



CONNECTICUT CHAPTER
99th Anniversary

Annual Report
November 15, 2020

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 and incorporated into the Chapter Standing Rules.



**APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB
CONNECTICUT CHAPTER
2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Chapter Chair	<i>John Grasso</i>
Chapter Vice-Chair	<i>Jocelyn Eppich</i>
Secretary	<i>Martha Cain</i>
Treasurer	<i>Al Puches</i>
Appalachian Trail Chair	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Mary Ann Gleba</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Susan Grant</i>
Communications	<i>David Roberts</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Russell Charest</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Andrew May</i>
East of the River Chair	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Co-Chair	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Education Co-Chair	<i>Janet Ainsworth</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Phil Wilsey</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>Tom Carruthers</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>David Roberts</i>
Family Activities Co-Chair	<i>Corey Mott</i>
Family Activities Co-Chair	<i>Janet Ainsworth *</i>
Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Chair	<i>Barry Gorfain</i>
Member at Large	<i>Bob Guenther</i>
Member at Large	<i>Cindy Butts</i>
Membership Co-Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>
Membership Co-Chair	<i>open</i>
Mountaineering Co-Chair	<i>John DeAngelis</i>
Mountaineering Co-Chair	<i>Paul Hayes</i>
Newsletter Editor	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
Northwest Camp Chair	<i>Rod Parlee</i>
Program Chair	<i>Michelle Baughman</i>
Webmaster/Technology	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Mark Schappert</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Dennis Wigg</i>
Young Members Co-Chair	<i>Corey Mott</i>
Young Members Co-Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>

* Elected to position during program year

CHAPTER CHAIR'S REPORT

This year will be remembered by us all for the COVID-19 pandemic which gripped the world. The pandemic brought all in-person AMC and Chapter activities to an abrupt halt in March, and when in late June AMC authorized outdoor activities to resume, it did so pursuant to detailed and demanding safety strictures which most volunteer leaders and members have felt unable or have been unwilling to navigate. Notwithstanding the commendable effort of several volunteer leaders, the number of Chapter outdoor activities and participation in those activities is a slight fraction of what it was a year ago.

Even so, Chapter morale is high. We take pride in AMC's national leadership role in securing permanent and full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a breakthrough regarded as improbable until it suddenly was achieved, and an historic milestone in the quest of the conservation community for protection and preservation of wild lands and waters. The ties which bind us as AMC and Chapter members are strong. Many of us correspond, and many of us gather informally. Many of us avail ourselves of AMC's excellent on-line programs, and some of us enjoy AMC facilities in New Hampshire and Maine. We all know that when these troubles are behind us, our Chapter will rebound strongly. It will be good to be together outside again.

This year challenged our Chapter Appalachian Trail Committee as it has seldom been challenged. As many of you know, our Chapter maintains the Appalachian Trail (AT) and the federal properties through which it passes within our state. Our Chapter's maintenance of the AT within Connecticut is our historic and distinctive public role and public service. The pandemic kindled a surge in the numbers of persons seeking outdoor recreation, and many more thousands of persons than is typical sought out hiking opportunities along the Connecticut AT and its connecting trails. At the same time the National Park Service imposed pandemic-related restrictions which for months forbade our volunteers to

conduct any maintenance. When at last our AT Committee was permitted to resume trail and campsite maintenance, the task was daunting. Then in August two windstorms in short succession brought hundreds of trees down upon the trail, rendering it impassable in many places. Our AT Committee had the trail cleared within days. 2020 tested the quality of our Chapter's stewardship of the AT, and we can be proud of how faithfully and competently our AT Committee and its handful of dedicated volunteers responded.

As we have approached our 100th anniversary as a Chapter, which we will celebrate next year, there has been new interest in better understanding our Chapter story. Several volunteers to include myself undertook to determine what records of our Chapter could be located, and to gather them. Our Chapter has no repository for records, and there was no writing detailing what records survive, or where they are. When the project of locating records was envisioned, only two "histories", printed in 1958 and in 1996, were known to exist. It was not known whether minutes and writings from decades past had been preserved. Fortunately, with the blessing of mere luck, we have been able to locate and to secure our primary original records going back to the Chapter's inception in June, 1921, and continuing to 2001, and to obtain copies of "histories" printed in 1939 and 1981 which we had not known existed. A Centennial History Committee is now preparing a Centennial History which will gather the earlier "histories" within one durable volume, bring our story forward to the present, and feature the "reminiscences and reflections" of many Chapter members. Our Chapter is focused on today and on tomorrow, but it can be entertaining and instructive to better understand the good work done and the good times had in our past.

When I became Chapter Chair in October 2018 I asked a former Chair for any insights he might wish to share. He paused and gave this pithy reply: "It will be over almost before you know it." So it is. I am humbled to have been entrusted with this role for the past two years, and I am inspired by each of you who have done

and are doing your great or small part to make our Chapter the strong, happy and welcoming community that we are.

John Grasso, Connecticut Chapter Chair 2020



CONNECTICUT CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING - 2019

The 98th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club was held on November 17, 2019 at St. Clements Castle in Portland, CT during our chapter Fall Gathering.

Chapter Chair John Grasso began the meeting at 6:50 during dinner, welcoming members and thanking volunteers and presenters who worked hard to make the Annual Gathering a success. Our chapter remains strong with 8,500 members, and a strong schedule of activities, training, and learning opportunities. We continue to be financially strong as well. We can be proud of what we have done in support of our Youth Opportunities Program in New Haven. In 2018, over 1000 youth were able to join activities that we enabled with gifts of over \$40,000 over four years toward the program's success.

We are in need of members who are interested in contributing to strengthening our Committees of Family Activities and Communications. Please see John Grasso after the meeting if you have interest in participating in this way.

