



BERKSHIRE Exchange

FROM *the* CHAIR

Let's Hear It for Our Leaders!

Now that summer is here, many of us are outdoors enjoying all that our region has to offer in the way of wonderful recreational opportunities. I would like to take this chance to thank all of the Berkshire Chapter leaders who lead hikes, climbs, paddles, and other adventures for our members.

This has been a challenging year for leaders. Changes in the publishing schedule of *AMC Outdoors* have made it necessary to plan further ahead and think about new ways to publicize our trips. Even with this challenge, over 1,000 Berkshire Chapter members went on Chapter-led hikes in 2009, in addition to all those who paddled, climbed, and helped with trail maintenance.

Our volunteer leaders represent the essence of what it means to belong to the AMC. It is their time, energy, and creativity that make it possible for so many of our members to experience the outdoors and take on new challenges and adventures.

I hope this summer everyone will consider trying something new, and as you do, be sure to thank the leader. If you are interested in becoming a leader yourself, then you might want to sign up for the leadership training to be held this fall (info on page 5). We welcome new leaders and have a wonderful training and mentoring program to make sure all of our leaders are prepared to lead safe and enjoyable trips.

Once again, thanks to all of our leaders, along with all of the other volunteers in our Chapter. You are the core of our Chapter, and your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Very best wishes,
Deborah Levine
Berkshire Chapter Chair
chapterchair@amcberkshire.org
413-584-6065

Noble View Goes Green and Online

Find Us, "Like" Us, and Post on our Facebook Page!

We've finally entered the twenty-first century! We've posted photo albums showing the ongoing construction on the Bathhouse, the ongoing renovation of the North Cottage, the completed renovation of the Double Cottage, and numerous site improvements over the past years. We'd love to see your photos, recollections and comments, so please post away!

Bathhouse Update

The photovoltaic (solar) array on the bathhouse went online on February 5. We qualified for a significant rebate from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the solar array. Upon going online it immediately began to generate electricity. The electricity that isn't used at Noble View flows back into the grid. Monitoring began on March 5, and can be viewed at <http://www.powerdash.com/systems/1000151>. Under Energy Performance there's a bar graph showing power generated per day, and under Equivalents you can get a better idea of the amount of power we've generated on an ongoing basis. We're spinning the meter backwards.

Gary Forish, Marlene Martell, Mark Bidus, and volunteers from the Western Massachusetts Carpenters Apprenticeship Program of Carpenters Union Local 108 have done a great job, and the Bathhouse may be ready for use by late fall. Check out the photos on our Facebook page!

Celebrating Earth Day

We milled 4,500 to 5,000 board feet of lumber from storm-damaged trees harvested on-site. If we had to purchase this lumber, it would have cost about \$1 per board foot. Reduce, reuse, recycle—a great practice for Earth Day, and every day!

We had lots of volunteers come for trail work on Earth Day—much was accomplished, and we're grateful for all the help.

Volunteer Job Openings

We can always use more help on various construction projects. If you'd like to know more, please call Gary Forish at 413-519-3251 (before 8 PM). There are lots of positions, including Noble View Vice Chair and Treasurer, available on the Noble View Committee—if you're interested, please contact our new Chair, Frank Evans, by email at FEvans6568@aol.com.

Out With the Old, In With the New

I'm deeply grateful that Frank Evans has agreed to serve as Noble View Chair, effective July 1, 2010. Frank has led many Noble View work weekends in his role as Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 11 and Crew 1. These Scouts have contributed more, over the years, than any other group of guests at Noble View, and Frank has developed a great understanding of Noble View and its volunteers. Thanks, Frank, for stepping up to the plate!

My thanks, also, to the many people who have contributed to Noble View over the years, and especially to Gary Forish, whose leadership, energy and enthusiasm have brought Noble View so far!

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Robertson
Past Noble View Chair

Notes From the Field

Let us know of an interesting outdoor experience or a favorite place. Send your notes from the field (hiking, biking, paddling, or climbing) to Rebecca Budaj at berkshirefieldnotes@gmail.com.

