



Trails & Waves

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News from the Appalachian Mountain Club
New York – North Jersey Chapter

**Not FOR SALE:
Fire Island Cabin**



Contents

Trails & Waves

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Fire Island Cabin Sale **P**ostponed

NY-NoJ Chapter Members Convince AMC Board Not to Sell Beloved Facility This Year

BY EILEEN YIN

After two weeks of sometimes contentious conversations over a proposal to sell the AMC's beloved Fire Island Cabin, a new alliance emerged between AMC Executives and membership.

After watching the live stream of the March 14th New York-North Jersey Chapter Executive Meeting, the AMC Board of Directors (the "Board") decided to postpone a scheduled vote on selling its Fire Island property. AMC President John Judge recommended that the vote be delayed by one year. AMC Board Chair Rol Fessenden concurred, informing NY-NoJ Chapter Chair Nathan Baker of the decision that afternoon.

Fire Island Cabin supporters reacted with cautious relief. Nathan said, “I want to thank Rol, John and the Save Fire Island Cabin movement. Our debate over the disposition of the cabin, while not handled through traditional channels, has been a wonderful opportunity to improve Club-Chapter relations. What started as a heated disagreement has ended with a pleasant meeting of the minds.”

WHAT HAPPENED, AND WHEN:

AMC Board Investigates Viability of Fire Island Cabin

The Board initiated a review of AMC facilities and activities after October 2016 conversations with Bill Huyett, a McKinsey & Company partner, on the possibility of “shedding what we do or own that

does not fit or does not deliver substantial mission impact.” A staff report followed in October 2017, concerning activities to be considered for elimination. On November 13, 2017, the AMC Facilities Asset Management (FAM) Committee assessed all volunteer- and staff-led AMC facilities for their “alignment with and support of the AMC mission.”

The Board expressed concerns about Fire Island Cabin including “the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood, limited flexibility in lodging options and access, and its proximity to rising seas.” Citing declining guest usage, FAM recommended “investigating divestiture of the Fire Island Camp due to lack of alignment with mission and operations.” With no input sought from the Fire Island Cabin Committee, FAM’s recommendation was approved by the Board’s Executive Committee on November 16, 2017.



The Board then moved its vote on the matter from its normal May date up to March, declaring that “spring is an opportune time to list such a property, and the Fire Island Committee has not started the significant work of opening for a 2018 season.”

AMC Informs Fire Island Cabin Committee

On Friday, March 2, John Judge and Board member Yvette Austin Smith informed Fire Island Cabin Committee Chair Diane Serlin that the AMC planned to sell the Cabin, and that the 2018 season was cancelled, “effective immediately.” The next evening, Diane Serlin informed volunteers attending the Annual Fire Island Cabin Volunteer Thank You Party.

The Fire Island Cabin Committee (FICC) held an emergency meeting on Tuesday, March 6, resolving to launch a petition on [Change.org](https://www.change.org), a direct letter writing campaign, a social media drive, and attend the Board meeting in person. The FICC published a press release explaining their opposition to the proposal, in which they expressed that the sale, presumably to developers, would be a “departure from AMC’s core values of stewardship and conservation, which stands in contradiction to its mission statement” which is to “protect the places we love, ensuring ongoing access to the Northeast’s most precious natural resources for recreation and education.”

Within a week, the FICC’s petition on Change.org had gathered more than 3,500 signatures.





AMC Board Explains Its Decision

On March 8, AMC posted a statement on outdoors.org that the Board will “determine the extent to which each location contributes to organizational goals and mission... The Board is weighing Fire Island against the likelihood that increased investments elsewhere would allow us to engage more constituents.” It will “consider a proposal to sell the Fire Island cabin and deploy funds elsewhere in greater New York” or where it could have “greater mission impact.”

Fire Island Cabin Committee and Member Reaction

On March 9, the Fire Island Cabin Committee (FICC) issued a formal press release about the proposed sale. The story was picked up by media outlets including Fire Island Patch, Long Island Business News, Newsday, and the New York Times.

Individual members sent letters directly to Rol Fessenden and John Judge, and posted appeals on social media with the hashtag [#StopAMCSellOut](#). Members from outside NY-NoJ and Volunteer Managed Facilities wrote to AMC expressing their concerns. Responding to the outcry from local members, the

NY-NoJ Chapter Executive Committee devoted their regular meeting on March 13 to the future of Fire Island Cabin. In a first for this chapter, the meeting was live-streamed on Facebook.

An unprecedented 80 people crowded into the Westside YMCA meeting room, with an additional 20 participants watching online. John Judge and Board members were invited to attend or view the feed. Local Board members Ann Lesk and Yvette Austin Smith joined in person. Over the course of the two-hour meeting, members spoke passionately about their love for the cabin, the camaraderie it fosters, its alignment to the AMC mission, and their dedication to keeping the cabin open.

Many attendees described their experiences at Fire Island Cabin. Frank Bamberger reminded the audience that many new members initially join AMC to take advantage of the cabin's affordable and convenient access to the seashore. Wylie Goodman, a new member, dubbed Fire Island Cabin "the

gateway drug to the AMC at large." Diane Serlin described the pipeline of chapter leaders mentored at Fire Island Cabin.

Others spoke of how Fire Island Cabin enhances the AMC's conservation, education, and recreation mission. John Maier asked, "What better lab is there to teach global warming?" Marie Tanner talked about her annual coastal cleanup trips while another hike leader talked about the connection between the Cabin and Fire Island National Seashore Park. Jake Lewis, a Sailing Instructor, described the cabin's location on the Great South Bay as the only safe place in the area to teach open water sailing.

Some attendees were alarmed by the possible loss of access to affordable outdoor learning and recreational opportunities accessible by mass transit from New York City, especially as the club strives to foster Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Others pointed out the irony of a conservation organization selling their property to private developers likely to build homes for affluent buyers.



Many new members initially join AMC to take advantage of the cabin's affordable and convenient access to the seashore.



Some speakers expressed concern about the commercial nature of a report prepared by McKinsey & Company, a management consultancy firm, pointing to its focus on bed-nights and other data points more appropriate to a hotel chain than a conservation organization. Patricia Ensworth asked the Board to be more aware of the AMC brand, which she cautioned is often perceived as “that organization that runs those lodges, as if the AMC’s prime mission is hospitality.”

