



BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE

FROM *the* CHAIR

Take the Challenge— Volunteer and Become a Leader!

When I speak with chapter members, I find a group with many talents and interests. Our members represent individuals with a vibrant mix of different backgrounds, occupations, ages, and locations. We have achieved diversity in many ways.

Engaging the whole membership is a chapter priority and challenge. The Chapter Executive Committee needs ideas on how to encourage this diverse membership to participate—especially as leaders—and how to promote our common interests in outdoor recreation, education, and conservation.

One major goal of the past year was to encourage young members, and Melissa Zeitz kicked off the Young Members Committee. (See page 7 for April 14th meeting information.) Also, singles activities have been highly successful, bringing together members who have not participated in past activities.

Chapter scholarship opportunities for educational programs and workshops have also encouraged members to become involved. Scholarship recipients are willing to give back and volunteer.

The chapter's goals and objectives are as diverse as the membership. Many committees are fulfilling their responsibilities by looking for ways all our members can participate. Volunteers and leaders are being constantly sought. Will you join in giving to the future? Volunteer today, become a leader, and be honored—only we can set the course for tomorrow.

In the AMC's past it was a special honor to be a leader, and it remains so today. Of nearly 3,800 Berkshire members, only a small percentage volunteer regularly. Chapter leaders are needed for outings and at the executive level. Since the winter newsletter was published, several volunteers have come forward with remarkable skills. Yet, in the past 10 years there have been 68 outings leaders and of that number only 14 new leaders stepped forward.

Are you a dedicated hiker and do you have the potential to be an AMC leader? Do you presently lead with a group or family unit? Come join with other AMC leaders, take a training course, and meet the challenge.

As the future of this chapter unfolds, the question is: How can we challenge you? Ask a friend to volunteer or to participate in an activity with you. Both of you will find many new friends and will enjoy all that we have to offer.

Respectfully,

Gary L. Forish
Berkshire Chapter Chair

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FROM *the* EDITOR

Springtime is just around the corner, outdoor fans. I hope the season finds you all well. I must say it's been an enjoyable winter—a *real* winter unlike some of those boring, mild winters of recent years.

I'm happy to say I received much to put in this issue of the newsletter. I'd like to thank all those who contributed. Also, I'd like to thank the Committee Chairs who have been sending in their updates each time.

The *Berkshire Exchange* has expanded. Please join me in welcoming Assistant Editor Maureen Flanagan. Maureen and I will be working together to provide you with a stronger, more informative and more appealing newsletter. And to help us achieve this, let's welcome volunteer Gail Blackhall who will be doing the final proof-reading for us.

Got a picture to share? If you've got a Berkshire/Pioneer Valley outdoor photo that you think would look nice on the front page (or other page) of the *Berkshire Exchange*, please send a **high-resolution digital file** (in TIF, EPS, JPG or GIF format on a floppy disk, Zip100 or CD-ROM), or a **color or black-and-white glossy print** no larger than 8"x10", to me at 29 Atwater Street, Westfield, MA 01085. Be sure to include all contact information and a brief description of each photo. If you'd like items returned to you (not encouraged), please include an SASE with adequate postage and allow 8–12 weeks. (So sorry for any inconvenience, but I cannot accept any image files via email at this time.)



Best wishes,

Jon Hanauer

Volunteer Opportunities!

General Opportunities

- Appalachian Trail work crews
- Education Workshop Coordinator, Program Director, and leaders
- Noble View volunteers
- Noble View trail maintainers
- Noble View work party leaders/co-leaders
- Skilled & unskilled construction craftsmen for Noble View
- Trail sign makers
- Grant writers

Committees

- Vice Chair of the Berkshire Chapter
- Leadership Training and Education Coordinator Chair
- Monthly outing coordinators and event leaders
- Conservation Committee members
- Young people's leader, facilitator, & members
- Club-wide Fall Meeting Committee for 2003 – hosted by the chapter

Join with other like-minded members in making your **Berkshire Chapter a MODEL Chapter**. Contact: Gary L. Forish, Berkshire Chapter Chair, at 413-562-6792 or email forgary@attbi.com.

Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee

• 2003 •

Chapter Officers

Chairman: Gary Forish

Vice Chair: vacant

Treasurer: Kevin Costa

Secretary: Ann Wood

Committee Chairs

AT Chairman: Cosmo Catalano

Berkshire County Rep.:

Vicky Singer

Canoe & Kayak Committee:

Charlie Camp

Computer & Website

Committee: Ian Beatty

Conservation Committee:

Cinda H. Jones

Leadership Training: vacant

Membership Committee:

John Berndtson

Mountaineering Committee:

Kevin Costa & Jim VanNatta

Noble View Committee:

Elvery Veal

Nominating Committee:

Chris Ryan

Outings Committee:

Sabine Dietrich

Programs: June Hoerle

Special Events: Andrea Kallfa

Trails: Pat Fletcher

Regional Director: Norm Sims

SE Trails Office: Ted Weber

BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE

– March 2003 –

Editor: Jon Hanauer

Assistant Editor: Maureen Flanagan

Proofreading: Gail Blackhall

Contributors (special thanks):

Gary Forish, Ian Beatty,

Elbert Bowler, Charlie Camp,

Cosmo Catalano, Sabine Dietrich,

Elvery Veal, Melissa Zeitz,

AMC (Joy St.), and more!

Title photo:

Sanderson Brook Falls,

by Tony Maniscalco

Website Committee

Out of hiding!

Last issue, we invited you to visit the chapter's newly renovated website. Unfortunately, between the time the newsletter went to press and the time it arrived in your mailboxes, our website disappeared from the Internet. It stayed AWOL for about two weeks. The company providing and maintaining the server on which our website resides—our "service" provider—forgot to renew our lease on the "amberkshshire.org" name (for the second year in a row), and was quite unresponsive to our problem. We now have a new, much more expensive, and presumably much more reliable service provider.

So to those of you who tried to check out the site and couldn't find it, our apologies. Please try again. The Information Superhighway still has a few pot-holes in it.

The URL is <http://amberkshshire.org>.

Cheers,

Ian Beatty
Chapter Webmaster

am
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ksh
sh
ire
.org

Noble View Committee

This past year has been a year of change for Noble View. Improvements to the Double Cottage and the North Cottage are in progress, with the Farmhouse to follow. New bunks have been installed and numerous health and safety issues have been addressed. The barn has been completely cleaned out in preparation for becoming our educational center. (See our website or *AMC Outdoors* for events.) And, most important, Noble View has made the AMC Board of Directors' list of self-service facilities designated for continued approval and support.

Building updates and maintenance work will begin in earnest this spring. We expect to complete the double cottage and barn by July 1, 2003. Completion of the barn will allow the scheduling of workshops, programs, and educational opportunities every weekend through November. Many hands, both skilled and unskilled, are required for this endeavor. Work will begin about April 1, and continue every weekend. Work schedules will be posted on the Berkshire Chapter website as well as in *AMC Outdoors*. Volunteers will be able to take advantage of no-cost lodging for one weekend this coming fall or next spring as a 'thank you' from the Noble View Committee.

Noble View is the jewel of the Berkshire Chapter—come and be part of it. Being a volunteer is as much fun as it is work. Add your name and e-mail address to the Friends of Noble View volunteer list. Contact:

Elvery Veal
Noble View Chair
Phone: 413-665-3010

Outings Committee

Hello everyone. My name is Sabine Dietrich and I'm the new Outings Committee Chair. I took on this position because for me, outings are the soul of the AMC—the way that members can see

the beauty of New England while we participate in many different activities like skiing, kayaking, hiking, canoeing, mountaineering, etc. Often when people see the fragility of the outdoors, they are also led to protect the natural environment in ways ranging from trail maintenance to legislative advocacy. Plus, outings are fun!

Along with coordinating outings events with current leaders, I'm hoping to encourage events we haven't taken part in as yet, like contra dancing, horseback riding, sleigh rides, downhill ski trips, tours of Northeast utilities, and more. I've led trips like this myself; it's easy! If you think you might like to try leading a trip, please contact me at pioneervplanner1@yahoo.com, or Gary Forish at forgary@attbi.com. It doesn't take much more than planning an activity and inviting others to join you!

