



The Southeast Breeze

The Newsletter of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club | February 2025

Outdoors Connector

AMC launched a new activities listing and registration platform on January 10, 2025 to replace ActDB. Outdoors Connector offers some new features, including the ability to pay online for fee-based activities. See articles in this and future issues of *The Breeze* for more information.

At this time, the personalized Activity Digest is not available through Outdoors Connector. [Visit here](#) regularly for the updated list of activities.

Find past issues of *The Southeast Breeze* on our [website](#).

Like us on [Facebook](#).
Follow us on [Instagram](#).

Have a story for *The Southeast Breeze*?

Please send your Word doc and photographs to breeze.editor@amcsem.org.

Please send original, full resolution photos as separate attachments, including the name of each photographer. Include the words "Breeze Article" in the subject line.

Shop the Breeze Market for equipment bargains!

Members looking to sell, trade, or free-cycle their used equipment can post for free. Send listings to breeze.editor@amcsem.org.

Business ads start at just \$10/month. Send inquiries to breeze.editor@amcsem.org.



Surrounded by all three Tuesday Blue Hills hike series leaders and participants, Bill Belben at last received his 2024 AMC Volunteer Leadership Award. *Photo by Tracy Hawes*

One year later, Bill Belben receives his Volunteer Leadership Award among the hikers he leads

By AMC Staff & Mo Walsh

On Saturday, February 8, Bill Belben was surprised with a presentation of the Volunteer Leadership Award he earned in 2024 but was not present at the AMC Summit to accept. More than 30 SEM hike members and leaders gathered at Houghton's Pond to congratulate Bill.

The AMC citation reads: "Bill Belben is very dedicated and goes the extra mile to motivate other leaders to lead more hikes and get involved with the SEM chapter. He sends out regular "hiking shorts," a hiking mailing list to leaders and Leaders in Training (LITs). These "shorts" are emails in which Bill regularly updates leaders on opportunities to join hikes or to lead them. The shorts often include shout-outs and or congratulations to new leaders and reminders for important programs like WFA training or changing seasonal conditions on the trail.

"Additionally, Bill is committed to ensuring that new LITs are mentored within SEM and he encourages them to stay active. Bill takes the lead in asking new leaders to co-lead with him. It is nice to have a hiking chair who is so welcoming and approachable."

(See more photos on page 5.)



View from the Chair:

I hope you have found some time to participate in enjoyable experiences outdoors this winter. We have had more reliable snow up north this winter, and cold, cold, cold all around. Winter is half over; so take heart, those who prefer the more moderate temperatures, flowers and peepers—Spring is coming.

Over the weekend of January 24th, AMC recently held the Annual Summit in Norwood, MA. This was an exciting event, chock full of opportunities to learn and network. You will find more information in this issue of the *Breeze*.

AMC’s new online activity system, the Outdoors Connector (OC), is “live,” and end-of-winter / early spring events are being organized and listed. Explore the opportunities! If you are interested in becoming an AMC-SEM Leader, or want to be a more informed participant, planning is underway for Leadership Training, the [Wilderness First Aid](#) course May 3-4, and a [Map and Compass](#) class May 10-11. Stay tuned for other postings on the OC.

As always, in our monthly *Breeze*, SEM celebrates our new leaders and our Volunteer of the Month, and shares accounts of our recent activities. “Tips” are also posted, about developing outdoors skills, for example, and using the Outdoors Connector.

If you are interested in contributing to the *Breeze*, please do! The deadline for submissions is the first of the month (e.g. March 1st for the March *Breeze*). Email your submissions to breeze.editor@amcsem.org. Be sure to include “*Breeze*” in the subject line.

Happy Trails,

Jeannine Audet, Chapter Chair

2025 Executive Board

Chapter ChairJeannine Audet
Vice ChairJenn Wong
Secretary.....Sue Franconi
TreasurerLarry Petrone
Past Chapter ChairPaul Brookes

2025 Standing Committees

20’s & 30’s Chair.....Dave MacDonald
20’s & 30’s Vice Chair.....Jeff Gilbert
Bicycling ChairOPEN
Bicycling Vice ChairOPEN

Cape Hiking Chair.....Robin McIntyre
Cape Hiking Vice ChairJanis Delmonte
Communications ChairLara Szott
Communications Vice Chair.....Bee Butterworth
Conservation ChairZoe Rath
Conservation Vice ChairOPEN
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Chair.....OPEN
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Vice Chair.....OPEN
Education ChairSrini Iyengar
Education Vice ChairOPEN
Hiking ChairBill Belben

Hiking Vice Chair.....Tracy Hawes
Membership Chair.....Nancy Piedra
Membership Vice Chair..... Stacey Steele
Nominating Committee Chair.....Ken Cohen
Nominating Committee Vice Chair.....Joe D’Amore
Paddling Chair..... Charlie Ashman
Paddling Vice Chair.....OPEN
Skiing ChairDia Prantis
Skiing Vice ChairMike Michalewicz
Trails ChairSteve Scala
Trails Vice ChairLarry Petrone

Ad Hoc Committee Chairs & Other Chapter Contacts

Social Media Administrator Lisa Robitaille
Webmaster.....Cheryl Lathrop
Volunteer Relations.....Katherine Brainard

Regional Director.....Cindy Crosby
The Breeze Editor..... Mo Walsh
Blast Editor.....Marie Hopkins

Please contact chair@amcsem.org or nominatingchair@amcsem.org if you are interested in any open position.



SEM Chapter's "delegation" to the Annual Summit: Dia Prantis, left, Paul Brookes, Diane Simms, Jeannine Audet, Jenn Wong, and Zoe Rath. *Courtesy photo*

The AMC Annual Summit 2025: Something to offer everyone

Jeannine Audet, Chapter Chair & Jenn Wong,
Chapter Vice Chair

Over the weekend of January 24, we attended the AMC Annual Summit, held at the Four Points Sheraton in Norwood, MA. Jenn and I have attended Summit in the past, as have many of our Executive Committee members, leaders, and SEM members. For others, this may have been their first time attending. We can say with certainty that Summit has something to offer to everyone, regardless of your interests and role with AMC. Here are some highlights from the full weekend.

On Thursday and Friday, AMC offered 16-hour SOLO Wilderness First Aid and CPR certification sessions. Most of the Summit events were held on Saturday, January 25. The day started with registration and breakfast and provided an opportunity to learn more about AMC Lodging, peruse AMC gear, and speak with partner organizations and event sponsors. The Business Meeting included updates and formal reports from AMC Board Chair, Yvette Auston, and AMC Treasurer, Kathy Campbell.

Sessions included workshops on bikepacking, leadership skills development, *Outdoors Connector*, and tools and frameworks to foster a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming outdoors community. Other sessions featured AMC initiatives like building accessible trails and the maintenance and improvement of the Bay Circuit Trail.

One exciting initiative is the [AMC 150 Relay](#) event. This will be a 1,500-mile torch relay from Virginia to Maine that

begins in March 2026. The Relay is designed to be an epic journey uniting hikers, paddlers, cyclists, and outdoor enthusiasts alike. More details, we were told, are coming soon.

And still other sessions explored history, the environment, marketing, and the art of storytelling. SEM Past Chapter Chair, Paul Brookes, and I presented a workshop, "Building Participant Engagement at the Chapter Level." The attendance was great, our content was well-received, and the discussion was lively and a lot of fun. See Paul's article on page 4.

At lunch, AMC President and CEO, Nicole Zussman, spoke about "All Out," the AMC's Action Plan for 2025-2030, and presented this year's Volunteer Awards. We are excited that SEM's Diane Simms was honored with an AMC Volunteer Leadership Award. She was recognized for generously and selflessly donating her skills, time, and talent this past year. See more on page 4.

Saturday closed with a cocktail hour—a great opportunity to meet other AMC members, talk with staff, network, and share ideas for collaboration. On Sunday, it was a return to business. The Chapter Chairs Committee and Outdoor Leadership Committee convened for their regular meetings. Both meetings afford AMC staff and chapter leadership the opportunity to plan, collaborate, and further develop AMC as **THE** Outdoors organization.