The sole voice of dissent was Henry Schreiber, former Chapter Chair and former Regional Director, who suggested Fire Island Cabin is too exposed to environmental ravages such as rising water levels and major storms. “Get the money for it now while we can,” he said.

Misako Yamagishi gave perhaps the most well-received and impassioned appeal. “This is the place we put our hearts and our time. If the sale goes through, we will lose membership and volunteers and not only in this chapter. There will be a loss of credibility of AMC as an

outdoors conservation organization. [If you do not sell] you will win our loyalty. You will win if you listen to us. Please listen to our voices so we can work together to make a Win-Win so everybody will be happy.”

Rob Holbrook, Secretary to the Chapter’s Executive Committee, wrapped up the meeting by reading a draft report to AMC Board summarizing the chapter’s concerns. It asked for clarification of the phrase “misalignment to the mission of the AMC,” and why there was no time set aside for a commentary period, or any details of the club’s long term plan for the Greater New York Area.

Neil Burns, Chair of the Volunteer Cabins and Camps Committee, expressed his concerns in an email to AMC Executives. “[T]he Process undermines the value of volunteers not only at Fire Island, but also at the other volunteer-led facilities. The message should be that we will undertake a Process that involves the volunteers, respects the history and contributions of volunteers, and their incredible value to the AMC mission.”



WHAT'S NEXT?

Fire Island Cabin now has a one-year reprieve.

In a letter to Nathan and Diane, Rol complimented them on the “constructiveness of how you approached our differences. I attribute that to your leadership. As a result, I am sure we can find ways to work together.” Nathan posted a conciliatory note to the chapter membership, “Thank you, John & Rol, for working with us to bring another great season to Fire Island Cabin. AMC Executives value our membership’s commitment to the mission of the Club. Working together we will... strengthen our presence in the NY/Northern NJ area.” Nathan and Diane invited all Club Executives and Board Members to “come out [to] enjoy some NY-NoJ Chapter hospitality.”

Fire Island Cabin’s 2018 season will continue as scheduled. AMC staff, chapter and FICC plan to collaborate on proposed changes.

“Going forward, I’m happy to say that the Chapter and Club Executives have agreed to better communications and input into the decision making process of AMC,” said Nathan. “This might not have been a ‘traditional’ discussion, but that is what we accomplished.”

Fire Island Cabin is the only barrier island facility in the AMC outside of Maine. Serving as the NY-NoJ Chapter’s home base for its sailing and sea kayaking programs, the cabin is situated on a vehicle-free barrier island within easy hiking or kayaking distance from bird sanctuaries, the Sunken Forest, National Lighthouse, and Fire Island National Seashore lands.



Fire Island Cabin
Midweek for Families
Mon-Thu, Aug 20-23, 2018

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Information**

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FIRE ISLAND CABIN

BY BONNIE MAIRS, ANITA BARBERIS AND EILEEN YIN

New York AMC members have enjoyed Fire Island Cabin for almost 100 years. Over time, the origins of the cabin have taken on an almost mythical status. Here is the real story of Fire Island Cabin.



PHOTO BY JOHNNY MILANO / NEW YORK TIMES

The property we know today was acquired little by little, over time, using local funds. Back in the Roaring Twenties, New York-North Jersey members camped on the beaches in Lonelyville, the little community just west of Atlantique. In 1926, members obtained the original four lots (where the cabin sits) from the town of Islip. It cost only \$10 as the owners had failed to pay taxes. Members financed and built two small buildings—a women’s bunkhouse with boat storage underneath, and a men’s bunkhouse with personal storage below. A kitchen was later added between the bunkhouses, connecting the buildings into one structure. This is the cabin we know today.

Between June of 1945 and May 1946, NY-NoJ members purchased additional lots east of Pirates Walk, the right of way that separates the cabin’s two parcels of land, for \$700 each. The large piece of undeveloped land west of Pirates Walk, where the old clothesline was buried under the pines, was purchased in March 1970 for approximately \$15,000. The property today totals 1.4 acres.

In the early 1990s, Fire Island Cabin was financially in the red and HQ was about to close it. At that time, supervision of the facility was transferred from the volunteer-led NY-NoJ Chapter Executive Committee to



the staff-led Volunteer Managed Facilities governance model, under the umbrella of the Volunteer Cabin and Camps (VCC) Committee. The goal was to bring the facility up to code. Upgrades included updated bathrooms with low-flush toilets, a new roof with skylights, new septic systems, upgraded and expanded outdoor decks, reconfigured dorms with new windows/wall panels/bunk headspace/ mattresses, outdoor showers, additional utility sheds, and a hookup to the municipal water supply.

Like all volunteer-managed AMC properties, Fire Island Cabin is maintained by a local management committee. Unique among VCCs, however, is the fact that during the season, the cabin is manned and maintained 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, entirely by Fire Island Cabin Committee and its volunteers. The cabin's charm and close-knit sense of community is the result of guests becoming cabin volunteers. Everyone chips

The cabin's charm and close-knit sense of community is the result of guests becoming cabin volunteers.

in with housekeeping and cooking chores. There's no better bonding ritual than making a meal together, unless it's cleaning the men's bathroom together. Volunteers who wanted to do just a little more have planted trees and dug an organic garden.

Through careful financial management, the Fire Island Cabin Committee has kept the cabin operating in the black for more than 20 years. In fact the cabin is financially independent. Its sole source of income is from guest fees collected in-season. These funds are sufficient to cover all budget requirements, including year-round operating expenses and a reserve fund for emergencies and property development.

The Committee is continuously upgrading the property and funding equipment for its programs, including its fleet of sailboats, canoes and kayaks. In 2008, the Committee used its reserves to fund its first major construction project in decades. The new Education Center, also known as the Gazebo, is a nature center, sailing classroom, yoga studio, dance salon, library and game room. In 2012, the cabin, which sits on the bay side of the barrier



island, largely escaped the effects of Hurricane Sandy. Although there was some water and sand damage to the kitchen, the cabin's insurance policy was more than sufficient to raise the kitchen floor by almost a foot, add porcelain tile for safety & hygiene, and replace all major appliances.

All AMC Volunteer Camps and Cabins contribute an Overhead and Public Service Fee (OPS) to the club. As of 2016, Fire Island Cabin sent 5% of its profits. This contribution rate will gradually increase over time to be consistent with other VCC facilities.

