

Wachusett Views



Worcester Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club

Spring 2021

A close-up view of our chapter's vibrancy and dedication.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Vice Chair	Michael Morin
Secretary	Peter Eggleston
Treasurer	Jose Schroen
Biking	Neil Schutzman
Communications	Janice Melchiore
Communications	Chris Pignatiello
Conservation	Jonathan DiRodi
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Families	Ingrid Molnar
Hiking	Walt Lazarz
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Membership	Erin Doolittle
Midstate Trail	Mike Peckar
Paddling	David Elliott
Past Chair	Joe Massery
Programs	Michael Hauck
Skiing	Ruth Langh
Social	Vanessa Butler
Technical Climbing	Dave Brainard
Third Wednesday	Fred Mezynski
Trails	Stephen Crowe
20s & 30s	Zenya Molnar
At Large Social Media	Karyn Marciniac
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)	Alexandra Molnar

Spring 2021

Letter from the Editors

As the winter winds down, we can feel that spring is literally right around the corner. Winter activities are fun - such as skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating and enjoying a hot chocolate while watching the snowflakes fall gently to the ground - but spring is a special time of year. There is an awakening all around us . . . mostly with the anticipation and pleasures that a new season can bring. The Worcester Chapter continues to offer wonderful activities, workshops and training in the new season. We hope you'll continue to join us as we move through this year with anticipation of good things to come!

We would like to thank the previous Communications Co-Chairs for AMC Worcester Chapter, Alexandra Molnar and Zenya Molnar, for their contribution over the past years. We will certainly have big shoes to fill as we continue the Chapter's tradition of monthly emails and quarterly newsletters to keep our leaders and constituents informed. Alexandra and Zenya are still active in the Chapter and we will continue to hear from them in their new roles: Alexandra as the Chapter's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Chair and Zenya as the Chapter's 20's and 30's Chair.

Have a wonderful spring season!

Janice and Chris

Janice Melchiore and Christine Pignatiello
Worcester Chapter Communications Co-Chairs



AMC Worcester Chapter
amcworchester.org
Appalachian Mountain Club
10 City Square
Boston, MA 02129



Under the Red Felt Crusher March 2021

By Kim Beauchemin, Worcester Chapter Chair

Hello everyone and happy New Year! I can't believe it was 2020 when I last wrote to all of you. Here's to a year full of new possibilities as we begin to emerge from the dark Covid cloud of 2020. The leadership of our Chapter has been very busy planning all kinds of great events for our members (and non-members!) for the spring and summer. And though some of our events may still look a little bit different this year, at least we now have a protocol to follow to get folks outdoors safely! Here are just some upcoming events that I'm excited about:

- [3rd Wednesday Speaker Series](#)
- [Backpacking Workshop](#)
- [Cycle Touring Workshop](#)

Also, we've started to discuss how we might celebrate [National Trails Day](#) this year and the TrailsFest committee has come up with some exciting ideas! Stay tuned for more details - we plan on having multiple outdoor trips in the weeks leading up to June 5th to celebrate all types of trails, whether they be hiking, paddling, or biking!

Finally, be sure to check our Chapter trip listings on [outdoors.org](#) to find other opportunities to get outdoors OR get online with the AMC! Thank you again for your support and enthusiastic participation with our AMC Club.

Happy Spring to you all!

All the Best,
Kim



AMC Worcester Chapter Hike along the Boroughs Trail/Callahan State Park

AMC Stewardship Society Awards 2020 - Worcester Chapter Recipients

The Stewardship Society Award honors AMC volunteers who carry on the tradition of public service activity and bring new members to join in the effort. The Stewardship Society structure seeks to recognize and encourage AMC's grassroots public service volunteers to contribute to the protection, enjoyment, and wise use of the public lands.

The Warren Hart Award recognizes those who have given at least 224 hours annually. Warren Hart, AMC Councillor of Improvements (Trails) from 1908-1910 was a stellar example of this spirit of volunteerism for trails. He spent 28 days in 1908 creating trails in the Great Gulf Wilderness and inspired others to join in the effort.

