

Smoke & Blazes

Volume 77, Number 2

Killington Section, Green Mountain Club

Summer 2024



Trails & Shelters co-chair Larry Walter tries out a new method for trail clearing. If you'd like to use a saw instead, join us on National Trails Day, Saturday, June 1, and we'll provide them. See the hike schedule for details and come lend a hand!



KILLINGTON SECTION



Summer 2024

Killington Section Officers

Wayne Krevetski, *President*
Herb Ogden, *Vice President*
Melissa Reichert, *Secretary*
Maura Wildman, *Treasurer*

Committee Chairs

Amy Peacock, *History & Archives*
Sue Thomas, *Outings*
Larry Walter, *Trails & Shelters*
Dave Coppock, *Trails & Shelters*

Delegates to GMC Board

Bruce Peacock, *Director*
Ruth Hare, *Alternate*

Web Site: gmckillington.org

Andrew & Isaac Jones,
Web Masters

Smoke & Blazes

Sue Thomas, *Editor*

Killington Section Directors

Term expires 2025:

Bill Cooke
Dave Coppock
Herb Ogden

Term expires 2026:

Wayne Krevetski*
Melissa Reichert*
Allison Henry

Term expires 2027:

Sheamus Fagan
Amy Peacock*
Maura Wildman*

**Second consecutive 3-year term, not eligible for re-election.*

Contact us:

KillingtonSection@greenmountainclub.org

Trail Mix

The 114th **Green Mountain Club Annual Meeting** will be held on Saturday, June 15 at the club headquarters in Waterbury Center. See the summer issue of Long Trail News or go to greenmountainclub.org for information on schedules, meals, activities and registration.

The Green Mountain Club will be offering **Wilderness First Responder Recertification** Saturday June 1 – Sunday June 2. This 2-day course will recertify those with current WFR certification, and will be a mixture of classroom learning and outdoors, hands-on scenarios. Optional CPR course Saturday evening. Go to greenmountainclub.org for details and registration.

Minerva Hinchey Shelter in our section will be moved this summer. The date has not yet been announced, but if you'd like to lend a hand, contact Director of Field Programs Keegan Tierney, ktierney@greenmountainclub.org for updates.

Long Trail Day will be held on Saturday, September 21 this year. More details will be coming in the Long Trail news and on the GMC website. If you'd like to participate in Killington Section activities on that day, which may include a fund-raising hike, passing out snacks to hikers at a trailhead, or trail maintenance, contact **Wayne Krevetski, 802-282-2237**, closer to the date.

If you'd like extra copies of our **Killington Section hike schedule** to post on local bulletin boards or hand out to friends, contact **Sue Thomas, 802-773-2185**.

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept. has closed a number of hiking trails in the state to protect peregrine falcon nesting sites. The following trails will remain closed until Aug. 1, or until the risk to nesting falcons has passed:

- **Bolton Notch (Bolton)** – UUW cliff – cliff access and climbing closed
- **Bone Mountain (Bolton)** – portions closed to climbing
- **Deer Leap (Bristol)** – cliff-top and climbing closed
- **Dummerston Quarry (Dummerston)** – upper quarry closed
- **Eagle Ledge (Vershire)** – closed to hiking and climbing
- **Fairlee Palisades (Fairlee)** – cliff-top closed
- **Marshfield Mountain (Marshfield)** – portions closed to climbing
- **Mt. Horrid (Rochester)** – Great Cliff Overlook closed
- **Nichols Ledge (Woodbury)** – cliff-top and climbing closed
- **Prospect Rock (Johnson)** – cliff-top overlook and climbing closed
- **Red Rocks Park (S. Burlington)** – southern cliff access closed
- **Rattlesnake Point (Salisbury)** – southern overlook closed
- **Snake Mountain (Addison)** – entire western trail closed

The Extra Mile

The Killington Section's own **Melissa Reichert** has been nominated for one of four open seats on the Green Mountain Club board of directors. Melissa is currently serving on the Killington Section board, and on the club's Land Conservation Committee. You can see profiles of all the candidates and cast your vote at greenmountainclub.org/vote2024.