John had the gathering take a moment to remember those members who have died in the year since our last Annual Gathering: Gerry Hardy, Richard Wanderman, Jim Lovelett, Janet Adcock, Janet Cooper, Fay Dresner, Tony D'Ambrosio, Kendall Forsberg, Michael Siebert, Steven Whalen, Sally Pryor, John Bentley, Jim Cummings, Viola Leonard, Marion Richardson, William Schmidt, Howard Treat, and Ann Schoeler.

David Boone of the AT Committee recognized chapter members with especially noteworthy contributions. With more individual participants this year than ever, 177 individuals contributed 4,071 hours in the field, and 798 hours in administration work. We have strengthened relationships with Trinity College and Yale University outdoor programs. He recognized those individuals who have accumulated hours of their time as follows:

12 hours: Patrick Cady and Sandra Cady
50 hours: Leo Kelly and Phil Wilsey
250 hours: John Graff
500 hours: Rich Cady

Dave further invited all those who wish to participate in trail efforts, as there are work party activities on Wednesdays and most Saturdays.

John then read the list of Volunteer Stewardship Award recipients who were present, and asked them to stand and be recognized. The complete list appears in the 2019 Annual Gathering program brochure. Cindy Butts will be providing gift certificates to these recipients.

John then asked Dave Roberts, Janet Ainsworth, and Dave Boone to join him up front as the committee who selects and presents the two highest awards that the Chapter gives to its members: the Appie of the Year, and the Lifetime Service Awards.
2019 Appies of the year are: Russ Waldie and Phil Wilsey
2019 Lifetime Service Award goes to: Leo Kelly

John then recognized the new 50 year members that were present: Richard Ruddick and Jacqueline Kirby. The complete list appears in the 2019 Annual Program. Dave Cullen will be providing 50 year pins to these members, and 25 year pins to those eligible members.

John introduced Justin Bailey, AMC Volunteer Relations Manager, who works out of AMC's NYC office, across all AMC Chapters. Justin thanked all for membership and volunteer support, and reminded us that the CT Chapter is often used as a "textbook example" of what an AMC chapter should be. He commended our updated website and our outdoor volunteer leadership training activities. He also thanked Janet Ainsworth for her contributions as Regional Director, from which she steps down this year. Justin spoke about AMC's Vision 2020, which began 10 years ago in 2010, when they developed 5 pillars of our vision, and he

outlined the successes the AMC has had in working towards and surpassing goals within them:

1. Conservation
2. Getting Kids Outdoors
3. Excellence in Learning and Leadership
4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
5. Maine Woods

In 2026, the AMC will be 150 years old, and a new Strategic Vision has been developed for “AMC 150” that will set us up for continued growth success for the next 150 years. It begins with a more precise Mission Statement: “The Mission of the Appalachian Mountain Club is to foster protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the outdoors.” And a new Vision: “We envision a world where being outdoors is an integral part of people’s lives where our natural resources are healthy, loved, and protected.” With this, we retain these core values: The respect for people in nature. Lifelong outdoor engagement. Prepared leadership. Intrinsic worth of the outdoors. Fun. To connect the above 5 pillars and concentrate what we do, AMC has developed 3 new “strategic themes” of Active Conservation, Outdoor Journey, and Recreational Network. This new Strategic Vision will continue to be developed in the future, and you will be hearing more about it.

John additionally thanked Janet Ainsworth for her service as Regional Director these past several years.

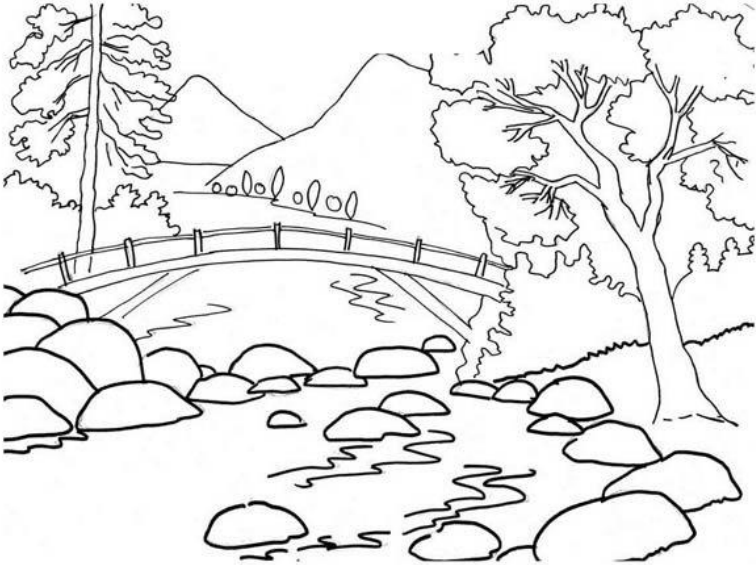
At 7:29 pm John conducted the business portion of the meeting wherein the Minutes and Treasurer’s Report from the 2018 Annual Meeting were approved with no further discussion.

Bruce Laroche, Chair of the Nominating Committee, read the Slate of Nominees for the 2020 Executive Committee, asking them to stand and be recognized. The Slate was approved and installed with no further discussion. The complete slate appears in the 2019 Annual Report. Note that openings still exist for Family Activities Committee Co-Chair and Membership Committee Co-Chair.

John explained the tradition of the red hat (since 1951, Chairs and Past Chairs wear red hats, so members know who they are). John asked the Past Chairs in attendance to stand (with their red hats) and be recognized: Judy Besancon, Dave Cullen, Bob Guenther, Dale Geslien, Janet Ainsworth, Ledge Clayton, Eric Stones, and Leo Kelly.