Steve Crowe, Worcester Chapter Trails Chair, received The Warren Hart Award for his contribution in 2020. Steve earned the award by volunteering over 240 hours working on trails such as the Pine Hill Trail at Mt. Wachusett, the Madison Gulf and Nelson Crag Trails in the White Mountains, and grading gravel at the Greater Worcester Land Trust. He also coordinated trail work events and volunteered as the Worcester Chapter Trails Chair on the Executive Committee. Steve says he adopted the Nelson Crag Trail on Mount Washington in 1990, before he was an AMC member. Congratulations on the Award, Steve!



Steve at Nelson Crag Trail (Mt. Washington Auto Road Crossing) with Ball Crag in the background



An example of the scree wall work on the Nelson Crag Trail to help keep hikers and Mt. Washington Auto Road visitors on the trail and not trampling on the fragile alpine vegetation. Nice work!

AMC Stewardship Society Awards 2020 - Worcester Chapter Recipients

The Marian Pychowska Award recognizes those who have given at least 96 hours annually. In the 1880's, she helped build trails, created a trail map of the Northern Presidentials, discovered the Pinnacle in Huntington's Ravine, and may be the first AMCer to look at the impact of recreation.

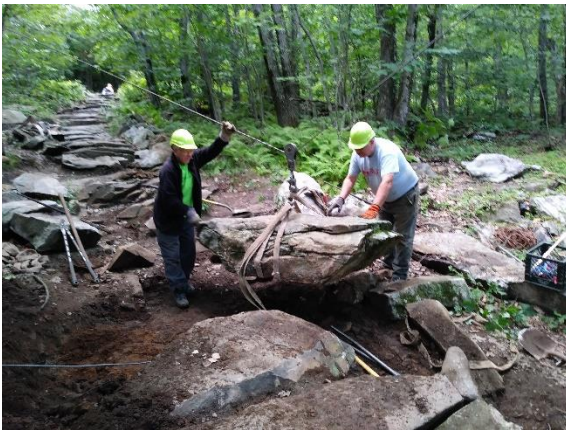
Emerson Grant, Worcester Chapter Trail Volunteer, received the Marian Pychowska Award for his contribution in 2020. Emerson performed 125+ hours of trail work on the Pine Hill and Mountain House Trails at Mt. Wachusett, the Madison Gulf and Nelson Crag Trails in the NH White Mountains and the VT Long Trail & AT on Stratton Mountain VT. Emerson has received this award six times—each year since he began volunteering with the Trail Crew. Congratulations and thank you for your hard work!



Emerson Grant at Madison Gulf Trail, Mt. Washington, NH

John Grote should also be recognized for his hard work and volunteerism over the past years. In 2020, John had over 75 hours logged—not quite enough to win the Pychowska Award in 2020—but he has been the recipient of the award multiple times.

Thank you Steve, Emerson, John and the other members of the Trail Crew for your volunteerism and hard work to maintain the trails we all know and enjoy!



John Grote and Steve Crowe setting a stair on Pine Hill Trail, Mt. Wachusett



Cluster of Blowdowns Cleared

Tales of a Peakbagger: Mt. Tecumseh, the Lowly 4000 Footer

By Walt Lazarz, Worcester Chapter Hiking Chair

As many who are nearing completion of the White Mountain's 4000 footers know, the 4000 Footer Committee requests that a short essay be submitted along with the forms detailing one's quest. While this is from a few years back, I thought I'd share my essay from 2015.

As I grew closer to number 48 on the 4000 footer list, I planned to schedule a major peak as my last. Since I was leading a hike to North and South Twin Mountains in September for the AMC Worcester Chapter's Peakbagger series, Mt. Tecumseh seemed to be the perfect finale.