Hiking Granville Gorge by Paxton Berardy

Looking for an interesting hike? Located on the border of Southwick and Granville on Rte. 57 is the Granville Gorge, a park with a mix of physical features that would please most any hiker.

The trail system is split into two sections, each on opposite sides of Rte. 57. Drake Mountain, located near the gorge, is on the north side and Sodom Mountain is on the south side. Destinations other than the gorge include several summit overlooks, which are part of the planned Sodom & Drake Mountain Ridge Trail. The first outlook, which is on the Drake Mountain side, climbs a steep upward path out of the gorge and looks out over the Connecticut River valley all the way to Hartford. From the other outlook, on the Sodom Mountain side, one can gaze out over Granville and the Berkshire foothills, first from a gas line cut and then a scenic rocky outcropping farther down the trail.

The deep gorge, for which this park is named, is on the Drake Mountain side of Rte. 57 and harbors a series of cascades and small waterfalls. Cool swimming holes are crisscrossed by trails that mostly parallel it on either side. Striking cliff faces, mysterious glacial erratics, a deep forest canopy, and the sound of running water are also common features of this diverse forest. The nicely shaded paths make for a cool, refreshing hike even in the height of summer. The trails in the gorge can be rough and steep at points and may cross Munn Brook—a sizable waterway in several places—so plan accordingly. The trail on the north side of the brook is the best option for hiking and requires a stream crossing. It primarily parallels the brook and leads up to overlooks of several water company reservoirs. The trail also passes a popular local swimming hole with a rope swing and a cliff jump. Access down the gorge sides can be challenging so be careful. The trail network here is extensive but primitive and few trails are marked, so bring navigation aids and a sense of adventure.

To get to the Granville Gorge take Rte. 57 to the border of Southwick and Granville and look for the parking area on the north side of the road in Southwick at the bottom of the hill. The best access to the Sodom Mountain trail is uphill from the gorge on a pull-off just south of the gas line cut below Granville center. Have fun and enjoy!

Trail Clearing on Unkamits Path by Sheila Croteau

On Sunday, April 11 seven of us, with handsaws, loppers, maps and gloves, met in Russell to begin a day of trail clearing. We drove off to section 6 of Unkamits Path, where we located the white-blazed trail and headed east, clearing the path of broken trees and branches. Much of the effort was dragging and throwing by hand.

After a morning of work, we found a nice resting place for lunch, with a view of the surrounding hillsides. The view, however, was not a pretty sight: past logging had left the hillside very cluttered, and many of the marked trees were gone. That would make the trail hard to find—not impossible, just time-consuming. So we left it for another day. We headed back the way we came, appreciating the beautiful path with wildflowers as a bonus: trout lily, colts foot, wild oats, and red trillium.

Thanks to Bill for coming all the way from Franklin, MA! Thanks also to Lynn from Monson who is pursuing leadership training. Bill, Dave, and Karen, I hope you know how much John Murphy and I appreciate all your work! We had a great day. Hope you will come out and help again soon to keep this great trail the way it was meant to be.

BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE

– July 2010 –

Publisher: Jon Hanauer (newsletter@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)

Editor: Maureen Flanagan (berksexeditor@amcberkshire.org)

Assistant Editor: Gail Blackhall (proofreader@amcberkshire.org)

Contributing Editor: Rebecca Budaj (berkshirefieldnotes@gmail.com)

E-Newsletter Administrator: David Jones (enews-admin@amcberkshire.org; 413-320-1617)

Submissions: newsletter@amcberkshire.org; Berkshire Exchange, 29 Atwater Street, Westfield, MA 01085-1541

Address Changes & Delivery Preferences: www.outdoors.org/membercenter
800-372-1758; Appalachian Mountain Club, 5 Joy Street, Boston, MA 02108

Title Image: Salamander. photo by Diane Furtek



Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee – 2010 –

CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chair: Deborah Levine
(chapterchair@amcberkshire.org; 413-584-6065)
Vice Chair: David Sauriol
(davesaur@greyst.com; 401-523-4672)
Treasurer: Kelly Dawson
(treasurer@amcberkshire.org; 413-592-5724)
Secretary: *vacant*

