

RIDGE LINES

www.gmcburlington.org

Summer 2008

Will the price of gasoline keep you closer to home this summer?

Here are some nearby walks and hikes.

First, check out the **Winooski Valley Park District** website. The WVPD manages many beautiful outdoor locations in the greater Burlington area, including the **Ethan Allen Homestead, Colchester Pond, Overlook Park, Woodside Natural Area** and the **Old Red Mill** in Jericho. Go to www.wvdp.org and click on *Six Easy Walks*.

Shelburne Bay Park and **LaPlatte Nature Area** – Both of these areas are reached from Bay Road, which connects with Shelburne Road. For the flat LaPlatte trails, park in the large fishing access lot and walk across the road. The parking lots for Shelburne Bay Park are a little farther down Bay Road. These trails run along high banks beside the lake.

Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge – This little-used gem has trails through woods and wetlands and then out into open fields. The Park entrance is off Greenbush Road, north of Charlotte Village and just south of the narrow railroad underpass.

Mud Pond in Williston – A mile-long trail leads uphill through woods to a little pond with an observation platform. Take Route 2 through Williston village. Turn right on Oak Hill Road. Just over the interstate, turn left onto South Road. After 1.9 miles, turn onto Mud Pond Road. The parking area is on the right.

Delta Park in Colchester - This easy trail goes through woods to the lake and is good for young children. From Porter's Point Road in Colchester, turn onto Airport Road and then take a left onto Windermere Way. Go 0.7 miles to the Park. (Each spring, a lot of the access trail to Delta Park is under water. It's best to save this walk for later in the summer, after lake levels recede.)

Airport Park and Colchester Bog - Walk on flat trails and boardwalks, with nearby playgrounds and restrooms. From Porter's Point Road in Colchester, turn onto Airport Road and look on the right for the Park. The Colchester Bog Trail continues onto the **Causeway**, an old railroad bed extending across Lake Champlain almost all the way to South Hero. You can extend your trip into South Hero by getting the weekend Bike Ferry at the end of the Causeway.

Mills Riverside Park in Jericho – Walk on extensive trails through fields and forests. The Park entrance is on Route 15 just outside Underhill Flats.

Mobbs Farm in Jericho – This relatively new nature area has several miles of walking and mountain bike trails in woods and meadows. Check the map at the kiosk on Fitzsimonds Road to find out what trails are open for biking.

Go to the Burlington Section website for additional information.

Inside: A story about hiking in Vermont's surprising weather ... A recipe for hardtack to take along on backpacking trips ... An interview with a trip leader ... Outings for June through September

Trail Recipe

By Maeve Kim

My dad was a native Vermonter who grew up in Morrisville, Elmore and Jeffersonville. He started hiking as a child, spent thousands of hours roaming around on "his mountain" (Mansfield), and eventually earned a Long Trail End-to-End badge. A Depression child, Papa was always careful about money. Even if there had been an REI or an EMS close by, he *never* would have filled his pack with expensive freeze-dried food. He always sent away for just one or two packaged meals and then filled out his menu with readily-available favorites such as Spam and beef jerky, Minute Rice, ramen, canned stew, and Jell-O (which he mixed with boiling water and drank for a warming energy boost).

A day or two before he started a backpacking trip, Papa would make hardtack to munch as he hiked. No one – not even Papa – ever described the stuff as yummy. But Papa's hardtack provides energy and nourishment and lasts forever!

Papa's Hardtack

1 cup wheat germ

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 cup rye flour

1 cup corn meal

1 cup soybean flour

8 ounces honey

2 ounces corn oil

1 tablespoon salt

enough water to make a workable dough

Knead until all the ingredients are mixed. Roll to an eighth of an inch. Cut to desired shape. (Papa usually cut the hardtack in squares to fit neatly in one of his waterproof plastic containers.) Place on lightly greased and lightly floured cookie sheets and bake at 225 degrees for an hour and twenty minutes.

Volunteers Needed!

Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Biennial Conference 2009

July 17-24, 2009 in Castleton, Vermont

The Green Mountain Club hosted the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's biennial conference in 1985. Next year, it's our turn again. We expect **800-1000 outdoor enthusiasts** to join us at Castleton State College a year from this summer.

July 17-24, 2009 will be a week of celebrating and learning about the 2,170-mile Appalachian Trail. Hikers will come to Vermont from all over the United States. They'll talk with other hikers, meet with vendors, try out new gear, attend discussions about hiking and backpacking, take bike tours, hike Vermont's mountains and paddle Vermont's lakes.

Hundreds of volunteers are needed to plan and run such a big event. Would you like to be part of the extensive pre-planning? Would you like to lead hikes and excursions? register and greet guests? sell T-shirts? staff workshop information centers? manage logistics including signs, parking and camping?

It's not too early to add your name to the growing list of potential volunteers.

Contact Jean Anderson at jeanoutdoors@aol.com to let her know when you would like to help and what you'd like to do. Tell Jean if you have a particular interest, and she'll be happy to accommodate you.

For more information, updates and registration information, visit www.Vermont2009.org.

In the March issue of Ridge Lines, we asked for tales about hiking in Vermont's always changeable and frequently challenging weather. Here's a story from long-time Burlington Section member Daan Zwick.

In 1940, my second year as caretaker at Taft Lodge, the Heiniger family in Burlington asked if I would take their 9-year-old son, Binny, with me for a couple of weeks as sort of a summer camp experience for him. I agreed, feeling that this would be good for both of us.

It did not start out as well as I had hoped. The weather at the cabin socked in - heavy clouds and pouring rain for three solid days and nights. That meant virtually no other hikers were on the trail, and we were pretty much cabin-bound. Although Binny didn't complain, by the second day I could tell he was not a happy camper.