During the late winter and spring of 2015, I had planned and scheduled AMC and personal trips in anticipation of finishing the peaks I needed to complete the White Mountain 4000 footers. Mounts Whiteface and Passaconaway, Carter Dome, the Tripyramids, Mt Isolation, Mt Cabot, the Twins were all scheduled. All hikes were in place, but Tecumseh was still untagged and unscheduled. All I had to do was sprint up and tag lowly Tecumseh sometime before the Twins hike. Without making a special trip, I had three chances during the season to piggyback Tecumseh onto another hike/backpack trip. I wasn't able to accomplish this. The Twins trip came and went . . . now 47 down. And there still stood lowly Tecumseh!

So I discussed with my family and decided to 'do' Tecumseh on October 4th with my two daughters, my 7-year-old granddaughter, Vanessa, and my son-in-law. All were excited and suddenly, Tecumseh grew in anticipative stature. As a bonus, we discovered that there are three geocaches along the way which we figured Vanessa would enjoy. This was shaping up to be the perfect finale!

This would be Vanessa's first 4000 footer, so two signs were made: one with '#48' and one with '#1'. And a bottle of bubbly was purchased in anticipation of our celebration.

Of course, being from the Worcester MA area, an early rise and long drive were required. A traditional stop at a Duncan Donuts along the way, then to the Waterville Valley Ski Area trailhead. We had a fun, small water crossing to start and then we were off. Along a very pretty, well maintained trail, the search was on for the first geocache. Vanessa had fun in the search and after a short time, she was enjoying her quarry.

Come to find out, this is a very pretty hike which stands on its own alongside other NH 4000 footers. We saw beautiful forest, Tecumseh Brook, lots of rocks and roots, cool stone stairs, somewhat steep sections that seem to go on and on, and a very nice summit with incredible views. We were enjoying this trip immensely. Once on top of the mountain, pictures with the signs were taken, the final geocache was hunted down, we had great views, and snacks and bubbly were enjoyed. It was nice to hear

“congratulations” from others on top. Two women asked to borrow the #1 sign as for one of them, it was her first 4000 footer. The hike down was as fun as the way up, perhaps more so. Spirits were very high and Vanessa sang songs. The weather was perfect, Vanessa and my youngest daughter bagged their first 4000 footer, and I completed my quest.

Mt Tecumseh, #48, was as enjoyable as any of the previous peaks. Not so lowly after all, never will be.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Highlight

“There’s No Place Like Home” An Essay by Dr. Carolyn Finney

Originally [posted](#) by The Joy Trip Project in October 2020.

I am African-American. Feels important that I say that up front. Born in New York City and raised by black parents on land belonging to a wealthy, Jewish family, I was “homeschooled” emotionally and spiritually on a diet of black power, black striving and black possibility. I often joke with people that I lived with Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali whose presence my father invoked on a regular basis. My parents, Henry and Rose, grew up in Floyd, Virginia – poor and black with a high school education. Their stories have all the fixin’s of living a black life in a segregated America – grandmothers working as maids for white privilege, grandfathers working to hold on to their sense of self-worth in a place that denied them on a continual basis, and a bloodline that reflected an African, European and American Indian heritage that was often denied, sometimes embraced, and always present.

It is something to live in a place that continuously tells you that you don’t belong

For the first 18 years of my life, I was all about the outdoors. The estate my parents cared for nestled in the Mamaroneck River watershed was filled with Northern red oak, black birch, poplar and beech trees. There was a large pond that was home to fish, turtles and waterfowl, including mallards and great blue herons. There were deer, wild turkey and cottontails roaming the property. And the flower gardens were filled with tulips, zinnias, daffodils, snapdragons, and roses that my father tended on a regular basis. As if that wasn’t enough, there were apple, plum, pear and peach trees that we could eat, when we could wrestle the fruit away from the squirrels. I rowed my first boat and fished for the first time on that pond. I learned how to swim in the pool that belonged to the owners. I created whole worlds on that property – one of my favorite games entailed me turning the driveway into a piranha river that my brothers and I had to cross to rescue a stuffed animal that was hidden on a secret ship made of rocks. Speaking of rocks, there was a fairly large rock on the property, hidden behind some trees that to my child’s eyes, was as large as a small house. I would climb onto that rock to sit on top in a perfectly carved out seat and I would imagine that rock as my horse taking me beyond the earthly limits of my day-to-day life.

