



Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter

2019 Annual Report

Presented to the members of the Appalachian Mountain Club
Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter at the 2019 Annual Meeting and Dinner at
the Bay Pointe Club in Buzzards Bay, MA, November 2, 2019.



SEM backpackers at Shoal Pond in NH



Paddling on Barnstable Harbor



SEM bike riders at Scusset Beach



Skiing "The Loop" at Waterville Valley

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Chapter Chair Report



I am honored to offer this report on the current state of the AMC Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter. In recent years, we've continued to grow trip offerings in both quantity and variety, while maintaining a stable financial position. Our chapter serves over 4,000 members, one-third of whom reside on Cape Cod and the Islands. Let me summarize highlights of this year's accomplishments.

We offered 387 trips in total; nine percent more than the previous year. This included 284 hiking trips, 40 bike rides, 47 paddles, five trails activities, five leader training workshops, three cross-country ski trips, and three social events.

Participation in Leadership Training more than doubled this year, fostering a jump in newly trained leaders and necessitating a second WFA/CPR offering.

We've increased the number of local weekend hikes offered this year, which was one of the chapter's recent objectives. We've also focused on engaging new members. These well-received efforts included a series of easy hikes and backpacks that targeted learning fundamentals for hiking and trail camping.

Our two-day Map & Compass course has been so popular, we added a second offering in the fall. This course provides a thorough introduction to interpreting topographic maps and proper use of compass.

New conservation efforts included improving trailhead access to Duxbury's North Hill Marsh Trails. This involved helping construct an embankment stairway and trailhead kiosk. Funding for project materials was drawn from the chapter's excess reserve fund.

We continue to support the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Friends of the Blue Hills with periodic trail maintenance of the chapter's adopted section of the Skyline Trail. We also re-blazed several ill-defined sections of the Bay Circuit Trail in Hanson and Pembroke.

Hosting AMC's annual Fall Gathering at Camp Burgess in Sandwich, MA was the singular major event for the chapter this year. With 250 attendees from across all AMC chapters, the event was completely sold out. We offered a variety of hikes and bike rides, plus a wide range of workshops and entertainment. This effort involved over a year of planning led by past chapter chair, Barry Young, along with committee chairs Jane Harding, Susie Schobel, and Jeannine Audet, who (along with the wonderful young staff at Camp Burgess) didn't allow the lingering power failure from the previous week's storm to interfere with everyone's enjoyment. More than 50 other chapter members also stepped up to help make this event successful.

Let me express my appreciation to our chapter secretary, Ann McSweeney; and treasurer, Patty Rottmeier; for their support to the chapter throughout the year; to Barry Young for his advice and guidance; and all our activity chairs and leaders. Finally, a fond farewell to Paul Miller, communications chair, and Bill Cannon, conservation chair, who are stepping down this year, and Patty Rottmeier who is retiring after eight years of service managing our chapter finances.

Respectfully submitted, Len Ulbricht, AMC SEM Chapter Chair

Biking Committee Report



Punkhorn mountain bike ride

The SEM Biking committee had lots of varied rides this season.

Almost all our leaders participated in several rides at some point this year and we've added several new ride leaders to our roster.

Paul Currier continues to lead his ever-popular Full Moon rides every month, year around. Paul also has maintained our 1,000-mile Plus club. We hope to have many new members reaching the 1,000 mile plus category.

Paul Corriveau has continued to expand his Adventure Series of mountain bike rides. Every ride seemed to focus on something new and interesting, encouraging repeat participation. Paul's rides were informative and educational for all levels of participants.

We recently added an excellent new Biking Vice Chair, Peter Linhares. Peter resides in Bridgewater, MA. He brings with him years of riding experience. He also has excellent computer and planning skills, which should really come in handy. In addition to assisting in the overall role of bike committee leadership, he plans to focus on increasing the biking activities on the Southcoast and for south-of-Boston cycling communities.

This year, we attempted to organize weekly rides from one central location in Dennis, with different leaders volunteering at various times during the 16-week main cycling season. While this only resulted in a few rides taking place, I'll try to resurrect this plan again next year.

