Winter is finally here, but have you made your plans for summer climbs on glaciated peaks? What about training for those trips? That’s where we can help! The New Hampshire Chapter is again offering two workshops in April to help you prepare for such adventures.

The “Introduction to Glacier Travel Workshop” is a one-day program held on Saturday, April 11, 2015 designed to familiarize participants with the glaciated mountaineering environment and the training to become a functioning member of a roped team for glacier travel. The morning starts with instructor introductions followed by group sessions that cover the mountain environment, dressing for success, basic knots, and a discussion about roped travel and the mechanics of clipping in.

Safety is continually stressed and the fundamental climbing equipment is thoroughly reviewed, from the harness and helmets, to the ropes and knots we use.

Our instructor-led group sessions include hands-on practice for the knot-work, including working with prussic loops which are provided. After the instructors demonstrate how we divide a rope for various team sizes (3 to 5 team members), we break into small groups for practice.

BY JOE DORSHEIMER

A Few Questions for…Rick Desmarais

Since you’re in the business of food, let’s get the food questions out of the way first. Favorite healthy food?

Stonyfield Farm Lowfat Yogurt. Talk about eating local! Their plant is about two miles from my house.

Favorite bad food?

Really, I need to pick just one? Isn’t the rule that after a long hike you can eat anything you want, sort of a grace period? French fries, absolutely.
July 18-Aug. 15, 2015

August Camp 2015 in Central Cascade Mountains

BY RUTH ("SAM") JAMKE

Studded with volcanic peaks, mountain lakes, wildflower meadows, old lava flows and miles of hiking trails, Oregon’s Central Cascades is the place to be for August Camp, which runs July 18-August 15, 2015.


This full service tent village accommodates 64 campers each week and offers multiple hikes each day for all levels of ability. Delicious home-cooked meals and trail lunches are provided, plus great camaraderie and nightly campfires make for a memorable experience. Round trip transportation between Camp and the Portland International Airport (PDX) and to and from daily activities is provided.

Plan your one- or two-week adventure now and be part of one of the AMC’s oldest traditions. Visit augustcamp.org for the application and camper information forms as well as detailed August Camp information.

Questions about August Camp? Contact Sam Jamke at regionaldirector@amc-nh.org for more information.

Ruth ("Sam") Jamke is AMC’s Regional Director for New Hampshire and Maine.

July 11-19, 2015

The 49th Annual Presidential Range Hike will be held Saturday, July 11 to Sunday, July 19, 2015. Described as “a strenuous and wonderful group hike,” PRH includes 15,000 feet elevation gain, about 50 miles, 8 nights lodging and meals at AMC huts, gratuities, trail snacks and in-hike transportation. The daily hikes are 5-10 miles a day with a variety of hiking options each day. There will be four AMC New Hampshire Chapter leaders and a maximum of 21 hikers. The cost is $880 for AMC members and $925 for non-members.

Visit the PRH website at amcnhprh.org or contact co-Leader John McHugh at ljmcugh(at)comcast.net or (603) 382-6685 for more information.
March 7, 2015
Hike Mount Moosilauke via Gorge Brook Trail

Join AMC New Hampshire on Saturday, March 7, 2015 for hiking to Mount Moosilauke via the Ravine Lodge Road and Gorge Brook Trail. Winter experience, full winter gear and registration are required.

Contact Trip Leader Larry Yetter at larry@texloom.com or Trip Leader John Bergman at johnb1764@gmail.com to register or for more information.

March 7, 2015
Hike Mount Osceola & East Osceola

Join AMC New Hampshire on Saturday, March 7, 2015 for hiking to both East Osceola and Mount Osceola. The hike is approximately 7.6 miles round trip with 3200’ gain.

There will be a good steep pitch, plus at least one tricky/icy area. Experience with crampons preferred and registration is required. Contact Trip Leader Beth Zimmer at bzimmer@metrocast.net for more information or to register.

April 11, 2015
Family Safety Workshop

A workshop called “Staying Found Workshop for Families” will be held starting at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 11, 2015 in association with the Beaver Brook Association in Hollis and NE K-9 Search and Rescue.

The workshop will teach children how not to get lost, and how to stay safe if separated from their group. It is free and is recommended for children ages 4-10. Children will get to see search and rescue dogs in action. The program lasts 1.5 to 2 hours. Registration is required.

Contact Wanda Rice at (603) 432-7840 (please call before 9 p.m.) or wandarice@comcast.net for more information or to register.

March 15, 2015
Family X-C Ski Day

Join AMC New Hampshire for a leisurely-paced family cross-country ski day at Windblown on Sunday, March 15, 2015. Windblown, located in New Ipswich, offers ski rentals, a cafe and warming huts.

Contact Trip Leader Emilie Phillips at emilie10amc(at)j3.org for more information or to register, which is required for safety reasons.

