

Outings Report, 2016

From April 2015 through March 2016, GMC Montpelier members led and attended 60 section events. Of these outings, 5 were work hikes (as opposed to 4 last year), and 15 were Trekkers events (19 last year). The total also included 38 hikes and road walks (29 last year), 2 backpacks (0 last year), 3 paddles (2 last year), 12 bike trips (13 last year), 2 snowshoes (7 last year), and 2 ski trips (11 last year). In addition, there was a combined hike, paddle, and picnic at Lake Elmore. About 10 events were canceled because of bad weather or insufficient interest. The significant growth in the number of hiking and walking trips and the dearth of ski and snowshoe trips are thanks mainly to this winter's disappointing weather.

There were an unusual number of out-of-the-ordinary trips this year. These include Manny Garcia's Montpelier history walk last October and his East Montpelier history walk in May, complete with old photographs. Others were Ken Hertz's series of walks, including perambulations of Chickering Bog with Rose Paul of the Nature Conservancy and of the East Montpelier town forest with local guide Kimberly Pierce. Other adventures, led by Phyllis Rubenstein, included several Long Trail backpacks and an off-trail hike up Scrag Mountain. Other delights included quintessential Nuquist trips: Acres of Apples—a bike ride in New York—and a midsummer celebration of hiking, paddling, and picnicking at Lake Elmore.

There was almost a tie for the most popular outing, with 15 people walking the Bear Swamp loop with the Nuquists in late April. A close second was George Longenecker and Cynthia Martin's wildflower hike to Little River State Park in mid-May, which attracted 14, and Mary Garcia and Mary Smith's walk in Adamant in mid-April, which attracted 13. Clearly there was a lot of spring fever last year. Also, in late May Ken Hertz had 11 on a Little River history walk, and in October Phyllis took 11 up Scrag Mountain. Also, in an unusual turn, the two fall work hikes attracted 14 and 16 hikers, respectively. Not counting work hikes, this year's average attendance per trip was 6.7, which is up from last year's 5.5.

Reidun and Andrew Nuquist led the most outings with a total of 16; Mary Garcia and Mary Smith were second with a total of 10. Steve and Heather Bailey led 6 (not counting work hikes, which would push Steve up to 10). Mike Chernick also led 6, and Ken Hertz led 5. The rest of us led 2 or 3.

Linda Trono was the most active member, participating in at least 13 outings this past year. Mary Garcia was second: she went on 9 trips, not including the 10 trips she also led. Ron Merkin, a nonmember, went on 9 trips; Steve Lightholder, 8; Cynthia Martin, 8; George Longenecker, 7; Anne Miller, 7; Steve and Heather Bailey, 6; and Margaret England, a new member, 6.

We are grateful to all of our trip leaders, who in 2015–16 included Jill Aspinall, Heather Bailey, Steve Bailey, Charlene Bohl, John Buddington, Michael Chernick, Manny Garcia, Mary Garcia, Kathy Gohl, Ken Hertz, Steve Lightholder, George Longenecker, Cynthia Martin, Andrew Nuquist, Reidun Nuquist, George Plumb, Phyllis Rubenstein, and Mary Smith.

If there is anything I've learned over three years as vice president it is that we need to be constantly encouraging new trip leaders and not simply depending on the old ones. We need the

new ideas and new energy that new trip leaders bring. In this spirit, I'd like to encourage you to consider leading a trip. If you've gone on 5 or 6 or 10 GMC trips but have never led one, maybe it's time for you to give it a try. There's information on the website about trip leading, and your incoming vice president will be delighted to hear from you.

Kathryn Gohl
Vice President