For 92 years and counting, operating Fire Island Cabin has been and continues to be a labor of love. As Diane Serlin, Fire Island Cabin Committee Chair said, "At the cabin, we live in community ... turning strangers into friends."

Learn to Kayak Weekend at **FIRE ISLAND CABIN**

Fri-Sun, Aug 10-12, 2018

Learn how to paddle a kayak.

No experience needed.

You'll be paddling on the Great South Bay on your first day, while enjoying stunning views of the dunes and forests of the National Seashore.

REGISTER NOW



AMC People

Chapter Volunteers Recognized with Awards

This is the first year the Advisory Committee oversaw the selection process for all four Chapter Volunteer Recognition Awards.

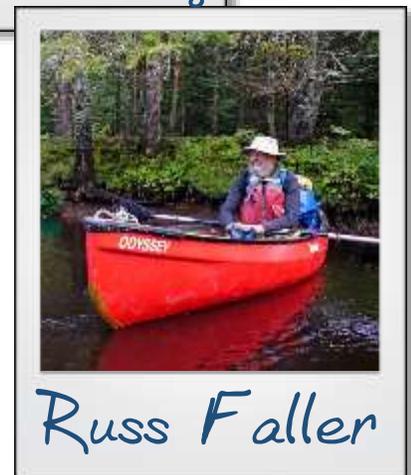
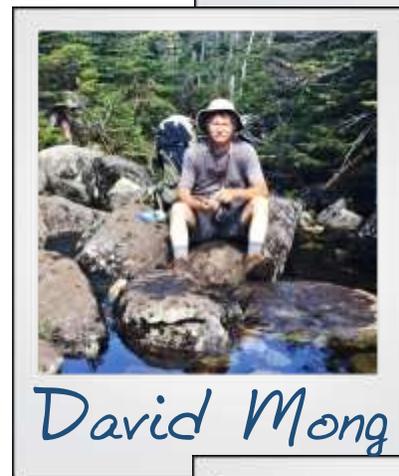
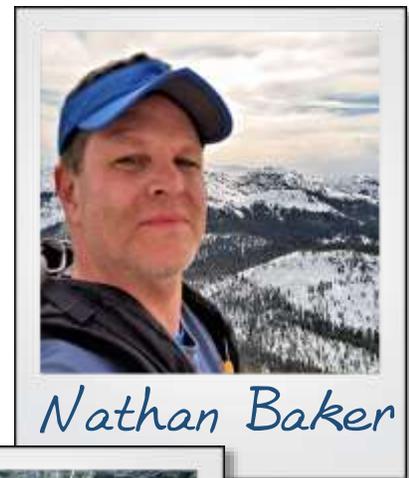
The voting panel for Appie of the Year is comprised of past Chapter Chairs. The voting panel for all other awards is comprised of the Executive Committee, plus a Guest Appie, who this year is David Lamb.

Members submitted 38 nominations this year, a record number that indicates how many extraordinary volunteers there are in our chapter.

The Chapter's Volunteer Recognition Awards are:

- Appie of the Year Award***
- Inspirational Award***
- Ambassador Award***
- Unsung Hero Award***

Congratulations to all the 2017 Volunteer Recognition Awards recipients.



Nathan Baker

Appie of the Year

Nathan's role in our Chapter goes far beyond his official title of Chapter Vice Chair. His knowledge, people skills and business acumen have been instrumental in our Chapter's many accomplishments. Nathan is an outdoor leader for our paddling, ski and hike committees. He brought this knowledge to the Executive Committee as Activities Executive. While serving in this role, he helped development our Chapter's initial standard Leadership program. In addition, he served on the Harriman Advisory Committee and contributed countless hours of volunteer time helping get the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center ready for opening day. He did so well, the Chapter promoted him to Vice Chair, with the intent he become a future Chapter Chair. As Vice Chair, Nathan helped us shape a financial plan and helped further develop our Leadership Committee, including teaching at our weekend class. Nathan, also known as Mr. Hospitality, worked on all three of our Chapter Picnics including our first Chapter Weekend event. He helped mentor the event leader and the picnic committee. This first ever Chapter Weekend was a huge success, with nothing but praise coming from attendees. At every meeting, picnic, dinner, activity, and volunteer event, Nathan's touch is everywhere—from the food consumed, to the goodie bag and raffles, Nathan's attention to detail separates him as a volunteer who goes above and beyond. Nathan has said that no job is more satisfying than leading for the Appalachian Mountain Club, especially when participants leave a Chapter event happy and more connected to the outdoors. Nathan will be taking on the role of Chapter Chair as of January 2018.



Russ Faller

Ambassador Award



The Ambassador Award is granted to a member who encourages others to participate with AMC or promotes AMC and our Chapter by recruiting, speaking for or representing AMC at events.

Russ leads and mentors many varied wilderness skiing, backpacking, paddling and river cleanup trips every year. His events are often run as joint trips, partnering with other outdoor organizations such as the Adirondack Mountain Club and Riverkeeper, which introduces their members to the AMC. Russ is a master of wilderness skills with a unique laid-back, calming style that inspires participants to notice how civilization and nature cohabitate.

Photo by Ron Gonzalez



David Mong

Inspirational Award

For a member who embodies the spirit of our chapter and inspires others by leading, mentoring, or encouraging leadership or activity for AMC this year.

David organizes and leads more back-packing trips than all our other leaders combined, thereby bringing newcomers into the sport and to the Club. He also leads for a wide variety of participants, ranging from his numerous beginner events to “hardcore” winter back-packing trips. He enjoys teaching novices, plans meticulously, explains thoroughly, is unfailingly patient, and loves to share his knowledge and experience.

Miho Izumi Estay

Unsung Hero Award

For a member who supports the chapter in less visible or celebrated ways behind the scenes, such as public service (conservation, trails), communications, editing, committee service, record keeping, etc. this year.

Miho has the thankless but necessary task of collecting the weekly fee from all softball players who show up (which can be as many as 60 or so!), tracking down and reminding those who forget, and then schlepping to the bank to deposit it all in our account. She then diligently photocopies receipts and sends a copy to all committee members.

