

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER



94th Anniversary

Annual Report

November 8, 2015

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
2015 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Chair:	<i>Bob Guenther</i>
Vice Chair:	<i>Cindy Butts **</i>
Secretary:	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Treasurer:	<i>Al Puches</i>
Appalachian Trail Chair:	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chairs:	<i>Susan Grant, Rick Merritt</i>
Conservation Co-chairs:	<i>Andrew May, Russ Charest</i>
East of the River Chair:	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Co-Chairs:	<i>John Crist, Keith Spaar</i>
Excursions Chair:	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
Fairfield County Co-Chairs:	<i>Tom Carruthers, David Roberts</i>
Family Activities Chair:	<i>Janet Ainsworth</i>
Flatwater/Coastal Chair:	<i>Barry Gorfain</i>
Membership Chair:	<i>Alison Terjek</i>
Member-at-Large:	<i>John Grasso</i>
Member-at-Large:	<i>Bea Holt</i>
Mountaineering Co-Chairs:	<i>Pete Gajdosik, Kurt Zoner</i>
Program Co-Chairs:	<i>Michelle Baughman, Janet Ainsworth*</i>
Newsletter Editor:	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
Northwest Camp Co-Chairs:	<i>Tom McGrath, Rod Parlee</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

It has been my privilege to serve this past year as your Connecticut chapter chair. Over the course of the year, I have been repeatedly impressed by the generosity, commitment, and can-do attitude of our chapter members. With this spirit, the Connecticut chapter will continue to thrive and remain worthy of the trust our members have placed in us. Make no mistake, the Connecticut chapter is very healthy by any one of a number of measures. The most basic of our chapter's vital signs is membership. Our membership is growing and at last count stands at 8,260 – behind only the Boston, New Hampshire, and New York chapters, respectively. At some not-too-distant point, it would not be far-fetched to see us nipping at New York's heels for the third spot in total members.

A second vital sign is the level of activity of chapter members, and on this score our chapter demonstrates vigor. A comparison of the 11 chapters' scheduled activities on the club's activities database in 2014 clearly shows this. In this comparison, Connecticut was the club-wide leader in total posted activities. What's more, Connecticut posted more activities than any other chapter for Paddling, Bicycling, Climbing, Conservation/Trails, and Hiking. Our top three activities were Hiking, Biking, and Climbing. In all last year, we posted 757 hiking trips, 253 biking trips, and 92 climbing trips.

The active involvement of our members goes beyond outdoor recreation and includes the sweat equity that our members have invested in the cause of outdoor recreation. This was clearly on display at the Give-a-Day-to-the-Appalachian Trail Day. Under the able leadership of our AT Committee Chair Dave Boone, dozens of chapter members showed up on a beautiful May morning at Housatonic Meadows State Park to spend the day rebuilding trail stairs, making an outhouse handicapped accessible, marking boundaries on the AT, and removing invasive plant species. It was a great day, and everyone went home tired but with a profound feeling of having made the 52-mile section of the Appalachian Trail that runs through our state a little better.

Beyond these activities we also have been advocates for conservation and outdoor recreation. Our chapter wrote letters to state lawmakers urging them to restore funding for the state park system, and our Conservation Committee has been active tabling at events and organizing an Alternative Spring Break with conservation-themed projects for college students.

In addition, our Fairfield County Group hosts programs in Bethel and Westport that are well attended and open to the public and feature a wide variety of speakers making audio-visual presentations on trips and topics of wide interests

The last of our chapter's vital signs that I will comment on is finances. On this score, our chapter fares well (as you can see from the accompanying financial report.) In fact, our chapter's finances are very healthy. This enviable state of affairs is due in no small part to the diligence and care that our treasurer, Al Puches, devotes to this responsibility.

Members pay dues expecting them to be used to support the goals of the chapter and club. To that end, I have proposed to our Executive Committee that our chapter support financially the club's Youth Opportunities Program in New Haven. Last year, the YOP New Haven program logged more than 2,000 youth trips that introduced inner-city youth in everything from hiking trips to Sleeping Giant State Park to extend backpacking trips in the White Mountains. I firmly believe that one of the most important things we can do as a club to advance the cause of conservation and outdoor recreation is to instill an appreciation of the natural world in future generations. YOP is reaching at-risk youth with the AMC message, teaching them valuable life skills, instilling values, and enlisting the next generation of conservationists/outdoor enthusiasts. I look forward to updating you next year on the progress of YOP in New Haven.

In the coming year, we will continue to make more efficient use of technology. Our chapter website (www.ct-amc.org) will be migrating to the club website (www.outdoors.org) at some point in the coming months and will be hosted and maintained on club servers. Our chapter will retain control over the content of our page. Not only will this shift make life simpler for Jim Scheef, our very capable webmaster (or as her refers to himself "chief web lackey"), but it should allow for easier and more frequent updating of our webpages with current information.

Our leaders continue to adopt new social media and communication tools, such as Meetup in addition to long-standing ones like our chapter Facebook page which is actively and ably managed by Dale Geslien. These technology platforms allow us to engage members and non-members alike more effectively. This proliferation of tools has raised concerns about the need for coordination across communications platforms. Fortunately, David Roberts, one of our valuable leaders in

Fairfield County, has stepped up to take the reins of this new role – my personal thanks to David for doing so.

