

Trail Talk

GMC Montpelier Section Newsletter
Fall, 2019 ~ No. 132

New (old) Section President

by Steve Bailey

Andrew Nuquist has decided to step down from his newly elected position as President of the Montpelier Section. I have agreed to serve out the remainder of his term as President, until the next annual meeting of this Section in Spring, 2020. We all appreciate the work Andrew has done to support the club over the years. He's a trooper and has been a key member of the group since the early 1970s.

SECTION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by George Longenecker

I've been reading *Footpath in the Wilderness*, an anthology of essays about the Long Trail published in 1941. Some things have not changed. As Wallace Cady said in his essay "Reading the Rocks," "the mountains...march northward from Massachusetts to the Canadian border like a herd of gigantic elephants." Dorothy Canfield Fisher asks in her essay, "Hiker's Philosophy," "Is it a perverse madness which drives Americans away from their bathrooms and gleaming kitchens out into wilderness...?" We hike the same mountains and still use outhouses, but some things have changed a lot. In "Hobnails, Packs and Lodges," Charles Crane writes of his experiences hiking the trail, and gives advice on what to do and bring. Today it's pretty unlikely a hiker would wear hobnail boots. Crane speaks of sleeping on balsam boughs. Unless someone is clearing a permitted trail, cutting balsam is illegal today. He tells of great meals cooked over wood fires. The wood stove in a Long Trail lodge is mostly a thing of the past. One thing that gets little mention in the book is waste. Except for Fisher's brief mention of bathrooms left behind, there is nothing much about how to dispose of trash or human waste in the wilderness.

As directors we have to think of both trash and human waste. Humans generate a lot of both. Trash dumps at lodges and shelters were phased out more than 50 years ago, when I started hiking, and today trash on the trail is rare. Privies are the current priori-

ty. Sewage is defined as "refuse liquids or waste matter usually carried off by sewers." Of course there are no sewers or septic systems in the Vermont back country. Disposal methods of 1941, or even 1981, are no longer acceptable. As romantic as those early years on the Appalachian and Long Trails may have been, the GMC can no longer use standard outhouses. Both the GMC and the Appalachian Mountain Club have invested a lot of time designing and building the new generation of sustainable privies.

Six remaining poop-in-the-hole outhouses will be replaced in 2019 and 2020 with one of two newer types of privies: moldering, of which there are currently 35, and composting, of which there are 20. Two articles and a video explain the history and differences. To learn more about where feces go, see: <https://www.greenmountainclub.org/privy-privy-privy/https://www.outdoors.org/articles/blogs/trails-blog/moldering-privies-101-video>

Moldering privies, which sit on a raised platform, require less maintenance and are suitable for sites with lower use. Composting privies have outside bins, and require more caretaker maintenance. The phase out of the last environmentally unsafe human waste disposal is a major step for the GMC, 78 years after *Footpath in the Wilderness* was written.

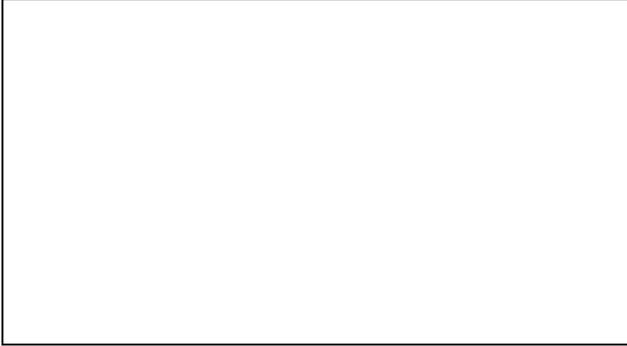
In other news, the Montpelier Section and central Vermont are well represented on the Board of Directors. While I represent the Montpelier Section, we have four other members from central Vermont who serve on the board. Nancy Thomas from our section just joined the board as a general director (once known as at-large-director). Also from our section, Steve Klein serves as treasurer and Ira Sollace as general director. Hope Crifo of Middlesex, a general member, is also a director. We thank section member John Page, who just left the board as immediate past president. Remember that section members can run for the general board positions, elected by the full club membership. We're always looking for new directors.

Think what it was like in 1941 the next time you're on the trail. Best wishes from the trail, the privy seat and the director's seat.

GMC ANNUAL MEETING IN ROXBURY

by Sue Morse

This past June the Montpelier Section hosted the annual meeting of the Green Mountain Club at the Windridge Tennis & Sports Camp in Roxbury,



Phyllis Rubenstein

VT. Each year the club meets at a different location around the state, hosted by a different section of the GMC. We had last hosted the event several years ago, so it was our turn again to host.

