

# Explore Your Inner Winter Hiker

AMC Worcester Chapter  
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Presented by: Charlie Arsenault, Pat Lambert, Steph  
Keimig



# Agenda

- Introductions
- Purpose of the workshop and hike series
- Screening
- Fixin' to get ready to get out there in winter!
- Hydration & Nutrition
- Fixin' to get ready for the next hike!
- Gear, gear, and more gear!

# Introductions

- Hiking Chair: Charlie Arsenault
- Vice Chair: Pat Lambert
- 4 Season Hike Leader: Steph Keimig

# Why a workshop on winter hiking?

- Appalachian MOUNTAIN Club
- No club rule that we can only hike in spring, summer, and autumn
- One of club missions: To get members OUTDOORS
  - Even in the winter
- “This is New England, it snows”

# Hike Series

- Build up from easier to harder winter hikes
  - Easy to moderate series
  - Moderate to hard series
  - Progress thru experience
- Opportunity to obtain the proper gear and get comfortable using it
- Preference will be given to workshop participants
- Non-workshop attendees – space available basis
- See the Appendix & web hike series

# Screening

- Purpose:
  - Safety and fun
  - To ensure that all participants know what to expect on the hike
  - To help ensure that all participants are of similar ability / experience so that they can stay together as a group

# Fix'n to Get Ready to Hike!

- 2 most important pieces of gear that everyone of us possesses even if we have never hiked in winter....
  - Brain
  - Body
- We'll talk about the body first...

# Fix'n to Get Ready to Hike!

- “...there’s an undeniable relationship between fitness and fun on the trail: The fitter you are, the more fun you have. End of story.” (Nate Goldberg, Summer Hiking Center at Colorado’s Beaver Creek Resort)
- Winter hiking consumes a vast amount of energy; Breaking trail
  - Physical conditioning more important in winter

# Fix'n to Get Ready to Hike!

- Kick up your fitness routine
- Walk, run, cycle, hike, snowshoe, ski
- Strength training
- Stretching
- The best gear on the market can't remedy poor physical fitness

# Engage Brain

You are responsible for yourself, so be prepared:

- With knowledge and gear.
  - Become self reliant by learning about the terrain, conditions, local weather and your equipment before you start.
- To leave your plans.
  - Tell someone where you are going, the trails you are hiking, when you will return and your emergency plans.

# Engage Brain, con't

## Be prepared:

- To stay together.
  - When you start as a **group**, hike as a **group**, end as a **group**. Pace your hike to the slowest person.
- To turn back.
  - Weather changes quickly in the mountains. Fatigue and unexpected conditions can also affect your hike. **Know your limitations and when to postpone your hike.** The mountains will be there another day.

# Engage Brain, con't

Be prepared:

- For emergencies.
  - Even if you are headed out for just an hour, an injury, severe weather or a wrong turn could become life threatening. Don't assume you will be rescued; **know how to rescue yourself**.
- Share the hiker code with others.

# Hydration

- Important for warm and cold-weather activities
  - Avoid Dehydration and Hypothermia
- Normal activity ~2 Liters/day
  - Hot Temps 3.5 Liters/day
  - Heavy Exercise 6.6 Liters/day
- Drink water early and often
- Start today – don't delay!
- Hydrating before hike
  - Important as hydrating during and after the hike
- C & C

# Hydration - Techniques

- Heat and Insulate
  - Boil / hot water
    - Back up Thermos
  - Invert wide-mouth Nalgene, insulated wrap
    - Freezes at top
    - Wool socks work!
- Lower freezing temp
  - Gatorade
  - Jell-O
  - Sugar based mix

# Hydration - Techniques

- Hydration packs – Prone to freeze
  - Thread hose close to your body
  - Blow water back into the bladder to prevent water from freezing in hose
  - Bring a back up wide-mouth Nalgene-type bottle in your pack
  - Insulated tubes and mouthpiece

# 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

# Nutrition - Technique

- 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
  - Chewy (moist) keep close to your body
- Light and simple
  - Easy to eat
  - Max calories per weight

# Nutrition, con't

- Snack all day
  - Keep body fueled all day
- Store some food in pockets for easy access
  - Easy to snack between breaks
- Pay attention to your body
  - Cold and tired – Drink and eat
- How much food to bring: rules of thumb
  - 2 times or more than a summer hike
  - Adjust based on experience – increase or decrease each trip
  - “Share the chocolate”

# Post-hike

- Celebrate the accomplishment
- Bring a change of clothes
- Drink more water
- Have a snack

# Post-hike, con't

- Make plans for your next hike
  - What worked? What didn't work?
    - Adjustments for next hike
  - Worcester Chapter ([amcworchester.org](http://amcworchester.org), All Upcoming Events)
  - Hikes offered by other AMC Chapters ([www.outdoors.org](http://www.outdoors.org), Recreation, Search Chapter Activities)
  - Call a friend and hit the trail on your own!

