O U R  M I S S I O N

The Appalachian Mountain Club is the nation’s oldest outdoor recreation and conservation organization, and promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters and trails of the Appalachian region. AMC has more than 100,000 members, 16,000 volunteers, 450 full-time and seasonal staff. The New Hampshire Chapter is the second largest of the 12 Chapters within the Club.
As far back as I can recall, I’ve loved winter: the stark beauty and transformation a snowstorm can bring to the landscape, the squeaky crunch of ice crystals underfoot, the gut-wrenching punch of the wind in warm lungs and nostrils, the newness in each day. On a cold afternoon in February 2010, after an extended period with little work and some backcountry exploration with my dogs, I ran across a steep trail that lead to an icefall. I can still recall the terror and intrigue I felt, realizing that people actually climbed that ice. By the next season I had connected with Tom Sintros and the New Hampshire Chapter of the A.M.C. I was totally hooked by the mental and physical challenges of winter climbing and the solid community of people I met.

Winter 2015-2016 is certainly the shortest and most varied climbing season that I have experienced since those formative days. The cycle of rain and warm temps followed by arctic blasts that sent everything back to “early season conditions” had us on our toes. Early season all year? Maybe. We made the most of every chance to get on the ice, and each outing was very unique.

Under the guidance of the Mountaineering Committee, and with the help of several local volunteers, Tom and I hosted two introductory climbing workshops and one day of open climbing at a small venue outside of Keene, N.H.

In the late 1800’s, sections of hill and ledge where blasted to create a level bed for the railway headed north from Keene through Westmoreland. Today, the cliffs on the rail trail provide a near perfect outdoor classroom with climbs ranging from WI2+ to very near WI5 and several hard mixed routes. The cut offers an easy approach and quick set up which translates to participants getting maximum time climbing. Many of our “students” stated they

A WINTER REFLECTION, TO PAGE 8

Mountain Passages is published six times a year by the New Hampshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Submissions. Members may submit articles or photos (hi-res jpeg) to newsletter@amc-nh.org. Articles may be edited at the discretion of the editor to meet space and style requirements. Publication is on a space-available basis. While Mountain Passages does not pay for submissions; a byline or photo credit is given. Contact Mountain Passages for reprint permission.

Advertising. The AMC NH Chapter members enjoy the outdoors year-round by hiking, paddling, skiing, backpacking, climbing and biking and more. For information and the 2014 Ad Rate Sheet, send an email to newsletter@amc-nh.org.

We reserve the right to refuse any submission, photo or advertising that is not consistent with the mission of the AMC.

Address Changes. Address changes or other changes to your membership must be made through AMC Member Services at 5 Joy St, Boston, MA 02108; 800-372-1758; outdoors.org/membercenter

Please note: Member address updates cannot be handled by AMC-NH officers, committee chairs, or the newsletter editor.

Mountain Passages Online. If you’re receiving Mountain Passages through the mail, please consider signing up to get the electronic version instead. You’ll get added resources not available to print subscribers: direct links to emails, forms and online information, color photos, online registration forms.

To sign up, go to www.outdoors.org/membercenter and set your AMC-NH Chapter newsletter preference to online.

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For questions, or to submit ad: Advertising@amc-nh.org

Please send ads as color PDF or jpeg high-resolution files, at correct size. Ads will appear in color in on-line version and black and white in print version.

Mail check for advertising to: Appalachian Mountain Club
c/o Ron Janowitz, 88 W Haven Rd., Manchester, NH 03104

We reserve the right to refuse ads that are not related to the mission of AMC. We do not provide proofs and accept no liability for errors beyond the cost of the ad.
Hiking to the high peaks, as you approach the alpine zone, you will encounter signs reminding hikers to stay on the established trails and hard surfaces, and especially to avoid stepping on plants. The alpine zone is a tough place for plants to grow.

Above the tree line in the alpine zone, most plants grow low to the ground, but where there is some shelter from the harsh winds, some trees like the black spruce can find a niche. Even in the relative shelter of the niche, the trees often take on a low-to-the-ground and prostrate form more like that of a bush or mat than a tree.