Trails & Shelters co-chair **Larry Walter** taught a saw-sharpening class for GMC staff members in February, instructing them in how to safely maintain the tools used by the summer trail crews.

Killington Section Annual Meeting | Saturday, April 13, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President **Wayne Krevetski**, and after the usual formalities Treasurer **Maura Wildman** reported that income is down somewhat from last year. Trails & Shelters co-chairs **Larry Walter** and **Dave Coppock** were next up. Recent storms have likely caused many blowdowns, they ask that anyone out on the trail report what they find. The Bucklin Trail kiosk needs repair, having been used for target practice.

Outings chair **Sue Thomas** reported attendance is up and down, not helped by uncooperative weather. She stressed the need for more hike leaders to fill the calendar, and activating the email list to send out reminders before hikes would be a help. We again discussed coordinating with Rutland Rec's Come Alive Outside program, but need our members to participate to make it successful. Front Porch Forum was also mentioned as a way to publicize hikes.

Section historian **Amy Peacock** updated us on the Long Trail Lodge site, reporting the application for the historical marker will go before the selection committee in May. The planned relocation of the Sherburne Pass Trail through the site is on the back burner, as much cleanup is needed and negotiations with Killington Ski Area will be delayed by the Cooper Lodge removal. **Bruce Peacock** and an engineer looked at the site to assess which parts of cabins could be preserved.

Next **Sue Thomas** switched hats to report on Smoke & Blazes, which consistently is the section's largest expense, but all agreed worth the cost to keep members informed. She questioned what happens to the volunteer check-offs on the membership forms – do we ever see them and follow up? And do sustaining members remain on our mailing list? We need a membership coordinator, and Maura offered to check with headquarters as to what's involved.

Our section Director to the Main Club **Bruce Peacock** filled us in on the last board meeting, see his report below. Then **Melissa Reichert** detailed the Land Conservation Strategic Plan as approved by the GMC Board, which is dedicated to legal protection of the AT/LT, infrastructure and the 1,000-foot Long Trail System corridor. **Wayne** then briefed us on the work of the Trail Management Committee, where Cooper Lodge is back near the top of the list, while bridging Sargent and Gould Brooks is deemed lower priority. **Melissa** gave an overview of GMNF's Telephone Gap project, which includes construction of a hut at South Pond and bike trails crossing the LT, raising concerns about bikes straying onto the LT. A new parking area will also ease access to Rolston's Rest shelter, a potential maintenance headache.

Then it was time to elect board members. **Ruth Hare** has served two terms so could not be reelected, but **Sheamus Fagan** has stepped in to take her place. **Maura** and **Amy** were reelected. All officers will remain at their posts, despite Wayne's futile attempt at escape. At this point the librarians came to kick us out, so the meeting was hastily adjourned.

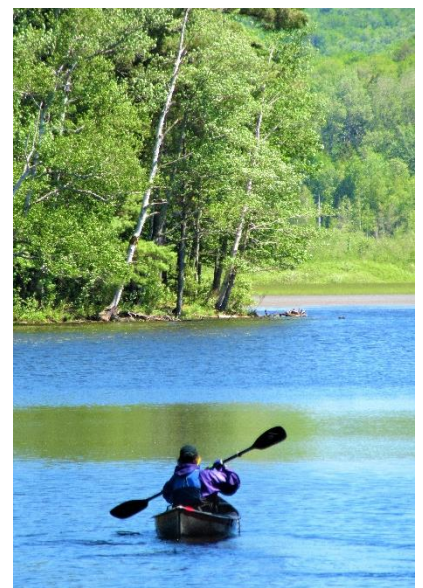
Board of Directors Report | *March 16, 2024, submitted by KS rep. Bruce Peacock*

Construction on the **new visitor center** has restarted. Construction was postponed last year due to contractor availability after the July floods. The cost has increased from \$1.1 million to \$1.4-5 million due to the delay and construction material expense increases. If you attend the annual meeting on June 15th at the Waterbury complex you will hopefully see the building framed.

The 2024 fiscal year will end with a surplus thanks to year-end giving and a portion of a bequest from the Wissman estate. Fund raising is up but membership remains flat. The **2025 budget** was approved. It is up 6% largely due to wages and a number of projects.

