Ridge Lines

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GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB
BURLINGTON SECTION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ATTENDS MEETING

Judy Lance, Recreation
(985-2914)

In an effort to become better acquainted with Burlington Section officers and to learn more about section projects, plans, and opinions, GMC Executive Director Harry Peet met with your executive committee on April 16.

Harry was particularly interested in the progress that has been made on the "Bolton reroute" section of the LT. The anticipated schedule for continued work and ultimate opening of the new section of trail were discussed. This summer's work will basically be a continuation of the rough clearing. There should not be a need this year for technical help, and consequently no need for dollars. In a future summer, however, the section may want to hire trailworkers and may enlist the aid of Harry and the main Club in locating qualified workers.

Another subject that Harry brought up was the policy of keeping a stove at Butler Lodge. It has been praised by some hikers and scorned by others. He wanted to know how the Burlington Section feels about the stove and what comments and opinions have been made to section members by hikers. Section members are urged to let a member of the executive committee know how you feel about this topic.

Other subjects mentioned were the future outlook of Club finances, both for the main Club and the section, and the possibility of soliciting Burlington area at-large members to become Burlington Section members, and, as a result, hopefully increase our active membership.

Harry's initiative in attending the meeting was much appreciated, especially in view of his extremely busy schedule. It gave us a chance to get to know him a little better, and it gave Harry a chance to meet us, see how we operate, and learn what our plans are. The meeting also served as a reminder that communication and cooperation between the section and the main Club can be not only helpful but invaluable to both of us and ultimately to all GMC'ers.

GMC CABIN AT STERLING POND

Corky Magoon, Director
(878-2035)

We learned from the last issue of Ridge Lines of the generous donation to the GMC by Thomas J. Watson, Jr., of property situated at the north end of Sterling Pond on Spruce Mountain. A committee has visited the shelter, found it in quite good shape, and made short-range recommendations to the Directors for its repair and use. The recommendations were mainly that the rotting steps be replaced, and that the door, outhouse, bunks and table be repaired so that it can be preserved as a shelter for visitors to that area and for Long Trail (LT) hikers.

Other committee suggestions for its future improvements were to screen the windows, build window closures, add bunk space, and open the front to make it more of a lean-to facility. The Directors, who had accepted the property with appreciation in January, agreed at their May 24th meeting to maintain the camp for overnight use, charging its supervision this summer to the Sterling Pond caretaker, and with the help of volunteers and possibly the Long Trail Patrol, to replace the steps, repair the door, and remove the oil stove.

The cabin is a spacious (21' X 20') structure overlooking the pond and located a stone's throw from the LT north of Sterling Pond Shelter. The Montpelier Section will be

seeking suggestions for future use of the cabin by the GMC and would welcome your thoughts. Why not pay a visit to this quiet, scenic spot this summer?

GMC ANNUAL MEETING

South Pomfret, Vermont, was an idyllic setting for the GMC annual meeting. From the Teago Grange Hall in the center of town, we could see deer grazing on the steep green side-hills. Lilacs and apple blossoms were abundant, and orioles were singing. Even a bat who fluttered in and out of the grange hall during the evening enlivened the scene only momentarily. It may have been the heat, the setting, or the mellowness of the GMC's seventy years, but it was a generally harmonious gathering.

Executive Director Harry Peet's report focused on two crucial themes -- finances and volunteers. A cutback in staff made it possible to balance this year's minimum budget. The field supervisor's position which Harry held previously will not be filled until November. He stated, and Jim Wilkinson, vice chairman and also chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee agreed, that a dues increase is unavoidable next year if the Club is to continue to operate as it has in the past and to meet the costs of inflation.

In describing the importance of volunteers to the Club, Harry pointed out that the highly successful ranger-caretaker program that the Club instituted was intended to supplement volunteer effort but never to replace it. Effort will be made in the coming year to increase volunteer participation. Field education workshops for individual sections and for at-large members are being planned as one way of stimulating active volunteer work.

