

Wachusett Views



Worcester Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club

Summer 2022

A close-up view of our Chapter's vibrancy and dedication

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Paddling	David Elliott
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Skiing	Ruth Langh
Social	Vanessa Butler
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Third Wednesday	Erin Doolittle
Trails	Stephen Crowe
20s & 30s	Zenya Molnar
At Large Social Media	Karyn Marciniec
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	Alexandra Molnar

Summer 2022

Letter from the Editor

June is the month we celebrate the long awaited arrival of summer! In this issue, you'll learn of volunteer trail work opportunities. You'll read about an inspiring man, Kimball Simpson, who made many contributions to our trails and community.

Also included this issue: you'll hear some Chapter plans on Bicycle Touring and learn of other bike trips!

If you want to share a story, or contribute to our combined knowledge, please consider submitting an article to me at newsletter@amcworchester.org. I'd love to hear from you.

My hope is that in reading this newsletter, you'll be inspired to get outdoors and join us. We need you to help us protect the great outdoors and to enjoy it responsibly.

Enjoy our newsletter and get outside!
Nancy

Nancy Cahn, Wachusett Views Editor

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Mt Flume, June 2022

Under the Red Felt Crusher June 2022

Hello everyone!

I hope you all had a safe and healthy spring and are ready to enjoy the summer weather. I got up to the White Mountains last weekend for my first trip of the year and had a great time climbing Mounts Flume and Liberty. I'm looking forward to several other trips I have planned throughout the summer.

The Chapter recently held our National Trails Day events, and our volunteers are working hard to organize summer [activities](#) for you all. At the end of the month, the Executive Committee will be holding its first in-person meeting in over two years at a new, outdoor venue!

Finally, the chapter's Nominating Committee is beginning to put together the slate of officers for next year's executive committee membership. If you would like to get more involved with the chapter, please contact [Kim](#), who is leading our nominating committee, to learn about the opportunities available.

See you on the trails!

Michael Morin



Call for Worcester Chapter Grant Applications

The mission of the Appalachian Mountain Club is to foster the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the outdoors.

We envision a world where our natural resources are healthy, loved, and always protected, and where the outdoors occupies a piece of central importance in every person's life.

Application deadlines:

January 31 for approval by March 31

July 31 for approval by September 30

We award grants for up to \$5000. The application form can be found on our website: <https://www.amcworchester.org/endowment.html>

Requests for funding must be aligned with the AMC mission.

Recent grants include youth opportunities programs, shelter construction in Maine, construction of the Worcester Gear shed, and funding for the Club's Inter-Chapter Climbing and Paddling Committees to support their conservation efforts. [Applications](#) for the next round of funding are due July 31. ◆



Summer is for Trail Work

by **Liam Cregan**
New England Trail Coordinator
Appalachian Mountain Club

AMC is known for its commitment to protecting and maintaining trails and most of that work falls to volunteers who are willing to learn the skills and pitch in knowing that a lot of training happens on the job. In the Worcester Chapter we are fortunate to have easy access to the [Midstate Trail](#), the [New England National Scenic Trail](#), and the many trails of the Greater Worcester Land Trust (GWLT). What you may not know is that successful trail work requires people to volunteer not just with their tools on the trail, but also to organize events, manage tools, communicate about opportunities and more. There are opportunities to volunteer for the NET Committee (lcregan@outdoors.org), on the Midstate (mst@amcworchester.org), or with GWLT (gwt@gwt.org). Please give back to trails this year! ◆



Submitted by Wendy Dziemian

Wanted: Gear Shed Volunteers

Gear libraries aren't a new concept. The AMC has maintained gear services in Worcester since 2013, making outdoor adventure trips possible for local youth organizations and schools across the city. With its relocation and expansion at 135 Olean Street in Worcester, MA on The Cascades property, Nathan Schumaker and Colin Novick are increasing equipment usage to other users venturing out with the AMC in order to break down barriers to enjoying the outdoors.

The collaboration between Shumaker, an AMC Community Support Manager for Educators Outdoors and the Center For Outdoor Learning and Leadership, and Novick, Executive Director for the Greater Worcester Land Trust, is a powerful one that will improve the quality of life for many by getting them outdoors with the right equipment.

The mission of the Worcester Gear Shed may be dual purpose, but the vision is the same for both; increase access to the outdoors for the less represented members in our community. Collin and Nathan are in need of two volunteers at 135 Olean Street, Worcester, MA on The Cascades property site to help manage the gear shed inventory once or twice a month for a couple of hours at a time.

If you would like to be involved in AMC's efforts to make gear accessible, we would love to have your help! Contact AMC's Nate Schumacher at 617-391-6599 or nschumacher@outdoors.org for more information, questions, and interest. If there is a barrier to your volunteering with AMC, please reach out, as we may be able to overcome volunteer equity issues in some cases. ◆



Photo : Pete Richardson and Kim Simpson

By Steve Crowe

Kim Simpson's Impact on My Outdoor Journey

The Trails Community and Midstate Trail mourned the passing of Kimball “Kim” Simpson who died peacefully at home on December 15, 2022, surrounded by his loving family after a battle with cancer. I spoke with many Worcester Chapter members that came out to pay their respects to Kim at the Funeral Home Calling Hours in Westborough. The event had a long line of outdoor enthusiast and politicians waiting patiently to talk with Kate Donaghue and the family.