April 18, 2015
WILD New Hampshire Day

Ready to celebrate Spring? Come and visit the AMC New Hampshire exhibit at the Discover WILD New Hampshire Day & 150th Anniversary Celebration of New Hampshire Fish & Game Department on Saturday, April 18, 2015 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on the grounds of the NH Hampshire Fish and Game Department, 11 Hazen Drive, Concord. The grounds will be transformed into an exciting outdoor festival for families.

Visitors will enjoy browsing more than 70 exhibits from outdoor, conservation and environmental groups from all over New Hampshire. Great ideas will be presented for conserving energy and protecting the environment. Everyone is a conservation partner in New Hampshire.

Come discover how you can get involved. Visit wildnh.com for more information.
Favorite hike snack?
Mint Milanos because they have little water and not that much chocolate so they are good in summer and winter. They don’t melt too much or freeze. And they seem popular with everyone.

How long have you been an AMC member?
More recently 15 years, but I was a member earlier in life. When my kids were young there wasn’t a lot of time to hike, or sleep for that matter, and I let my membership lapse.

What would you advise someone who has never hiked before?
Do it however you’d like as there are few rules. Just enjoy it, whether that means hiking in bare feet on Monadnock, trail running on ridges or tramping around on old rail trails. If you can do something that pulls your focus away from deadlines and financial issues and the day to day minutia that everyday life wants to convince you are most important, then you’ll be relaxed and better able to keep them in perspective.

What’s your favorite outdoor activity?
Hiking. Summer or winter, foggy or clear, each hike has its appeal.

Favorite place to do it?
New Hampshire. Between the Belknaps, the Ossipees and the different areas of the Whites, when you wake up in the morning within a few hours you can drive to different areas depending on the type of experience you’d like. For lofty views you can head to the Northern Presidentialis, and if you’re hiking with in-laws you can take them to the “scenic” Desolation Trail on the back side of Carrigain.

If you’re not hiking you’re probably…
Writing a term paper. My employer has a very generous program in place to encourage employees to head back to the classroom. I’ve been working on an MBA in Project Management online at SNHU for a couple of years now, and writing long Blackboard postings or term papers is just as painful as I remember. As I went to an engineering school, we got all of our humanities work out the way early so we could focus on the joys of differential equations and Laplace transforms, so relearning how to do APA citations has been a struggle.

Why engineering?
I think a lot of engineers are born and not made, as they grow up tinkering, taking things apart and trying to put them together in a different way from a very early age. It’s a great career track that can lead you into marketing, sales, or management, or in many companies you can stay on the technical track and become the resident expert. The downside is that you have to field requests weekly to fix computers and setup TVs, and for days after daylight savings time you find yourself compulsively resetting digital clocks. But it does typically allow for weekends off, giving engineers plenty of time for hiking!

Engineers are really exciting, fun people, right?
Yes, of course we are! Engineering is the art of striking the right balance between a number of factors, such as time to market, cost and functionality, and daily engineers run into all sorts of problems that require creative thought and problem solving skills. Think about it this way: if you broke a leg in the back country who would you rather be hiking with: an engineer or an Art History major?
Do we have (bike) throw downs for you!

BY DORIA HARRIS

The AMC NH Chapter Bike Committee is offering challenges to encourage bike riders to get out for a ride and discover the beauty of New Hampshire by bike. The fun will be in meeting the challenges and the reward will be experiencing more of the Granite State by bike and receiving an AMC t-shirt which will announce to the world that you have met a AMC NH Chapter Bike Challenge.

Challenge #1 is the Covered Bridges Challenge: 15 in 2015.

Did you know there are 54 covered bridges in New Hampshire? These beautiful structures from an earlier century are located throughout our state. (Go to www.nh.gov/nhdhr/bridges/table.html for a complete list of covered bridges.)

To meet this challenge, go on bike rides that visit at least 15 of New Hampshire’s covered bridges. Each ride should be at least 10 miles in length and can include multiple bridges per ride. Document your ride by taking a picture of yourself in front of each bridge on your ride, showing the name and/or bridge number in your photo and the date visited by bike.

We will use the most interesting pictures and stories in later articles in Mountain Passages. Send your documentation to: nhambikegroup(at)gmail.com and put “Bridge Challenge” in subject line.

Challenge #2 is the 100 Mile Challenge. Did you resolve to get more exercise in 2015? Our 100 mile challenge can help with that.

To meet this challenge, go on a series of AMC NH Chapter led-bike rides that total up to at least 100 miles. For example, go on 5 of our 20-mile rides to meet this challenge. Inside scoop: A covered bridge ride led by an AMC NH Bike leader would count towards meeting this challenge as well. To document that you’ve met this challenge send the dates and lengths of your rides and your ride leader’s name to: nhambikegroup@gmail.com and put “100 mile” in subject line.

Visit amc-nh.org/calendar/activities.php for a list of our bike rides. Come ride with us!

Doria Harris is Co-Chair of AMC NH’s Bike Committee.
teams for individualized team training.