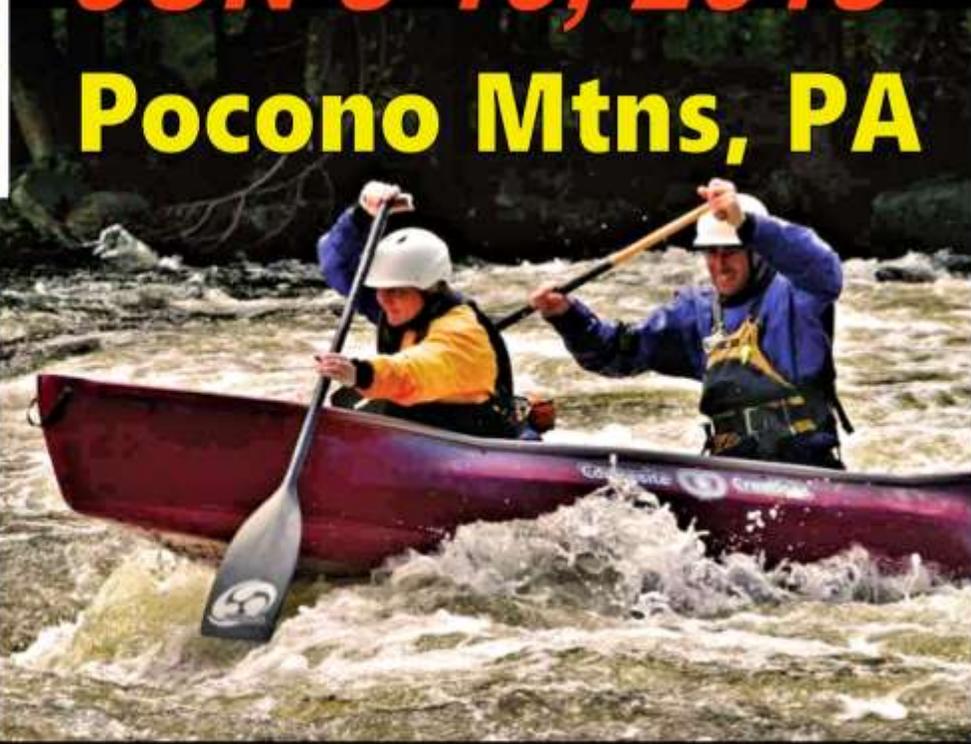
Beyond that, the day after each game, for no reason other than her love for the game and the group, she writes up and emails a “Softball Diary” to everyone who played, recounting the highlights of the games, praising players for their good plays or hits, recalling anything funny that might have happened, and humbly mentioning areas where she’d like to improve.

Everyone looks forward to her diary, which is made all the more impressive because English is not Miho’s first language. Miho is unfailingly cheerful and welcoming and has a great sense of humor.





Learn to
WHITEWATER
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with the
Appalachian
Mountain Club
JUN 8-10, 2018
Pocono Mtns, PA



WANT TO
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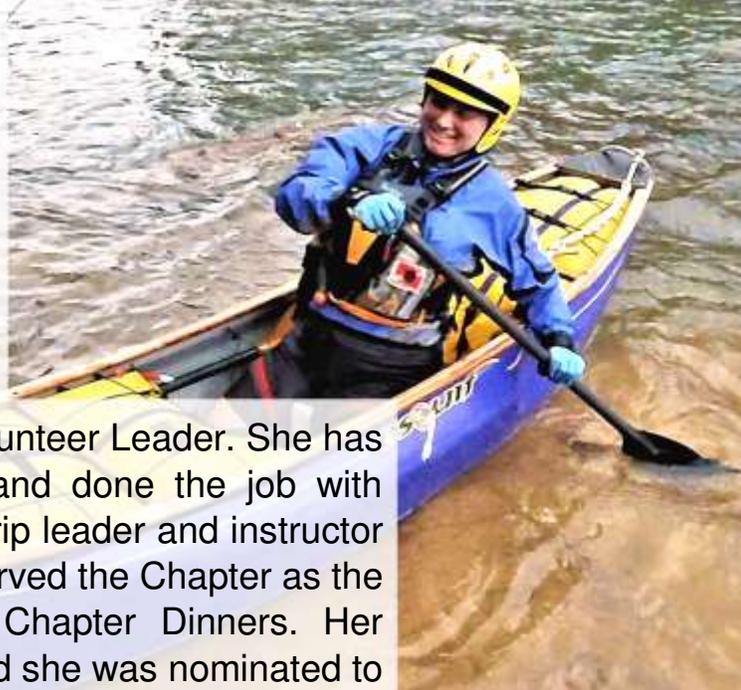
Eileen Yin

Volunteer Leadership Award

Eileen is the definition of an outstanding Volunteer Leader. She has served our Chapter at the highest level and done the job with unmatched enthusiasm. She is a longtime trip leader and instructor for our Canoe/Kayak Committee and has served the Chapter as the Hospitality Chair, organizing outstanding Chapter Dinners. Her leadership potential did not go unnoticed and she was nominated to the Executive Committee as Vice Chair, then Chapter Chair. As Chapter Chair, she created new leadership awards, an annual picnic, and a master leader program with a jacket reward.

Most importantly, she convinced the Executive Committee to support the donation of \$500,000 to capital expenses and programming at the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center (CHOC). She was also a member of the Harriman Launch Advisory Committee and after her Chapter Chair position was up, she went on to start a Chapter Harriman Program Committee, where she organized 18 Chapter events at the CHOC. She helped organize an additional 19 Chapter events this year and almost all sold out. Next year promises to be even bigger and better with 20 events organized including family events and an LGBT weekend. This year she also took on the role as head of the Chapter Advisory Committee adding additional responsibilities such as offering advice on Chapter Financial Policies and taking over the administration of Chapter Volunteer Award Recognition.

Eileen's endless energy and devotion to ensuring the success of the Chapter makes her an outstanding volunteer leader and we look forward to what is next.



Eileen receiving the award at the AMC Annual Summit in January, 2018.



Mountain Leadership School

ICELAND

As Jo moved south on Iceland's Laugavegur Trail, the rain began moving off, slanting columns of water drifting east.

The sun reappeared but more rain could be seen upwind sweeping slowly over the mountains. For now, things were fine with a massive crescent rainbow filling the sky to the northwest. It was day six of an adventure in these wild mountains just a couple degrees south of the Arctic Circle.