Figure 1 shows a clump of black spruce that grew above tree line in the alpine zone. Something changed in the niche environment, and now some, or all trees, in this clump are dying. The weather-beaten and twisted remains of the trunk and branches of the most recently killed stand in mute testimony to the fury of the alpine environment. Note, in front, the remains of a tree that died earlier and the newly exposed opening on the lower right, where the needles are being stripped away. That tree may not survive.

The space once occupied by the now dead spruce is being filled in by low-to-the-ground alpine plants. These plants are better adapted to the alpine conditions.

Note the twisted and grotesque shape of the dead tree trunks and branches. As the tree tries to grow outside the shelter of the niche, the wind and blowing snow nip the leader and cause the surviving branches to grow so as to remain in the niche. The shape of the branches indicate the prevailing winds blow from left to right relative to the photograph. The tree branches illustrate the structure of krummholz, “twisted wood.”

Figure 2 shows a view of the alpine zone in the vicinity of this clump of black spruce. All the plants are small and close to the ground to minimize the area exposed to the harsh environment. The dark green mats are Diapensia cushions, interspersed with clumps of rust-colored sedges.

You can see all this for yourself. It’s located on the north side of the Crawford Path near the western junction of an unmarked loop path to the summit of Mt. Franklin. When hiking in the alpine zone above 5,000 feet, take a few moments to contemplate the forces and life adaptations that shape this environment.
**SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENT**

**Tuesday, July 19, 2016**

**Historical Cardigan**

**TERRI WILSON**

The Bristol, N.H. Public Library (Minot Sleeper Library) will be promoting one of our favorite pastimes: hiking. The library will be hosting a summer reads program, “A Walk in the Woods”, by Bill Bryson, as well as promoting hiking as recreation. N.H.’s very own AMC Cardigan Lodge Manager, Thomas L. Fisher will be speaking at the library Tuesday, July 19 at 6:30. The topic will be on Historical Cardigan and promoting the local trails around the Lodge. Tom has been the manager at Cardigan for 11 years. As manager, Fisher fills many roles: innkeeper, chef, park ranger, outdoor education teacher, plus performing a host of other duties.

Tom says to destress “he simple heads up the mountain.” Sounds like the perfect remedy for all of us. Please come and support our speaker at the library, located at 35 Pleasant Street, Bristol, N.H.

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**Where Are You Riding This Year?**

**DORIA HARRIS**

Where would you like to ride this year? The local bike path? Your favorite day ride? Travel on gravel or take the unknown road? A bike overnight to your favorite inn or campground? Ride across the state? Across the country? AMC Bike Activities can get you inspired, started and out there!

We will be offering day rides on paths, paved and unpaved roads. These vary in length from 10 to 40 miles. In addition, this spring, we are offering two Bike Touring Workshops followed by two Bike Overnights in June to help you get started with your touring plans. We are also offering our Bike Challenges again so if you didn’t get to them last year, you have another opportunity.

See our website for details of the Covered Bridge Challenge and the 140 Mile Challenge. Yes, 140 miles in recognition and celebration of AMC’s 140th Anniversary. In addition to our Bike Touring Program and the Challenges.

Look on our activities calendar at: [http://amc-nh.org/calendar/activities.php](http://amc-nh.org/calendar/activities.php) for our offerings.

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**Bike Leaders Wanted!**

Do you have some favorite bike rides to share? We would like to be able to offer rides in every region of New Hampshire but we need more bike leaders. If you’re enthusiastic about biking and would like to share your knowledge with others please contact us at the address below to learn about becoming an AMC Bike Leader.

amcnhbike@gmail.com

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*Photo By: D. Powers*
Notes From The Chair

Summer Fun: Hike, Bike, Paddle and Climb

Bill Warren

We all enjoy the outdoors no matter what the season brings us. It is difficult to explain to someone how exhilarating it feels to stand in the snow above tree line with the wind in your face and temperatures hovering around 0 degrees. Those memories are now deeply stored away and it is time to make plans to get out and enjoy all the New Hampshire landscape has to offer during the warm weather.

Has anyone ever said to you there is nothing to do? I am never sure how I should respond as there is plenty to do: There is just not enough time.

