

# Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker: Winter Hiking Workshop

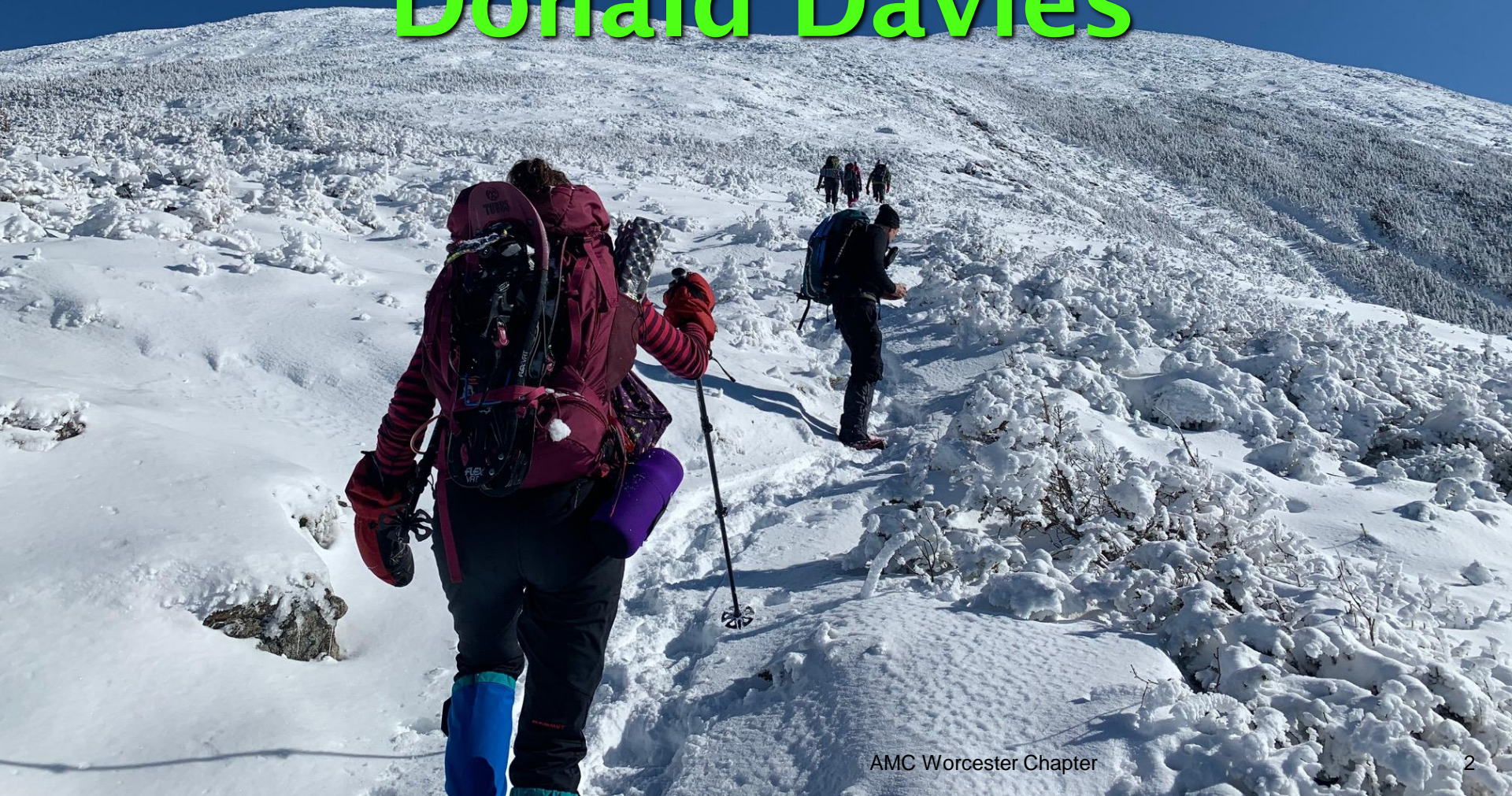
AMC Worcester Chapter  
November 12, 2022

