# THE RESUSCITATOR

THE PUBLICATION OF



## From the Desk of the Chair



Loday's OHA, and how far we've come over the past 23 years. That's at least how long I've been chair of this organization, although it was so long ago nobody seems to remember exactly when I was voted in. (Sage advice: never go to the bathroom during an important vote.) For years it's been well past due for someone new to take over the reins, so

as I step down this fall, it gives me pleasure to know my

successor brings years of proven leadership to his new

assignment.

Jared Liu has served as OHA Secretary for years and has been an integral part of our leadership team. His help updating our membership database and cumbersome dues mailing process are just two examples of his many contributions to making the OHA easier to run and "funner" to join.

Our treasurer, "AL" Razat, has shown herself more than capable of managing our money. Our newsletter editors, "EB" Carlson nèe Brandt and Ethan Daly crank out one fantastic issue after another. Legal Beagles Josh Alper and Bill Oliver continue to offer expert advice on legal affiars, and Mike Waddell is always there when the Cabin needs some TLC.

We've come a long way since 2002. Back then our website barely existed, and all of the social media platforms that are now so central to our communications had yet to even be invented—Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and others. Web gurus Schroeder and Brian Post continue to invest large amounts of their own time keeping all of this on the rails.

{Photo} A sojourn in King Ravine last fall. The trail: Great Gully. The hiker: tired and weak. The leaves: foliag-ing. Ethan Daly

Back in 2002 our treasury was roughly 20% of what it is today. Among other things, that surplus makes it at least possible to consider buying the property just north of the Cabin, which will hopefully become available soon.

Membership has held steady over the past two decades, and our leadership team is more diverse in age and gender. We adopted a "Code of Conduct," modeled after the AMC's policy, that's helped us navigate changing mores and made the organization more welcoming to women and younger members. OH continue to provide the AMC with a steady stream of

suppose this is as good a time as any to take stock of qualified staff and volunteer leaders.

Emily Benson and her dedicated Cabin sub-committee keep the place in tip-top shape, and the reservations system necessitated by the Covid Pandemic ushered in a new era of increased use and greatly enhanced income.

Partnerships have never been stronger with sister organizations like the Trail Crew Association, the Mount Washington Observatory, the US Forest Service, and of course the AMC, which OH members continue to support with their time and treasure. We recently provided funding for the expansion of the AMC Library and Archives (which manages our records and artifacts), and OH have been major contributors to recent AMC capital campaigns. At least nine OH currently serve on the AMC's Board of Advisors, not to mention the financial and moral support we provide the hut system—our reason for being—through direct financial contributions, Cabin privileges, sponsorship of social events, and the occasional temporary off-campus housing.

In short, we're in good shape as an organization. We continue to provide our members with plenty of opportunities to connect with each other, themselves, and the mountains, which is really what we're all about. I feel privileged to have played a small part in all of this, with a LOT of help and guidance from a very deep bench. Thank you all.

Solvitur crumpus!

Stroker

(on behalf of the Steering Committee)

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### CORRECTIONS CORNER

Dear Readers,

Apparently we used some of Mark Hitchcock's photos in the last issue without crediting him. Hands up, sorry Mark! We do our best but thanks for your great photos.

Also, Anne Michalec Payson, one of the first women hired by the AMC Trail Crew, also said a piece at FallFest. Somehow her piece missed inclusion in the last issue. Hands up on that as well! See Page 23 for the full scoop.

Ethan Daly, Co-Editor

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hello Editors,

I was delighted to recently read (I'm always behind) the Spring 2025 Tator. I have a few thoughts to add to the articles about Women in the Huts and Muleskinning.

I'd like to introduce you to my mother, Barbara (Bobby) Garthwaite Smith. She was born in 1913 and was the very first Hutman-F. Bobby went to Camp Mudjekeewis, a girls camp on Kezar Lake, Maine, during her high school years, and returned as a counselor during her college years. At least during the last few years she was there, the Camp arranged a multi-night hiking trip in the White Mountains, making use of the Huts, and led by none other than Joe Dodge himself. Bobby loved the Whites, and as a Mudjekeewis counselor worked with Joe on these trips. Bobby graduated with honors from Wellesley College in 1935, and was almost immediately visiting Pinkham for hiking and skiing. During these trips she talked to Joe about the possibility of working for the AMC in some capacity in the Whites. In March 1937 she wrote to Joe asking if he could give her a job they had already discussed, as his secretary, beginning in September of 1937. She assured him she was reviewing her shorthand, and would spend August at school learning bookkeeping and gaining speed in dictation and transcription. There were some delays, but she arrived at Pinkham at the end of November. On December 2 she filled out the formal AMC job application. There were 6 possible positions listed on the form, namely: Hutmaster, Assistant Hutmaster, Mule Driver, Laborer, Packer, Truck Driver.

Bobby checked "Mule Driver." Later in life there were family comments about Joe (who remained a close family friend until his death) having many muleish characteristics. Bobby worked for Joe as secretary for a couple of years until she married in April 1939. She also helped out in the "Trading Post" filling in most of the jobs. Besides that she was sometimes called on to provide childcare for the Dodge children. In June of 1938 the crew of Greenleaf were called to Pinkham for a day of orientation by Joe and some of the Huts Committee. Bobby was sent to Greenleaf to keep the hut running in their absence. If her work at Pinkham did not already qualify her for Hutman-F status, this assignment did. Of course I understand that my Mom was a separate-and-unequal hutman compared to the women in the Tator stories. Still, she did her part for eventual equality.

And, just a note on Mules in the Huts, I worked closing a couple of huts in September 1959 after summer on the Trail Crew. When closing Madison we used beasts of burden which were definitely donkeys, not mules. I'm not sure there was anyone on the closing crew who had any experience tying loads on donkeys, but I think it was Bruce Sloat (with some expertise) who made sure all the loads were well-secured at the base. As I recall the loads were intact when we reached the hut, and we were thankful for the work the donks had done. Next day, however, was a different story. We loaded the donks up with empty goofer bombs and sent them on their way. Clearly we had not learned as much as we needed about securing loads, because by the time we got to the bottom, the donkey saddles were empty, and all the goofer bombs were dangling from our packs.

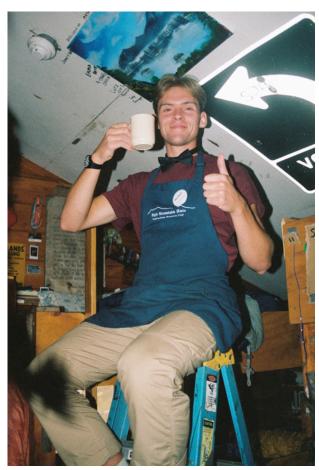
Cheers, Alex (Mahoosuc Mac) McKenzie TC 1958-1960

## FEATURED CONTRIBUTORS



#### Cooper Dart

Cooper lives in central Idaho, where he splits his time between writing and eating pulled pork. He misses the Whites and Ethan Daly, who is doing a great job editing the Tator. Tallyho!



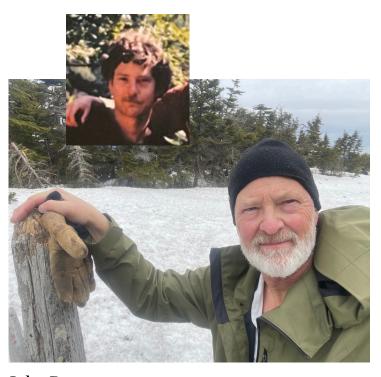
#### **Michael Fairley**

Michael is currently throwing a dart at a map of the US and deciding where to live next. When he's not doing that, he can be saying, "hey look at that bird" around people who don't care about that bird. His photography graces our cover.



#### Callan Hand

Callan lives in Portland, Maine with her partner Matthew and dog Forest. She works as a software engineer at Garmin. When not working, she can be found find her hiking in the White Mountains, biking along the Maine coast, or writing.



#### John Dunn

John recently returned to the huts as one of the Carter Notch winter caretakers, after a nearly 40-year hiatus, fulfilling every semi-retired OHer's dream. He worked the desk at PNC in '79, Lakes in '80, Carter in '82 (the holdup summer) and Zealand winter '85-'86. In the meantime he practiced emergency medicine, co-parented a daughter (now 28), wrote a book on winter hiking, and had a lot of fun outside.



Join the OH Association for our annual Fallfest reunion, this year on <u>Saturday, November 1st, 2025</u>, once again at **PINKHAM!** 

Please call and reserve your lodging for \$95+ tax (including dinner and breakfast) or dinner only for \$37 by October 17<sup>th</sup>.

Contact the AMC Customer Service Center at  $\underline{603-466-2727}$  option 1. Customer service is open Monday – Saturday 10-5. Ask to book under group reservation # 701024 OH Reunion  $\underline{11/1/2025}$ .

#### **Prices**:

Dinner: \$37/person

Lodging: flat \$95/person + tax, regardless of room type (includes dinner and breakfast).t

## SCHEDULE FOR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1:

1:00-4:00 - Unguided group hike on the Hall's Ledge Trail. Weather Permitting.

**4:30-6:00** – Happy Hour (BYOB) Joe Dodge Lodge Living Room and Conference Room A

Bring an acoustic instrument for a jam session in the Rathskeller if you wish.