On the fourth day, I decided to take action. Rain or no rain, we would hike up to the Chin and along the ridge to the Mansfield Hotel, which then existed at the top of the Toll Road. We had a cold and wet climb up the Long Trail to the junction of the Adam's Apple. As we ascended the Chin, the sky brightened and the rain ceased. There we entered a whole new world.

We were standing on a tiny island, surrounded by clouds on all sides. Far to the east I could see peaks of New Hampshire's Presidential Range poking above the clouds, and to the west were the tips of the closer Adirondack High Peaks. Southward, only a tiny tip of Camel's Hump emerged from the surrounding ocean of cloud. And all above us was the shining sun in a blue sky.

I could see Binny becoming a happy boy again. We spread our damp jackets on the warm rocks to dry and ate our lunch, enjoying our special status.

After that rest, we followed the Long Trail southward down Mansfield's ridge toward the still invisible hotel, and entered the cool cloud cover again. It wasn't raining, but the trail was damp and dark, in sharp contrast to what we had just left.

At the hotel, most of the guests were huddled around the big fireplace, bemoaning the miserable weather outside. I tried to convince them that a half-mile stroll would take them to a beautiful sunny world, but nobody would believe me. So the only people to hike back to that magical world were Binny and me.

Share Your Weather Story with Ridge Lines Readers

Most Vermonters who've spent any time outdoors have stories about the weather. Have you hiked in mud to your kneecaps? Put your head down and trudged blindly through gale-force winds? Skidded all over an icy mountain? Share your story by sending it to Maeve Kim: PO Box 1086, Jericho Center 05465 or maevulus@surfglobal.net.

Visit Us On Line!

The Burlington Section website (www.gmcburlington.org) has been redesigned and expanded. You'll find information from *Ridge Lines* plus photos and lively descriptions of completed hikes and other outings. There's also a comprehensive history of the Burlington Section.

Trip Leaders: Send trip reports with or without photos, so participants can relive the fun by reading about their outings. See the homepage for instructions.

Celebrate National Trails Day – June 7

All over the country, hikers will be celebrating our nation's wilderness trails. Several GMC sections are offering outings on that day. For more information, go to www.greenmountainclub.org. Click on *News and Events* and then *Events Calendar*.

Remember: *Ridge Lines* lists Burlington Section outings only. There are many more GMC activities that you can find on the main club's website. You don't have to belong to a particular section to participate in their outings.

Trip Leader Profile

We're starting a new now-and-then feature to help readers get to know Burlington Section members who lead many hikes.

Pete Saile

By Valerie Wilkins

Pete Saile grew up in a small town in New York just across the border from Bennington. As a restless teenager somewhat bored by high school, he was fortunate to be introduced to the Adirondacks and Green Mountains by family friend and longtime GMC member John Underwood. Through numerous hiking and canoeing trips with John, Pete developed a tremendous affinity and enthusiasm for the great outdoors – and an equally strong desire to share the wilderness experience with others. These themes have remained constant throughout his adult life.

Pete loves to lead hikes because he feels it's a great way to get folks out to see things in their own "backyard" that they might not otherwise get to see – including Vermont's many beautiful mountains, valleys, streams, and lakes and the incredible variety of animal and plant life that inhabit them. One of Pete's favorite hikes on the Long Trail is along the ridgeline from Lincoln Gap to the Appalachian Gap. He recalls stopping for lunch one day at one of the many lovely vistas along the ridgeline and being surprised by the sudden whoosh of a glider as it soared just above his head, close enough to wave to the pilot and see him wave in return! Wherever he goes, Pete encourages fellow hikers to enjoy the surprises they may find along the trail in the course of the day's hike.

Pete likes the camaraderie that develops during a day of hiking with a group. As a leader, he tries to get to know a little something about each of the hikers in the group. He sometimes alternates hiking in front of the group and at the end so he can spend time with everyone on the hike. And he often packs a little food and beverage to share with the group before they get in their cars and head in separate directions at the end of the day.

In addition to leading trips for the GMC, Pete has been a Shelter Adopter. First, he adopted and took care of French Camp and then Bear Hollow Shelter after French Camp was replaced. For the past several years, he's been the adopter for the Glen Ellen Lodge just north of Mount Ellen in Fayston. Fellow GMC member Brenda Wright gave Pete the trail name "Outhouse" for his help in constructing the composting outhouse at the Glen Ellen Lodge. Pete believes that by keeping the shelter clean and well-maintained he is encouraging other folks to leave the shelter in the same shape they found it. And he simply enjoys heading out on a hike to visit the shelter!

When he's not out hiking, you might find Pete skiing at Mad River Glen, canoeing the region's rivers and lakes, tending the garden, brewing beer, or cooking up a special meal at the home he shares with his wife, Deb Lane.

For folks who have been hesitant to go on an outing with the GMC, Pete suggests you just give it a try. He encourages young people to sign up for hikes in hopes that they too will develop a love of the outdoors. To get started, review the list of trips and find one that sparks your interest. Give the trip leader a call, and he or she will help you determine whether the trip is a good fit for you. Aside from a small initial investment in hiking gear and the cost of gas to get you to the trailhead (and your annual dues to the Green Mountain Club!), hiking is free entertainment that's available to everyone!

Join Pete for an upcoming hike!

Pete will be leading a hike along the ridgeline from Lincoln Gap to the Appalachian Gap on Friday, August 1. You can enjoy a full day's hike in good company with good snacks and 360-degree views. Call Pete at 658-0912.