One of the goals for 2020 will be to re-start weekly rides and add more rides that appeal to beginners who prefer lower speeds and shorter mileage. We'll also continue to train our leaders on the chapter's ridewithgps.com account, which gets more use each year. Ideally, we'd also like to add a second committee vice chair to prepare to eventually assume the chair position.

Overall, we are a very active and positive group. Thanks to everyone on the Biking Committee for contributing to our success and growth.

Respectfully submitted, Bernie Meggison, AMC-SEM Biking Committee Chair

Cape Hikes Report



*Cathy Giordano and Jane Harding,
Cape Hikes Vice Chair and Chair*

Jane Harding and Cathy Giordano, Cape Hikes Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, partner to share committee responsibilities. In 2019, Robin McIntyre will join the team as a second vice chair. The plan is to divide up Board responsibilities among us and team up to find ways to increase offerings and participants. We work well as a team and reach consensus easily.

The Cape Hiking Season runs from Labor Day to Memorial Day annually. We schedule hikes on Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sunday afternoons. The Saturday hikes tend to be slightly longer in length at three to five hours. We average 10 to 12 participants per hike and have had as many as 30 people on a hike. Our hikers and leaders are primarily retirees, but we welcome all age groups. This past year we offered 79 hikes, four more than the prior year. We're always searching for new places to hike and once a year we try to schedule a hike that includes trail clean-up work. We conclude our season with a

potluck picnic. This year, our "potluck" was at Long Pond in Falmouth. It is becoming challenging for us to attract hikers as many more groups now provide this activity and have been using social media effectively as a communication tool.

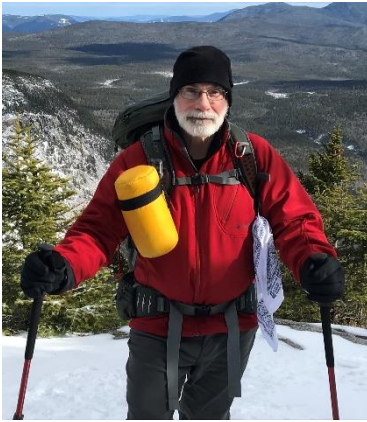
We currently have 19 qualified hike leaders, plus four individuals who have completed leadership training, but not yet done their required co-leads. Ten of our leaders lead three or more hikes a year and we pull from a pool of about 60 individuals who participate in our hikes annually. Our major challenges are keeping an active pool of leaders to be able to maintain a robust schedule of hikes.

Cape Hikes has actively contributed to many chapter-wide endeavors. The Cape hosted the Spring Pot Luck Supper, which many Cape Hikers attended. Cape Hikes offered a hike in Wareham before the 2018 annual dinner, but inclement weather cancelled it. Farley Lewis and Cathy Giordano presented show-and-go Hikes at the SEM Leadership training. Cape Hikes offered several hikes at the club-wide Fall Gathering that SEM hosted at Camp Burgess in Sandwich in October. Jane Harding was an active participant on the AMC Fall Gathering Planning Committee and approximately 20 Cape hikers stepped up to volunteer at Fall Gathering in some capacity.

Stay tuned for 2020.

*Respectfully submitted by Jane Harding, Cape Hikes Chair, and Cathy Giordano,
Cape Hikes Vice Chair*

Communications Committee Report



Paul Miller, SEM
Communications Chair
(Photo by Ken Carson)

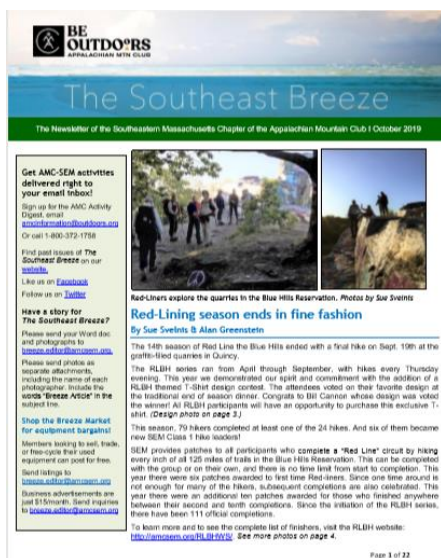
The SEM Communications Committee had another busy year in 2019. As usual, in addition to producing this Annual Report for the chapter, the committee:

