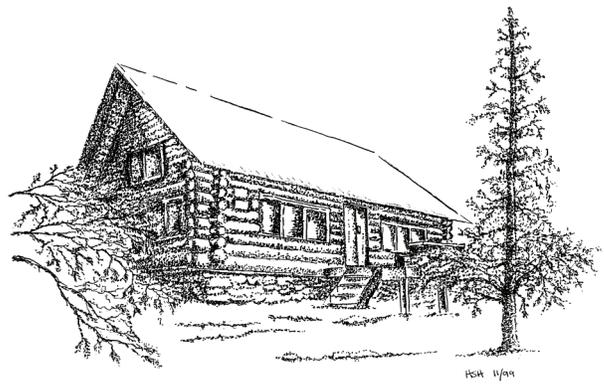


RIDGE LINES



GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB
BURLINGTON SECTION

www.naturecompass.org/gmcburlington

WINTER - SPRING 2006

In this issue, read more about our Long Trail Shelters and Lodges and the hard-working volunteers who keep overnight sites whole and welcoming. Go along with a Burlington Section member on a trip to someplace warm. Look forward to exciting events right here in Vermont that will chase away cabin fever.

The Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club is responsible for four overnight lodges, two shelters, and one tenting area. (Lodges are large enclosed buildings made of logs and situated in heavy-use areas. Shelters are three-sided lean-tos with open fronts. There are also camps on the Long Trail, which are similar to lodges but are smaller and made of boards.) In the October issue, we shared some of the history of Taft Lodge and Taylor Lodge. Here are some tidbits about other places you can head for overnight or maybe just for lunch.

Butler Lodge is on the Underhill side of Mt. Mansfield, accessible from a trailhead at the end of Stevensville Road. The Lodge was built in 1933 by the Long Trail Patrol and was named after a Burlington Section hiker named Mabel Taylor Butler. It's a log cabin nestled among huge rock ledges, with stone steps leading to a sturdy door, sleeping platforms, and glazed windows. Old-time hikers remember sweeping views from the rocks in front of the Lodge, but over the decades the trees have grown up and obscured the vista. Butler Lodge underwent significant repairs and renovation in 2000. The roof was propped up as volunteers replaced rotting sills and rebuilt the floor and walls. Windows were repaired, and the windowsills got a fresh coat of red paint. For the last several years, Butler Lodge has been the site of the Annual Winter Solstice Hike.

Duck Brook Shelter is on the Long Trail north of Jonesville. It's an open lean-to that was built in 1966 by the Long Trail Patrol.

Puffer Shelter (originally Puffer Camp) is on the Long Trail near Bolton Mountain. The original camp was completed in 1954 but burned in 1974. After the fire, over a hundred Burlington Section members put up a three-sided log structure, completing the entire construction in 24 hours. More hard work closed in the Shelter a few years later. Puffer Shelter is named after Professor Louis B. Puffer who had been an active GMC member and one-time president.

Buchanan Lodge, north of Bolton Notch, is a relatively new overnight site. It was built in 1984 and named for Professor Roy Buchanan, the founder of the Long Trail Patrol (the Green Mountain Club's professional trail crew). Buchanan Lodge has an open porch and an enclosed bunkroom with space for sixteen.

The tent platforms at the **Twin Brooks Tenting Area** provide the best tenting opportunity on the Long Trail in the Mt. Mansfield region. The platforms were put up in 1996 and then redesigned the next year to accommodate larger groups.

It's not easy being a Long Trail lodge or shelter!

For the first several decades of the Long Trail's history, porcupines were a constant threat. They loved the taste of salt so much that they'd eat right through any piece of wood that tasted of sweat. Sleeping platforms, eating tables, support beams and stairs were destroyed by the critters. Porkies particularly liked outhouse seats, a fact that more than one unfortunate hiker discovered during a late night trip to the privy. Hikers were urged to kill any porcupines they saw. One shelter caretaker remembers killing a dozen porcupines during his first week of the caretaking season. A man who owned a lot of land on Bolton Mountain offered a bounty of fifty cents per dead porky; hikers could collect by showing him the ears.

Fire has also been a significant danger. Most enclosed overnight sites were originally equipped with wood stoves. When the lodges burned down – and they did frequently – the stoves were usually replaced. (Butler Lodge's last stove was hauled up the mountain on a plastic shed in 1977.) Almost 30 GMC shelters have burned down over the years. Now, wood stoves have been removed from almost all of them.

Ever wonder who takes care of overnight sites?

Every one of the Long Trail's shelters, lodges and tenting areas has a volunteer "adopter". Adopters regularly check on the condition of their sites and do basic maintenance. They can also organize a volunteer crew if needed. Adopters fill out adopter reports to keep the GMC's field coordinator up-to-date about work that's been done and about any major repairs that might require a professional crew.