Presented by:

Debi Garlick, Donald Davies, Steph Keimig,  
Dave Kulpa, Kim Beauchemin, Chris Pignatiello,  
Wendy Dziemian

# Agenda, Introductions, and Purpose

## Donald Davies



# Agenda

- ▶ Introductions: Donald Davies
- ▶ Purpose of the Workshop/Hike Series: Donald Davies
- ▶ Purpose of the Screenings: Donald Davies
- ▶ Getting Ready for Winter Hiking: Chris Pignatiello
- ▶ Hydration & Nutrition: Kim Beauchemin
- ▶ Break outside/firepit s'mores
- ▶ Heat Management/Clothing: Steph Keimig
- ▶ Gear, Gear, and More Gear! Dave Kulpa
- ▶ Post Hike: Debi Garlick
- ▶ Leadership Training: Wendy Dziemian
- ▶ Gear Demos: Walt Lazarz, Denise Guillemette, Paul Glazebrook
- ▶ Hike around Trout Brook: Alex and Zenay Molnar, Vanessa Butler

# Introductions

- ▶ **Debi Garlick:** Worcester Chapter Hiking Chair, 4-Season Hike Leader  
Worcester Master Leader
- ▶ **Donald Davies:** 4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Steph Keimig:** 4-Season Hike Leader  
Worcester Master Leader
- ▶ **Dave Kulpa:** 4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Kim Beauchemin:** Past Chair, 4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Chris Pignatiello:** Worcester Chapter Vice Chair  
4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Wendy Dziemian:** Worcester Chapter Leadership Chair  
4-Season Hike Leader
- ▶ **Gear Demos:** Paul Glazebrook: Worc. Master Leader, 4-Season Leader  
Walt Lazarz: 4-Season Hike Leader  
Denise Guillemette: 4-Season Hike Leader

# Purpose of Workshop/Hike Series

- ▶ Audience
  - Beginner Winter Hikers (attract and prepare)
    - Gain knowledge, experience and confidence
  - Experienced Winter Hikers (refresher)
- ▶ “Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker” - Learn by Doing:
  - Mt. Wachusett Gear Shakedown - Review gear/ Take a hike!
  - Beginner Track (I): Intro to Intermediate Local Winter Hikes
  - Advanced Track (II): Intermediate to Advanced Up-Country Winter Hikes
  - Other training: Crampon and Self Arrest
- ▶ Sign-Up priority given to workshop participants for “Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker” hikes
  - Listing opens to non-workshop participants three weeks prior to event
- ▶ Current list of Hikes: [www.amcworchester.org](http://www.amcworchester.org)
  - Keep checking website for new hike additions (or subscribe to AMC Activity Digests emails)

# Screenings

- ▶ Chapter's goals are to keep hikes safe and fun
  - Need to match participant's hiking level (experience and physical ability) with posted hike
  - Expect detailed "Screening" Questionnaire
  
- ▶ Four Elements to Hike Ratings (Worcester Method)
  1. **Distance** in miles
  2. **Pace**: Slow (< 1.5MPH), Moderate (1.5-2MPH), or Fast (>2MPH)
  3. **Terrain**: Easy, Moderate, Strenuous, & Very Strenuous
  4. **Overall difficulty**: Intro, Easy, Intermediate, Advanced, Expert
  
- ▶ Be honest about your fitness level and experience

# Getting Ready: Chris Pignatiello



# Get Ready to Hike!

- ▶ 2 most important pieces of gear that everyone of us possesses, even if never hiked in winter:
  - Body
  - Brain
- ▶ Physical conditioning a must!
  - Winter hiking physically harder than 3-season hiking
  - The best gear on the market can't remedy poor physical fitness
  - Know your limitations and when to postpone a hike to a better time
    - The mountains will be there another day!