I loved that place

I loved that land

The property was part of a very wealthy, all-white neighborhood that was home to more trees than I could count. In my first job delivering newspapers on my bike, I got a close up look at many driveways, homes and yards that also boasted significant flora and fauna. I’m not sure that I consciously understood the gift I had been given – the opportunity to have all of that green around me on a regular basis; to wake up every day to the sounds of cicadas and geese and my father’s lawn mower. To breathe air that was always fresh; to play in the snow unfettered by fear of any sort; where parents telling you to “go play outside!” was hardly a scolding; where my body became strong and I believed my legs could carry me anywhere. I’m not sure that I was conscious of these things. But when I was nine years old, I was walking home from school one day. I was right around the corner from my house when I

was stopped by a policeman in a squad car. I don't think I was surprised to see the policeman as there were always policeman patrolling this neighborhood. It was what happened after that that confused me. He asked me where I was going and I gave him my home address and pointed in front of me. He looked at me and said, "do you work there?". I remember feeling strange and saying, "no, I live there". He let me go. I went home and told my parents, and my father in his fury, called the police station to set them straight and the police never bothered me or my brothers again. But for the first time I became aware that perhaps, me and my family, because of the color of our skin, don't belong in this beautiful place filled with trees, flowers, ducks and possibility.



It is something to live in a place that challenges your right to be there

In 2003 my family had to leave the estate permanently. While my brothers and I had grown up and moved on, my parents had stayed on the land, caring for it until a new family took their place. In the 1990's the original owner fell ill and conversations ensued about what to do with my parents. While the original owner's family considered trying to keep my parents on this land, in the end, they had a lovely house built for my parents in Leesburg, Virginia. A new owner came on soon after the death of the original owner. My parents packed up their furniture, their memories and their dreams and moved to their new home in Virginia. That was also the last time I was able to stand among the trees in the place I called home.



Soon after my parents moved to Leesburg, VA, they got a letter from one of their old neighbors back in New York. It was a copy of a letter that had been sent to all the homes in their old neighborhood from the Westchester Conservation Land Trust. A conservation easement had been placed on the property that I had grown up on and that my family had cared for, for nearly half a century. This meant that in perpetuity, nothing could be changed on this land. The letter touted all the reasons why this land needed to be protected: the abundance of wildlife, the importance of where the property was in the watershed, and the diverse tree species. At the end of the letter, the writer thanked the new owner for his conservation mindedness (he had been on the land for about three years). But there was nothing in the letter thanking my parents who had worked on and cared for that land for nearly fifty years. And just like that, my family was erased from the history of that land.

I don't remember the first time I set foot in a National Forest. In truth, for the longest time I did not understand the concept of public lands in general – that there were forests, grasslands, and diverse landscapes that “belonged” to all of us. My experience of growing up on land that never belonged to my family (and the subtle and not-so-subtle reminders of that fact) and moving through the world in my brown skin influenced how I thought about any space, including National Forests. Would I be welcome? Would I be safe? Would I be seen? I couldn't see the forest for the trees (pun intended). I had to go away in order to come back home again, in order to “see” differently. I spent the better part of five years backpacking in different parts of the world including Kenya, Nepal, Madagascar, Israel, Turkey – visiting their forests and wide-open spaces under the guise of challenging myself physically and opening myself to a world beyond my borders. At a deeper level, I wanted to be free – free of the fear of a history that negated my presence that challenged my worthiness and limited my possibilities.

