



Appalachian Mountain Club

Berkshire Chapter

SEVENTY FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

November 6, 2004



Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee

• 2005 •

Chair: Rob Robertson

Vice Chair: *vacant*

Treasurer: Kelly Druzisky

Secretary: Mary Norton

Appalachian Trail Committee Chair: Cosmo Catalano

Berkshire County Representative: *vacant*

Berkshire Exchange Committee

Editor/Publisher: Jon Hanauer

Editor: Maureen Flanagan

Conservation Committee Chair: Cinda H. Jones

Leadership & Education Committee Chair:

Cathy Wickens

Membership Committee Chair: Tom Osley

Mountaineering Committee Chairs:

Jim VanNatta and Alice Hodgdon

Noble View Committee Chair: Gary Forish

Nominating Committee Chair: Gary Forish

Outings Committee Chairs:

Dave Koerber and Bob Napolitano

Paddling Committee Chair: Connie Peterson

Programs & Special Events Committee Chair: *vacant*

Trails Committee Chair: Pat Fletcher

Website Committee Chair: Ian Beatty

Young Members Committee Chair: Kelly Druzisky

Report of the Chapter Chair

The Chapter's year has finished successfully with a dedicated member stepping up to the challenge of Chairperson. Many other successes have been realized as well with the help of our many volunteers. The goal for this past year was to recognize Chapter volunteers and to offer low-cost and no-cost education courses to our volunteers and the Chapter membership. At the Spring Gathering, the Chapter received additional funding for volunteers and educational opportunities. This funding to date has served over 87 Chapter members through educational programs, a volunteer luncheon, and reduced Annual Banquet volunteer costs.

Our financial picture shows that the Chapter has over-budgeted over the past few years. This year, through Supplemental Dues Allocations (SDA) grants and other funding, the Chapter once again has a balanced budget. The challenge for the coming years will be to continue to fund the AT Committee and volunteers. I expect that the Chapter will be able to meet this challenge and fill any funding shortfalls. One concern, though, is that the Chapter membership has not grown in the past few years while costs continue to escalate. It has therefore become critical that we focus on membership growth. By increasing our membership, we can build the Chapter and meet funding requirements. And, importantly, the number of volunteers will also grow.

The Berkshire Chapter's committee chairs are a vibrant part of this Chapter and without them my job would have been very difficult. Each has contributed expertise to the management and mission of the Chapter as well as the Club. I thank each one of them for the wonderful years that they have contributed to my term. I have enjoyed working alongside of these dedicated men and women. Now I leave the Chapter in the dedicated hands of a new Chair, Rob Robertson, who I know will be able to fill the Chapter's needs and guide us all into the future. I will be assuming a new roll as Noble View Chairperson with the same dedication that I have brought to the Chapter as Chair. I welcome all of the Chapter's members in the continuing support of the Chapter and Noble View.

In the past year the Chapter has realized some shortfalls within the Committee structure. The Trails Committee especially

requires volunteers for trail maintenance. Become a trail adopter for a few miles and give back to the recreational pursuits that we all enjoy.

Also of note, the Outings Committee will revise the format for activity and trip listings. In the past, these listings were gathered and organized by monthly coordinators, many of whom have recently retired. The new format will improve on this system which has become too complex and reliant on middle volunteers to pass on information. Another focus for further development is on the recruitment of new leaders and on the skill training that is required for today's recreational pursuits.

Yet another critical area is the outdated Nominating Committee that will require changes to meet the demands for new volunteers. My thinking at this time is to propose a reformatting of the committee as a volunteer development component of the Chapter. This restructuring would focus on volunteer recruitment as well as volunteer appreciation.

As my term ends I thank the entire Chapter for the confidence that you have had in me. I have met many members, made many new friends, and enjoyed recreational pursuits with many of you. Most important to me has been the enjoyment I have received in giving to you and supporting our mission of open spaces, outdoor recreation, education, and conservation. Now I leave you in the competent hands of my successors.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Forish
Chapter Chair

Appalachian Trail Committee

Volunteers working with your Appalachian Trail Committee contributed 4058 hours to the management and maintenance of the AT since this time last year. This season we carried in and installed over 1000 feet of boardwalk and bog bridging and relocated approximately 1500 feet of trail because of increased beaver activity. Roofing materials were carried up to the Tom Leonard Shelter and the 20-year-old roof replaced. Skylight panels were also installed—the first in a Mass. AT shelter—to see if they can survive the rigors of the backcountry. These and other trail projects were completed in addition to regular maintenance of the footpath and boundary monitoring. All in all, about 75 people are involved at all levels of participation. We would like you to be involved too. Once a year is all it takes. Please join us.