The staff is finalizing the rollout details of the new **Code of Contact** and hope to have it out for sections and volunteers by the start of field season. The 29th edition of the **Long Trail Guide** is in preparation and should be ready by winter.

It was good to see that Keegan Tierney, Director of Field Operations, had as one of his next-quarter priorities, "beginning large project planning for the **Cooper Lodge**."



Outing Reports

Snowshoe Hares | Rte. 73 South to Sunrise Shelter, Saturday February 3, 2024 by Larry Walter

Allison, after exhausting all other options, including inmates at the Rutland Correctional Facility, was forced to tap me as her alternative trip leader. She claimed to have been recovering from a bad cold, but it's rumored she was actually covering for the U.S. Ambassador to Tuva.

As usual, Sue T. and Sunghee were the only KSGMCers crazy enough to go on a Larry-hike. Is the main club paying these two to keep an eye on me? Turned out to be a very nice day. The trail was so well packed by the skiers, it wasn't even necessary to wear snowshoes, but two of us did, anyway. The backwoods ski area was really busy. I kept myself busy cutting small branches on the way up. It was cold and the recent snow was still clinging to the trees, with a bright blue sky. Hardly any wind. Pretty much perfect.

Eventually, we left the jump-off point for the skiers, but for one track that continued southerly. I think we got to the new shelter around noon, so we had lunch. No one was up there. The shelter is really bright inside, with plexiglass windows and a wide door. Some snow had blown in, but there was still plenty of room to throw your bedroll, if that's what the plan was. Sue got several really nice pictures. I pointed out where some of the more famous climbs were to the north of the Gap. Dave and I may end up there this summer to try a couple. The walk out seemed longer, but easier. It's a remarkably even grade all the way out, save for the side trail to the shelter. The hikers will be really happy with this beautifully built structure.



A tribute to our fallen leader, Allison.

Fickle Mom | Plymbsbury WMA, Shrewsbury, Saturday, February 10, 2024 by Sue Thomas

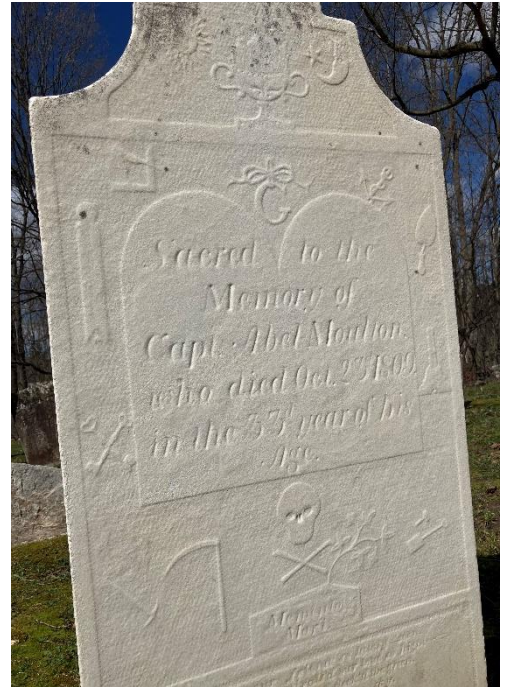
Once again Mother Nature laughed at our hike schedule – a scouting trip to Lily Pond made it obvious that I would have to come up with a different destination as there was only patchy snow interspersed with fragile needle ice, which gave way with every other step, not fun. Not to mention that the second half of the trail has been churned into an all-but-impassable muddy mess by ATVs. Sigh. So I put on my thinking cap and pondered where we might find some snow, a



rare commodity this year, and settled on the Plymbsbury Wildlife Management Area in Shrewsbury, where not even global warming can keep winter away. Sure enough, there was plenty of the white stuff there, the conditions on the snowmobile trail were perfect for walking, and we met only a couple of snowmobiles all day. Better still, it turned out to be a family reunion of sorts, with the Martins joining us for the first time in ages, and Burdock brought Jerry along too – just like old times. We had a ball reminiscing about our past hikes – like the time Stella the dog ate Larry's lunch, and another when his sister's dog Ivy the Terrible locked Jerry out of his car...good times! So no regrets, as often happens the change of plan led to a mighty fine day.