6:00-7:00 – Dinner, Pinkham Dining Room

**7:00-7:45** – Annual Business Meeting, Honorary/Special OH Awards to James Wrigley and Jim Kneeland

7:45-8:30 – Feature presentation from Miles Howard on Urban Wilds: Bringing Hiking Back Home

8:30-8:35 – Closing remarks

## Cabin Update

#### BY EMILY BENSON, CABIN CARETAKER

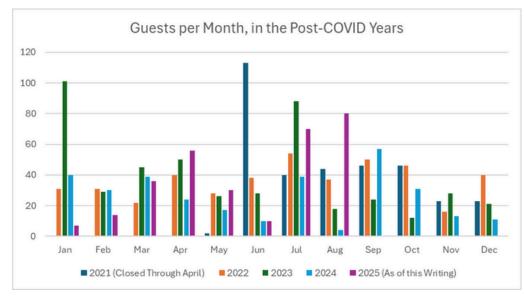
Many thanks to the summer croo members who took great care of the cabin, as well as all the other OH who enjoyed their time visiting over the summer. While more permanent repairs are still needed to the road after the flooding in December 2023, OH are hardy folks and able to navigate the coarser stone towards the top of the driveway. It was great to have more people using the cabin this summer compared to last year. See the graph below.

Our Spring Reunion and Work Weekend took place on May 17th. Nearly 30 folks turned out as it coincided with Dave Wilson's Celebration of Life at PNVC. Costs for food were completely covered by donations, thanks to everyone for chipping in! It was tricky to take care of all the spring chores that needed to be accomplished, but the upstairs bunkroom was vacuumed, mattresses were washed and the screens were installed for the summer months. This fall a thorough cleaning will be completed after Fall Fest to get the cabin ready for winter. The good news is that we do not have to move any firewood this year. Other projects to be completed this fall include some tree work around the cabin, as well as some remaining electrical work. Many thanks to George Holt and his guests for installing a new ceiling light in the kitchen, it is a classic!

Thanks to everyone for taking care to clean-up after themselves and lock all doors when they depart. Please remember to fill the wood box before you leave so it is ready for the next guests, and watch out for those windows along the bench seats in the living room. Several of them have had

> to be replaced in recent years as a result of accidents but luckily no one has been injured.

Finally, remember to check out the complete details on cabin use that are available on the website, as last-minute changes may occur as we head into the colder months. Thanks everyone and enjoy our special cabin!



## THANK YOU TO OUR OHA DONORS!

An extra special thank you to those who gave a little extra since last issue.

William Blaiklock
William Blais
Brian Copp
Adam Crofoot
Rick Estes

Emma Gildesgame Lorna Hamilton A. Dobie Jenkins Thomas Johnson David Kaplan Betsy MacMillan Amy Matthews Ted Miller Dave Moskowitz Catherine Naden Gary Nonnemaker Valerie Robinson Donn Springer Judy Starkey Reynold Welch

## Newest Lifetime members!

Alexa Engelman

Amelia Keohane



## SIXTY YEARS OF REVERENCE AND IRREVERENCE IN HIGH PLACES

{Photo}
MMVSP flags.
Keith Force

BY JEN GRANDUCCI AND KIM "SCHROEDER" STEWARD As MMVSP turns 60, we reflect on its legacy.

If you've wandered the White Mountains anytime in the last sixty years, you may have spotted a hiker donned in a ragged purple T-shirt emblazoned with the cryptic words "Mount Madison Volunteer Ski Patrol" and wondered—what on earth is that? Do people actually ski on Mount Madison?

The answer, of course, is no. And yes. And more importantly—it doesn't matter.

The MMVSP was founded on the radical notion that the mountains belong to everyone, not just the fast, the competitive, or the outrageously athletic. Its members prefer the quieter joys of the hills—strolling, feasting, laughing—and they welcome anyone willing to join them in celebrating the sheer joy of being alive in such beautiful places.

Membership requirements are refreshingly straightforward: no dues, no committees, no responsibilities.

You don't even need to have worked at Madison or in the hut system at all. The only obligation is to show up, enjoy the mountains, and contribute to the merriment.

The Patrol's icons are its mysterious purple shirt and orange and purple flag, which inevitably prompt questions from the uninitiated. The official explanation? "The only way I can explain it is to invite you to come along."

#### ORIGINS: A SKI PATCH CONFRONTATION

The MMVSP traces its glorious lineage to one man: hut legend Tony Macmillan. Tony was witty, theatrical, and a gourmet cook who delighted in bending rules. In the spring of 1965, he made the fateful mistake of wearing an unauthorized Mount Washington Volunteer Ski Patrol patch while visiting Tuckerman Ravine.

There he encountered the formidable "Swampy" Paris, commander of the real ski patrol and reputed adversary of hut croo everywhere. Swampy promptly tore the patch off Tony's sleeve and scolded him within an inch of his life. Tony's response, repeated with increasing grandeur over the years, was simple: "Fine. I'll have my own ski patrol. A better one."

And thus, the Mount Madison Volunteer Ski Patrol was born.

#### FOOD, COSTUME, AND FLAIR

Tony wasted no time establishing the MMVSP's character. Where other huts offered hearty but simple fare, Madison suddenly sprouted exotic spices, cooking sherry, and special orders from Boston's S.S. Pierce. Was this culinary rebellion? Certainly. Was it tolerated? Barely. Did it add to Madison's reputation as the hut with flair? Absolutely.

Tony's talents as a showman flourished in annual events like "Christmas at Madison" (celebrated every August) and later in the Patrol's Boston dinners at Locke-Ober's, where members turned up in formal attire and played the part of an explorers' club.

But the true centerpiece of the MMVSP calendar was the "Grande Traverse and Alpine Picnic," a deliberate poke at Swampy Paris and his Mount Washington crew.

## THE GRANDE TRAVERSE: A NATION OF ITS OWN

The Traverse was part mountaineering, part performance art. Members, decked out in fine clothes and flying their orange, white, and purple flags, would ascend the Auto Road in vintage cars, looking like emissaries of a small but dignified kingdom.

Upon reaching the summit, they would promenade over all the highest points: Mount Washington, Ball Crag, and Air Force Peak. Leading the Grande Traverse, champagne in hand, was Tony, who would address the membership and gawking onlookers with salutations and words of wisdom before settling down to a gourmet picnic among the rocks.



Poor weather simply relocated the revels to the Tip-Top House. The effect was the same: sheer theatricality and spectacle at high elevation.

In case anyone missed the joke, Tony twisted the knife further by issuing shoulder patches for the "6,000 Footer Club of New England," just to rile the AMC's more seriousminded 4,000 Footer Club.

#### FROM JOKE TO TRADITION

What began as a thumbed nose at authority quickly grew into a living tradition. Alumni of huts across the Whites joined in, as did, eventually, administrators who had once tried in vain to rein Tony in. The Patrol's flag, bearing the motto Semper Altior ("Ever Higher"), began appearing not just on White Mountain peaks but around the world—from the Alps to the Andes, from the Himalayas to the South Pole.

At least eight states have issued MMVSP license plates, though one suspects the DMV clerks were as baffled as the hikers who stumble upon purple-shirted members in the wild.

#### THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On August 3, 2025, the MMVSP gathered in Franconia Notch to mark its sixtieth year. Nearly forty purple-clad members, ranging from original Patrol to current croo, paraded behind Bob "Apples" McIntosh, flag held high, to the Old Man of the Mountain Historic Site.

There they honored original members, remembered absent friends, and held a formal "changing of the guard" as new leaders—Kim "Schroeder" Steward, Leslie Fowler Nesbitt, Jen Granducci, and Heather Harland Wingate—took up the mantle. Brian Fowler remains as the bridge between past and present.

Naturally, the day concluded with a picnic, which—true to Patrol tradition—was judged not by taste but by spectacle. The gaudier and more ridiculous the display, the better. The current generation did not disappoint.

{Photo} The old guard to the new guard. From left to right: (1) Joel Mumford, Margery Collins, Bob "Apples" McIntosh, Jed Davis, Brian Fowler (2) Lesley Fowler Nesbitt, Kim "Schroeder" Steward, Heather Harland Wingate, Jen Granducci, Brian Fowler.



#### EVER HIGHER

The MMVSP has always been more than an inside joke. It is a celebration of humor, camaraderie, and the joy of not taking oneself too seriously. It institutionalizes mischief, ceremony, and mountain love in equal measure.

And so long as there are mountains to climb—or at least views to enjoy—the Mount Madison Volunteer Ski Patrol will remain, proudly loyal, forever higher.

How do I get a purple shirt?

Shirts are printed on demand from an online source. Please check out this link to place an order.

https://www.bonfire.com/store/mmvsp/

Other ways to stay in touch?

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/mmvsp

Want to make sure you hear about the 65th?

 $\label{lem:com} Email\, \underline{mountmadisonvolunteerskipatrol}\, \underline{(agmail.com)} \ to \ be included in future mailings.$ 



## 2025 Honorary OHA Members

BY STEERING COMMITTEE

At Fallfest this year, we will be awarding James Wrigley and Lieutenant Jim Kneeland of NH Fish and Game the titles of Honorary Members for their outstanding contributions which have enriched the experience provided by the AMC Hut System and its associated facilities. James Wrigley has worked for the hut system and AMC in numerous capacities starting as hut croo in summer 2004 and working his way up to his current title as the Director of Occupancy. James has probably done more than anyone since Joe Dodge to ensure the guest experience is highly prioritized and it's largely due to his experience and perseverance that the huts survived COVID as well as they did. Lieutenant Jim Kneeland has been a Conservation Officer with NH Fish and Game since

1992. He has been the Lieutenant for District Three since 2011 and has managed countless search and rescues in that time. He was one of the original members of NH Fish and Game Advanced Search and Rescue Team in 1996 and serves on the New Hampshire Outdoor Council which provides funding support to agencies and organizations which are involved in backcountry safety education and in search and rescue activities in the Granite State.

