

Appalachian Mountain Club
Berkshire Chapter

2011

ANNUAL REPORT



Report of the Chapter Chair

2011 was a growth year for the Chapter with the formation of a new core Executive Committee team, following the retirement of several key long-time Executive Committee heavy contributors in the positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Training Chair. This new core along with an equal mix of experienced Executive Committee members made for a solid start on new energy for the Berkshire Chapter.

The individual committee reports attached herein show the breadth and depth of opportunities in the Berkshire Chapter. It is my hope that this will motivate you to consider participation in a new area of interest and even join us on the Executive Committee to help continue the work of getting people outdoors. Of particular note should be that the Berkshire Chapter now has its own Chapter Youth Program (CYP). Jim Pelletier, our Appalachian Trail Committee Chair, spurred the initial efforts to get this started due to the strong interest of youth organizations to perform service projects on the AT. Leading youth requires specific additional youth leadership training and an established CYP program. To date, I, Jim and several other Berkshire Chapter personnel have undergone this training and certification, and a number of Youth activities did occur. It should also be noted that the Berkshire and Worcester Chapters continue to share leadership training programs which is beneficial to both organizations by sharing the costs and enabling a deeper sharing of ideas from diverse leaders. We also co-lead a number of CYP trips in 2011.

Our goals for 2012 include expanding our CYP program to serve youth organization in a wider area beyond the AT region which is currently its focus. To date, we already have scheduled youth activities at our Noble View facility and in the Greenfield School System this coming Spring and Summer. Additionally, we hope to attract more volunteers to help us in both adult and youth outdoors activities and on our Executive Committee. Please consider donating some hours of leadership and give us a call to join in. You're always welcome and we truly need your input to keep the Berkshire Chapter strong and robust.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dave Sauriol
Berkshire Chapter Chair, 2010 -

Appalachian Trail Committee

The AT Committee had another active and productive year with approximately 100 volunteers participating in one capacity or another over the course of the year. Indeed, some volunteers serve in multiple roles. Volunteer hours are still being collected so current year data is not yet available. That said, there were over 6,000 volunteer hours in 2009 and similar or greater hours are anticipated in the tally of 2010 hours. Below is some information on the major areas of our activities.

Trail Maintenance: A full roster of volunteers was maintained throughout the year with little interruption. Some trail sections required extensive brushing due to lush growth from more than usual sunlight reaching the forest floor. This is the second year with these conditions caused by the ice storm of 2 years ago. AMC teen crews continued to make significant contributions to our efforts in several important areas, such as Jug End and Mt. Greylock.

Trail Land Monitoring: Roughly 20% of the boundaries were maintained consistent with our 5-year maintenance program. An inventory of missing monuments has been created for the National Park Service's use and long range planning. Special Use Permits were reviewed and renewed on schedule. One permit was cancelled when the farmer lost access to the NPS property. Work continued with the Park Service Ranger on incursions in the Dalton/Hinsdale area.

Trail Facilities: The Glen Brook and Wilbur Clearing shelters were rehabilitated. The Shelter Adopters program was reinvigorated and all overnight sites now have active oversight and a coordinator. A kiosk upgrade project is well underway and should be completed before the end of 2010.

Open Areas and Vistas: The active management of open areas and vistas continued to expand, with open areas at Hubbard Brook and Goose Pond Rd. joining the list of areas being actively managed.

Upper Goose Pond: The cabin was opened in mid May and closed in mid October with caretakers assigned throughout the period, this being the second year with fulltime coverage after Labor Day. It was another active year at the cabin with heavy use by hikers. In April, the Committee took over responsibility for the George Cabin (so called). In accordance with NPS wishes, the privy and cabin were demolished. The boathouse has been repaired and secured as a tool and equipment shed. The metal bed frames, mattresses, and miscellaneous household goods left behind have been removed (a very significant undertaking!). Significant additional work remains to restore this area to a natural state.

Our volunteer efforts continue to be supported by the ATC with Adam Brown from the Kellogg Conservation Center (KCC), by the AMC with Regional Trails Coordinator Matt Moore, also at the KCC, and by the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation with their project and Ridge Runner support lead by Becky Barnes.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Pelletier
Massachusetts AT Management Committee Chair

Berkshire Exchange Committee

The *Berkshire Exchange* continues to be published three times per year. Release dates are approximately late February for spring, early July for summer, and late September for fall/winter.

