


Mountain P A S S A G E S

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Trails Committee

RICHIE HOLSTEIN AND BILL FOSTER

As part of our continuing series profiling the activities of the committees in the New Hampshire Chapter, in this issue we present the introduction to the Trails Committee.

The Trails Committee maintains trails used for hiking, skiing, and occasionally biking. Every project is different – drainage, brushing, blazing, hardening, rock steps, relocation – variety keeps us going. Always thinking of the people who use a trail, we look for ways to allow more people to be involved. Conservation and protection of the surrounding area are important, so we keep trails attractive enough to keep people on the trail. We work with the State of NH for trails on state lands, and have pushed for upgrading one of the Cardigan nature trails for wheelchair access.

Why do trail work? Why add pounds to your pack, skip a summit, trim trees, dig a ditch, roll with rocks? Well, trail work is:

- Fun: Think of it – when did you last able to play in dirt or mud and not be the object of scorn? You still can't throw rocks, but you sure can move them!
- Inclusive: There's work for people from 6 to 106. Tools plus skill plus teamwork allow everyone to contribute.
- Family-oriented: Kids like to do neat things with their parents. Here's something different that can get everyone working together.
- Instructional: What keeps a trail dry and smooth? Why are dips and logs and rocks deliberately put on a trail? How did those rocks just happen to be set in a slope so we might use

TRAILS COMMITTEE, 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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Waste Not

JANIS STOKES, AMC NH CONSERVATION COMMITTEE AND ARIANNA STOKES

Several years ago, we had made a habit of bringing reusable bags into the supermarket, but now we wanted to do more. We decided to go “zero-waste.” We wanted to reduce the amount of trash our daily activities generated to the point where we would no longer need a trash can. We wanted to generate so little waste that a recycling bin and a compost pail would suffice.

Despite our resolve and best attempts, we were not able to make it to the end of the day



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**TRAILS COMMITTEE,
FROM PAGE 1**

- them as stairs? What else is going on beneath my feet? Work with us for a day and find out!
- A chance to work individually and as a team: You can spend a day on your adopted trail, enjoying the quiet and the chance to concentrate on a favorite trail. Other days you can work with a dozen or even up to 40 others, covering a large area or tackling a more difficult project.
 - Rewarding: You can often see the benefit of your work by the end of the day.
 - Hey! That mud puddle is gone!
 - Look at those hikers using the steps we just made!
 - Gee, it's a lot nicer walking back along the trail than when we started!
 - A way to contribute to the hiking community: We work on our adopted trails, trails on New Hampshire state lands, town properties, and other federal and private lands. One of our leaders has volunteered for a four-day work party on the Crawford Path, "the oldest continuously used trail in America."
 - An opportunity for advocacy: Trails are not just for the able-bodied. Some of the work to

have a trail conform to ADA standards is highly specialized and mechanized, but as a trail worker you can propose and contribute to projects which encourage a diverse community to use a trail.

Four events show up on our schedule every year:

- Wild NH Day: NH Fish and Game fights the mud season blues with a kickoff extravaganza featuring all sorts of outdoor activities. The Trails Committee spreads the good word about trail work and runs a kid-oriented quiz with prizes!
- Introduction to Trail work workshop: The chapter's Spring School includes instruction on several activities. Now in its fourth year, the Trails workshop starts with basic trail maintenance and moves up to an advanced project. (You can read all about our 2018 project, a rock waterbar that fixed a muddy area at the base of Cardigan's Back 80, in July/August 2018 Mountain Passages at www.amc-nh.org)
- National Trails Day: Sponsored by The American Hiking Society, this gets people out publicizing, maintaining, and just plain appreciating our country's trails. For our part, we run work days on our

adopted trails.

- Mt. Cardigan ski trails: Every November a cross-committee, cross-chapter trip with AMC-NH Ski and AMC-Boston Ski clears blowdowns and brush on some of New England's best backcountry ski trails.

Learning and working together, so we're always ready to explain, to help or to give tips. All our trips begin with a talk on safety and technique. And every trip is "On the Job

Training" – we always teach as we work. Fear not if you've never done trail work before!

People get the message when they pass volunteer trail crews at work or when they read about trail work in AMC Outdoors and other publications. What can you do? Try working with us for one day a year! For more info contact our co-chairs, Richie Holstein and Bill Foster at trailsnh@amc-nh.org.