Photo courtesy of [Iceland Travel](#)



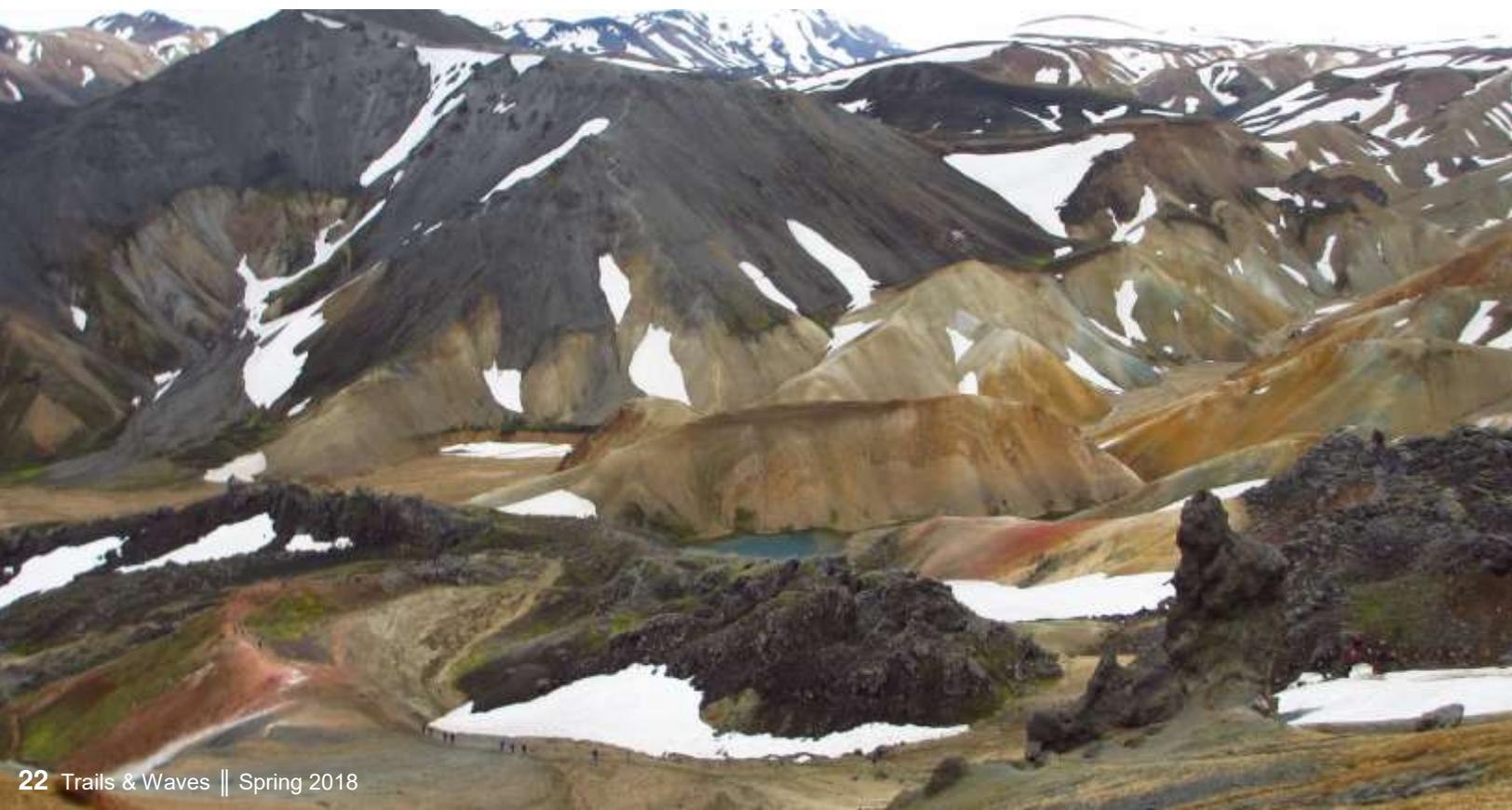
She thought back to her first day...Jo's group had met near the old harbor in downtown Reykjavik. Greeted there by Alfi who would be their guide and leader for the next ten days, with twelve travelers from Europe and North America.

Iceland's wilderness had greeted Jo's group that first day with driving horizontal sheets of water. Yet, after dropping their gear at a mountain hut, the group had hiked

out in the afternoon and the walk reminded Jo of a day in the White Mountains last June. There she had joined other adventurous souls for AMC's Mountain Leadership School. She had learned in those New Hampshire Mountains that good rain gear can keep you comfortable (and safe). Jo had selected her gear for this trek using her MLS checklist. Base layer, fleece mid-layer, and hard shell were called for today. She had experienced these conditions before and was comfortable and confident.

However, not everyone was fine. Minutes earlier, the group had hiked around the side of a large hill, straight into the full force of the wind. With Alfi up front leading the way, Jo glanced back to check those behind. She noticed two hikers standing 50 yards back.

Jo gave a shout over the wind to the group and turned round. Back down the trail were Kay and Ben. Ben was struggling with Kay's rain gear. Kay had commented in the morning that she liked a poncho because it could double as a pack rain cover. At this moment it was flapping violently around Kay's head and neck. Kay couldn't see with the fabric flapping in her face, and worse, she was fully exposed to the pelting rain and cold wind. As Jo reached the couple, she pulled off her own pack and reached in, bringing out her what-if bag. Among other items, the bag contained 50' of paracord. In moments Jo wound the cord round Kay's waist, snipping off a length with the scissors in her Swiss Army knife. Now Ben and Alfi worked together, holding down the poncho as Jo once again wrapped the cord around Kay. With a quick slip knot the poncho was secured in place. The four trekkers exchanged smiles as water dripped off their chins. Turning back towards their mountain hut, Jo once more thought back to her time at Mountain Leadership School. During the program she had



Jo learned so much from the MLS team, had found the group pace others in her field group, and the challenging at first. Not unnoticed, Jo course materials. It had been after responded by forming a quiet dinner one evening, sitting around partnership with their guide Alfi. Alfi their camp stoves, when one of her led the group from up front and Jo teammates had reviewed the items in would help at the back. Together they his just-in-case bag. Since then Jo created an efficient pace and were carried one too. able to manage the wide range of abilities of the group members.