Take care,

Sabine

Canoe & Kayak Committee

Greetings from the C & K Chair

Welcome to the 2003 paddling season of the Canoe and Kayak group in the Berkshire AMC. I am looking forward to another good season with many choices of paddling adventures on quiet water and white water to inspire you and your friends.

Our schedule of quiet water and whitewater trips appears in *AMC Outdoors* each month and you may wish to plan further ahead by visiting the boating schedule on the website at amberkshshire.org. Remember, we have a fleet of boats at Andrew's Greenhouse in South Amherst, and rental rates are very reasonable.

If you are into quiet water paddling, you might choose from six boats that could easily fit your needs. Whitewater paddlers have a number of choices, and our three sea kayaks have seen extensive summer use from members who wished to try something new. We also own two rafts and the schedule offers a few wonderful rafting opportunities.

Again this year we are offering a number of instructional opportunities. Kayak rolling sessions will continue until mid-March, and they will be followed by a clinic practicing sea kayak rescue techniques. The schedule also offers beginners instruction in quiet water paddling and introductory whitewater paddling. (Please see page 4 for scholarship information.)

Many of us are lucky that we now have a longer season due to the releases on the Deerfield River. So get yourself out on the water, bring some friends, and have more fun by teaching others and improving your own skills.

Charlie Camp

AMC Boat Rentals

• *Reserving rental boats*

If you are planning to use a rented boat for a scheduled club trip, you should register with the trip leader at least a week in advance to have first priority on the use of a rental boat. Then you or the trip leader should call Charlie Camp, 665-3750, to reserve the boat for the scheduled date(s). To make late reservations or reserve a boat for a non-AMC scheduled trip, you should also call Charlie Camp.

• *Picking up your rental boat*

The Berkshire Canoe and Kayak boat storage location is in the barn at Andrew's Greenhouse, 1178 Southeast St. in South

Amherst. At the barn, there is a clearly posted sign-out system you should follow. Please fill out the form completely, including the AMC ID number on each item. Anyone who will need help loading the boat(s) or tying them safely on the vehicle should bring an experienced helper. We cannot expect the folks at the Greenhouse to provide this help. Boats should be returned promptly. If you need to return a boat late, check with Charlie Camp to see if someone else has signed out the boat for the next day.

• **Payment of rental fees**

If you are paddling on a scheduled club trip, you may pay the rental fee to your trip leader along with the registration fee. Folks renting boats for non-AMC scheduled trips may pay the rental fee by leaving a check on the clipboard in the barn or mailing the check to our treasurer, Ken Langley, whose address is posted in the barn. Any lost or damaged AMC equipment should be reported to your trip leader or to Al Howcroft 413-256-1301.

Berkshire Canoe Camping Files

by Charlie Camp

The Berkshire Canoe and Kayak Committee maintains a rather extensive file of information about canoe camping trips. For folks who enjoy summer canoe camping, we have an extensive resource available.

Some of the trips are mostly quiet water with a few gentle rapids. Other trips are more challenging and require at least one class three whitewater paddler per boat. In any case, we have a lot of information available and I personally enjoy sharing this information with folks and helping them get started selecting and planning a trip.

If any folks have trip reports or other useful information about particular canoe camping trips, please consider making a copy to contribute to our files.



SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The chapter has limited funding available for educational opportunities, workshops, and teen programs. Scholarships are available to those who wish to start up a program or those who have financial need in the following areas:

- Teen Wilderness Adventure Program at Pinkham Notch
- Mountain Leadership School at Pinkham Notch
- SOLO Wilderness First Aid Training
- Leadership Training
- Canoe & Kayak Safety/Leadership Training
- Mountaineering Safety/Leadership Training

For further information or an application contact John Berndtson at email: jfbern@aol.com or phone: 413-447-7582

There is also help available if you are planning your FIRST thru hike on the AT in 2003. This financial help is being offered by an anonymous individual who is not able to complete the hike. Please contact: PO Box 38308, Virginia Beach, VA 23471.