# Get Ready to Hike!

- ▶ Take Time to Plan Your Hike & Navigation Methods
  - Review the area you will be hiking
    - Look at trail map and other relevant references
  - Recent Experiences:
    - [NewEnglandTrailConditions.com](http://NewEnglandTrailConditions.com)
    - [AllTrails.com](http://AllTrails.com)



# Get Ready to Hike!

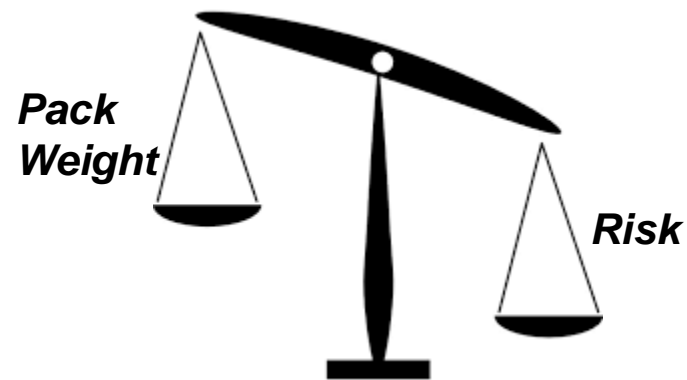
- Trail descriptions:
  - AMC Guides: White Mountains, Maine, Day Hikes
  - The 4000 Footers of the White Mountains
  - Alltrails.com, Hikingproject.com, OutdoorProject.com
- On-Trail Navigation:
  - **BRING: Waterproof map – or protected map**
  - Trail descriptions handy
  - Electronic navigation: Gaia GPS; AllTrails
  - Other: Garmin, smart watch, etc

# Get Ready to Hike!

- Check weather conditions for trails and driving (up and back!)
  - Local and destination weather forecast
  - Higher Summits Forecast (MWOBS)
  - Thunderstorm threat... take it seriously!
- Even if forecast for hike looks great... if the drive home *won't be*, rethink your plan....

# Get Ready to Hike!

- Review your gear/Bring what is on **Gear List**
  - Emergencies happen on short and long hikes
  - (injuries, weather changes, wrong turns)
  - Rescue will likely be many hours away
  - Be prepared to hike in the dark (hike duration can be longer than expected when the “unexpected” occurs)
  - Weight vs safety



# Get Ready to Hike!

- ▶ Policy of all AMC led Hikes – Stay Together!
  - Start as a group, hike as a group, end as a group
  - Hike at the pace of the slowest hiker
  - Participants should hike close enough to see the person in front and the person behind
  - Hike leaders have the right to change the plans of a hike in the best interest of the group for safety and comfort.

A wide-angle photograph of a snowy mountain landscape. The sun is low in the sky, creating a bright glow and casting long shadows. The foreground is covered in snow with some rocks visible. In the distance, there are more snow-capped mountains under a clear sky.

# Hydration & Nutrition: Kim Beauchemin

# Winter Hydration – Techniques

- ▶ Hot Water and Insulate
  - Insulated bottle holder, wool socks, neck flask
  - Back up thermos
  - Invert wide-mouth Nalgene, Freezes at top
- ▶ Lower Freezing Temp with Sugar
  - Gatorade
  - Jell-O
  - Real sugar (not artificial sweetener)
- ▶ Keep Water Accessible
  - Reach without taking off pack
  - Encourages hydrating

# Winter Hydration – Techniques

- ▶ Caution Use of Hydration Packs/AKA “Camelbacks”
  - Prone to freeze
  - Keep hose close to your body
  - Blow water back into the bladder to prevent water from freezing in hose
  - Insulate tubes and mouthpiece
  - Have back-up -> Wide-mouth Nalgene bottle