- Produced and distributed the ten scheduled monthly issues of our electronic *Breeze* newsletter (no newsletters in July and August)
- Sent out monthly Blast announcements on items of interest to chapter members
- Coordinated with SEM webmistress and social media administrator
- Provided general communications support for chapter activities
- Provided communications support for the 2019 AMC Fall Gathering, hosted by our SEM chapter

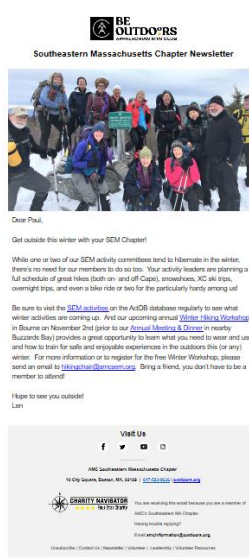
Once again, the committee would like to thank the many SEM members who contribute articles and photos to the *Breeze* and our other communications vehicles. This helps share the fun, adventure, and camaraderie of the many and varied hikes, paddles, bike rides, ski trips, trail work, and conservation events we offer every year. Our common goal, of course, is to get even more of our members actively involved.

Particular thanks go out to those individuals who continue to do the lion's share of the communications work for the chapter: Maureen Walsh, *Breeze* editor; Marie Hopkins, *Blast* editor; Cheryl Lathrop, SEM webmistress and technology guru; Christine Racine, social media administrator; and Ann McSweeney, *Breeze* proofreader.

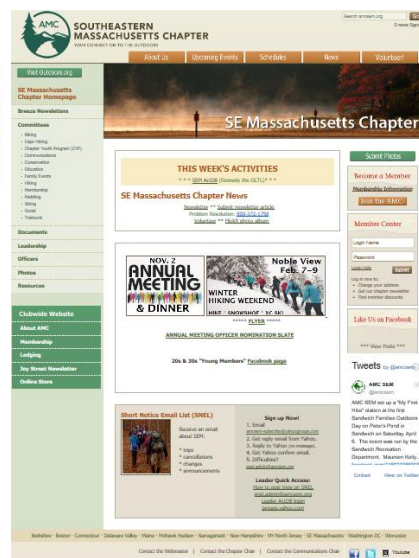
Respectfully submitted by Paul Miller, SEM Communications Chair



Southeast Breeze



Blast email



www.amcsem.org home page

Conservation Committee Report

The SEM Conservation Committee participated in many chapter activities this past year in our ongoing efforts to educate SEM members in Leave No Trace (LNT) and other good conservation practices.



*Picking up trash in the Blue Hills
(photo by Sue Svelnis)*

At this year's SEM Leadership Training in Plymouth, we trained potential new activity leaders in LNT practices and conservation and presented participants with LNT cards

At the SEM Mew Member Hike in the spring, we handed out LNT cards and spoke about conservation during the hike.

The committee is developing "quick and simple" trail head talks for Leaders. We have tried out some talks with the Red Liners and found much success in passing on vital conservation information.

We partnered with the Red Line Hikers to do a trash pick-up hike in the Blue Hills. The route covered all the

Trail Heads along Randolph St.

We also recruited a new Conservation Chair, Joanne Newton. Current Chair, Bill Cannon is moving to Vice Chair and Current Vice Chair, Nancy Coote will continue to serve as an active committee member.

*Respectfully submitted by Bill Cannon, SEM Conservation Chair
and Nancy Coote, Conservation Vice Chair*



Conservation Committee joined forces with our "Red Liners" to collect a prodigious amount of trash in the Blue Hills (Photo by Sue Svelnis)

Education Committee Report



*Hands-on exercises reinforce WFA training
(photo by Doug Griffiths)*

2019 was one of our best years for educational opportunities offered through the Southeastern Massachusetts chapter. Our Leadership Training program held in April at the Wildlands Trust Conservation Barn in Plymouth had the biggest turnout in recent memory, with forty-two participants. This was double the typical class size for new leaders. Clearly, our SEM trip leaders do a great job of inspiring their participants to become leaders themselves. We are grateful and indebted to our dedicated chapter trip leaders who volunteer their time and expertise to mentor the new leaders who take this course. Our presentations from SEM leader volunteers and AMC Leadership Training staff create a productive and entertaining full day of learning and fun. As always, this training is offered free of charge for interested chapter members.