One more change this year that I should remind you of is the new day and venue for the Annual Gathering: Sunday, November 8, at St. Clements Castle in Portland. This is a gorgeous facility in a beautiful setting, giving an added dimension to a day of stimulating content, reconnecting with fellow members, and good food. My thanks go out to Michelle Baughman, program chair, for identifying this new location.

Lastly, I want to send a special thanks to my fellow Executive Committee members for their patience and support.

Our activity committees and their leaders also deserve a well-earned thank-you from us all. They are the face of the AMC on the trails, roads and waterways of Connecticut and beyond. Your chapter can use more leaders for the wide variety of activities we offer, so please consider contacting one of the committees to volunteer. Contact information is on the website.

I am especially proud to play a small part in the nation's oldest outdoor recreation, conservation, and education organization and I look forward to serving Connecticut members in 2016.

See you on the trail!

Bob Guenther, Connecticut Chapter Chair



CONNECTICUT CHAPTER ANNUAL GATHERING – 2014

The 93st Annual Gathering of the Connecticut Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club was held on November 8, 2014 at the Sheraton Hartford South Hotel, Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Chapter Chair Janet Ainsworth welcomed everyone to the Annual Gathering. As is tradition, Janet reflected upon the first Annual Gathering, held on November 21, 1921. In the first year of the Chapter, there is record of four scheduled activities. Janet observed that this past year, the Chapter has conducted over 1,000 activities, and she commended leaders for providing an array of outstanding recreational and service opportunities. Janet noted that Chapter finances are in excellent shape, and that Chapter membership is around 8,000.

Janet outlined the evening program. Names of Chapter members who have died since the last Annual Gathering were read aloud, and a period of silence in their memory was observed, including *William (Bill) Novoa, PhD, Gardner Moulton, G. Ernest Anderson, Fred W. Ensling, Richmond B. Hopkins, Thelma Pierce, Charles L. Brisson, Leo Ouillette, Jane T. Stone, Sandy E. Lane, Richard T. Lawrence, Dick Gardiner, Paul Noetzel.*

Past Chapter Chair Dave Cullen announced Beth Critton for the Appie of the Year Award. He praised Beth's years of service to the Chapter, the Club, and to the Appalachian Trail Conference; and noted it was Beth who initiated the Chapter's popular annual "AT Day", held every October. Dave then gave a moving tribute to Betty Robinson, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, including being instrumental in establishing the East of the River Committee of the Chapter. Betty was too ill to be present, but it was noted that Dave gave her the news in person and it appeared to touch her.

Janet directed everyone to the Annual Gathering program, in which the contributions of outstanding volunteers are noted. Those receiving the Chapter Stewardship Award were asked to stand and be recognized.

David Boone, Chair of the Trails Committee, commended 121 persons for a total of 7,134 volunteer hours of trail work, up from 4,120 hours in 2013. Dave singled out Henry Edmonds for a remarkable 619 hours. Dave again commended the Bulls Bridge Task Force for its ongoing efforts to monitor the site and to protect it from misuse. Task Force members contributed almost 1500 hours to this ongoing project. Dave read the names of the 2014 winners of the Pychowska Award and the

Hart Award, and directed everyone's attention to the Program in which all winners of the 2014 Trail Awards are named.

Janet recognized the past Chapter Chairs in attendance: *Judy Besancon; Ledge Clayton; Beth Critton; David Cullen; Mary Dorpalen; John Gardner; Dale Geslien; and Trish Niece*. Janet then recognized nine Chapter members celebrating their 50th year as members of the AMC: *Lawrence and Lillian Buck, Elaine Luckey, Frederick Moore, C. Eugene & Mary Louise Mosher; Laurence & Eleanor Smith, and Irving Stanley*. Janet also stated that 49 individuals had become 25 year members since the last Annual Gathering, and noted that David Cullen sent each of them a commemorative pin.

Janet introduced Stephanie Brochu, AMC's vice president of Outdoor Leadership and Learning. Stephanie spoke about upcoming Chapter events and training, and about the Club's youth outreach programs, and specifically about the Club's efforts through schools in New Haven.

Janet expressed the Chapter's appreciation to each of the persons and organizations presenting the afternoon workshops and events. She recognized the following to sustained applause: *Kristen Sykes of AMC; Jason Newton; Mary-Beth Kaeser, Horizon Wings; Danielle Jepson, AMC; Joel Gordes; Linda Zajac; Christine Woodside, Appalachia Journal; and David Roberts, AMC CT Chapter*. Janet then thanked the program committee and its friends for arranging today's events: *Chair Michelle Baughman, Registrar Kathleen Miller and Wilda Wyse; along with Jim Scheef, David Roberts, Darcy Withem, Dale Geslien, Cindy Butts, Bruce LaRoche and Barbara Beckerman*. Janet thanked the members of the Nominating Committee for their attention to this year's Executive Committee slate, and asked them to stand and be recognized.