On the Rails | Rails to Trails, Castleton, Saturday, February 24, 2024 by Larry Walter

In an attempt to keep me from getting lost, Sue and Sunghee offered to chaperone me over to Castleton and back. They even let me drive, although I noticed Sue pushing on an invisible brake pedal several times. Originally, Viv and I planned to hit the R-to-T in West Pawlet, but when she couldn't make it we decided to stay closer to home, plus I'm too cheap to drive that far. The weather was sunny, but there was a fairly nasty south wind. I didn't bring a balaclava, but the synthetic muffler I found on a Rutland sidewalk (Yeeees, I washed it, OK?!) kept me warm. Other than a couple birds here and there, the only animal sightings were canine and bovine. After walking for about an hour, we hit the 7-mile R-to-T marker and a stop sign. Seemed like a good place to turn around. Even though the wind was to our backs, our pace slowed as we enjoyed the return trip. Just for fun, we decided to take a side trip onto the Castleton College trails which eventually brought us back to the stadium. From there, needing another hit of caffeine, I talked the ladies into walking back by the store, where we picked up said coffee and some interesting car magnets. Sue suggested we tour the cemetery on the way back, which turned out to be a great idea. The stones have, for the most part, been cleaned up very nicely. Several graves were from the Revolutionary era, including several soldiers. One guy had symbols indicating he had been a sailor, architect, logger, farmer, soldier and several other hats. He was carved-symbol king of the whole place. As long as mine has a kitty and a saw on it, that'll be ducky. I think we probably covered about 5 to 6 miles.



Jack-of-all-trades Abel Moulton, died 1809.

A Matter of Mud | Dayton Hill Road, Poultney, Saturday, March 16, 2024 by Diane Bargiel

With having so many mud seasons this spring, it was tough to get on trails without damaging them. I had originally thought we would do Sawmill Hill Rd. from Poultney to Wells, but then remembered about Dayton Hill Rd. from Poultney over to Middletown Springs, which I don't think I've used as a club hike before. It's best to steer clear of most of the road during hunting season. As a matter of fact, some, if not all, of the Endless Brook trails are closed during hunting season as a share-the-woods gesture with our hunting friends.

So, we parked at the Endless Brook Trailhead parking lot of Slate Valley Trails, which were closed due to the trail conditions. Then, we walked just a little bit up the road to the partially Class 4 Dayton Hill Rd. in Poultney, which begins on Endless Brook Rd. and ends at Route 140 in Middletown Springs. (The Lewis Deane Preserve is across from the start of the road on the Endless Brook side. Please do NOT park at that little lot. Please leave those spaces for folks hiking the Deane Preserve itself.)



The round trip is about 5.4 miles. We had lovely little water falls in the stream along the way and no traffic. We also passed the entrance/exit to the Shale Shifter trail. With only a handful of houses/cabins, it was almost like walking on the trails. A hunting cabin is the last building on the Poultney side, and it marks the beginning of a stretch of road that one does not want to take one's vehicle on. It is quite rugged in spots, with muddy quagmires here and there, especially in one area of a huge hole that is often filled with water. It's wide and it's deep. We navigated around it as other walkers have clearly done. On the

Middletown Springs side, the road is paved, and there are a few houses there, but it's still nice. We had a really nice hike and day with great conversations that uplifted our spirits. Here's to getting outdoors with good company in Vermont, no matter what the season.