Right now, we need **Adopters for Taylor Lodge and Butler Lodge!**

Qualifications:

- membership in the Burlington Section of the GMC
- affinity for the care of the Lodge and the GMC
- willingness to visit Lodge on periodic basis
- ability to assess and inventory necessary repairs
- basic knowledge of carpentry, lodge construction and maintenance)
- willingness to complete adopter reports

Contact John Connell or Linda Evans, Adopter Co-Chairs - 899 2375 or jc61945@yahoo.com

Thank You from the President

Looking back over the last year, I cannot help but think of all the volunteer efforts that make the Burlington Section such a great organization to be a part of. We have the executive committee, listed on the Outing Schedule card, the people who make those committees function from trip leaders, shelter adopters, trail adopters, trail work people, Ridge Lines mailers, special events and more. And we have our complete Burlington Section membership that support us by being members year after year that is so important to all of our work.

Thanks to everyone in the Burlington Section for your support.

Have a Great New Year!

Phil

Notice of Proposed Amendments

to the Bylaws of the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club, Inc.

At the Feb 4th Annual Meeting, members will consider and vote on bylaw amendments related to quorum requirements. The amendments are posted on the Section Website at www.naturecompass.org/gmcburlington. Please read the amendments before the meeting and come prepared to participate in the discussion. You can also send comments to philhazen@directway.com before January 18th.

Correction: In the October issue of Ridge Lines, we absent-mindedly moved a big chunk of mountain four miles or so (and we did it without an army of volunteers armed with grip hoists and come-alongs!). We said that Taylor Lodge is in Nebraska Notch, between Mansfield and Dewey – but actually Nebraska Notch is between Clark and Dewey Mountains. Reader Dave Keenan of Essex Junction noticed the error.

Dave's been a member of the Burlington Section of the GMC since the early sixties and has spent at least two dozen nights in Taylor Lodge. He's a two time end-to-ender, first completing the Long Trail in 50-mile segments and then hiking it straight through the second time. Dave has also hiked many sections several times.

The October issue brought back many memories for Dave. "I remember the oyster stew suppers [at Taylor Lodge] with Don and Beverly Remick and I remember a winter outing to a cabin in Moscow with Roy Buchanan."

In the deep of winter, sometimes it's fun to think about places where the wind isn't howling, the snow isn't blowing, and you *don't* have to dress in layers. Burlington Section member Dot Myer sent these recollections of her recent trip with the Vermont Institute of Natural Science to the Amazon area and the Galapagos Islands.

ANIMAL SITINGS YOU WON'T SEE ON THE LONG TRAIL

By Dot Myer

Hoatzins, marine iguanas, poison dart frogs, little black monkeys swinging in the trees, sea lions, green forest dragon, flocks of parrots and paraqueets, frigate birds and blue-footed boobies, tarantulas! Toto, I don't think we're on the Long Trail any more!

We were floating along the Napo River, a major tributary of the Amazon, when we first began to see exotic birds. The real excitement began when we heard squawking and saw a flash of wings right next to our thatch-roofed cabin. There were hoatzins in the bushes right near us. These large birds with ragged crests are among the most primitive birds. Their babies have hooks on their wings (like reptiles) so they can climb back to their nest if they fall out. Hoatzins are one of the few birds that can eat leaves, because they have multiple stomachs like cows.

We saw toucans, orependulas (like orioles), a black hawk eagle, spoonbills, jackamars, and many others. A screech owl made her nest *in* the dining cabin. I didn't know there could be so many kinds of herons: Great blue, Little blue, Green, Lava, Striated, Zigzag.

For one of the best excursions, we had to get up before 5:00 in the morning and leave at 5:30. We went to some clay licks, which are like salt licks. Every day at about 7 or 8 o'clock large flocks of parrots come to eat the clay, which they need for their digestion. There were about four different types of parrots there. Most prominent were yellow-crowned parrots, but all were beautifully colored.

We saw small black tamarinds (monkeys) swinging in the trees, and one red monkey as well. We saw a tarantula, poison dart frog, green forest dragon, millipedes, and other creepy-crawlies. We were pleasantly surprised to find there were very few flying, biting insects. We saw less of these in four days than you would see in a half hour in Vermont in late spring.

Even more amazing than the Amazon animals were those of the Galapagos. There we not only saw birds, mammals, and reptiles; we saw them doing interesting things. And they were right next to the trails. We saw male frigate birds with their brilliant red throat patches swollen to enormous sizes for courting. We saw blue-footed boobies stretching out their necks and walking around each other, the males whistling and the females grunting. (Blue-footed boobies don't have to do anything more than walk around to be interesting. They walk with a real goose step, slowly and deliberately, lifting each foot high as though to make sure everyone sees their beautiful bright blue feet.)