Overall, it was a great experience! Jenn and I are excited to continue learning and working with all of our SEM members, SEM Chapter leadership, and AMC leadership in support of and in service to the AMC Mission.

Watch for Annual Summit 2026!



Volunteer Leadership Award recipients included Diane Simms, second from left. See page 4. *Photo by Zoe Rath*



AMC-SEM's Diane Simms, a 2025 AMC Volunteer Leadership Award honoree, enjoyed an AMC Adventure Travel trip to the Dolomites | July 2024.

Photo by AMC Trip Leader Chuck Huber



Powered by the People: AMC's 2024 Volunteer Awards

By Lauren Murdock, AMC Staff

Editor's Note: AMC-SEM Leader Diane Simms was one of only eight volunteer leaders to be recognized at the Summit with this award. This article is from the Summit program book and webpage. More details on awards presented are [here](#).

From providing hiking information at AMC's huts and lodges, to leading nature walks, to restoring miles of trails, our team of passionate volunteers are critical to delivering on every aspect of our mission. Each year AMC recognizes volunteers not only for their invaluable contributions, but also for how they inspire others to step up and share their talents and time to connect people to the outdoors. We are proud to celebrate the winners of AMC's 2024 Volunteer Awards, who are honored at the 149th Annual Summit in Norwood, MA on January 25, 2025....

DIANE SIMMS

Diane Simms brings AMC's values to life, embodying outdoor leadership. Her ability to bring people together, make meaningful connections, and inspire positive change shines in every role she's taken on, from Chair of the Outdoor Leadership Development Committee to SEM Chapter Chair.

Diane is a driving force at AMC, always willing to invest her time, energy, and expertise to get things done right, while engaging stakeholders along the way. Her dedication to recruiting and retaining leaders and making a lasting impact is felt across the organization. As one team member from the Leader Retention & Recruitment Subcommittee shared, "Diane does a wonderful job—she excels at steering conversations, turning vision into practical action, and ensuring work gets done."

SEM leaders present workshop on building member participation

By Paul Brookes, Past Chapter Chair

One of the workshops at the Annual Summit was presented by our very own SEM leaders Paul Brookes and Jeannine Audet. The workshop was held immediately after lunch and was extremely well attended. While we did not do a count, our estimate is we had about 60 people attending, which was great.

The workshop title was "Building Participant Engagement at the Chapter Level," and it was our chance to share what has worked well for us and maybe, just maybe, to brag about all the great things our leaders and participants have been doing to make SEM one of the best chapters. We brought a lot of items as Show-and-Tell. We had patches to pass around, Bill Cannon's zip tie man, SEM-branded leader badges and leader gifts, our spiffy looking SEM Outreach Cards, and Bill Belben even provided a fully stocked New Leader gift bag for us to show. We passed around a copy of our Annual Report and showed off our Chapter Vase.

While Jeannine and I are, of course, proud of our chapter's achievements, we presented the workshop from a place of humility and sharing, recognizing that other chapters do things differently, and the feedback we are getting is that it was well received by those attending. Nancy Piedra, our Membership Chair, emailed Jeannine and me and said, "I attended the Quarterly Membership meeting for Membership Chairs this morning, and those who attended the Summit were very impressed by your workshop. Bravo!". We have also had chairs and vice chairs reach out to us for more information and the slide deck.

If you are interested in viewing the slides and our talking points, you can find them by clicking the link [Summit Workshop Slides](#).



Introducing new Level 2 Hike Leader Elaine Killough

By Larry Petrone, Mentor/Hiking Leader

I am pleased to announce that Elaine Killough is SEM's newest Level 2 and Local Walks Hike Leader. Elaine recently completed her qualifying hike on January 14, having designed and led a winter Trail Tracing hike in the Little Blue Hill area in the Blue Hills Reservation.

Interestingly, if you ask Elaine about being a hike leader, she might laugh a bit. You see, although Elaine's wife was a life-long hiker and backpacker, Elaine herself didn't share that passion initially. Only after her wife's passing did she decide to take a hiking trip in Italy. And to prepare for that, she joined AMC. Since that time, Elaine has been a very active hiker, regularly participating in SEM-sponsored local hikes, hiking with friends, and hiking internationally.



Elaine Killough. Courtesy Photo

In addition to her interest in hiking, Elaine is also an accomplished pickleball player. She has been playing competitive doubles pickleball with her playing partner for the last six years. They medaled at their rating in the 75–79-year-old bracket at the Senior Massachusetts Games last fall. Given that accomplishment, they are now our state's representatives in pickleball (in their bracket) in Iowa this July at the National Senior Games. Keep your fingers crossed for them!

Finally, I'm sure that those who know Elaine will agree with me that she is one of the nicest, most considerate people on the trails. In addition, her passion and enthusiasm for hiking is contagious and is reassuring for new hikers. Finally, I found her to be one of the most detailed-oriented new leaders I've hiked with. She leaves no detail unattended when planning a hike, knowing the hiking route, and managing the group.

I'm sure Elaine is going to be a real asset to SEM's hiking leadership. Please join me in welcoming her to the leadership team.

Bill Belben Continued from page 1



Bill Belben receives his 202 AMC Volunteer Leadership Award from 2025 honoree Diane Simms.



The Hike Leader goes back to work.

Photos by Tracy Hawes

See more photos [here](#).

AMC Adventure Travel in 2026!



Hiking England's Spectacular South Downs Way

April 12-24, 2026

Trip leaders Robin Melavalin + Nancy Tutko
Join us for a ten-day trek along the historic South Downs Way, a panoramic 100-mile amble through southern England from the ancient cathedral city of Winchester to the dramatic Seven Sisters cliffs near Eastbourne. We'll enjoy luggage transport, a rest day mid-trek, and overnights in comfortable country inns. See details [here](#).



Ski group on the trail at Craftsbury. Photo by Dia Prantis

AMC-SEM has another popular and successful XC ski season

By Jeannine Audet, Chapter Chair

This year, SEM Chapter ran two weekend cross-country ski trips. Over the New Year's holiday, we ventured to the Craftsbury Outdoors Center for our Chapter's first trip at that location. Our group of 24 enjoyed the accommodations at the Cedar Lodge, which included cozy bedrooms, shared bathrooms, a common area for gathering, a rec. area downstairs, and a fire pit outside.

While the snow cover was sparse, especially further south, there was good snow cover and grooming on some of the Craftsbury trails, which allowed our group some lovely skiing on Tuesday, with a sunshiny day. We returned to our lodge for Happy Hour, conversation about the day, and a hearty dinner. Some also took a post-activity trip to the sauna. After dinner, there was a spirited ping-pong game; others watched college football; and a fire was started outside (after some persistence).

On Wednesday, we enjoyed a lovely hike to Barr Hill, which afforded a number of views in all four directions, including of nearby Caspian Lake. We also hiked some trails at Craftsbury, including up to Hosmer Point Camp and Charley's Cabin, prompting our leaders to consider that this may be a great place to hold an event!

Impending snow on Thursday morning prompted some of our group to head home, and others to stay to enjoy approximately three inches of new snowfall, which allowed us to ski some trails we hadn't been able to do on Tuesday. The skiing was great, although the snow was a bit sticky.

In sum, the shared outdoor and community experience was awesome, and the food and accommodations satisfying. SEM Chapter is planning a return trip to Craftsbury for the New Year's period in 2025—Consider joining us!

Our Chapter also returned to our familiar lodgings at the Mountain Fare Inn in Campton, NH, for our traditional Martin Luther King weekend. Our recollection is that this was our 7th year at the Mountain Fare. This year, we had a group of 29, which filled the inn, and included a leader from Boston Chapter offering her help. Our group was fairly evenly split between participants from past trips and new participants and included a family with two young daughters.

We were again able to use the Mountain Fare's kitchen to prepare a smorgasbord of foods for our breakfast and dinners. Everyone pitched in, and the spread was amazing! The inn has cozy rooms in the main building and more rooms in the carriage house, which also has a ping-pong table and sauna. The main building also has a fireplace, and the group gathered there for Happy Hour on Friday and Saturday evenings. A separate sitting area provided space for football fans and puzzle builders.

