 more people were able to attend a speaker dinner event. If we space the two events further apart next year we are likely to see ticket sales rise for both events.

The first annual Vegetarian Soups & Stories event was held Friday, March 21, 2017 at the beautiful, rustic Crandall Park Lodge in Tolland, CT. Our keynote speaker Wick Griswold, Associate Professor of Sociology from the University of Hartford gave an enthralling presentation entitled "Stories of the Connecticut River," while attendees enjoyed hot, delicious homemade soups by the crackling fireplace. Wick regaled us with exciting stories of the vast and varied history of the Connecticut River. We were enlightened and entertained by captivating stories ranging from the first explorers and settlements, to the developing industry that shaped our state's economy, to modern day recreational pastimes. A book signing session followed the event, as Wick has authored five books about local Connecticut history with in the Connecticut River Watershed. The hearty, healthy soups were catered by Monet's Table of Tolland, a renowned local eatery that only uses fresh, local "farm to table" ingredients. Although attendance on the night of the event was hindered by a snow storm, ticket sales were encouraging for a first time offered event, especially considering that it conflicted with the UConn NCAA finals that was being televised that night and it was not well publicized due to time constraints. (As this is a very popular venue it books two years out, so I had no choice but to take the only open date, despite this not allowing much lead time to get the event properly publicized and promoted).

My solution to the short time frame in which to publicize the event was to go on air as a guest on a local radio show entitled "The Neighborhood" to promote these events. I had previously established a relationship with the radio station, WILI 1040 in Willimantic, CT, as I had been a guest for the purpose of promoting the last two Annual Gatherings and the AMC in hopes of encouraging new people to join. As the "Workshop Only" and Exhibit portion of the Annual Gathering is only \$15 admission and does not require pre-registration, it is a perfect opportunity for potential new members to check out what the club has to offer.

The 2016 AMC Annual Gathering was held at Saint Clements Castle in Portland. We sold 123 dinner tickets to the event (53 less than AG 2015), and a dozen people showed up for workshops only, some who pre-paid (through Eventbrite) and some who paid at the door. The keynote speaker was Deborah Lewis, AMC hike leader and owner of Bredeson Outdoor Adventures, an active adventure travel company. Deborah shared her experiences as part of a

ground-breaking 2014 trip to Kosovo, Macedonia, and Albania where 15 adventure travel tour operators and six travel media representatives from the U.S. and Europe participated in this co-operative trip designed to jump-start adventure travel in these Western Balkan countries. Deborah's multimedia presentation shared the group's experiences which ranged from biking and hiking to paragliding and horseback riding, to visiting ancient monasteries, mosques, ruins and rural villages. "Adventure Week Western Balkans" was an unprecedented example of cross-border partnerships, and Deborah's overview of this trip provided eye-opening (and scenic) information on these under explored countries.

We had 15 exhibit tables, including two authors and an "oral historian," 50-year AMC member David S. Moore. David shared his extensive historic postcard collection at a set of tables in the rear of the dining room. People could sit down and relax while David regaled them with reminiscences of the old days of the AMC. He had an ancient pair of hiking boots that were ridiculously heavy...to illustrate the advancements that have been made in gear technology over the years...something to be very grateful for!

Michelle Baughman
AMC Connecticut Chapter Program Chairman
programs@ct-amc.org
<http://www.ct-amc.org>



Webmaster/Technology

Webmaster/Technology Committee

Throughout the past year we have maintained the status-quo in our systems waiting for AMC to complete their adoption of the relevant Salesforce modules for constituent management (i.e.: membership). This plan was presented at the AMC Summit (annual meeting) in January, 2017. AMC later changed direction and has now been planning to implement chapter websites in WordPress, rather than CommonSpot, the CMS they have been using for outdoors.org website. (please forgive the jargon).

After more than fifteen years as your Webmaster, I am finishing my final year. I had hoped to find a replacement, but the job should really be broken into several smaller jobs.

The Technical Stuff

One of the more technical tasks is creating and managing the chapter email addresses. We have several ct-amc.org email addresses plus 89 addresses that forward to another address. Our chapter hosts the website for “Fall Hiking Week” which occasionally complicates changes in our webs hosting. This could be the most difficult role to fill.

Constant Contact Email

The use of Constant Contact has achieved the goal of better quality messaging for our members. The better format and more consistent delivery have proven this to be well worth the effort. Our emails are opened 24% of the time, which is exceedingly high for mass emailing, and indicates a high level of interest. David Roberts is the principal user of Constant Contact.

Social Media

Facebook and Meetup continue to draw people to our chapter. Our Facebook “likes” increased by 50% as Dale Geslien continues to manage our Facebook page, posting pictures and chapter events. Our page reaches hundreds of people each week, sometimes over a thousand, as posts are shared and liked. Our Meetup group has also grown to 2090 “appies” with more joining every week. Meetup continues to be our best means to reach out to new people. Several people share the task of managing our Meetup group. For those still not using such things, our “pages” are at www.facebook.com/AMCConnecticut and www.meetup.com/AMC-CT-Chapter.

Online Trips System

Webmaster involvement in this system (also known as the Activity Database) has been greatly reduced by promoting most committee chairs to function in the “approver” role. AMC has done a marvelous job of upgrading and improving this system over the years.