As a part of this award, both recipients have chosen an organization to receive a \$100 donation from the Old Hutcroo Association. James has chosen The Vaughan Community Services in North Conway, NH and Jim has chosen the Slim Baker Foundation for Outdoor Education in Bristol, NH.

## SUMMER 2025 HUT CROO

#### Carter

Justin Nimmo - HM Clara Alger - AHM Jasper Ellis - Natty Kathryn Cuneo - Croo Harley Ransom - Croo

#### **Madison**

Sierra Dunn - HM Noah Anderson - AHM AJ Rizika - Natty Malcolm Courchesne - Croo Christiana Hardie - Croo Lucy Farran - Croo

#### Lakes

Gerritt Bingham-Maas - HM
Jake Arseneau - AHM
Lily Fine - Natty
Josh Rizika - Croo
Klara Fritsch - Croo
Ethan Showalter - Croo
Hunter Nesbitt - Croo
Emily Kang - Croo
Calli Goodling - Croo
Zoe Sachs - Croo
Alice Gipe - Researcher

#### Mizpah

Caroline Odlin-Brewer - HM
Patrick Mulready - AHM
Jonny Ollendorf - Natty
Liv Frakt - Croo
Taylor Young - Croo
Alja Forcey-Rodriguez - Croo

#### Zealand

Tom Oliver - HM (JUN)
Clem Southworth - HM (JUL-AUG)
Miles Huntley - AHM (JUL-AUG)
Josie Dolan-Edmondson - Natty
Rhiannon Novik - Croo
Brinkley Brown - Croo

#### Galehead

Maddie Ziomek - HM Grace Schuur - AHM Ian Buchanan - Natty Nicola Dove - Croo Lu Powdermaker - Croo Ryan Widdop - Croo

#### Greenleaf

May Lamb - HM
Tom Ekrem - AHM
Annika Smart - Natty
Ella Knight - Croo
Kape Clements - Croo
Ava Whitney - Croo

#### Lonesome

Leydi Walle - HM Samana Young - AHM Hannah Markelz - Natty Rubén Case - Croo John Potter - Croo Brooke McHugh - Croo











## FALL 2025 HUT CROO

#### Carter

Annika Smart - HM Sam Walton - AHM Klara Fritsch - Natty Greer Garver - Croo

#### **Madison**

May Lamb - HM Kathryn Cuneo - AHM Jess Patrick - Natty Josh Rizika - Croo Anya Buchovecky - Croo Megan Serafin - Croo

#### Lakes

Leydi Walle - HM
John Potter - AHM
Hailee Gibadlo - Natty
Felix Griffin - Croo
Denika Kao - Croo
Matt Hecht - Croo
Adam Cummings - Croo
Mary Gackowski - Croo
Liam Shemesh - Croo
Hardy Payson - Croo

#### Mizpah

Samana Young - HM Calli Frankel - AHM Cali Turner - Natty 1<sup>st</sup> half Oliver Ransom - Croo Noah Vernick - Croo Josh Rizika - Croo 2<sup>nd</sup> half

#### Zealand

Maddie Ziomek - HM Gerritt Bingham-Maas - AHM Annica Hunter - Natty Ksenia Smart - Croo John Potter - Croo 2<sup>nd</sup> half

#### Galehead

Caroline Odlin-Brewer - HM Rubén Case - AHM Josie Dolan-Edmondson - Natty Sydney Rubin - Croo Ryan Huckins - Croo

#### Greenleaf

Patrick Mulready - HM Lily Fine - AHM Kate (Mars) Marston - Natty Eli Koester - Croo Tressa Urie - Croo

#### Lonesome

Nicola Dove - HM Evie Hardart - AHM Ella Buckingham - Natty Calli Goodling - Croo Phoebe Ballard - Croo











## Among the Crowds Excerpt

#### BY THE SUMMER 2025 LAKES CROO

Issue One Volume One

7/16/2025

## Among the Crowds

Dearest AMC Seasonals, welcome to your number one source for <u>reliable</u> and <u>trustworthy</u> information in the North Country. In an era where reliable information can be difficult to parse, trust Among the Crowds for unbiased and well researched stories, from the world renowned Lakes of the Clouds Hut.

Best,

-The Editor

#### Wider AMC News

As some of you may have heard- or heard about more times than you can count- the AMC has implemented a new plan for the future of the organization, called the 'All Out Action Plan'. This plan boldly steps forth into the unknown, with ambitious and inventive goals such as: increasing membership, and focusing on the mission statement. The entire team here at Among the Crowds is very excited to see the progress that this pioneering approach will bring!

#### **Keeping Up With Tom Ekrem**

We know that many of our readers are very interested in the personal life of Tom Ekrem, Greenleaf AHM. As such, this column wil provide the most interesting and up-to-date details on Tom Ekrem. Our reporters have recently uncovered that Tom is attempting to sell his early 2000s Honda CRV, word on the trail is that the power steering is malfunctioning and coolant is leaking. When one of our reporters enquired why he was selling said vehicle, he bit one of them on the arm as hard as he could.

#### An Among The Crowds Investigation

As anyone who has ever tried to get a good nights sleep at a hut can tell you, raiding has been intensive this summer. With such activities so common, questions and rumors are bound to swirl. While many people are wondering: is being back before breakfast actually a rule? And, will Wilbuh ever leave flea? By far the most commonly pondered question in the minds of our readers surely must be, where the hell is the sword? Happily, our investigative reporters picked up the case, and have definitively determined the swords location. As it turns out, Lonesome has had the sword this entire time, though they may not have yet realized it. Giving out the exact location in this would make it too easy, but interested parties can send a trucknote to our team at Lakes with 20 big ones enclosed for the exact spot. Happy hunting!

#### **Poetry**

'Diddle Twix Fiddle, In Purgatory Frank's Sauce, Towards a Sparkle'

- Em & Gerritt

#### Gossip

Two rocks were seen sitting awfully close to each other this week on the Crawford Path, Oooooooooo.

We will be watching the story closely for any updates on this potential budding romance!

Thank you for reading Among the Crowds, the <u>only</u> reliable source for North Country AMC News, we will see you next week with more exciting and true stories.

Tips and contributions can be directed towards the Editorial Team at Lakes via truck.

## **DAD JOKES**

#### BY JOHN DUNN

y father had many wonderful qualities, but telling a joke wasn't one of them. That's not to say we didn't laugh when he told one, but it wasn't at what he said. It was how he delivered it. Most jokes are not very complicated, really. There is the setup, in which you lead the listener on a short journey towards an expected conclusion. At the last possible second, you pull out the rug. You deliver the punchline, which upends the narrative with a surprise so unexpected, your listener can't help but laugh. My father seemed to have missed this basic template somewhere along the way, most likely during his childhood. His most common mistake was to deliver the punchline incorrectly, through some fault of intonation or timing, or the lack of a key word without which the whole thing fell apart. On occasion he might jump ahead and deliver the punchline prematurely, which we kids all found exceedingly funny.

I often thought my dad's inability to tell a good joke came from his upbringing in Canfield, West Virginia, a place so remote that when his great-great grandfather moved to another hollow twelve miles away, the family lost track of him for three generations. For six children whose mother died of pernicious anemia, they said, when Dad was sixteen, life wasn't easy. His twin brother Howard was killed in a car crash while he was away at the war. Perhaps Howard was the funny one. My father's father, therefore, took on the responsibility of feeding six hungry mouths on some of the hilliest, poorest soil in a state where poor soil is a birthright. Add to that Grandpa's progressive, debilitating arthritis, and one can imagine there weren't many moments of mirth in the household.

There was one night, however, when my dad told a joke perfectly, a night that is etched in my memory. The subject of the joke isn't important. Suffice it to say it was a little off-color, but his audience was ready for that. He and my grandfather John (my mother's step father) had taken me and two or three of my friends fishing in northern New Hampshire, on a small stream ambitiously called the Wildcat River. The stream flows down from the heights of a cleft in the mountains known as Carter Notch, then drops steeply past the village of Jackson in a series of short waterfalls before joining the Saco, which is rightfully known as a river. Along the way it passes a disorganized series of refurbished farmhouses, camps with names like "Gout Grotto," and a few newer constructions built by people from down country. My dad had been bringing me here since I



"Spring Gully from Clivus to summit of A-Cat is in excellent shape," Dunn wrote from his home in Carter Notch. John Dunn

was five, firmly planting my dream of owning a house on the Carter Notch road. By the famous night in question, however, that five-year-old boy had reached adolescence. He had started to grow weary with fishing, and trout for breakfast, lunch and dinner. He and his friends had found school sports, and girls, and all the other attractions of puberty. Fishing no longer held its magical spell on him. I suspect Dad invited my friends on this trip as a way to hang on to the past. Both of us could see our "Dad moments" were fading. He had to do something. Bringing my friends on the trip let me see the experience through fresh sets of eyes, and rekindled the meaning. Perhaps it did for him and my grandpa as well. I'm pretty certain this was the last time I fished with my grandfather, and possibly one of the last with my dad. Despite having had a heart attack in his fifties, my grandfather, then nearing his 70's, continued to smoke. He tried to do it judiciously, just on special occasions such as the Fourth of July. We five or six grandchildren would line up on the granite patio by his deck chair, waiting in turn for

the chance to light our child-sized firecrackers on the tip of his glowing cigar. Another excuse that allowed him to smoke was fishing. He claimed the cigar smoke kept the mosquitos away, and I think he was right. Whether it was the cigars or just unhealthy genes, I don't know, but it wasn't too many years later my kid sister Karen called me at school to say that he'd passed. He was working in the vegetable garden and took a break to sit in his lounge chair. Maybe something didn't feel right or perhaps he was just tired. When my grandmother found him later that day after work, she said he looked peaceful, and satisfied. I don't doubt that he did.



