



Appalachian Mountain Club

Berkshire Chapter

SEVENTY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

November 5, 2005



Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee

• 2006 •

Chair: Rob Robertson

Vice Chair: *vacant*

Treasurer: Kelly Druzisky

Secretary: *vacant*

Appalachian Trail Chair: Cosmo Catalano

Berkshire County Representative: *vacant*

Berkshire Exchange Editor/Publisher: Jon Hanauer

Chapter Youth Programs Coordinator and Chair:

Alicia Wendolowski

Computer and Web Site Chair: Ian Beatty

Conservation Chair: Elizabeth Gordon

Membership Chairs: Deborah Levine and Chris Mangano

Mountaineering Chairs:

Alice Hodgdon and Jim VanNatta

Noble View Chair: Gary Forish

Nominating Chair: Gary Forish

Outings Chairs: Dave Koerber and Bob Napolitano

Paddling (Canoe and Kayak) Chair: Charles Camp

Programs and Special Events Chair: *vacant*

Trails Chair: Pat Fletcher

Training and Education Chair: Donna Walters

Young Members Chairs:

Steve Beauregard and Kelly Druzisky

Cover photo

This fall, the Berkshire Chapter reserved Cardigan Lodge for Labor Day weekend and filled the place with nearly 80 happy guests. This photo on Mount Cardigan was taken by Ingrid Shuttleworth.

Report of the Chapter Chair

What a great year! In the following Committee Reports, you'll read about people enjoying different outdoor recreational activities, performing various types of community service, and doing work that supports and increases our awareness of and commitment to the preservation of our environment. No doubt about it – the people involved in these activities are having fun! And they're doing it safely.

We've worked hard this year to offer activities and events oriented toward new members, and we'll increase this effort in the year to come. We want everyone who joins the Berkshire Chapter (or who participates in any activity with us) to feel warmly welcomed – to feel as though they've come home. We want folks to look forward to the next hike, climb, trail work day, paddle, or social event, and we want them to praise the Chapter to their friends.

Our strength as a Chapter lies in our membership. Our diverse backgrounds, personalities, talents, and interests enrich our skills as volunteer leaders and Committee Chairs. Perhaps more important, they're the basis for the warm acquaintances and, sometimes, the lasting friendships that may develop as we take part in the activities we enjoy.

Whatever we can do as individuals to welcome new people warmly, to encourage someone who appears uncertain to join our circle, to thoughtfully explain the practices of a particular activity so that we all enjoy the same knowledge base and no one feels left out – let's resolve to do it at every opportunity!

I've really enjoyed working with this Executive Committee, a vibrant, enthusiastic, and committed group of people. Everyone's welcome to attend our monthly meetings, which are listed on amcberkshire.org. We're hoping to fill some open positions on the Executive Committee, and to identify and enlist additional members on some of our other Committees. If you're interested in having a great time working with excellent people, we may have some suggestions! Please feel free to talk with any of our Committee Chairs or members about any aspect of our work.

So what have we done this year? Our Appalachian Trail Committee continued to diligently and expertly maintain the AT in Massachusetts; our Berkshire Exchange Committee received

widespread praise for its professional product; our Canoe and Kayak Committee continued to fill an active paddling schedule; our Chapter Youth Program Committee just got off the ground; our Computer and Website Committee created a number of email lists and continued to improve our website; our Conservation Committee supported attendance at various public hearings and promoted the Visibility Volunteers (VizVol) project; our Membership Committee encouraged leaders to schedule new member activities and events; our Mountaineering Committee rocked on; our Noble View Committee achieved incredible progress in the ongoing rehabilitation of the property; our Outings Committee contacted all potential hike leaders, developed a current list of folks interested in leading hikes and, through the Monthly Coordinators, brought another year of great hiking to the Chapter; our Trails Committee built a new shelter on the M-M Trail and, with the AT Committee, supported the Monthly Trail Work Days.

And we planned and conducted a spectacular Labor Day Weekend trip at Cardigan Lodge – a new Berkshire Chapter tradition!

This year has been great fun for me, and I hope it's been that way for you, too. If you've enjoyed what you've found in the Berkshire Chapter, please share it with others. If you're still uncertain, please jump in – the water's fine!

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Robertson
Chapter Chair

Appalachian Trail Management Committee

Volunteers working with your Appalachian Trail Management Committee contributed 3,185 hours to the management and maintenance of the AT since this time last year. This season, we purchased and installed another 500 feet of locust plank bog bridging in October Mountain State Forest and in the Housatonic River Valley. We replaced the roof of Wilcox North Shelter and refurbished the roofs at Wilcox South and Upper Goose Pond Cabin. We completed these and other trail projects in addition to our regular maintenance of the footpath and monitoring of boundaries. 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.

