THE WACHUSSETT VIEWS

Quarterly e-Newsletter of the Worcester Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club - Spring 2016

Photo Credit: Horace Cheng

AMC Worcester – We welcome new members – www.amcworcester.org
As the new Chapter Chair, I find it exciting to see first hand how our community interacts within the Chapter. One of my more thrilling moments is when we have a proposed endowment request that gets approved, funded and realized. And this all happens because of our amazing people.

You will see our Chapter in action by reading Pat Lambert’s *On The Road with the Endowment Chair*, which highlights the energy and passion of Dana Perry and his unique success in Upton. You will also get to know one of Worcester Chapter’s engaged youth, Mark Dyer, who received the Appalachian Mountain Club’s prestigious *Emerging Youth Conservation Award* this past January at the 140th Annual Summit. A special thanks to our endowment committee who oversees and makes recommendations on funding these projects.

Spring is here! By the time you read this, the Spring Peepers should be out, according to Tim Loftus. See Tim’s observations on frog-love and, after calming down, learn more about some of our special volunteers and active members highlighted in our newsletter.

Looking forward to your engagement, any way that fits.

Dave Cole, Chapter Chair
chair@amcworcester.org
Appalachian Mountain Club
Worcester Chapter
Spring Open House

Wednesday, April 13, 2016
Northborough Historical Society

Are you done with winter and want to embrace Spring?
The outdoors is calling! Come to our Spring Open House!

We will tell you about the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) and present various outdoor activities being offered by our Chapter this Season, including hiking, biking, paddling, backpacking, climbing and more! Open to the general public, you do not have to be an AMC member to participate in our activities.

If you would like to attend, send an email with the subject “Spring Open House” to: hiking@amcworcester.org

Light refreshments will be served
On March 22, past Hiking Chair and current Hiking/Backpacking leader Dana Perry took me out on a hike to Sweet William Farm in Upton, MA. Our Chapter provided Endowment funds in 2011 to the Sudbury Valley Trustees to help preserve the land.

The next step was to install a fence and build a parking lot on preserved land. The Metacomet Land Trust submitted a subsequent proposal to the Endowment Committee to help the Upton Land Stewardship Committee accomplish this work. The fence was needed to separate the trail users from the pasture. The parking lot was needed to add one more point of access to the trail network.
The quarter-mile section of trail along the pasture completes the 15+ mile trail network that connects Upton State Forest and Upton’s Howarth Conservation Area (CA) to trails in Upton’s Warren Brook Watershed CA and Grafton’s Pell Farm CA. The trail network is used by hikers, birdwatchers, equestrians, mountain bikers, cross-country skiers, and other outdoor enthusiasts.

As Dana and I made our way over to Sweet William Farm, we passed a working farm which hearkens back to the time when Upton State Forest was farm land. As Marcella Stasa of the Metacomet Land Trust stated in the Endowment proposal she submitted, the number of continuous trail miles is a rare thing in this increasingly developed part of Massachusetts and the creation of a public trail network on over 2000 acres of open space provides for an exceptional resource for those who enjoy the outdoors.
You can do a hike of less than 4 miles to one of 15 or more miles depending on the trails you take. Don’t have a lot of time to get out but are going stir crazy? Head over to Sweet William Farm for a short hike. Want to get in a longer hike but don’t want to drive 4+ hours round trip to the Whites? Start at Upton State Forest and venture through the different conservation areas connected by the trail. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination!
A special thanks to Dana Perry who initiated the first Endowment request to help preserve the land and for keeping the trails in good shape with his training hikes for his Appalachian Trail section hikes 😊. Go Pilot!

Note: The quarter mile section of trail is now complete with the fence installed and the parking area built. This map provides a great overview of the preserved land.

If you want to join me on my next "On the Road with the Endowment Chair" adventure, please contact me at plambert119@yahoo.com.
Appalachian Mountain Club Honors Mark Dyer

with Volunteer Leadership Award
Appalachian Mountain Club Honors Southborough Resident with Volunteer Leadership Award

Boston, MA – The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) honored Mark Dyer of Southborough with its Emerging Conservation Leader Award at the 140th AMC Annual Summit held January 30 in Norwood, MA. This award recognizes and encourages an emerging leader who has demonstrated a commitment to conservation. It supports the AMC’s belief that successful conservation depends on active engagement with the outdoors, and demonstrates AMC’s commitment to engaging young leaders in its mission.