A late night glow escapes from Carter Notch Hut. John Dunn

On that famous fishing expedition, however, both my dad and my grandpa looked happy and vigorous. We all caught our limit of trout, built a big campfire, and pitched our tents for the night. My grandfather lit up one of his favorite cigars, and my father withdrew a small flask from his backpack. "This will help me sleep on that hard ground," he explained, with a smile and a twinkle. We boys were of the age to know about alcohol in a general way, but had yet to experience it personally, other than perhaps a small sip of beer, to which we probably turned up our noses. After a couple of sips, and in the glow of the campfire, my dad started to tell us a joke. As I mentioned before, I don't recall it exactly. What I do remember is, it was funny. Not only was it funny, but the setup was perfect, the punchline well-delivered and crisp. We all laughed so hard we nearly fell into the fire. Even now, some fifty years later, when I run into one of those old friends, he might call out the punchline and we'll laugh as if we had never heard it before. In an instant we'll be back by that stream, listening to the gurgle of water and the breath of the wind, huddled together with people we loved.

My dad always said that if he had to lose one part of himself as he aged, he would rather lose his physical strength than his mental acuity. Even if he couldn't roam the mountains and forests, or work in the garden, he would still be able to interact with the world. He could talk to people, read and write, and listen to his favorite Irish ballads, most of which I still carry in a blue plastic box in my car. Although I rarely listen to them now, I will never get rid of them. Yes, life without physical activity would be difficult, but life without mental awareness would be a much greater loss. As it turned out, God granted Dad's wish. The year before he died, he suffered a massive heart attack, brought on by a medical procedure. Yes, I am still pained by that, but I don't blame the doctors entirely. I'm sure the prescription for my father's demise was written long before they got involved. During that year of physical incapacity, Dad continued to do all the mental activities that made it worth living for him. In particular, he wrote desperately about his life growing up in rural America during the Great Depression, about serving four years in the army during the war, and he gave copious advice on how to live off the land to anyone with an ear for it. On the night that he died, too weak to sit up in bed, he continued his quest. He told my sister Holly and me, in halting breaths, the story of how his Uncle Jim, the family doctor, used to trick women into thinking he could predict the sex of their fetus. It was important to him that we know this. The following morning, after the inevitable call from his doctor, Holly and I went to pick up the things he had brought to the hospital. On the tray table that had been pushed to the side of the room I found a small note pad containing a scrap of a sentence. He had written, in a barely legible hand that trailed off the page, "Can't write any more..." Like my grandfather, it was not a bad way to be found.

Now, more than fifty years later, I am back at that river. I snowshoed down from Carter Notch Hut, where I am making a pilgrimage back to my youth. I am serving as a mountain hut caretaker at a place where I worked in my twenties. It just so happens that the hut sits near the headwaters of the Wildcat, where my dad told his best joke. As the river descends, first through thickets of spruces and firs, and then spreads out into more open glades of birches and maples, I find a small clearing. It looks like a good spot to set up a tent. I pause to look at it closely. Although I know it's a trick of the wind, as the water drops down over a moss-covered rock and lands in a crystal-clear pool where there must be a trout, I hear my dad's voice. It is as strong, and as clear, and as timeless as the water itself. When I strain just a little, I still hear him nailing the punchline, and all of us laughing.



## BATTLE IN THE SADDLE: AN ODE TO LAKES

#### BY JOHN POTTER

The mountain looms,
my energy only blooms
as I ascend, seated in sweat and waste.

The cog screams.

That wretched plume, crawling up the face.

Cliffs block my view.
I'll be there soon.
Rocks and stones twist and turn below my base.

We exist in constant battle:

Up and down,
Give and take. Through and through.
Cars overtaking each other in a race.

Eighty up today.

One-hundred down - again tomorrow too.

There's no relief from the chase.

Guests in their seats, the kitchen's hot - balmy day in June. God, I love it here at Lakes!



## TRAIL

## Wanderings

#### BY EB CARLSON AND BILL BARRETT

On Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, Jesse and EB Carlson took to the Hutmen's Trail to do some brushing and light clearing. They were able to clear some blow downs, clean out drainages, and brush back some growth. There are a few additional blow downs that were beyond their means to take care of, but luckily they're all easy overs or unders. If anyone else has been over the trail since May 17, please let Bill know (wllmsbrrtt@yahoo.com) so I can include any work that was done in our report to the US Forest Service. (Please include date(s), names of workers, description of work, and hours spent.) Don't forget, anyone who accumulates 16 hours of trail volunteering in a single season is entitled to a free USFS parking pass!.

The annual spring trail day is timed so that it coincides with Springfest and the opening of the OH Cabin. Despite the record turn out for Springfest, it was just the two of them doing trail work that day. We're hopeful for a bigger turn out in future years!

Similarly, for the Hall's Ledge Trail, I have not heard of anyone who has done any work on it in 2025. So if any of you "Tator" readers out there have been on the Hall's Ledge this summer, please let me know (the same information as above). Even if you have just hiked the trail without doing any significant maintenance, that counts. It is extremely helpful just to know the general condition of the trail both so that can be reported to the Forest Service as well as so any necessary work can be scheduled. Thus, even if you just hiked the trail you might have been accumulating parking pass hours without realizing it!

As part of the festivities surrounding Pinkham Fall Fest

on November 1, we are scheduling an unguided group hike over the Hall's Ledge Trail from 1 to 4PM---weather permitting. Those interested in this can do as much or as little of the Trail as they please! For those who have never been over the Hall's Ledge, it is a short, occasionally steep, climb to an outlook toward Mt. Washington having THE best view into the Gulf of Slides. The trailhead is a few miles down Route 16 from Pinkham, just on the far side of the highway's sole bridge crossing of the Ellis River. If you reach the Dana Place Inn, you have gone slightly too far. Park on the east side of Route 16 in a cleared area 75 yards below the highway bridge. The trailhead sign is partially obscured by Route 16's guard rail, but becomes visible as one gets near the River. The lower section of Hall's Ledge is exclusively a hiking trail---adopted by the OH Association---as far as the Gulf of Slides outlook, after which it becomes an XC ski trail in the JSTF system, and not part of the OH maintenance responsibility. Those who wish to contribute to maintenance of the Trail during the hike might bring tools such as a bow saw or lopping shears. For others, merely contributing to traffic on the Trail is very helpful. This time of year, the steep section can be very slippery---either from ice if the weather is cold enough, or from deep fallen leaves if the weather is warm. So, caution is indicated, especially on the descent. Also, with so many leaves on the ground, the footway can be hard to follow, so pay close attention to the yellow blazes in order to stay on the Trail.

As Jesse will be rotating off of the Steering Committee for next year, the Steering Committee is continuing to look for someone with interest in trail work who would like to take on managing the OHA's trail work. The OHA has adopted the Hutmens Trail and Halls Ledge Trail which we aim to maintain twice a year. If you are interested in contributing to the organization and taking on the trails role, please reach out to Bill Barrett at wllmbarrett@yahoo.com.



For the love of god, someone help Jesse, EB and Bill out on trails.





Snow litters the peaks above Glacier National Park. Callan Hand

## A NOTE FROM THE NORTHERN TIER: GOING TO THE SUN

BY CALLAN HAND

A fter leaving Washington and its many mountain passes behind, our focus shifted towards Glacier National Park. Other bikepackers, strangers in the grocery store, and curious passerbyers all brought up Going-to-the-Sun road with awe and excitement. Before my partner, Matthew, and I set out from Seattle to bikepack across the country, people often asked which place I was most excited for. My answer was always the same: Glacier. Rugged mountains, endless wilderness, glacial lakes, sweeping valleys and the daunting Logan Pass. At over six thousand feet, Logan Pass, our biggest climb of our entire adventure, is perched twenty-two miles up the engineering marvel that is Going-to-the-Sun road.

In Idaho, we began hearing rumors that Glacier was getting hammered with twenty inches of snow. By the time we reached Montana, every bikepacker headed in the opposite direction had the same story: Going-to-the-sun road was impassable. One man even said he got caught biking in a snow storm on the alternate route around the pass.

The alternate route takes you through Browning, Montana —a town that came with a slew of stories and cautionary tales. It's part of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, and the stories we'd heard painted it as a place you don't want to bike through. "Packs of dogs," they'd said, shaking their heads. Dogs with no leashes, nor fences, ready to chase cyclists for miles, barking and snapping at their ankles. One man said he went through holding a stick; another swore by an air horn; another shrugged, saying the dogs hadn't bothered him at all.

Dogs were, hands down, the scariest thing we encountered on the entire bikepack across the country. As soon as I heard a dog bark, my hands tightened around my handlebars, my heart beat faster. My eyes darted across the horizon, searching for the dog. Where

was it coming from? Was it tied up? If I was lucky, I'd spot the dog before it spotted me. "DOG!" I'd yell to Matthew, his cue to pedal as fast as possible.

Farm dogs have stamina. With teeth like knives pointed at our ankles, they chased us growling and barking, refusing to retreat even as their owners screamed at them to stop. There's a delicate balance between not wanting to hurt the dog, the dog to hurt us, or a car to hurt either of us. It didn't matter how many miles we'd gone. It didn't matter how tired we were. Once we heard the dog bark and saw it sprinting towards us, our legs were moving at a Tour de France pace.

By the time we hit Libby, Montana, about one hundred and forty miles from Glacier, Going-to-the-Sun road was closed. We latched onto the hope that "closed" only applied to cars and that they would allow bikers and hikers up the road. Even then, it was only accessible Thursday through Sunday, and only if the snowplows weren't working. The odds felt slim, but we had to try.