I have a life-long love affair with the Appalachian Trail. My parents gave me a life membership when I graduated from UMASS/Amherst. So, in 1985, when the ATC Biennial Conference was hosted by the Green Mountain Club in Poultney, Vermont, it was my chance ride up on my motorcycle and go to the ATC Life Member Dinner. I accepted Kate Donahue's offer to join the GMC and get a free day at the conference. When the bill arrived the next year, I decided that I didn't want to pay dues every year, so I sent in the payment to be a GMC Life Member.

I stayed in touch and was finally able to connect with them and carpool together for a spring work party at Stratton Pond in May of 1989. I remember blue blazing the Stratton Pond Trail on the way out. That September, I attended the ATC/AMC Skills Exchange Workshop at Camp Dodge in the White Mountains. With the training I received from Kevin Peterson, Morgan Sommerville and AMC Chapter Volunteers, my trail volunteer career was off and running. I met Lester Kenway and started volunteering at Baxter State Park doing griphoist highline projects. Rueben Rajala, Bob and Leah Devine introduced me to the AMC's White Mountain Adopt-A-Trail Program. In 1990, I adopted the Nelson Crag Trail on Mount Washington.

When Kim was Treasurer of the Green Mountain Club, I was able to serve on the Budget and Finance Committee. That volunteer position gave me a good look at all the different aspects of an organization like the GMC. When Kim became President of the GMC from 1991 to 1994, I resigned when the meetings were held on a weeknight. I was also asked to become the Trails and Shelter Chair of the GMC Worcester Section. So, I didn't think I needed to do both. I was fortunate to have Kim and his family on almost every work party. I think Kim holds the record for cleaning waterbars on the Stratton Pond Trail.

I went to a meeting of the Club Presidents for the maintaining clubs of the ATC at Harper's Ferry West Virginia. Kim Simpson was one of a few folks that nominated me and I was eventually elected to the ATC Board of Managers in 1997. This set off many memories of attending the ATC Biennial Conferences with Kim and Kate.

The AMC hadn't hosted in the White Mountains since 1972. When Kevin Knobloch asked if this was a good idea, I was the one that said yes, and I would help. He asked me to create an exploratory committee to figure out how it could happen. I chaired the ATC Biennial Conference in 2003 at Waterville Valley in N.H. Since there was no existing organization to do this, I cobbled together a professional group of dedicated volunteers from all over New England. With Kim part of the leadership committee, we wound up having the committee meetings at Kim's house in Westborough. We worked together for 3-4 years, and I invested 2000 to 3000 hours working almost every day for about two years to accomplish this.

When Kim Simpson chaired the 2009 ATC Biennial Conference at Carlton College in Vermont, many of the 2003 Conference volunteers joined Kim in putting on the 2009 Conference. I was Chair of the Trail Maintenance Committee, running the daily trips to work on the Long Trail.

Kim and Kate made major contributions to the Long Trail Protection Campaign, which raised funds to purchase private land and protect the continuity of the Long Trail System. Decades of tireless work have protected more than 60 miles of the Long Trail and 25,000 acres. Naturally, Kate was able to help me invest in the 265 Mile Club, which is engraved on the monuments at GMC Headquarters. Under many years of Kim's leadership, the GMC Fundraising and Land Protection Committees achieved robust growth in the GMC's annual budget and program activities. Kim supported the mission of the GMC by participating on the Nominating, Budget and Finance; and Legal, Insurance and Endowment Committees.

Kimball Simpson eventually became a member of the Board of Directors of the American Hiking Society, eventually becoming the treasurer. He was able to nominate me for the American Hiking Society Volunteer of the Year for New England which I received in 2006. Finally, about 10 years ago we enjoyed each other's company when he chaired the Midstate Trail Committee, guiding the MST to unparalleled excellence. This position also meant he served on the Worcester Chapter Executive Committee, and we would go to many meetings together, like the Mass Trails Conference.

The Midstate Trail Committee and the Worcester Chapter are working on a Conservation and Stewardship Award to be named in honor of Kimball T. Simpson. Kim was very humble and didn't seek awards himself, he was more interested in championing other folks. I will miss working with Kim and teaming up with him on many projects over the years. Kim was more than boots on the ground, he provided leadership wherever he could and was generous with his time, money and resources. So, it was a sad winter, when we lost a legendary figure and longtime friend who I had worked with on the local, regional, and national levels. ◆



OTTER RIVER BICYCLE TOUR

by Denny Laforce

The Otter River Bicycle Tour is a wonderful cycle tour that starts our summer's touring schedule. It's an annual tour held the first weekend of June.