Respectfully submitted,

Cosmo Catalano

Appalachian Trail Committee Chair

Berkshire Exchange Committee

This year a few minor changes were made in the newsletter format to make it more appealing to non-members and use as a tool for recruiting new members. The last two issues included a Membership in a Bottle form on the back page, and extra newsletters are being left in some area public libraries and other locations.

Another part of adding more appeal to the newsletter is that we've been encouraging trip leaders to submit a few highlights of upcoming trip listings, although there isn't enough space to list *all* activities (which can be found on the website and in *AMC Outdoors*). A few leaders have also been sending in trip reports of outings they've recently led, and occasionally leaders or participants send in photos.

Also being looked into are ways to improve the quality and turnaround time of the newsletter printing. We may be able to do this at a cost that is the same as or even lower than what we're currently paying. Where the newsletter gets printed will probably change with the upcoming Winter or Spring issue.

Back issues of the Exchange are available for downloading

in Acrobat format on the Chapter website.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Hanauer and Maureen Flanagan
Berkshire Exchange Committee

Leadership and Education Committee

The Berkshire AMC offered four courses during 2004: *Leadership Training*, *SOLO Wilderness First Aid*, *SOLO Wilderness First Responder*, and *Search & Rescue Training*. *Leadership Training* and *Wilderness First Aid* were held in the spring and *Wilderness First Aid* was held again in the fall. A total of 48 members and non-members participated. The *First Responder* and *Search & Rescue* courses were cancelled due to low enrollment.

Participant feedback about the courses held was extremely positive. Comments included: 'Upbeat and engaging,' 'Full of information targeted towards practical backcountry treatment,' 'Lots of info, fun, hands-on experience,' and 'Went beyond my expectations!'

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Wickens
Education Committee Chair

Membership Committee

From September 2003 to October 2004 the Berkshire Chapter of the AMC enlisted 800 new members. During most months the number of new members averaged between 60 and 70. Total Chapter membership—both individuals and families—currently stands at 3103 people.

Many of these new members have requested information regarding Chapter activities. Over the past year we have provided information on day hikes, canoe trips, trail maintenance, and Noble View.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Bozzuto
Membership Committee Chair

Mountaineering Committee

We had a great rock climbing season with our trips to the “Gunks,” Rumney, New Hampshire; the White Mountains; and Adirondacks—all well attended. Our spring and summer Wednesday evening sessions at Chapel Ledges in Ashfield and Rose Ledge in Northfield gave many a chance to further develop their skills whether they were basic techniques or expert moves. The proficiency of the active core group has increased to a level such that lead climbers are often in the majority on many trips.

Training and learning experiences are ongoing as people exchange experiences and ideas on technique and safety. We have offered weekend-long courses in Beginners Rock Climbing and Intermediate Rock Climbing. These were well attended and of great benefit to all. The turnout of volunteers to help at the classes was overwhelming. A hearty “thank you” goes to them.

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. We wish to thank all of the trip leaders and co-leaders, Committee officers and others who volunteered their time and effort in making this season such a great success.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Van Natta

Mountaineering Committee

Noble View Committee

In 2004, Noble View succeeded in winning approval of the Board of Directors’ Facilities Committee to go forward with our Long Range Plan that outlines the future of the facility. The reconstruction of the Double Cottage has now been underway for 16 months, following several setbacks from concealed rot and damage. Starting in April 2004, volunteers have worked every weekend on the buildings. The Double Cottage exterior is completed with new windows, doors, roof, and newly painted trim. Completion of the interior is awaiting final resolution of the fire sprinkler issue. The summer of 2005 should see the long awaited reopening of the Double Cottage—a crucial step in Noble View’s recovery.