More hike reports ►

Just a Head | D & H Rail Trail, W. Pawlet, Sunday, April 21, 2024 by Vivian Bebee

Larry and I had planned a loop hike at the Lowell Lake State Park in Londonderry, but had to change plans after we scouted out the trip a few days in advance. The road into the State Park was dirt and not in great shape in places due to “mud season” conditions and more rain was expected in the area. Also, when we did make it into the State Park that day, we discovered a sign indicating that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the loop trail around the lake was closed. So, we pivoted to the D&H Rail Trail



walk that was originally on the last outing schedule, which had to be cancelled at that time due to inclement weather. At least there would be no dirt roads involved and rail trails are pretty resilient surfaces. Our rain date turned out to be a cloudy/breezy day, with high temps in the mid-40's. Diane, John and Sue joined us for the hike and off we went. We enjoyed a pleasant stream flowing next to the Rail Trail (most likely part of the Indian River), crossed two bridges and were treated to views of hills and farm fields along the way and some art work. We also saw remnants of an old mill and very large pieces of stone (some smaller pieces of quarried marble) that may have been part of dams or bridges across the stream or used as protection from erosion by the Indian River. There were also two wooden bridges across the stream that were most likely for the purpose of allowing farmers to access their fields on the other side of the stream. Those bridges seemed quite substantial in strength and in good condition. There were several other users along the way on the Rail Trail, including other walkers (some with dogs on a leash, as is required), joggers and bikers. All were respectful and made way for passing in both directions.



A Really Big Tree | Emerald Lake Vista Trail, Dorset, Saturday, April 27 by Herb Ogden

On a beautiful sunny and almost warm day, five of us hiked the only Emerald Lake State Park trail that is east of US 7. Back in the previous decade, the part that descended from the ledges and crossed the highway, the railroad, and Otter Creek was abandoned, and a new loop trail was opened, mostly on old logging roads. We climbed it steeply to a fine vista over Emerald Lake and the Taconics, passed under impressive ledges, and summited on the ridge that separates Mad Tom Road from US 7. A nice, often fairly level stretch follows along old stone walls, past a big vernal pool. We heard no frogs, however. We returned through evergreen woods past another Emerald Lake view and eventually joined the old trail heading north, where there was an impressive white pine that Larry figured was 130' tall. We also saw hepatica, spring beauties, a few trout lilies, and a patch of red trilliums.



 **New leaders are always welcome! Contact Sue at 802-773-2185 by late July to get onto the fall schedule.**

*Wish you
were here...*

Postcards
from
the trail



GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB: KILLINGTON SECTION OUTINGS www.gmckillington.org

June – August 2024

Bring water and a lunch. Wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the weather and be prepared for weather changes. Snowshoes or grippers may be needed for winter hikes. Distances are round trip and approximate, as are elevation gains. Hike leader has discretion to refuse anyone who is not adequately prepared. If you are sick or have any symptoms, please stay home and join us next time.

June 1, Saturday – National Trails Day – Upper Elevation Work Party, Killington

Outdoor enthusiasts all over the country will be out sprucing up the trails for the summer hiking season. Come lend a hand as we clear brush and water bars, paint blazes and cut blowdowns on the upper-elevation stretches of the Long Trail. Bring work gloves, sturdy shoes, lunch, water and bug spray, tools will be provided. **Larry Walter, 802-775-3855** or **Dave Coppock, 802-683-1614**

June 8, Saturday – Beane Trail to Birch Glen Camp & Molly Stark Balcony, Starksboro

Great for those working on Side-to-Side certification. The Beane Trail is an easy climb through an old sugaring area to Birch Glen Camp, a log-cabin-style shelter. We will then follow the Long Trail south with some steep climbing to Molly Stark Balcony and return the same way. 6 miles, moderate. Call leader for meeting place and time, and plan for an early start. Must call leader by 5 p.m. Friday to sign up. Masks may be required for carpooling. **Allison Henry, 802-779-4404**

June 15, Saturday – Green Mountain Club Annual Meeting, Waterbury Center

Held this year at club headquarters, it's a great opportunity to meet staff members and folks from the other sections, get updates on GMC's activities and projects around the state, and join in on some hikes after the business meeting. For information on registration, lodging, meals and additional activities, see your summer Long Trail News or visit greenmountainclub.org/annual-meeting

June 22, Saturday – Cooley Glen Trail, Lincoln

Great for those working on Side-to-Side certification. 7 miles, difficult, at a moderate pace. Option to continue on to Mt. Grant if the group wants. Plan on an early start, must call leader by 5 p.m. Friday to sign up. Masks may be required for carpooling. **Allison Henry, 802-779-4404**

