

Wachusett Views



Worcester Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club

Winter 2023

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair	Chris Pignatiello
Vice Chair	
Secretary	Ginny Bixler
Treasurer	Jose Schroen
Biking	Neil Schutzman
Communications	Nancy Cahn
Conservation	Jonathan DiRodi
Finance	Christine Crepeault
Families	Ingrid Molnar
Hiking	Debi Garlick
Historian	Dave Laska
Leadership	Wendy Dziemian
Membership	Erin Doolittle
Midstate Trail	Mike Peckar
Paddling	David Elliott
Past Chair	Kim Beauchemin
Programs	Gaurav Dutta
Skiing	Ruth Langh
Social	Vanessa Butler
Technical Climbing	Dave Brainard
Third Wednesday	Erin Doolittle
Trails	Stephen Crowe
20s & 30s	Zenya Molnar
At Large Social Media	Karyn Marciniec
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	Alexandra Molnar

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Winter 2023 ***Letter from the Editor***

Winter is here! Shorter days and longer nights, and when the wind blows through the trees, it's an absolutely ideal time to get outdoors. Enjoy the trails, find solace in the quiet of winter, you'll find there's so many reasons to love living here. And if you're new to winter hiking, challenge yourself to give it a try!

In this issue, you will meet our new Worcester Chapter Chair, Chris Pignatiello, and find out who received Chapter awards. You will also read about the Chapter's contribution to Primary Source HistoryThon and the Mass Trails Conference.

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.

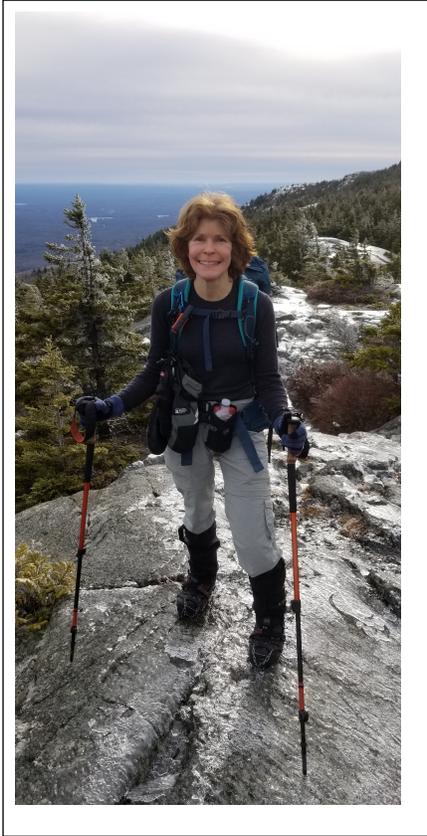
My hope is that in reading this newsletter, you'll be inspired to get outdoors and join us. We need you to help us protect the great outdoors and to enjoy it responsibly.

Enjoy our newsletter and get outside!

Nancy

Nancy Cahn, Wachusett Views Editor

Under the Red Felt Crusher



Greetings Fellow AMC Members!

I want to first introduce myself as the new Worcester Chapter Chair. I am excited to work with the Chapter in 2023 as we move further away from “lock-down” and closer to what we knew in the past as “normal”. While I don’t think we are completely free quite yet, we have made great strides in 2022 to bring folks together again. Our trip numbers are up substantially, our Leader roster is growing, and we have many exciting things planned. I myself will be getting boots on trail more frequently starting in January, and look forward to that familiar “crunch” of my spikes grabbing the ice. We have a number of beginner winter hikes scheduled to introduce newbie winter hikers to the beauty and experience that only the winter season brings. I encourage you to check out our [activities](#) database and sign up for an excursion or two.

Our newly elected Executive Committee consists of seasoned members as well as some new folks eager to jump in and make a difference. Our upcoming Planning Committee meeting on January 21st will be ground zero for identifying priorities and direction for the coming year, and we would love to hear