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Spring 2003

Leadership Training and Awareness

May 3-4

Annual chapter leadership training with professional staff will be held at Noble View. New leaders, group leaders, and family unit leaders are encouraged to participate. There will be an emphasis on group-led activities, leaders' responsibilities, trip planning/management, special need requirements, weather emergencies, principles of emergency first aid in the backcountry, and leader awareness/decision making. Two-day workshop with refreshments; bring your own lunch. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for supplies, program materials, and refreshments. Call the coordinator, John Berndtson, at 413-447-7582, or email jfbern@aol.com for further info and to register.

AMC Trail Maintenance Workshop

April 26-27

Reconstruction of the Pot Rock Trail: Come give back to the trails that have given you so much. **This is a Trails Skills Series with specific instruction in areas such as trail layout and design, alpine skills, and drainage construction in addition to basic trail maintenance.** Here we will be rehabilitating a section of trail that is severely eroded. At the end of the trail, discover the wonder of a large glacial-age pothole about 8 feet in diameter and 20 feet deep. Hard work, dirty hands and clothes, and lots of fun will be mandatory. Bring a lunch and wear work clothes, long pants and sturdy shoes. For more information contact the AMC Southern New England Trails Office at 413-528-6333, or Noble View at 413-572-4501. (No-cost lodging offered to participants.)

AMC Trail Adopter Workshop

May 17

Come learn the ins and outs of being an AMC Trail Adopter and adopt a Noble View or other chapter trail by the end of the day. The Noble View Committee and AMC's Regional Trails Coordinator are working together to encourage the long-term stewardship and maintenance of the Noble View and other hiking trails. This program is open to individuals, groups and families. Come with a lunch, work clothes, sturdy shoes and a small daypack. We will be doing basic trail work including drainage construction techniques, pruning, tread-way pitch and much more. As an Adopter, you would be required to get out on your section of trail twice per year to clear the trail and check for problems, and follow up with a simple paper report. For more information contact the Southern New England Trails Office at 413-528-6333, or Noble View phone at 413-572-4501. (Free lodging offered to participants.)



Be a landowner along the Appalachian Trail

...and have a home in the woods!

Are you in a position to become a Conservation Buyer through the Appalachian Trail Conference Land Trust? Our program matches conservation buyers—people like you—with people who are selling land along the AT. You locate your home or cabin out of sight from the Trail. All we ask is that you donate a conservation easement on the rest of the property. A conservation easement “runs with the land”—that is, no present or future owner can develop it!

AND, because an easement is an irrevocable gift of a property right, you get a nice income tax deduction equal to the value of the easement. Contact Bob Williams, Director of Land Trust Programs, at bwilliams@appalachiantrail.org, 304-535-6331, or write to PO Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425.

AMC seasonal employment in the Berkshires

The Appalachian Mountain Club Berkshire Trails Program is currently hiring Trail Crew Leaders, Trail Program Assistants, Ridgerunners and Weekend Ridgerunners.

See www.outdoors.org for complete job descriptions and online application, or call 413-528-6333 for more information. All positions are seasonal and possible college internships are available.

Ninth Annual Westfield River Symposium

A Look at the Future: Water Resources and Open Space

On Saturday, March 29, the Westfield River Watershed Association and Westfield State College will sponsor a symposium entitled, “A Look at the Future: Water Resources and Open Space” at Westfield State College. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. The morning portion of the program, including a series of speakers and exhibits, will conclude at 12:30 p.m. There will be opportunities to go on several outdoor field trips in the afternoon. Admission is free and includes continental breakfast and mid-morning refreshments.

While the symposium features some specific information about the Westfield River, anyone interested in watershed ecology will find this event valuable. For detailed information, either visit our website at www.westfieldriver.org or call our office to request a brochure at 413-532-7290.



AMC Fall Gathering Get-A-Way October 25 and 26, 2003 Hosted by the Berkshire Chapter

- In the scenic center of the Berkshires
- Conference, networking, planning and play
- Saturday evening country dancing to live music
- Beautiful fall color • Hiking • Biking • Canoeing
- Close to Lenox & Stockbridge cultural events and crafts
- Easily accessible from the Massachusetts Turnpike

Location: Becket-Chimney Corners YMCA Outdoor Center, Becket, MA.