The remainder of the day is spent in the field learning the skills needed to function efficiently as a roped climbing team. These instructor-led teams review and practice roping up, properly tying prussic loops, crampon and ice axe techniques, self and team belay, self and team arrest and learning to ascend and descend as a team. Aside from Glacier Travel, ice axe and crampon skills are important for Winter Hiking in New England. For some participants, the rhythm of traveling smoothly as a team is an entirely new experience.

Highly anticipated by most participants is the opportunity to learn and practice self arrest, and our training site at Gunstock Mountain provides the terrain necessary for practicing these critical skills. We do this as a practical exercise by having the participants demonstrate properly dividing the rope, clipping in and then the entire team must check each other to ensure they are safely prepared to start climbing. All of these fundamentals are reviewed as needed. Ascending the slope as a team re-establishes the rhythm needed to move efficiently. Instructors frequently establish a route using wands, something which helps to simulate that real world experience.

We introduce a running belay and the techniques used for safely passing your clip-in knot across the belay anchor. We also review self arrest to re-enforce those skills. Repetition of all these skills is designed to increase confidence and establish the foundation necessary for safely building snow anchors, followed by crevasse rescue hauling systems. Our instructors review the most common snow anchors including improvisation techniques, and then demonstrate building several.

Participants then practice building their own and testing them. Next, the instructors explain and demonstrate the need for and construction of hauling systems and the anchors required to support them. All team members practice all aspects of the anchor building and hauling activities which includes the rescue of a fallen climber, typically one of the instructors. The hauling systems we cover range from the simplest heave-ho to complex mechanical advantage using multiple pulleys and improvisation techniques.

If there is sufficient time, a dynamic “un-scripted” rescue scenario is practiced by the team, and anything can happen! At the end of the day, everyone descends to base camp for a group re-cap and review.

The April 11 workshop costs $30 for AMC members and $35 for nonmembers. The April 18-19 workshop costs $55 for members and $65 for nonmembers.

Contact Workshop Director Joe Dorsheimer at jdorsheimer(at)hotmail.com for more information.

Joe Dorsheimer is Co-Chair of AMC New Hampshire’s Mountaineering Committee.
Notes from the Chair

BY WAYNE GOERTEL.

The winter storms of late January created many challenges for work and travel, but the generous snowfall was a lift for winter sports enthusiasts. Some weather forecasts claim the Northeast may have proper winter weather into April!

The snowy weather was welcomed by the attendees of 2015’s first New Hampshire Chapter Winter Workshop. Participants and volunteers for the courses offered the weekend of January 30 to February 1, 2015 nearly filled the AMC Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH, and backpackers slept in winter tents outdoors.

Courses were held for snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, and other winter wilderness travel at several ability levels, as well as winter backpacking and leadership skills. Participants enjoyed discussions about active winter attire, equipment, weather, nutrition, trip planning and risk management. These skills were practiced in small groups, supplemented by map and compass lessons, and the result was groups of intrepid winter adventurers exploring the snowy east side of Mt. Cardigan both on and off trail!

The Saturday morning temperature outside the lodge was slowly climbing from zero Fahrenheit, accompanied by wind gusts of 20 to 30 mph. Teams heading outside quickly tested their gear and myriad techniques for retaining warmth in these conditions for several hours. Over the weekend, instruction and practice gave attendees new ways to safely enjoy the winter season outdoors. Students experienced success with their new skills and were quite satisfied with what they’d accomplished. The event is operated entirely by New Hampshire Chapter volunteers, experienced course instructors and talented cooks, and it yields a genuinely enthusiastic environment for learning and camaraderie.

There are plenty more of these NH Chapter educational offerings to be found this winter and spring, and trips too. You can find them at amc-nh.org/calendar/activities.php or at outdoors.org. Winter hiking, skiing, and climbing round out the winter, and paddling events come on the calendar in early March! I hope you’ll check them out.

See you outdoors!
-Wayne

Where in the world is…?

This fisheye lens shot is of Marianne Page, Membership Chair of AMC NH’s Chapter taken on Mount Garfield. Marianne and her husband had just returned from vacation in Florida where she reports they had a “cold spell.” Nothing beats a walk in the wintry woods to celebrate your return to New Hampshire!

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’Mountain Passages’ is only the beginning…

From hiking to biking, AMC’s New Hampshire chapter has it all. Visit our website at amc-nh.org and read more about us and our many year-round events.

Volunteer hikers, bird-lovers needed for conservation program

Do you enjoy hiking? Are you a birder or would you like to learn more about bird identification to support a conservation effort?

Mountain Birdwatch is a long-term monitoring program for Bicknell’s Thrush and other high-elevation forest birds. Mountain Birdwatch is looking for beginner to experienced birdwatchers who are strong hikers to conduct surveys in the White and Green mountains, the Adirondacks, the Catskills and in Maine. Hike a scenic mountain trail, enjoy the sunrise, and count birds for conservation!

Visit http://vtecostudies.org/projects/mountains/mountain-birdwatch/ or email Mountain Birdwatch Director Judith Scarl at jscarl(at)vtecostudies.org for more information about the program including a list of routes in need of volunteers in 2015.