*Top: Clearing a blow down.
Photo credit Valerio Viti.*



*Right: Size matters not when you use the Force!
Photo credit Heather Wyman.*

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MOUNTAIN PASSAGES

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Submissions. Members may submit articles or photos (hi-res jpegs) to newsletter@amc-nh.org. Articles may be edited at the discretion of the editor to meet space and style requirements. Publication is on a space-available basis. While Mountain Passages does not pay for submissions; a byline or photo credit is given. Contact Mountain Passages for reprint permission.

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For information and the Ad Rate Sheet, send an email to newsletter@amc-nh.org.

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Please note: Member address updates cannot be handled by AMC-NH officers, committee chairs, or the newsletter editor.

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You'll get added resources not available to print subscribers: direct links to emails, forms and online information, color photos, online registration forms.

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♻️ WASTE NOT, FROM PAGE 1

without generating several pieces of trash. A bit trash here and piece of trash there. It was unavoidable. So, we laid out the items of trash on the kitchen counter. They formed a small pile. We looked at the pile with dismay knowing that its fate was to become fill in the land.

The next day we generated a bit more trash. By the next, a trash pile of moderate size sat on our counter. The next day, and the next day, more trash was added the pile. Yes, we were quite the trash makers. By the fifth day, we gave up, and moved our trash can back into the kitchen and dumped the pile on our counter into it. The trash would soon be off to the landfill.

“Zero waste” is not yet attainable for us. Since our counter top trash pile exercise, we have looked for ways to easily reduce our trash production. Here are a few that work for us:

- Don't use any disposable items that are designed for single use:
 - Carry reusable utensils in your car. You can buy a reusable lightweight bamboo set at health food stores.
 - Cut up a camp towel and carry a piece with you to replace paper towels (better yet, wipe your hands on your pants).
 - Keep a coffee mug in your car. Convenience stores will let you use your own mug.
 - Bring a few reusable containers when eating out

in case you need to bring home leftovers.

- Use reusable containers for your lunch. Silicone zip-locks work great!
- Just say no thanks to K-cups
- Avoid over-packaged items in stores
- Carry several lightweight mesh bags when shopping to put bulk items into.
- When it is necessary to buy items that come in plastic, look for plastic numbers 1 or 2 inside the triangular recyclable symbol. Plastic numbers 1 and 2 are more easily recyclable. With the current recycling market, plastic number 4, 5, 6, and 7 aren't likely to get recycled.
- Buy items in glass containers. Reuse glass containers to

store food in your refrigerator. (Keep in mind that it takes a lot of energy to melt and recycle glass.)

- Avoid buying food in containers that cannot be recycled, such as milk cartons.

Want to try going “zero waste?” Save your waste for a week. Lay it out on the counter. Then try to figure out ways to reduce your waste. While we may not be able to completely eliminate our waste generation, we can certainly reduce it. Let us know how it worked and send your ideas for reducing trash production to conservationnh@amc-nh.org. We would like to publish the best suggestions in future Mountain Passages.



Equipment Corner; When spring comes, just say no to waterproof boots

WANDA RICE

It seems that the majority of people I hike with go waterproof with their 3 season footwear. I was part of that crowd until last year.

I needed to replace a pair of aging waterproof boots. They were no longer very waterproof and they had always made my feet sweat more than I liked. I decided it was time to give up waterproof and go with something more breathable. I also found that once the waterproof boots were wet, which happened many times, they might take days to dry out.

Many (many, many) years ago, my first pair of hiking boots was not waterproof. Back then, the choice was either a leather boot or a non-waterproof boot. I will also add that the choices in women's sizes were very limited. I had fond memories of how comfortable those boots were and how quickly they dried after getting

wet (despite the fact that I wore them with cotton socks!).

In recent years, I have not found any sort of hiking boot in a store in New England that is not waterproof. There are some non-waterproof hiking shoes available, and more choices in trail runners. So last spring, tired of sweaty feet, I managed to find a pair of Salomon boots online that were not waterproof. I felt safe ordering, since my previous pair was also Salomon and the fit was good.