At approximately 7:43 pm, Janet called to order the business portion of the 93rd Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Chapter. Janet called for a motion to accept the Secretary's Minutes of the 2013 Annual Gathering set forth in the Annual Report, which motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously without revision. Janet 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. Janet 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:

Chair:	<i>Bob Guenther</i>
Vice Chair:	<i>open</i>
Secretary:	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Treasurer:	<i>Al Puches</i>
Bicycling Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>Sue Grant & Rick Merritt</i>
Youth Program Coordinators:	<i>Jim Liptack</i>
Conservation Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>Russ Charest & Andrew May</i>
East of the River Chair:	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>John Crist & Keith Spaar</i>
Excursions Committee Chair:	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
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Membership Committee Chair:	<i>Alison Terjek</i>
Member at Large:	<i>Bea Holt</i>
Member at Large:	<i>John Grasso</i>
Mountaineering Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>Pete Gajdosik & Kurt Zoner</i>
Newsletter Editor:	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
Northwest Camp Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>Tom McGrath & Rod Parlee</i>
Program Co-Chairs:	<i>Michelle Baughman & Janet Ainsworth</i>
Trails Committee Chair:	<i>David Boone</i>
Webmaster/Technology Chair:	<i>Jim Scheef</i>
Whitewater Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>Mark Schappert & Dennis Wigg</i>
Young Members Committee Co-Chairs:	<i>Mary Grant & Alison Terjek</i>

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

Janet spoke briefly of the Chapter's need for volunteers for various committees. Lastly, Janet noted the tradition of the red hats, and asked all past chairs to come forward to the podium to welcome Bob to his new role as Chair.

At approximately 7:50 pm, Janet called for a motion to conclude the Annual Business Meeting, which motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously. Michelle Baughman came to the podium to introduce the speaker for the evening program, Sam Jamke.

John Grasso, Immediate Past Secretary



**TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2013 AND 2014**

	2013	2014
Cash at January 1	\$113,470	\$125,005
Revenue Collected:		
Joy Street dues allocation	26,981	26,945
Program activities	16,456	16,832
Contributions	2,100	2,100
Reserve funds- sources (1)	2,490	2,425
Share of initial memberships	2,380	2,100
Leadership training	7,847	8,005
Merchandise sales	431	203
Interest and investment income	<u>8,588</u>	<u>17,539</u>
Total revenue collected	\$67,273	\$76,199
Expenditures:		
Cost of program activities	17,324	18,923
Cost of Merchandise	-	120
Reserve funds- uses (1)	4,157	1872
Committee operating expenses:		
Bicycling	890	748
Conservation	377	904
Education	5,848	8,690
Excursions	-	-
Executive	9,377	8,640
Flatwater	30	-
Membership	230	292
Mountaineering	554	780
Newsletter	6,387	-
Trails	8,360	7,759
Whitewater	<u>2,204</u>	<u>1,403</u>
Total expenditures	\$55,738	\$50,131
Cash at December 31	\$125,005	\$151,073

**TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2014 AND 2015**

					9/30/14	9/30/15
Cash at January 1					\$125,005	\$151,073
Revenue Collected:						
	Joy Street dues allocation				17,962	18,636
	Program activities				9,191	10,291
	Reserve funds- sources (1)				2,425	4,559
	Share of initial memberships				1,320	1,360
	Leadership training				7,140	6,605
	Contributions				2,100	100
	Merchandise sales				203	120
	Advertising				0	0
	Interest and investment income				17,536	5,597
	Total revenue collected				57,877	47,268
Expenditures:						
	Cost of program activities				9,923	12,185
	Reserve funds- uses (1)				1,872	5,037
	Committee operating expenses:					
		Bicycling			29	
		Conservation			520	806
		Education			6,704	4,839
		Executive			3,218	169
		Flatwater				17
		Membership			292	512
		Mountaineering			277	
		Newsletter				
		Trails /AT			3,018	3,285
		Whitewater			400	234
		Total expenditures			26,253	29,211
Cash at September 30					\$156,629	\$169,229

**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:

		12/31/13	12/31/14	9/30/15
Reserve funds:				
	AT Handicap Accessible Project	\$7,422	\$7,422	\$5,176
	Other Trails Memorials/Grants	13,388	12,945	13,214
	Duren and Simons Memorial Scholarships	2,564	3,079	4,579
	Whitewater reserve	5,337	5,696	6,897
General fund:		96,294	121,931	139,363
Total cash:		\$125,005	\$151,073	\$169,229

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:

- 136 individual members of the Chapter contributed 6,729 total hours to Trail activities.
- The Committee voted, and the Chapter Executive Committee approved, changing the name of the Committee from "Trails" to "Appalachian Trail". This name more accurately reflects the roles and responsibilities of the Committee.
- The Kent Lion's Club made a significant donation to support the continuing good work of the Bulls Bridge Task Force, in the effort to manage appropriate visitor use of this area.
- DEEP wildlife researchers conducted a project to determine the presence and health of the population of the New England Cottontail, an endangered native rabbit, in the area of the Stanley Tract.
- The Riga shelter suffered fire damage caused by a careless camper during the early winter. Although still structurally sound, repairs need to be made to the "deacon's bench" and roof support.
- Graffiti painted on trail structures, natural features, and practically any other surface grows at a frustrating rate. Much effort this season was spent on attempting to remove graffiti, and experimenting with various removal techniques. Please help us by educating hikers that such vandalism is absolutely unacceptable!
- Our annual "Give A Day to the AT" had 49 participants, working on 4 different projects.
- A proposal to relocate the trail on the Schaghticoke Reservation and on to newly acquired land formerly owned by the Preston Mountain Club was approved by the New England Regional Partnership Committee, and a biological compliance review was conducted.
- Using funding from the LL Bean "Grants to AT Clubs", the Committee purchased a DR Field and Brush mower and a DR trimmer. This equipment will allow us to maintain both open and less accessible open spaces.
- Our season kick-off event, formally known as the "Maintainer's Workshop", now known as the "Volunteer Round-Up", successfully brought together all our various volunteers. The trail on Prospect