We were about four days out and made a plan to try to reach Glacier by Saturday for a chance to bike the road on Sunday. The margins were tight, but we didn't want to over extend ourselves and arrive in Glacier exhausted. We pedaled on towards Glacier, spirits high and fingers crossed the road would be open.

On Saturday morning, in our campground in West Glacier, some eight miles from the park entrance, we awoke to news that the road was open. Holy crap, we were actually going to have to do this thing! Many emotions coursed through my body—excitement to bike the legendary Going-to-the-Sun road we'd heard so much about, relief that we weren't going to get chased by packs of dogs, and nerves that yikes, there was no going back now, we were going to have to tackle this monster of a mountain pass.

Since bikers have to be off the road from 3pm to 6pm, we spent a night at Sprague Creek, at the base of the road. We dipped in the frigid glacial waters of Lake McDonald, nestled between the daunting peaks. I painted, wrote and let the mountains work their quiet, peaceful magic on me. There were a couple other bikepackers at the campsite who we chatted and hung out with. Though, Matthew and I were tired and feeling anxious about tomorrow's climb, and embarrassingly went to bed at 7 pm. The hum of car engines on the road, which at times sounded as busy as a highway, disturbed the peaceful wooded campground and stood as a jarring reminder of what lay ahead.

We woke at dawn the next morning, hoping to get a head start on the road before it became clogged with cars. I wore a short-sleeve t-shirt expecting to climb right away but the first ten miles were relatively flat, in the woods, and followed a clear stream. The pine-scented mountain air was crisp and cool and I soon put on a long sleeve. It was beautiful, almost meditative, yet my mind refused to settle. Around every turn there was a pang of expectation. Is this the start? Is it going to start climbing? When is it going to get steep? My eyes wandered, scanning for clues. Which mountain were we about to bike up? The one on the left? Right?

And then, I saw it.

A giant wall of rocks and trees. My gaze climbed higher and higher, until I found the thin line of pavement etched into the mountainside, crawling with tiny cars. My breath caught in my throat. That's it. That's where we're going to be.

We biked on what is referred to as 'the edge' and we soon realized why. Going-to-the-Sun road is narrow, steep, has lots of curves, tight turns, and absolutely no shoulder. It is but a mere thread stretched across the mountainside. The edge is a two-, maybe three-foot stone wall. My tires rubbed up against the side of it as cars inched past us. I made the mistake of peaking over the edge to find a four thousand foot straight drop into the stream we had just biked alongside. My stomach churned and I snapped my gaze back to the road.

The stunning mountains kept my mind occupied with their long waterfalls weaving down into the trees. The road curved to reveal sweeping valleys nestled between large stone mountain faces. It was otherworldly, with such beauty that I found myself questioning if it was real.

For once, cars were nice to us. They seemed to recognize the fragility of our shared space. Cars were patient, waiting for a moment to pass when they could give us a wide gap. No one was in a hurry. We were all in awe and humbled by the mountains.

The home stretch of six or so miles, traversed the mountain at a diagonal incline, passed a waterfall, and kept going up until disappearing left over the pass. Matthew and I looked at each other and made an unspoken agreement—it was time to give it all we had and pedal nonstop to the top. My legs burned with every turn of the pedals, the weight of my four panniers dragging me down like anchors. Did I really need to haul a camp chair? Three books? I adjusted my position trying to give my sore butt some relief. I cursed myself for deciding not to bring padded bike shorts. People in cars yelled, "You're almost there!" Maybe if you're in a car I thought. I could see the top of the pass and we still had a ways to go. I forced my legs to keep cranking.

We rounded the left corner with a little under a mile to the top. A gust of cool mountain wind surged towards us, giving us an extra boost to finish feeling strong. Back in Idaho, a very religious man described biking Going-to-the-Sun road as a spiritual experience. Now, as I looked out over the looming peaks, a mix of relief and triumph washing over me, I understood what he meant. It felt spiritual. Not in a connection to any god, but to the incredible resilience of the human body and the awe-inspiring nature.

On a wooden bench, outside the visitor center, we looked out at the expansive tall stone peaks and enjoyed our lunch. Six foot snow banks surrounded us as the sun warmed our skin. As the day wore on, more familiar faces joined us. By noon, we were seven bikepackers strong. First came Alex, who we weren't expecting to see. We jumped up and cheered when we saw him coming up the hill.

"What are you doing here?" I exclaimed.

"It's a beautiful day. I would have regretted not biking the pass in the daylight," he said. Alex was also in his twenties and headed to Maine. His plan was to dip further south through Wyoming before heading back north in Minnesota. He was an impressive biker. Two days ago, in one massive a hundred and fifty four mile push, he biked from Eureka all the way up the pass because he had heard they were allowing bikers and no cars on the road. He got to the top around midnight.

Next, came the European couple, their casual demeanor baffling and inspiring. They were in their forties and biked the pass wearing flip-flops, and hats, no helmets in sight. I

I was self-conscious about how much weight Matthew and I were carrying until I saw the European's giant panniers. Wasting no time, they broke out their camp chairs, and cracked a beer. Their motto was simple: if they had enough food and water, they chose the fun thing. It was what had inspired Alex to bike up the pass a second time. It inspired Matthew and I too. We were putting in long miles and decided then that we needed to slow down and smell the roses.

Rounding out our pack were two retired men, one from the Upper Peninsula and one from Seattle. They were experienced bike packers with lots of stories and knowledge to share. We sprawled out on the benches, our bikes in a pile behind us. Snacks and laughter were swapped as we soaked up the sun and each other's company.

I watched as people got out of their cars taking in the view, their eyes inevitably landing on us—a ragtag crew of dirty, sweaty bikepackers. Some people wandered over to exclaim their bewilderment. "You really biked all the way up here?" "How did you train for that?" "You're crazy!"

I sat there enjoying the bliss of the mountains with

no imminent place to be, no timeline. I realized that if I was one of the people passing by, emerging from my car at the top of the mountain, I would be envious of us sitting here. For days, perhaps months, it would have eaten at me. I would be wishing I biked the pass. I would be regretting the decisions that led me to be the person in the car and not on the bike. I would be filled with jealousy and a deep longing to be a part of the group.

And here I was being that person, the person I would have envied. So often life moves so fast that I forget to stop, and recognize that I am living my dream, if only for a moment. I get caught up in the comparison without appreciating what I have, what's right in front of me.

Our ragtag group all reconvened at the one hiker/biker campsite at the campground on the other side of the pass, joined by a German couple hiking the Continental Divide Trail. We went out for pizza then meandered back to the campsite to share a pint of ice cream, laughing as we shared pieces of our lives.

In the morning, we all headed our own ways—two went north, one went south, we headed east and another west. For one perfect night, the stars aligned, bringing together a little group of bikepackers, each on their own journey, following their own map. For the briefest moment, our paths crossed and we got to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow adventurers.



 $\textbf{Callan and Mathew atop the infamous Logan Pass.} \ Photographer \ Unknown$ 

## PHOTO ESSAY: FALL 2024

#### BY MICHAEL FAIRLEY











Michael Fairley takes a look at huts culture through the lens of his film camera, memorializing so many aspects of work and play which we all can relate to. Just a mere two years out of the hut system myself, I feel thrown back into the world of Lakes, and look at those colorful overalls with a special kind of fondness. I can imagine that we all find a feeling of nostalgia in these photos, and are able to reflect on our own seasons while also admiring the big and small ways in which each crew takes up their own creativity in silly, fun-loving backcountry living. I wish I had thought to have a formal outdoor dining experience in the rocky fields of the hut!

-Larz von Huene













Michael Fairley worked at Lakes in the Fall of 2024 and finished up the Long Fall at Zealand Falls Hut.

## Under the Vacuum

#### BY COOPER DART

mong the recipients of the 2015 Albert Einstein Legacy Project's *Genius*: 100 honor—an award which recognizes the world's 100 greatest living visionaries, an award which is meant to commemorate the centennial of the physicist's groundbreaking General Theory of Relativity, an award which was bestowed upon the likes of Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Thich Nhat Hahn, Salman Rushdie, Chris Hadfield, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and the inimitable Barbra Streisand—there is one visionary who seems to rise above the rest: Dr. Bruno Gaussault, "Creator of the Modern Sous-Vide Method."

A genius of our time. The man who, in 1971, while looking to improve the tenderness of roast beef (a goal I am sure many of us have had), thought: why not just put raw meat in a plastic bag in warm water for a while? A question which would change the world as we know it.

It was with his immense successes in the world of meat research (a phrase I had the pleasure of reading many times while researching Gaussault), that he eventually became what many would call a meat *visionary*, a prophet, of sorts, of beef texture. His sous-vide (French for *under vacuum*) method allowed meat to be cooked to a hyper-specific temperature while not losing any of its juices, since they (both meat and juices) are vacuum-sealed into a plastic bag. It is worth noting that Gaussault also did this all, as his Wikipedia page makes clear is very impressive, *while colorblind*. Against all odds.

The world was never the same. Gaussault seemed to have tapped into a brilliance the likes of which astronauts and novelists and chemists and, perhaps, even Einstein himself could only dream. There are those of us whose names will be forgotten, and then there is Dr. Bruno Gaussault.

And, really, what does it mean to be a visionary? To be someone who seems to have some access to the occult, to the otherworldly spaces where the horseshoe poles of magic and science, eventually, meet each other once again? Where the holy and the empirical realize that they have been siblings this whole time, children of humankind's need to be convinced that there is some logic out there for all of this? Some meaning?