Continued on page 7



Skiers prepare for the Coronary Trail at Bretton Woods on the Waterville Valley ski trip.



Back at the Mountain Fare Inn for a great hot meal at the end of the day.

Photos by Jeannine Audet



Left: Hiking the Smarts Brook Trail. Photo by Dia Prantis. Above: Skiing at Waterville Valley. Photo by Jim Martin



Photo by Robin McIntyre

Volunteer of the Month: Sandra Alisch

By Robin McIntyre, Cape Hikes Chair & Janis Delmonte, Vice Chair

X-Country Ski Trips Continued from page 7

Some early arrivers hiked Snow’s Mountain on Friday. The weekend skiing conditions were good; most of the group enjoyed a day on the trails at Bretton Woods—where two of us saw a bull moose at close range! Others stayed at Waterville Valley, some taking lessons on both Saturday and Sunday. The instructors were reported to be highly attentive, allowing for a very helpful, amazing experience.

It was the first time ever XC skiing for some participants, and they loved it, and reported that they want to do more. Sunday’s activities included skiing at Waterville Valley, and some local hiking in the Livermore Road/Greeley Ponds area.

We returned to the inn after each day’s activities for relaxation, some yoga, great food, and conversation. Again, snow was forecast for our planned departure day, as well as a drop in temperature. Some chose to depart for home after breakfast, while a small group stayed to hike along the lovely Smarts Brook Trail to view the cascades.



New Year’s Eve fire pit at the Craftsbury Outdoors Center. Photo by Jeannine Audet

The woods protected the group well from the wind chill.

Our SEM Chapter intends to hold another weekend event at the Mountain Fare at the same time in 2026. This trip fills quickly, so stay tuned to the Outdoors Connector.

Each month the SEM chapter recognizes one of our amazing volunteers. We are so fortunate to have people give their time, energy, and resources to make our chapter one of the best! This month, Cape Hikes recognizes Sandra Alisch.

Sandra was an active participant with Cape Hikes before becoming a leader. She then attended Leadership Training with SEM in the spring of 2023 and completed her qualifying hike in December 2023. Since that time, even with our nine-month hiking schedule, she has led eleven hikes for our group. These include Monk’s Park/Little Bay in Pocasset, Lyman Reserve in Buzzards Bay, Bourne Farm/Wing Pond in West Falmouth, and Sagamore Hill and Scusset Reservation in Sagamore.

Sandra shares the history and interesting highlights of the area when she leads and enhances the hiking experience for participants. She is flexible and welcoming to all hikers. She re-schedules quickly if she has a weather cancellation, which helps to fill in our hiking schedule. She loves hiking patches and has achieved a large assortment which she attaches to her pack for everyone to admire and be motivated by.

Congratulations, Sandra, and thank you from all of us at AMC SEM! Sandra will receive a Volunteer of the Month Certificate and a \$60 gift card.





Why I serve on the AMC-SEM Executive Committee (“Excom”)

By Jeannine Audet, Chapter Chair

All AMC Chapters, SEM included, have a committee of volunteers who dedicate their time, energy and talents to the day-to-day operations of the Chapter. As a member, you may be familiar with casting your vote for the ExCom slate at Annual Meeting and Dinner and seeing their names posted in the *Breeze* newsletter and on the SEM web page. Volunteers who organize and lead activities for SEM work closely with their Committee Chairs and with the Chapter Chair, Vice Chair, and Past Chapter Chair as they plan, post, and lead activities. The ExCom highly values the input of SEM leaders and members, as we strive to continuously develop and improve our Chapter. I think this is evident in the breadth of activities offered by SEM.

ExCom positions have a three-year limit. Chapter Chair is limited to two years. Vice Chairs often, but not always, move up to the Chair position when a Chair’s term is finished. Some ExCom members choose to stay on in their role or change to another ExCom position, when their two-year term has concluded. The duties of an activity Chair include assisting their committee leaders in developing activities, approving activities for listing on the Outdoors Connector, encouraging their leaders to contribute to the *Breeze*, managing their committee’s budget, and preparing their committee’s section of the Annual Report for the Annual Meeting. Committee Vice Chairs assist their Chairs in these duties. ExCom members attend seven online meetings and one or two in-person meetings each year.

SEM strives to have all of our ExCom positions filled to provide the best opportunity for the Chapter to run smoothly and grow. We currently have openings in our ExCom and are seeking interested applicants.

I can truly attest that working with the ExCom over the past seven years, initially as Skiing Vice Chair, then Skiing Chair, and now Chapter Chair, has been an amazing, rewarding experience. The dedication of the members of the SEM ExCom is hard to describe.

Stay tuned for more “reasons” in the March Breeze. We hope that your interest has been piqued and that we hear from you!

To spark the reader’s interest, below are some quotes from our current ExCom officers. I received an immediate response when I asked SEM’s ExCom if they would provide a brief comment on the reasons they serve to contribute to this article.

“I choose to serve because it takes a village to have the type of chapter we do in SEM. It is my way of giving back, despite my commitments and responsibilities outside.”—Tracy Hawes, Hiking Vice Chair

“Serving as Nominating Committee Chair, and attending Executive Committee meetings whenever possible, allows me to give back to an organization that has been an important part of my life for the past 18 years. It also affords me the opportunity to participate in the “heartbeat” of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter of AMC.”—Ken Cohen, Nominating Committee Chair

“I serve on the board because I believe in AMC’s mission of inspiring joyous, meaningful outdoor experiences and cultivating a diverse, robust welcoming community. It seems to me that if we all spent more time outdoors, we’d share greater responsibility for our environment and our personal health. When we are outside, we are putting our differences aside and actually finding what unites us as a society. This camaraderie and community is what keeps me active on the executive board and in the AMC.”—Dia Prantis, Skiing Chair

“Would you like to know more about AMC, and SEM? Joining the SEM ExCom is a great way to get involved and learn more about AMC as an organization. At the same time, you join a group of kindred spirits (other chairs on the committee) who become like family!”—Zoe Rath, Conservation Chair

“I get so much joy, exercise, and social interaction from participating in AMC activities that I want to give back and help it thrive and continue so that I can still be a part of it.”—Janis Delmonte, Cape Hiking Vice Chair

“I volunteered because I love skiing and the AMC. I saw the Ski VC position open in The Breeze for a few months straight and decided to check it out. I am still learning and growing into my role and that’s okay. I hope to continue to grow the SEM skiing offerings over the next few years. I guess I would say that it’s fine to be nervous and not have a perfect idea of the logistics of managing an activity committee, especially as a vice chair. As long as you have a passion for the specific activity committee or role within the Exec. Comm., there is plenty of time and room to grow into the role. —Mike Michalewich, Skiing Vice Chair

Open positions on the ExCom are Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Chair and Vice Chair; Conservation Vice Chair; Bicycling Chair and Vice Chair; Paddling Vice Chair, and Education Vice Chair. For details on these or any future openings, contact chair@amcsem.org or Ken Cohen at nominatingchair@amcsem.org.





An accomplished hiker, Nancy Tutko is now qualified to lead winter day hikes and snowshoe hikes, like the recent Winter Series Hike #5 up Mt. Pierce. *Photo by Zoe Rath*

Nancy Tutko: A calm and confident new Level 3 Hike Leader

By Paul Brookes, Level 3 Hike Leader

On Saturday, February 1st, Nancy Tutko led a large group of hikers up Mt. Pierce, successfully completing her qualifying hike to become a Level 3 Hike Leader. Please join me in congratulating Nancy on this significant achievement! (See page 12.)

The hike included a changing forecast, unexpected snow squalls, and single-digit temperatures. None of this fazed Nancy as she had prepared herself well over the years. Nancy became a Cape Hike Leader in March 2021 and a Level 2 hike leader in November 2022. She has helped organize and lead winter hikes such as Mt. Webster/Jackson and the Osceolas during the winter of 2021/2022; Tuckerman's Ravine the following winter; and Mt. Gunstock/Row during the 2023/2024 winter season. In addition, Nancy is one of the few SEM leaders who have successfully completed the New Hampshire chapter's three-day Winter Leadership School at Mt Cardigan (very similar to Mountain Leadership School).