Mountain was reblazed, and a staircase on Wetawanchu Ridge, was rebuilt, as highlights of the Round-Up.

- Connecticut's "Father of the AT" and homegrown Renaissance man Ned Anderson (1885-1967) was inducted into the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame.
- Deteriorating forest health, and increased awareness following a tragic accident in Maryland, has led the Committee to survey and remove hazard trees in our camping areas. The Limestone Springs campsite was temporarily closed for this reason this summer. Approximately 40 hazard trees have been removed this year from Limestone Springs, Caesar Brook, Stewart Hollow, Belter's Bump, and Mt. Algo. This work is being performed by both volunteer certified sawyers and a professional arborist. This work will certainly continue into the foreseeable future.
- The summer Ridgerunner program had a very successful season, with over 7,000 hiker contacts.
- The Committee worked with the Northwest Camp Committee to build a new 220 foot bog bridge on the NW Camp Bog Trail.
- Long time volunteers Dave Cronin, Sue Kirk, and Dave Boone were recognized by the National Park Service for twenty-five years of service at the ATC Biennial Conference in Winchester, VA.

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

Rich Cady

Craig Cassella

Walt Daniels

Henry Edmonds

Bernadette Ellegard

Gene Grayson

Harlan Jessup

Jim Liptak

Elaine LaBella

Lisa Luca

Bob Poitras

Paul Reder

Sue Spring

Ann Sherwood

Brian Sears

Russ Waldie

Alice Webber - Regional Trails Coordinator

Silvia Cassano - ATC Trail Management Assistant

Adam Brown - ATC Stewardship Conservation Manager

Dave Boone, Chair

Bicycling Committee

RIDE COORDINATOR: Joann Hewitt our bike rider coordinator has done a great job again this year keeping all rides for our web-site and the ride leader list up to date.

QUICK NOTICE: Tom Ebersold continues to go above and beyond, sending out weekly notices, entering rides in our trip system and leading many, many rides.

TUESDAY & THURSDAY EVENING RIDES: out of Manchester continued to attract a large number of participants, bike leaders Judy Borrmann, David Waldburger, Rick Merritt and Wayne Tursi. Other leaders assisting were Bruce Ebbets, Tony Calabrese, and Jim and MaryAnn Gleba. 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 and many going to dinner after the ride. Leaders included: Finlay and Mary Ferguson; Beverly Medlin, Mark Henebry and Wayne Chapman.

WEEKEND BIKE TRIPS: included three trips this year - Hampton Beach, NH, leaders, Susan Grant, Rick Merritt and MaryAnn Gleba, Cape Cod, MA, leaders Dick Cable and Joe Thomas, and Fairlee, VT with leaders Finlay and Mary Ferguson and Mark and Leslie Henebry.

WEEKEND DAY BIKE RIDES: did well this year with a ride most Saturdays and Sundays. New this season were Saturday morning rides out of The Bike Shop in South Windsor, led by Andrew Johnson and Sharon Timins. We continue to look for new ride leaders. In addition to those already mentioned, Mark Kiley continues to be a major contributor leading many weekend rides.

Susan Grant, Co-Chair
Rick Merritt, Co-Chair

Conservation Committee

The AMC Conservation Committee was very active this year.

Andrew and Russ participated at the following events:

- North Haven Earth Day
- Hamden Earth Day
- Beardsley Zoo Party For The Planet
- Hartford Earth Festival
- CT Folk Festival

We promoted both the CT AMC and the ESDDDB (Energy Saving Device Display Board). Members were at the Fiddleheads Food Co-op. Andrew May was at "Give A Day to the AT."

Russ led a Highlands Hike on Bear Mt CT on CT Trails weekend where we promoted conservation.

Russ built an ESDDDB (Display Board) which the CT AMC financed and it was given to the Ridge Road Elementary School in North Haven, CT. The board helped to promote the CT AMC!

Andrew and Russ will both table at AMC Annual Gathering at Saint Clements Castle.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Andrew C. May, Co-Chair

Russ Charest, Co-Chair

Bob Andrews

Jamie Lee.

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. The 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.

There are two levels of hikes: one is a more challenging hike and the other is a more moderate hike of about 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. Attendance for hikes varies and sometimes consists of small intimate groups but can also be a larger group of as many as 30.

Trips to Boston and events such as our annual “cookie swap” will continue in the future. After the hikes, small groups often go for pizza, ice cream or coffee at nearby establishments. Our learning on each hike includes identification of tree species, wildflowers, historical buildings and landmarks.