With no further business, the 98th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club was adjourned at 7:44 pm.

Martha Cain, Secretary



**TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2019**

	2018	2019
Cash at January 1	\$153,357	\$150,862
Revenue Collected:		
Boston dues allocation	25,612	24,414
Program activities	20,533	20,778
Contributions	4,855	1,620
Reserve funds - sources (1)	6,100	1,445
Share of initial memberships	1,690	1,740
Leadership Training	15,844	14,194
Merchandise sales	278	29
Interest and investment income	<u>12,732</u>	<u>6,153</u>
Total revenue collected	\$87,644	\$70,373
Expenditures:		
Cost of program activities	24,900	21,691
Youth Opportunities Program - New Haven	10,000	10,000
Cost of Merchandise	241	0
Reserve funds - uses (1)	3,575	3,812
Committee operating expenses:		
Bicycling	628	1,173
Conservation	101	990
East of the River	0	0
Education	16,668	15,345
Excursions	200	135
Executive	14,052	11,933
Membership	517	322
Mountaineering	1,683	2,275
CT AT	11,478	14,789
Whitewater	6,046	1,927
Young Members	<u>50</u>	<u>0</u>
Total expenditures	\$90,139	\$84,392
Cash at December 31	\$150,862	\$136,843

**TREASURER'S REPORT
FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2019 AND 2020**

	9/30/19	9/30/20
Cash at January 1	\$150,862	\$136,843
Revenue Collected:		
Boston dues allocation	16,413	15,162
Program activities	12,759	4,898
Reserve funds - sources (1)	1,345	10,055
Share of initial memberships	890	270
Leadership training	7,049	0
Contributions	1,320	0
Merchandise sales	20	0
Interest and investment income	<u>4,669</u>	<u>(3,843)</u>
Total revenue collected	\$44,465	\$26,542
Expenditures:		
Cost of program activities	12,749	3,622
Youth Opportunities Program - New Haven	10,000	10,000
Reserve funds - uses (1)	3,812	71
Committee operating expenses:		
Bicycling	373	294
Conservation	358	130
Education	9,123	1,950
Excursions	123	22
Executive	6,164	5,401
Membership	262	0
Mountaineering	1,300	273
CT AT	7,665	2,836
Whitewater	1,509	0
Young Members	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total expenditures	\$53,438	\$24,599
Cash at September 30	\$141,889	\$138,786

TREASURER'S REPORT RESERVE FUNDS (1)

Reserve funds represent 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:

	12/31/18	12/31/19	9/30/20
Reserve funds:			
AT Handicap Accessible Project	5,176	5,176	5,176
Eversource Donation	-	-	10,000
Other CT-AT Committee Memorials/Grants	4,324	4,442	4,371
Connecticut Teen Wilderness Fund	3,651	1,166	1,221
Whitewater Committee reserve	7,305	6,305	7,722
General fund:	130,406	119,754	110,296
Total cash:	\$150,862	\$136,843	\$138,786

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.

- The 2020 season began with great plans, great anticipation, and great expectations. As with most everything that occurred in 2020, navigating the unexpected, in particular the COVID-19 shut down that began in March, required major course changes. In spite of a volunteer stand down, limited numbers for scheduled work parties, and various concerns regarding volunteering during the pandemic, 71 AMC-CT AT volunteers contributed 3,184 field hours, and an additional 936 hours of non-field based work. This is quite remarkable considering that nearly 100 fewer members volunteered this year as a result of COVID-19, but field hours were only 887 less than the '18-'19 season.
- Most significantly, although the AT was never officially closed: the National Park Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) directed volunteers to not perform any maintenance, or other trail, corridor ,or facility related work; and AMC outdoor activities were prohibited between mid-March and June. In mid March, AMC-CT joined with the other AMC AT maintaining clubs, as well as other AT clubs trail-wide in a request to the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture, that they officially close the Appalachian Trail. The request was not acted on. By mid-June AMC and ATC had established protocols and procedures which allowed volunteers to return to field work, provided proper safety measures were instituted. This allowed us to return to Trail projects to a limited degree by mid-June. The Summer Ridgerunner

program however, was not initiated this season because of COVID-19 concerns, as was the summer crew program. Even as of this writing, AT shelters and privies remained closed to use.

- The Schaghticoke relocation was approved by NPS. A part of the review of the project consisted of an assessment to confirm that the proposed route would not impact Native American or other culturally important sites. This survey was completed by representatives of the of NPS, ATC, AMC-CT, and Mohegan and Schaghticoke representatives.
- Committee and ATC staff met with a bridge contractor to perform much needed repairs to the Ned Anderson Bridge across the Ten Mile River. Town and County Bridge & Rail of Albany, NY is performing the work. This is the same firm that initially installed the Anderson Bridge.
- The Committee has worked in cooperation with the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (formerly known as Naromi Land Trust) regarding a connecting trail to the AT from their newly acquired Eastman parcel, which adjoins their Herrick property in Sherman. The Committee has taken the first step, which is to bring the proposal to the New England Regional Partnership Committee for review and advice.
- An NPS funded demolition contractor removed several "incidentally acquired structures". One was the foundation of the "Red Cottage" along the river walk, the other the removal of two water storage cisterns off West Cornwall Road.
- The long-awaited Limestone Springs Trail relocation is still awaited. Although a professional AMC trail crew was to begin this work in July, the crew could not arrive due to COVID-19 complications.
- The Bulls Bridge scenic area suffered abuse and misuse that hasn't been witnessed in a decade. Huge crowds of non-hiker

users, seeking some relief from stay at home restrictions and summer heat, descended on the area, leaving litter, waste, and other negative impacts. The traffic and parking situation added other safety concerns to the issue. As a result, NPS closed the area between the AT and the Housatonic River between Bulls Bridge Road and Ten Mile River. The closure has not been entirely effective.

