

Mountain P A S S A G E S

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READ ABOUT OUR NEW COMMUNICATIONS ON PAGE 8!



Annual Meeting

Nepal, Mt. Everest Base Camp and Beyond

LUANN LAQUERRE, DEBBIE MARCUS AND TERRI WILSON

AMC-NH Chapter Programs Committee is pleased to announce the guest speaker for the 2017 Annual Meeting will be Jake St. Pierre, who will share his experiences and photos as a mountaineer and climber during the 2014 avalanche on Mt. Everest that killed 16 Sherpas and highlighted an international debate on the labor conditions and roles of the Sherpa guides.

In 2014, the American Climber Science Program recruited St. Pierre to assist in climate change research. The program collected snow and ice samples from Mt. Everest and her sister peak Lhotse, the

world's fourth highest peak, to test for the collection of black carbon blow from surrounding countries. The trip was cut short by the historic avalanche on Everest, which took a member of St.



Photos courtesy of Jake St. Pierre.

ANNUAL MEETING, TO PAGE 2 

OUR MISSION

The Appalachian Mountain Club is the nation's oldest outdoor recreation and conservation organization, and promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters and trails of the Appalachian region. AMC has more than 100,000 members, 16,000 volunteers, 450 full-time and seasonal staff. The New Hampshire Chapter is the second largest of the 12 Chapters within the Club.

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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2017



Notes from the Chair

NH Chapter Learning Opportunities

BILL WARREN

I have attended a few of the educational workshops we offer here in the New Hampshire Chapter both as a participant and as an instructor. As a participant, I was so happy with what I learned that I wanted more. As an instructor, I found the participants I was teaching had very similar thoughts to mine.

We decide to take up any number of outdoor activities, and while we may do well as we learn the basics, we also stumble, get wet, make some missteps, all while somehow not getting lost or

hurt. Then we hear about another workshop designed to address a specific concern of ours. We take the class, and we are hooked.

This column is a great forum to tell you about the educational workshops we offer here in the NH Chapter. I contacted the Committee Chairs of Skiing, Mountaineering, Biking, Trails, Paddling and Excursions to help me compile a list of these workshops.

I was overwhelmed. I had no idea the list would have 60 workshops.

Furthermore, the Chairs told me, when

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR, TO PAGE 4 

 ANNUAL MEETING, FROM PAGE 1

Pierre's team.

St. Pierre is a mountain-
eer and climber who currently
works as a safety guide and
location scout for the hit NBC
show *Running Wild with Bear
Grylls*, where his responsibilities
include rigging rope systems for
show stunts, acquiring props,
short roping crew on dangerous
terrain, researching and writing
the emergency and evacuation
procedures for each show and
the overall safety of the cast and
crew throughout filming.

On top of working for
NBC, St. Pierre is a lead
survival instructor for the
Bear Grylls Survival Academy
in the Catskill mountains of

upstate New York. He guides
groups in the mountains and
teaches them how to survive in
the wilderness with minimal
supplies. He also leads annual
expeditions to Nepal and to the
Mt. Everest base camp through
his company, Juggernaut Ad-
ventures, and recently returned
from a successful climb of
Mt. Rainier, where each of his
clients summited.

Jake has climbed on Mt.
Everest and in the Himalayas
numerous times. He is also
a certified Wilderness First
Responder and personal trainer
as well as a former police of-
ficer. Jake's family includes his
wife, six-year-old daughter and



Photos courtesy of Jake St. Pierre.

a daughter expected to arrive
in December. During Jake's
presentation, he will also share
info about his current interests
in survival training and recent
trips.

The AMC-NH's Annual
Dinner will be held Saturday,
October 28 at the Grappone
Conference Center, 70 Consti-
tution Avenue, Concord, NH.

The social hour begins
at 5:30 p.m. (appetizers and
cash bar) with dinner at 6:30
p.m. The menu will include a
buffet dinner, soup of the day,



salad, beef and chicken entrees,
roasted potatoes, vegetable and
chef's dessert display, rolls, cof-
fee and assorted herbal teas. A
brief business meeting and the
featured speaker will follow din-
ner.

