Winter is just around the corner and with it come many opportunities to participate in AMC activities. The NH Chapter leaders and volunteers continue to offer hikes, mountaineering activities, schools and dinner programs throughout the winter. As fall turns to winter, the number of paddling trips is winding down, but the number of skiing trips is ramping up. This year we will also have trips sponsored by the Walks and Short Hikes group. Other Chapters also offer activities and the Club’s Staff provides a wide range of things to do and ways to become involved.

Outdoor activities in the winter do bring unique risks that can conspire to turn an outing into a struggle. You can mitigate some of the risk through knowledge, experience, and preparation. AMC’s schools and trips can help people gain the knowledge and experience needed. Even very experienced, knowledgeable people will find that going with a group led by an experienced leader will help increase the likelihood of a safe and fun experience. Being in such a

Check out the new AMC New Hampshire Chapter Website! Visit AMC-NH.org

The new site features a fresh new look with photos from members like you! Easy navigation leads you to up-to-date online trip listings and a wealth of information about AMC trips and other activities. It's fun and easy to find your next AMC adventure.

Members can view current and past issues of Mountain Passages, renew their membership online and so much more. Visit amc-nh.org today.

AMC Launches Member Center on outdoors.org

The AMC has launched a new Member Center—the first enhancement to the Website and the member database since 2006. Through the new online Member Center, you’ll be able to check your member status, renew your membership, update your address, change your chapter affiliation, and set your preference for receiving Mountain Passages—either through the mail or via an email link. Check it out now at www.outdoors.org/membercenter.

Notes from the Chair:

Paul Berry

Thinking about becoming a 4-season adventurer?
Learn about winter travel and safety in the mountains at the AMC-NH Annual Winter Workshops. See page 3 for information.

continued on page 3
Who's Who in New Hampshire

Chapter Chair  
Paul Berry  603-423-1192

Vice Chair  
Eric Savage  603-772-6259

Treasurer  
Mitch Manseau  603-744-2332

Secretary  
Karen Thurston  603-778-1077

Conservation  
Bob Harrington  603-524-1464

Education  
Bob Humphrey  603-456-3708

Excursions  
David Ross  603-224-6786

Hospitality  
Kathy Ratcliffe  603-456-3708

Membership  
Kathy Ratcliffe  603-456-3708
Keely Norton  603-630-5270

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Larry Krutko  603-428-4355
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Paddling  
Karen Klawiter  603-623-5350

Joe Correia

Programs  
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Janice Bremer

Ski  
Tony Schmidt  603-726-7256

Trails  
Bill Darcy  603-224-0709
Tim Doucette  603-332-6722

WebMaster  
Kim Rexford  603-497-2500
Karen Klawiter  603-623-5350

Young Members  
Ross Garofalo  603-264-4412
Mary Schmidt  603-880-1875

Past Chapter Chair  
Sam (Ruth) Jamke  603-472-2536

Regional Dir. NH/ME  
John Dolloff  207-415-6702

Over 55  
Nancy Seavey  603-586-7727
Linda Holton  603-433-4909

Family Group  
Dave Passios  978-582-7476

AMC-NH Chapter Website  www.amc-nh.org

Address changes and membership renewals:
AMC Member Services, 5 Joy Street, Boston, MA 02108
617-523-0636 or www.outdoors.org/membership

Mountain Passages

Advertise in Mountain Passages

The AMC NH Chapter membership is over 10,000 strong. Members enjoy the outdoors year-round by hiking, paddling, skiing, backpacking, climbing and biking.

If you have a product or service that New Hampshire AMC members would benefit from, consider advertising in Mountain Passages, published six times a year!

Display ad rate: $12 per square inch (4 sq. inch min.)
Classified ad rate: $1 per word (20 word minimum)

Email newsletter@amc-nh.org for a rate sheet.

The AMC-NH Chapter reserves the right to refuse ads that are not related to the mission of the AMC (outdoor adventure, education and conservation).

For more information, or to place an ad, email newsletter@amc-nh.org or call 603-566-8270.

Submitting Articles & Photos

Members are welcome to submit articles or photos to newsletter@amc-nh.org. Articles may be submitted as MS Word docs and may be edited to meet space and style requirements. Photos must be high resolution: 300 DPI when sized to about three inches wide. If you set your camera to the highest or best quality setting, this will produce a high resolution image. Lower resolution images may look sharp on your camera or computer screen, but do not work in print. Please save the image as a JPG file. The image must not include a date stamp or caption embedded in the photo. Please include separately as text caption, the names of the people in the photo, where it was taken and the photographer. Email photos and text as attachments to newsletter@amc-nh.org.