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Appalachian Trail Committee:
Jim Pelletier
(wanderer0131@yahoo.com; 413-454-4773)
Berkshire County Representative: *vacant*
Berkshire Exchange Committee:
Jon Hanauer
(newsletter@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)
Canoe and Kayak Committee:
Charlie Camp and Connie Peterson
(paddling@amcberkshire.org)
Conservation Committee: Bill Scaife
(conservation@amcberkshire.org)
Family Programs: *vacant*
Membership Committee: Diane Furtek
(membership@amcberkshire.org; 413-589-5530)
Mountaineering Committee:
Bill Fogel
(mountaineering@amcberkshire.org; 413-427-1693)
Jim Van Natta (mountaineering@amcberkshire.org)
Noble View Committee: Frank Evans
(FEvans6568@aol.com)
Nominating Committee: *vacant*
Outings Committee:
Bob Napolitano
(nappyofma@comcast.net; 413-534-8955)
Past Chair: Jon Hanauer
(newsletter@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)
Public Relations Committee:
Sabine Prather
(publicity@amcberkshire.org; 413-949-3914)
Trails Committee: Patrick Fletcher
(hiker6@comcast.net; 413-562-9863)
Training and Education Committee:
Christine Fogarty
(learning@amcberkshire.org; 978-857-7078)
Website Committee:
Chair/Webmaster – Bob Bergstrom
(webmaster@amcberkshire.org)
Content Editor – *vacant*
Young Members Committee:
Wendy Barbour and Paxton Berardy
(ymchair@amcberkshire.org; 413-569-9998)

Other Helpful Contacts

Chapter Trips Approver: Jon Hanauer
(approver@amcberkshire.org; 413-568-0990)
Membership in a Bottle: Chris Ryan
(geolopes@comcast.net; 413-549-4124)
Regional Director: Dale Geslien
(dalegeslien@sbcglobal.net; 203-778-3651)
Regional Trails Coordinator: Matt Moore
AMC Southern New England Trails Office, South Egremont
(mjmoore@outdoors.org; 413-528-8003)
Tuesday Hiking: Sonja Goodwin
(SGoodwin@alum.rpi.edu)

Need a phone number?

If the person you want to contact by phone has no number listed, please call Jon Hanauer at 413-568-0990.

Save the Date for AMC Fall Gathering 2010

Fall Gathering, hosted by the Worcester Chapter, will be held October 15–17 at the Prindle Pond Conference Center Hilltop, Charlton, MA. Whether you enjoy hiking, biking, paddling, rock climbing, or just like to socialize with other AMC members (or non-members), October is a great time to explore central Massachusetts. Plus, family-oriented activities will be offered, so bring your children and grandchildren! Top it all off with lively Saturday evening entertainment and a bonfire. This will be an event you won't want to miss! For more information, check out the website at www.amcFallGathering2010.com.

Nature's Turn: Experience the Wonder

Founded by Berkshire Chapter member Judy Isacoff, Nature's Turn focuses awareness on Earth and sky. Through guided walks, hands-on science and arts workshops, gardening, and writing, the programs arouse a sense of wonder—the wellspring of interdisciplinary learning. Students of all ages are encouraged to experience personal contact with the living world and interact with the architecture of built environments. Earth stewardship and sustainable living are integral to the teachings. The programs promote hands-on, inquiry-based, creative science learning. Nature's Turn also offers indoor versions of most outdoor programs, bringing the enlightenment of direct contact with nature to all audiences. Find out more at www.naturesturn.org, or contact Judy at naturesturn@taconic.net or 413-528-1335.

– VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES –

VOLUNTEER FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

If you're interested in one of these exciting positions, or would like to know more, please contact Deborah Levine at 413-584-6065 or chapterchair@amcberkshire.org.

Chapter Secretary

This is a very important Chapter Officer position on our Executive Committee. Primary responsibilities include recording the minutes at our monthly meetings and emailing those minutes to Executive Committee members. The Secretary may also compile the Chapter's Annual Report at the end of each year.