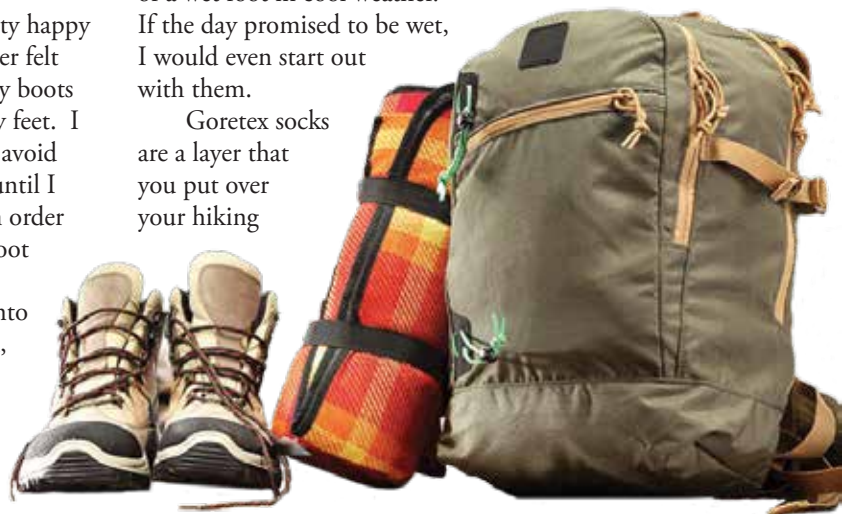
My feet were pretty happy all summer. I no longer felt the need to take off my boots at lunch to dry out my feet. I didn't feel the need to avoid putting on my boots until I got to the trail head in order to reduce the sweaty foot time. On a few occasions, I dipped a toe into a stream or some mud, but the boots dried out fairly quickly if it was a warm, dry day. Only when

fall approached did I take extra precautions.

A great extra piece of gear to have if you go with non-waterproof footwear is a pair of Goretex socks. These are usually sold as cycling gear. I had used a pair several times when they wet through, so I was pretty comfortable with their performance. Throughout fall hiking season, I made sure to have them in my pack in case of a wet foot in cool weather. If the day promised to be wet, I would even start out with them.

Goretex socks are a layer that you put over your hiking

socks in your shoes. They come in a foot shape and must be purchased in your shoe size so you don't have extra material that can cause a blister somewhere. I am still using a pair that I bought back in 2010, so they last quite well and can be washed. All and all, it's a pretty functional system. Something to consider the next time you are in the market for hiking footwear.





AMC NH Chapter Excursions Spring School; Hiking, Leadership, Trail Work & Backpacking

RICK SILVERBERG

Our renowned weekend workshops, covering almost every aspect of safe three-season backcountry travel, are designed for hikers of all levels! You will work with our experienced volunteer instructors in small experiential learning groups. Our instructors are all active Trip leaders with NH chapter AMC. Groups are 8 participants to 2 instructors so learning is fun and focused for you.

When: April 26, 2019

7:30PM – April 28, 2019

4:30PM

(Fri - Sun)

Where: Cardigan Lodge, Alexandria, NH

Choose from one of seven available workshop sessions, each filled with field exercises, instruction, lectures, and discussions. If you're not sure which class is right for you, ask our workshop director. Choose from one of the following workshops:

Basics of Outdoor Safety:

Beginner section: For those just getting started with mountain hiking will hike approximately 3.5 miles per day and spend about 5 hours outside each day.

Intermediate section: For those with some experience in the mountains. Expect to learn while on the trail for about 6 miles per day and up to 6 hours a day outside.

Map and Compass:

Covering everything you want or need to know about map and compass use, this workshop will be a small group of 8 participants and 2 instructors who will spend the weekend together reviewing and learning the details of map and compass skills, culminating in field exercises that will include off-trail (bushwhack) navigating.

Backpacking

Backpacking 1: Spending two nights out in tents, traveling not more than 3 miles and cooking breakfast outside on Sunday morning.

Backpacking 2: For those with some backpacking experience wanting to take it the next level of longer hikes with more nights out spending two nights out in tents setting up a second camp site on Saturday night about 3 miles from the lodge. You will be outside most of the weekend cooking dinner Saturday and breakfast Sunday in the back country.

Leadership and Mountain Skills:

For those who have good three-season hiking skills and wish to enhance them and/or wish to run trips of their own. Exercises will include planning, organizing, and conducting

Trail Work Instruction:

Learn how to perform basic trail work, such as cleaning water bars, painting blazes, brushing, and replacing signs. We will review tool skill, maintenance and safety. Spend hours outside each day.



Hiking up Twinway trail to Zealand Mountain.

Photo credit: Jessica Clifford.



trips with an emphasis on leadership techniques, group decision making, handling difficult behaviors and group dynamics. Learn by doing! Also covered will be accident scene management, medical considerations, and off-trail navigation. Plan to spend about 5 hours on Saturday and 4 on Sunday outside bushwhacking and practicing leadership and compass skills. This course is also designed for those who may desire to become AMC NH Chapter Volunteer Trip Leaders.