Publication is on a space-available basis at the discretion of the editor. While Mountain Passages does not pay for submissions, a byline or photo credit is given.

Moving?

Contact AMC Member Services for address changes or membership renewals. To update your member information:

- Call 617-523-0636 Ext 0
- Or visit www.outdoors.org/membership

Please note AMC-NH officers and committee chairs cannot take updates to your membership information.
group will also reduce the consequences should an accident happen.

To find out what activities are planned you can read the AMC’s *Outdoors* magazine and go to the various AMC websites. The websites will be the most current and accurate and will include additional activities that were planned after publication deadline for the magazine. An inch of rain on a summer Tuesday may have little to no impact on the weekend activities, but 12 inches of snow on a winter Tuesday will. The Tuesday snow may open up new possibilities and new trips. It may also cause existing trips to be modified. Several of our groups make use of the Club and Chapter websites to let people know what has been added and what has changed. The Walks and Short Hikes group will list some winter activities but these may be cancelled if conditions are too severe. Chapter webmasters Kim and Karen have updated our website (www.amc-nh.org) with great links to show upcoming trips. The Club website at www.outdoors.org shows many of our trips as well as those from other AMC chapters and the Club’s staff.

I want to end this “Notes” with an invitation. Join me on Thursday Dec. 4 at 7:30-9:00 p.m. in a location near Concord for my first “Open Forum with the Chapter Chair.” We can talk about whatever AMC topics interest those that come. If you are interested, please call or email me. My phone number is 603-423-1192 and my email is PaulBerryAMCNH@aol.com. The location will depend on the number of people interested.

Paul

Views to Amuse

In the September/October issue of *Mountain Passages*, the photo was a view of a Wood Carving on Hermit Island.

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The New Hampshire Chapter Annual Winter Workshops

Workshop #1: January 9-11, 2009
Workshop #2: February 27-March 1, 2009

Just because it’s winter doesn’t mean you have to hang up your backpack until spring. Come to Cardigan Lodge and learn how to go out and explore the NH wilds this winter, safely and with confidence. Both workshops are designed to teach what you need to know for safe travel in the winter mountains.

Classes are offered that cover almost every aspect of winter backcountry travel and safety. The weekend is filled with field exercises, lectures and group discussions. Please choose only one class per workshop. Your time will be divided between your individual class and activities with the entire group. Plan to spend extensive time outdoors. And when you’re not learning, there is plenty of great food to fuel you! If you are not sure which class to pick, just ask one of our Workshop Directors (contact info below).

- Winter Wilderness Travel (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced)
- Backcountry Skiing (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced)
- Introduction to Winter Backpacking (January only)
- Mountain Ski Touring (February only)
- Leadership & Mountain Skills
- Intermediate Winter Backpacking (February only)

The workshop will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. Friday evening and end Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m. Cost is $110 for AMC members or $120 for nonmembers, and includes lodging, excellent meals, materials, and instruction.

For further information and to register online, go to our web site (amc-nh.org) or send a business-sized self-addressed stamped envelope to the Registrar: Lynda Caine, 64 South Bow Rd., Hooksett, NH 03106. Do not send any check or money at this time; send it with your completed application. You must be 18 years or older to attend. For more information please contact Directors Rick Silverberg (603-225-5921, 7-10:30 p.m.) or Bob Humphrey (603-456-3708, 7-10 p.m.).
Some of our favorite vacations have been spent on long, point-to-point hikes or backpacks. We find we really love the anticipation of seeing a new trail, different scenery, another campsite, or hut as the days pass.

In 2006 we hiked across the breadth of England on the Coast to Coast Walk. We spent 15 days on the trail, passed through three lovely national parks in Cumbria and Yorkshire, put 200 miles and 30,000 feet of elevation on our boots, and had a great time.

A feature of that hike was the comfortable accommodation in bed and breakfasts and cozy dinners in the local pubs. While we’ve backpacked since, and will continue to do so, we appreciated the cushier style of travel. This year, when we had an opportunity to do the Tour du Mont Blanc in a similar fashion, we jumped at the chance.

A classic European long-distance walk, the TMB makes a circuit of the Mont Blanc massif, a glaciated jumble of Alpine peaks rising to 4000 meters. The walk itself does not involve summing any of the peaks, and is non-technical in nature, but endurance is required: 110 miles, 35,000 feet of elevation and all this in 11 days of hiking through three countries: Switzerland, Italy and France.