Register at www.amc-nh.org
or with the mail-in regis-
tration form listed below. For
more information, contact
Debbie Marcus after 7:00 pm
at 978-578-4198 or send an
email to programsnh@amc-nh.org

ANNUAL MEETING, TO PAGE 3 



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ISSUE	DEADLINE	AD SIZE	PRICE (per issue)
Jan/Feb	December 1	1/8 page	3.5" w x 2.5" h \$100
Mar/Apr	February 1	1/4 page	3.5" w x 5" h \$160
May/June	April 1	1/2 page	7.5" w x 5" h \$250
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MOUNTAIN PASSAGES

Volume 43, No. 5
September/October 2017

Mountain Passages is published six times a
year by the New Hampshire Chapter of the
Appalachian Mountain Club.

Submissions. Members may submit
articles or photos (hi-res jpegs) to newsletter@amc-nh.org. Articles may be edited at
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and style requirements. Publication is on
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a byline or photo credit is given. Contact
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For information and the Ad Rate Sheet,
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We reserve the right to refuse any submis-
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Long-standing Map and Compass Course a Participant Favorite

BETH ZIMMER

AMC-NH Excursions Committee recently wrapped up another successful Map and Compass Workshop this past July. NH Excursions Co-Chair Beth Zimmer has spent the past couple of years developing the workshop, which covers the essential map reading and compass skills most any hiker needs. An avid bushwhacker and hike leader, Zimmer, along with fellow NH Excursions Hike Leader Barb Audin, began offering map and compass instruction to small groups a few years ago. Never quite able to keep up with demand, Zimmer and Audin knew they had to change the workshop's model to increase capacity. Since the change, Zimmer has helped more and more leaders become

map and compass instructors, and with more instructors, the workshop has expanded. Zimmer even developed a curriculum guide, or field "playbook," so that each instructor covers the same skills and participants walk away with the same knowledge regardless which instructor with whom they are partnered. Each six-hour workshop begins with a two-hour classroom component. Instructors teach participants basic map reading skills, such as understanding contours, water drainage, features that can serve as "handrails," topographical features and the like. This is followed by gaining a solid understanding of how a compass works and how to use it, including the tricky concept of "magnetic declination" (the difference between "true north" and the direction

in which the compass needle points). Wedding the compass and map concepts together is the final step before taking to the field.



Photo courtesy of Beth Zimmer.

The four-hour field course layers the basic skills on one-at-a-time. First, it's as simple as, "What direction does the trail appear to be traveling on the map?" And, "Let's confirm this with our compass." Later that afternoon, participants are following contours in the woods, or bushwhacking small

segments using "offset" to arrive at trail junctions. As one avid hiker wrote in an email, "I'm embarrassed to admit that I've carried my compass for years and never knew how to use it! Thanks to your M&C class, I get it! I plan to practice my new skills regularly, and hopefully, stay found. Special thanks to Beth for her time, leadership and attention to detail." Last year, Zimmer and her fellow instructors trained about 30 participants, and this year, they trained another 27. Workshops fill quickly, and there is always a waitlist. Zimmer, along with either Audin or Philip Werner of AMC Boston, also offer weekend-long backcountry navigation workshops, using map, compass and GPS that includes handhelds and/or smartphones.

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR, FROM PAGE 1

they offer one of these workshops, whether they require a fee or not, they are almost always filled to capacity.

I am one of the instructors for an annual map and compass workshop offered in July. Once posted, it is filled within 24 hours.

These 60 workshops are planned, directed and taught by volunteer leaders. The only payment we get our participants' learning and a simple, "Thank you," at the end. We know, when they finish the workshop, they will be safe and enjoy their outdoor activities a bit more. I

have enjoyed some of the comments made afterwards: "I have carried this compass for years and now I finally know what to do with it."

I taught a winter backpacking class, where we had some of the worst weather possible. One of the campers was overheard saying, "because of them [the instructors] I have no more excuses." Many of the participants have been impressed enough to become activity leaders for the chapter and instructors themselves. I did.

Perhaps you would like to learn to roll your kayak, follow

a map, use a compass, ski the backcountry, camp in the snow, fix a flat tire, take a run down whitewater, have your kids learn how to "stay found," climb almost vertical ice, maintain a trail, learn backcountry leadership skills or use a GPS device. The workshop instructors all use the same basic teaching format. They will tell you, they will show you and very importantly they will have you do it. It is a great way to learn.

If you think it is time to take your outdoor fun to the next level, I suggest you consider one of our workshops. They are offered throughout the year, and you can find them

by going to the NH Chapter website, amc-nh.org

Look under the "Activities" tab to find them. I can vouch for all 60 workshops by saying you will be very happy with the experience. You will learn from qualified volunteer instructors, meet some wonderful likeminded people, make some new friends, learn many new concepts and, most importantly, have some fun. After all, in the philosophy of a famous New England company, "If it's not fun, why do it"?