Chapter-wide Email Messaging

We continue to use of this facility with good results. The mailings go to all members within our chapter with a valid email address in the AMC membership database. This allows us to reach many members who are otherwise inactive within the chapter. If you do not receive these emails, you likely need to update your email address in the AMC Member Center. The task of composing and sending these emails has been passed to our Chapter Chair during this period of transition.

Chapter Phone Line

Northwest Camp and East of the River continue to make beneficial use of the phone line. For Northwest Camp it is a toll-free way for people to make and confirm reservations. For EOR, the phone line provides an easy, “no computer” way to learn about each week’s East of the River hikes. Managing this is an unfilled task.

Online Payments - Eventbrite

Last year we expanded use to Education Committee events. Keith Spaar, Education Committee Chair, will manage Eventbrite.

Committee Page Maintainers

I want to thank those who maintain the sections of the website devoted to specific committees:

Jamie Lee
Mark Schappert

Conservation
Whitewater

Kurt Zoner

Mountaineering

All other sections are maintained by your webmaster.

Your faithful web lackey,
Jim Scheef

Whitewater Committee

The CT AMC WHITEWATER COMMITTEE in 2017 was very busy and has seen some growth in our membership and active participation numbers.

This year we discontinued the winter pool session at Bridgeport as it was not breaking even on cost. Our Middletown session attendance remained strong.

This summer our Lake Beseck Instructionals and Satan's Kingdom Instructionals both had possibly record attendance. with 15-20 participants on average per session.

Our river trip attendance has also been very strong.

Our annual trip to the Ottawa Kayak School was well attended.

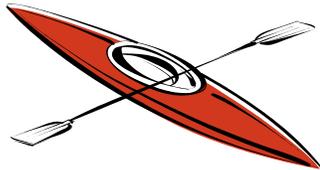
We happily added Troy Schenk as a new trip leader in September.

This October we are holding our annual leader's appreciation picnic and will present the Stephen Forster Award, recognizing excellence in whitewater kayaking and leadership.

Coming up in December we have our annual pool and pizza party. As in past years, we have had many river trips to different states and different rivers.

Mark Schappert, Co-Chair

Dennis Wigg, Co-Chair



Young Members Committee

This year the Young Members Committee (20s-30s young-at-heart) was excited to launch our own Facebook group to help expand our social media presence through Facebook and Meet-Up! We had a total of 39 trips across the region in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire!

To help increase trips east of the river, the Executive Committee voted to split the Young Members Chair responsibilities between east and west. Alison Terjek (alisonterjek@gmail.com) will continue to organize trips west of the river, while Corey Mott (cwmott08@gmail.com) will organize trips east of the river. We also welcomed two new Young Member leaders, Corey Mott and Nick Dagenais. Nicole Dewberry from the Berkshire Chapter has worked with our Chapter on several successful Inter-Chapter trips.

We had a great year with several one day and overnight trips. Highlights include the Carter Notch Hut trip on Columbus Day and several Connecticut and Berkshire Inter-Chapter trips in Massachusetts and Northwestern Connecticut. We are looking forward to some new hikes (including beginner hikes) for Young Members east of the river including the Narragansett Trail, Green Falls Pond area, Pachaug Trail, Nehantic Trail and kayaking. West of the river trips will include the Connecticut Appalachian Trail and New England Trail sections in Connecticut and Massachusetts. We will also plan some more weekends in northern New England.

We invite you to join us for a Holiday Hike in Central Connecticut on December 17th with pizza afterwards. <http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/101333>

Corey Mott, Co-Chair
Alison Terjek, Co-Chair

Nominations for the 2018 Executive Committee

In accordance with the chapter bylaws, the Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following slate of candidates:

Chapter Chair	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Chapter Vice Chair	<i>John Grasso</i>
Secretary	<i>Jocelyn Eppich</i>
Treasurer	<i>Al Puches</i>
Past Chapter Chair	<i>Bob Guenther</i>
Appalachian Trail Chair	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Mary Ann Gleba</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Susan Grant</i>
Communications	<i>David Roberts</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Russell Charest</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Andrew May</i>
East of the River Chair	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Chair	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Phil Wilsey</i>

Fairfield County Group Co-Chair
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair
Family Activities Co-Chair
Family Activities Co-Chair
Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Chair
Member at Large
Member at Large
Membership Chair
Mountaineering Co-Chair
Mountaineering Co-Chair
Newsletter Editor
Northwest Camp Co-Chair
Northwest Camp Co-Chair
Program Chair
Webmaster/Technology
Whitewater Co-Chair
Whitewater Co-Chair
Young Members Co-Chair
Young Members Co-Chair

Tom Carruthers
David Roberts
Janet Ainsworth
David Bellemare
Barry Gorfain
Bea Holt
Open
Alison Terjek
John DeAngelis
Paul Hayes
Darcy Witham
Tom McGrath
Rod Parlee
Michelle Baughman
Open
Mark Schappert
Dennis Wigg
Corey Mott
Alison Terjek

50-Year Members

Congratulations and best wishes to the following Connecticut Chapter members who we are honoring for their remarkable 50 years of membership in the Appalachian Mountain Club! They have been invited to attend the Annual Gathering and banquet as guests of the chapter.

A. Dean of Granby, Connecticut

Jonathan Rosen of Stamford, Connecticut

Edwin Rosenberg of Brookfield, Connecticut

Robert Sollmann of Redding, Connecticut

Donald Hubert of Cromwell, Connecticut