To accommodate the interest from our many Leadership Training graduates, we held two programs for Wilderness First Aid in 2019. WFA is a practical two-day hands-on seminar taught by Stonehearth Open Learning

Opportunities (SOLO). SOLO continues to provide for us a comprehensive, but manageable program that engages participants in a challenging and entertaining review of outdoor activity first aid principles. CPR training is offered as an optional add-on to WFA. This year, we offered the WFA course in both May and September. We are grateful to the Wildlands Trust organization for allowing us to use their beautiful Davis-Douglas Farm meeting facility in Plymouth for these programs. It is well suited to the combination of indoor and outdoor instruction.

We were pleased this year to present two programs for Map and Compass training taught by SEM chapter member Paul Brookes. Geared to beginners, this is a comprehensive course held over two full days. A half-day indoor class is followed by an afternoon of outdoor practice exercises. The second day is all-outdoors orienteering practice, hiking through the Blue Hills Reservation. Participants thoroughly enjoyed this experience, learning and practicing real-world navigation skills. This has become a popular course and Paul has received rave reviews for his program. We hope to continue to offer this popular course.



*SEM map & compass training
(photo by Sue Svelnis)*

Plans for 2020 programs include developing more beginner skills programs, including a review of phone apps for hiking and other outdoor activities. We invite input from members and leaders regarding needs and ideas for future program development.

Respectfully submitted by Doug Griffiths, SEM Education Committee Chair

Hiking Committee Report



SEM backpackers at Shoal Pond in New Hampshire

SEM hiking leaders were very active again this year with 187 hikes in a variety of venues, including several trips right inside Boston (Arnold Arboretum) and Cambridge (Mt. Auburn Cemetery), in the Blue Hills, as well as across Massachusetts and in Rhode Island and New Hampshire. These included several overnight and backpacking trips.

Our ever-popular “series” hikes (Red Line, White Line, Winter, Thursday Morning, Spring Conditioning, Full Moon, etc.) continued to attract participants, including many new people.

The Hiking Committee held introductory workshops for hiking, winter hiking, and backpacking to educate prospective participants about critical skills and gear for each activity. Many thanks to Bob Vogel for developing and leading this program. Following the workshops, we offered a series of increasingly challenging hikes to enable participants to put their new knowledge to use while gaining experience and confidence.

Of particular note, we added many new hike leaders and advanced several others. New level 1 hike leaders include: Samantha Fisher, Robert Branczewski, Diane Simms, Joanne Newton, Beth Mosias, Roger Whidden, Karen Foley, Diane Hartley, Craig MacDonald, and Anne Rapp. In addition, both Dia Prantis and Emilie Bent advanced to level 2. Congratulations to all these leaders for their initiative and desire to help out SEM and the AMC!

Respectfully submitted by George Danis, SEM Hiking Chair

Membership Committee Report

The Membership Committee had several highlights in 2019, including the very well-attended Annual Meeting & Dinner and a New Member hike.



*Social hour at 2018 SEM Annual Meeting
(photo by Dave Selfe)*

Almost 120 members and their guests showed up for our 2019 Annual Meeting and Dinner on November 2nd at the beautiful Bay Pointe Club in Buzzards Bay. After a delicious dinner, awards were presented, officers elected, and raffle prizes awarded. Carl Wirsén, Jr. from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute spoke on “The Deep Sea,” a fascinating presentation that showed us how new technologies are advancing our understanding of the deep sea and what it means for us land-dwelling creatures.

On Sunday, May 19th, the SEM Membership committee hosted a hike for new members at Wompatuck State Park in Hingham. Sue Svelnis led 16 hikers over a variety of trail for approximately four miles, stopping to view some of the bunkers and other structures left behind from when the land was used as an ammunition depot during World War II. Ellen Thompson brought along brochures and instructions on how to locate the various activity listings for the chapter. In addition to Sue and Ellen, seasoned hikers, Bill Cannon and Hadley Donaldson were on hand to share their experiences hiking with the SEM chapter.