With deep thanks to those this past season who gave a day (and more) to this Trail,

Cosmo Catalano

Appalachian Trail Management Committee Chair

Berkshire Exchange Committee

Beginning in December, 2004, printing of the Chapter's quarterly newsletter, the *Berkshire Exchange*, is now being done by a large, commercial printer. Since we made this change, the printing quality (ink and contrast) has been fantastic. Some minor cosmetic issues with the finishing process (cutting and folding) are still being worked out and continue to improve.

A few leaders have been sending in trip reports of outings they've recently led, and both leaders and participants are sending in more photos than in previous years.

The newsletter continues to include a

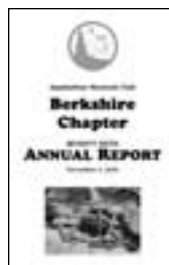
Membership in a Bottle form on the back page, and extra newsletters are being left in some area public libraries and retail stores. Back issues of the *Exchange*, as well as Chapter Annual Reports, are available for downloading in Acrobat format





on the Chapter web site.

The Berkshire Exchange Committee also continues to produce other publications. This year we completed a brochure, "Experience the Wilds of Western Massachusetts," and continue work on a Metacomet-Monadnock Trail brochure for our Trails Committee.



Respectfully submitted,

Jon Hanauer

Berkshire Exchange Committee Editor/Publisher

Chapter Youth Programs Committee

As this year comes to an end, the Chapter Youth Programs Committee is just getting started. We are in the process of organizing leadership training, and recruiting already qualified leaders interested in upgrading their training, for the Chapter Youth Programs.

REI has made a generous donation of gear to the AMC, a portion of which was given to the Berkshire Chapter for these programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia Wendolowski

Chapter Youth Programs Coordinator and Committee Chair

Computer and Web Site Committee

It has been a busy year for the Computer Committee. Behind-the-scenes technical upgrades that have consumed significant time include installing updates and then tracking down and fixing problems that arose as a result. We are in the process of migrating our email lists to new software that is significantly more powerful and easy to maintain; some lists are using the new software, but many have not yet been migrated.

Our Conservation Committee has taken over the "Conservation" section of the site and developed content, and we anticipate other Committees will follow. The Chapter has decided to make our web site the official database for all Chapter events,

and Committees will enter their event schedules directly into the web site; the data will be extracted from their entries, formatted, and sent to *AMC Outdoors* and other channels of dissemination. The change should significantly streamline our Chapter's information flow procedures and reduce redundancy, delay, and error. Programming work to support this change has begun.

The Committee has also, upon request, provided advice to the Joy St. staff in charge of developing the AMC's beleaguered Outdoor Listings Trip Database (<http://trips.outdoors.org>).

Our Chapter web site was highlighted as a "success story" at the 2005 AMC Chapters Retreat on "communication." Over the 12 months prior to this writing, the site has served 1,867,720 hits in the process of providing 262,315 distinct page views from 89,334 separate visits (from search engine "crawlers" as well as human visitors). Additional statistics can be found at <http://amcberkshire.org/logs/>.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Beatty

Computer Committee Chair and Webmaster

Conservation Committee

The Conservation Committee worked to advance AMC Club-wide conservation initiatives and formed partnerships with local organizations on conservation activities. We have 604 members from our Chapter who are now subscribed to the AMC's Conservation Action Network (CAN), a monthly email action alert that keeps our members informed about conservation issues of regional importance. One such issue is Massachusetts' proposal to set aside over 100,000 acres as large and small ecological reserves, free from logging and new motorized recreation. The State held four public meetings in the Berkshire area, and many Chapter members attended these meetings to voice their opinions about the planned reserves.

Berkshire AMC members also served as Visibility Volunteers by collecting ozone data during several hikes this summer. These data, along with those gathered by other chapter volunteers, are now being compiled to evaluate air quality throughout the Northeast. Last year's air quality data can be viewed at the

AMC's "Mountain Watch" web site, which is accessible through the new Berkshire Conservation web page (amcberkshire.org/conservation).

Locally, the Committee teamed up with EMS and Amherst Conservation Department on National Trails Day to clear invasive species from the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst. We are now preparing our list of conservation activities for 2006, so it's a great time to get involved! Please join in the conservation efforts of AMC Berkshire.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Gordon

Conservation Committee Chair

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has been trying new ways to welcome and orient members to the Berkshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club. A number of hikes have been designated as "new members especially welcome," in an effort to reach out to new and returning members. New member packets continue to be mailed. Future packets will include a welcome letter with timely information, listings of upcoming selected events and outings, and conservation information. The package will also contain a survey and the latest issue of the *Berkshire Exchange*.