For more information on AMC’s volunteer awards, visit www.outdoors.org/volunteers/awards. Dyer was brought up in the AMC family community of the Worcester Chapter and has maintained a strong tie to the mission of the AMC through his passion for leadership, conservation, education, and recreation. Mark has demonstrated leadership by helping to organize and recruit young people to attend AMC family events and experience outdoor adventures like canoeing, hiking, snowshoeing, camping, biking, and more. He found his inspiration by attending AMC’s “A Mountain Classroom” program and AMC Noble View Outdoor Center events, as well as many trips over the years to the AMC’s Highland Center, Huts, and Cardigan Lodge.

Dyer is an Eagle Candidate for the Boy Scouts and just completed a new section of the Bay Circuit Trail for his Eagle project. This required managing the Troop of 30+ scouts who provided over 100 hours in building this trail from scratch, approximately one mile in length connecting the Southborough and Framingham section.

Dyer’s passion for the outdoors also goes beyond the AMC. At the age of sixteen, he operated a non-profit business called Southborough Teen Services, where he managed a team of motivated students to do landscaping to promote the outdoors. He has won several awards for his leadership in the community and has been involved in many trail building projects in Southborough over the years, including a vernal pool nature exhibit, planting a wildflower garden, and trail blazing the town’s extensive trails network. With many options to choose from for Eagle projects, he followed the path of outdoor recreation to help the community get outdoors.

Founded in 1876, the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters, and trails of America's Northeast. AMC helps people of all ages and abilities to explore and develop a deep appreciation of the natural world. With chapters from Maine to Washington, D.C., guidebooks and maps, and unique lodges and huts, AMC helps people get outdoors on their own, with family and friends, and through activities close to home and beyond. We invite the public to support our conservation advocacy and research, youth programming, and care of 1,800 miles of trails. Visit www.outdoors.org.
Spring Peepers are a type of tiny tree frog (see the mosquito at the lower right corner of the photograph for a size comparison). Rather than webbed feet like on most frogs, Peepers have pads at the ends of their toes which helps them climb woodland vegetation.

Throughout most of the year Peepers live silently in the woods; but in early spring they migrate en masse to water bodies – from puddles and roadside ditches to lakes and ponds – to breed. Their familiar “peep, peep, peep” breeding call can be heard a mile away if the evening air has the right conditions. During winter they hibernate under tree bark and woodland debris.

I found this little fellow one night at the edge of a vernal pool in North Brookfield, Massachusetts. This Spring Peeper was singing his heart out to his yet-to-be sweetheart. He was so cute puffing out his throat into a big bubble to get the most volume out of his mating call. So I lay down in the oak leaf and muck mixture at the edge of the pool to photograph him. Apparently with me nearby his comfort level was not conducive to love. He played the silence card on me and deflated his throat. Then I played the patience card on him. And another patience card. And then another patience card. My deck was getting low. About this time I was starting to think more about the ticks crawling up onto me than this love-lonely tree frog.

After a long wait he finally puffed up his throat and continued his amorous refrain. When I turned on my flashlight to focus the camera, he clamed-up again. I turned off my flashlight and he started to sing. Flashlight on: singing off. Flashlight off: singing on. We played this game for a while before I admitted defeat. Frog love is a tricky thing to capture on film, so I took his portrait instead and headed home – wet, cold, and thankfully, with no ticks.
The Winter Hiking Adventure Series allows experienced upcountry winter hikers to flex their winter hiking skills and move out of their comfort zones. Challenges abound but the rewards are spectacular!

The series commenced with a post-Thanksgiving climb up the incredibly steep Upper Holt Trail of Mt. Cardigan; a sign at the base of the trail warned that it was “one of the most difficult in New England.” The purpose of this shake-out hike was three-fold: 1) To give participants a flavor for the future hikes, 2) To help them gauge an appropriate balance between safety and a fun challenge, and 3) To allow the leaders to assess the participants skills to determine if they are prepared to handle the future hikes. Our primary goal is to keep everyone in the group safe with a secondary goal of having fun! If we’re not safe, in no way will we have fun. Plus, they were introduced to my home baked cookies 😊.
The mild winter weather at lower elevations in December left us unsure as to what to expect for trail conditions on our New Year’s Day traverse of Mts. Hancock and South Hancock. Eering on the side of caution and the fact that no trail reports were posted after the area received a mix of precipitation during the week of the hike, we decided to carry all our gear. As it turned out, our crampons and snowshoes got free round trip rides 😊. A cloudbank descended on the mountains, creating a sense of serene stillness as we walked among the snow-covered firs at the summits. What better way to greet 2016?

