Hi Folks! Well so far it's certainly been a year to remember. As one of my favorite inspirational speakers used to say “if you can't think of something nice and polite to say in response to a catastrophe, just say unbelievable!” There have certainly been some real challenges both nationally with the continued unbelievable economy and locally with some unbelievable weather. That said, in times of strife there seems to arise that special hero who will always come in the nick of time to help and comfort us in our time of need. Who is that special person? It's the Volunteer! The Volunteer has his/her super power to lift our spirits when we are down and lend a strong hand when it's needed. The Volunteer never gives up, but instead holds up those who have, helping to return their dignity and humanity to a weary world. The Volunteer is a master of disguise and comes in every shape, size, age and ability. The Volunteer is a master organizer, bringing order to chaos and discipline to anarchy.

On June 1, just as my small town of Monson was preparing to celebrate the coming of summer, school endings and graduations, and our annual Summerfest, a Category 3 Tornado touched down in Westfield, literally tearing a gash in the earth for 39 miles eastward and devastating many communities in its path. Monson took a direct hit in the center of town, taking out the only grocery store as well as town offices, the library, several historic churches and other facilities and causing damage to over 200 homes, including close to 50 total losses. In just a few minutes it looked like the world had been turned upside down (one friend’s house actually was just that). It was nothing less than an unrecognizable warzone, with roads having disappeared in a mass of trees and wires and the once lovely hillsides raked clear of their majestic trees. It seemed like it might take not days, but weeks and months to clear the massive destruction.

But then it happened. The blue skies came just minutes later and heralded the army of the Volunteer. Before the maelstrom had even completely passed over, the Volunteer disguised as a teenage girl set up a Facebook page to help facilitate coordination of help efforts. Then he appeared as numerous neighbors who immediately dug through the rubble to free those under the debris. From here the Volunteer mobilized her armies, the government workers and leaders to comfort and coordinate recovery, the vast convoy of Utility Workers with their hundreds of repair trucks and legion of telephone poles, the National Guard to protect our property and politely but firmly tell the enemy armies of “sightseers” to “move along” and let us get to work. He set up a headquarters at the local community church, the steeple ravaged by the storm but the spirit far from broken. From here the volunteer fed the hungry, clothed the needy and sent out its missionaries of food and goods providers and chainsaw warriors to the nearly unreachable realms of the town. In just days, new poles and lines were strung, roads and waterways were cleared, and homes were cleared and cleaned. In less than a month, what appeared to be an insurmountable task became a celebration of re-emergence of a strong and united community...thanks to the Volunteer.

In these difficult times, it is easy to say “Hey, I have to take care of me and mine,” and to some extent this is certainly the truth. After all, charity does begin at home, for it is out of the home that the Volunteer comes, not from some paid agency. True volunteerism is the backbone of American society, from the volunteer army of the Revolution to the marches for equal rights and, most importantly, that unsung local hometown helper volunteer. Do you have volunteer experience? Do you encourage and support your family members to volunteer? There is nothing more personally satisfying than contributing to a community. Why not try it today? There are many opportunities waiting right outside your front door. Drop me a note if you need some ideas.

I wish you all a safe and prosperous end of 2011 and a happy start to 2012. And don't forget to get outdoors!

See page 4 for some great AMC volunteer opportunities.

Respectfully,
Hikin’ Dave Sauriol
Berkshire Chapter Chair
chapterchair@amcberkshire.org
401-523-4672
It’s Time to Enter the 2011 AMC Photo Contest!

The AMC’s 17th annual photo contest is now open to all members, with more prizes than ever up for grabs. This year’s Grand Prize winner will receive a spot in an upcoming photography workshop and an accompanying stay at an AMC destination. Winners of the “Kids, Families, and Adults Outdoors,” “Scenics and Nature,” “AMC in Action,” and “People’s Choice” categories will receive prizes from Black Diamond, Deuter, Merrell, and Outdoor Research.

Visit www.outdoors.org/photocontest for the full rules and entry instructions. Entries will be accepted until November 15, with the winners appearing in a spring 2012 issue of AMC Outdoors.
ALL ARE WELCOME:  
old friends • new friends  
new members • prospective members!

Berkshire Bash

Saturday, November 5, 2011 • 6:00 p.m.