The forecast called for clouds and warm temperatures, which allowed for a leisurely and pleasant hike for the first three miles. Then an unforeseen downpour arrived that forced a hasty retreat to the Visitor Center for homemade granola bars and cookies. I guess this was nature’s way of breaking in a new group of hikers!

*Respectfully submitted, Ellen Thompson,
SEM Membership Chair and Sandy Santilly,
Membership Vice Chair*



*Our New Member Hike gets off to a
pleasant start (photo by Sue Svelnis)*

Paddling Committee Report



Paddling on Barnstable Harbor (photo by Jean Orser)

The 2019 paddling season ended much as it started. On May 8 a group of paddlers gathered on the shore of Long Pond and in a cold north wind surveyed the white caps on the water. They decided not to paddle. On October 26 a group of paddlers gathered on the edge of Bass river and in a cold north wind surveyed the white caps on the water. They decided not to paddle. In between those two dates we had lots of paddles although a few also had to be canceled due to weather. Most paddles had six or more participants, and several had more than ten. We have a few new leaders, some of whom have already led paddles and others who plan to lead their first paddle next season. We've also had several paddles off-Cape and I expect to have even more next season.

*Respectfully submitted by Ed Foster,
SEM Paddling Chair*

*Paddling on Seapuit River
(Photo by Jean Orser)*



Ski Committee Report



*On the Loop at Waterville Valley
(Jeanine Audet photo)*

While the snow conditions this year were not exactly cooperative, we managed to pull off several trips.

In January, our group of 22 (including several newcomers) filled the Mountain Fare Inn in Waterville Valley, NH to enjoy a weekend of cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking. The trails at the Waterville Valley Cross Adventure Center were well groomed and our two morning ski groups (“fast” and “half-fast”) covered a lot of ground, while braving a stiff morning breeze. Another group went out to ski other trails and a few chose to snowshoe at WV. We all reconvened for Happy Hour by the fireplace at the Mountain Fare, followed by a hearty dinner, some local microbrews, and lively conversation at the Mad River Tavern. On Sunday, a group returned to Waterville Valley for skiing, including the scenic Moose Run Loop. A second group hiked the beautiful nearby Welch-Dickey loop, an invigorating 4.4 miles, and enjoyed spectacular views,

while some chose to ride the fat bikes at the WV Center and others went for a snowshoe near the Inn. This was our second year at the Mountain Fare. Our hosts were gracious and welcoming, and we have requested dates with the Mountain Fare for a return trip in January, 2020.

In March, we returned to the Old Field House in Intervale, NH for a cross-country skiing and snowshoeing weekend. Our group of 27 was the largest we have had on this trip, which has run for several years. As always, the innkeepers were welcoming, and prepared a wonderful breakfast each morning. The skies were mostly sunny, with light breezes on both days and a 27- to 40-inch base of snow on the trails. On Saturday, 13 X-C skiers enjoyed the nicely groomed trails at Great Glen, while eight snowshoers did a loop hike at Diana’s Bath and the Red Ridge Trail. Other group members chose to go shopping in North Conway, or relax and read at the B & B. Happy hour followed at the B & B, with several folks also enjoying the outdoor hot tub. We broke into small groups for dinner at local restaurants. On Sunday, a group of eight skied the picturesque trails at Bear Notch, while others snowshoed the network of the Mt. Washington Valley trails outside the B & B. Several participants this weekend were relatively new to skiing and had a great experience.

As always, we welcome and encourage all to join our winter trips!

*Respectfully Submitted, Jeannine Audet,
SEM Ski Chair*



*Happy hour at Mountain Faire Inn
(photo by Jeanine Audet)*

Trails Committee Report



New stairway improves access to North Hills Marsh trailhead (photo by Skip Maysles)

Mother Nature was kind to the SEM Trails committee this past winter. Our first major snowfall in the first week of March was later than usual, with minimal damage to the trails.