In 2011 the Berkshire Exchange Committee closed within or close to budget (final figures were not available at the time of this report). The purchase of software upgrades was necessary in 2011. There are more subscribers to the e-newsletter than there were in the previous year, mainly because Joy St. changed the default preference for all new members.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jon Hanauer
Berkshire Exchange Publisher

Canoe & Kayak Committee

Our committee continues to offer trips in four categories:

- Quiet water paddling including canoes and kayaks
- Whitewater paddling for kayaks and canoes
- Sea Kayaking
- Whitewater Rafting

We faced a number of challenges this year. Our Quiet Water program was hit with major confusion due to the loss of the coordinator Rudy Julian who had to move suddenly. Trips continued but the regular email reminders were limited and the email list was lost. We are fortunate that Sabine Prather has stepped in to take the coordinating role for the next season. She is rebuilding the email list and supporting some new Quiet Water leaders. Links to join the new Quiet water listserv are now available on the Berkshire Chapter website, and an invitation to join the listserv and sign up for trips will be posted in the next newsletter.

The whitewater program continues to offer class 2, 3, and 4 trips for kayaks and a few open canoes. The number of trips offered each year is steadily dropping due to a decrease in the number of trips our leaders are willing to offer. WE continue to advertise regularly through a large Whitewater email list.

Our rafting program offers excellent trips for folks with limited paddling experience. The cost is very reasonable compared to usual commercial rates. We are thankful for Al Howcroft's continued effort as the coordinator of our rafting program.

We have a fleet of rental boats stored at Andrew's Greenhouse in South Amherst. The inventory of the boats is included in the *Ferry Tales newsletter each year*. Our committee is thankful that Andrew Cowles continues providing the space for the storage of our 16 rental boats. The number of rentals suddenly dropped by about 50% this past year. WE find this rather puzzling as our rental rates are very reasonable.

Our committee cooperates with the larger AMC paddling community through the Inter-chapter paddling committee. Connie Peterson is an active participant representing us on that committee.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charlie Camp, Connie Peterson, and Sabine Prather
BK Paddling Committee

Conservation Committee

This year has been slow starting, having taken over the Chair position mid-year. I have represented the Berkshire Conservation Committee at the Annual Meeting and Fall Gathering, and planned and posted a Green Activity on the Outdoors Conservation website for Green June - a hike and tour of a local organic farm. So far there are only two longtime members, but I had interest after the Berkshire Bash and plan either a face-to-face or virtual meeting in January. Possible activities next year are: working with Environmental Insurance Agency on a bike familiarization tour on the Southwick/Westfield Rail Trail, river cleanup, and local potlucks with speakers, which has been done successfully in the past.

Respectfully submitted,
Sabine Prather

Mountaineering Committee

We had another great year rock climbing. This past winter we did local moonlight skiing, ice climbing trips and hiking trips in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Our spring and summer Wednesday evening sessions at Chapel Ledges in Ashfield, Sunbowl in Sunderland, and Farley Ledge in Erving gave many a chance to further develop their skills. We had weekend trips to the "Gunks" on the Mohonk Preserve in New York State, "Dacks" in Adirondack State Park in New York, and to Rumney, Whitehorse, and Cathedral in the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire. Day trips took us to climbing areas in Connecticut and New Hampshire and many closer to home in the western Massachusetts area. We hosted Women's Climbing trips (open to everyone, but targeted towards women) that were well-attended. In the summer there was a post-climbing barbecue hosted by one of our members. In the colder months we continued climbing on Wednesday evenings at the Central Rock Gym in Northampton. We celebrated the holidays with a Mountaineering potluck party in December.

Training for our trip leaders were ongoing highlighted by an advanced skills training with Ryan Stefiuk through Alpine Endeavors. People exchanged experiences and ideas on technique and safety. Our training offerings included weekend-long courses to AMC members and general public in Introduction to Rock Climbing, and Intermediate Rock Climbing, and a Gym to Rock course.

As a group, the Mountaineering Committee teamed up with the Trustees of Reservations for the annual spring work day at Chapel Ledges. Erosion control was the goal of this year's efforts and we spread a truckload of wood chips on the access trails. We worked with the Western Mass. Climbers Coalition at their annual Rendezvous fundraiser in October.

We wish to thank all of the trip leaders, Committee Officers, trainers and helpers, and others who generously volunteered their time and effort in making this year's season such a great success.