The goal of the GMC has changed from "maintenance" of the Long Trail to "management." This change has been necessary to protect the trail and its environs from various pressures. Jim Wilkinson, in presenting the budget, listed a number of areas in which the GMC has become involved in order to protect the LT. These include planning with ski developments, the cooperative management agreement with the state, planning with the Green Mountain National Forest, the acquisition and management program for the Appalachian Trail, the landowner agreement program, RARE II, and proposals for erecting wind turbines on mountain peaks. Volunteer support is needed to back up and assist the administrative staff which provides the focus for the Club in continuing to address these issues.

Officers Re-elected

The current GMC officers were all re-elected for 1980-81. They are Douglas James, president; Jim Wilkinson, vice-president; Elizabeth Paulsen, secretary, and Preston Bristow, treasurer. John E. Keyes was elected auditor.

AT WALKTHROUGH CONSIDERED SUCCESS

At least 500, and maybe as many as 1000, people participated in the May 17 effort to inspect the entire length of the AT and report on its condition. Larry Van Meter, At-Large Director, estimated that between 75 and 100 GMC'ers "walked" in Vermont, either on the AT/LT, or on the LT.

The Burlington Section covered its entire section of LT from Jonesville to Smuggler's Notch (not including side trails). Other than the usual winter blowdowns, they found no unusual problems on the trail.

HIKING WITH CHILDREN

Cathy Frank (862-1816)

My husband and I met on the Long Trail, halfway up Mt. Abraham. Since that time we have had many wonderful camping and hiking trips together, with friends, and with our children who are now five and seven years old. Obviously any expertise we have acquired on hiking with children is limited to children under age seven, but I would like to think that the greatest challenges have been met. Undoubtedly the next problem will be how to tactfully suggest to our children that they slow down so we can keep up with them. I trust we have a few more years before that happens, however.

Our guiding thought in all the hiking trips we have shared with our children has been to plan the trips for them and have us tag along. Planning a trip for yourselves and expecting your children to tag along just doesn't work. I've spent enough time with tired children to imagine the following scene.

It's five o'clock, and you still have four miles to go. The kids are tired and hungry and took the last sip from the canteen two hours ago. The last bag of gorp was dropped in a mud puddle, and your husband, who has the rest of the food, is at least two miles ahead oblivious to your problems. The kids are whining, you're screaming, and your husband is wondering what is taking so long. You are silently cursing him under your breath wondering why he doesn't walk with the kids and let you race on ahead (never to return)! No doubt it was his dumb idea to go hiking to begin with.

Hiking with kids doesn't have to be that way and, while we have had our ups and downs, we have never lived the above scene (not all at once anyway).

Our older daughter took her first hike at age six weeks, when we were just beginning to realize how dramatically our lives were being changed. It was very easy. All that we needed were enough disposable diapers and plastic bags to keep us all dry for the duration of the trip, a day hike. We stopped when she was hungry and made sure the day was not too hot or too wet.

By the time she was one and a half years old, she was less willing to sit in a kiddie carrier for long periods of time, and our excursions with her became noticeably shorter.

The birth of our second daughter (two years after the first) dramatically slowed us down for about a year. (I am reminded of a winter outing we led up Camel's Hump at that time, without our children, when we were so tired from being up most of the night with one or the other child that we never made it above the hut clearing and at that we were the last ones to arrive!) This year of very limited hiking coincided with our general observation that children between the ages of two and four are very hard to hike with. They are quite heavy (20 - 50 pounds) and don't like to sit still or sleep for very long. They want to walk themselves but only for about twenty minutes at a time. Furthermore their pace is so slow as to be trying to even the most patient adult, not to mention a mere mortal parent!

Of course, while we made this observation, we didn't necessarily stop trying, but we did plan our trips very carefully. Making our children miserable in the woods wasn't going to help achieve our ultimate goal of introducing them to what we hoped would be a rewarding lifelong pastime.