# Nutrition = Fuel

- ▶ **Fuel your Furnace**
  - Normal 1,200 – 2,500 cal/day
  - Summer Hiking 3,500 – 4,000 cal/day
  - Winter Hiking 4,000 – 5,000 cal/day
- ▶ **Carbs**
  - Simple sugars – quick fuel (minutes)
    - Candy, dried fruit, gel packs, chocolate
  - Complex: starches – longer fuel (hours)
    - Bagels, cookies, granola bars
- ▶ **Fat** – Long Term Fuel (4 – 6 hours after eating)
  - Cheese, meat, peanut butter, nuts
- ▶ **Protein** – Post hike recovery
- ▶ **Fancy Energy Bars vs. Snickers ...If you like Snickers, bring Snickers!**

# Nutrition = Fuel

- ▶ Have a good breakfast
  - Balanced and nutritious pre-hike
- ▶ Bring what you like
  - Think about what appeals to you on a hike; “Dark Chocolate”
- ▶ Don't skimp on calories
  - Diet before and after hiking
- ▶ Skip food that freezes easily
  - Keep chewy (moist) food close to your body
  - Precut food into bite-size pieces
- ▶ Light and simple
  - Easy to eat; can eat while wearing gloves
  - Max calories per weight



**Heat Management &  
Clothing:  
Steph Keimig**

# Heat Management/Clothing

- ↑▼ Biggest Challenge to Winter Hiking: Sweating
- ↑▼ Being wet can lead to Hypothermia
  - Start hiking cool, not necessarily cold
  - Dress in layers (like an onion)
  - Wear breathable clothing
  - You will sweat, be prepared
  - Hydrate early and often
  - Snacks (salts and carbs)
  - No diuretics if possible
  - Hydrate well day before and that morning of
  - Use electrolytes as well, day prior and morning of

# Heat Management/Clothing

- ↑▼ Clothing – Look for
  - Wicking material
    - ✗ Designed to pull moisture away
    - ✗ Allow for air flow
  - Venting options
    - ✗ Zippers at neck, arm pits, side zips on pants
  
- ↑▼ No Cotton!!!
  - Cotton pulls heat from your body!
  
- ↑▼ No Jeans!!!

# Clothing: Tops

## ↑▼ Base Layer (long underwear)

- Synthetic or wool
- Long or short sleeves

## ❓ Mid Layer

- Lightweight synthetic or wool
- Consider lightweight windbreaker

## ❓ Outer Layer

- Fleece and/or wool. Maybe a vest

## ❓ Insulating Layer

- Down “puffy” jacket with hood if possible

## ❓ Outer Shell: Water & windproof layer (muat fit over all layers))

# Clothing: Bottoms

## ↑▼ Base Layer (long underwear)

- Synthetic or wool

## ↑▼ Mid Layer

- Lightweight synthetic
- Can be hiking pants

## ↑▼ Outer Shell

- Water & windproof layer (not water resistant)
- Full side zippers recommended

# Clothing: Feet

## ☐ Socks:

- Wool or synthetic (bring extra)
- Liner socks/Vapor barriers

## ☐ Gaiters:

- Keep snow/water out of boots (internal on pants)

## ☐ Insulated/Waterproof boots

- Proper fit (not too small/not too big!!)
- Break in your foot on shorter hikes
- Different feet – Different boots
- Prep feet prior with duct tape and tincture of benzoine– keep in kit!

AMC Worcester Chapter -W WS



# Clothing: Hands

## ↑▼Gloves: sized correctly!

- Synthetic (fleece) or wool gloves (if leather must be treated waterproof)
- Liner gloves
- Bring extra pair

## ↑▼Mittens:

- Waterproof/windproof mitten shells to slip over liners. Bring gallon size ziploc freezer bags!