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

Ray Phillips, Chair



Education Committee

On the weekend of November 14-15, 2014 the Education Committee conducted a 2-day leadership training at White Memorial in Litchfield. Eight instructors were on hand over the weekend teaching 18 future hike leaders.

In April of 2015, a Wilderness First Aid course at White Memorial in Litchfield was attended by 41 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 14 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 12 new leaders. Bill McCarthy took the lead on the training. Janet Ainsworth, Keith Spaar, Robin Pleshaw, Barbara Beckerman were on hand to cover all the topic areas and role plays.

Outdoor education never stops. This year we added a second Wilderness First Aid course in November and kept alive our 2 day LTS training on the same weekend at White Memorial in Litchfield. Dates are November 14th and 15th.

Facebook, Constant Contact, and the CT-AMC Website got the word out about the trainings.

In 2016, the Education Committee will be looking to expand its training offerings with a Leave No Trace Trainer course (Fall), Winter Hike Leader LTS and possibly hosting additional trainings at the new AMC facility in New York.

Keith Spaar, Chair

Excursions Committee

In the twelve months to the end of September 2015, Connecticut Chapter Hike Leaders posted approximately 500 hikes and quite a number of weekend and other multi-day trips.

Almost 100 different Hike Leaders led at least one hike during the year demonstrating the depth of our group of Hike Leaders. Also, over 50 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 of our Leaders deserve our thanks and appreciation for their efforts.

In addition to hikes led by Hike Leaders who are not part of a sponsoring group, hikes sponsored by East of the River (EOR), the Thursday Western CT Group, Young Members, and Family Activities again made major contributions. The EOR Midweek Hiking continued to sponsor four well attended hikes each week, the Western CT Thursday Group sponsored at least one hike each week, and our Family Activities group sponsored a number of hikes during the year. Our Young Members group continues to grow with over 70 hikes and activities in the past year with several different leaders. 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.

Several of our Hike Leaders, in addition to leading local hikes, led backpacking and ski trips both within and beyond the state and led Adventure Travel trips. Hike Leaders also strongly supported chapterwide events such as National Trails Day, Give a Day to the AT, and AT Day, which was again run by Excursions. Since it was started only a few years ago, AT Day has grown to be the chapter's biggest outdoor event each year.

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. We also thank the Education Committee, comprised 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.

Jim Scheef remains an invaluable asset to the Excursions Committee and to all the club as our Webmaster and we thank Jim for all his work. Our principal hike email list now includes over 4200 names. Our Weekly Upcoming Hikes List 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 year, the CT-AMC Meetup group surpassed the 1000-member mark. Many thanks to the volunteers who maintain our Meetup group.

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. We are very happy to welcome a new member, Bill Curley, to the Excursions Committee. This year we added a Hike Leader Appreciation Party in April, a chance for our leaders to get together and relax, and let someone else take care of the details. More of the same are planned for the future.

A special thank you to David Roberts, past Excursions Chair, for remaining on the Excursions Committee for the past year to provide his help and expertise throughout the transition. His contributions to this committee and to the club as a whole have been enumerable. He remains a valuable member of the Executive Committee as Fairfield County Group co-chair, and we look forward to many more of his presentations at FCG meetings and the Annual Gathering.

EXCURSIONS COMMITTEE:

Peg Peterson, Chair

*David Roberts
Carol Hassett
Dave Cronin
Eric Stones*

*Phil Wilsey
Bill Curley
Fiona Nicholson*



Fairfield County Group

Fairfield County Group (FCG) had another successful year. In the twelve months to the end of September 2015, FCG organized ten events, which attracted a total of over 600 people. This program consisted of five speaker meetings in Westport; and five speaker meetings in Bethel.

In Westport, FCG's 2014/ 2015 season of five speaker meetings attracted a total audience of around 340 people or about 70 people per meeting. FCG continued to hold its Westport meetings in the Unitarian Church until June 2015, despite continued issues over rental cost levels and the provision of services which were supposed to be provided by the church. Then following proposed significantly reduced services by the Unitarian Church, FCG moved to Saugatuck Congregational Church, beginning with its September 2015 meeting. The new location provides excellent facilities at a reduced cost. After reducing its offerings to reduce costs, FCG Westport meetings once again feature hot pasta, salads, desserts, wine and sodas.

In Bethel, FCG's meetings feature appetizers, entrees, wine, desserts and coffee, as well as great speakers and interesting movies. The five speaker meetings in Bethel during the 2014 / 2015 season attracted crowds averaging about 55 people per meeting, compared to around 40 the previous year, and the Bethel meetings continue to become better established with a growing crowd of regulars.

FCG's meetings feature a wide range of topics, mainly in the armchair travel category, which in the 2014 / 2015 season included international locations as varied as the Arctic, Brazil, Cambodia, Myanmar, Ireland, Brazil, the Silk Road, and Hiking to Everest Base Camp. AMC Connecticut Chapter Hike Leaders Frank Keen, Ian Lewis, Deborah Lewis, and David Roberts were among the speakers.