The next afternoon, as the group rounded a bend in the trail, Jo saw something new—a substantial river—with no bridge in sight. This river wasn't like the other water crossings they had forded easily wearing the water shoes or sandals everyone carried. This was a braided maze of fast moving water-ways and gravel bars perhaps 200 yards wide.

On the far shore, Jo watched as two hikers, independently bracing themselves with their trekking poles, moved carefully through the fast-moving water channels from one gravel bar to another. Jo felt a slight thrill.

At the same moment, Jo realized this wasn't going to work for Vivian. Vivian had been a constant ray of sunshine lifting everyone's spirits despite the rain each day. While the years had been kind to Vivian she

The risk was too great for Vivian to cross alone. If she went down in the fast current, Vivian would struggle to recover. Jo once again thought back to her time at Mountain Leadership School and the water crossing techniques she had learned.

The risk was too great for Vivian

As the group sat down to remove boots and put on water shoes, Jo asked Jason if he would cross with her and Vivian and complete the team of three she envisioned. Jason and Jo moved left and right round Vivian. They unfastened hip belts and sternum straps, and locked arms with Vivian at the elbows. The three waded into the river – six legs and two hiking poles working together as one. The water was icy cold and milk white but Jo was satisfied by how securely the team of three moved. Even in the deepest channel the trio moved steadily towards the far bank.

After just minutes of concentrated effort they were sitting on the far side of the river, drying feet and putting on boots. There were five miles of trail remaining today before they reached their final mountain hut of the trek, then two more days of hiking in the Thorsmork valley before returning to civilization.

As the group got to their feet Jo moved easily, realizing with satisfaction that every day on this trek she had applied something from her time at Mountain Leadership School. Attending MLS had been one of the best decisions she had ever made. Jo wasn't sure where she would travel for her next wilderness

adventure. She was sure that wherever she went, she wouldn't be going alone. MLS would be there with her.

This is a dramatized composite story that illustrates how Mountain Leadership School alumni have applied their leadership skills during subsequent backcountry experiences. AMC's Mountain Leadership School runs each June in the White Mountains. The five-day program specializes in leadership and backcountry skills development, utilizing a learn-by-doing instruction method. A two-day Wilderness First Aid class is also available.

AMC MOUNTAIN LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

AMC Highland Center, Crawford Notch, NH

June 11-17, 2018

[Click for more information](#)



2018 DATES

June 11 - 12 | SOLO Wilderness First Aid & CPR
June 13 - 17 | Mountain Leadership School Courses:
- MLS for Backpack Leaders
- MLS for Backpack Leaders - Women's Specific
- MLS Advanced Skills

AMC Highland Center in Crawford Notch, New Hampshire

- Leadership styles
- Group dynamics
- Accident scene management
- Trip planning
- Map and compass
- Low-impact travel
- ... and more

www.outdoors.org/mls

Chapter Party

The Chapter held the 105th Annual Meeting and Dinner on January 6th, 2018 at Dinosaur Bar-B-Que in Harlem. The event was sold out and our members braved one of the coldest days of the year. During the meeting, the next Executive Committee was voted in and awards were presented to outstanding volunteers. Our guest speaker, Ms. Katina Grays, and AMC member and leader of Outdoor Afro NYC spoke about diversity and inclusion in the outdoors. [Outdoor Afro](#) is a national organization that “celebrates and inspires African American connections and leadership in nature.” Our Chapter did a joint hike this year with their group. Katina loves the outdoors and when she moved to the city she was amazed at the opportunities to continue with her

(top to bottom) Carrie Ho and Nathan Baker; Dee Mozeleski and Katina Grays; Don Getzin, Richard Dabal and Charles Michener



passions so close to the city including creating opportunities from all walks of life to enjoy the outdoors.

Her talk focused on how the outdoor community has evolved to embrace people who do not fit the stereotype most of us have experienced, citing recent cover photos and advertisements depicting women of all shapes, sizes and color embracing an outdoor lifestyle. She challenged us to not make judgements with our

internal biases. She also spoke about an expedition she is currently training for, to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in June. The trip will be led by renowned African American climber Phil Henderson who was part of a North Face/National Geographic Educational Expedition to Everest with Conrad Anker. Her talk was humorous and from the heart. Her message really spoke to our audience and she received a standing ovation. A big Thanks to Katina!



Congrats!

Congratulations to our 2017 Master Leaders!

Master Leaders are volunteers who have met their committees set requirement for activities for at least three years. These leaders all get Patagonia Jackets with the AMC Master Leader Logo. This jacket has a retail value over \$200. Leaders may pick up their jacket by contacting Justin in the office, 917-444-0202, jbailey@outdoors.org. If you would like your chance to earn a jacket, why not sign up for Chapter Leadership Training which will be held May 18th thru 20th at the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center.

Jill Arbuckle
Nathan Baker
Tim Burrows
Rich Dabal
Steve Galla
Bill Hladky
Herb Hochberg
Howard Israel
Judy Kossover
Maureen McCahery
Robert Monczka
Fred Polvare
Irv Reich
Hope Rogers
John Sheets
Jonathan Silver
Dave Tarlo
Chris Viani
Steve Weissman

4th Annual Chapter Picnic

Sat, Jun 9, 2018



Last year our Chapter Picnic and Pig Roast sold out! This year promises even more fun and surprises when we take over the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center from June 8-10. Mark your calendar and be ready to buy your tickets as soon as they become available!

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More Information

Family Adventure at MOHICAN OUTDOOR CENTER

Fri-Sun, Jun 15-17, 2018

crafts
games
guided hikes
boating
swimming
...and more





Making Friends



Grand Prize, AMC 2017 Photo Contest

Geraldine Sweeney, New York–North Jersey Chapter.
Taken at Breakneck Pond, near the Corman AMC
Harriman Outdoor Center, July 2017.

“When I arrived at Breakneck Pond to join friends for a swim, I spotted a young girl at the water’s edge. I loved how absorbed and relaxed she was in this moment, as the fish swim around her and the sun sparkles and dances on the water. I wanted this photograph to capture the joy and innocence of childhood interacting with the timeless gift of nature.”