Friends, Romans and country folks, lend me your ear.  
The time of the annual meeting is here.  
There’ll be food and much laughter  
And Pathfi nder thereafter  
To speak of the trail far and near.  
So all Berkshire region  
Drop by the Hadley American Legion  
November 5 just around 6 p.m.  
Let us know you’ll be coming  
So we won’t just be wondering  
And reply to chapterchair@amcberkshire.org.  
There’s a small facilities fee of $10 if you please  
That we’ll collect as you come to the door.  
Just mark down the date, so you will not be late  
And help us celebrate another great year.

Social Hour • Cash Bar  
Potluck Dinner • Annual Meeting  
Volunteer Recognition • Guest Speaker

A fantastic evening of dining and entertainment.  
Special guest will be Ron “Pathfi nder” Strickland,  
trailblazer, author, and conservationist.

Please bring a dish to share with 6–8 people.  
Last name A–C, salad; D–M, dessert;  
N–S, casserole; T–Z, appetizer.

American Legion Hall  
162 Russell St. (Route 9), Hadley, MA

For Directions and More Information  
Please contact David Sauriol at  
chapterchair@amcberkshire.org or 401-523-4672

PATHFINDER

Ron “Pathfi nder” Strickland is one of only two  
living founders of national scenic trails. Beginning in  
1970, he began to create a pathway from the Continental  
Divide at Glacier National Park, Montana to the Pacific  
Ocean at Cape Alava, Washington. In 1983 he and his  
fellow explorer, Ted Hitzroth, thru-hiked the proposed  
trail’s 1200 miles east to west to publish its innovative  
guidebook. In 2009, that route was established by  
Congress as the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail.  
Ron Strickland has also developed new concepts such as  
the 7700-mile, transcontinental Sea-To-Sea Route. Oregon  
State University Press published his memoir, Pathfi nder,  
in May.

AWARDS

June 2010: Ron and Scenic Trails Research received  
the prestigious L.L. Bean Outdoor Heroes Award.

October 9–11, 2009: ALDHA, the Gathering,  
Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA. The Appalachian  
Long Distance Hikers Association extended “special  
recognition to Ron Strickland for all of his efforts in  
creating the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail.”

November 17, 2008: The 19th National Trails  
Symposium in Little Rock, Arkansas awarded Ron  
Strickland its Lifetime Service Award.

October 2002: At the American Land Trust  
Alliance Rally in Austin, Texas, the Conservation  
Fund awarded him the $50,000 American Land  
Conservation Award.

August 2001: He received the $10,000 Chevron  
Conservation Award for his work to create and  
preserve the Pacific Northwest Trail.

2001: Ron founded the non-profit organization Scenic  
Trails Research, which he still heads. The mission  
of Scenic Trails Research is to help to develop new  
national scenic trails such as the 1200-mile Pacific  
Northwest National Scenic Trail (PNT) and the  
7700-mile Sea-To-Sea Route.

ALL ARE WELCOME:  
old friends • new friends  
new members • prospective members!

Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee: 2012 Nominees

OFFICERS

Chapter Chair: David Sauriol; Vice Chair: vacant; Treasurer: Sonja Goodwin; Secretary: Nora Hanke

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Appalachian Trail: Jim Pelletier; Berkshire County Representative: vacant; Berkshire Exchange: Jon Hanauer;
Canoe & Kayak: Charlie Camp, Connie Peterson; Conservation: Sabine Prather; Family Programs: vacant;
Membership: vacant; Mountaineering: Bill Fogel, Sarah Long; Nominating: vacant; Outings: Jon Hanauer;
Past Chair: Deborah Levine; Public Relations: Sabine Prather; Trails: Patrick Fletcher; Training & Education: Eric Gove;
Website: Bob Bergstrom; Young Members: Paxton Berardy
**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**Volunteer for the Berkshire Chapter Executive Committee**

*If you’d like to be part of the top level of Berkshire Chapter leadership and you’re interested in one of these exciting positions, or would like to know more, please contact David Sauriol at 401-523-4672 or chapterchair@amcberkshire.org.*

**Chapter Vice Chair**

The Chapter Vice Chair works with the Chapter Chair to develop goals and establish benchmarks to achieve these goals. The Vice Chair attends (and represents our Chapter in the Chair’s absence) the AMC-wide Chapters Committee meetings. The Vice Chair would be nominated to become Chapter Chair at the end of the current Chapter Chair’s two-year term.