We have volunteer leaders ready when you are.

Conservation Corner

Peat Moss in the Boreal Forest

PAUL HOPKINS

Hiking through the upper mountain boreal zone, around 3,500' and higher, one can't help but notice the mostly green moss that covers just about everything. The sharp edges of broken boulders appear rounded, and much of the forest debris is covered by the growing moss. On a bright day, the velvety green moss appears like a soft blanket that smooths out all the rough edges. In areas where the Balsam Fir is well spaced, you can find inviting spots that beckon you to come in, lay down and rest a bit before moving on.

Should you take the imagined invitation and move off trail into this mossy realm, you will soon discover that the footing is very much like the trail you just stepped off, and it is also very wet. Quite unlike the visual expectations.

What is this moss?

The moss blanket is composed of one or more varieties of Sphagnum, more commonly known as peat. Peat mosses thrive in wetland environments.

The rain and fog that occur frequently in the mountain boreal forest keep it wet. In these wetlands, there are bogs, fens and swamps. All are characterized by their respective water chemistry and vegetation. Let's consider some technical definitions for these mossy wetlands.

Bogs get their water mostly by precipitation. They generally appear as pockets of flat open areas with limited types of vegetation, relatively stagnant water flow, acidic and are nutrient poor.

Fens get their water by both precipitation and groundwater flow. They may be slightly acidic, neutral or alkaline, as well as nutrient poor to rich. Fens can form blankets on both slopes and flatter ground. Because of the range of pH and nutrients, fens can support a variety of vegetation, but are usually devoid of trees.

Swamps are wetlands that are

forested, usually on relatively flat ground with visible standing water.

Therefore, we might consider mountain boreal forest moss blankets as having characteristics of both fen and swamp. The frequent rains are the principle water source which flows down slope like ground water with nutrients. These are the fen properties.

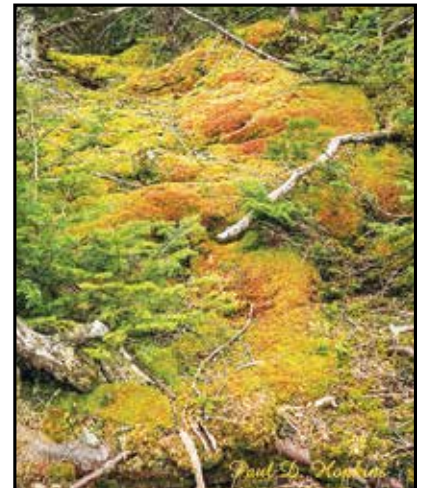
The presence of trees is the swamp property, but because of the slope, there is usually no visible standing water. The presence of rills and rillettes flowing out of the moss across the trail is evidence of the flowing ground water.

Peat moss, both living and dead, can hold a copious amount of water. As much as 16-26 times its own dry weight, depending on the species. It stands to reason that the effect is to soak up water during frequent mountain rainstorms so that the water doesn't rush madly down the steep slopes. Between rainstorms, the stored water slowly drains downhill providing moisture and nutrients to the lower vegetation as well as maintaining stream flow.

A red variety of peat moss is scattered in pockets throughout the boreal forest. It is typically found where there are openings that provide more sun access.



Velvet blanket. Photos courtesy of Paul Hopkins.



Red peat moss. Photos courtesy of Paul Hopkins.

AMC Fall Gathering

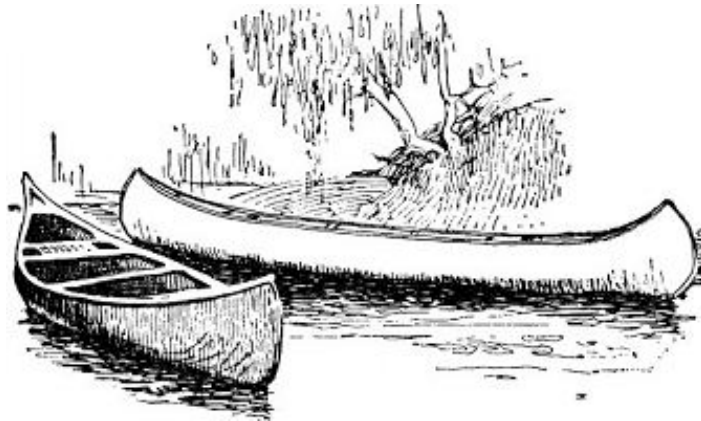


AMC Fall Gathering, October 13-15, 2017

The AMC is now accepting reservations to this great event!