Family Programs Chair

Do you enjoy getting outside with your family? Would you like to share your love of the outdoors and the excitement of introducing children to new adventures in the natural world? Then consider becoming involved with Family Programs. We are looking for someone with energy and enthusiasm to take on this role and develop family-friendly outings and activities.

Nominating Committee Chair

We are looking for someone to assist our Chapter's committees in identifying and developing qualified individuals for leadership roles in the Berkshire Chapter. This role is vital to the continuity of Chapter leadership. We are looking for someone who has, or is willing to develop, a broad knowledge of our Chapter and its members, and who would enjoy helping to identify talented members and leaders and encouraging them to become more involved.

Berkshire County Representative

If you live in or near Berkshire County and you can spare a few hours per month, this position could be perfect for you. You'll solicit approved Chapter leaders to run hikes and other outdoor activities, as well as other events, in the Berkshires. If you'd like, become an approved Chapter leader yourself and lead a few of your own events.

Website Content Editor

Are you web savvy? Would you like to use your skills to keep Chapter members up-to-date on happenings? We are looking for a website content editor to work with the Website Committee Chair and keep the information on our website current and interesting. We are currently redesigning our website and this would be an exciting time for someone with some time, energy, and skills to come on board.

REGISTRAR NEEDED FOR TRAINING & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Training and Education Committee needs a Registrar in order to continue its programs!

We are looking for someone who lives in the Berkshire Chapter territory to:

- Respond to inquiries and register participants for Leader Training and other programs.
- Prepare registration rosters and provide current headcounts to the T&E Committee.
- Collect and accurately account for all training fees.
- Send materials (agendas, equipment lists, directions, etc.) via email to participants well in advance of the programs.
- Scope and recommend venues for trainings and other programs.
- Communicate and coordinate with other chapters' registrars when we participate in joint ventures.

Our new Registrar should be friendly, enthusiastic, and welcoming. She/he must have a positive attitude, be timely in responding to phone and email inquiries, and be wicked detail-oriented. Proficiency in email, Word and Excel preferred.

If you'd like to help, please call Christine Fogarty at 978-857-7078 (before 9 PM). And thanks for helping us continue our excellent Leader Trainings in 2010 and beyond!

Berkshire Chapter Publicity

Hello, Berkshire Chapter members. My name is Sabine Prather, and I'm in charge of publicity for the Chapter. What I do mostly is post events in the local papers to draw some non-members, like National Trails Day hikes, potluck dinners, and special meetings. I also post press releases for happenings, such as awards given to dedicated AT volunteers, announcements for new buildings at Noble View Outdoor Center, and any conservation events.

Most recently, I've begun a Facebook page for Berkshire AMC. If you're on Facebook, you can look up Appalachian Mountain Club and become a fan! You can upload photos from trips, write on the AMC Berkshire wall, and post upcoming AMC events. As a fan, you'll also automati-

cally get an e-mail whenever an event is posted. There's a link back to the Berkshire AMC website, as well as one for Noble View.

There are a lot of exciting things going on in the AMC, including many trips and events coming up. Please check them out here in the newsletter, or look for us in the papers and online. Come join the fun!

Respectfully,
Sabine Prather
Public Relations Chair
publicity@amcberkshire.org

This Could Be Your Last Paper Edition of the BERKSHIRE EXCHANGE!

Berkshire Exchange Online!!

If you are reading this publication, you have the unique opportunity to contribute to conservation, and our budget, by signing up to receive the *Berkshire Exchange* electronically! Just go to www.outdoors.org/membercenter, sign in and update your Chapter Newsletter Preferences. It's that easy. You can also choose to receive e-newsletters from other chapters!

What are you waiting for? Do it now!

Don't forget to check in at home!

amcberkshire.org

LATE-BREAKING NEWS & IMPORTANT CHAPTER INFORMATION.

Get the very latest event listings!

amcberkshire.org/schedule

outdoors.org/membercenter

Have Chapter activity listings emailed.
Set your *Berkshire Exchange* delivery preferences.

Take a look at

Noble View Outdoor Center's website!