# Clothing: Head

## ↑▼Hats

- Synthetic (fleece) or wool
- Pack an extra

## ↑▼Face:

- Goggles – if very cold, windy, going above tree line
- Sunglasses
- Buff or face gaiter. Balaclava is not best choice

# Gear: Dave Kulpa



# Gear

- ▶ For the Winter Hiking Program, leaders will send you a list of required gear for your hike.
  - Also find it on AMC Worcester web site [here](#)
- ▶ “Full Winter Gear” means everything on the list marked **required**
- ▶ If you don’t own an item on the list, before you buy it:
  - Borrow
  - Contact the leader, who just may have an “extra”
  - Rent (e.g., snowshoes)

# Winter Gear Track I

## Additional Gear

Z*	<b>Backpack</b> - big enough to fit all of your gear (use stuff sacks to organize gear)
Z*	<b>Pack cover</b> and pack liner (plastic compactor bag works well)
*	<b>Microspikes</b> – some kind of non-snowshoe foot traction
Z*	<b>Snowshoes</b> – designed for flat to rolling terrain ( <b>adjust/try on at home before the hike</b> )
Z*	<b>Trekking poles</b> - (flick-lock style recommended) – snow basket on bottom
*	<b>Water Bottle and Water Bottle Holders</b> – insulated (camelbacks will freeze in the winter)-
*	<b>Personal first aid kit</b> and toiletry articles (personal meds)
*	<b>Whistle</b>
*	<b>Headlamp</b> (check batteries before hike)
*	<b>Map</b> of hiking area (remember to leave copy and hiking itinerary at home)
	<b>Chapstick and sunscreen</b> (20+SPF)
	<b>Hand Warmers</b> (activate at the beginning of the hike)
	<b>Small Cell Foam Pad</b> (to sit on)

“\*” Denotes required items

“Z” Denotes items recommended for rental before purchase or borrow from a friend

# Winter Gear Track II

## Additional Gear

Z*	<b>Backpack</b> - big enough to fit all of your gear (use stuff sacks to organize gear)
Z*	<b>Pack cover</b> and pack liner (plastic compactor bag works well)
*	<b>Stabilizers/microspikes</b> -- some kind of non-snowshoe foot traction
Z*	<b>Snowshoes</b> – designed for steep terrain (adjust/try on at home before the hike)
Z*	<b>Crampons</b> (adjust/try on at home before the hike; only required if specified by the leader)
Z*	<b>Trekking poles</b> - (flick-lock style recommended) – snow basket on bottom
*	<b>Water Bottle and Water Bottle Holders</b> – insulated (camelbacks will freeze in the winter)
*	<b>Personal first aid kit</b> and toiletry articles (personal meds)
*	<b>Whistle</b>
*	<b>Headlamp</b> (check batteries before hike)
*	<b>Map</b> of hiking area (remember to leave copy and hiking itinerary at home)
	<b>Emergency kit</b> containing compass, lighter, knife, fire starter & rope, duct tape
	<b>Chapstick and sunscreen</b> (20+SPF)
	<b>Hand Warmers</b> (activate at the beginning of the hike)
	<b>Biyy sack</b> and/or sleeping bag (emergency shelter)
	<b>Cell Foam Pad</b> (to sit on)
Z*	<b>Ice axe</b> (only required if specified by the leader)

“\*” Denotes required items

“Z” Denotes items recommended for rental before purchase or borrow from a friend

# Hiking Tracks

## ▶ Track I

- If you are a casual hiker, who usually hikes less than 5 miles and typically less than 1,000 ft of elevation, then this track is for you. Typically local terrain, rolling hills, modest inclines/declines.

## ▶ Track II

- If you are an adventure seeker, who usually hikes the Monadnocks, Mt Greylock, White Mountains 4k and 52WAV, or Adirondacks, then this track is for you. Typical hikes are 6–10 miles in length, 1500 to 3000 ft of elevation gain, with steeper ascents and descents.