Registration: Details will be sent out and available on the chapter web site at www.amcberkshire.org on August 15th.

*– In Passing –
Remembering those departed
who have left a legacy
to follow.*

Richard B. Dunn

Kimball Farms, Apt. 102
235 Walker Street
Lenox, MA 01240
Member since 1957.

Richard Metcalf

A resident of Venice, FL since the 80's. Member since 1968. He was a longtime member of the Berkshire Chapter and did a lot of trail work at Noble View.

Leon Young

140 Main Street
Montgomery, MA 01085
A Noble View volunteer since 1991 who was faithfully present for work/volunteer days.

THE DOUBLE BLAZE

Chapter 4: *Maintaining the Trail*

by Cosmo Catalano, *Appalachian Trail Chair*

In the past three chapters, dear reader, you have discovered how state and federal agencies protect the AT by establishing a corridor of land protected from development, and how that land is further protected by volunteer Corridor Monitors.

The next piece of the puzzle is keeping the trail useable by hikers. This is often what one thinks of when one hears about “trail maintenance”—the actual care and feeding of the footpath. According to the standards set forth by the Appalachian Trail Conference, a group of trail clubs (including our own Berkshire AMC) are charged by the National Park Service with protection and care of the trail. These standards call for a footpath 18 inches wide and a corridor cleared of brush, limbs and other similar obstructions 8 ft. high and 4 ft. wide. Now, any of you hiking on the AT in Mass. will know that these standards are not universally applied. In fact several sections of the trail (I’m thinking particularly of the Mt. Race and Mt. Everett areas) would lose a considerable amount of their unique charm if we cleared the vegetation four feet wide. So we take liberties locally with these standards, as does every other maintaining club along the trail. Why, then, this silly standard? Have you ever hiked in or after a heavy rain or snow storm? The branches and shrubs weighted down with water are quite unpleasant to push past and may be damaged in the process. So we do look to provide a fairly wide cleared area along the footpath over most of the trail. However, it is pretty much left up to the individual maintainer to decide how strictly to apply the standard.

Who are these maintainer people? (Some clubs call them “trail adopters.”) These are individuals (or sometimes groups of individuals) who have accepted responsibility for seeing a particular section of the AT kept clear of brush, fallen trees and branches (blowdowns). They also make sure the paint blazes are fresh and easy to see, and erosion control structures like waterbars and drainage ditches are kept clear of fallen leaves, dirt and vegetation. Some maintainers also keep tabs on shelters and campsites along their section as well. The length of these sections can vary anywhere from one to five miles depending on the terrain and the abilities of the maintainer. The Berkshire Chapter’s AT Committee has three maintainer coordinators (North, Central, and South) that assist the individual maintainer and keep track of his/her work.

What does it take to be a maintainer? Time, mostly. Here is a typical schedule for a maintainer with a section

through a standard stretch of open forest land:

April/May (or when the snow is gone): Walk section, remove small limbs and trees blown down over winter. Assess condition of blazes. Clear winter leaves and debris from water bars and drainage structures. These tasks may take more than one trip depending on conditions and length of the section. Report any large downed trees that require chain saw work, or other large-scale damage.

June: Clip brush, repaint blazes as needed.

July/August: Clip brush if needed.

September/October: Clip brush, clear debris from water bars and drainage structures as needed.

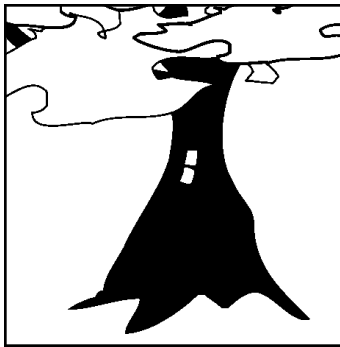
In addition, if there are big storms, a quick check of the section is prudent to see if any trees or large limbs have come down.