The Otter River tour was thoughtfully developed by Colleen McLaughlin (now deceased) and Bill and Alice Mullen around 2012 with the purpose of giving the Cycle Touring Workshop participants an opportunity to try out their newfound skills. This event has all the ingredients to make it a perfect early season tour - low-mileage, rolling hills, and an overnight stay at one of the oldest and nicest campground in Massachusetts.

One challenge in running this tour is to find a place where cars can be safely parked through the weekend. Fortunately for the past 2 years, the North Brookfield Police has offered their parking lot, located next to the police station. While the police do not and cannot take responsibility for any vehicles parked in their lot, we feel pretty confident that this is safe place for overnight parking.

As we gather at the start of the tour on Saturday morning, beginners and experienced riders alike load everything they need for the weekend, camping gear and cooking utensils, onto their bicycles. Once their loads are secure, our ride begins slowly on lightly traveled roads with gentle hills. The slow start gives us a chance to adjust to cycling with a loaded bike.

Along the ride, we transition to the Central Mass Rail trail via a very short stretch of the Mid State Trail. While most of the ride is on paved roads, we do ride on some rail trails and gravel trails as well. Our scenic ride takes us through Hubbardston State Forest, past ponds, and wetlands.

Then around lunch time, we ride by a convenience store to get some more food and drink. While we're instructed to carry enough food and water for the weekend, the store does offer a great selection of beverages and sweets, and has a deli too. Over the years, we've also found the store keeps the empty milk crates behind the building that we use can use to sit on while eating lunch.

After a few "bumps" of climbing we finally reach the Otter River Campground. For the next half hour or so, we claim our group campsite, and then each rider surveys the ground for roots, stones, and bumps, looking for that "perfect" spot for his or her tent. After the cloth dwellings have been erected, out comes the stoves and cookware. The picnic table chatter begins and continues into dusk as we get to know each other better.



Like to backpack? Like to ride your bike? Why not combine the two? Worcester Chapter has a full schedule of cycle tours of varying distance and difficulty. Check out our website to learn more!

If you're experienced at cycle touring, why not become a cycle leader and lead a tour of your own design. It can be a simple two-day trip and can be to any local destination. To find out more, contact Neil Schutzman at biking@amcworchester.org.



Photo: Sarah Cahn finding a repair shop along the East Bay Bike Path

COME RIDE WITH US!

By Neil Shutzman

The Worcester Chapter of the AMC has bicycle riding activities for all levels of riding.

We offers a variety of rides and workshops which are open to ALL cyclists - AMC members and non-members, fast and slow, beginner and experienced. We follow the philosophy of unless otherwise posted 'no rider will be left behind'. Although you do not have to be an AMC member to participate, we hope that if you have fun, you will join our club. If you want to meet others who enjoy bicycling and want to explore new places and routes, this is the group for you!

The best way to find out what is going on is to visit our web site <https://www.amcworchester.org/biking.html> . This is a link to currently listed activities and at the bottom of the page there is a form for you to sign up for our newsletter. It comes out once a month and highlights the upcoming rides. You'll find out about our Block Island weekend ride and our series of rail trail rides, and find a humorous cartoon too!

For those interested in an easy leisurely ride we have our Tuesday even series of rides. These rides start at 6pm and usually are between 10-15 miles. The pace is relaxed and it's a good way to get out, get some exercise and enjoy good company. These rides often have a theme, such as "Taco Tuesday" or an after ride stop at a local bar to take in the band. Be sure to check our web site for upcoming summer rides.

If a more strenuous/training ride is what you are interested in, we have a Thursday evening ride series for you. These rides are in the 13-15 mph range and usually are 15-20 miles long. Also, if you are free in the day, keep an eye out for our "Hills of Harvard" rides. These rides feature steep hills good for training.

Weekend and weekday daytime rides are offered at a moderate pace (10-12mph) and are usually in the 20-30 mile range. Based on the leader's interest these normally will have a stop for food or a stop at a historical site. Be sure to keep an eye out for our series of rides that hit all the ice cream stores in the greater Marlborough area!

If you enjoy backpacking and want to explore New England then our cycle touring is for you. We normally have a workshop on skills in May and then several tours throughout the summer. This year we are planning on tours the length of Cape Cod, up and down Vermont, Block Island and the Maine coast. These tours usually stay at state parks, so the cost is minimal and travel is less than 50 miles a day (we make lots of ice cream breaks). The pace is leisurely and the experience is something you will remember for a lifetime.

If all this doesn't sound adventurous enough for you, then it's time to try Bikepacking. This is basically cycle touring, but on off-road trails. Bikepacking calls for off-road gear and an appetite for adventure. These trips are in the planning stages and tend to come up on fairly short notice, so always keep an eye on the web site.

As always the best way to enjoy AMC activities is to give back by becoming a leader. The more people we have as leaders, the more trips we have, and the less work anyone person has to do. We have a widely respected leader training program and a large database of area rides. So come out soon and enjoy the fun. 