For her Level 3 qualifying hike, Nancy chose one of the hikes from the SEM Winter Hiking Series, a group hike to Mt. Pierce, offering to do all the organization of a hike that had around 40 registered participants. She explained that she wanted the challenge as she has a desire to eventually become an AMC Adventure Travel leader.

Leading up to the hike, Nancy provided the leader's regular weather updates since snow, cold temperatures, and high winds were predicted with changing forecasts. On the day of the hike, snow caused several participants to cancel. In addition, a snow squall caused more participants to turn around on their drive up. Due to the changing circumstances, Nancy pulled the leaders together for a pre-hike meeting in a quiet conference room, while the participants waited downstairs, warm, in the Highland Center. Back downstairs she welcomed 31 remaining participants and, oh, it was Nancy's birthday, so we all sang "Happy Birthday."

The hike to Mt. Pierce's summit via Crawford Path, the oldest continuously maintained hiking trail in the United States, was quite the adventure in managing temperature. As we ascended, the temperature dropped to single digits, and at the intersection for the Mizpah cutoff, it plummeted even further. Once we left the cover of the trees, the temperature with wind chill was around -20°F. Blowing winds and large snowdrifts had covered the cairns, and the path to the summit was hidden, so we wisely made the decision to return below the tree line.

Despite the ever-changing weather and the large group, Nancy maintained her composure, and continued to deal with situations as they arose, successfully executing her qualifying hike.

I had the privilege of being the official "observer" on Nancy's qualifying hike. However, Bill Belben and Dexter Robinson have been Nancy's ongoing mentors. It is inspiring to witness such a collaborative effort, and I am grateful to have been a part of it.

Congratulations, Nancy! You're going to be a fantastic Level 3 Leader for our chapter. I look forward to leading with you on future winter hikes.



Nancy's confidence comes in part from her own hiking experiences.

Photo by Eli Hanschka



Summit 25: AMC ongoing actions for Conservation yield results

By Zoe Rath, Conservation Chair

At the AMC Annual Summit 25, the most memorable session I attended was “Advocacy for the Outdoors: AMC’s State and Federal Conservation Funding Campaigns at Work.”

In this session, Amy Lindholm, AMC Director of Federal Affairs & Conservation Funding, explained how AMC initiatives make a difference for policy and for future shared 30 x 30 goals.

“The initiative, dubbed ‘30 by 30,’ is part of an international movement to mitigate climate change and biodiversity decline through the conservation of lands and waters. The scientific consensus is that 50 percent of the Earth’s land should be conserved by 2050, and 30 x 30 is an important benchmark in getting there.”

Amy reminded us that in the House and Senate there is a very narrow margin between Democrats and Republicans, and that many conservation issues share bipartisan support. Right now, swing districts exert power, and within these districts conservation remains a popular issue. AMC priorities remain the same.

AMC fought and won \$30 Million for the Maine Trail Bond and more than \$16 billion for state and local trails.

As the Federal Budget is shrinking, we need federal partners. The AMC cannot advocate for candidates, but they can and do advocate for many conservation issues. The AMC pushed for The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), which was signed in 2020 and stays in effect through 2025:

“The act has two major components: permanent annual funding of \$900 million of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to assist federal, state, and local agencies in the acquisition of land for preservation and recreation; and the commitment of \$9.5 billion over the next five years for maintenance and repair of infrastructure in our national parks.”

AMC continues to make a difference leading a coalition which provides \$1.2 trillion in funds for projects that can have the most impact.

Amy went on to summarize important advocacy work that AMC continues to advance.

Preparing for this article, I looked up some of the policies that Amy mentioned at Summit on the AMC

website and discovered a wealth of in-depth articles written by various AMC staff.

The Mid-Atlantic Highlands and the Highlands Conservation Act

“The Mid-Atlantic Highlands comprise a ribbon of green space stretching through northwestern Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania—the geographical heart of AMC’s region.”

River protection

Discover how AMC helps protect Delaware River Watershed, Connecticut River Watershed, advocates for Hydropower Licensing, and more.



White Mountain National Forest (The Weeks Act)

“AMC’s involvement and mass support would prove crucial for the success of the Weeks Act. In 1904, AMC members were urged to exert their influence on Congressmen (sic) representatives in support of a measure that would create a national reserve in New Hampshire.”

Funding of the LWCF

“Throughout its 55-year history, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has used royalties paid by oil and gas companies drilling offshore to partially fund more than 40,000 outdoor recreation projects, from land acquisition in national parks to helping create local parks and playgrounds.”

Explore Act

“Codifying the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) program, which provides grant funding for parks and trails in underserved communities....Through the Conservation Action Network, AMC sent 2,719 letters to representatives advocating for the passage of the EXPLORE Act. Representing our community of 400,000 voices.”

Amy ended by stressing the importance of advocacy: letters to senators and congressional representatives and other government officials can make a real difference. She encouraged us to join the AMC Conservation Action Network (AMC-CAN), so that we can continue to push our government to promote conservation issues.



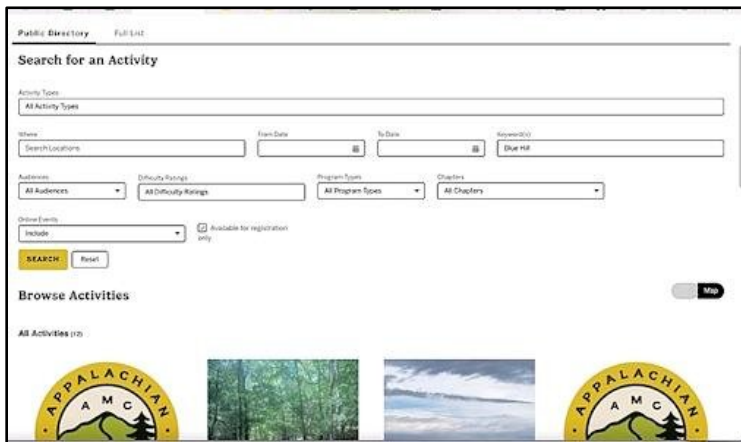
Searching for Published Activities in the new Outdoors Connector

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

Since the introduction of OC, there have been a lot of questions on the best way to search for activities. As we continue to learn the new system and AMC staff continues to fix bugs and add features, here are a couple of tips that may be helpful to find an activity that best suits you.

Finding Activities that are still open for registration:

If you want only to look at activities that are still open for registration, there is a checkbox at the bottom of the Search for Activity section of the Activity page. By checking the box, activities that are no longer open for registration will be filtered out.



The Outdoors Connector offers search filters by trips still open for registration and key words, a trip leader's name or "beginner," for example. [Screen shot](#).

Key Word searches:

OC offers the ability to use Keywords to further refine your search. Be sure to spell your words correctly as the search result may deliver different results depending on how you spell things. Use of multiple words may be helpful to further narrow your search, but that could also lead to missing events that you may be interested in. For example, use keywords of "Blue Hills" or "Cape Hikes."

After you have done the filtering and/or using Keywords for your favorite type of activity, bookmark it so that you can quickly search for those activities again without having to go through the filtering process all over again.



Old leader badge, left, has been replaced by one with the new AMC brand logo, right. *Photos by Paul Brookes*

Recognize your SEM Leaders by their new AMC styling badges

By Paul Brookes, Past Chapter Chair

So, you're in a large parking lot excited to take part in an AMC-SEM hike and see multiple groups gathering at different sides of the lot. Humm, which group is mine. You walk over to one group and see someone sporting the new and stylish SEM Leader Badge and immediately feel at home 😊

No more the black and white stick man!

Rather SEM has, in partnership with AMC, designed a brand-new leader badge in the SEM chapters green colors with the AMC style, classical, logo.