This can amount to a lot of work, depending on what kind of season we are having. If the maintainer’s section is through open fields, there may be a need to mow the grass and clip fast-growing brambles such as raspberry or multi-flora rose. If the section is mostly over rock and scrub, a much less frequent visitation schedule may be appropriate. As the maintainer gets to know his/her section, he/she will discover what parts need the most attention and what can be let go a bit longer. On some sections, light carpentry may be necessary to replace some bridge planks or bog bridges every now and then. Larger projects of this type are typically addressed by the AT Committee work parties, scheduled Tuesdays and Saturdays during the summer.

So a maintainer’s job can be fairly time-consuming, but it is vitally important for both the hiker and the trail. If the brush grows too thick, or a tree falls across the footpath, hikers will make their own path around the obstruction. This path is typically the shortest way around, and most likely will quickly become eroded and muddy, making it wider and more damaging to the surrounding environment. In the

worst case, hikers can get lost if the trail becomes too obscured. When this happens, the AT is no longer “...a way continuous, from Katahdin in Maine to Springer Mountain in Georgia for travel on foot through the wild, scenic, wooded, pastoral and culturally significant lands of the Appalachian Mountains,” and we have failed at our most basic duty as a maintaining club.

What can you do as a hiker to help keep the trail in good shape? Number One: stay on the footpath. Even if it’s



muddy and appears to be swallowed in a bottomless puddle, there are more than likely stepping stones down there somewhere. Don't skirt the edges in search of dry ground; that just makes the trail wider, destroying more habitat. It won't hurt your super-Gortex-encased-extra-sticky-Vibram-gripped trail shoes to get them a little wet or muddy—that's why you don't wear them to the office every day.

You can also help out by picking up dead and downed branches and tossing them into the adjacent woods. You can clear out any obviously clogged waterbars with your boot heel. Finally, you can promptly report any problems you encounter to the AT Committee, either directly to me or to the DEM (Mass. Dept. of Environmental Management) regional office.

If you really want to get into this maintenance thing, join the AT Committee on a work party or two to see if you like the work. Then, if you still think this is fun, ask if there are any unfilled sections to maintain. We do get several openings a year as folks move away or find themselves

busier than they expected. The skills are very basic—pretty much what you do in your back yard but on a slightly larger scale. You do not need to know how to use a chain saw. (In fact, three days of expert training and certification are now required before a person can use a chain saw on AT lands.) Most of the work can be easily done with limb loppers, a bow saw and a hazel hoe or pick mattock. I carry a small set of hand clippers in my backpack when I day hike, just in case I come across an aggressive stand of raspberries out there in the wilderness.

If you are interested in finding out more about this subject, or want to volunteer on the trail, please visit our web page, <http://friends.backcountry.net/MassAT/ATCommHome.html>, or contact me directly at ccatalan@williams.edu or 413-458-5349.

Next chapter: *Defining the AT Experience*

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

The activities listed here are highlights only. For complete listings of all Excursions and Chapter Activities, as well as for full details on events listed here, please see *AMC Outdoors*.

Singles social and dinner

Mon., Mar. 31: (These activities are targeted to singles but open to all.) Join in on the ground floor opportunity of creating a new program and help formulate the future. Discussion of organizing other future singles events, interests, future direction and socializing. Meet 6 p.m. at Peking Garden, Rte. 9, Hadley. RSVP is mandatory. L Gary Forish (562-6792 or forgary@attbi.com).

Worcester Woodlands Weekend—AMC Spring Gathering

Fri.-Sun., April 11-13: A variety of AMC committee meetings and activities will be tak-

ing place. Whether or not you are an active member of any club committees, we invite you to attend any of the meetings that may interest you. This is a great opportunity for you to find out all about how your club works! The meeting schedule will be provided with your registration information, and on the website: www.amcworchester.org/springgathering/about.html.

Young Members Committee

Kick off meeting

Mon., Apr. 14: Be a part of something new. Activities are targeted to young members in their 20's and 30's, but open to all. Young members will meet for discussion of organizing other future young members' events, future interests, direction, and socializing. The Chapter is supplying appetizers. Meet 6 p.m. at Peking Garden, Rte. 9, Hadley. RSVP is mandatory. L Gary Forish (562-6792 or forgary@attbi.com).