ALL WORKSHOPS are for any adult who wants to learn and have a great time! Our weekend begins Friday evening at 7:30pm and ends Sunday afternoon at 4:30pm. Cost is \$170/members and \$190/non-members, and includes lodging, excellent meals, materials and instruction. Registration Website: <http://amcnh.registration.qilan.com/>

If unsure of attending and need more info please contact Director Rick Silverberg (603-225-5921, evenings between 7:00 and 9:00 pm or synergyc@aol.com)

Spring School Classrooms are more fun!



NH Mountaineering Glacier Travel & Crevasse Rescue Workshops

April 13, 2019 and April 20-21, 2019

JIM KENT

Winter is here, but have you made your plans for summer climbs on glaciated peaks? What about training for those trips? That's where we can help! The New Hampshire Chapter is again offering two workshops in April to help you prepare for such adventures.



Going over the equipment at the start of the day at Gunstock.

The **Introduction to Glacier Travel Workshop** is a one day program designed to familiarize participants with the glaciated mountaineering environment and the training to become a functioning member of a roped team for glacier travel.

The morning starts with instructor introductions followed by group sessions that cover the mountain environment, dressing for success, basic knots, and a discussion about roped travel and the mechanics of clipping in. Safety is continually stressed and the fundamental climbing equipment is thoroughly reviewed, from the harness and helmets, to the ropes and knots we use.

Our instructor-led group sessions include hands-on practice for the knot-work, including working with prussic loops

which are provided. After the instructors demonstrate how we divide a rope for various team sizes (3 to 5 team members), we break into small teams for individualized team training. The remainder of the day is spent in the field learning the skills needed to function efficiently as a roped climbing team. These instructor led teams review and

practice roping up, properly tying prussic loops, crampon and ice axe techniques, self and team belay, self and team arrest and learning to ascend and descend as a team. Aside from glacier travel, ice axe and crampon skills are important for

winter hiking in New England. For some participants, the rhythm of traveling smoothly as a team is an entirely new experience.

Highly anticipated by most participants is the opportunity to learn and practice self-arrest, and our training site at Gunstock Mountain provides the terrain necessary for practicing these critical skills. We also discuss, demonstrate and practice the rope handling skills you will need to know for safe glacier travel. The Gunstock ski slopes provide the perfect terrain for participants to practice all these skills and after spending all day on the slopes, we recap the day as a group.

Our **Crevasse Rescue Workshop** is an intense two-day (weekend) program that builds upon the fundamentals covered in the one day Introduction program. Practical field experience is also acceptable. The workshop begins with

instructor introductions and team assignments, and a quick review of most of the topics covered in the group sessions in the Introduction program. This approach allows our returning participants to "warm up" to the weekend program without being overwhelmed. Each team is assigned two instructors. Then, with ropes, snow pickets, and rescue pulleys in hand, teams head for the slopes for a full day of training.

Part of Saturday is used to re-enforce what the participants "think they know". We do this as a practical exercise by having the participants demonstrate properly dividing the rope, clipping in and then the entire team must check each other to ensure they are safely prepared to start climbing. All of these fundamentals are reviewed as needed.

Ascending the slope as a team re-establishes the rhythm needed to move efficiently. Instructors frequently establish a route using wands, something which helps to simulate that real-world experience.

We introduce a running belay and the techniques used for safely passing your clip-in knot across the belay anchor. We also review self-arrest to re-enforce those skills. Repetition of all these skills is designed to increase confidence and establish the foundation necessary for safely building snow anchors, followed by crevasse rescue hauling systems. Our instructors review the most common snow anchors including improvisation techniques, and then demonstrate building

several. Participants then practice building and testing their own snow anchors.

Next, the instructors explain and demonstrate the need for and construction of hauling systems and the anchors required to support them. All team members practice all aspects of the anchor building and hauling activities which includes the rescue of a fallen climber, typically one of the instructors. The hauling systems we cover range from the simplest "heave-ho" to complex mechanical advantage using multiple pulleys and improvisation techniques.

If there is sufficient time, a dynamic "un-scripted" rescue scenario is practiced by the



Practicing roped travel on the slopes at Gunstock.

team, and anything can happen! At the end of the day, everyone descends to "base camp" for a group re-cap and review.

Registration is open for both courses. The course dates are: Introduction to Glacier Travel on April 13, 2019, and Glacier Travel & Crevasse Rescue on April 20-21, 2019.

For more information or to register for the workshops, contact Workshop Director Jim Kent at jimkent@comcast.net.



Wildlife Around Us: Vernal Pools

BOB McLAUGHLIN

Until recently, pools that form in New Hampshire woodlands every spring were considered more of a nuisance than anything else. When hiking off trail, you had to sometimes follow a corkscrew path to avoid them and occasionally slog through the mud at their edge. Then came the realization that these temporary pools are really an intriguing and important part of our environment.