The upcoming year will see the introduction of smaller and more frequent new member orientations, as well as the annual New Members Potluck in March.

The Membership Committee is seeking new members with energy and ideas. Please join us and help to keep the Berkshire Chapter dynamic and growing.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Levine and Chris Mangano

Membership Committee Chairs

Mountaineering Committee

Another fun year on the rocks and trails was had by climbers of all ages and levels of ability. We continued our emphasis on rock climbing instruction and safety by conducting

classes for beginners and intermediates. As always, we tried to make classes fun for all participants, regardless of their climbing skills or experience.

We joined with the Trustees of Reservations again this year for a work day at Chapel Ledges spreading wood chips to prevent erosion on the hiking and climbing access trail.

We ventured to “The Gunks” and several local crags for weekend trips, although rainy weather kept us from traveling up to Cathedral and White Horse Cliffs in New Hampshire. On “warm” midwinter Saturdays, we climbed some local south-facing cliffs. Our Wednesday evening top-rope climbing took place from May to the beginning of September at Rose Ledge in Northfield and Chapel Ledges in Ashfield.

We wish to heartily thank all the trip leaders, co-leaders, our Treasurer and Secretary, and others whose time made the events of this year so well-planned, successful, safe, and fun.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Hodgdon and Jim VanNatta
Mountaineering Committee Chairs

Outings Committee

There were over 200 outings in 2005, including hiking, biking, backpacking, skiing, and snowshoeing. For the first time, those outings included a monthly trail maintenance activity.

Our group of Tuesday hikers was very active again this year with their weekly trips, celebrating their sixth year of outdoor activities for those folks available during the week. Their outings continue to be predominantly hikes, but also include backpacking trips, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, biking, and camping trips.

More effort has been placed on varying the types of outings offered, including some targeted at new members and families.

Our Monthly Coordinators have once again been the backbone of the Outings Committee. They diligently work to fill each weekend with varied and interesting activities.

We have had much support from Ian Beatty (Computer Chair), and an anonymous contributor (KG – *AMC Outdoors* guru), who helped design our portions of *AMC Outdoors* as well

as our Chapter web site. We also attempted to utilize the new AMC direct-enter web site for outings, with less than stellar success.

While most of the Monthly Coordinator positions are filled, we still have a couple of months open in 2006 and could use a hand filling them in.

An ongoing activity for the Outings Co-Chairs is to keep a current list of potential qualified leaders. We continue to work on maintaining that list.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Koerber and Bob Napolitano

Outings Committee Chairs

Paddling Committee

The Paddling Committee is completing another year of successful boating trips. Our major activities include quiet water and whitewater trips for both open boats and closed boats. We also offer a number of excellent rafting trips and sea kayaking excursions.

The greatest area of growth in participation during 2005 was the quiet water program. Through the enthusiastic leadership of our coordinator Rudy Julian and our other quiet water leaders, the number of participants in this program has grown dramatically.

Our most extensive instructional effort has been aimed at helping beginning kayak paddlers work on their rolling skills. Unfortunately, the rolling sessions were canceled in 2005, as the pool we had been using is no longer available. We will, however, be able to offer a number of kayak rolling sessions during March and April of 2006 for beginning paddlers.

The Committee continues to maintain a fleet of rental boats that are stored in South Amherst. We have canoes and kayaks available for quiet water and whitewater as well as some sea kayaks and rafts. Our Committee is grateful for a Supplemental Dues Allocation grant that will help us upgrade the supply of life jackets and helmets that accompany our rental boats.

We have been publishing a paddling newsletter at the start of each paddling season, and we now also provide access to the

entire season's schedule on the Berkshire AMC web site.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Camp

Paddling Committee Chair

Trails Committee

The completely revised *Metacomet-Monadnock Trail Guide, 10th Edition*, is back in print. After two years of being out of print because of numerous changes and relocations to the Trail, the 10th Edition is now available. Profits from the sales of the Guide are donated to local area land trusts when they are purchasing sections of the trail for permanent protection.

We built a new trail shelter and composting privy in Leverett on 16 acres of land that has been donated to the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust by Hal Mosher of Shutesbury for permanent protection and a trail relocation. We had an energetic crew of six AmeriCorp young people working on the shelter for nine days last May. Their help and the donation of most of the lumber and other materials at cost from W. D. Cowles Lumber made it all possible.