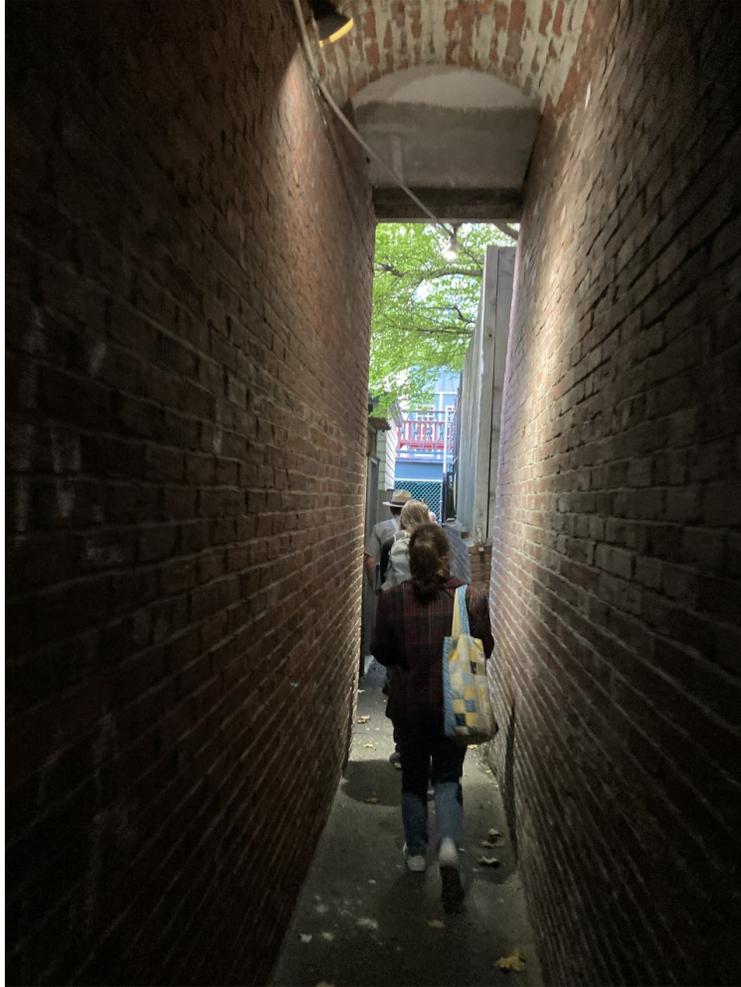
from you! If you have an idea that you would like to have considered, please contact me directly at chair@amcworchester.org.

Lastly, we would like to thank Michael Morin for his service as Chapter Chair, as well as the other roles he has held over recent years. We look forward to working with Mike in the future, as I’m sure he is going to want to stay involved!

See you out there,
Chris Pignatiello
Chapter Chair

Thank you Worcester Chapter

Submitted by Faith Salter



Boston's African American Heritage Tour includes venturing down these small Beacon Hill alleys which helped some of Boston's residents escape slave catchers.

Thank you for your contribution to Primary Source HistoryThon. This sponsorship provided free access for nearly 2000 AMC volunteers and staff to online and outdoor learning opportunities focused on African American History from Maine to Virginia. We are proud that nearly 50% of the participants in HistoryThon came from AMC's volunteer and staff across 7 states. As an Activist Sponsor AMC was one of the key sponsors of their History Thon series which included one online event, one in person event, and one

hybrid event featuring world premiere of the 20 minute film 'Legacy of Change: Black Changemakers in Massachusetts'. This film includes a community discussion guide that will be shared with AMC volunteers and staff. Thank you!

PRIMARY SOURCE
Educating global citizens

HistoryThon
A Walkathon to Support Education About African American History
Put the way to understanding

HistoryThon Together
Thank you to our generous sponsors!

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Nannette & William Braucher; Hester Brooks; Eileen & Jack Connors, Jr.;
Elizabeth Goodman; Jonathan & Meredith Meeks; Caroline Michel;
Rosemary & Bill Pisano; Anne & John Watt

Oct. 1-Nov. 6 | HistoryThon: A Walkathon to Support Education About African American History
Sept. 17 | *Rich Mosaic: Mt. Auburn Cemetery's African American Heritage Trail*
Oct. 12 | *Dreaming the Present: Time, Aesthetics, and the Black Cooperative Movement*
Oct. 27 | *Film Premiere "Legacy of Courage: Black Changemakers in Massachusetts Past, Present, Future"*

Poster showing appreciation for AMC as an Activist Sponsor for HistoryThon

Making a Difference with the Worcester Chapter

Submitted by Chris Pignatiello

Rookie of the Year: Wendy Dziemian

This is an award given to recognize a Worcester Chapter member who goes above and beyond in their first year in a volunteer role whether that be as a trip leader, ecom member, leadership training staff, ect. Wendy has exceeded expectations in all of those areas. She started out volunteering on the ecom as the Secretary; however, when the position became vacant she immediately jumped into the role of Leadership Chair which is one of the more demanding roles. She has also been our point of contact for arranging in-person meetings at the Auburn Middle School and has helped with the pre-meeting dinner. Outside of the ECOM she has completed her leadership certification. All around, Wendy has been a great addition to our chapter's volunteer leadership this year.