- On August 2, an EF-1 tornado touched down in Sharon, and hit the Belters campsite, impacting the Trail between there and "the cornfield" east of RT 7. Two days later, Tropical Storm Isaias left literally hundreds of trees down in and along the AT. Damage assessments were completed by our section maintainers and also a number of Mass AT Management Committee volunteers and an AMC staffer. A major effort was needed on Schgauticoke Mountain, where nearly fifty trees needed to be removed. Almost all our CT sawyers responded to that call, including two of our bros from the Mass Committee. By mid-September, the Trail was cleared. It's estimated this Herculean effort removed at least 250 trees from the Trail.

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.

Ray Bracone

Jeff Glans

Jim Liptack

Bob Poitras

Rich Cady

Gene Grayson

Paul Reder

Ann Sherwood

Walt Daniels

Leo Kelly

Adam Lippman

Russ Waldie

Henry Edmonds

Elaine LaBella

Sue Spring

Chip Ward

Bernadette Ellegard

Adam Brown, ATC Stewardship Conservation Manager

Aaron North, AMC SNE Trails Supervisor

Dave Boone, CT AT Committee Chairman

Bicycling Committee

Bike Rides:

A warm winter and little snow encouraged cyclists to ride through late fall and winter. Twenty-three posted rides took place between mid October 2019 and mid March 2020. Ten rides scheduled for late March and April were cancelled when COVID-19 precautions were instituted.

Twenty bike rides took place from July through mid-October after AMC implemented COVID-19 safety measures and opened the door for events. Some former leaders were wary of taking on the added responsibilities. Those who did lead posted rides found eager participants appreciative of the opportunity to ride with friends. A special mention goes out to Leo Pon, a strong bike leader undeterred by the bit of extra work. Leo was the first leader to post a ride in early July and led 14 rides.

Recurring weekday rides did not take place, with the exception of one Thursday evening ride led by Neal Fisher in August.

Ride Posting:

Mark Kiley, Mary Ann Gleba and Susan Grant continue to serve as bike rider coordinators.

Our club chapter extended its subscription to 'Ride with GPS'. This software offers members a shared database for rides, easy route download to cell phones and other electronic devices, plus audible cues for safer riding.

New Ride Leaders:

In September new bike leader Jennifer Golec led her first ride in Simsbury with trainer Mary Ann Gleba.

Bike Safety:

A second lot of 20 bike helmet mirrors were purchased at a discount. Mirrors are distributed to Ride Leaders to hand out on

AMC rides in an effort to raise awareness of the safety benefits of using a mirror while riding.

Susan Grant & Mary Ann Gleba, Co-Chairs



Conservation Committee

Like every other chapter committee, the Conservation Committee saw its activities come to a rapid stop due to the COVID-19 public health emergency the governor declared in March. Prior to that, the committee held a legislative preview session and was planning another group event that had to be canceled when the meeting space became unavailable due to the impending emergency declaration. Similarly, plans to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and the biggest ever Connecticut Trails Day had to be shelved.

Committee members actively supported the ultimately successful reauthorization and funding of the Land and Water Conservation Act. They responded to various "take action" calls from club staff in Boston and shared topics of interest on the Conservation Facebook group and the chapter Twitter account.

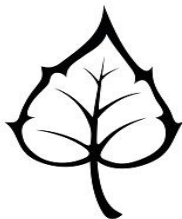
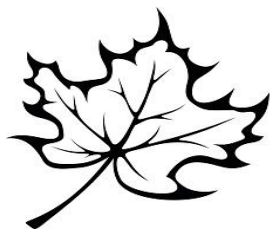
Janet Ainsworth has been doing a lot with Conservation staff in Boston, participating in a webinar with several staff members, and she recently agreed to chair the Club-wide Conservation Committee. Janet usually monitors legislation to share with staff, but the Connecticut General Assembly shut down when the emergency was declared. Fortunately, the Environmental Justice and Transfer Act bills were passed during a special session in the fall.

Russ Charest and Andrew May, Co-Chairs

Janet Ainsworth

Robert Andrews

Jamie Lee



East of the River Committee

This year the East of the River group started off with many hikes throughout the state. Some of the hikes that took place were Connecticut River Flood Plain Walk, E. Hartford/Glastonbury; Rock Springs, Scotland; Mattabesett Trail Mt. Higby, Middletown; Quinebaug River Trail, Danielson; Pond Mountain Natural Area & AT, Kent; Old Furnace State Park, Killingly; a Mystery Hike, New Hartford; Massacoe State Forest, Simsbury; Goodwin State Forest, Hampton; Burr Pond and Paugnut State Forest, Torrington; and Seven Falls, Middletown.

Our hike coordinators Barry Resnick, Bob Nickels, Jill Oneglia and Leigh Knuttel kept our hiking schedule full every week until we had to shut down March 12 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been difficult to get our EOR group up and running again since this shut down.