We had the good fortune to join an AMC Major Excursion led by Spencer Meyer, (Maine Chapter), and John Lisker, (Boston Chapter.) Thirteen of us in all, our mates were strong hikers with a positive attitude and, equally important, an appreciation of the culture of the regions we passed through!

We passed through villages infrequently. Our journey was a semi-backpack of sorts: we stayed in high-elevation huts (usually around 7-8000 feet) every night, so tents, sleeping bags, and stoves were left at home. Our packs weighed in at 25 pounds or so, including lunches for 2 or 3 days at a stretch, allowing us to cover 10 to 12 miles and 3000 feet of elevation on a daily basis at an unhurried pace.

Upwards of 10,000 people walk the TMB each year, and the majority make a counter-clockwise circuit starting in the Chamonix valley. Our leaders made the decision to hike clockwise, jumping off from Champex, Switzerland, a charming little village southeast of Geneva.

One of the advantages to the clockwise route is that you avoid having a line of hikers in front and to your rear on some of the narrow stretches. Of course, the downside is that you have to encounter and pass them on the trail.

What we liked best. The scenery is spectacular, and very unlike anything we have seen in our country. We are used to long mountainous vistas with no signs of human habitation, but nowhere does one get a snapshot of lofty snow-covered Alpine peaks and glaciers in the background, flower-strewn meadows in the foreground and in between, there’s a tiny hamlet that’s been there for ages.

It goes without saying that the trails are much easier underfoot than our White Mountain variety.

What we remember fondly. Our ‘dortoir’ accommodations [read dormitory] were perfectly satisfactory for the most part, once we got used to sleeping 13 or 20 to a room the size of a minivan. Most of us were tired enough from the hiking (and, maybe, the wine) that sleeping was not a problem.

One memorable night we stayed, with about 60 others, in a former cowshed. Yes, they removed the stanchions and installed thin mattresses, one for one, thus increasing their cash flow and decreasing the overhead in one fell swoop.

That night there was torrential rain accompanied by a huge electrical storm. None of us complained about the cowshed after that.
Fleece for the Holidays!

Looking for a special Christmas present? How about some NH Chapter fleece?

- Full zip jackets are $45
- Pullovers (half zip): $40
- Vests: $35

Shipping is an additional $6.50 per garment.

All are dark green 200 weight polar fleece with an embroidered NH Chapter logo.

To order online by credit card visit the NH Chapter website at amc-nh.org and click on NH Chapter Store.

For more information or to order off-line, contact Mary Harrington, 603-524-1464 (before 9 p.m.) or email at thndrbrd@worldpath.net. Off-line payments must be by check or money order.

Psst! Maybe if you left this ad where someone could see it, you’ll get a fleece for Christmas!

Wes Tucker Honored at AMC-NH Annual Meeting

Wes Tucker, out-going Excursions Chair, was honored at the recent AMC New Hampshire Annual Meeting for his dedication to the Chapter. As Excursions Chair, Wes coordinated Chapter trip descriptions to send for publication in Outdoors magazine; organized the annual SOLO Wilderness First Aid classes; helped to organize the Cardigan Workshops and instructed at them; organized Leader recognition luncheons; and served on the Excursions Committee Leader Board of Acceptance.

Wes received a certificate for his contributions to the Chapter. In presenting the certificate, incoming Excursions Chair, David Ross, joked that Wes had developed the certificate for presentation to newly accepted trip leaders, but had never received one himself. The Chapter also gave him a gift card to Amazon.com.

Got Great Photos?

Send your best photos of your outdoor adventures along with a brief description. Top photos will be published in a future issue of Mountain Passages. Please read the photos guidelines on page 2 for more details on submitting photos.

An Excursion to Remember

continued from page 4

The food. Breakfasts and dinners were typical for the country we were in; in France, bread and café au lait for breakfast, in Switzerland, muesli and cheese. Dinners were plain and plentiful, and we devoured them. Some of the group grew a bit tired of the over-abundance of cheese—one day we had cheese for all 3 meals—but all in all everyone was satisfied. All the huts serve draft beer and local wine and the majority of hikers imbibed with gusto.

If You Go. The TMB is fully described in many guide books; the one we used is published by Cicerone, authored by Kev Reynolds. We followed it closely for the most part, although we did deviate from the classic route on a few occasions.

The time of year plays a large part in the conditions one encounters; do the tour in May and you’ll need crampons for the snow fields. By the time of our walk in late July and early August, the snow fields had melted, and we had perfect temperatures, in the 70s during the day and the 50s at night.