Construction has been moving forward in many different areas. The fire buffer cutting of the forest has been completed, with the cutting required for the road widening underway. In the spring, electricity will be installed and the road surface widened for two-lane access for emergency vehicles.

Noble View's water well was re-drilled to 450 feet and extensive water chemistry was completed to comply with Massachusetts State Laws for a public water supply. This spring, Noble View was issued a license as a public water supply operator.

Trails were not forgotten either. A work crew from the Student Conservation Corp donated two weeks of work on the border trail. A bridge was installed and a dry trail installed over a wet area. Ted Weber conducted a Trails Workshop this spring attended by 14 people.

Overnight lodging in 2004 far exceeded expectations with 685 bed nights sold, resulting in another financially profitable year for Noble View. It was thought that the construction would discourage Noble View usage, but that was not the case. An AMC marketing survey listed low-cost facilities as a priority for the membership. Noble View is succeeding as a low-cost, close-to-home facility with conservation, education, and outdoor recreation programs that meet the members' needs.

Phase 2 is a financial challenge with Noble View seeking partners within the other chapters. To date Noble View has been awarded \$19,500 in grants toward phase 2. Community and commercial interests have donated another \$161,765 in materials and labor. In meeting the mission of the Club, Noble View welcomes the interest and involvement of all AMC chapters and members.

Respectfully submitted,

Elvery Veal

Noble View Chair

Outings Committee

This year a total of 200 events involved hiking, biking, backpacking, skiing, or snowshoeing, with or without some form of social activity before or after. Outings continue to be predominantly hikes, but also include backpacking trips, cross-country ski-

ing, snowshoeing, biking, and camping trips.

Outings have traditionally been scheduled by trip leaders who give the activity information to monthly coordinators who in turn pass the info to the Outings Committee Chair. Over the course of a few Committee meetings this year, members discussed modifying scheduling procedures by switching to an annual planning timetable or passing info directly to the Committee Chair. At this time, we do not have enough monthly coordinators to fill each issue of the magazine with activities. In the meantime, outings with a short lead time are listed on the Berkshire website or advertised via listserv for those with Internet access. The required form for all outings, the release form, is also available on the Berkshire website (www.amcberkshire.org).

Outings leaders and monthly coordinators met a few times this year to celebrate the new leadership guidelines, plan trips, and discuss trip issues with each other. These were great opportunities to socialize—dinner at Aura Restaurant on Mt. Tom in Easthampton, a potluck at Elbert and Bernice's in Holyoke, and pizza at Bill's farmhouse near the co-op in Easthampton. The meetings generated energy and interest for leading in the future.

I say with regret that I am stepping down from the Chairmanship this year. Although I've learned a lot, I find I need to devote my energy in a different direction. I'm ready to meet whoever chooses the position next, to give them leader information and whatever else they need.

Respectfully submitted,

Sabine Prather (nee Dietrich)
Outings Committee Chair

Paddling Committee

The Chapter's Paddling Committee has started its planning meetings for the year. Most of the traditional fall paddling weekends included the Farmington River (Mass.) and the West River in Vermont. We also hosted a successful sea kayak weekend at the Cape in October. Great turnout for the first Farmington weekend, due to Mother Nature being generous with water.

We continue to grapple with the Army Corps' reduction of releases on the West River, which cuts in half the usual number of

release days. AMC, FLOW, and other organizations have commissioned an economic study with hopes that it will help their efforts to lobby the Corps to reinstate the former number (or more) of releases.

The committee will again sponsor kayak rolling sessions at the YMCA this winter—watch AMC Outdoors for dates if you're interested. Also, if you're a whitewater paddler, we can always use new trip leaders! Please contact me if you're interested in learning how to become a trip leader or for other questions about the committee. Connie Peterson, cpacpsummer@aol.com or 413-548-9113.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Peterson

Paddling Committee Chair

Programs Committee

The Wednesday Socials were held at the Unitarian Church in Northampton on the second Wednesday of each month. Homemade refreshments and social time preceded the programs. Eight interesting programs included presentations on Alpine Mountain Tours, Lewis and Clark journey, Antarctic kayaking, Newfoundland biking, northern Rockies hiking, plus an informative program on improved meals for backpacking and camping. All were enjoyed by members and friends.