For the past sixteen years, I have spent my time traveling this country speaking about land, race and belonging amidst questions of sustainability and whose story counts. What started off as a personal quest to reinstate my parents – nay, my families experience – as part of a local environmental history that perhaps unintentionally excluded us in the larger telling of environmental stewardship, became something more. Whether we define home as our local community, the roof over our heads, or a piece of land, we don't exist in isolation from the larger processes that define this country and our world. And many us carry that history with us. I became interested in the legacy of contradictions – how the Homestead Act of 1862 provided the opportunity for European immigrants to own land and build a home while at the same time, black people were being held as slaves and Native people were being pushed off the land; How John Muir started publically speaking about preservation while Jim Crow segregation did not allow for African Americans to partake in sublime Nature; and how Gifford Pinchot was creating forestry as a profession and conservation as a way of life, but African Americans (and others) could not participate to the same degree. These contradictions inform the work that many of us are doing today concerning the restorative power of the landscape and any kind of environmental engagement for ALL people. And I believe that entails something else, beyond a universal prescription. This place was home to Native people and non-human species before others came to make it their home. If we are to tend to the restorative power of a landscape, we have to tend to the legacy and the complexity of what that actually means.

In 2015 [the National Forest Foundation](#) launched a new campaign entitled, *“It’s All Yours”*. At its core, the message reminds of us of our relationship with the forests and landscapes that provide for us and tell us who we are. I have to admit that I find the name of the new campaign “It’s All Yours” somewhat troubling. It implies a kind of ownership – “this is mine, not yours” – that is fueled by a capitalist system and a sense of entitlement that continues to impede our ability to stand in the tension of our differences and build meaningful relationships with the land and each other. Here’s the thing: all this land was stolen. The land I grew up was stolen. The public lands many of us enjoy was stolen. No amount of time passing will change that fact. How do we hold that? I believe the intention behind the “It’s All Yours” campaign hints at something deeper than simply playing in and caring about our forest and our grasslands. Yes – go on a hike! But also think about how power, privilege and our collective past informs our individual experiences. Consider who might have access and who does not (and why). Look for and read about those stories of people different from yourself whose experience of nature and the woods in particular may challenge your own. Be willing to listen. Be willing to change. I see the “It’s All Yours” campaign as an invitation, offering us an opportunity to embrace our complex history and reconcile that history in our present. It invites us to be in better relationship with our forests and our grasslands. It reminds us that we are responsible for our actions and we have agency – at any moment, we can always make a different decision. And it affirms what I have always felt – that home is not so much about ownership, but about responsibility, accountability, and love.

Editor’s note:

Carolyn Finney, PH.D. is an author, storyteller and scholar-in-residence at the Franklin Environmental Center at Middlebury College. She is the author of the book [Black Faces, White Spaces](#): Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors

This essay was commissioned by the National Forest Foundation in 2019 and published here with the permission of the author. As a truly wonderful model of storytelling as a vehicle for environmental advocacy this narrative can inspire others to share in words their experiences on the land that express their love for it and an abiding desire to protect it for future generations.

AMC Worcester – Annual Workshops – Spring 2021

This could be the first step to your next big adventure!

Backpacking Workshop: Sunday April 11. This online workshop will be an educational, all-day introduction to backpacking covering everything you need to know for fun and safe backpacking: personal and group gear, tent site selection and set-up, food and nutrition, trip planning, and Leave No Trace principles. Presentations will be given by experienced backpackers.

Worcester Chapter Leaders will post progressively challenging "Inner Backpacker" trips throughout the spring, summer, and fall, with registration preference given to workshop attendees.

For more info & registration, click [here!](#)



Bike Touring Workshop: Saturday May 1. This online workshop offered by AMC Worcester Cycling Leaders will cover the basic information needed to get you on the road cycle touring. Topics covered include: what makes a perfect touring bicycle, the different types of touring, route/trip planning, finding places to stay, methods and systems for packing, and more! Bikepacking will also be covered.

Workshop attendees will be given preference to our beginner 2-day / one night mini tours to a local state park.