June 29, Saturday, rain date Sunday – Jockey Hill, Shrewsbury

We'll park where the Clement Shelter Rd. leaves the Gilman Rd. and follow the Clement Shelter Rd. to its end at a long-abandoned farm north of the shelter, then follow a wood road north around Jockey Hill to the Tin Shanty Rd. and end at the CCC Road to Bridgewater. Part of this is the original route of the Long Trail. 5 miles, moderate, 700 ft. total climb. Call for meeting place and time. **Herb Ogden, 802-293-2510** hogden@vermontel.net

July 6, Saturday, rain date Sunday – Pico Loop, Killington

Hike with us up Pico via the Long Trail from Route 4, then make a loop of it by descending via the Sherburne Pass Trail and visiting Deer's Leap across the road before finishing the hike through Maine Junction. 10 miles, difficult, with a 2500-ft. total elevation gain. Please give the hike leader a call to find out the meeting place and time. **Sheamus Fagan, 802-498-8751**

July 13, Saturday – Blue Ridge Bushwhack, Mendon to Chittenden

We'll start with a strenuous hike up Blue Ridge Mountain via the Canty Trail, then bushwhack down the other side to Lefferts Pond. 5 miles, difficult, but quite an adventure! **Larry Walter, 802-775-3855** or **Dave Coppock, 802-683-1614**

July 20, Saturday, rain date Sunday – Little Rock Pond, Wallingford

Hike in to this beautiful wilderness pond via a less-used trail from Wallingford. We'll pass through the site of the once-bustling lumber mill town of Aldrichville, where stone walls and a few artifacts can still be seen. Bring a suit if you'd like to take a dip. 5 miles, moderate. Call for meeting place and time. **Sue Thomas, 802-773-2185**

Turn the page over, there are more hikes and 2 paddles on the back!



July 27, Saturday – Bristol Pond Paddle, Bristol

We'll do a leisurely exploration together of this 248-acre pond (aka Winona Lake) where bald eagles, ospreys and great blue herons have been reported. Bring your own paddle-powered craft, an approved personal flotation device for each person, water, lunch and sun protection. Contact leader **before** July 26 for meeting place and time and to sign up; leader may limit group size. **Ruth Hare, 802-223-1196** (evenings), vt_rh@protonmail.com.

August 10, Saturday – Haystack Mountain, Pawlet

Climb through a forest of oak, ash and hickory to a sweeping view of the Mettawee River Valley, Taconic Range, Greens and Adirondacks. Part of the Nature Conservancy's North Pawlet Hills Natural Area, it's home to bobcats, hawks, ravens and peregrine falcons. 3 miles, moderate, with some steep pitches. Dogs are not permitted in Nature Conservancy preserves. Call leader for meeting place and time. **Diane Bargiel, 413-687-1109**

August 17, Saturday, rain date Sunday – Killington via Bucklin Trail, Killington

Let's give our local 4000-footer a visit with a straightforward out-and-back hike of the Bucklin Trail from Brewer's Corners on Wheelerville Road. 7 miles, difficult, with a 2400-ft total elevation gain. Please give the hike leader a call to find out the meeting place and time. **Sheamus Fagan, 802-498-8751**

August 24, Saturday – Lowell Lake State Park Hike or Paddle, Londonderry

Bring kayaks or canoes for a day of paddling, or hike the 3.5-mile, mostly flat trail around the lake. Swimming is also an option. State Park admission fee or pass required. Drivers may request masks for carpooling. Call leaders for meeting place and time. **Larry Walter & Viv Bebee, 802-353-3976**

Wednesday Hikes for Seniors

The Godnick Adult Center sponsors a series of hikes at a less strenuous pace for adults and older adults. Hikes typically cover 2-4 miles, involve limited to moderate elevation gain, and try to avoid treacherous footing. Participants should bring water, lunch and bug spray. Hikers are encouraged to wear sturdy footwear, long sleeves/pants(to protect against ticks), and be prepared for Vermont weather.