When Becky was three and Tinky one and a half, we DROVE up the Toll Road on Mt. Mansfield and walked across the top to the Chin where we had a picnic lunch. We had about two snacks on the way over, two on the way back, and picked the last of the summer's blueberries as well. The total distance was three miles, ascent 500 feet, and the day beautiful and cool. A cloud sailed by and for a few moments engulfed us. Becky still talks about walking through a cloud. She happily walked the entire distance. Our one and a half year old was content with the carrier.

Hiking with children means you have to be prepared to carry a little bit more, and I don't necessarily mean the children. We always carry lots of food, especially treats that we don't normally have in the house such as M & Ms and gorp, and lots of water. It's not that kids get so thirsty, but drinking out of a canteen is exciting and a grown-up thing to do, so they do it a lot and are perfectly capable of drinking a day's water supply by mid-morning. That in turn necessitates other stops further down the trail which might suggest that one carry an extra supply of bumwad as well! We always carry an extra set of clothes for each child even on a nice day. Water doesn't always come from above.

Our day hikes have included places like Camel's Hump, Mt. Mansfield, and Mt. Abraham with wonderful views at the top. If you are going to urge the kids to the top, there had better be something up there to shout about. Climbing up and down ladders and over steep rock piles is great fun for kids, despite any reservations you might have about it. Most kids are natural climbers. The Wampahoofus Trail on Mt. Mansfield is a favorite of our children.

Along with seeking out fun trails, we have painstakingly avoided buggie situations. Blackflies and mosquitos don't do much for my disposition not to mention that of my children who seem to think that in my bag of tricks, I should have the power to make mosquito bites stop itching. August, September, and October have been our best hiking months.

Now even if you choose the most exciting trail on a clear cool day without bugs, there is no guarantee of success. There are a lot of steps taken on any hike and not all will be taken willingly. So what do you do when all else fails, or how do you get them down the mountain once they have met the challenge of going up? One way is to sing songs, and don't worry about the porcupines realizing you can't carry a tune. Songs pass time while little feet keep moving and chase away scary forest monsters as well. It's also fun to look for sticks along the trail that resemble the letters in a child's name. Be prepared to find lots of "y's" and not many "b's", however. Another pastime is taking turns telling a mutual story. The adult starts and after a few sentences turns the story over to the child, who takes her turn and passes it back to the adult. My trick of last resort is to keep an edible treat waiting in the car for the completion of the day's hike. It's called the ultimate bribe.

We always let our children carry one canteen, raincoats, and nibble food in their packs. As mentioned above, food is a great bribe and has gotten us over many a steep section of trail, and carrying it makes the kids feel important -- at least until the goodies run out.

It also helps to change partners from time to time. Our younger daughter is the slowest walker in our family so my husband and I take turns walking with her. That allows us to recharge both our mental and physical batteries.

Backpacking adds to the challenge of hiking with children but in many respects it makes it easier. Kids love gear -- tents, sleeping bags, stoves, flashlights -- the more of it the better. Our kids first slept in a tent in our backyard. We then progressed to what we call car camping -- driving to the campsite. So by the time we tried our first backpacking trip last spring, the kids were veteran campers.

There is a very useful book called Backpacking with Small Children by James and

Ann Stout (Funk and Wagnalls, NY, 1975) which I highly recommend. It covers such topics as how to plan, where to go and what to eat, as well as what kind of gear to get for children and where to find it. Backpacker Magazine has also run some excellent articles on children's gear and hiking with kids. Whatever you do, don't skimp on them just because they will outgrow everything next year. They have just as far to walk and the same hard ground to sleep on as you do.

Aside from our basic principle of planning the hikes for our children's needs, not ours, the other important concept we have tried to follow has been to give them lots of encouragement and praise for what they have done. Hiking requires a certain amount of self-discipline and persistence even for a three-year-old. Each of our children has had to earn her first day pack by climbing a mountain under her own power. Neither succeeded on her first try but each effort was treated as a great success. When they finally achieved their goal, the pack was ready at the top of the mountain much to their surprise and delight. This gave us still another way to show our approval of what they had done.