Breeze newsletters for 2024 now searchable by subject

By Ben West

Below is a new link to the "2020s Consolidated Breeze," updated to include 2024 newsletters. This replaces the version formerly located on the [Search our Breeze Archives by Subject](#) section of the Breeze Newsletter page.

To repeat instructions from the April 2024 *Breeze*: "Although there are several ways to run searches, the simplest way to do so from your computer (PC or Mac) is to click the Control [CTRL] key and press the letter "F." This works in Chrome, Safari, Edge, and most other browsers.

"To search from your phone or tablet, open the link and use the browser's search function—typically, by selecting the magnifying glass icon or clicking search from your browser's menu. If you choose to save a copy of the file on your local device for offline use, you will need a PDF reader app (e.g., Adobe Reader)."



Winter Hiking Series group enjoys a generous coating of snow on Hike #5. Photo by Nancy Tutko

Mt. Pierce: Snow & cold for Hike #5 in the Winter Hiking Series

by Janet Harris, Hike Participants

Less than 10 yards from the warm, crackling fire inside the AMC Highland Center was a sign that told us a different story was unfolding outside: The day's temperature was expected to reach a high of only 10 degrees F with potential for extraordinarily high wind gusts. We'd been previously warned the high mountain forecast was windchills in the -20s. It was Saturday morning, February 1st, and 31 intrepid hikers were about to hike up Mount Pierce, in the Crawford Notch area of the White Mountains, as the fifth hike in the Winter Hiking Series.

Nancy Tutko, the hike's leader, gathered us near the lodge's fireplace for our pre-hike talk. The original plan was to split into three groups, but we split into only two since there were fewer participants due to a few cancellations and one carpool turning back on the highway due to snowy, unsafe conditions driving up to New Hampshire. (Luckily, they'd made it as far as Hooksett, so were able to drown their disappointment in warm apple cider donuts!)

SEM hiking chair Bill Belben was given a copy of AMC's White Mountain Guide as a thank you gift for his incredible dedication to putting together this incredibly instructive and fun Winter Hiking Series for several years in a row. Then, after belting out a round of "Happy Birthday" to Nancy Tutko, we stepped outside to gear up, strap on our snowshoes, and set out to cross Route 302 to the trailhead.

Our trail up to the summit was the Crawford Path, the oldest continuously used mountain trail in America, named for Abel Crawford and his son, who first cleared the path in 1819. Countless thousands have since traveled this trail to the Presidential Range and Mt. Washington.

With the AMC Highland Center reporting a snow base of 18" that day, we enjoyed one of the many blessings of winter hiking: a nice soft trail with nary a sign of roots and rocks. A couple of inches of fresh snow had also fallen the night before and, of course, the higher we hiked the more snow there was.

The trail ascended at a steady and relatively even incline, mostly sheltered in the woods. While the skies were a bit overcast at times, the wind and sun were working hard to blow the clouds aside and break out the blue skies, so we periodically captured a nice view through the trees. Overall, it was a spectacularly beautiful hike with the trees blanketed in big bulbous blisters of snow. A classic winter wonderland—like a walk through a marshmallow forest.

The trail was well-packed but narrow and, despite the cold, there were a fair number of other hikers, so we had to hang left or right many times to let them by. As one passing hiker jokingly remarked, the slight bottleneck nearer the top was "like the Hillary Step of Mt. Pierce" (a reference to a crowded area on Mt. Everest).

As we neared the summit and were about to step out of the trees, we stopped to fully gear up with extra layers, balaclavas, and goggles. We checked each other to ensure not a speck of skin was showing, as it doesn't take long to get frostbite in those conditions.

Continued on page 12



Hike Leader Gilles Pepernos, left, and Eli Hanschka. Be careful your faces don't freeze like that, guys. Photo by Nancy Tutko



Carpooling: Make a friend, save money and a tree or two

By Bill Belben, Zoe Rath, and Paul Brookes

I think it's fair to say that most people like to save money. And if you're a member of AMC, then it's probably also fair to say that you are concerned about the environment. And if you are an active participant in AMC activities, then it might also be fair to say that you like to be around people. Well...what if I told you that there is a great way you could do all three things at once?

How, you say? The answer is carpooling, and it's very simple. All you do is go to the [SEM Hiking Webpage](#) and look on the right-hand side of the page, where you will see a handy dandy link appropriately called "[Carpooling](#)". Once you click on that link, you will launch the Carpooling spreadsheet created by Zoe Rath and modified by Paul Brookes to include a formula to track our CO2 reduction.

How can I help, you say? First, if you're interested in a destination activity and there are no carpooling options in the listing, contact your activity leader. Ask them to add their event to the carpooling spreadsheet, publicize the spreadsheet on event postings and information sheets, and encourage participants to carpool. Second and most important, is to be an active participant in Car-Pooling to/from our events, either as a driver or a passenger.

"So how do we save a tree by carpooling?" I hear you ask. Well, that's where Paul's dandy little formula comes into play. Let's assume that one person offers to carpool and takes one passenger, and the round trip is 100 miles. The average car emits about 40 kg of CO2 for every 100 miles driven, so if the passenger drove separately that would be 40 kg of CO2 emitted that would not be emitted if they had carpooled. On average a tree absorbs 22 kg of CO2 per year, so by carpooling and not driving those extra 100 miles, you saved the equivalent carbon absorption of about two trees for a year!

And since we love a good challenge, let's set a target of 1,000 trees saved in 2025. Plus, for those who participate in the carpooling program the most, either as drivers or passengers, maybe, just maybe, there will be a secret prize at the end of the year if we meet our goal.

For our sources, check out [Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle](#) and [How Much CO2 Does A Tree Absorb?](#) Also, please take a moment to peruse [AMC's Conservation page](#), read about the AMC's 30x30 goals, and consider joining the Conservation Action Network (CAN).



Winter Hiking Series group at the Crawford Trail to the summit of Mt. Pierce. Photo by Janet Harris

Mt. Pierce Hike

Continued from page 11



Top left photo by Nancy Tutko; Middle left, Joanne Graziano, by Zoe Rath; Left by Tracy Hawes; Top right and right by Jennifer Tickell. More photos [here](#).



Five AMC-SEM hikers reflect on achieving their NH-48 4Ks goal

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair, et al.

Last year was a very exciting year for SEM Hiking. As mentioned in the “SEM Hikers Circle Half the World” Hiking Chat email, we had tremendous participation in our hiking program. Nestled within the program were a lot of individual achievements, including five members who completed their NH-48 4,000s list in the second half of 2024. For those who have hiked peaks over 4,000 feet in New Hampshire, you know that they are not easy and to hike all 48 is quite a feat of determination and worthy of recognition.

Everyone has different reasons for their journey, a different timeline to complete it, and different experiences along the way. We asked each of these members to share a bit of their story.

Tracy Hawes

What an adventure these past few years have been! My journey to climb all 48 of New Hampshire’s 4,000-footers officially began on August 3, 2020, after my twelfth jaunt up Mt. Washington via Tuckerman’s Ravine and down by Ammonoosuc Ravine Trail, a route I’d first hiked at 18 years of age. Back then, it was my first real summit and, man, did it spark a passion for me! That early comedy of errors became a source of resilience and joy that fueled me over decades to walk among the 48 NH summits.



In 2020, in the middle of a chaotic pandemic world, I decided I needed a goal. With peaks like Washington, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lincoln, Flume, and Monroe already under my belt, I committed to finishing “the list.” Along the way, I balanced work, life, and midlife graduate school—but my determination never wavered. The hardest challenge wasn’t one specific peak but rather finding the space to honor the journey amidst life’s demands.

The easiest? Maybe that first hike up Washington, if only because of the freedom of not knowing what I didn’t know. But the most rewarding moments have always been about the people: Bob, Matthew, Jeannine, Dia, Julie, Mike, Bill, Anne, Susan, and so many others who joined me for stretches of trail. Each hike reminded me that this wasn’t just about summits; it was about connection, discovery, and joy.

Now, as I leave the numbers behind, I look forward to simply climbing the peaks and valleys in front of me. “What do you want me to do, to do for you, to see you through?” For this is all a dream we dreamed, one afternoon long ago.