Respectfully submitted by:
Sarah Long and Bill Fogel, Mountaineering Co-Chairs

Outings Committee

There has been some decline in the number of activities submitted, but Outings leaders continued to lead activities on a regular basis, including hiking, overnights in the White Mountains, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and biking.

A Leader Appreciation Barbecue for active leaders was held in September at Noble View Outdoor Center, and about 20 Outings Committee leaders attended. This event went well.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jon Hanauer
Outings Committee Chair

Public Relations Committee

This year I converted the Berkshire Chapter Facebook group to a page, which allows page members to post events and do last-minute trips online. This has been useful to those members using social networking. I worked extensively with Laura Hurley, Public Relations Associate Director, on a press release for the progress of the New England Trail. I also posted a press release for Appalachian Trail Day, and led one of the section hikes. I posted several smaller events, such as the Berkshire Annual Meeting, on the event pages of local papers like the Valley Advocate, and on Facebook.

Respectfully submitted,
Sabine Prather

Trails Committee – ACHEVEMENTS FOR 2011 ON THE NEW ENGLAND NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

Land protection – we supported the purchase of 290 acres of land off Rt. 9 near Holland Glen on the Belchertown line. This open space was supported by the State and the town of Belchertown with CPA money and donations by us and many others and the support of the kestrel trust.

Camping and shelters along the trail- In September work was started on a shelter and camping area about 1/2 way between the Wendell SF and the Mt. Grace shelters. The shelter is not open for use as yet, but we hope to finish and dedicate it by the spring.

Trail conditions – A small relocation to make the trail safer on Section 2 was done with the help of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club who maintains Sect. 1 & 2. They also provide help mowing the parking at the start of the trail at Rising Corners about every month in the summer. We dedicated a new kiosk at this location this year on National Trails days.

South of the Conn. river the maintainers have been working to clear damage from several storms and for the most part the trail is passable. Any trail reports about damage are appreciated or better yet bring a small saw on your hikes to trim downed trees.

AMC Berkshire chapter at the annual meeting this year gave me the Appie of the years award for outstanding sustained commitment in service and leadership the Berkshire Chapter.

While those of you who know me have heard me say that I do the work that I do because I enjoy it not for recognition I accepted the award. Over the years I have maintained that many more in the chapter deserve this award more than me and my successes have been because of the efforts and dedication of others in my committee.

Patrick Fletcher

Trails Committee Chair

Trails Committee – Berkshire Trails Report

In reflecting on the completion of a remarkable second year of trail activities, the signs of tangible progress, like the NET's blue and white painted blazes, are easy to find; restored trail on Mt. Tom, a beautiful trailside cabin in Northfield, and new conservation partners helping to preserve the trail. Year two in the NET calendar shows many reasons to celebrate and many volunteers to thank. What is less visible, but more important, is the growing network of people who care deeply about the NET and special places connected by it.

Last spring, 40 volunteers donated over 645 hours to rehabilitate 1 mile of severely eroded trail on Mt. Tom State Reservation, work which included restoration of historic stairs built originally by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s. This much-needed restoration project was ably coordinated by the Trailwrights in collaboration with DCR. In Connecticut, CFPA trail volunteers received specialized training in low-impact trail construction, including highline rigging techniques. During the fall, Barbara and Sam Richardson, with help from 16 AMC Berkshire Chapter volunteers, constructed a new enclosed cabin for NET hikers. This beautiful cabin, sited in Northfield, Massachusetts and protected by a conservation easement generously donated by the Richardsons, affords sweeping mountaintop views in all directions, including perhaps the best view of Mt. Monadnock from the NET.

Joshua M. Surette
New England National Scenic Trail Planner
Appalachian Mountain Club

Trails Committee – Northfield Cabin Update

A cabin on our land in Northfield is in the final stages of completion. It sits on Stratton Mountain at the top of Alexander Hill Road and features a spectacular view to the east. It is located on the New England Trail, a newly-designated National Scenic Trail (like the Appalachian Trail), and was funded by the Appalachian Mountain Club and the National Park Service. Built by a crew from Berkshire Chapter of the AMC and local volunteers, the cabin will serve as a shelter with bunks and a loft for hikers as well as provide a place for field workshops and retreats.

Availability will be through reservation and registration. There are no utilities -

including heat, water, or electricity. Guests will need to provide their own bedding and backpacker cook stoves.

There are still a few things to be done before the cabin is finished:

- 1) lay the shiplap pine floor on the plywood deck and stain it.
- 2) stain the ceiling and the walls,
- 3) build benches/bunks with storage underneath around the interior perimeter, and
- 4) build and install shutters against inclement weather.