NobleViewOutdoorCenter.org



MEMBERSHIP IN A BOTTLE

For the cost of your annual membership, you will receive:

A Nalgene® water bottle • A \$10 gift certificate good for AMC books, lodging, and workshops • An AMC window decal • A subscription to *AMC Outdoors* • Our Chapter newsletter, the *Berkshire Exchange* • A new member packet with a welcome letter, information brochure, and member ID card.

– AMC Berkshire Membership Form –

I wish to purchase:

- Individual "Membership in a Bottle" kits (\$40 each – 20% new member discount!).
- Family "Membership in a Bottle" kits (\$60 each – 20% new member discount!).
- Senior "Membership in a Bottle" kits (\$25 each, age 69 and over). Age: _____.
- Young Member "Membership in a Bottle" kits (\$25 each, up to age 30). Age: _____.

I have enclosed a check for the total amount of \$_____ made payable to Berkshire Chapter AMC.

Please mail the kits to:

Name:
Street:
City, State, Zip:
Phone:
E-mail:

Is this a gift membership? Yes No
(Bottles will be sent to the address above, and the membership recorded in that name, unless you indicate otherwise.)

Note: This offer is for new members only. Not for renewals, please. Thanks.

Please mail completed form with check to:

Chris Ryan, PO Box 9369, North Amherst, MA 01059

Questions? Contact Chris Ryan at 413-549-4124 or geolopes@comcast.net

- OUTDOOR EDUCATION -

Leadership Training at Noble View Saturday–Sunday, October 30–31

Whether you'd like to become a Chapter leader, or just want to improve your outdoor skills, you're invited to attend. Training emphasizes group dynamics, leaders' responsibilities, trip planning and management, weather emergencies, incident/accident scene management, leader awareness, and decision-making. Fee of \$25 covers 2-day training and all materials. Attendance both days is required. Overnight lodging is available for \$18/night. Advance payment requested. Current Berkshire Chapter leaders looking to recertify attend at no charge. Please contact Christine Fogarty at 978-857-7078 or learning@amcberkshire.org.

SOLO Wilderness First Aid Training at Noble View Saturday–Sunday, November 20–21

Held at Western Massachusetts' beautiful Noble View Outdoor Center (nobleviewoutdoorcenter.org)! Improve skills and increase confidence. Learn accident scene management and patient care. Lectures and discussions are supplemented by hands-on scenarios. Emphasis on long-term care and evacuation complications in the backcountry makes this course unique. Fee of \$140 with optional lodging available. A subsidy is available for active Berkshire Chapter leaders. All are welcome: AMC members as well as members of the general public. Register with Gary Forish (413-519-3251; forgary@comcast.net).

Highlights of Upcoming Chapter Events

PARTIAL LISTING. For complete and updated listings of all Berkshire Chapter events, please visit amcberkshire.org/schedule.
L=Leader; CL=Co-Leader; R=Registrar. For details about hike difficulty ratings (e.g. "C4D"), contact the leader.

Sun., Aug. 15. Try a Writing Walk (C4D)

Open to writers and nonwriters alike! Some people enjoy photography on their outings. I've discovered the pleasure of including writing, alone or with others, on my walks and hikes. A full description—where and when we'll meet, where the walk will take place, how writing will be incorporated into the walk, materials needed, etc.—will be posted at amcberkshire.org/schedule. Note: this outing repeats on 8/22.
L Susan Middleton (413-628-4039 before 10 PM).

Tue., Aug. 24. Moonlight Paddle on the Connecticut River

Upstream paddle until moonrise. Leisurely return under moonlight. Experienced only. Sign up by 8/19 at 8:00 PM.
L Bernice Bowler (413-532-4464 before 8 PM, treble13@comcast.net).

Wed., Aug. 25. Mountaineering Committee Planning Meeting

Join us to see how you can get involved! New members also welcome. Starts at 8:00 PM, Northampton Brewery.
L Adam Jasionkowski (413-563-2518, atom413@yahoo.com).