Adults and families are all welcome.

Enjoy the best of Fall this year at our host camp on Lake Ossipee with AMC members from all chapters. Share your love of the New Hampshire outdoors with guests from other regions. There will be hearty breakfasts served to prepare you for great outings in the White Mountain region, as well as bagged lunches and satisfying meals at the end of your outdoor day.



Bring your kayak or canoe and go for a dawn, dusk, or mid-day paddle from the shores of the camp.

Saturday night events will include a camp fire, an inspiring guest speaker, a band and a fabulous raffle (including top-end gear like a complete kayak package, tents, back packs, sleeping bags, down jackets and biking gear, and lots more!). You don't want to miss this!

For reservations and all of the details: www.outdoors.org/fallgathering



20s and 30s Group Update

Our Weekends Away: A Reflection on

NICK MONTECALVO

They are unequivocally the best things we do in our little corner of the AMC.

The camping weekends we host as volunteer leaders, and attend as participants,



Photo courtesy of Denise Fredette.

create lasting memories that are altogether unique and keep participants coming back. This is not the social experience you would find at a bar, nightclub or urban haunt; all of which can be intimidating and contrived. Those types of social situations were what I worried about on my way to my first AMC



Photo courtesy of Kathy Ellis.

Camping Weekend in August 2014.

What I found was the real catalyst to living a clean and healthy life. It's not what we do, it's how we do it, and it's the people who volunteer, participate and experience these events that make all the difference. The AMC New Hampshire and Maine Chapters offer young

adults in the surrounding areas an experience that, at least six times a year, can open the door to much more than just a hike, a nice dinner by the fire and a weekend away. Our camping and hut weekends forge lifelong relationships and, for some, create and mold the leaders we always felt we could be.

This realization started for me at Barnes Field on a hot and dry, early August afternoon in the shadow of Mount Washington. Chris Higgins, who I knew only by email, was hosting the event, and I was very nervous. Having just moved back to New Hampshire from California, having just started a new job, having come back to find seemingly everyone else moving on with their lives, I was nervous and out of practice in the art of cultivating new acquaintances. I was even new to the

outdoors and just doing the "hiking thing" on my own, as a family member of mine put it. Like many new participants, I felt I wasn't skilled enough to hike and fraternize with other members (who probably already knew each other, and had their own cliques and yada, yada, yada). The AMC Young Member's proved me wrong: More than once in just one weekend.

Chris Higgins (NH Chapter), Denise Fredette (ME Chapter), Sarah Keats (ME Chapter), and Frank Brooks (ME Chapter)

that attracts very unassuming and welcoming people.

Chris invited me on an unofficial hike the Friday of that



Photo courtesy of Sarah Keats.

were the volunteer leaders who made that event go. Also, not shockingly now, I count them as the very best of friends. There is something about the AMC

weekend up Mount Eisenhower, which he did not have to do. It would be just my third 4,000-Footer in New Hampshire. I was so green, I had no

20S AND 30S GROUP UPDATE, TO PAGE 7

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20S AND 30S GROUP UPDATE, FROM PAGE 6

clue what a “list” was. He filled me in quickly without having to ask. I wasn’t intimidated as we made our way up Edmands



Photo courtesy of Megan Waterman.

Path, and I quickly realized, in hiking with him, that I fit in. And it wasn’t that hard to fit in.

This is the, “Aha!” moment many others, I believe, have when they go on one of the 20’s and 30’s Group hikes or events and the jitters just melt away, a rare occurrence in the world today. It’s not rare to us.

Most of the participants who leave our camping weekends end up coming back because of the great experience at a previous event. I am a walking, talking example and there are countless others. Most everyone’s experiences vary, but they are almost always positive ones. There are at least two official Interchapter 20’s, 30’s and Young at Heart Hut Weekends a year, one in spring and fall. These two events bookend at least four camping weekends. While many of these weekends have been hosted in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, we are in Maine at least once a year, where the Maine Chapter hosts the ever-popular Range-

ley Lake Camping Weekend. This year was the fifth annual weekend in the wonderful lakes region of Maine, July 21 through 23. The Maine Young Members hosted 30 participants from Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

These weekends are full of hikes, paddling, bicycling, food and laughs. We saw a lot of familiar faces in Rangeley, but again, just as many new faces. These new faces had similar expressions and attitudes that I must have had at Barnes Field four years ago. This bodes well for the AMC, however, we need



Photo courtesy of Kathy Ellis.

to keep going and welcoming these new participants to keep this trend alive. We are just getting started.