The mammals were not to be outdone by the birds. Young seals flopped right up to us and smelled our shoes. (We weren't allowed to touch the animals, but they were allowed to touch us and almost did.) We saw both land and marine iguanas that were about three feet long, as well as much smaller lava lizards.

The giant tortoises, for which the Galapagos are so well known, are now extremely rare. From the 1500s to the 1800s, sailors captured them for meat. About 100,000 tortoises were captured and eaten. Later, non-native animals (goats, dogs, pigs, etc.) were introduced to the islands. They competed with tortoises, which are vegetarian, and other native animals for food. As a result of these things, the tortoises are extinct on many of the islands and rare on others. We did not see any in the wild.

However, we did see a number of small tortoises at the Darwin Research Center, which raises tortoises for re-introduction to their native islands. We also saw a few very large ones, more than three feet across their carapaces. One very large, very old tortoise named Lonesome George is believed to be the last of his sub-species. Another one, called Diego, was of interest to me because he lived in the Bronx Zoo about the time I visited it as a child. I may have seen this very tortoise before!

We did see sea turtles in the wild. On our last day we went to Turtle Cove and saw turtles with shells about the size of a child's "flying saucer" swimming all around us. A great ending to a great trip!



Mark your calendars for Four Exciting Events!!

12th Annual Green Mountain Club Snowshoe Festival

Saturday, February 4th

Club Headquarters on Route 100 in Waterbury Center (north of Ben and Jerry's, south of Stowe)

Get out with family and friends and take advantage of free snowshoe demos, guided snowshoe tours to local peaks and trails, educational workshops, nature walks, outdoor gear displays, a raffle with great prizes, and more! For people who haven't done much snowshoeing in the past, there will be nature walks on GMC property as well as three off-site trips. Intermediate snowshoe hikes will be held in Honey Hollow and Little River State Park. For advanced snowshoers, there'll be a hike up Mt. Hunger. There will also be lots of activities for kids right at GMC headquarters. Children can make snow sculptures, build an igloo (or maybe a whole snow village), run an obstacle course on snowshoes, and take part in a scavenger hunt.

Admission to the full day of activities is \$5 for GMC members, \$8 for nonmembers; kids under 12 are free. For more information call GMC at 244-7037 ext. 27 or go to www.greenmountainclub.org.

Be a part of the Festival! Snowshoe Festival Volunteers are needed for parking, greeting participants, registration, coordinating with vendors, working in the hiker center/store, renting snowshoes, leading kids' activities, taking photographs, and more. Contact Group Outreach Specialist Becky Hewitt at (802) 244-7037 x.27 or groups@greenmountainclub.org.

Weekend in the Adirondacks The Wiezel Trails Cabin on The Adirondack Club's Heart Lake property (8 miles south of Lake Placid) is available to the Green Mountain Club and Burlington Ski Club for our joint trip from noon on Friday, March 3rd to 10:30 Sunday morning, March 5th. The heated cabin accommodates up to 16 people in four bunkrooms. There's modern plumbing, hot and cold running water, and showers in separate men's and women's washrooms. There's also a complete kitchen with refrigerator, stove, and most equipment that we will need. Right out the cabin door are trails for hiking, snowshoeing and XC skiing. There are plenty of other possible activities including a ranger's talk at the Visitors' Center. Also, feel free to bring small musical instruments, songs, or games for the evenings. A \$50 deposit, which covers the cost of lodging, will ensure a spot. Send to: Patty Williams, G-1 Stonehedge Dr, South Burlington VT 05403. For more information, call Patty Williams (865-2233) or Donna Leban (865-2839). The trip is limited to 16 people and fills up early. So if you're interested, don't delay!

Taylor Series Program

March 17th at 7PM, in the McCarthy Recital Hall at St. Michael's College

Come hear Bill McKibben on "Beyond Global Warming and Peak Oil: Imagining an Energy Future". Don't miss this timely and thought-provoking presentation.

Admission is \$5 members/\$8 nonmembers; kids under 12 are free. Tickets available at the door only. A portion of the proceeds will go to support GMC's Education Program.

And finally, another in our now-and-then series of comments heard on (or about) Vermont's hiking trails

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In the Hiker's Center

Heard ~~Along the Trail~~

Phone call from a man who said he was planning to take some out-of-state guests on a day hike in the vicinity of Camels Hump: "I've just got a couple of questions. First, who does the catering at the Bamforth Ridge Shelter? Are there vegan options? And what about AC?"