I'm not sure if it was science or God or Gaussault I met in my Madison summer of 2023, but one of them held my hand that rainy July day when, after I had worked up an appetite shoveling compost, I looked over the soon-to-spoil steaks in the fridge (kindly bought for us from the Gorham Walmart by sto-ho [meat was made to be special req'd, folks]) and knew what I had to do. The compost had temped hot that morning. A thick, brown, consistent heat. 140 degrees. In other words: the ideal internal temperature for a medium steak

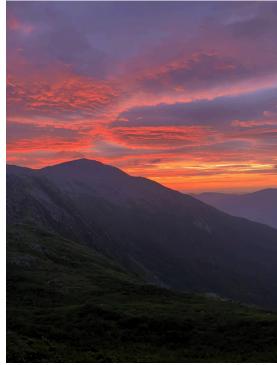
I put one of our steaks into a Ziplock along with some salt, pepper, thyme, and crushed cloves of garlic. I pulled the air from the bag. Sealed it. I looked at it for a moment, the deflated bag full of raw meat on the big granite island of the kitchen. I wondered how grotesque beauty could be while still being beautiful. I wondered if God was looking away or watching me more than ever. I wondered if we'd ever see the sun again that summer. Eventually I decided that two bags may be best. The meat and the bag went into another bag and I walked out to the compost where I buried the steak a foot deep in hot food and walked away.

What I was looking for that summer, I think, was the purest form of sustainability. Like the artesian well at the corner of the hut whose water is what pushes the water from the ground. A hole bored into the earth is maybe the most beautiful thing I can imagine. I would always stutter during my GTTs when I got to the point about how the shit's flown out to Berlin, or the cardboard packed out to the trailhead, the propane tanks helicoptered out and in. I wanted a closed system. A circular economy. I wanted what we had to be all there was, all we needed, perhaps because of the record rainfall the Whites had that summer, the days after days after days of just clouds and rain and lightning pushing against the big dining room windows, the once-a-month sunset we might be lucky enough to catch over Vermont. 17 inches of rain fell in July. Some days I wouldn't even make it outside. That summer, it felt as if (forgive me) we, as a croo, had been placed under the vacuum. Like we were just big pieces of meat sealed into a plastic bag surrounded by spices and aromatics, without much room to move. If the weather was making Madison feel like a singular place, like a fragile building floating among those dense clouds every single day, I wanted it to function like one. I wanted a system which could truly sustain itself. I wanted my food to cook my food.

I also thought it would be really funny to cook meat in the 'post.

(This is not to say that it wasn't a beautiful summer, that summer of 2023. It was. The way we turned to Euchre, to Rummikub, to convoluted six-act Space Race BFDs, to *Twin* 

Peaks, to I, Tonya [that BFD is still pending], to the joys of attics and basements and reefer sheds. What I am saying is it was a joy to be reduced to meat in a bag, spend three months meat among the garlic and the



What the sun setting over Vermont looks like. Sierra Dunn

pots. What I am saying is: one must imagine the meat happy.)

Two hours later I exhumed my steak. It had darkened substantially. It had started to sweat. I couldn't believe it. It had cooked. I was astounded at my own genius. I thought of publishing my findings in elite scientific journals. I thought of making a plaque: this is the location where meat was first cooked in the Whites without the use of fire. It was almost godly what I had done. Something from nothing. I considered a Ted Talk.

The steak was delicious, and it didn't even taste like compost had leaked into the bags. With lunch over, and perhaps one of the greatest scientific discoveries of the 21st century complete, I put earplugs in and took a nap, lulled off by wet hikers asking how far it was to the summit of Madison, and if we thought the wind was really going to be that bad. Yes, we did think so. Yes.



When asked by the Einstein Legacy Project for 250 words about his vision for the future of our fragile and tender and bustling world, Gaussault said cooking at the right temperature and extracting the flavor from the peelings before preparing them for their return to the earth will not be enough.

Which, of course, begs the question: what *will* be enough, Gaussault? When it is our food, not our stove, which cooks our food? When Saturday turkey in the huts has spent Friday night in 145-degree weeks-old oatmeal for a perfect medium-well turkey which hasn't lost any of its juices? When the pot is nestled into the compost all day to keep the black bean soup nice and toasty prior to dinner?

Gaussault, if you are such a visionary, how will sous-vide save our world? Gaussault, what will we be eating a hundred years from now? Gaussault, is perpetual motion possible? Gaussault, if you are colorblind, what do you see as the sun sets over Vermont? Gaussault, Dr. Gaussault, which do you love more: closing the bag or opening it? Gaussault, if you'll allow me to ask: full bowl or half?



[Left] The compost cooking. [Right] The exhumed steak in its bag. Gaussault would be proud. Cooper Dart

## IN HER WORDS

#### BY ANNE MICHALEC PAYSON

he summer of 1978 found me living at the Garfield Ridge campsite high on the slope of Mt. Garfield, hired for the season by AMC Trail Crew (TC). I had interviewed with Bob Proudman and Reuben Rajala at 5 Joy Street the year before and was eager to have a Thoreau-like summer experience. Did I know TC had only recently started hiring women? I wanted the job so badly, but they did not make hiring women an issue. Instead they forewarned me of the isolation and loneliness that can come with being in a remote location, and told tale of one caretaker who couldn't hack it and left mid-season. But I still was game and was thrilled when I was hired and assigned Garfield Ridge.

That June at orientation/training at Hutton Lodge at Pinkham, TC's base, I was introduced to quite the Animal House atmosphere. I largely felt accepted although I must have looked like a deer in the headlights amidst the raucousness. There were several women on TC that year, Joan Chevalier among them, and just the sight of her provided reassurance. Shelter Coordinator Bob White helped me pack to my site, set up my canvas tent on the wooden tent platform and then scampered away, leaving me with hordes of black flies, socked in weather, and barely half a dozen visitors during my first 11-day stint. With the tools that were packed up I cleared some branches, swizzled overgrowth, and in the days before DEET put on so much Ole Woodsman bug repellent to fend off the black flies that my skin turned bronze. I was in charge of managing the AMC's first high-altitude composting outhouse using wood chips which required periodically packing in a huge bag. It felt questionable to be suffering up the trail under a full bag of wood chips while hiking past thousands of trees.

Days off at Hutton Lodge with various TC around was sometimes wild - lots of beer bottles and dirty dishes everywhere, the stereo blaring Little Feat or Bonnie Raitt, a bathroom that made the Garfield composting outhouse look like a spa. But they were fine with having me around - we were all young people, all part of the change. Some of the TC guys were very kind to me, and insisted I must have a pair of Limmers, took me to Intervale, I bought a custom made returned pair off the shelf for \$90, and I still have them.

Back at Garfield Ridge the highlight of my morning was radio call with the Galehead Hut croo, whose job it was to make sure I was still alive and to relay weather reports for me to share with campers. Soon I was hiking the 3 + miles over there to meet them, then returning again to remove

layers of Ole Woodsman with a hot shower. I became very fond of them. We even set up periodic communication for cheap entertainment in the mountains...they would get on the roof of Galehead at dusk and at an appointed time flash a headlamp, and I would flash back.

Through visiting the croo I met Carl Krag who led Guided Hikes, which used to be a Huts program. Through that introduction I went on to work with him the next summer (1979) and with Misha Kirk (1980). Visitation at Garfield Ridge picked up, the black flies retreated, the weather improved, and it was a terrific summer.

But the grand finale of that summer, the one that leaves me with the my lasting impressions of TC, was the annual end-of-summer Bash. That year it was held at some clearing off the Success Pond Road. TC and shelter caretakers were dumped with a keg of beer, food, and left to party through the night with Reuben chaperoning. Bonnie Raitt, with whom TC seemed to have a love affair, was actually invited but I didn't see any sign of her. At some point I believe there were fireworks, and mischief that apparently to this day still cannot be revealed. And no talk about women being part of TC - it felt like that bridge had been crossed.



Anne Michalec Payson at last year's FallFest. Brian Post

## GORMINGS

#### This section is filled by you! Send your gormings to tator@ohcroo.com

Bryan Cunningham shared the following memory: I can remember during my time at the AMC in Gorham at the PNVC, the Pro Deal Catalog! Was about 20 years old back then when I purchased my very first climbing rope through the catalog - and to this day, I still have it. Can you believe it, yes, I actually still have it. Do I still use it? Well no, of course, it was tucked away many years ago in storage as a keep sake. However, at the age of 50, I still actively climb in New England, typically 5.7 - 5.10 as a Top Rope Soloist. I wanted to share this because if you truly enjoy something, then you keep at it - never stop learning. As we know, time changes the technologies and the techniques, hence the lessons of being humble to learning new things. So, although our age creeps up as the years roll on, remind yourself to make time for the things that have meaning in your life, and to get off that couch and - Keep moving, keep hiking, and keep climbing - get out there. Your Outdoorsy Friend, Bryan.

Croo members Katie Mygatt, Liz Mygatt, Jen Mygatt, Alana Sagin, and Beth Eisenhower gathered this summer on the Green River to raft the Lodore Canyon. The last morning we introduced our group to BFDs, with Olympics featuring Hans and Franz, about tent folding, LNT, and tipping, that was very well received.

EB Carlson née Brandt and Jesse Carlson were married August 9<sup>th</sup> 2025. They followed in the proud tradition of many AMC couples and got married at the Whitney's Inn in Jackson, NH. In attendance were many AMC and OH friends. There may have even been some cocktail hour whisky slaps... There was a photo taken of everyone AMC affiliated, however, it hasn't been received yet. Thanks to the current croo who loaned their packboards for the occasion and 3-7 for the delightful pins. EB and Jesse are deeply grateful to their loving AMC community for celebrating with them and to live the married life in the mountains they love.