# Gear

- Stay warm and dry
- Think multi-purpose : Reduce, reuse
  - An extra pair of socks can double as mittens
  - A bandanna can be used to wipe sweat from the brow or as a wash cloth, a napkin, a bandage, etc.
  - Check out what gear you already have for other activities and use it for hiking
    - Ski and Snowboarding clothing

# Gear, con't

## Clothing

- NO COTTON
- Synthetic or wool long underwear for top and bottom
- Lightweight synthetic or wool shirt, synthetic or wool pants
- Wool sweater or synthetic pile jacket
- Down vest

# Gear, con't

- Down or fiberfill parka
- Waterproof/windproof shell jacket and pants
- Synthetic or wool socks and liner socks
- Vapor-barrier socks
- Insulated boots
  - Proper fit
  - Use on shorter hikes before trying them out on that 10-mile hike

# Gear, con't

- Synthetic or wool gloves and liner gloves
- Synthetic or wool mittens
- Waterproof/windproof mitten shells
- Synthetic balaclava, synthetic or wool hat, face mask, and goggles

# Gear, con't

- Backpack
- Pack cover
- Hiking poles with snow bales
- Guidebook, trail map(s), compass (and the knowledge to use it)
- Headlamp and other light sources with extra batteries
- First-aid kit

# Gear, con't

- Wide-mouthed water bottles (two to four quarts of water per person per day)
- High-energy snacks
- Whistle
- Jackknife
- Waterproof matches
- Hand warmers

# Gear, con't

- Plastic trash bags , Many functions:
  - Pack liner
  - Carrying out trash
  - Makeshift rain poncho
  - Emergency bivouac sack
    - One for pants;
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> for upper body w/ a breathing hole for your face

# Gear, con't

- Bandana
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm
- Extra zip-lock bags
- Sunglasses
- \$\$
- ID
- Medical Insurance card
- AAA card

# Gear, con't

- Snow shoes
- Stablicers (or similar traction devices)
- Crampons
- Ice axe

# Group Gear

- Winter-rated sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad
- Sleeping bag cover
- Vapor barrier liner
- Cooking stove, pot, spoon
- Fuel bottles
- Thermos filled with hot water

# Appendices



# Schedule of Hikes; Easy to Moderate

- December 13: Wachusett Meadow (Princeton) ; Leader: Paul Glazebrook
- Jan 16: Mt Watatic ; Leader Steve Gabis
- Jan 17: Bigelow Hollow ; Leader: Marie Anne Langan
- Jan 24: Buffumville Dam; Leader: Jack Downing
- Jan 30: Callahan St Park ; Leader: Andy Wojcikowski
- Feb 6: North Pack Monadnock ; Leaders Jack Downing & AnneMarie Langan
- Check for additional hikes and registration info at:  
[amcworchester.org](http://amcworchester.org)

# Schedule of Hikes, Moderate to Advanced

- Dec 6: Mt Wachusett ; Leader: Debbi Moore
- Dec 12: Mt Wachusett ; Leader: Steph Keimig
- Jan 9: Monadnock ; Leader: Pat Lambert
- Jan 30: Cardigan ; Leader: Paul Glazebrook
- Feb 20: Willey & Field ; Leader: Pat Lambert
- Feb 21: Mt Tom, WMNF ; Leader: Pat Lambert
- Feb 27: Cardigan (Upper Holt trail) ; Leader Steph Keimig
- March 6: Hancocks ; Leader: Pat Lambert
- March 13: Moosilauke ; Leader Paul Glazebrook
- March 20: Liberty/Flume ; Leader Steve Gabis
- Check for additional hikes and registration info at:  
[amcworchester.org](http://amcworchester.org)

# More Details on Clothing

- Layers
  - Add when cooling down
  - Remove when warming up
- Material
  - Wicking
- Shirts
  - Zipper at the neck
- Pants
  - Zip-off
- Fleece
  - Full zipper vs. pull over
- Underwear (non-cotton)

# Leave No Trace Principles

- Plan ahead and prepare
  - Know the terrain and any regulations applicable to the area you're planning to visit, and be prepared for extreme weather or other emergencies.
  - Small groups have less impact on resources than large ones.

# LNT Principles, con't

- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
  - Established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses, or snow
  - Camp at least 200 feet from lakes and streams, and focus activities on areas where vegetation is absent.
  - In pristine areas, disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.

# LNT Principles, con't

- Dispose of waste properly
  - Pack it in, pack it out.
  - To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap.
  - Scatter strained dishwater.

# LNT Principles, con't

- Leave what you find
  - Cultural or historic artifacts, as well as natural objects such as plants or rocks, should be left as found.
  - Exception: You can, and should, pack out the trash or “treasures” of others that you find.

# LNT Principles, con't

- Minimize campfire impacts
  - Cook on a stove.
  - If a campfire is built, keep it small and use dead sticks found on the ground.
  - Use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.

# LNT Principles, con't

- Respect wildlife
  - View critters from a distance.
  - Feeding wildlife alters their natural behavior.
- Be considerate of other visitors
  - Be courteous and respect the quality of other visitors' backcountry experience
  - Let the natural sounds of the forest prevail.

# References

1. AMC Guide to Winter Hiking and Camping, by Yemaya Maurer and Lucas St. Clair
2. AMC Recommended Gear for Winter Day Trips:  
[www.outdoors.org/publications/outdoors/2002/2002-winter-gear.cfm](http://www.outdoors.org/publications/outdoors/2002/2002-winter-gear.cfm)
3. Avoiding risks and becoming a better hiker: [www.hikesafe.com](http://www.hikesafe.com)
4. Proper and Safe Use of an Ice Axe:  
[www.outdoors.org/publications/outdoors/2006/ice-axes.cfm](http://www.outdoors.org/publications/outdoors/2006/ice-axes.cfm)
5. Reading Weather: Where will you be when the storm hits?, by Jim Woodmency
6. Backpacker Magazine: Food and Nutrition “Eat Better”:  
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