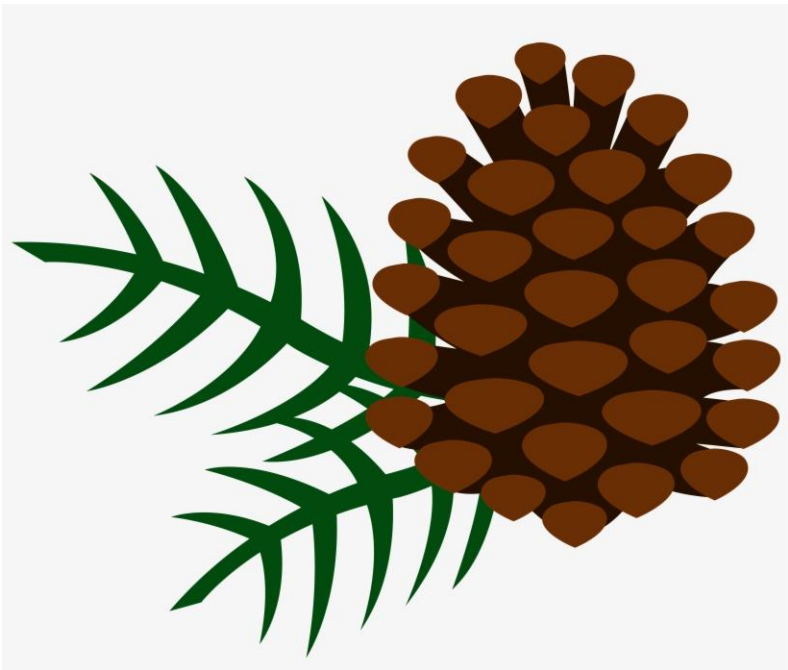
Ray Phillips, Chair



Education Committee

The COVID-19 public health emergency the governor declared on March 10, 2020 put a number of plans on hold this year. Multiple leadership and wilderness first aid training sessions were canceled. A Leave No Trace training session was on the books and it, too, had to be canceled. In April 2021, we are hopeful that we can hold our spring Wilderness First Aid and Leadership Training School weekend at the White Memorial Conservation Center in Litchfield, as we do every year. Meanwhile, both co-chairs were active with the club's Outdoor Leadership Development Committee, participating in regular meetings and virtual training programs.

Keith Spaar & Janet Ainsworth, Education Co-Chairs



Excursions Committee

The Excursions Committee is responsible for all AMC hiking, backpacking and skiing events offered by Connecticut leaders. This was definitely a challenging year for organized hiking with the global COVID-19 pandemic shutting down all AMC hiking between March 20 and June 22. Our posted hikes dropped from an average of almost 60 hikes per month during October to mid-March, to zero from mid-March to late June. They rose only to an average of about 12 hikes per month from late June to the end of September when Phase 2 hiking rules were implemented, which included online registration with groups of 10 or fewer, and wearing masks whenever 6-ft. spacing was compromised. The number of hike-related e-mails issued by the Excursions Committee also dropped considerably over that same time period from over 30 per month to less than 5 per month since late June.

In spite of that, in the twelve months to the end of September 2020, 65 Connecticut Chapter Hike Leaders posted 395 hikes along with several weekend and other multi-day trips. Weekend hikes this year numbered 173, and just 6 leaders offered over 70% of them. Weekend hikes were down by about 75% and mid-week hikes were down by about 80% from the pre-COVID-19 levels. Though hike postings were dramatically reduced, we are all fortunate to have so many AMC friends we have met over the years, so people were keeping up their healthy hiking in small trusted groups, even though the hikes were not posted to the AMC website.

This year, 37 of our leaders qualified for our chapter Volunteer Stewardship Award, which honors those who have led 5 or more events or contributed 30 or more volunteer hours. All of our leaders deserve much appreciation for their efforts!

Sponsoring groups, which include East of the River (for midweek hikes), the Thursday Western CT Hiking Group, Young Members, and Family Activities again made major contributions. The midweek Hike Leaders continued to offer at least 4 well-attended

hikes each week between October 2019 and March 2020, during which time the Western CT Thursday Hiking Group generally offered at least one hike each week, and our Family Activities group offered several hikes. Sponsoring groups make a major contribution to the success of our hiking program and Excursions values highly the work not only of the leaders who offer these events, but also the work done by the group coordinators: Dave Cronin, Barry Resnick, Bob Nickels, Jill Oneglia, and Leigh Knuttel. Jill moved out of state this summer and will be missed!

Several Hike Leaders led ski trips or backpack trips both within and beyond the state, and Adventure Travel trips. This year National Trails Day and Give-a-Day to the AT (run by the AT Committee), supported by our hike leaders, were canceled due to the pandemic. AT Day, which is usually the CT Chapter's largest outdoor event each year, was scheduled for October 17, but was also canceled due to the pandemic. Instead, the Excursions Committee offered "AT Day/Week – Keeping the Tradition Alive," and several Leaders led hikes on the Appalachian Trail on the weekend and during the week.

Once again, the Excursions Committee sponsored and planned AMC's 139th Fall Hiking Week (FHW), as well as supported and worked to provide leaders for August Camp. Unfortunately, both of those events had to be canceled this year due to the COVID-19 restrictions. We thank everyone who worked to organize those great events before they were eventually canceled. This year, FHW was planned to be based at the Town and Country Inn in Gorham, NH. The FHW Committee worked hard with the hope that the COVID-19 restrictions would be lifted in time to hold the event. Registration was delayed from early April until the official cancellation notice was sent out on July 2nd to all recent FHW attendees. August Camp had already been cancelled by that time for this year. The FHW Committee then turned their efforts to setting up FHW for next year. They selected the week of September 24th to October 1st for next year's FHW and will be returning to the Town and Country Inn. A formal contract has been agreed upon and is currently out for review/approval. Another sell out is predicted for next year's event.

Special thanks to Keith Spaar and the Education Committee, composed of mainly Hike Leaders, for organizing the annual Leadership Training weekend in Litchfield in November, critical to providing high quality training to candidate leaders.