Top left: Tracy’s first climb on Mt. Washington. Photo by R. Duquette

Left: Tracy in the Bonds, Eisenhower & Washington. Photo by Mike Michalewich

Bottom Left: Tracy’s final peak. Photo by Tracy Hawes

Kim Hicks

While contemplating New Year’s resolutions for 2019, I casually mentioned to my sister that I’d like to hike Mt. Washington. She eagerly stated that she would like to do this hike with me. After a brief pause, she wisely suggested that we should hike a few “smaller” mountains first. And so my journey began. After picking the brains of friends and my nephew (all accomplished hikers and NH-48 4K veterans), studying the AMC White Mountain Guide and trail maps, and ramping up workouts, we packed our backpacks with the 10 essentials and successfully summited Mt Moosilauke on July 16, 2019!



While still elated with our accomplishment, we enthusiastically told our families that we were going to hike NH-48! We completed two hikes that summer and only one in 2020. We stepped it up in 2021, completing five hikes, and stayed in our first AMC high hut, Zealand Falls.

On each hike we encountered fellow hikers, engaging them in conversation and gleaning valuable information, from equipment choices, AT trail names, and favorite hikes, to best snacks, all fueling my interest in hiking.

Continued on page 1



NH-48 4Ks Continued from page 13

On September 14, 2021, I achieved my 2019 New Year's resolution and hiked Mt. Washington with my sister, Lindsey, and nephew, Keon. In NH vernacular, the day was a "50-Centah"! In 2022, my daughter accompanied me on several day hikes. Together with Lindsey, we summited Mt. Eisenhower via the Edmands Trail. This was particularly poignant as my maiden name is Edmands (same unique spelling of this surname but, alas, no known relationship to J. Rayner Edmands, the White Mountains trailblazer).

Winter of 2023 found me eager to get back on the trails with the goal of completing the NH-48 in 2024 to mark my 60th birthday. Having known Bill Belben from our pre-retirement days, and upon learning that he was an avid hiker and AMC leader, I tapped into his vast knowledge of hiking that he generously shared. I hiked 21 of the 48 that year. I joined many AMC volunteer-led hikes to reach my goal. Through the AMC, I met loads of friendly, supportive, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable fellow hikers. As my hiking experience in the Whites grew, so did my admiration for the hiking community and appreciation for the AMC, particularly the SEM chapter, and respect for the mountains and their weather.

I completed the NH-48 on September 13, 2024, with my #1 supporter—my husband, Lee, on Mount Lincoln. It was so memorable to share this accomplishment with him, as we took in the amazing views on the Franconia Ridge and into the Pemigewasset Wilderness, identifying the surrounding peaks and saying proudly, "I hiked those!"

What I love about hiking is the knowledge I gained about the sport, the sense of personal accomplishment I felt with the completion of each hike, the wonderful folks I met along the way, and a heart-felt appreciation for the beauty and awesomeness of nature, especially the White Mountains of NH.

Memorable moments:

June 21, 2023. While hiking Wildcat Ridge, my husband and I were passed by a trail runner wearing only a loincloth, declaring, "It's a great day to hike naked." Indeed, the first day of summer is unofficially Hike Naked Day. I found it on Google, so it must be true. ;)

August 1, 2023. At the summit of Garfield, we were met with the loud roar of approaching jet planes. Several Air Force A10 Warthogs were flying training missions around the Pemigewasset Wilderness. It gave me an appreciation of how high the summit was at 4,500' as the jets were flying lower than the summit.

Favorite hike. This is a hard question for me to answer. For me each hike becomes a favorite because of the people that I hiked with or met on the trails. Hiking gave me the gift of sharing quality time with family, friends, and fellow hikers, and together we forged life memories that will sustain me far beyond the summits.

Jayne Oliverre

It was early 2020 and I found myself in a position to devote some time and energy to hiking. I always enjoyed hiking but with a busy schedule never prioritized it. Finally, I was ready and signed up for the AMC-SEM Blue Hills Spring Conditioning Series. COVID struck; the series and everything was cancelled. Like many others during the lockdown, being outside was a great escape and a source of peace.



That fall the conditioning series was offered again and I was able to register. My weekly Tuesday hikes became the highlight of my week. I found a group of other outdoor enthusiasts led by a great group of leaders willing to share their time and knowledge of hiking and the outdoors.

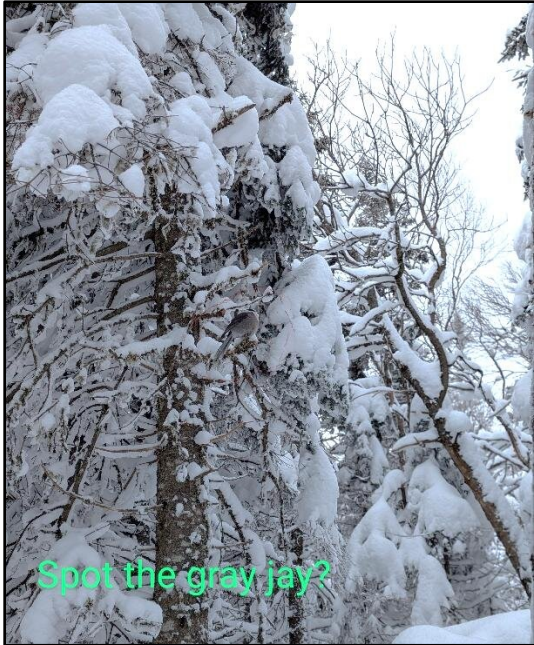
Often the topic on the trails was hiking in the White Mountains and the NH 4,000-footers. AMC-SEM was always willing to help by scheduling White Mountain Hikes. Soon it became a challenge for me to complete all 48 of the 4,000s.

On Veteran's Day (Nov 2024), I completed the 48th on Cannon Mountain. Each of the 48 was memorable in its own way, but this hike was extra special as I was able to finish it with my daughter, son-in-law, and my 9-year-old grandson.

A special thanks to Bill Belben and the super group of AMC-SEM hike leaders for all of their support and encouragement in helping me and many others achieve our hiking goals.



Continued on page 15



Spot the gray jay?

Winter camouflage can be life-saving for woodland creatures, especially when raptors have limited prey.

Photo taken on the Mt. Pierce hike by Anne McKee



Register now for Map & Compass

By Paul Brookes, Past Chapter Chair

As AMC hikers, we've been taught to always carry the 10 essentials, one of which is a compass. You know, the little lightweight plastic thing with a circle, a spinning arrow, and a bunch of numbers? I'm sure we all have one in our pack; they weigh next to nothing. But do you know how to use it? Learning Map and Compass skills is valuable if you hike solo, with friends, or lead trips.

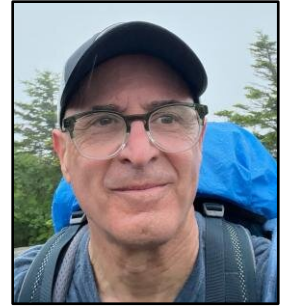
For a video interview with Paul Brookes about the very basics of Trail Navigation, click [here](#) or read the article in our April 2021 issue of the Breeze. Click [here](#) for a Facebook reel from past classes. Register [here](#).

NH-48 4Ks

Continued from page 14

Brian Gollub

My journey to complete the NH-48 started with a one-off, when my older daughter Eliza and I hiked Cannon Mountain in late June of 2021. At that time, I was still working, and the 4,000-Footer List was not even on my radar screen. After retiring in February of 2023, I was admittedly a bit unsure of how to handle the 10 hours every weekday that I now had free, and I started searching for things that would interest me. I stumbled upon an AMC-SEM 20-mile hike in the Fall River Bioserve and on March 23, 2023, did my first-ever SEM group hike. On this hike I met Bill Belben, Ben West, and Deb Sepinwall, three great leader/mentors, and there was much chatter about the NH 4,000-Footer



Being someone who makes lists, loves checking things off, and is also physically active, tackling the 47 remaining 4,000-footers seemed like a great adventure. The adventure began with an AMC-SEM hike of Mount Tecumseh in early May 2023, and then it was off to the races. By late October of 2023, I had completed 37 out of 48 peaks. In early January 2024, I had an unfortunate black-ice related car accident and was sidelined for numerous months. I picked things back up in early August 2024 and was able to complete my 4,000-footer journey as part of an AMC-SEM hike of Owl's Head on October 26, 2024.