The last day of January brought us to Mts. Flume and Liberty. We were in the minority of groups who traversed up the steep Flume Slide Trail to summit Flume before heading over to Liberty. We were very happy to have our crampons for the Slide, especially when we saw another group struggling down it in Microspikes. Although we cautioned them about descending in Microspikes, it was clear they were going to continue with their descent. We could only hope they would descend without a need for rescue. We continued on and summited both peaks successfully and returned to the trailhead via Liberty Spring Trail.
February 28 took us on a Wildcat Odyssey. Did we go A through E? Heck, no! Where’s the adventure in that? We, of course, went E through A! We quickly switched from microspikes to crampons to tackle the ice on the route to E and D. We were the only group who traversed the ‘Cats that day in that direction. We took a break from our solitary ascent to watch the downhill skiers & snowboarders and enjoy gorgeous views of Mt. Washington. We were on our own again all the way back to the Nineteen Mile Brook trailhead.
The capstone trip of the series was the backpack over the Tripyramids, the Sleepers, Whiteface and Passaconaway. The weekend brought picture perfect weather for this trip. On Saturday, we made our way over the Tri’s and the Sleepers to the campsite by Rollins Trail on Whiteface. A crescent moon smiled upon us as we set up camp, ate our dinner and settled in for the night. A howling wind blew outside the tent all night but we were warm and dry in our sub-zero degree sleeping bags. Morning dawned with the wind still howling; of course, it didn’t die down until right after we had finished packing up camp. We summited Whiteface and didn’t run into any other hikers until we were near the summit of Passaconaway. As we ate lunch, we even recruited one of them to join us on next year’s adventure series 😊. We made our way down from Passaconaway to the Oliverian trailhead and returned to the van marking the end of this year’s adventure series 😊. But, we still had cookies to enjoy on the ride home!

We used our crampons way more this winter than in recent years. Flume Slide, Wildcats E and D, and Whiteface/Passaconaway provided great opportunities to embrace the ice. Front points rule! We’re hoping to have more ice south of the New Hampshire border next year so that Steph can run a crampon clinic at Wachusett for both Chapter leaders and members. Proper foot placement and body positioning are critical to successfully negotiating the ice and enjoying all that winter hiking has to offer!

Steph and I will plan Winter Hiking Adventure Series III soon. Other than the shakeout hike on Cardigan, we will not repeat any of the hikes from series I and II. Check the trip listings in October to see what adventures we have planned for winter 2016-17! Plus, I’ll test out some new cookie (with chocolate) recipes as the year progresses😊.
Come adventure with us next winter!
Worcester Chapter’s Volunteer of the Month (VOM)

Please extend hearty congratulations to our Chapter's Volunteers of the Month for the past quarter:

November: Franny Gribbons  For three days of trail maintenance work on the Pine Hill Trail on Wachusett Mountain.

December: Liz Browne

For her support of the Chapter's Winter Workshop.

January: Cindy Martel

For her volunteering efforts across numerous activities, including Adventure Travel Committee and leader, Hut Fill In Croo, Information Volunteer, hike/backpack/families leader, and help with the registration table at the Annual Meeting.
AMC Leadership Training for 20s & 30s
September 16-18, 2016 Harriman Outdoor Center, NY

Want to brush up on your outdoor leadership skills? Want to connect with other outdoor enthusiasts in their 20s & 30s? Take the first step to become a trip leader! AMC is organizing its first-ever Leadership Training designed for 20s & 30s and it is sure to be a great time. Participants will have a chance to network with other AMC Young Members (YM) from across the region and learn important leadership skills that will set them on the path to becoming trip leaders for local AMC Chapters.

Registration will be open July 1, 2016 – August 31, 2016. Questions? Email shatch@outdoors.org

Nominate a Volunteer

The Volunteer of the Month program was developed to recognize and thank our volunteers for their outstanding support of our Chapter. Chapter members can nominate volunteers by sending an email to Joe Massery at ViceChair@AmcWorcester.org. The nomination should include the nominee's name, reason for the recognition, and name of the nominator. Nominees must be an AMC member, not a member of the current Executive Committee, and may serve in any volunteer capacity that benefits the Worcester Chapter.

Save the 2016 Dates

Spring Open House 4/13
Worcester/Berkshire Backpacking Workshop 4/16
Spring Picnic 5/14
3rd Wednesdays Potlucks and Socials 4/20, 5/18, 6/15
Executive Council Board Meetings 4/27, 5/25, 6/29
The AMC Worcester Families Group is an integral part of our chapter. Our current Families Chair, Susan Leo Johnson, and each of our past Families Chairs have brought their own unique skills in getting children outdoors with the No Child Left Behind Initiative.