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:

Darcy Witham

Lorraine Cronson

Paul Garborino

Fiona Nicholson

Al Puches

Eleanor Sasso

Tom Carruthers, Co-Chair

David Roberts, Co-Chair





Family Activities Committee

The Family Activities Committee has had fewer hikes this year for various reasons. As has been true almost from the outset, the committee has only two leaders. We need more. 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. As I noted last year, if you don't want to lead hikes, we could always use a volunteer to plan social activities for this most important part of our chapter and club.

Janet Ainsworth, Chair
Eric Stones

Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Committee

This was another fun year on the water. Tom, Debbie and Steve explored lakes and rivers all across our state, from Lake Waramaug in the northwest to Aspinook Pond in the southeast. All of our leaders are branching out into new territories as we learn of new launch sites and paddling locations. We also welcome to the committee Eric Barbour, who has shown an eagerness to learn skills and enthusiasm for paddling.

A special series of nine trips was a great success as we through- paddled the Connecticut River from Enfield to Old Lyme. Along the way we observed a great variety of bird life, especially bald eagles on almost every segment- even in downtown Hartford! Very satisfying. We met many local paddlers along the way, and learned about the tallest building in Connecticut (City Place in Hartford), the source of gunshots in Glastonbury (corn guns- compressed air canons fired randomly to keep raccoons out of corn fields), and two islands that host the annual tree swallow migration swarmings off Old Lyme (referred to as a murmuration).

We offered 21 trips and had 194 paddlers, including a well attended Fun With Kayaks skills session held at Powers Lake in East Lyme. We are also cementing our ties with the Connecticut River Watershed Council and the Old Lyme Land Trust.

Come join us on the water next season.

FLATWATER/COASTAL PADDLING COMMITTEE:

Tom Ebersold
Debbie Tedford
Steve Lemoine
Eric Barbour

Barry Gorfain, Chair



Mountaineering Committee

Recreation: This year, Mountaineering offered over 80 climbing events (climbs, trips and classes).

Ice Climbing: AMC ice climbers enjoyed excellent conditions in CT this year. We climbed regularly in Canaan and also in Beacon Falls. As usual, the group also travelled north to climb in the White Mountains, the Catskills, Massachusetts, and the Adirondacks. The Beginners Ice Climbing course in North Conway in January was well-attended and we were able to offer a Steep Skills workshop for more advanced climbers.

Rock Climbing: Indoors, our Thursday evening gym climbs at Prime Climb in Wallingford were typically attended by 6-10 climbers. We also climbed at the Central Rock Gym in Glastonbury on Tuesday evenings.

In April, we moved our Thursday night climbs out of doors and, through September, we rotated through eight Connecticut crags. The outdoor climbs were well-attended. We also held numerous weekend trips for multi-pitch rock climbing to the Shawangunks, the White Mountains, and Rogers Rock.

Education: This year we sponsored 7 training sessions that introduced club members to our activities or enhanced the climbing and safety skills of our members. Winter season programs included: Introduction to Ice Climbing, Introduction to Mountaineering, and Avalanche Beacon Training. We also held classes for Beginners Rock Climbing, Top Rope Set-up, Anchor Building, and Self-Rescue. A planned Sport Climbing course fizzled due to lack of interest.

Organization: We attracted about 6 new, regular climbers to the group. The Facebook Group now has 206 members and appears to draw new climbers to our events. This year, there were no serious injuries of AMC climbers. Club gear was inventoried, maintained and, when necessary, retired. We expect to end the year with a balanced budget.

2016 Objectives:

First, attract new climbers to our group through introductory courses, publicizing our climbing events via Constant Contact and Facebook, and participating in Chapter initiatives such as New Member Day and AT Day.

Second, maintain the large calendar of climbing events. Developing additional new leaders will help distribute the effort of organizing and conducting courses and multi-day climbing trips.

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

MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE:

Mike Adelson

Ron Curtis

Dominick Galletti

Art Morenz

Gustavo Nava

Audrey Suseno

Gary Zempel

Sandy Bartell

John DeAngelis

Bob Lener

Carol Morenz

Gini Kramer

Steve Wall

Paula Zimbrea

Chuck Boyd

Patrick Jacques

Tim Linehan

Jesse Morenz

Mark Sondeen

James Wolff

Pete Gajdosik, Co-Chair

Kurt Zoner, Co-Chair



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. AMC in Connecticut is also distributed to numerous advocates and supporters who subscribe via e-mail or who download the newsletter from the chapter web site. This electric distribution allows readers an easy way to reduce their carbon footprint while helping to defray printing and mailing costs for the chapter. The newsletter showcases CT-AMC member information, such as an update from your chapter chair, information about upcoming events, and many other stories/articles of interest to our constituents submitted by committee chairs, participating members and AMC.

Each newsletter is always a group effort, so all submissions and comments are greatly appreciated. The goal of the newsletter is to foster greater CT-AMC membership and to recruit participants for upcoming events. The publication also works to persuade members to try new activities and encourage more members to volunteer, recruit, and give of their time.

Darcy Witham has been sole editor of the publication this past year. 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 works on a number of additional CT-AMC associated promotions including but not limited to flyers, announcements, brochures, posters and advertising.

Her recent co-editor Maggie Grayson provided her writing, editing and proofreading services for many years and has moved on to more worldly and personal adventures.

She is surely missed. The position for co-editor is still open.