If you enjoy doing things like-minded people, or you prefer to be like we were in the 60s, and do your own thing, or you would like to be like-minded people, there is plenty to do: There is never sure how I should respond to your there is nothing to do? I am

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Has anyone ever said to you there is nothing to do? I am never sure how I should respond as there is plenty to do: There is just not enough time.
Two members of the AMC’s New Hampshire Chapter recently traveled to Tanzania to climb 19,341’ Mt Kilimanjaro. Kevin Rooney and Al Dwyer had planned the trip for nearly three years, but delayed it last year due to the Ebola. Both have extensive experience climbing fourteeners in the US, but this was their first climb above 14,500’.

They were looking for a climb spread over several days which would 1) allow for gradual acclimatization, and 2) allow for continuous ascent the last few thousand feet and then descending to a point at or below their last camp. They found that with an 8-day trip by Serengeti Pride Safaris (SPS), a company co-owed by AMC-er Erika Bloom (Southeastern Mass member). Several of their AMC-hiker friends had also climbed Kilimanjaro on trips organized by Erika.

After checking in with the Kilimanjaro Park Rangers at the Londerossi Gate, where everything going up the mountain was weighed and checked, the climbing party began the actual climb at nearby Lemosho trailhead in early afternoon, hiking a few miles to Big Tree Camp at 8,800’. The chosen route would take them on a newer, and lightly-used route along the Northern Circuit side of the Kilimanjaro massif, looking down into Kenya.

The next day they made camp at Shira 1 (11,300’) on the Shira Plateau, followed by Moir Camp at 13,650’ on Day 3. The grades were anything but even, with frequent up and downs thru ravines and valleys. The guides referred to days with much elevation gain/loss as “good acclimatization days”.

Day 4 took them to Buffalo Camp/Pofu where they camped at 13,400’ and Day 5 took them to Third Cave Camp (12,800’) with expansive views.

Much of Day 6 was spent in mental preparation for the summit attempt which would begin at midnight that night after stopping at School Camp (15,500’) for dinner and few hours sleep. The final 5,000’ climb was made under ideal conditions – cold, with clear skies, no wind, and full moon – near perfect conditions.

They made the crater rim (Gilman’s Point - 18,652’) shortly before dawn. The climb during the night had been long, steep and steady. The pace was, as it had been during the previous days, “Polé, polé”, Swahili for “Slowly, slowly”. At that altitude it was cold – a bit...
above zero, but with nearly calm winds, no face protection was needed. After the obligatory pictures standing in front of the sign, they made their way along the rim, dropping briefly toward the crater until they reached Stella Point where they’d return later on the descent. Finally, about 1.5 miles from Stella Point the high point of the rim, Uhura Peak, 19,341’ was reached at 8:14AM on February 21, 2016.

After many pictures and interacting with other groups of climbers they had met along the way, they began the steep descent from Stella Point, dropping 9K’ thru Barafu Camp to their final camp at Mweka Camp, 10,448’. By noon the following day, they were checking out at the Mweka Gate at 5,380’. All-in-all, they had trekked 55 miles from start to finish.

It had been a successful climb but their African trip was not over yet! That evening they were met by their wives and spent several days on safari in the Serengeti plains & Ngorongoro crater area of Tanzania.

Kevin and Al have been leading trips/hikes for the NH Chapter for many years, and have been active in outdoor education workshops. Kevin is the co-founder of the Chapter’s Winter Hiking Series, served as August Camp Manager, and currently serves as an Excursions Co-Chair. They wish to thank the guides, porters, cooks and other staff of SPS – as well as the co-owners, Erika Bloom and Lema Peters, not only for the carefully executed climb, but for the work they do on behalf of local schools and cooperatives.
climbed considerably more than expected.

Consistent with the steady growth we’ve observed over the past four years, all three outings drew a large interest from the AMC community and were waitlisted at least 10 people per outing. Participants practiced belay skills, rope management, efficient movement on ice and mixed terrain, built v-threads, and tackled firsthand, the complex nature of keeping fingers and toes warm in cold weather. Thanks to the foresight of the Mountaineering Committee, a recent purchase of used double boots and new crampons enabled us to open up these climbing days to a wider variety of folks than we have in the past.

The Committee’s push to fund American Mountain Guide Association training and certification for leaders insures that we are providing the highest-level instruction possible. Feedback from the more came through the workshops and climbing day is that they want more. The bottom line is we are stoked about winter climbing and we love sharing it with new friends. We hope to see you next season!