# Winter Gear Topics

- ▶ Traction
  - Micro Spikes
  - Snowshoes
  - Crampons
- ▶ Trekking Poles
- ▶ Backpack
- ▶ Hydration Insulation
- ▶ Sit Pad (highly recommended)



# Traction

- ▶ Micro Spikes
- ▶ Snowshoes
- ▶ Crampons



# Micro Spikes



- ▶ Required gear for all winter hikes
- ▶ Best traction for hard-packed and/or slippery snow, “crunchy” ice

Hillsound  
Trail Crampon  
**Ultra**



Kahtoola  
Microspikes





**"Crunchy" Ice**

# Snowshoes

- ▶ Your needs depend on your goals
  1. Flat Terrain
  2. Rolling Terrain
  3. Mountaineering / Backcountry
    - e.g., White Mtns, Monadnock, Greylock ..
- ▶ Consider snowshoe weight, ease of entry, durability, amount of traction, heel lifts, expert opinions
- ▶ Sizing usually based on your weight, but for maneuverability in the mountains and back country, the recommendation is no larger than
  - 25” for men
  - 22” for women

# Snowshoes – continued

## For front country, flat terrain

- ▶ Any snowshoes will do
- ▶ Light weight and ease of entry are desirable



MSR EVO Trail

## For rolling hills

- ▶ You want some bite; teeth under the ball of foot at a minimum
- ▶ Heel lifts are nice



MSR REVO Explore

# Snowshoes – continued

## For Mountaineering / Backcountry

- ▶ “Aggressive” teeth pattern to bite into steep terrain
- ▶ Heel Lift to reduce fatigue on the steps



# Backcountry snowshoe models

MSR Lightning Ascent



MSR Lightning Explore



Note: these come in Men's and Women's models

# Best Snowshoes of 2022



MSR Lightning Ascent



Atlas Montane
















Tubbs Flex VRT



Atlas Helium Trail



Crescent Moon Big Sky 32

<b>Awards</b>					
<b>Price</b>	<a href="#">Check Price at Backcountry</a> <a href="#">Compare at 3 sellers</a>	<a href="#">Check Price at Backcountry</a> <a href="#">Compare at 3 sellers</a>	<a href="#">Check Price at REI</a> <a href="#">Compare at 3 sellers</a>	<a href="#">Check Price at Backcountry</a> <a href="#">Compare at 3 sellers</a>	<a href="#">Check Price at Backcountry</a> <a href="#">Compare at 2 sellers</a>
<b>Overall Score</b> ▾	 75	 73	 73	 69	 68
<b>Star Rating</b>					
<b>Pros</b>	Rigid, precise, excellent binding security, impressive traction	Good traction, easy-to-use and comfortable binding	Fully featured for steep and technical use	Inexpensive, easy to use, versatile	Large, easy stride, great flotation
<b>Cons</b>	New binding trades ease-of-use for comfort	Mediocre flotation for the length, strapped binding attachment isn't ideal	Loud decking and bulky harness	Unimpressive traction	Heavy, heel lifter is clunky
<b>Bottom Line</b>	The best snowshoes in our test, complete with high end features and simple engineering	This is a great traditional snowshoe that's outshone in a few areas by newer designs	This contender provides excellent traction, heel lifts, a comfortable binding, and moderate weight	This snowshoe does everything well and has a low price, making it a great value	An all-around snowshoe that tilts its preferences to the wild and deep environments

Outdoorgearlab.com



# Crampons

- For the most challenging terrain: hard, steep, ice
- Required for some Track 2 hikes
- Leader will tell you if these might be required for your hike

Model:  
Camp Stalker



- 12 point
- Universal Fit

## ▶ Ice Axe

- For self-arrest, steep icy climbs
- Requires special training
- Not required for Intro Series



# Crampon Option

## Hillsound Trail Crampon Pro

- More of an entry level into crampons
- Lighter in weight
- Easier to put on
- Easier to walk in as they have a shorter spike
- Suitable for our Track II Training hikes and other backcountry hikes we do



Anti-snowballing pads prevent snow build-up

10x 3/4 - 1" carbon steel spikes keep you moving in deeper terrain

- 10 point
- Universal Fit

# Backpack with pack cover and liner

- ▶ **BIG enough to carry all of your gear!**
  - Clothing Layers you peel off and put on
  - Wind/Rain Gear, Puffy Jacket
  - Extra socks, gloves, hat
  - Microspikes, Snowshoes, Crampons
  - Food, Water
  - Safety gear (headlamp, first aid ...)