Fri.–Sun., Aug. 27–29. Northern Vermont Paddling, Swimming, Hiking

Join us in far northern Vermont at Lake Carmi State Park. We're planning on hiking Mount Mansfield. There will also be swimming, fishing, and paddling choices on the lake, which is 7.5 miles around. Visit www.vtstateparks.com or call 802-933-8383 for info and reservations. Cost is \$20/night for tent site, \$25/night for lean-to. We're staying in Cabin A, Area A. This is a dog-friendly trip. Contact CL for more information.
L Donna Walters. CL/R Sabine Prather (413-949-3914 before 9:00 PM, pioneervplanner@yahoo.com).

Sat., Sept. 18. Young Members Fall Introduction to Hiking Series

Thinking of breaking in those hiking boots? New to the area? Looking to meet like-minded folks who enjoy spending time outdoors? Sign up for the YM Intro to Hiking Series on the M-M Trail! Five hikes; each one will become progressively more challenging, building on skills and experience gained the week before. Hikes are on 9/18 (Provin Mountain), 9/25 (Holyoke Community College), 10/2 (Mount Tom), 10/16

(Seven Sisters), and 10/23 (Mount Monadnock). Young Members activities target adults in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, but are open to all.

Ls Wendy Barbour, Paxton Berardy, Mike Root, Meeyoung Lepore.
R Wendy Barbour (413-387-9289, wjbarbour@yahoo.com).

Sun., Sept. 26. Holyoke Range State Park (B3C)

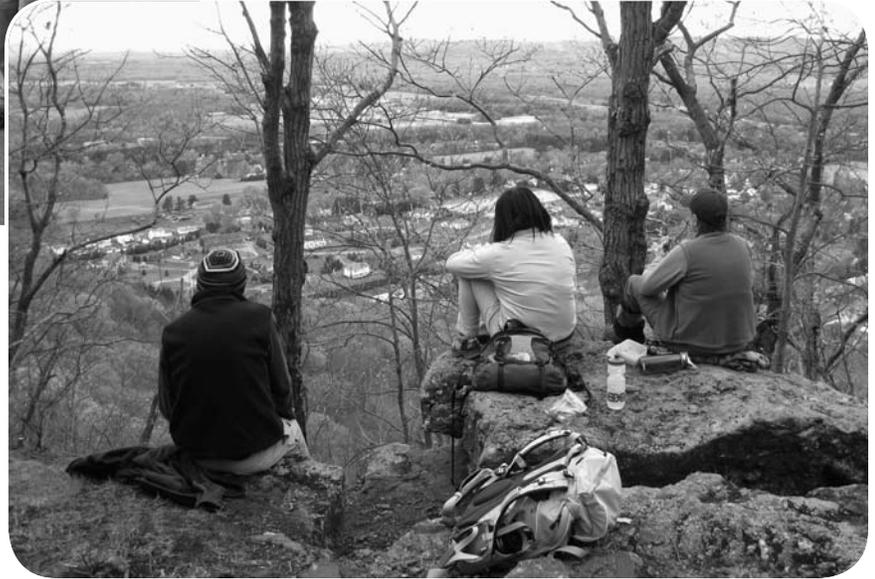
We will hike 8–10 miles. Final route and meeting places to be determined. Contact leader before 9/20 to register and confirm meeting place and time.
L Michael Zlogar (413-253-7522, mzlogar@comcast.net).

Fri.–Sun., Oct. 15–17. Fall 4000-Footer Weekend (A2A)

Enjoy New England splendor after the mad rush of Columbus Day. Hike a 4000-footer on Saturday, and a leader's choice on Sunday. Stay at a local lodge with shared rooms and bathrooms. Approx. \$105 for two nights lodging and two breakfasts. Recent mountain experience required; sense of humor a plus. Register early, limited space.
L Rebecca Budaj (413-289-0114 before 7:30 PM, rbudaj@comcast.net).



Hikers are rewarded with the views from the top of Mount Sugarloaf. This outing was led by Rebecca Budaj on April 10.
photos by Rebecca Budaj



Where do you like to go outdoors in western Massachusetts? Share your favorite experiences with other members! See **Notes From the Field** on page 2.

BerkshireExchange
 Summer 2010



Berkshire Chapter
 Appalachian Mountain Club
 5 Joy Street
 Boston, MA 02108

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