***For more info and registration, click [here!](#)
Otter River Cycle Tour info, click [here!](#)***

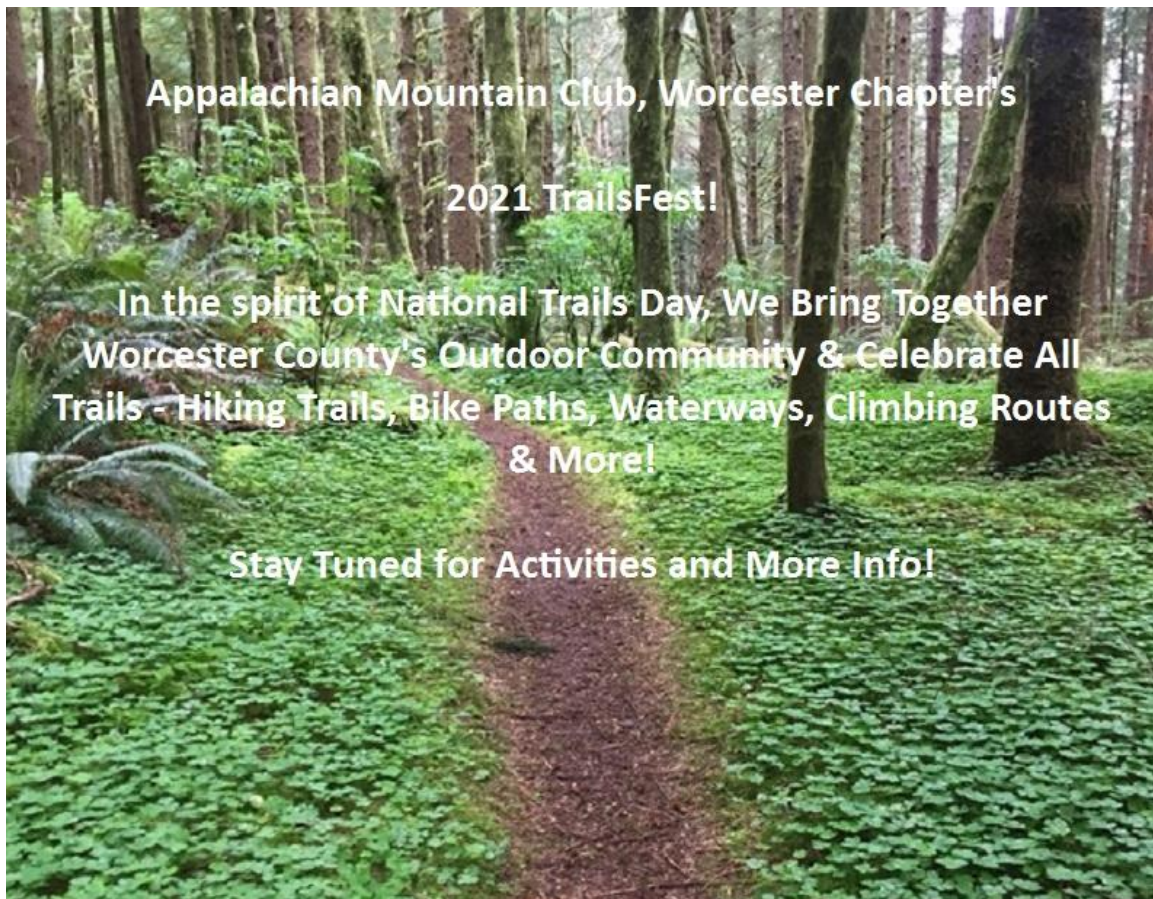
AMC Worcester Will Celebrate National Trails Day with TrailsFest

In the spirit of **National Trails Day**—this year on **Saturday June 5**—we bring together Worcester County's outdoor community and celebrate ALL trails: hiking trails, bike paths, waterways, climbing routes, and more!

This year's TrailsFest event may look different than past years but it will be a great celebration of our trails and conservation efforts.

We are planning to host multiple themed outdoor events on weekends leading up to National Trails Day, Saturday June 5. We will have Hiking, Trail Maintenance, Climbing, Paddling, Geocaching, and Biking activities planned on the weekends of May 15-16, May 22-23 and May 29-30 and on National Trails Day June 5. In addition, we are planning to have themed virtual events with drawings for prizes.