The online newsletter is produced 3-4 times a year. It gives last minute news and changes a better chance of getting to our members. The newsletter will continue to be available online as a downloadable, printable pdf document.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Darcy Witham, Chair

Northwest Camp Committee

The Committee had a very active and successful 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 forest canopy in the very remote northwest corner of Connecticut. The Northwest Camp committee volunteers, managing this self-service facility continue to balance the needs of its guests with a safe and environmentally responsible lodging experience.

The sparkling pristine stream adjacent to the cabin drains to Sages Ravine and is part of the very 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. In support of recognizing this protection, the Committee is seeking professionals that would volunteer their services by conducting an inventory of native flora, invasive plants, wildlife, GIS, herpetology, avi-fauna, old-growth forest ecology, calcareous fens, vernal pools, geology, natural history, hydrology, fish science, global climate change, storm water run-off, etc. Continuously learning what makes this fragile and vulnerable property and watershed so rare is a high priority of the Committee. The results of these inventories will help us manage the property sustainably & heighten the awareness of our guests.

Many productive meetings took place throughout the year and the two annual workparties (first Sat in May & Nov.) resulted in the completion of many tasks. The Ridgerunners (and program) were once again the happy recipients of a NW Camp committee donation. The Committee strongly supports a longer Ridgerunner season beyond Labor Day to help with cabin monitoring during a very active time of year. Many thanks, to CT Chapter member Bea Holt who made a personal monetary donation to the committee for the purpose of starting a library of field guides. A bookcase was constructed and is now ready to be stocked.

The Committee's high-point of the year was the construction of a 250-foot long bog bridge on the Bog trail for the purpose of reducing impact to a Topogenous, oligotrophic bog that slowly drains to Sages ravine, on its way past the cabin. The bridge material purchase was made possible thanks to a Special Projects Fund grant from the AMC Conservation Programs Committee. Original plans called for the sills to be made with rigid LEAD and Green certified corrugated plastic piping allowing amphibians and water to flow freely under the bridge tread. But, concerns arose regarding aesthetics and durability. The Committee

sprang into action searching for a sill material the AMC staff would approve. After reaching out and networking with numerous associates, it was decided to go with Black-locust which may last as long as 50 years. Big time kudos to Charles Besozzi of New England Naval Timbers, LLC Thanks to his long-time association with the folks in Salisbury he supplied and delivered the Locust for half the cost! The first Bog bridge workparty was just one weekend in June and with the help of four AMC Ridgerunners, Angel Vega and many volunteers moved the very heavy material that was delivered (and stacked) to the yarding area. The second workparty took an entire week in August and was planned in conjunction with the annual Perseids Meteor Shower weekend cookout and an Owl Prowl, led by Fran Zygmunt of the Audubon Society. The grand opening ceremony of the Bog Bridge was conducted prior to the field portion of the Saturday night Owl Prowl. The completion of the bridge wouldn't have been achieved without the tireless efforts of the NW Camp Committee members & volunteers especially Caretaker, Don Klein with members of the AT Committee and their dedicated leader, Dave Boone.

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

Committee Roster with Volunteers and Hours

Tom McGrath (Co-Chair, Moldering Privy Chair) 58*

Rod Parlee (Co-Chair, Conservation Director) 138*

Merri Fox (Secretary) 22

Donald Klein (Caretaker) 212 *

Craig Kennedy (Registrar) 323 *

Al Puches (Treasurer) 40*

Paul Thoma (Financial Liaison) 139*

John Hicks (Past Chair/Caretaker – Trails Committee Chair) 142*

Carol Langley (Cabin Monitor & Green Mt Club, CT Rep) 81*

Art Mauger (Cabin Monitor) 20

Roy Hoffman (Past Chair/Caretaker) 16

John Rek (Past Chair/Caretaker) 8

Angel Vega 35

Joe Parenteau 32

Richard Jewell 22

Ethan Rain 21

Marge Hicks 20

Eric Harvey 8

Chris McGrath

Ron Zlotoff

* denotes Stewardship Award with more than 30 volunteer hours

Program Committee

On March 13, Alison Terjek and Michelle Baughman attended a tabling event at the Connecticut Forum's Explorers and Adventurers Expo at the Bushnell in Hartford. They promoted the AMC to potential members and they also aggressively promoted the Spring Dinner event (which at that time was undersold). Eight days later the Spring Dinner sold out.

On March 28, the talented cooks at the Cheshire Grange provided us with a wonderful homemade roast beef Spring Dinner (and an alternative Vegan/Vegetarian friendly meal of meatless chili). The vegan alternative this year was inspired by our keynote speaker, Christine Woodside. Attendees were comprised of 88 AMC members and 12 non-members. Christine spoke about the inspiring stories and the interesting characters behind them in her new anthology, "No Limits but the Sky," a collection of the best stories from Appalachia Magazine from 1877 to the present.