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

The entire chapter was saddened at the passing of Communications Chair, Fairfield County Co-Chair, and former Excursions Chair David Roberts on September 14, 2020. David held the Excursions Chair position for 10 years until November 2014, and never stopped supporting our efforts. He continued to coordinate and email The Weekly, our chapter email for advertising hikes and all our chapter events, until 2 weeks before his death. His contributions to the entire chapter over the years were innumerable, and he will be greatly missed.

Peg Peterson and Phil Wilsey, Co-Chairs

Carol Hassett

Dave Cronin



Family Activities Committee

Not surprisingly, the COVID-19 public health emergency the governor declared on March 10, 2020 took its toll on the committee's activity plans. Due to the high risk status of household members, co-chair Janet Ainsworth has not led an activity since early March.

Co-Chair Corey Mott has held several outings and, prior to COVID-19, he has reached out to other organizations to explore holding joint events and is looking at extending our reach to cycling and paddling. A wall climbing outing was very popular. Corey also combined our Facebook group page with the Young Members Facebook group page, which increased the number of people that we are reaching. We have seen a decided increase in people seeking to join the group. In addition, over the course of this season we have increased the number of leaders to 8! We are hoping that once we emerge from pandemic-related restrictions that we will see a surge in the numbers of those families interested in what we have to offer and our new leaders offering new activities across the state and region!

Janet Ainsworth and Corey Mott, Co-Chairs



Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Committee

Due to the COVID-19 shut-down, we had only 5 events this season. Some of our most popular events require car shuttles, which are not allowed under COVID-19 restrictions. Also, some of our leaders were not comfortable interacting with even small groups, despite the guidelines that AMC provided.

On a brighter note, we are happy to welcome Bill Ruel as a leader to our committee. He has a lot of enthusiasm, energy and new ideas. He is also leading hikes for our chapter as well. Bill has led a hike/ paddle/ camping trip to the Moose River in Maine, and a flatwater trip on the Black Hall River in Old Lyme.

Tom Ebersold led an exploration of Tyler Pond in northwest Ct. Debbie Tedford and Barry Gorfain visited the Norwalk Islands for the first time in quite a few years, and visited overpopulated Selden Island on the Connecticut River.

We are looking forward to next year to see where we can paddle for a healthy, safe and enjoyable trip.

Barry Gorfain, Chair

Eric Barbour

Tom Ebersold

Corey Mott

Bill Ruel

Debbie Tedford



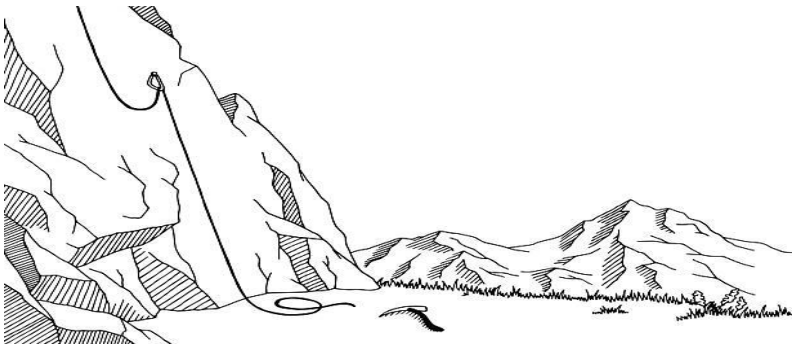
Mountaineering Committee

The mountaineering activities were brought to a halt in March due to the COVID-19 shut-down. All activities throughout the remainder of the year were decided by the leader base to stay inactive. However, we were still able to complete our winter training programs. We had 4 students attend our Beginner Ice climbing class taught by IME in North Conway, NH which included a second day for the students to practice their skills with our AMC members. Our next program was Intermediate Ice Climbing with two students taught by our own senior member ice leaders. The final event was our Winter Mountaineering course - a two day program where the students camp overnight and make a Mt. Washington summit bid the next morning. The summit bid on Mt. Washington is always subjected to weather conditions, but this year the weather was excellent and all three students made it to the top.

Last December we had our 2nd annual holiday party in Middletown, hosted by one of our members. In addition to handing out appreciation awards to some of our committee members, the evening included a potluck dinner, and raffle prizes. Approximately 30 people attended, which resulted in a great evening with friends and family.

Climbing/Mountaineering Committee:

John DeAngelis and Paul Hayes, Co-Chairs



Northwest Camp Committee



The NW Camp Committee had a disappointing and challenging year managing the cabin and its surrounding 125-acres high on the Taconic Plateau below the summit of Bear Mountain. The rustic but cozy cabin is constructed of native American chestnut logs, tucked away under the beautiful old-growth Eastern hemlock forest canopy located in a remote and environmentally diverse northwest corner of Connecticut. Sadly, this amazing cabin remained vacant during most of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Monday, March 16, 2020 at 1:16 PM the NW Camp Committee was notified that the AMC Leadership Team implemented a closure of all Volunteer Camp and Cabin (VCC) lodging. Forty-eight hours later the NW Camp Caretaker, Don Klein, former Chair John Hicks and former Co-Chair Tom McGrath sprang into action and arrived at the cabin where they secured it, locked it, and posted “Temporarily Closed” signs at the cabin and various entry points. Many executive board and regular meetings

immediately followed with a goal of reopening, but too many critical health related questions remained unanswered. As of October 2020, Northwest Camp unfortunately remains “Temporarily Closed”.

Since March, volunteer Cabin Monitors have inspected the cabin and surrounding property almost on a weekly basis, sometimes twice a week. Thankfully, even with the onslaught of crowds in April and May flocking to the outdoors in the immediate area, the cabin stayed secure and clean. In early August, tropical storm Isaias and following windstorms impacted some of the old-growth Eastern hemlock forest surrounding the cabin. Once again, Committee members arrived at the cabin property on a weekly basis under the direction of Cabin Caretaker and Certified sawyer, Don Klein cleaning woody debris away from the cabin.