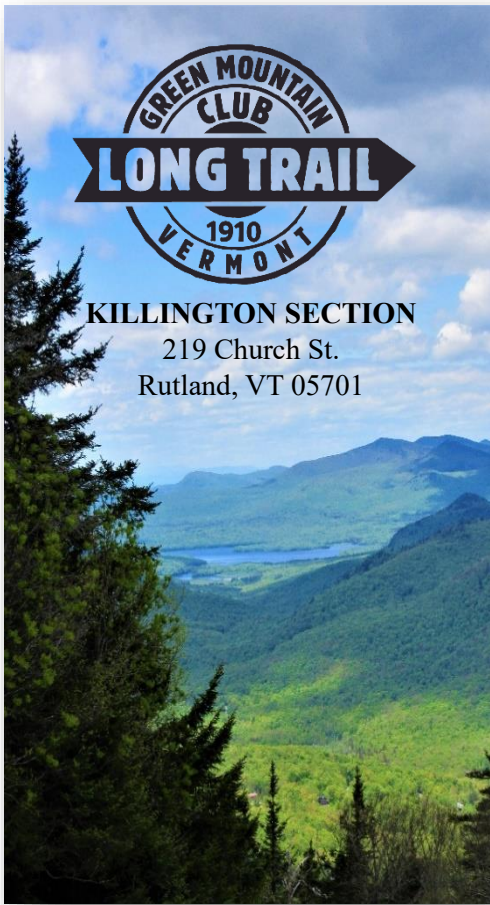
Meet at 9 a.m. at the Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street to carpool. We return in the early to mid-afternoon. For further details, call the hike leader listed on the schedule. All are welcome. NOTE: Hikes are subject to change due to weather and/or trail conditions. (.....and please, no dogs.)

May 29, 2024 – Slate Valley Trails Hike leader: Renee Warren 802-747-4466. Venture into the woods on an easy-moderate 3-mile walk. We'll be searching out wildflowers: the last of the spring ephemerals as they exit and turn over the stage to early summer blooms.

June 12, 2024 – Texas Falls & Robert Frost Interpretive Trail Hike leader: Lyn Drigert 802-775-7038. Texas Falls is a 1.2-mile hike through the woods, near waterfalls. Narrow path, slight elevation, rocks and tree roots. The Robert Frost Interpretive Trail is a .9-mile loop, on the boardwalk through woods and a field.

June 26, 2024 – Jamaica State Park/Buttermilk Falls Hike leaders: Renee Warren & Lyn Drigert

See the Godnick Adult Center newsletter on their website for the rest of the summer hike schedule. Also find information there about the **Understanding the Woods** hikes offered on the second Thursday of the month, 9:30–10:30, at Pine Hill Park, Oak Street Ext. Join Sharon Shea for a monthly exploration of our relationship to our woodlands. During the hike Sharon will moderate discussion about the ecological history of our woodlands and their continuing importance in our lives. Participants will be encouraged to engage and contribute throughout the hike. By participating community members will gain some physical activity, social interaction and knowledge of the natural environment within the park. The next date will be June 13. **Registration is required for the Understanding the Woods series, free, suggested donation \$5.**



Your invitation to join
Killington Section, Green Mountain Club

The Killington Section, based in Rutland, VT, is a chapter of the statewide Green Mountain Club. Membership in the Section includes membership in the Club. Members receive a membership card, the Club quarterly *Long Trail News*, and the Section quarterly *Smoke & Blazes* including a schedule of outings, trail work parties and social events. Members also receive reduced rates on items from the Club store and at most overnight sites served by caretakers. Membership dues help to maintain trails and shelters in the Killington Section (Route 140 to Route 4) and the Long Trail system throughout Vermont.

ANNUAL DUES:

Individual.....\$45
Family.....\$60
Senior/Student/Friend.....\$25

Contact us for information on life memberships
and categories for giving at a higher level.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

I enclose a contribution of \$_____ to the Kirk Trails and Shelters fund supporting the Killington Section's maintenance and preservation of trails and shelters.

I would like information on volunteering for:

___ trail work, ___ shelter work, ___ sign making, ___ publications, ___ leading outings, ___ publicity, ___ education, ___ tech support

Make check payable to "GMC" and mail with this application to:
Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677