**RECOMMEND 35–45-liter backpack,**  
with side compression straps or other  
attachment points onto which you can lash  
snowshoes to the sides, back, or top.



# Attaching snowshoes to a pack

Side Mount



Back Mount



Under Lid Mount



Credit: Sectionhiker.com

<https://sectionhiker.com/how-attach-snowshoes-to-backpack/>

# Hydration / Insulation

- ▶ Nalgene bottle
- ▶ Insulated bottle holders
  - Wool sock
  - Forty Below Neoprene Bottle Boots
  - Mountainsmith Insulated Bottle Holster
  - Outdoor Research Water Bottle Parka ??

Wide mouthed  
32 oz

Easy  
Sipper



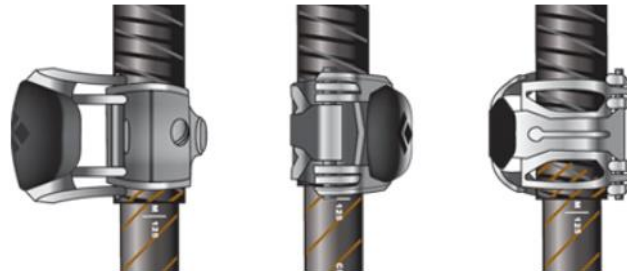
# Trekking Poles

- ▶ Help you maintain balance and stability
- ▶ Reduce fatigue; especially on downhill
- ▶ Good to test snow depth and ice solidity
- ▶ Used to raise/lower snowshoe heel lifts!

- ▶ With Snow Baskets

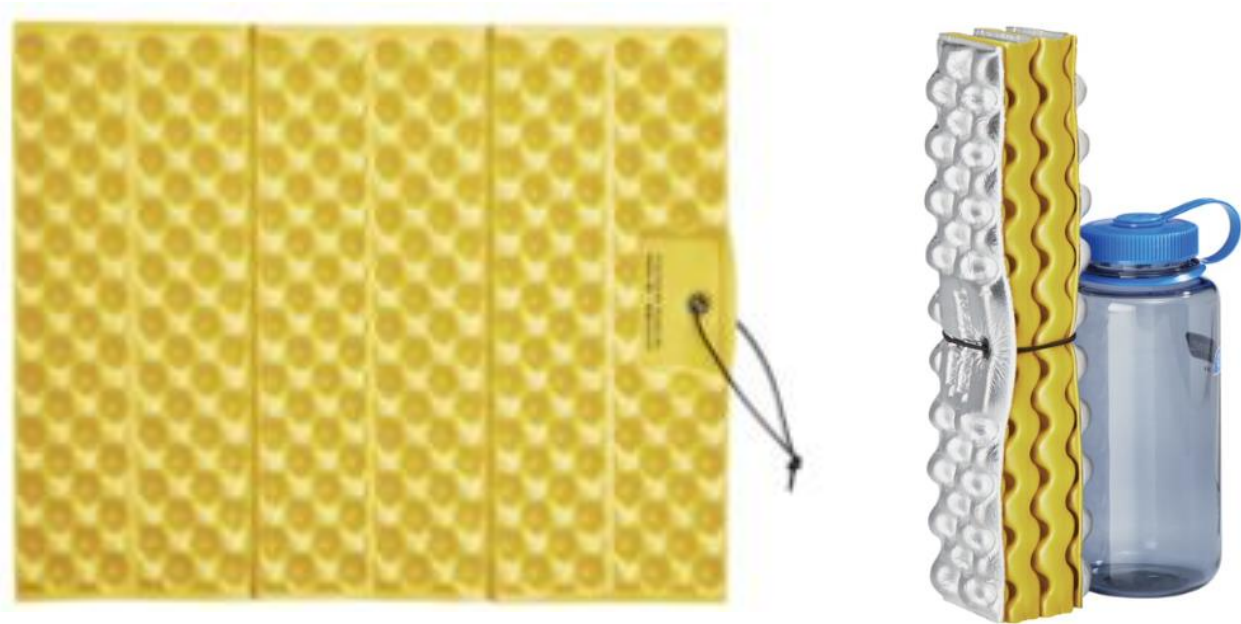


- ▶ Adjustable, “flick-lock” style is best



# Sit/Seat pad

- ▶ Foam padding for a comfortable dry seat
- ▶ Adds warmth when resting on rocks, logs, snowbanks



