

NW Camp Committee Annual Report for 2007



Submitted by Rod Parlee, Interim Co-chair and Conservation Director

Change comes slow on the northwest shoulder of Bear Mountain although the challenges remain great. The 125-acre Northwest Camp/Cabin is Connecticut's only volunteer managed facility and has endured 56 years of lodging and management in its rustic, structure made from American chestnut. Hard working and dedicated volunteers who have a passion for their work make it all possible.

After seven years of being Chairman, Chuck Doll stepped down as Chairman. At a Committee meeting in October, Rod Parlee presented him with wooden plaque shaped like a map of CT with the NW Camp patch logo etched in the northwest corner. Chuck was Chair during very challenging times. Times when the cabin went through a major restoration project and was closed temporarily and opened with a new highly structured staircase. The committee also grew to be the largest ever and dealt with many life safety issues both swiftly and successfully. Special thanks to Chuck Doll for all of his hard and continuous work!

In January, Members of the Committee attended the AMC Annual Meeting in MA with a very effective tabletop display promoting the Committee and proper use of Northwest Camp. They also attended a Volunteer Managed Facilities subcommittee meeting and learned about marketing and safety issues.

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of former Caretaker Dan Greene in a sailboat accident on Wednesday, March 21st in Long Island Sound. As a tribute to "Danny Boy", and at the request of the Committee, nationally known arborist Matt "Twig" Largess planted an 8-foot tall Yellow Birch during a ceremony attended by many members of his family and members of the Committee.

At the Fall workparty, Matt Largess dazzled the Committee with all of his forest knowledge. Matt is a nationally known arborist from Rhode Island who is fascinated with NW Camp and the Taconic Plateau. He proved his theory that the Hemlock tree stand surrounding NW Camp is old growth by cutting the cross-section of a fallen 7-inch Hemlock and counting 116 tightly compressed rings. Matt has completed a study of the forest around NW Camp and has recommended the committee preserve it for the next 100 years and beyond. He has also developed a knack for predicting bear sightings, seeing the most recent bear to travel through the camp.

Co-Chair/Caretaker Jim St. Amand and Registrar Joni Kafka announced they are stepping down from their positions as of December 31st, 2007. Both have performed the lion's share of the work for the Committee. We are very grateful for their years of service since the year 2000.

Reservations are accepted on a first-come-first-serve basis by calling Registrar Jonie St. Amand at 203-265-4165 between the hours of 8am to 8pm Monday through Friday. After January 1st, 2008 the new contact number or website will be posted on the CT Chapter's NW Camp home page at <http://www.ct-amc.org/nwcamp/index.shtml>

The following events are planned at the cabin for 2008:

Winter Social Weekend – February 22-24 2008

Spring Workparty – Saturday, May 3rd, 2008

Perseids Meteor Shower - August 8 - 10th, 2008

New Members Day – Saturday, September 13, 2008

Fall Workparty – Saturday, October 18, 2008



Matt "Twig" Largess, John Calandrelli
of the Sierra Club and Rod Parlee