The 2015 Annual Gathering broke tradition this year and is held on a Sunday in order to secure Saint Clements Castle as the venue. Next year we will return to a Saturday. The noon start is to insure that our exhibitor tables can get enough attention to make it worthwhile to participate. You won't want to miss the opportunity to network with our vendor tables, sponsors, related conservation organizations and committees. The silent auction is changed to a Tea Cup Social where sheets of tickets can be purchased by attendees who put tickets in the boxes of the items they hope to win. Each vendor has donated items with a minimum value of \$50. You can win a chance for the door prize of a one-year AMC membership via a "Passport Game" designed to get attendees to visit the exhibit booths. The game consists of collecting "stamps" or signatures from each vendor booth to fill your "passport" (which serves as your raffle ticket to win the door prize.) We also added a service of coffee, tea, and cookies during the noon hour.

Thanks to the diligent hard work of Jim Scheef, we accepted credit card payments for on-line tickets sales for the first time this year.

The keynote speaker is David Roberts who will give a special new presentation for this year's Annual Gathering, entitled "It's a Wild, Wild World." David Roberts has traveled to around 70 countries and explored every continent, usually with hiking boots, and always with a camera.

Michelle Baughman, Chair

Webmaster/Technology

2015 Accomplishments:

- Maintained the website with current information for the various committees and chapter events.
- Completed email migration to Constant Contact.

Constant Contact Email: Remaining committees migrated to Constant Contact. The better format and more consistent delivery have proven this to be worthy effort for all of the committees.

Social Media: Our efforts on both Facebook and Meetup continue to draw people in. Our Facebook audience has doubled to 685 “likes” as Dale Geslien continues to manage the page – posting pictures and chapter events. Our Meetup group has more than doubled to 1166 “appies”. Meetup has become our best means to reach out to new people. Events are mostly posted by the leaders. An “organizer” then makes sure it is in the AMC Trips System which ensures the event and the leader are approved by the appropriate committee. Please check these out at www.facebook.com/AMCConnecticut and www.meetup.com/AMC-CT-Chapter.

Online Trips System: The expansion of Trips System to allow registration, payment and carpooling was tested by several volunteers in early summer and is now live. The goal is to allow trip leaders to better manage their trips thru online participant registration. Unfortunately the payment part was left for the next round of enhancements.

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.

Chapter Phone Line: Northwest Camp and East of the River continue to make heavy 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.

Online Payments: For the first time ever, we have had a means to register and pay for the Annual Gathering online. As I write this, about two-thirds of those attending the event registered online. It is too soon to report total success as there is much still to do, but we have seen progress.

2016 Goals:

- Continue to help AMC improve the Activities Database (Online Trips Listings) system.
- Improve chapter communications and publicity thru more effective use of the various tools available.
- Move the chapter website to hosting provided by AMC. We are a lead chapter in this project which is due to start before year end.

Committee Page Maintainers: I want to thank those who maintain the sections of the website devoted to specific committees: Jamie Lee – Conservation; Mark Schappert – Whitewater, Young Members. All other sections are maintained by your webmaster.

Your faithful web lackey,
Jim Scheef, Chair

Whitewater Committee

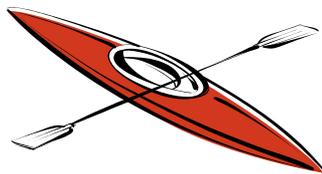
In 2015, as in years past, the Whitewater Committee started off the year with our pool instructional in Middletown and Bridgeport. These drew great attendance. We had several students from a "Sea Scouts" troop and a couple of Veterans from the Veterans Rowing and Kayaking program. At Tville on the Farmington River, a Thursday evening paddle was a success with many paddlers turning out for this evening. This led to the summer lake session instructional in July/August in combination with an on the river instructional with kayakers that attended the lake session. We have also run our annual trip to the Ottawa Kayak School in Beachburg, Canada.

As in years past we ran many river trips on the Deerfield, Farmington and other local rivers.

This November we are holding our annual leaders appreciation picnic and will be presenting the Stephen Forster Award, recognizing excellence in whitewater kayaking and leadership.

Mark Schappert, Co-Chair

Dennis Wigg, Co-Chair



Nominations for the 2016 Executive Committee

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

Chapter Chair	<i>Robert Guenther</i>
Chapter Vice Chair	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Secretary	Open
Treasurer	<i>Al Puches</i>
Appalachian Trail Chair	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Susan Grant</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Rick Merritt</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 Chair	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>Tom Carruthers</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>David Roberts</i>
Family Activities Chair	<i>Janet Ainsworth</i>
Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Chair	<i>Barry Gorfain</i>
Member at Large	<i>John Grasso</i>
Member at Large	<i>Bea Holt</i>
Membership Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>
Mountaineering Chair	<i>Peter Gajdoski</i>
Newsletter Editor	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
Northwest Camp Co-Chair	<i>Tom McGrath</i>
Northwest Camp Co-Chair	<i>Rod Parlee</i>
Program Chair	<i>Michelle Baughman</i>
Webmaster/Technology	<i>Jim Scheef</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Mark Schappert</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Dennis Wigg</i>
Young Members Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>

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.

Ledge Clayton of Middletown, Connecticut

Bob Dannies of New Haven, Connecticut

Priscilla Dannies of New Haven, Connecticut

Frederick P. Glike of Meriden, Connecticut

Roy C. Normen of South Windsor, Connecticut

Nancy Normen of South Windsor, Connecticut

John W. Shea, Jr. of Cromwell, Connecticut