So much for the theory! On our first backpacking trip all went well for two days and eight miles. Then one mile before we reached our car the kids collapsed. Our four-year-old said she couldn't and wouldn't go another step and rode the rest of the way on her daddy's shoulders on top of his thirty pound pack. Our six-year-old threw down her pack, said it was dumb, the trail was dumb, her boots were dumb, and her mother was dumb! There was no way she was going to be carried out on my shoulders so what followed was an interesting conversation between us about the many, many times (at least once on every trip) that I had felt that way. I wanted her to know that what she felt was normal, that my feet hurt, too, and that the only way out was to make them hurt more. Within ten minutes she was her old determined self, tired but content, and we both felt closer for the hurt feet we were sharing.

Were the first two days and eight miles worth the price we paid the last mile? There is no doubt in my mind that they were, and judging from our children's enthusiasm for our next outing, there is no doubt in their minds either.

One last thought -- fortunately no amount of planning will ever take away the spontaneity and challenge of hiking with children. One lovely late summer day our family climbed Camel's Hump. Our youngest daughter, then two and a half, was out of diapers and had been for some time. We were all seated on top of the mountain with other hikers who had come from other directions, attentively listening to the ranger-naturalist tell us about the fragile alpine vegetation and how we should not walk on it. Tinky, who was sitting on my lap, turned to me to say she had to go "potty." Before she finished the sentence both she and I became very wet as did the fragile alpine vegetation immediately downhill from us. It was not one of those inconspicuous events that no one noticed, but we all had a good laugh, including the ranger-naturalist!

ANNUAL TUCKERMAN'S RAVINE TREK

Dot Myer, President
(863-2433)

On May 11 eight GMC'ers went to Tuckerman's Ravine on what has come to be an annual event.

Tuckerman's Ravine is an immense glacial cirque on the southeast side of Mt. Washington. It is shaped like a huge bowl with very steep sides. The snow that collects in this bowl is measured not in inches but in feet -- sometimes 100 feet or more. It takes a long while for this amount of snow to melt; it usually lasts into June. The combination of warm weather, lots of snow, and steep slopes makes it very popular with skiers -- and almost as popular with spectators. (We were among the spectators.) It's a two and one-half mile walk up to the ravine (no ski tows), but a warm spring day brings a steady stream of people going up the trail.

Since 1973 GMC'ers have been part of that stream. In the spring of 1973 Al and Brad Perkins, and Dot and Pirk Pirkanen, were thinking about how long it had been since they had been to Tuckerman's Ravine and on the spur of the moment decided to go again. News of the trip spread by word of mouth and sixteen people went. All were impressed by the huge snowy bowl and enjoyed watching the skiers and eating supper on the way home. The hike was so successful that the next year it was put on the Burlington Section outing schedule and has continued to be on it ever since.

In 1974 nineteen people went on the first scheduled hike; four of them helped carry an injured skier down on a litter. In 1975 the weather was so perfect that four members of our group went all the way to the top of Mt. Washington. Unfortunately the next year it rained, snowed, sleeted, and was so socked in we couldn't see the ravine or even people 50 feet from us. But we tried again, and in 1977 and 1978 the weather was good. In 1978 we hiked in snow all the way from the bottom. Last year the weather was not very good, and only the Pirkanens actually got to Tuckerman's The rest of us went to the Perkins' camp in Calais where Al taught us about edible wild foods, and we sampled cattails, fiddleheads, dandelion flowers, and other plants.

This year, as expected, there was much less snow than usual, but there was enough for skiing. We enjoyed watching the skiers,

and the good weather lasted until we were part way down. Then we got wet. It was a good trip, and we're looking forward to another one next year.

SOME COMING EVENTS

July 5-6. Brandon Gap to Sherburne Pass.

For those interested in hiking the LT end-to end, this is an opportunity to add another stretch of trail.