We started the year with several collaborative planning meetings to design a combination wood/metal stairway on the property of the First Parish Church to help improve access to the popular North Hills Marsh Conservation Area in Duxbury. The existing trail access was all dirt, very steep, and with limited accessibility. During the weekends of April 27-28 and May 4-5, a group of volunteers from the church, SEM, and Boy Scouts built a rugged and durable stairway, which all parties deemed a great success!

On May 11 and September 28, SEM held the spring and fall trail work events to clean our adopted section of the Skyline Trail in the Blue Hills. Each day, six volunteers showed up to clean the rock steps, clear water bars, and cut back vegetation. Many hikers on this well-used trail stopped to say “thank you” to us!

During the spring and summer, Pete Tierney and I continued remarking the Bay Circuit Trail running through the town of Pembroke.

Overall, we had a successful year with over 200 man/woman hours of volunteers!

We are also planning to assist personnel at the Wildlands Trust in Plymouth with two projects; one possibly starting in December 2019 and a second project possibly starting in the spring of 2020.

Respectfully submitted by Skip Maysles, SEM Trails Committee Chair



Marking the Bay Circuit Trail in Pembroke (photo by Skip Maysles)



Removing a tree on our adopted section of the Skyline Trail in the Blue Hills (photo by Skip Maysles)

Treasurer's Report

Another year has come and is almost gone and my role as SEM Treasurer will soon come to a close. I will be passing the baton to Dave Yampanis who is very qualified to take on the Treasurer role. It has been my pleasure to have worked with such wonderful team leaders for these last eight years. I want to thank all of them for your support.

As we approach the end of 2019, we can expect to have a deficit, which was planned in our budget process. We began 2019 with a successful Annual Financial Audit of 2018 books by AMC HQ. We went into 2019 with a plan to spend some of our prior year's surpluses and \$7,700 of our Invested Reserve Funds for special projects and therefore budgeted to have a planned deficit of \$15,000. For year-end 2019, we can expect to have a smaller-than-planned deficit of about \$4,700. This is due to controlled and conservative Committee spending and because not all the special projects were completed in 2019. I want to thank the Executive Board and Committee members for making 2019 a financially successful program year.

Most of our monthly Executive Board meetings continue to be held on-line, which has proven to be a convenient, productive, and economical approach. We had one in-person board meeting in June, at the Wildlands Trust facility in Plymouth. Highlights of our program spending included our Chapter hosting the club-wide, 2019 AMC Fall Gathering at Burgess Camp on Cape Cod. Our special project initiatives continued in 2019. Committee program accomplishments included five training courses, a New Member Hike, the Noble View Winter Weekend, and more. We also continued to focus on recognizing our Board, Committee members, and volunteers for their dedicated work in their committees and in leadership with gift cards from REI. We awarded 16 of our members scholarships for the WFA trainings, totaling \$2,945, and provided a Leadership Training workshop to develop new activity leaders.

Chapter Committees reported net expenditures as follows:

- \$638 for Communications/Website fees (E-Breeze newsletter, On-line meetings & Annual Report)
- \$231 for Membership - Postcards to New Members and had a New Member Hikes
- \$362 for Biking – Spring Pot Luck event and renewed GPS app
- \$100 for Cape Hiking & Paddling Committees – Spring Pot Luck gathering
- \$241 for Conservation & Trails Committees – Planning meeting costs with their volunteers
- \$2,502 for Education - includes two WFA Courses, Leadership training, Map & Compass, and Scholarships (\$3,000)
- \$1,749 for the Hiking Committee – including a winter workshop, quarterly committee planning meetings, Winter Noble View Weekend, Blue Hills Maps and 500-Mile hiking patches as awards.
- \$2,451 for the Special Projects – Bioreserve Foot Bridge, Duxbury project stairs, Laptop & PA System
- \$17,821 Administrative Exp– Insurance, Office Supplies, Board & Committee Member Recognition (Gift Cards), Executive Board Meetings and SEM Annual and club-wide Meetings & Gatherings, and partial subsidizing the AMC-SEM Annual meeting for our members

In closing, I want to thank the Board and the Committee members again for their support and efforts during the past year, and best wishes for my successor, Dave. I look forward to seeing everyone on the trails!

Respectfully submitted by Patty Rottmeier, SEM Treasurer