Geraldine Sweeney



Springtime

mis

ADVENTURES

Getting Lost in the Lost Creek Wilderness

STORY AND PHOTOS BY YELENA UDLER



We found ourselves in Colorado on a weekend in mid-May. Snow had not been seen in the Front Range for weeks. It was a sunny 70 degrees outside, with an expected low in the 40s. In other words, the weather would be perfect for a back-packing trip.

We packed the car and headed off towards the Lost Creek Wilderness, about an hour west of Denver. What followed was a cascade of mistakes, one after another. Short of wearing cotton, we, Yelena and Bronson, made every bad decision any seasoned hiker knows not to make. Read on, and learn from the error of our ways.

Starting out rather late in the day (!) on a sunny Saturday, the plan was for Bronson to drop Yelena off at the Ben Tyler trailhead and for Yelena to hike towards the pass, while Bronson dropped the car off 17 miles away at Kenosha Pass, from where he would trail-run towards her. They figured they'd meet in the middle to make camp. No backup plan was considered, as it was assumed they couldn't possibly miss each other (!). They had cell phones and walkie talkies, but Yelena wound up carrying all the camping gear (!).

At four miles in and having climbed 1,000 feet to the pass, Yelena hit waist-high snow drifts obscuring the trail. Despite not having any snow gear or waterproof boots (!), Yelena pressed on, thinking the snow wouldn't slow her down too much and there was plenty of time in the day to get to the top. Instead, the drifts got deeper and the incline ever steeper. After a certain point it was no longer possible to hop from one snowless patch to the next. Deep, heavy, wet snow was everywhere.

Two hours and one and a half exhausting miles later, Yelena was finally above tree line. Traversing across the hardened snowfield without traction devices (!), another hour of climbing brought her to the top, where two problems occurred. Stumbling from exhaustion, she landed shin deep in icy snowmelt and immediately felt her toes go numb, just as she discovered that her GPS app (!) showed no continuation of the trail from there on. Not knowing where to go, she plopped down by the trail post marking the top, wrapped a sleeping bag around her soaked, frozen feet, and contemplated her next steps:



Had Bronson received the text message she'd sent two hours ago, when she was still optimistic about her situation? Was he waiting on the other side, with no camping gear? Or did he get the message, but not knowing how long it would take, had returned to the car to spend the night?

Should she keep walking down the other side in the general direction of the Colorado Trail — despite not having a trail to follow — or attempt to retrace her steps back below tree line in the two hours that remained before sunset?

Meanwhile, on the other side of the mountain, Bronson had relaxed for an hour in the car to give Yelena a head start, thinking she'd be over and down the pass by the time they met. Starting out after 1 pm, the Colorado Trail felt comfortable and familiar beneath his feet. Two hours later, he had passed the junction and was on the Ben Tyler trail starting up the steeper pitch to the top. By this point Bronson was worried. Even at a slow pace, Yelena should already have come down this section, yet there was no sign of her. He started building small cairns and making marks in snow patches along the way. Another hour passed before Bronson reached the top, also with soaked feet and plunging in and out of the occasional snowpack. It was after 5pm, and he was at the highest point of the hike, yet there was still no sign of Yelena.

Should he go forward, down the other side, in the hopes of spotting her along the trail? There was still some daylight left and he could hitch a ride back to the car later. What if she was injured or traveling off trail? They could miss each other and not even know.

Yelena, beginning to think that the smartest thing to do was turn back where at least she knew the trail, suddenly heard the walkie-talkie chirp to life. Now that the mountain pass wasn't blocking the signal, they could finally communicate over the walkie-talkies. Although Yelena and Bronson were both at the top of the wide-open pass, they still couldn't see each other.



They found themselves unable to describe where they were through the static-y phones, with wind howling on both ends. Yelena had an idea. She tied a bright pink hiking shirt to one of her trekking poles, which she lashed to the top of the trail post, creating a flag waving 8 feet above the open ground. After searching a bit through the deep snow, Bronson spotted the makeshift flag, and the parties were finally reunited at around 6 pm. They decided

to hustle back down Bronson's route, towards the car. Seeing bare earth again, Yelena was filled with renewed energy as they hoofed it four miles down to a camping spot Bronson had found on his way up. Relaxing in the warm evening over a sorely-needed dinner, with shoes & socks drying by the fire, memories of winter snow slowly drifted off into an inconceivable past.

Use AMC Trail Maps and Guidebooks.

Don't get lost.

Don't be a

STOOGE



Update from the Membership Chair

by CARRIE HO

Dear fellow members,

Thank you all for coming to the Speaker Series kick-off party on January 24th at Paulaner Brewery. I hope you enjoyed the presentation and our AMC atmosphere. Benno Rawlinson shared stories of his inspirational arctic adventures on Baffin Island, complete with beautiful pictures. On March 20th we had Bob Guenther's presentation on the Camino de Santiago. The talk attracted more than 50 hikers, packing the Fireside Room. Bob was happy to share his itinerary: Bilbao – Portugalete – Castro-Urdiales – Laredo – Escalante – Santander.

Here are some upcoming Speaker Series talks:

April: David Roberts "A Journey Through France". One comment on his last France talk was, "Superb"!