Distance: 19.7; moderate to difficult.

Call Andy Squires, 658-2275, for information.

July 27. Joiner Creek Swim Hike.

I keep thinking I should scout out a new creek. Maybe sometime I will, but I know this one is perfect, and I look forward to showing others its beauty.

We go right up the middle through deep swimming holes and up sheer cliffs and spectacular falls. Last year it was one of our hottest days. There is no better place to be on such a day, in the shade of the trees and the walls of the gorge, and in cool water most of the time.

This will be a lazy hike of three miles. There are some places that have to be swum and a few short steep rock scrambles, so this hike is for the swimmer and the nimble-footed.

Wear clothes to get wet in and "holey" sneakers. Leave a change of clothes in the car. Bring your lunch (nothing breakable) and a towel in a plastic-lined pack. See you at the UVM Dairy Science Building at 9:45 a.m.

Leader: Peg Whitson (879-0217)

August 17. Corn Roast.

Corn will be served at 5 p.m. However, those who wish to wade or "dunk" in Lewis Creek, stroll through the woods, play badminton/croquet/horseshoes, will meet at 2:30. Location: beautiful, rural Starksboro, VT.

There will be a charge for corn and butter; as in the past, coffee and dessert will be furnished. Those attending should bring their own eating utensils.

In the event of rain, roast only will be held at 5 p.m. indoors.

Reservations required. Contact Dot and Pirk Pirkanen, 458-3966; or Sally Spear, 893-7962 (evenings).

August 29 - Sept. 1. Mahoosuc Range.

This section of Appalachian Trail offers one of the most unique hiking experiences available in the eastern US. It is described by the ATC guidebook as "for its length, probably the most difficult portion on the AT (with one exception). It is, however, most rewarding." Even with the four days of fog and rain that we experienced last year, it is unique and rewarding. The two of us and certainly other members familiar with this section will verify these statements.

The trip is a four-day affair scheduled for Labor Day weekend (including the preceding Friday). Due to the length, difficulty, and remoteness of the area, it is next to impossible to compact it into a three-day event.

Persons interested in this hike should contact us well in advance as we must limit the group size to a total of eight. Lean-tos are available but heavy hiking traffic, especially on a holiday weekend, and the lack of reasonable tenting areas could present problems for a larger group. Also, interested members should heed the advice concerning the difficulty of the trip and be certain of their ability to tote a burdensome pack of 30-40 pounds for seven or eight miles per day over very rugged terrain.

Leaders: Keith Edson, 879-7404; and Andy Squires, 658-2275.

Outings co-chairpersons are Elise Palmer (658-0372) and Betsy Schneider (862-7962). For weekly announcements of outings, check the "Happenings" column in the Burlington Free Press. Call the hike leader listed on your outing schedule or a chairperson for additional information.

A FAMILIAR FACE

In your travels on Mt. Mansfield this summer you may likely meet Burlington member Ginny Yandow, who will be working for the GMC during the summer as a caretaker at Taylor Lodge. Ginny's decision to spend the summer "away from it all" will not get her far enough away to prevent her from taking part in the LT hikes scheduled in her endeavor to finish the LT this year.

Other caretakers in the Burlington Section portion of the LT will be Lisa Andrews, Butler Lodge, and Linda Gionti, Taft Lodge.

Mt. Mansfield Ranger-Naturalists will be Julie Hand, Cindy McGuffrey, Colin Wightman, and Laura Dibble, head ranger.

CANOE SAILING

Frederic O. Sargent
(863-4307)
Professor of Canoe Sailing

White watering is fun, but it can't beat canoe sailing if you use the streamlined method (no rudder and no leeboards) and follow these simple instructions. Equipment consists of a 15-foot Cadorette canoe with a single keel, a lateen canoe sail, one paddle, and a friend on shore.