Our most recent trip was the annual Shapleigh Bunkhouse at the AMC Highland Center. We filled the bunkhouse again this year, and parents and kids alike had a great time. The bunkhouse is perfect for our Families Group – we have our own space and there’s so much to do - skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating and tubing!

The Shapleigh weekend is all about having quality family time, and letting kids have fun! Our trips make the dynamics work and the adventures happen. Wondering how to get your kids outdoors (and away from technology) and where to go? Then get involved with the Worcester Chapter, become a leader, and help organize events. Our Chapter does it all - rock climbing, paddling, hiking, trail work, camping, snowshoeing, and conservation activities, and more. Check out our Facebook page (AMC Worcester Family Group) and our Families group on our website www.amcworcester.org and find out ways to get involved.

Save the date for the Worcester Chapter Spring Picnic on Saturday, May 14th. This annual event is a fun-filled day at Hopkinton State Park, with activities for kids of all ages. Hikes, guided walks, bike rides, field games, paddling on the lake, fishing, and much more is offered. A BBQ lunch is provided, just bring a side dish or dessert to share. It’s free for members and their families, and only $10 for non-member families. You just might meet some other families interested in doing activities with you and your family.
Adventure Travel with AMC

Looking for a great trip in the next 6 months? Below are a few trips that still have openings! Check out the full list of trip offering at http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm?type=2&sortby=date

**An Easter Island Adventure** April 22\(^{nd}\)-April 29\(^{th}\), 2016  
http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/84897

**Biking Amsterdam to Brugge** May 25\(^{th}\)-June 6\(^{th}\), 2016  
http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/79450

**Hiking: Spain’s Greatest Secret, Picos to Europa** May 30\(^{th}\)-June 6\(^{th}\), 2016  
http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/82794

**Biking: Innsbruck-Venice: Hang a Left at Verona** August 5\(^{th}\)-August 27\(^{th}\), 2016  
http://activities.outdoors.org/search/index.cfm/action/details/id/80925

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*Did you know ...*

You can now read entire issues of *AMC Outdoors* on your iPhone, iPad, or computer—turning page by page, just as you would in the magazine? With the digital edition, you’ll be one quick click from exclusive features and interactive slideshows and videos. You can even download current and past issues to read offline. Check out outdoors.org/digitalmag to get started.
New AMC Books! Spring Release Reminders:

*Best Day Hikes in the White Mountains, 3rd edition* is now available (in full color!!!), and the remaining spring titles will be available in the next 3-4 weeks, including *Best Sea Kayaking in the Mid-Atlantic*, *Best Sea Kayaking in New England*, and *Massachusetts Trail Guide, 10th edition*. Here is the release schedule:


2. AMC’s Best Sea Kayaking in New England: Available late March
3. AMC’s Best Sea Kayaking in the Mid-Atlantic: Available late March

Links to the store will be provided as soon as possible, and cover images and additional copy can be provided: contact Ryan Dorsey at rdorsey@outdoors.org

**AMC Members: Drive Green and Save Green!**

Want to put your auto and home insurance to work for the environment and save money at the same time? AMC members receive an automatic 10% discount on auto insurance purchased through the Environmental Insurance Agency (EIA). Low-mileage drivers save even more. Each EIA policy also supports the environmental advocacy work of Conservation Law Foundation, a loyal AMC partner dedicated to solving New England’s toughest environmental issues [http://www.clf.org/our-work/](http://www.clf.org/our-work/). When’s the last time your auto (and home) insurance helped promote healthy forests and clean water, fight climate change, and build healthy communities throughout New England? Learn more at [http://EIAinsurance.com/AMC](http://EIAinsurance.com/AMC).
Come and Join Us!

Join our AMC Worcester Meetup group to find out about many upcoming trips and events.
http://www.meetup.com/AMC-Worcester/

We’re on Facebook
Appalachian Mountain Club – Worcester Chapter.
Like our page and connect with others.
https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/88432323469/

AMC Worcester Chapter Website

Visit our website to find an activity, get the latest news, and meet the chapter’s leadership at www.amcworcester.org.

AMC Member Center

Use the Member Center to renew your membership and update your member profile at http://www.outdoors.org/membership/member-center.cfm.
The Wachusett Views is a quarterly newsletter of the Worcester Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC).

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The Wachusett Views Editor: Nancy Cahn