Berkshire County Hike

Sat., June 14: Enjoy a day of hiking and

socializing with other Berkshire County AMC members. Meet members of the Chapter Executive Committee, renew old friendships, discover new friends. Families welcome. Meet at the Pittsfield State Forest Lodge. Hikes starting at 9:00 am with a lunch and socializing at 12:30. Short hike at 2pm. "Dog friendly" hike available, limited to 5. Sign up in advance. Bring a dish to share for 4. Cold drinks, hamburgers & hot dogs will be provided. RSVP to Vicky Singer, 936 West St., Pittsfield, MA 01201, or email goforgreen2001@yahoo.com.

Backpacking, "mini" mountaineering expedition in remote northeast Greenland

July 3-19: For complete details on this very special Major Excursion please see *AMC Outdoors*. Also, as a Berkshire Chapter member you are formally invited to join by L Francie Sparks and CL Jim Lindsley—you can read this detailed invitation at <http://amcberkshire.org/news>.

AMC chapter volunteers needed to host Appalachian Trail Conference 2003

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) is the proud host of this year's biennial meeting of the Appalachian Trail Conference, which will be held July 25 through August 1, 2003 at Waterville Valley Conference Center in Waterville Valley, New Hampshire. AMC maintains and monitors sections of the Appalachian Trail in four states, including sections in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

"AMC volunteers are the force behind this event and we hope that members from all of the chapters can pitch in and volunteer to help out with the conference," said Steve

Crowe, volunteer conference planning committee Chair and Trail Adopter. "Even if you can't volunteer, we hope that AMC members will plan to attend for a whole week or just a few days. We've planned a great conference with broad appeal!" The conference is a good chance to experience and learn about the AT, long-distance hiking, and all that goes into protecting the quality of the nation's premier long-distance hiking trail.

The theme of this year's conference is "Stewardship-Education-Action." Conference activities have been organ-

ized around the theme and will be centered at the Waterville Valley Conference Center. Some of the activities and workshops include: alpine ecology, land protection opportunities, trail maintenance, first aid and other outdoor skills, trip planning, volunteer organization, back-packing equipment, other long-distance trails, backcountry management issues, hiking history of the White Mountains, and nature photography.

Hiking trips on the AT throughout New Hampshire will be led daily by leaders from the AMC's New Hampshire Chapter. Hikes of varying degrees of difficulty will also be offered in the White Mountain National Forest.

The conference will include a number of half-day outings and full-day excursions. There will be an historic excursion via the Conway Scenic Railway and a cruise on the MS Washington around Lake Winnepesaukee. The conference will also feature a tour of Squam Lakes Natural Science Center/Golden Pond, a tour of the geological wonders of Franconia Notch's Flume Gorge, and a trip up the Cannon Tram to the 4,200 foot summit that provides outstanding views of the White Mountains and Maine.

Featured entertainment will include North Country comedienne Susan Poulin. Each evening, folk and contra dancing, musical performances, storytelling, or slide shows will be available for your entertainment. And the Green Mountain Club will organize a variety of youth activities.

Waterville Valley is convenient to the AT and other points of interest in the White Mountain National Forest. There are several 4,000-foot peaks surrounding the Valley and a variety of possible hikes accessible directly from the conference location.

Lodging for the conference will be at the area inns and condominiums. RV camping will be available nearby, and tent camping will be located at the US Forest Service Osceola Vista campground, which is graced by views of Mt. Osceola.

Waterville Valley, New Hampshire is nestled within the White Mountain National Forest, eleven miles from Interstate 93, Exit 28 (Route 49). The Manchester, New Hampshire airport is one hour and fifteen minutes away, and Boston's Logan Airport is two hours away.

For more information on volunteering at the conference, contact Ken Wenger at 978-456-3722 or via email at kwenger99@yahoo.com.

Registration and general information are available at the conference website, www.atc2003.org, on the AMC website, www.outdoors.org, and in the March issue of *Appalachian Trailway News*. For information or questions about registration, call Geoff Weaver at 978-297-0003 or send an email to Peter Lane at lanep@rcn.com.

Spring 2003

BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE



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