Zoe Davidson would like everyone to know that the OHA is now on LinkedIn! Maybe you're moving to a new city, want to network with someone who works in a particular industry, or just want to reconnect with your croo. Members have been asking for ways to connect with other OH. Join the LinkedIn group and start searching for friends today. And spread the word! Just go to LinkedIn, search "OH Association," and then join!

Scott Berkley and Phoebe Howe are happy to announce that Ellis Marshall Howe was born on August 21! Ellis reports that highlights so far include meeting all his OH friends (and some of their babies!) and lots of White Mountains sightseeing (including a trip to the alpine zone via the Auto Road!). Upcoming adventures include



hikes to Lonesome, Zealand, and maybe even an overnight at the OH Cabin if his parents are feeling ambitious...

Christopher Riely has been living in Providence, RI, since 2008 and works as a forester and conservationist both in a position with University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension and his practice Sweet Birch Consulting. Much of his work is in the emerging field of climate-adaptive forest science and stewardship.

Larz Von Huene, Brian Daly and Ethan Daly met up at Mammoth Campground in Yellowstone National Park. They consumed exactly 12 beers, 6 bratwurst, 6 smores and burnt 3 buffalo chips in the fire, testing their fuel capabilities. The trio laughed the night away with stories of their lives before, during and after the huts. The cherry on top was an elk skull found near camp with blood still on it.

Joel and Amanda Fisher-Katz-Keohane welcomed their second child, Margot Callaghan Fisher-Katz-Keohane on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025. Margot has already seen many trails and notches across the White Mountains and we are loving being a family of four!





#### PO Box 628, Intervale, NH 03845

The O H Association is an alumni group for employees who worked in, on, or around an AMC Hut.

#### 2026 NOMINATED STEERING COMMITTEE

#### **EXECUTIVES**

Chair: Jared Liu

Treasurer: Anne Laure "Al" Razat

**Secretary:** Josh Alper

Webmaster: Kim "Schroeder" Steward

**Tator Editor:** Ethan Daly

Huts Representative: Bethany "Benny" Taylor

#### MEMBERS AT LARGE

Emma "EB" Carlson
Doug Shaffer
Gerry Whiting
Heather Harland Wingate
Al Kamman
Bill Oliver
Henry "Hank" Ritter



A beautiful cake to commemorate a beautiful organization. Kim "Schroeder" Steward

### OH EXCHANGE

OHA Members are entitled to unlimited classifieds per issue. Classifieds are available in the following categories: Barter, Services, For Sale, Wanted, Property Available, Seeking Property, Positions Available, Positions Wanted, Looking for OH, Book Recommendations. Classifieds must be submitted by each issue's deadline: March 1st for Spring, October 1st for Fall. Email them to tator@ohcroo.com.

#### **WANTED**

- -The Editors of the Tator are seeking any OH stories. Email any tips to tator@ohcroo.com.
- -EB and Jesse Carlson are house hunting in the Mount Washington Valley. If you know of anyone looking to sell to fellow OH get in touch at emmahaven@gmail.com.
- -If you love thinking about the history of a place, you have to read the novel "North Woods" by Daniel Mason. The book follows a property in Western Massachusetts through time and through the eyes of the many characters that interact with it.
- -Do you want to help the huts department provide coozies to current croo as Allee Burt did for many years? This summer, thanks to a few different knitters, the Huts Department was able to give all croo who had never before received a coozie, their very own! Please see the spring issue of 2023 for Allee's Recipe and mail coozies to:

  EB Carlson

PO Box 298 Gorham, NH 03581

-The AMC is looking for stories to celebrate 150 years of AMC. Select stories will be published on the blog, social media, or the website. Submit stories by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera app or by going to the website.



www.outdoors.org/amc150/stories-submission/

## **OBITUARY**

#### ARRANGED BY KIM "SCHROEDER" STEWARD



With heavy hearts and deep gratitude for a life well-lived, we announce the passing of Gail Yorkell of Hudson, formerly of Berlin, New Hampshire. Gail departed this world with grace, love, and faith, joining her beloved parents, James and Madeleine

Lafferty, and her cherished brother Donald.

Gail was the devoted wife of Bill, with whom she shared a life built on unwavering love, laughter, and faith. She was a nurturing and proud mother to Margaret, James, and Dianne, and a beloved grandmother to Morgan, Michael, Nicholas, Trevor, Jason, and Connor. She also leaves behind her loving siblings, Ann (Peppy) and Ronald, whose lives were forever enriched by her compassion and warmth.

Gail's life was a testament to service and love. She lived to give — to her family, her friends, and her church communities at St. Kieran's in Berlin and, more recently, St. Joseph the Worker in Nashua. Whether organizing a church event, supporting a neighbor in need, or simply offering a listening ear, Gail's kindness and generosity knew no bounds.

Family memories with Gail are filled with warmth and laughter. Some of the fondest moments were spent around the campfire, where she delighted in making s'mores with her "grandchildren"—always quick to claim the burnt ones they didn't want, smiling as she ate them with love. Her backyard became a place of magic during Easter, where she took joy in organizing egg hunts that brought generations together in playful celebration. These simple traditions, full of joy and togetherness, reflect the heart of who Gail was—someone who found happiness in the happiness of those she loved.

Gail served the AMC for many years, helming the North Country Business office as the Accounting Supervisor from around 1986-2010. Following that, she worked for several years in the AMC's Boston office at 5 Joy Street.

The family would like to express their deepest gratitude to the dedicated and compassionate staff at Fairview Nursing Home and Inn, whose loving care brought comfort and dignity to Gail in her final days.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Gail's memory to the Alzheimer's Foundation at www.alz.org an organization close to the hearts of those who knew and loved her.

Gail's life was rich in faith, filled with purpose, and grounded in family. As she journeys now to the mountains she so dearly loved, may her spirit rest peacefully, surrounded by the beauty and grace she brought to the lives of so many.

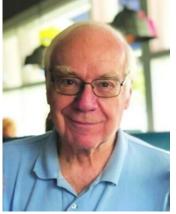
She is profoundly missed and lovingly remembered. A Funeral Mass was held on Monday, June 2nd at 10:00 AM at St. Joseph the Worker Parish, 777 West Hollis Street, Nashua, NH. Following the Mass, all were warmly invited to a Celebration of Life with a light luncheon in the parish hall. Burial will be held privately at a later date at St. Kieran's Cemetery in Berlin, NH.



Richard A Maxwell, age 99, of Laguna Beach, California passed away on Monday, June 9, 2025. Surely he was our oldest surviving member? Unfortunately there isn't anything more posted online. Dick clearly loved the OH as his email address began with oldhutman@

He worked at Pinkham in 1943, at

Zealand in 1944 and 1945 and Greenleaf in 1950 and 1951. In addition to his croo work, he also worked on Construction Crew out of Pinkham in 1944, and was tasked with patrolling the closed western huts in 1945 while at Zealand.



Alexander "Alec" Macmillan, a lifelong resident of Hingham and Silver Lake, New Hampshire, died at home on August 20 with his family by his side.

Throughout his life, both personally and professionally, Alec was dedicated to public service. Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on September

28, 1940, to Stuart and Margaret (McCorkle) Macmillan, Alec was a 1958 graduate of Hingham High School. He graduated from Harvard College in 1962 and the University of Michigan Law School in 1965. After law school, Alec returned to Hingham and began the practice of law in Boston. He was appointed an Assistant Attorney General by Eliot Richardson and also served in the same capacity under both

Republican and Democratic governors, drafting and administering a new statute granting broad collective bargaining rights to public employees. After leaving state service, he served as a labor arbitrator, becoming a member of the National Academy of Arbitrators.

In Hingham, Alec served in leadership roles on a number of boards and committees. He was a member and Chair of the Hingham Advisory Committee for five years; Chair of the Open Space Committee – where he helped obtain key harbor-front properties for the Town; and Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He then assumed leadership of the Hingham Historical Commission, where he oversaw creation of several local and National Register Historic Districts and drafted a new Historic District bylaw.

For nearly two decades he represented Hingham in negotiations with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts regarding the proposed restoration of the Greenbush rail line from the South Shore to Boston. Eventually, he persuaded the Governor and Secretary of Transportation to run the train in a tunnel under Hingham Square in order to reduce adverse impacts, and to establish a multi-million dollar trust fund, administered by the Historical Commission, to support properties otherwise affected by the construction. In 2009 he was honored by the Hingham Journal as Citizen of the Year, earning the title "The Man Who Saved Hingham Square."

He also served for six years as President of the Hingham Historical Society – publishing and republishing several histories of the Town – and as President of the Wilder Charitable and Educational Fund. In retirement, he was appointed by the Select Board as Town Historian, where he informally advised Town boards and committees, and citizens at large, on local historical matters of interest to them.

At Hingham High School Alec was president of the drama club, and for much of his life he delighted in watching the high school's plays and musicals. He and his siblings also endowed the Stuart Macmillan Scholarship in honor of their father, which is awarded annually to a graduating senior at Hingham High School. It can truly be said that Alec loved the Town of Hingham.

A lifelong summer resident of Silver Lake, NH, Alec loved spending his time outdoors hiking, swimming in lakes and rivers, and — much like his father before him — trimming and clipping, puttering around, marking trees to be cut down and, of course, entertaining the multitudes of visitors to his beloved Crow's Nest.