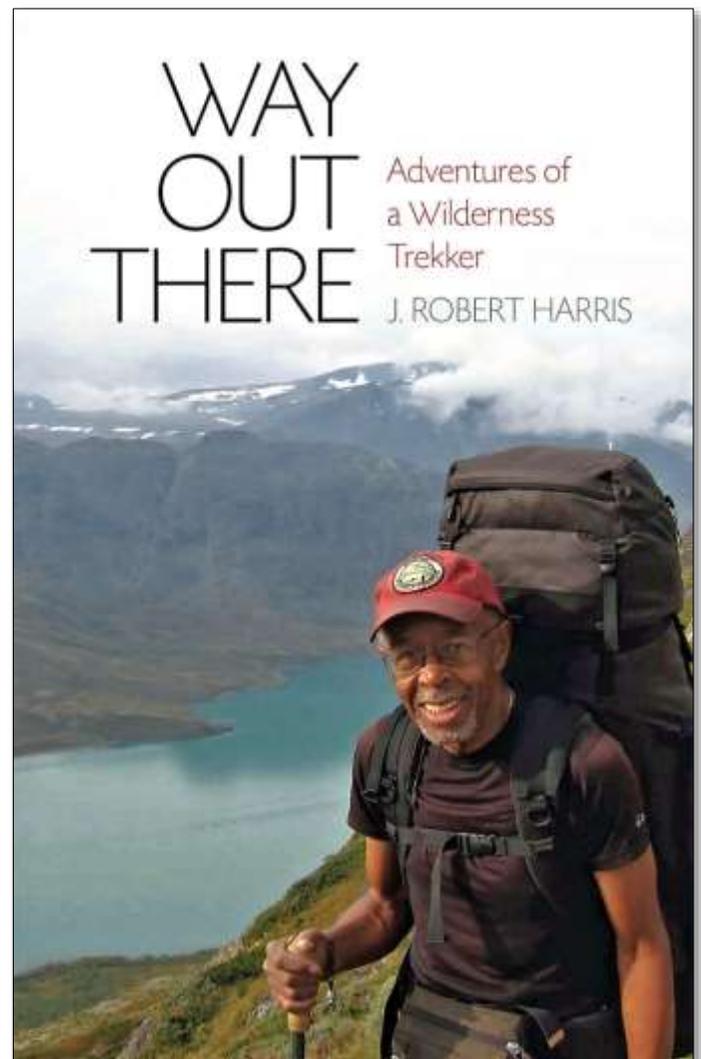
May: We'll partner with [Outdoor Afro](#). J.R. Harris will share stories from his experiences solo backpacking all over the world.

June: David Beck will share what motivated him to become an AMC Adventure Travel leader after participating in AMC trips.

I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Carrie

AMC NY-NoJ Membership Chair
membership@amc-ny.org



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Jul 14-Aug 11, 2018

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Dick Wolff

1927-2018

One of our favorite, stalwart and most characterful outings leaders has left us. An AMC leader for over 50 years, Dick Wolff introduced untold numbers of hikers and skiers to the great outdoors of the New York-North Jersey area and beyond.

Richard "Dick" Wolff of Montclair, N.J., passed away on January 14, 2018. He was 90 years old.

Dick Wolff was born in Newark, N.J., on December 5, 1927. After graduating from high school he served in the Army Air Force, 1st Experimental Guided Missiles Group, from 1946 to 1947. Dick enjoyed a long career with the New Jersey CPA Society in Roseland, N.J., working in their production department until 2017. He was fond of saying that he was an Essex County boy—"born at the Beth"—living and working in Essex County, N.J. all his life.

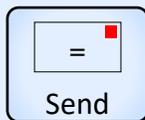
Dick Wolff served as chair of the chapter's Ski Committee and was named Appie of the Year. He led hiking and skiing trips all over New Jersey, New York and New England, as well as to the American West and Europe. Dick also led interesting history walks around the city, a tradition that continues today. It's impossible to know how many AMC hikers and leaders-in-training Dick helped and mentored over his half-century of outdoor leadership.

For those of us who had the pleasure of spending time with Dick on club excursions, we'll remember him fondly, miss him greatly, and think back with gratitude for how he brought a deeper appreciation of our city and our parks, our forests and waters, to so many of us.

Back in the Winter 2012 issue of T&W, several of our chapter's longtime hike leaders and members shared their appreciations of Dick Wolff. We're reprinting them here, so we can share these memories with you once again.

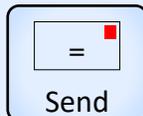


Dick Wolff



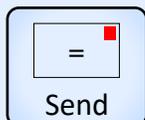
From: Jane Levenson
To: Trails & Waves
Subject: Dick Wolff

We had years of great times, especially Labor Day weekends in the Adirondacks and Vermont. One Vermont weekend stands out: we enjoyed a craft fair in town and great hikes led by Dick. I had climbed Mt. Mansfield many times but never via the Hell Brook Trail, which Dick introduced me to. It was a super hike, with the usual good camaraderie. On many AMC trips in U.S. and abroad, I meet hikers who say "Do you know Dick & Nancy Wolff? I enjoyed them so much." Thanks, Dick.



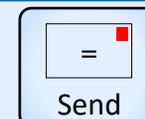
From: Richard Seibel
To: Trails & Waves
Subject: Dick Wolff

Like I expect he did for many, Dick was my original mentor. The first hike I ever led was on one of his Catskills weekends when he said, "Why don't you take the stronger people out tomorrow?" I am now doing for others what he did for me. Thea and I both enjoyed the numerous weekends we spent with Dick in the Catskills (Memorial Day) and Adirondacks (Labor Day). I also had pleasant days XC skiing with Dick and learned some new ways to check my speed. Thank you, Dick!



From: Danny Bernstein
To: Trails & Waves
Subject: Dick Wolff

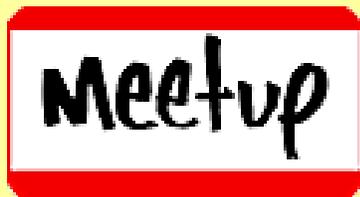
Dick Wolff taught Lenny and me how to hike. Though we knew how to put one foot in front of the other, Dick shared tips on equipment, maps, routes and techniques. He always has an opinion on the right way to do things – and he is usually right. For over 30 years, we hiked together in the Catskills, New Hampshire, the Adirondacks and, of course, Harriman. His stories and jokes livened up every trip. Dick also taught us how to cross-country ski; although as Lenny points out, only one person learned (me). I had never been on skis when I took my first group lesson from Dick in the Catskills. After that, he continued to help me improve my technique. Though we have since moved to Asheville, NC, we keep in touch and visit Dick and Nancy every time we go up to New York. A hiking friend is a true friend.



From: Judy and Jack Kossover
To: Trails & Waves
Subject: Dick Wolff

Dick Wolff is a superb hike leader. He is always enthusiastic about his trip, whether it is a day trip or a Major Excursion. His planning is fastidious, resulting in a wonderful time for all of the participants. Dick is also very caring about his fellow hikers. One time Jack had to leave a hike early for medical reasons, and Dick hiked out with him. Thank you, Dick, for all the years of wonderful hiking and caring that you have shown to others.

Keep in Touch!



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AMC is excited to launch a new Teen Wilderness Adventure and Advocacy Program. The program will combine wilderness backpacking in the White Mountains and a canoe adventure in New Hampshire's Lakes Region with learning about our public lands and developing advocacy skills. Financial aid is available.