Vernal Pools form in the same location every year in the spring. Vernal is another word for spring. For example, the Vernal Equinox is the first day of astronomical spring.

Most importantly, vernal pools are separated from other waterbodies and last for several

months every year, but not all year. Why is this important you may ask? First, by being isolated and temporary, vernal pools do not support populations of fish that would prey on the populations that develop in the pools. Second, the vernal pools last long enough to allow the animals that make them their homes to complete their life cycles before the pools dry up.

What animals live in vernal pools? The most obvious is the wood frog whose calls may attract you to the pools. But, some of the other animals are more astounding. For example, the pools are homes to populations of fairy shrimp, fingernail clams, and variety of snails. A number of salamanders also make vernal pools their homes,

including the spotted salamander, the blue spotted salamander, the Jefferson salamander, the marbled salamander, the four toed salamander, and the eastern newt. Of course, the vernal pools also support populations of many insect larva, including mosquitos, and the insects that prey on them.

As March turns into April, and the snows melt, you may find it interesting to explore the woodlands close to your home to identify the vernal pools in your neighborhood. Alternatively, you might explore vernal pools you encounter during your first spring time hikes.

In the next issue of Mountain Passages, we will explore the life cycles of some of the inhabitants of vernal pools. In the interim, if you are interested

in learning more about vernal pools, you may want to visit the following websites:

- <https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wetlands/vernal-pools.htm>;
- <https://www.vernalpool.org>;
- <https://extension.unh.edu/resource/vernal-pools>;
- <https://harriscenter.org/programs-and-education/citizen-science/vernal-pool-project/map>

You may also be interested in reviewing the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department's book "Identifying and Documenting Vernal Pools in New Hampshire" which is available for a free download at <https://wildlife.state.nh.us/nongame/vernal-pools.html>.

Until next time, take the time to enjoy the wildlife around us.



Vernal Pools are easy to find when the snow is still melting. Photo credit: Bob McLaughlin.



Like to Ride Your Bike? Ride it Where You Like AMC-NH Biking Activities in 2019

DORIA HARRIS

While it may still seem early with all the snow on the ground, in 2019 AMC Bike Leaders will be offering day rides throughout NH from the seacoast to the Connecticut River on paths, and paved and unpaved roads. These are all “no drop” rides, many of them at a leisurely pace, some more brisk. These are a great opportunity to meet other cyclists and learn new routes and discover hidden local features of NH.

Does fear of a flat tire keep you from going out for a ride? Join our free [Bike Road Repairs & Maintenance Workshop](#) in Nashua this spring. This workshop will cover road side repairs and basic bike maintenance.

Want to Travel by Bike? This spring we will also be offering a free [Bike Touring Workshop](#) with an emphasis on trip planning. Bring your ideas for a bike trip and we will help you get started. On June 1 - June 2 we will be offering a [Bike Overnight](#) to give riders an opportunity to experience what travel and living off your bike entails. This is a great opportunity to “dial in” your gear and bike set up.

Is one of your goals for 2019 to bike more? Find it hard to get motivated to get out on your bike in the early

spring? Consider participating in our [Coffee Ramble Challenge](#) which runs from April 19 to May 31 to help you get started. Participating in the Challenge is a fun way to explore your local area by bike, support your local merchants or visit your favorite outdoor setting and enjoy a hot (or cold) beverage.

For details on the Challenge, see: <https://amc-nh.org/committee/bike/index.php>
For details all our activities, look on our Activities Calendar at: <http://amc-nh.org/calendar/activities.php> for our offerings.
Bike Leaders Wanted:
Do you have some favorite bike rides to share? The NH Chapter Bike Committee would like to

be able to offer rides in every region of New Hampshire but we need more bike leaders. If you're enthusiastic about biking and would like to share your knowledge with others please contact us at the address below to learn about becoming an AMC Bike Leader.
amcnhbike@gmail.com



Combine Biking with Camping for great multiday trips. Photo credit: Doria Harris.

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'Mountain Passages' is only the beginning...

From hiking to biking, AMC's New Hampshire chapter has it all. Visit our website at amc-nh.org and read more about us and our many year-round events.



Save the Date: New Hampshire Chapter Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 26, 2019
Grappone Center, Concord, NH

You don't want to miss this opportunity to enjoy the companionship of your fellow chapter members, and a great dinner. Also, we will have a world class after dinner speaker, Marty Basch, author of seven outdoor adventure books, a long-time outdoor adventure syndicated columnist, and a popular newspaper, radio, television, and website contributor.
Hope to see you there!