Sports were the other constant in Alec's life. Ted Williams and Bill Russell were his greatest heroes (he witnessed

Williams's legendary final at-bat in person, on his birthday), and as a Michigan man he was thrilled by Tom Brady's ascendance. For more than 50 years he held season tickets to Harvard Football games; in college he played the giant drum in the Harvard Band just so he could get free rides to away games (and parties). He spent years as a volunteer coach for Hingham Gals Softball (where he considered himself the #1 cheerleader) and was a fixture on the sidelines of his daughter Kate's field hockey and lacrosse games. In recent years — much to his family's chagrin — he was known to send strategy suggestions to the coaches of his granddaughter Dasha (a Division 1 college basketball player!).

Alec was "OH Adjacent". He never actually worked in a hut or at Pinkham, as far as we know, but from his sister Jean's obituary, we know that he and his siblings had a love of the White Mountains instilled in them from a very early age. His parents Stuart and Margaret Macmillan met on top of Mt Washington in 1924, and his father Stuart was later the president of the AMC. His sister Jean was one of the very first females to work in the Pinkham kitchen as well as several huts. His brother Tony founded the MMVSP, and brother Andrew also worked in the huts. Alec served as Chief Patrolman of the MMVSP since 1976, after the death of Tony. Predeceased by his parents, his brothers, Andrew and Anthony, and his sister, Jean (Macmillan) Bennion, Alec is survived by his wife of 52 years, Sunny (Gould); their daughter Kate McFarlane (James) of Shaker Heights, Ohio; two children from a previous marriage, Douglas (Tanya) and Anne Deems (David), both of Dallas, Texas; and his five grandchildren Alex, Andrew, Dasha, Maggie, and Tad.

A memorial service will be held at 11a.m. at the Old Ship Meeting House, 90 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043 on Saturday, October 11. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to organizations dear to Alec such as the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Hingham Historical Society, or the Trustees of Reservations, or the charity of your choice.



Bill Buffum, aged 71, passed away on the 8th September 2025, from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) in Providence, Rhode Island. He was born on 29th October 1953, in Providence to William Potter Buffum Jr. and Jean Fitz Buffum.

Bill attended high school at Providence Country Day School and continued his academic career at Brown University where in 1977 gained a BA in Biological Science. He took a couple of years off from Brown to work for the Appalachian Mountain Club in the White Mountains (1974-1975). His work there transformed his life. He spoke with AMC members who had climbed in the Himalayas. After graduation from Brown, he worked for the Peace Corps in Nepal. There he met his first wife, Wendy Frances King, and was married in 1981. They divorced in 1998.

Bill gained a Master's degree (MA) in International Affairs from Ohio University and then worked in social forestry and conservation for various American and international non-profit agencies in 15 developing countries. He did long-term assignments in Nepal, Haiti, Thailand, Indonesia and Bhutan and shorter assignments in Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, China, Philippines, Vietnam, Eritrea and Kosovo as well as participating in international workshops in Costa Rica and Kenya. He became a fluent speaker of Nepali, Haitian Creole, Indonesian (Bahasa) language and was also proficient in French after spending a semester in Paris.

He met Tracey Anne Coulson, from Scotland, while designing a biodiversity project in the Philippines. They were married in Dumfries, Scotland in 2000. Bill continued his work in developing countries focusing on reforestation projects to reduce severe soil erosion due to the cutting of trees by the local communities for heat and cooking.

Shortly after their daughter, Iona Grace, was born in Scotland in 2002, the family returned to Bhutan where Bill was working to strengthen the country's forestry program. They then spent a couple of years in Scotland, where Bill gained a PhD in Agricultural Science (Forestry), from the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria. In 2007 the family moved to Kingston, Rhode Island.

After entering the world of academia, Bill taught and mentored undergraduate and postgraduate college students and published dozens of scientific papers in his field. He worked as a Research Associate from 2009-2021 at the University of Rhode Island and was awarded the CELS Outreach and Extension Award in 2017.

Following retirement from URI, Bill continued working as a freelance consultant on various funded Forest Ecology projects up until a few months before his death. Earlier in his life he was a seasoned Himalayan climber/mountaineer and he continued to enjoy trekking in Nepal and hiking in Scotland and Utah right to the end.

He sought adventure not only in his travels but also in body surfing, ice boating, parachuting, scuba-diving and

paragliding. He also loved calmer activities such as playing his own wonderful melodies on guitar, tai chi, yoga and meditation.

Bill had a serious commitment to making the world a better place, and that never stopped his soft smile from signaling a deep curiosity, good humor and gentle soul. Bill wasn't one to pretend to be what he was not. He loved nature and was very natural himself. In his unconditional loving way Bill would encourage you to "be as you are". This message will be on his memorial plaque on a huge boulder that he uncovered in Potter Wood, Kingston as he was making a Forestry Management Plan, during many years of volunteer work there.

He treasured so many beings in this world and he will go on being treasured by so many, long after his passing. Bill is survived by his wife Tracey Anne Buffum of Kingston Rhode Island and his daughter, Iona Grace Buffum; his sister Phoebe Buffum Cook; his two brothers, Paul Buffum and Harry Buffum. His sister, Jenny Buffum Chamberlin, predeceased him.

There will be a celebration of his life by invitation only. If so inclined, please consider a donation in his memory to the South Kingstown Land Trust or Compassionate Care ALS or by mail at P.O Box 1052, West Falmouth, MA 02574.



John Thompson, 68, of Cyr Plantation, Maine, passed away on September 29, 2025 in Manchester NH, of cancer. He spent his last days surrounded by the love and care of his family and friends.

John was a proud graduate of Timberlane Regional High School, Class of 1975, and UNH,

Class of 1980. He worked on the AMC Trail Crew and AMC Construction Crew (1981-1983), cooked for summer camps and restaurants, and did some HVAC work before running his own business, John Thompson Painting and Repair, for most of his life. After retiring to northern Maine in 2019, he returned to NH for several summers to do maintenance work at Pawtuckaway State Park. He helped maintain the OH Cabin, especially when he was still living in NH and could easily run up to Jackson for the day.

In his lifetime, John was known as fiercely independent, hardworking, and always ready to help. He was an energetic and enthusiastic outdoorsman with the eye of an artist. He enjoyed hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, golfing, oil painting, and most of all, fixing up his "slice of heaven" in Cyr Plantation. John was a rock that certainly gathered no moss. When not on some mountain or lake, he could be found at the home, cabin, or campfire of any one of his many friends and extended family, telling tales, lending a hand with a fix-it job, and sharing a meal before bebopping along to his next stop, occasionally wearing the Thompson family kilt or a Santa suit.

John is survived by his 3 brothers, Joe and his wife Andrea of Danville, NH, Bob and his wife Cheryl of Allenstown, NH, and Bill of Hagerstown, MD; his sister Kathy Simpson and her husband Brandan of Manchester, NH; nieces and nephews, Tracey Adams and her husband Micah, Connor Simpson and his wife Caitlin, Shaun Filiault and her husband Jeff, Ashley Trenholm and her husband Robbie, Joe

Thompson and his fiancée Kristen; and grand nieces and nephews, Zoe, Sadie, Calvin, Carly, and Russell. He was predeceased by his parents, Bob and Judy Thompson.

Friends and family are all invited to join us for a memorial gathering on Sunday October 12th, 1:00-3:00 pm at the beach area of Pawtuckaway State Park, Raymond, NH. To honor John's casual lifestyle, please dress casually according to the mid-October weather. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Appalachian Mountain Club, or to your favorite charity.

Assisting the family with arrangements is the Cremation Society of NH, Manchester. To view John's Online Tribute, send condolences to the family, or for more information, visit www.csnh.com.

To order memorial trees or send flowers to the family in memory of John E. Thompson, please visit our flower store.

## TATOR CROO

Emma "EB" Carlson worked in the huts for six seasons across four years and has been the co-*editor* of the Tator for five years. She is also the Huts Assistant Manager. She continues to explore the Whites by foot and by ski with friends and her husband, Jesse,



also OH. She's a fan of boardgames, crafting, and hanging with friends. She's grateful she remains close to the mountains and community she loves.

Ethan Daly is a co-editor for the Tator. He worked in the huts for four seasons and the Highland Center for one. He is a writer and is featured in MWV Vibe and Backcountry. Look for his articles this coming winter.



Maya Shyevitch is a *co-editor* for the Tator. She had a rambling career around the AMC and now lives in Portland, ME, where she makes maps for the Ocean Renewable Power Company. You can often find her knitting, contra dancing, or doing a slew of PT exersizes.



Larz von Huene is a *co-editor* for the Tator. They spent two seasons as Lakes researcher and now live in Portland, ME. They recently returned after a stint doing seed collection in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park.



Kim "Schroeder" Steward serves as a *tator* proofreader, OHA Webmaster, Social Media Maven and is a member of the patrol leadership for MMVSP. After working for the AMC for 21 years, she has spent the last 15+ years working for White Mountain Oil &



Propane doing marketing, web administration, and HR duties. She also continues to perform weddings as a Justice of the Peace in New Hampshire. She and her husband Keith Force live in the Mount Washington Valley.

Bill Barrett serves as a *tator proofreader*. He worked in the Huts in the '60's and '70's, mostly Opening and Closing, but also including Fall HM at Flea and Lakes (even though there was then no official Fall season); then he was on the North Country



Board (successor to the Hut Committee) in the 80's; and now he is a Huts volunteer, and a trail adopter (the latter not just on the two OH trails, but also the Crawford Path and the Tuckerman Crossover).

2025 Steering Committee Calendar

Online Meetings: 11/18/25

OH Meetups: 11/1, Fallfest





Thanks to EB for many years of stellar management at the helm of the Tator!

Like what you see?

Have feedback?

Want to contribute?

Email us at tator@ohcroo.com