The Committee volunteers managing this self-service facility will continue to balance the needs of its guests with a safe and environmentally responsible self-service camping experience. Going forward, the hope remains alive that this well-managed cabin sitting on a sensitive piece of property will open for guests sometime soon. Through the VCC committee’s collaborative, information sharing process the NW Camp committee will continue to share and work to sustain its long-term myriad of benefits for future generations to enjoy.

2020 Committee Roster with Volunteers

*Rod Parlee, Chair **

*Art Mauger, Secretary **

*Craig Kennedy, Registrar **

*Donald Klein, Caretaker **

*Paul Thoma, Treasurer **

*Tom McGrath, Outgoing Co-Chair **

*Al Puches, Chapter Treasurer **

*John Hicks, Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar **

Carol Langley, Cabin Monitor

Joe Parenteau, Cabin Monitor

Joel Hoffman, Cabin Monitor

Roy Hoffman, Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar

John Rek, Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar

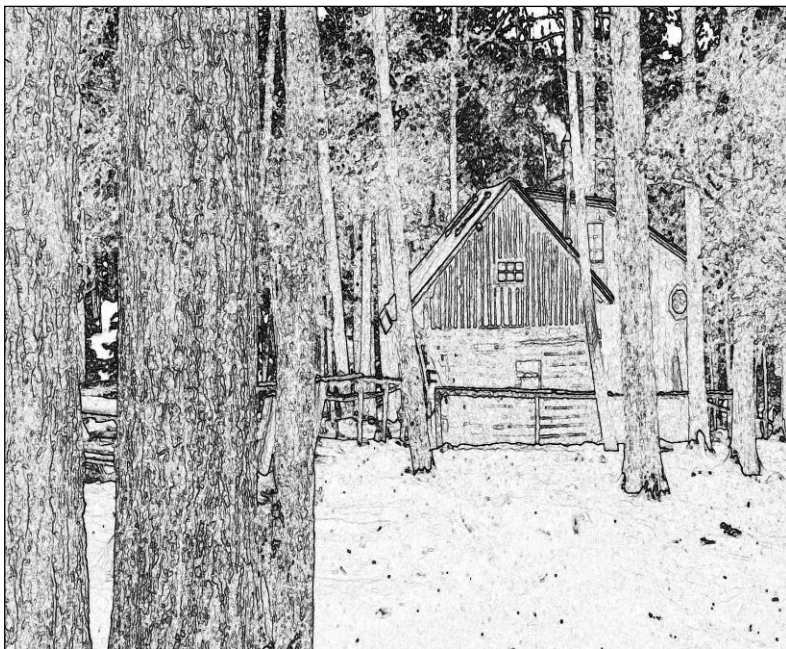
Trent Link, Past Chair/Caretaker/Registrar

Ethan Rain

Eric Harvey

Tom O'Connor

* Denotes Stewardship Award with more than 30 volunteer hours. Thank you!

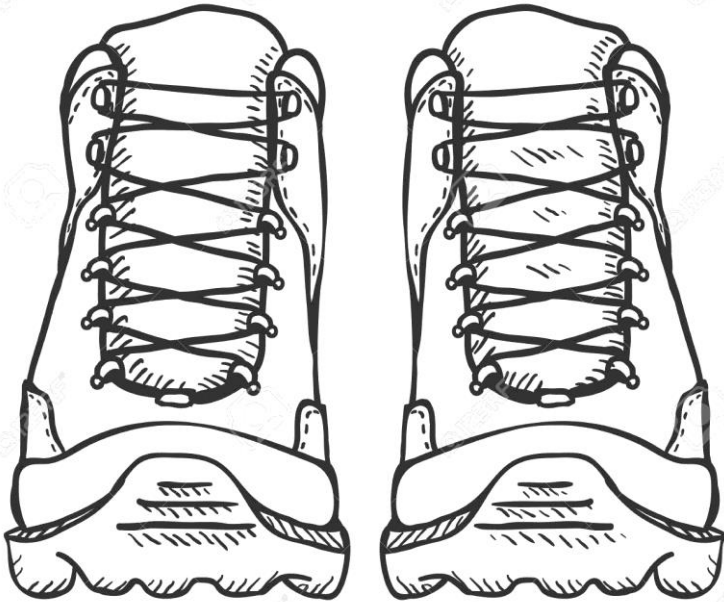


Program Committee

In the interest of the health and safety of our valued AMC members, Programs for 2020 were shut-down beginning in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We hope to be able to bring back the chapter's annual spring Roast Beef Dinner, Soup and Stories, and fall Gathering events next year.

Michelle Baughman, Chair



Young Members Committee

This year, the Young Members (a.k.a. the 20's & 30's Group), welcomed some new leaders! We finished this year with 6 leaders thanks in part to an inter-chapter agreement with the Narragansett Chapter. We had a little more variety this year with a kayak trip and a Virtual Happy Hour! We continued the New England Trail Hiking Series up to the Massachusetts border from Long Island Sound. We then started the section that heads east over to the Connecticut River when the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Once the pandemic hit, planning activities became more challenging. Now that the chapter has a separate Zoom account, we are looking forward to having more regular virtual Happy Hours! Once restrictions are lifted from the pandemic, we are looking forward to continuing the New England Trail Series and starting an Appalachian Trail Series! We also combined our Facebook Group with the Family Activities to help support the growth of both groups! Check out our new group - CT AMC - Family and Young Members Group!