# Before you buy

- ▶ Do some online research
  - [Outdoorgearlab.com](http://Outdoorgearlab.com)
  - [Sectionhiker.com](http://Sectionhiker.com)
- ▶ When you have a good idea of what you want, go to a retailer to get hands on for fit and feel
- ▶ Compare prices online
  - Backcountry and Campsaver often offer 10–20% discounts on 1 full priced item when you sign up for their mailing lists.
- ▶ Now that you are ready to buy, earlier is better
  - Manufacturers, Supply Chains, Delivery companies are still suffering from affects of COVID, including labor shortages, and economy recovery pressures.



# Where to buy

- ▶ REI, EMS, Amazon, Backcountry.com, Campsaver.com
- ▶ Suggestions for low-cost winter gear, besides big-name gear stores:
  - Craigslist
  - Ebay
  - steepandcheap.com
  - geartrade.com
  - gearx.com – Outdoor Gear Exchange, Burlington VT
  - International Mountain Equipment (North Conway, NH; all sorts of used gear)
  - REI Outlet (on-line)
  - REI Garage Sale: as-is, used/returned gear (check REI web site for dates, locations)

# Renting

## REI

- ▶ Carries different rental gear in different store locations, so your local REI may not rent everything listed below. Give your store a call to see if they have what you need

### \* Snowshoes



Rental Gear	Member Pricing <i>No deposit required</i>		Non-Member Pricing <i>\$100-\$200 per item deposit required at pick up</i>	
	First Night	Additional Night	First Night	Additional Night
Basic	\$18	\$5	\$27	\$8
Premium	\$22	\$7	\$33	\$11
Youth	\$8	\$2	\$12	\$3

- Snowshoe rentals include free trekking poles where inventory exists

# Post Hike & More: Debi Garlick



# Post-Hike

- ▶ Celebrate the accomplishment
- ▶ Bring a change of clothes
- ▶ Drink more water
- ▶ Have a snack
- ▶ Email those pictures to everyone
  - Especially the awesome ones with the hike leaders...
  - May find the picture in the next newsletter or on AMC Worcester website







# Post-Hike

- ▶ Make plans for your next hike
- ▶ What worked? What didn't work?
  - Equipment, skills, fitness
- ▶ Check for hikes for Worcester Chapter and registration info at: [amcworchester.org](http://amcworchester.org)
- ▶ Check out hikes with other AMC Chapters
  - [www.outdoors.org](http://www.outdoors.org)
  - Don't limit hikes to Worcester Chapter



# Schedule of Winter Hikes

- ▶ “Fixin’ to Get Ready”
  - Pack your winter gear and go out and hike
- ▶ “Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker: ...”
  - Beginner to Advanced Hikes
- ▶ Ad Hoc Events – Ice Axe Self Arrest clinics and crampon clinics
- ▶ Check web for winter hikes outside the series

# Pathways to Leadership

- ▶ Build your Worcester Chapter resume
  - Get into trips with the AMC– hiking, backpacking, paddling, cycling, skiing, and or climbing
- ▶ Complete the Leadership Application, and turn it in to me and the activity chair
- ▶ Complete the AMC Leadership Training
- ▶ Complete Wilderness First Aid
- ▶ Complete 2 mentored evaluate trips
- ▶ Receive your badge
- ▶ Commit to leading 2 more trips over the next 2 years

# Advanced Adventures in Winter