Stay tuned to the [AMC Worcester Activities](#) web page and search for keyword 'TrailsFest' to find activities that will be posted soon. Come join the fun!



AMC Leadership and WFA Training Opportunities

Leading or co-leading AMC outdoor adventures can be rewarding in many ways. There are several upcoming programs geared toward preparing you for a leadership role. For more information on any of the below training opportunities, contact Paul Glazebrook, AMC Worcester Leadership Chair at leadership@amcworchester.org

[Appalachian Mountain Club's Be-on-Line Leadership Training](#)

Every Tuesday and Thursday at 7 pm, April 1 – April 13

[Western Massachusetts / Worcester Chapters Leadership Training](#)

4 Wednesday's at 7 pm (4/7, 4/14, 4/28 and 5/5)

2 subjects covered each night via Zoom

In-person Training, Saturday June 5 (Location TBD)

[Mountain Leadership School](#)

Wednesday June 9 through Sunday June 13

[Wilderness First Aid Training & Recertification](#) (contact Paul Glazebrook for more info)

Preference will be given to active Worcester Leaders and Leaders-In-Training until 30 days before the class start date. Enrollment will be opened to the general public after that time. Cost is subsidized for active Worcester Chapter leaders.

There are 3 dates from which to choose:

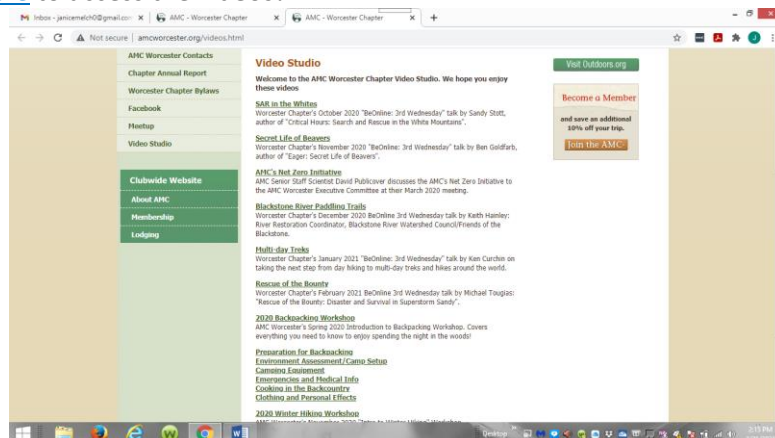
May 22-23, June 19-20 or July 17-18 (activities to be posted 60 days prior to training)

All classes will be held outdoors in Huntington, MA.

AMC Worcester Chapter Video Studio is Live!

Did you miss a 3rd Wednesday Speaker Presentation or an online skills workshop? We now have all of those presentations available via a new link on our AMCWorchester.org web landing page for you to view whenever you would like!

Click [here](#) to access the videos!



Cornerstone Hikes of Worcester County

By Pat Lambert, Past Chair

This past year, many of us have either discovered new to us or rediscovered local areas last visited years ago. What places have you fell in love with and would like to experience during all 4 seasons? Let's come together as a community of outdoor enthusiasts and build the 4 Cornerstone Hikes of Worcester County. Don't know if your hike is in Worcester County? Then check out the below map:



These cornerstone hikes will allow us to build a series of 16 annual hikes that will enable our Chapter members, and those outside our Chapter, to experience the beauty and wonder of our cherished local area.

Please submit your suggestions to me at plambert119@yahoo.com. I will announce the 4 winning hikes in the summer newsletter. Ready, set, vote!

Photo Contest Winners

Enjoying the Outdoors - Close to Home!

Congratulations to our Photo Contest Winners! And thank you to all who submitted their photos.

1st Place – Jeffrey Mayes at Grove Pond, Ayer MA



2nd Place – Walt Lazarz
East Branch Pemigewasset River NH



3rd Place – Mary Ellen Brew
Plum Island MA