My favorite hikes were based more on who I hiked with than the mountains themselves. I have two adult daughters and was lucky enough to have each accompany me on a two-peak adventure. My older daughter Eliza and I hiked Pierce and Eisenhower in June of 2023, and my younger daughter, Samantha, and I hiked Monroe and Washington in August of 2023. Having this shared experience with my girls was a blast.

Probably my least favorite hike was Mount Willey. It took me three tries! The first time, I got caught in a torrential downpour after summiting Tom and Field and had to come off the trail. The second time, I tried to hike Willey on its own after doing another 4,000-footer the same morning. I got dehydrated, cramped up, and couldn't get to the summit. I finally made it without incident on my third try.

Continued on page 16



NH-48 4Ks Continued from page 15

My most memorable hike was my finale at Owl's Head. As we approached the summit, we all dropped our packs, and everyone raced ahead of me. When I arrived at the summit, I was greeted by my fellow hikers cheering me on as I ran through their canopy of upraised poles.



Brian Golub hiked to the summit of Mt. Washington with his younger daughter, Samantha.

Photo by Anonymous Hiker



Brian's hikes up Pierce and Eisenhower were enlivened by the companionship of his older daughter, Eliza.

Selfie photo

If I was advising someone who was just starting this journey, I would offer a few things:

1. Be a sponge and tap into the experience of others. The AMC community is full of smart, experienced, and kind people who love sharing their knowledge.
2. Develop a plan. I did not have a road map to tackle the 4,000-footer list and so my order ended up being a bit helter-skelter with too many trips to the far north to peaks like Cabot, Waumbek, and Moriah at the end. Lots of long rides home.
3. Try a solo hike. Most important, I would only recommend this from June to September when the snow and ice are gone and with an understanding of the water crossings on your chosen hike. I did 16 of my 48 peaks solo, and while it is a quite different experience than a group hike, it gives you the flexibility to start when you like and control your pace. If you are up for this, try it on popular, easier peaks such as Tecumseh, Hale, and Pierce. Some type of satellite communication device is a must as well.

I happily found my retirement passion in fairly short order after I stopped working. Hiking the Whites is a beautiful, challenging, and satisfying experience. I have come to truly respect Mother Nature and all of the variabilities the White Mountains have to offer. The biggest benefit I received during this journey was the strong sense of community within AMC-SEM. I have learned so much and made so many friends over the last couple of years and hope to pay it forward as a Level 2/Level 3 SEM leader.

Many thanks to the leaders who helped me on my journey, including Bill Belben, Tracy Hawes, Dexter Robinson, and Ben West. Your leadership, mentorship, and friendship are a primary reason I was able to get this done.

Continued on page 17



Whooooo's that staring at me?

When you hike in the Blue Hills in the early morning, you better look up because you never know Whooooo will be watching you! *Photo by Elisabeth Belben*



Elisabeth Belben discovered each of the 48 peaks has its own personality. She was overjoyed to have both her parents and many friends present when she bagged peak #48. Photos by Bill and Mary Belben

NH-48 4Ks

Continued from page 16

Elisabeth Belben

I hiked my first NH 4K back in the summer of 2020 when my father, brother, and I hiked Mt Hale. Having hiked in the Blue Hills a few times, I thought I knew what to expect. But it was different; it was uphill all-the-way! After the hike, if you had asked me if I would go on and complete the rest of the 48 4Ks, I would have resoundingly said “No Way!” In fact, it wasn’t until I got past the half-way mark that I actually thought I might be able to finish.

As I progressed through 48, one of the things I noticed was that while all of these peaks were part of the White Mountains, every one of them had its own personality. Each hike was different in terms of steepness, ruggedness, rock scrambles, deep forests, water crossings, above tree line, ridge walks, and views (or lack thereof). There were definitely hikes that I really liked, and hikes that I really did not like. The one thing they all had in common was they were all hard!

Looking back, I would say my favorite hike was Mt. Washington and Mt. Monroe with an overnight stay at the Lake of the Clouds Hut. We had perfect weather and great views from the summit, followed by a great time with the “kroo” at the hut. The next day was memorable, as well, as we had to hike out in 70 mph winds and rain, which gave me an appreciation of how fast the weather can change in the White Mountains.

I am so thankful that I was able to save Mt. Cannon as my last hike so that my mother (who is not a hiker) could join us at the summit. While the weather was not great, a

group of my hiker friends and family made the trek up to support and celebrate with me.

As I reflect on the past four years, I still have a hard time believing that I was able to accomplish this. The two things I will remember most about the journey were the incredible views and all of the friends who hiked with me and encouraged me along the way.

If I was to offer advice to someone who is deciding whether to hike the NH 48, it is to do it at your own pace. Don’t feel pressure to get them all done quickly. I would also say to make sure you do proper planning and seek advice from knowledgeable sources so that you don’t put yourself, or others, in harm’s way.

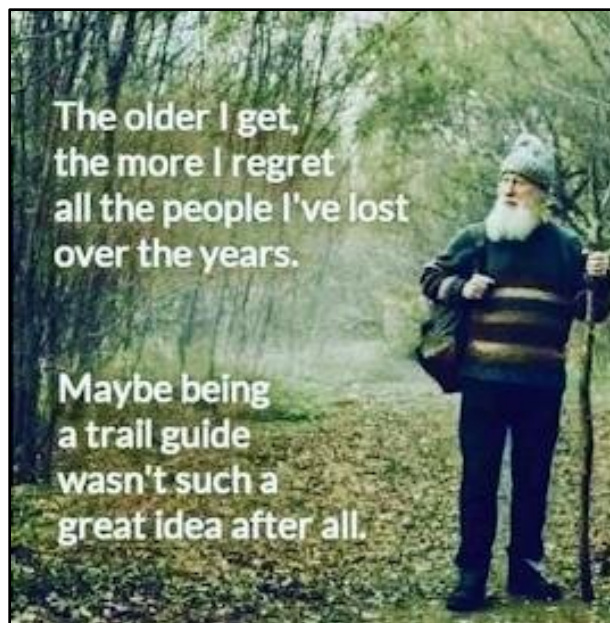


Save on new and used gear from AMC-SEM members



Merrill / Size 8-1/2 women’s hiking boots.

They run small. New \$50. Reach out to Dora at grobanite111@icloud.com.





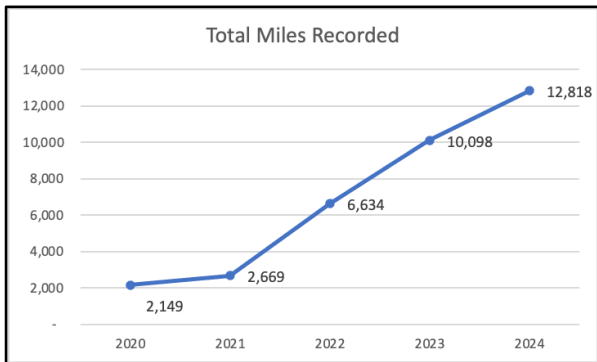
AMC-SEM hikers circle halfway around the World in 2024

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

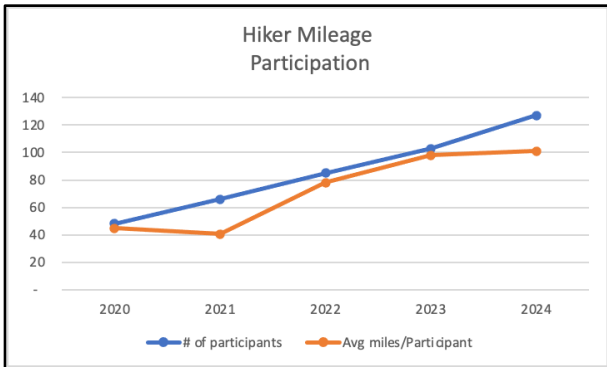
Who could blame us for taking a few days rest at the end of 2024? After all, if you add up all the mileage recorded by our participants this year (12,818 miles), we could have walked halfway around the world!