Respectfully submitted,

June Hoerle

Programs Committee Chair

Trails Committee

Trails had a challenging yet rewarding year. Several private property owners asked us to relocate the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail from their land as a result of the publicity generated from Congressman Olver's National Scenic Trail Study Bill.

We responded to the landowners' demands and the results thus far have dramatically improved the trail corridor. In Holyoke the new route utilizes Mass. Fish and Wildlife property just south of MA 141. North of 141 we are negotiating with the City of

Holyoke Water Commissioners to remove the road walk from 141 and place the trail onto their abandoned Whiting Street Reservoir property. In Leverett we have successfully negotiated with a private landowner to donate his 16-acre parcel to a local land trust. The M-M Trail has been relocated onto this now protected parcel and we have plans to build a badly needed trail shelter there next year. In Warwick, our volunteers are in the process of cutting a major relocation of the trail onto an isolated section of Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) land with that agency's written approval. All of the above relocations have greatly improved the trail by placing these sections onto public land and removing it from over a dozen private property parcels. We have intentionally delayed publication of the upcoming 10th edition of the popular M-M Trail Guide until the dust settles from these important relocations. The updated guidebook is expected to be published late this fall.

Finally, Trails Committee Chair Pat Fletcher led another of his popular "end to end" series of day hikes of the entire trail this past hiking season.

Anyone interested in joining us to maintain this incredible local treasure is very much needed. Please contact us to get involved. Happy hiking!

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Ryan
Trails Committee

Website Committee

Operation of the Chapter website has continued without significant changes this year. Events and news items are posted regularly, and some of our e-mail lists are used heavily. Further development of website features—for example, allowing designated individuals other than the webmaster to post trip listings and news items—has been frozen while Joy St. develops its own web-based trip listing database that may supplant ours. In the coming year we will be working closely with Joy St. to integrate our database with theirs and to train our volunteers in the use of the new system. Over the 12 months prior to this writing, our website has served 879,514 hits (146,046 separate page loads). More statistics

can be found at <http://amcberkshire.org/logs>.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Beatty

Webmaster

Young Members Committee

The Young Members have had a very successful year thanks to the wonderful support from the Chapter and specifically the support of Gary Forish and Melissa Zeitz who played key roles in getting this group off the ground. Throughout this year, we have held more than 35 events including local hikes, bike rides and overnight cabin trips as well as over 10 social events ranging from bowling to billiards. This summer the Young Members held their second annual Young Members' Extravaganza at Look Park in Northampton and we most recently held our second Hike and Pizza event which was attended by more than 20 people. As we continue to grow, we are looking forward to another great year in 2005!

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Druzisky

Young Members Committee

Treasurer's Report

Berkshire Chapter Financial Summary, 2004

COMMITTEE	INCOME	EXPENSES
Mass AT	\$3,601.00	\$3,601.00
1st Wed. Socials		\$48.00
Computer		\$782.00
Noble View	\$3,000.00	\$2,411.00
Berkshire Exchange		\$4,026.00
Outings	\$53.00	\$105.00
Membership	\$9,778.00	\$1,995.00
Trails	\$73.00	\$328.00
Conservation	\$1,164.00	
Administration	\$7,553.00	\$9,610.00
Young Members		\$400.00
TOTAL	\$25,211.00	\$23,300.00

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Cash \$14,057.30

Vanguard Prime MM Fund \$3,487.46

Total Checking/Savings \$17,544.76

Total Current Assets \$17,544.76

Other Assets

Loan Receivable Noble View \$30,000.00

Porter Dickinson Fund \$21,023.00

Total Other Assets \$51,023.00

TOTAL ASSETS **\$68,567.76**

NOTES

• **50-year members** •

Norman E. Aubrey
Sidney H. Law

• **25-year members** •

Paul W. Abrahams
Stephanie Bradford
William L. Burgart
Lynn Dgetluck
Paul S. Foster-Moore
Marie Kelleher
Eleanor Mosher
Harold Mosher
Letitia N. Mutter
Rudolph F. Mutter
John Rapoport
Nancy Rapoport
Bea A. Robinson
W. Gordon Rockwell
James W. Sherman
Howard W. Smith
Roger J. Soucy

Past Chairs of the Berkshire Chapter

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