Volunteer of the Year: Emerson Grant

Emerson was among those volunteers most frequently nominated for Volunteer of the Month by club members during the 2021-2022 year. He devoted many hours of personal time and labor for the benefit of the Chapter, including helping with the following projects and tasks: Served as overseer of the Wachusett Mountain Adopt-a-Trail Program, while monitoring blowdowns and trail conditions; Logged 144 volunteer hours (as of December 2021!), including a 3-day rigging class and 2 days of axe training at AMC Camp Dodge Volunteer Center; Assisted with National Trails Day and Trails Fest; Assisted with Greater Worcester Land Trust at Southwick Pond Step Project; Served as a member of the Volunteer Pine Hill Trail Crew, working tireless hours in June, July, August and September; Worked behind the scenes for the trail crew through texting, emailing and organizing volunteers for the crew, as well as the logistics with Wachusett Mountain Ski Area Banquet Facility to provide a corporate lunch for the He has ordered tools necessary for the trail work done by the crew, and has learned how to repair some of the tools used. Thank you, Emerson, for your many volunteer hours given for the benefit of the Chapter!

Appie of the Year: Walt Lazarz

This is our Chapter's highest recognition. It honors a person who over multiple years has gone above and beyond to help make our Chapter great. Nominations are received from the entire Chapter membership, and it is a great honor to be nominated. The winner is chosen by secret ballot of the Executive Committee members. This year's winner was nominated by no fewer than ten different members (most non-EC). Comments from the nominators included: "Walt is such an asset to the Worcester Chapter"; "Always trying to improve hikers' abilities"; "Humble and patient"; "His hikes, backpacks, and workshops are always great, memorable, enjoyable". Thank you, Walt, for giving the gift of outdoor adventure to others.

Mass Trails Conference

Submitted by Steve Crowe



AMC Worcester Chapter shined bright at this year's MassTrails Conference, between the Midstate Trail contingent and the workshop 'Run a Productive Griphoist Highline Crew to Safely Set Rock Steps' hosted by the Worcester Chapter's Pine Hill Trail crew.

Stephen Crowe, Volunteer Coordinator for the Treadway Restoration Project and Sunshine Landscaping owner, was the leader for another Griphoist demonstration on the Pine Hill Trail. Crowe transferred his landscaping knowledge into the trail construction world. He volunteered at Baxter State Park in the 1990's, learning how to build rock steps during weeklong volunteer vacations. The time spent at Baxter allowed him to be mentored by Lester Kenway, who pioneered these techniques. Sunshine Landscaping allowed Stephen Crowe to provide leadership and vehicles for the workshop.

Long time crew member Emerson Grant assisted by splitting rock and demonstrating his Griphoist Skills. Former AMC Pro Crew member Robert White taught the crew how to safely set rocks using pick-mattock, rock bars and stone shaping tools. Bob also discussed trail design and discussed the various ways that rocks had been set as steps along the treadway. 8 attendees from the Trustees, DCR and Land Trust crew members were able to take these skills back to their organization with a new appreciation on how to move rocks.

They were able to take turns learning from the different sites and learn the different skills required to get rocks off the ground and into the air to move across the highline. Functioning much like a Zip-line for rocks, the highland helps protect the forest soils when moving rocks.



Originally built by the CCC during the 1930's as a Fall Line ski trail, the Pine Hill Trail wasn't meant to handle over 100,000 hikers per year. It was Dwayne Ericson's vision to prevent erosion and restore the trail at Wachusett Mountain State Reservation. The former Park Supervisor started the project in 2000 with SCA Crews and recruited Crowe in 2001. Lester Kenway taught several Griphoist workshops over the years to keep the crew's skill sharp.

The front country sidewalk style rock staircase built on the Pine Hill Trail has wide steps and allows hikers to pass each other. The 10-foot hardened treadway protects forest vegetation from trampling, provides adequate drainage, and almost eliminates erosion from rain and water.