In just two years, we have doubled our annual mileage recorded. In addition, the number of participants recording hiking mileage has *tripled* since 2020, and the average number of miles per participant has more than *doubled*.

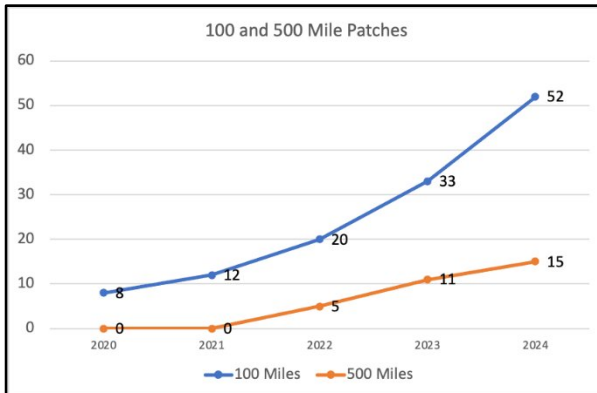
There is no telling how far we will go in 2025, but if you haven't joined us on a hike lately, it's time to lace up those boots/trail runners and get outside and join us for a hike!



Total Miles in 2020 was 2,149. In 2024, it was 12,818!



In 2020, less than 40 participants logged an average of less than 50 miles. In 2024, about 130 hikers logged an average of 100 miles.



In 2020, SEM awarded fewer than ten 100-mile patches and no 500-mile patches. In 2024, SEM awarded 52 for 100 miles and 15 for 500 miles.

Patch fever has spread across the SEM Footprint. But have no fear, while patch fever may be contagious, it is actually very healthy for you. In 2025, we awarded fifty-two 100-Mile patches and fourteen 500-Mile patches, along with several other high mileage awards.

100 Mile Annual Milestone	
Diane Ryberg	Dia Prantis
Jerry Campbell	Lars Quicklund
Madelyn Atwood	Julie Young
Bea Cockrell	Janet Houser
Joanne Newton	Diane Simms
Susan Stoll	Hiroko Hardebeck
Barbara Lightizer	Brenda Hui
Lisa Buckley	Ben West
Kathy O'Keefe	Andrea Jeniski
Ann Rega	Kathleen Nash
Annie Fortnam	Eileen Ryan
Ken Cohen	Rosie Williams
Susan Cummings	Karen Foley
Pam Aberle	Jackie Ferguerson
Elaine Killough	Ron Cadillac
Christine Satterwhite	Paul Brookes
Anne McKee	Lydia Anderson
Barbara Gaughan	Janice Delmonte
Bill Belben	Deborah Tranfaglia
Gloria Urrejola	Bob Khederian
Patty Everett	Brenda Hui
Anne Duggan	Mary Ellen Cusack
Tracy Hawes	Joanne Graziano
Jaime Itani	Kathy Philpott
Sandra Alsich	Sujatha Srinivasan

500 Mile Lifetime Milestone	
Tracy Hawes	Kathy O'Keefe
Annie Fortnam	Pam Aberle
Ken Cohen	Lars Quicklund
Diane Ryberg	Hiroko Hardebeck
Ann Rega	Jerry Campbell
Gloria Urrejola	Anne McKee
Anne Duggan	Rosie Williams
Kathleen Nash	

1000 Mile Lifetime Milestone
Bill Belben
Madelyn Atwood
Abi Natarajan

2000 Mile Lifetime Milestone
Ken Cohen

3000 Mile Lifetime Milestone
Joanne Newton

Mountains & Sea

AMC's August Camp 2025

Olympic National Park

Enjoy both snow-capped mountains and ocean at magnificent Olympic National Park. Hike, bike, paddle and more, visiting many stunning waterfalls and scenic vistas on dozens of activities for all ability levels led by trained AMC volunteers.

This million-acre park protects a vast wilderness, thousands of years of human history and several distinctly different ecosystems. These include glacier-capped mountains, old-growth temperate rain forests and more than 70 miles of wild coastline.

Camp just outside the park in Quilcene, WA. Arrive and enjoy the activities and camaraderie. Everything's provided: tents, and cots. Hearty, delicious meals including trail lunches prepared by our staff. We provide local transportation and a free shuttle from and to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

August Camp runs from July 19 through August 16. Apply to

attend for one of the four weeks. Detailed information, pricing and registration are available at augustcamp.org. The last time August Camp was held on the Olympic Peninsula, it was filled by mid-January!

Online registration opens January 2, 2025 at 9 AM. All applications received between then and midnight on January 12 will be treated equally by random selection.

Week 1: July 19 — July 26

Week 2: July 26 — Aug. 2

Week 3: Aug. 2 — Aug. 9

Week 4: Aug. 9 — Aug. 16

Each week: \$1700 for members, \$2040 for non-members, plus Washington state tax

Questions: Please visit augustcamp.org.

augustcamp.org



Activities

For the most current information, [search activities online](#)

Outdoors Connector

AMC launched a new activities listing and registration platform on January 10, 2025 to replace ActDB. Outdoors Connector offers some new features, including the ability to pay online for fee-based activities. See articles in this and future issues of *The Breeze* for more information.

At this time, the Chapter-wide Newsletter listings and the personalized Activity Digest are not available through Outdoors Connector. [Visit here](#) regularly for the updated list of activities.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Volunteer Opportunities

Ongoing. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Chair & Vice Chair – Southeastern MA Chapter, MA. Our DEI committee works to welcome everyone to our activities, especially previously underrepresented groups. All you need for this committee is openness, interest, and enthusiasm. Our next task is to create the content for our DEI webpage. For more information click on [“Responsibilities”](#) under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing nominatingchair@amcsem.org or Jeannine Audet by emailing chair@amcsem.org.

Ongoing. Bicycling Chair & Vice Chair - Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA. SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on [“Responsibilities”](#) under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing nominatingchair@amcsem.org or Jeannine Audet by emailing chair@amcsem.org.

Ongoing. Conservation Vice Chair – Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA. SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on [“Responsibilities”](#) under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing nominatingchair@amcsem.org or Jeannine Audet by emailing chair@amcsem.org.

Ongoing. Education Vice Chair – Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA. SEM SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on [“Responsibilities”](#) under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing nominatingchair@amcsem.org or Jeannine Audet by emailing chair@amcsem.org.



Activities

For the most current information, [search activities online](#)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Volunteer Opportunities

Ongoing. Paddling Vice Chair - Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA. SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on "[Responsibilities](#)" under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing nominatingchair@amcsem.org or Jeannine Audet by emailing chair@amcsem.org.

Ongoing. Committee Members - Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA. Our committees are always looking for new members. For more information email the Committee Chair or the Chapter Chair. **Nominating Committee** Do you regularly attend activities and are comfortable talking to people about open positions. If so, please consider the nominations committee. We are looking for people from all over our region, but especially someone from the Cape. **20's & 30's Committee** As we all know, our younger members are the future of our chapter. We are looking for people in their 20's & 30's who like participating in and organizing events for a younger crowd including social events. **Membership Committee** If you're a fan of SEM and regularly promote SEM to those you meet, this committee could be for you. In addition to supporting our Open House and other outreach events, you would help our new members fully engage with the chapter by organizing new member activities and social events. **Communications Committee** We are looking for people to train under our current Communications Committee volunteer staff as backup and support for the following roles: *Social Media Administration: Will work with Lisa Robitaille our Social Media Administrator *Web development and maintenance. Will work with Cheryl Lathrop our Web Mistress who maintains our SEM Website *Editing and typesetting: Will work with Mo Walsh who produces our monthly Breeze magazine. *We are also looking for someone with Video editing skills to help generate video content for our website. L Jeannine Audet (chair@amcsem.org). For more information, you can discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities by contacting our Nominating Committee chair Ken Cohen by emailing nominatingchair@amcsem.org