I have kept a journal, taken photos and video, with an eye toward producing a film. In the meantime, if you'd like to see the photos and/ or read the journal, you can copy the link below and paste it into your internet browser.

Photos of cabin:

- > <http://www.dropbox.com/gallery/46277698/1/Cabin%20Pix?h=e832fc>
- >
- > Journal Day #00-10:
- > <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/46277698/Cabin%20Journal%20%20-%20%20DAY%20%2301%20-%2010.pdf>
- >
- > Journal Day #11-20
- > <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/46277698/Cabin%20Journal%20%20-%20%20DAY%20%2311%20-%2020.pdf>
- >
- > Journal Day #21-30
- > <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/46277698/Cabin%20Journal%20%20-%20%20DAY%20%2321%20-%2030.pdf>
- >
- > Journal Day#31-40
- > <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/46277698/Cabin%20Journal%20%20-%20%20DAY%20%2331%20-%2040.pdf>
- >>
- >> Sam Richardson

Training & Education Committee

In May of 2011, I took over as Training and Education Committee Chair from Christine Fogarty after her 5yr plus time at the helm. I found out quickly that I had some big shoes to fill, and hit the ground running with the help of Christine and the Executive Committee. This past year the Training and Education Committee put on the Introduction the Backpacking Series which had 13 participants attend the course, and we were able to complete a successful backpacking trip the Mt. Grace. The Outings Chair, Jon Hanauer and I put on a Leadership Appreciation Day for our existing leaders; it made for a great day with a good turn out.

As for this coming year, so much is in the works. I can always use a hand from our leaders. This year we are kicking off the 2012 with our Introduction to Backpacking Seminar, March 3-4th at the YMCA Harrington Outdoor Center, Boylston, MA. Following the seminar we will be leading trip at least once a month for the rest of the hiking season, progressively getting more strenuous, due to increase in length, or elevation gains. Anyone interested in attending or helping out please email me.

Well I hope everyone had a great holiday season, and is enjoying your outdoors as much as I am. Hears to a great 2012.

Eric Gove
Training and Education Committee Chair
Berkshire Chapter

Young Members Committee

This year the young members committee led about a dozen hikes or activities. We also picked up three new hike leaders Carol Arcand, Glenn Ewing and Eric Gove. We are in the process of getting these leaders to lead new hikes or events. Our Co Chair Wendy Barbour stepped down leaving Paxton Berardy as the Chair. Attendance at hike this year was down noticeably and fewer hike leaders were able to lead hikes. Events in the new Year that are planned already include some snow shoeing when weather permits and the annual Teluride Mountain film festival social at Amherst college.

Paxton Berardy
Young Members Committee Chair

Past Chairs of the Berkshire Chapter

1929-30	Edward K Allen	1967-68	Charles L Kirkpatrick
1931	Joseph F Partenheimer	1969-70	Norman E Aubrey
1932	Edwin W Gantt	1971-72	Forrest E House
1933	Donald E Temple	1973-74	Margaret Rose
1934	Howard M Buffinton	1975-76	William T Cushwa
1935	Malcolm B Ross	1977-78	Walter L Haynes
1936	Donald McClench	1979-80	John D Shuttleworth
1936-37	John Dickson	1981-82	Kathryn E Burnett
1938	Horace E Allen	1983-84	S Alberta Stutsman
1939	William K Buxton	1985	John Pritchard
1940	Eugene E Durst	1986	Florence Mertz
1941	Maynard O Saunders	1986-87	Edward N Lewis
1942-43	Parke W Farrar	1988-89	Paul Evans
1944-45	Warner B Sturtevant	1990-91	Sue Lewis
1946-47	Carl O Chauncy	1992	Jean Armitage
1948-49	Harold T Daugherty	1993	William Kopel
1950	Heinz J Sherbow	1994-95	Thomas J Leary
1951-52	Ellis H Pritchard	1996-97	Christopher J Ryan
1953-54	Byron Chauncy	1998-99	Kathryn B Leary
1955-56	George W Alderman	2000-01	Thomas Senuta
1957-58	John A Saunders	2002-04	Gary L Forish
1959-60	Sidney F Law	2005-06	Rob Robertson
1961-62	Phyllis M Sears	2007-08	Jon M Hanauer
1963-64	Edith M Libby	2009-10	Deb Levine
1965-66	Garrison Householder		