The feasibility study for National Scenic Trail status is being finished and will be submitted to Congress by the end of the year. The National Park Service, with our help, is exploring a route for the proposed trail from Bay Road to the Quabbin Reservation in Belchertown and Pelham, and then returning to connect with the M-M Trail in Shutesbury and Wendell. If the Norwottuck Rail Trail is extended to Belchertown, this trail could serve as a possible connecting route from the M-M to the Quabbin, avoiding much of the remaining landowner resistance to a National Scenic Trail proposal in the Pioneer Valley. A proposed route from Long Island Sound to New Hampshire would be called the New England Trail. The M-M Trail will continue as before and we will continue to work toward protection of the existing corridor west of the Quabbin.

We agreed to donate \$5,000 to the Mt. Grace Land Conservation Trust to protect a 46 acre trailhead parcel on Gulf Road in Northfield. Mt. Grace took title to the parcel on the Crag Mountain ridge and is holding it until the Town of Northfield can

raise the funds to purchase it from them. This is the Trails Committee's sixth act of land protection assistance to date, resulting in the protection of almost three miles of trail since we started this initiative.

I continued my work on a badly eroded section of the Trail in the Mt. Tom State Reservation at the junction of the Quarry Trail with a great crew of UMass students. We installed 11 more rock steps and carried more stone up the hill to be used later.

I continue my search for the right person to take over as Trails Committee Chair. I am hesitant to resign at this time without finding somebody who has the time to donate and the love for this trail I have. It is time for me to step down and find a person younger than me with new energy and ideas. I have worked to develop a committee that will assist the new Trails Chair, and I will be available to provide guidance and as much assistance as the new Chair wants.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fletcher

Trails Committee Chair

Training and Education Committee

I'd like to thank Cathy Wickens for all of her hard work and time spent volunteering as the Training and Education Chair for the past two years. She did a fantastic job organizing quality educational opportunities for members and we greatly appreciate her contribution to the Berkshire Chapter.

If you haven't yet met Rob Robertson, the new Chapter Chair, well, I can tell you he is a lot of fun to work and play with. In September, 2005, I agreed to be nominated as the Training and Education Chair. I am very excited about serving in this volunteer role. Being new to the position, I'd love to hear from recent and longstanding members regarding the types of training opportunities that would be most beneficial to you as you explore the mountains, rivers, and trails of the Appalachian region.

The ideas I bring include developing the following training and education initiatives:

- Expand the current selection of educational and training sessions to include Leave No Trace, winter backpacking,

water safety and rescue, map & compass, a train-the-trainer program, and more.

- Create a mentoring program for new leaders by pairing them with experienced leaders.
- Create an activity leader kit to post on the web, which would include trailhead talking notes, release forms, a list of approved hike leaders, a list of monthly coordinators, instructions for how to list a hike and get it posted, and equipment lists for various activities such as day hikes, 3-season overnight backpacks, and winter backpacks.
- Develop and promote a program of rewards and perks for those who volunteer their time as trainers and activity leaders, including “how to stay at AMC destination points for free or reduced cost,” free books and maps, and Chapter reimbursement for training, meals, and mileage in exchange for volunteer services.

So please feel free to bend my ear with your suggestions, and together we will work on expanding the Club’s educational and training opportunities.

Looking forward to learning about and exploring the outdoors with you,

Donna Walters

Training and Education Committee Chair

Young Members Committee

The Young Members have had another successful year, with over 50 trips ranging from Mount Wachusett for Kids to Mount Moosilauke in the White Mountains. We continued our Thursday night hike series in the local area. We also joined a Worcester Chapter group for a camping trip on Lake George in New York. The Young Members have added a few names to our list of leaders, but we are always seeking new ones! We are looking forward to numerous outings this winter and another eventful year to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Druzisky

Young Members Committee Chair

Treasurer's Report

Berkshire Chapter Financial Summary, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Druzisky

Chapter Treasurer

COMMITTEE	INCOME	EXPENSES
Mass AT		\$500
Computer		\$1,040
Berkshire Exchange	\$1,200	\$5,662
Membership	\$15,763	\$1,782
Trails		\$219
Conservation	\$763	
Administration	\$2,495	\$5,567
Young Members		\$188
TOTAL	\$20,221	\$14,958

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Cash \$15,283

Vanguard Prime MM Fund \$3,502

Total Checking/Savings \$18,785

Total Current Assets \$18,785

Other Assets

Loan Receivable Noble View \$30,000

Porter Dickinson Fund \$22,461

Total Other Assets \$52,461

TOTAL ASSETS **\$71,246**

• **50-year members** •

Sally Kusek
Robert W. Murdock

• **25-year members** •

Robert A. Balboni
Dr. Alan D. Berkenwald
Elbert Bowler
Robert K. Buckwalter
Helen C. Monico
Gail Palmer
Connie Peterson
Peter Rentz
Alice N. Smith
William T. Whitman, Jr.
Carole Ann Zambito

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
		2002-04	Gary L. Forish