Corey Mott and Alison Terjek, Co-Chairs



No Reports Submitted This Year

Fairfield County Group
Membership Committee
Newsletter

Annual Chapter Awards

Janet Ainsworth, Dave Boone, Peg Peterson - Awards Committee

2020 APPIE OF THE YEAR – Barry Resnick

This award is presented to chapter members who have made a significant contribution to the chapter.

This year's Appie of the Year has been working with the East of the River group for over 20 years, and did his stint as Vice Chair and Chair of EOR. But more importantly, he has been one of the monthly hike coordinators since 2002, taking just a short time off for a cardiac arrest five years ago, then right back in the game.

Most people don't realize that the 4 monthly coordinators for Tuesday and Thursday hikes take responsibility for finding leaders for 4 hikes per week/52 weeks per year for the most part. That is a huge chunk of our monthly activities, since hiking is the most popular activity in our chapter. He not only continues as a monthly coordinator, but also took on the responsibility for finding other monthly coordinators. He also managed the hiking phone list; for years he read the hike list into the answering system every week for hikers who did not have internet access. This service was dropped only recently.

He was an extremely active hike leader for many years, generally leading 2 or 3 hikes every month of the year from 2002-2016. He was famous for his very popular urban hiking tours, including day trips to Boston and the NYC Wicky Wacky trips. From 2006-2015, he also organized and led the hike for the annual December cookie swap. Many people give some portion of their time to the AMC, but he has given decades of almost non-stop service and dedication to the AMC. Congratulations and much appreciation to Barry Resnick, our 2020 Appie of the Year.

Appie of the Year - *Barry Resnick*



Lifetime Service - *Dale Geslien*



2020 LIFETIME SERVICE – Dale Geslien

This award is presented to a chapter member who has made a significant lifetime contribution to the chapter. Recipients have 10+ years of significant service to the chapter.

Since the mid-90's, you'll see Dale Geslien's name in chapter Annual Reports year after year in a variety of leadership roles. Beginning when former Chapter Chair Dave Cullen first recruited her to the Membership Committee to contact new members, her name appears as a committee volunteer or as a chapter committee leader in most years, until she ascended to the position of Regional Director from 2007-2012. During the years prior, she served in Membership, then as Program Committee Chair from 1999-2001, Chapter Vice Chair in 2002 and, following her tenure as Chapter Chair from 2003-2005, she took on leadership of the Education Committee from 2006-2010. She is a founder of the Fairfield County Group program in Bethel. A consequential decision that she made as Chair was to agree to sponsor the Fall Hiking Week program, after the club decided that it needed to be reorganized.

Education has also been a constant for Dale. As Chapter Chair, she focused on chapter leadership and held retreats designed to ensure the success of the chapter's Education program. She also sought training opportunities and educational roles outside of the chapter. She became a Leave No Trace Master Educator, was an instructor for the club's Mountain Leadership School in New Hampshire and served on the club wide Outdoor Leadership Development Committee, the committee that develops the requirements and guidelines for club volunteers. In 2005, these achievements led to her receipt of the club's Distinguished Service Award. Dale has been the administrator of the chapter Facebook account for many years and continues to lead chapter hikes and Adventure Travel trips to exotic locales around the world. She walks boundaries and patrols trails for the AT Committee. She also continues to teach activity leader prospects for the Education Committee. After cycling out of the Regional Director position, Dale was appointed to the club's Board of Advisors, joining many other former Board of Directors members.

She continues to serve on the board to this day. Congratulations Dale, our 2020 Lifetime Service Award winner! Your work over the years is much appreciated!



Nominations for the 2021 Executive Committee

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

Chapter Chair	<i>Jocelyn Eppich</i>
Chapter Vice Chair	<i>open</i>
Secretary	<i>Martha Cain</i>
Treasurer	<i>Al Puches</i>
Appalachian Trail Chair	<i>Dave Boone</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>Susan Grant</i>
Bicycling Co-Chair	<i>open</i>
Communications	<i>open</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>Andrew May</i>
Conservation Co-Chair	<i>open</i>
East of the River Chair	<i>Ray Phillips</i>
Education Co-Chair	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Education Co-Chair	<i>Janet Ainsworth</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Peg Peterson</i>
Excursions Co-Chair	<i>Phil Wilsey</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>Tom Carruthers</i>
Fairfield County Group Co-Chair	<i>open</i>
Family Activities Co-Chair	<i>Corey Mott</i>
Family Activities Co-Chair	<i>Janet Ainsworth</i>
Flatwater/Coastal Paddling Chair	<i>Barry Gorfain</i>
Member at Large	<i>open</i>
Member at Large	<i>open</i>
Membership Co-Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>
Membership Co-Chair	<i>Barbara Beckerman</i>
Mountaineering Co-Chair	<i>John DeAngelis</i>
Mountaineering Co-Chair	<i>Chris Granata</i>
Newsletter Editor	<i>Darcy Witham</i>
Northwest Camp (*)	<i>Rod Parlee</i>
Program Chair	<i>Michelle Baughman</i>
Webmaster/Technology	<i>Keith Spaar</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Mark Schappert</i>
Whitewater Co-Chair	<i>Dennis Wigg</i>
Young Members Co-Chair	<i>Corey Mott</i>
Young Members Co-Chair	<i>Alison Terjek</i>

(*) by AMC Appointment

50 Year Members

Congratulations and best wishes to the following Connecticut Chapter members who we honor for their remarkable 50 years of membership in the Appalachian Mountain Club!

Daryll Borst of Bethany, Connecticut

Thomas Dean of Farmington, Connecticut

Joyce and Dirk Hansen of Woodstock Valley, Connecticut

Peter Hill of New Milford, Connecticut

Jean and John Gallup of Salisbury, Connecticut

Peter Zasada of Bethlehem, Connecticut