Squam Camping Weekend in June was another example of leaders stepping up. Katie Vaughan and Kathy Ellis are new leaders who have burst on the scene and taken the 20’s, 30’s and Young at Heart group by the horns and have been helping it into the digital age while keeping the focus on the

great outdoors. Ellis and Chris Vaughan are currently part of the new Communications Committee and are responsible for creating the new AMC New Hampshire Facebook and Instagram accounts. Additionally, Katie Vaughan has been busy helping organize the Annual AMC Fall Gathering that will be hosted by the New Hampshire Chapter this year.

The Squam Camping Weekend boasted three different AMC-led hikes to Mt. Eisenhower and the Osceola’s on Saturday and Mts. Welch and Dickey on Sunday—not to mention a paddle was also led that Sunday.

It cannot be overstated, the planning that goes into these events spearheaded by the AMC NH Chapter 20’s, 30’s and Young at Heart Advisory Board, which is headed up by the very hard working and enthusiastic YM NH Chapter Chair Jamie Gillon. All these camping weekend are planned months in advance, with the hosts stepping up many months in advance. It is not uncommon for Squam

Weekend in June planning to start in November of the previous year. Maine operates in a very similar fashion and the two chapters are in constant communication with each other spacing out events accordingly and making sure weekends are not being held at the same time. Cross promotion has been extremely important for both Chapters.

Still to come, the Osceola Camping Weekend will be held the weekend of August 12th with three official hikes to the Hancock’s, Liberty and Flume, and Cannon already posted. Barnes Field Camping Weekend will be held on September 8th, where most of the participants will be participating in Flags of the 48 that weekend to remember those we lost in the 9/11 attacks. And all to be capped by the Annual Fall Gathering and Fall Interchapter Hut Weekend.

All the planning, volunteering, and participation leads to the happiness of all involved. We do it for the comradery, to see each other and to enjoy nature with our friends. The result over the last few years has been the creation of new excursions leaders, returning participants, and lifelong relationships we couldn’t imagine not having. Something special has been happening with our 20’s, 30’s and Young at Heart group in the AMC over the past few years. It’s only the beginning. And our weekends away, have become weekends at home.

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@amcnewhampshire's Communications Committee Begins New Initiatives

BRETT BILLINGS

If New Hampshire Chapter members have noticed some new ways to stay in touch with AMC happenings in the region, then they have a new chapter communications committee to thank for the changes. New Chapter-wide Facebook and Instagram accounts are two outward signs of the tightening of messaging and outreach across the membership.

The temporary committee was the brainchild of Chapter Chair Bill Warren and Past Chapter Chair Wayne Goertel, who hope the committee can standardize and enhance the messaging from the NH Chapter. "We developed a list (which has since grown) with 36 possible places to communicate with our members. We

were only using three to four," Warren wrote of the process. In addition to the myriad avenues to connect membership, individual committees sometimes have their own social media pages, email groups or newsletters. Coordinating and presenting a consistent message across those platforms will be the thrust of the nearly 18-month-old committee.

Most of that time has been spent finding the right people to lead the initiative. Kathy Ellis and Chris Vaughn stepped into their new roles this past winter, following some informal talks with chapter leadership during the Winter School at Cardigan Lodge. Ellis is from the New Hampshire Lakes Region and is a Class 2 Excursions Leader for the chapter, while Vaughn has a background in sales and mar-

keting and is from the Boston area.

Following the Annual Meeting in October, Warren plans to assist from the sidelines, "As Past Chair, I will be working with this committee to solidify its place and to develop a structure for its future. I have spoken at length with Frank [Miller], and when the apple is ripe, we want to make it a permanent committee."

The goal of the communications committee is to standardize messaging from the New Hampshire Chapter, including managing email blasts, supporting standing committees, promoting membership recruitment and retention, assisting in Chapter publications and managing social media platforms.

Recently, the committee

published an official AMC New Hampshire organization Facebook page. This channel will share chapter news, happenings, updates and information along with cross-promoting content from the larger Club and other chapters.

An AMC New Hampshire Instagram account was also created to increase member engagement through photo sharing. Members are encouraged to tag their photos with @amcnewhampshire or use the hashtags #amcnh or #amcnewhampshire on their social media posts.

"What we have been doing is a lot of observation before taking action," Vaughn wrote of the committee. "The chapter is a very strong one...Our thought process is to complement the chapter, not to change it."