We both had a terrific time on the TMB; it was a trip of a lifetime!
Today, as I filled out the dates I hiked all 48 peaks on my AMC White Mountain Four Thousand Footer Club application and tried to decide what I loved most about the experience, three words came to mind: anticipation, meditation, and camaraderie. That the first letters of those three words spell out AMC is a happy coincidence, since I started this journey not long after joining the AMC, and many of the hikes to those 48 peaks were done as part of an AMC group, or in conjunction with an AMC event. The AMC gave me the structure, support, and knowledge I needed to get me started, and the motivation to keep me going, and for that I am thankful.

I don’t know how many other hikers out there lie in bed at night with their guide book (in this case the AMC White Mountain Guide) and maps spread out in front of them, anticipating their next hike, planning the route, and reading the trail descriptions, but I sure do. I enjoy the anticipation of a good hike or camping trip almost as much as the trip itself. However, it wasn’t just the anticipation before each four 4,000 footer hike that I enjoyed. I also loved the anticipation, during each hike, of what would be around each bend in the trail, when the grueling uphill we were on would finally flatten out and give us a break, what the next view would be like, when we would reach the summit, and finally when we would get back to the trailhead. I even savored the anticipation of what massive meal we would eat, and where, on our drive home. The final anticipation of each hike was always for the moment when I would get home, cross off the newly bagged peak, or peaks, and fill in the dates on my list. I suppose all along I was also anticipating the pride of accomplishment I would feel after completing my last hike on the list, submitting my application, and being awarded my scroll and patch at the annual Four Thousand Footer Club reunion dinner.

This wasn’t all about anticipation, though. In hiking, just like in life, if we dwell too much on either the past or the future we run the risk of short-changing the present. Meditation is meant, among other things, to ensure that we focus on the here and now. The Merriam Webester Dictionary defines meditating as “engaging in contemplation or reflection.” While I have never practiced any formal meditation, my hikes in the White Mountains have given me ample opportunities to contemplate and reflect on the beauty around me, my place in nature and the world, and what is important in life. As a member of the NH Chapter’s 40th Annual Presidential Range Hike in July of 2006, an eight day group hike where I bagged seven 4,000 footers and stayed at six of the AMC’s high mountain huts, I remember one special morning at Greenleaf Hut. I woke up at 5 a.m. and sat outside behind the hut on a rock, waiting for the sunrise. By the time the sun came up there were at least 10 people sitting silently apart on rocks just thinking, and soaking in the silence and beauty of the moment, with not a single word spoken. Even when hiking with a partner, or in a group, there’s something meditative about the repetitive act of putting one foot in front of the other, for hours at a time, that relaxes me and helps focus my mind.

Perhaps my favorite part of my quest to hike the four thousand footers was the camaraderie I felt with all the people I hiked with. From the large group of people on the Presidential Range Hike, to the smaller group hikes, to the many hikes I did with only one hiking partner, I was always surprised at how thorough and deep the conversations could get while on the trail. I often wondered whether it was the relaxation derived from physical exertion, or the feeling that we all shared one common goal (to make it to the top and back) that made it easier to discuss things often considered uncomfortable or confrontational, like religion and politics, or career and relationship troubles. Sometimes I wondered if, continued on page 7
The NH Chapter Mountaineering Committee is offering its 5th annual December ‘avy’ workshop at the Pinkham facility. This workshop, taught by experienced Mountaineering Committee Instructors, is a Level-one Course and will provide insight into safe travel in avalanche country. It is an ideal course for those new to travel in avalanche terrain and a great review for anyone who has some experience or prior training.

Participants will learn to recognize avy terrain and learn why the snow slides. The course covers route finding, rescue, and human factors that affect decision making. Participants will engage in both classroom activities and extensive field instruction.

Knowledge of snow stability and route finding are obviously helpful in achieving safe winter travel in the mountains. In addition, trip leaders who ‘know snow’ can execute adventurous ski, snowshoe, and climbing trips with added insight for their participants. Therefore, this course is highly recommended for all winter climbers, hikers, and skiers.

Course participants are eligible for group rates and are encouraged to stay at Pinkham. To guarantee availability, Pinkham reservations must be made by Wed., Nov 13. Cost $75 includes avy equipment, but not bed and meals at Pinkham. For more information contact Jed Eliades (643-4556, before 8:30 p.m.).

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Manager Wanted. AMC’s Cold River Camp North Chatham, NH Information at outdoors.org/about/employment/parttime. Please submit a resume, a letter of interest detailing previous experience and qualifications, and three references to: Mark Winkler, Search Committee Chair, 17 Southview St., Pleasantville, NY 10570 or email coldrivercamp_amc@yahoo.com. An Equal Opportunity Employer
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