A planning committee was formed last summer to prepare for the event. The committee looked at various venues before deciding on Windridge. The facilities there included a large central building for meetings and meals, with plenty of space for our activities. Accommodations were in group cabins and private cabins, with additional space for those who wanted to pitch their tents.

The committee also had to choose a speaker. There were lots of interesting people to pick from, and Sue Morse was chosen to give her presentation titled "*Wild Cousins of Our Best Friends: Wolves, Coyotes and Foxes*".

In addition, the committee had to prepare a list of outings for Saturday afternoon. Various places were suggested, and some new locations had to be scouted out for suitability. Eleven different outings were planned, most of which were hikes of varying difficulty, plus a bike ride and a paddle. Leaders had to be found for the outings as well.

Another committee was formed to prepare for the silent auction. This involved soliciting local businesses and individuals to contribute items for the auction. Many of the section members made their own contributions, ranging from outdoor gear to artwork. We had over 30 items in the auction.

The annual meeting started off on Friday night, May 31 with a dinner and storytelling by former caretakers of huts, shelters and a fire tower along the Long Trail. Many of them had served more than 40 years ago, but they remembered lots of details of what happened way back then. Their stories were very entertaining.

Saturday morning brought the annual business meeting, where officers gave reports and various awards were given out. John Page received a life-

time award for his service on the Board of Directors. The business meeting was followed by the directors' meeting. Each of the 14 GMC sections sends one director, ours being George Longenecker. Also attending were the club's officers and a number of "at large" directors who don't belong to a section.

We were lucky enough to have good weather for the outings, which took place after lunch. We had a good level of participation, with 18 people in the largest group. There was even a post-hike yoga session, and an early-morning birding walk.

The silent auction closed just before the Saturday dinner. We raised \$1663 for the GMC. Dinner was followed by Sue Morse's talk on wolves, coyotes and foxes. She had many wonderful photos of these animals, and regaled us with stories of her adventures in stalking these "intelligent, loving and loyal, wild canid 'cousins.'" "It was a fascinating look at animals we rarely see.

The weekend finished on Sunday morning with a workshop on trail maintenance and a section trip leadership discussion.

We received lots of positive feedback about the weekend. The venue was well suited to the event. The main building was perfect for what we needed. It was very nicely finished inside, and it had enough space for dining, the silent auction, and the general meeting. The food was catered by the camp, and was delicious. The cabins were rustic but adequate. The tenting was scattered around the grounds with a number of nice locations. One tree did blow down during a nighttime storm. It didn't hit anything, but it wasn't far from one of the tents. Parking was limited, but we managed to find spots for everyone in the end.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the weekend. There are lots of people who put in many hours to make this happen. The Annual Meeting Committee planned the event, the Silent Auction Committee collected items, and all of the outings had leaders who contributed their time. We also had many volunteers who directed parking, signed in participants, staffed the silent auction, and helped set up and take down equipment for the weekend. Kristin McLane from the GMC was very helpful in planning the event, working with us to get everything organized.

Next year the annual meeting will be hosted by three small GMC sections: Sterling, Laraway, and Northern Frontier. I hope you will consider attending, as it is a fun weekend. They haven't chosen the venue yet, but the location is coming soon.

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GMC Montpelier Section
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Phyllis Rubenstein

Pitcher Plant

We encourage you to join or renew your membership in the **Montpelier Section** of the **Green Mountain Club**.

Annual dues are: Individual - \$45.00	Life (1 adult) - \$1,000.00 (one time)
Family - \$60.00 (inc. children under age 18)	Dual Life (2 adults) - \$1,500.00 (one time)
Friend/Senior/Student - \$25.00	Sponsor (Individual or Family) - \$75.00

Renewals: MAILED ON ANNIVERSARY DATE OF JOINING GMC



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We wish to join the **Montpelier Section** of the **Green Mountain Club, Inc.** and you will receive a membership card, the Section quarterly newsletter (*Trail Talk*), the GMC quarterly (*Long Trail News*), a discount on **GMC** publications and merchandise, and reduced overnight fees at selected shelters.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (h) _____ (w) _____ E-mail: _____ Amt. Enclosed \$ _____

- I/We are interested in helping with trail maintenance.
- I/We enclose a \$ _____ donation to the Montpelier Section.

Please make check payable to the "Green Mountain Club" and mark it for the Montpelier Section.

Mail to: Green Mountain Club, Inc.
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(802) 244-7037 • www.gmc@greenmountainclub.org