I leave the dock on a beam reach (across the wind), starboard tack, holding only the main sheet. If I start to fall off downwind, I shift my weight to leeward. This brings me back up to a close reach. After 100 yards, I go onto a port tack. To do this, I shift my

weight to leeward until the gunnels are just above the water and slide forward under the thwarts to shift weight forward. This brings the bow closer into the wind. To come about, I kick the boom around with my left foot. This tacking can be accomplished without a paddle 50 percent of the time. The other times I use the paddle for half-a-dozen quick strokes to come about and then ship it again. The second tack is most fun if it is across the waves. If the wave crests break simultaneously over both bows and hit your face, it gives you a sensation of speed even though actual speed may be only three knots.

After 100 yards on the port tack, I drop off to run back to the dock. Running is most difficult. I use my paddle and I am ready to drop sail in a hurry. Sometimes the wind will grab the sail and lock it in so the sail won't drop. This is embarrassing if you are on a collision course with a moored boat or a rocky shore. In these cases, I just roll over. The vessel stops immediately. With a little luck, I zigzag back to the dock (I haven't learned to run straight back). Here is where my friend comes in. He grabs the canoe to keep it from crashing the dock or the shore. Then I take a turn at shore patrol while my friend sails the triangular course.

Canoe sailing is most fun when small craft warnings are posted. There is no danger; the water is warm (August), everything floats (canoe, paddles, mast, you), and an on-shore wind brings everything ashore.

Some experienced sailors will tell you that a canoe can't be sailed up-wind without leeboards, rudder, or touching a paddle to water. (I am not able to tack into the wind with leeboards.) The proof is to see it or, better still, try it.

Some experienced canoeists never saw a 9-foot laminated, scooped, feathered, right-handed, double-ended canoe paddle either. You can get them from Clement Brothers, Trois Rivieres, Quebec, for less than $50 -- but that's another story.

1980 ETV AUCTION REPORT

Alice Cook Bassett
(862-8449)

As in past years, Burlington Section members were there. Our night was Wednesday, April 30, and since we were asked to supply only fifteen workers, your chairperson was in the enviable position of limiting those who could work, rather than scrounging!

Many thanks to the following loyal GMC'-ers, who gave of their time. Jan and Harris Abbott, Terry Bouchard, Gale and David Cass, Roy Fava, Cathy and Joe Frank, Evelyn Hickey, Janice Lange, Corky Magoon, Dot Myer, Lyn Phillips, Arlene Weitzel, and Peg Whitson.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Dot Myer is seeking a volunteer to be "telephone Chairperson" in connection with work hikes. If the hike leader wants help getting people to show up for work hikes, this person would be responsible for calling around. Anyone interested please get in touch with Dot, 863-2433.

Good wishes to Rick Rice, trails, who has exchanged hiking Vermont trails (hopefully temporarily) for a bike trip to California.

NEW MEMBERS

Rose Bloomhardt.
Membership (864-7903

The Burlington Section welcomes the following new members:

Gianetta M. Bertin, Cherry Hill Farm, Williston, VT 05495; Rose Marie Carruth, 38 Marble Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401; Anne Garnett, Grandview Condos B-1, So. Burlington, VT 05401; Ted S. Glatt, 29 Hawthorne Circle, So. Burlington, VT 05401; George and Eileen Jaray, 211 Lourdes St., Waterloo, Ontario N2L 1N8; Joseph R. Riddle, P O Box 647, Essex Junction, VT 05452; Lucille J. Truex, 792 So. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401.

RIDGE LINES

Ridge Lines, the Burlington Section newsletter, is published June, September, January, and March. Send suggestions and news items to Sally S. Spear, RFD 4, Colchester, VT 05446. Notify Ridge Lines or membership chairperson of address changes or corrections.

Contributors to this issue: Alice C. Bassett, Rose Bloomhardt, Keith Edson, Cathy Frank, Judy Lance, Corky Magoon, Dot Myer, Dot Pirkanen, Fred Sargent, Kari Jo Spear, Sally S. Spear, Andy Squires, Ann Thornhill, Peg Whitson, Ginny Yandow.