**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.

**Membership Welcoming Committee Chair**

Organizing events is especially helpful in introducing new and prospective members to our chapter and the AMC. Help us welcome new members and encourage them (as well as the general public) to join us in all our 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 need 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.

**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 considering redesigning our website and this would be an exciting time for someone with some time, energy, and skills.

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**– OUTDOOR EDUCATION –**

**Leader Training, Berkshire/Worcester Chapters**

*Prindle Pond, Charlton, MA • Saturday–Sunday, October 29–30*

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 control, leader awareness, and decision-making. Fee of $40 includes 2-day training, materials and meals. Overnight lodging available for $20 (members) or $25 (non-members). Advance payment requested. Existing leaders attend at no charge.

Eric Gove (413-374-0467; amc.berkshire.te@gmail.com)

**SOLO Wilderness First Aid Training**

*Noble View Outdoor Center, Russell, MA*

*Saturday–Sunday, November 19–20*

Improve your skills and increase your confidence. Learn accident scene management and patient care at western Massachusetts’ Noble View Outdoor Center (nobleviewoutdoorcenter.org)! Standard first aid practices are generally based on the assumption that help will arrive soon and the patient will be out of your hands and at the hospital in under an hour. Accidents can and do happen, and all too often members of a group are not capable of dealing with the emergency. Not only does this lead to improper care of the patient, but it also endangers the entire group. WFA addresses the medical and logistical issues that arise where there is no ambulance, no shelter from the elements, your supplies are few, and the length of your wait for help is unknown. Lectures and discussions are supplemented by hands-on scenarios. An emphasis on long-term care and evacuation complications in the backcountry make this course unique. Fee of $140 with optional lodging available. Subsidy available for active Berkshire Chapter leaders. All are welcome: AMC members as well as members of the general public.

Gary Forish (413-572-4501 before 8 PM; forgary@comcast.net)
Celebrate Appalachian Trail Day on Saturday, October 8!

The Massachusetts Appalachian Trail Management Committee is again sponsoring hikes along the AT in Massachusetts.

Hikes vary in difficulty and length. Please contact the appropriate trip leader for more info and to learn of any changes in rendezvous time/location. For information about AT Day events, contact Jim Pelletier at 413-454-4773 or at@amcberkshire.org.

For all hikes, wear suitable clothing and bring plenty of water, as well as lunch or snacks for longer hikes. Hikes will go rain or shine.

For more information, contact the hike leader or hike contact person. As always, if you have any questions about what the hike will be like, call the trip leader or hike contact person.

Hikes are rated according to their distance, pace, and ruggedness. A typical rating might be “B3C.”

The first letter indicates the hike’s distance:
AA = over 13 miles
A = 9 - 13 miles
B = 5 - 8 miles
C = under 5 miles

The number in the middle indicates the pace the leader expects to set (on average terrain):
1 = very fast (2.5 mph or faster)
2 = fast (2 - 2.5 mph)
3 = moderate (1.5 - 2 mph)
4 = leisurely (less than 1.5 mph)

The final letter indicates the kind of terrain:
A = very strenuous
B = strenuous
C = average
D = easy

Hikes vary in difficulty and length. Please contact the appropriate trip leader for more info and to learn of any changes in rendezvous time/location. For information about AT Day events, contact Jim Pelletier at 413-454-4773 or at@amcberkshire.org.

For more information, contact the hike leader or hike contact person. As always, if you have any questions about what the hike will be like, call the trip leader or hike contact person.
Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado.
photo by Tom Harrington

On Mount Elbert, Colorado.
photo by Tom Harrington
In Memoriam

LUCILLE “LIBBY” HANAUER – Passed away on September 11. The mother of Outings Committee Chair and Berkshire Exchange Publisher Jon Hanauer.
Active volunteers for the Outings Committee were invited to the Leader Appreciation Barbecue, held on September 10 at Noble View Outdoor Center. Several of those who came stayed for this photo opportunity. The event was hosted by Eric Gove (Training & Education Chair) and Jon Hanauer (Outings Chair). *photo by Eric Gove*