

Minutes: February 2010 Monthly H/B Meeting

Date/Time: Tuesday February 9, 2010

Location: Home of Ellen Cullen

Attending: Bob Asch, Ellen Cullen, Judy Dillman, Silvia Dubinsky, Stan Dunbar, Robert Freed, Brian Glenn, Brian Hall, Joyce Horrigan, Bob Knudsen, Dirk Koechner, Julie LePage, Alex Nedzel, Gary Schwartz, Michael Swartz, Dan Wiktor

Come to order: 7:24pm

Minutes of prior meeting: The minutes from the January 12, 2010 H/B Committee meeting were discussed. Three small amendments were made, and the minutes were approved.

Recent Chapter Executive Committee Meeting: Judy and Gary attended the February Executive Committee meeting. Judy reported that:

- Paul is interested in fostering more membership involvement -- if not directly in outdoor activities, then in 'giving back' via helping out with things like conservation. Judy suggested at that meeting that for the March/April time frame, the chapter should highlight the Spring Hiking Program and its associated trips. The suggestion was well received. For further detail on the Executive Committee's direction on this front, see the e-mail from Paul, included below as Appendix A.
- The April Mountains and Music program (Cape Cod) is still looking for leaders for activities such as day hikes. **Action:** Judy will put a notice out to the leader community.

Treasurer's Report: Michael reported that we became \$3485 poorer over the course of January. This is due principally to the payment of Winter Hiking Program costs. The corresponding revenues were collected and reported in the prior month. Michael noted that the monthly journal therefore does not serve as a very efficient tool for matching the revenues and costs of a given program. For this, Michael offers program-specific line items (and sometimes reports) as needed.

Trips: Robert reported that Compared with 10 trips in January, the March and April numbers thus far are 3 in each month. The January number compares well (double) to 2009, but March and April need work. The group discussed possible actions to take to help increase Leader and Co-Leader involvement in posting and running trips. The Spring Leadership program is planning a post-program survey to reconnect with graduates. Also, shortly after the program, Robert plans to follow up with graduates. Robert will also start reminding leaders each month to consider posting trips (**Action**). Silvia suggested that we analyze our database of Co-Leaders and identify those who have done the necessary co-leads to continue the process and apply for leadership. At the next meeting (March), the group agreed to explore the idea of a monthly H/B communiqué to Leaders and Co-Leaders: what would go into it?

Harvard Cabin: Via an e-mail, Bob Kittredge reported that H/B lost \$156 in the course of offering January trips to 9 participants.

Trip Reports: Joyce reported that she has received almost all of the January trip reports. There was discussion of the fact that an updated (12/2009) volunteer-led activity release form is available. **Action:** Joyce will remind leaders to be sure and use the new form on their trips.

Webmaster Report: Gary reported that Joy Street has changed its front door lock and tightened its control over the (now) single key. Event coordinators now need to arrange to pick up the key from Mark Woodward, the Facilities Manager, in advance of their events, sometime before 4:45p on a weekday. Gary also summarized the protocol for accessing the Boston Chapter spaces within the facility.

Gary then introduced Dirk Koechner, who gave the group a live intro to a prototype of the web application he is developing to succeed Andy Shearer's trip registration system, with help from Dan Westerberg. To be available within a couple of months, the system will be able to:

- Allow trip participants to manage their own registration info
- Keep participant info in a permanent database such that it can automatically be reused to populate many of the data fields in a new trip registration
- Facilitate trip payments via PayPal
- Verify a person's participant status in any prerequisite program
- Include both standard and trip-specific questions on a trip registration page

The presentation both impressed the group and catalyzed requests for further features, for example:

- Include a standard question about which Leaders and peaks a person has worked with
- Allow Leaders to compose a detailed Trip Info Page that participants can access once they are accepted onto a trip (this is a very useful feature in Andy's system)

Action: Gary will assemble a set of volunteer Leaders to work with Dirk to help beta test and shake down the new trip registration system. People interested in being beta users of the new system should let Gary know.

Wilderness First Aid: Silvia noted that Phil Jones has resigned from the H/B Committee and its programs. **Action:** Ellen will work on identifying and obtaining a thoughtful gift for Phil as a memento of the committee's thanks for all the great work Phil has done on our behalf.

Matt Pearson has been identified as a likely candidate to replace Phil in the WFA role. **Action:** Silvia will confirm Matt's interest and work with him to coordinate dates for WFA that mesh appropriately with the Spring Leadership Program schedule. She will keep the committee apprised.

Lecture series: Julie reported that the Cabot Auditorium construction work will preclude her hoped-for March lecture date. That lecture will therefore take place in early April. The schedule as it now stands is:

- February 16 - Sean MacKay - Climbing, Climate Research, and a bit of Arctic Sailing in Greenland
- April 7 - Chris Pollari - Cultural aspects of her trip to Inda - Includes pot luck dinner
- April 20 - Danielle ____ - Trail Work in Russia
(**Action:** Julie will try for a date later in April to avoid a conflict with the Spring Hiking Program)
- May - an AMC member from PA will do a lecture on Nepal.
- Nothing is planned for the summer months.

Winter Hiking Program: Brian indicated that from an H/B Committee perspective, the program is all set, and need no longer be a regular agenda item. To position for next year, Brian asked Gary to send him, Alex and Silvia an editable version of the WHP Manual (**Action** for Gary).

Finally, and with much acknowledgement from others in the room, Brian took pause to note the value of Phil Jones' contributions, not only to the chapter's WFA program, but also for leading the WHP's Cardigan weekend and countless other contributions. The energy, good humor, and intense team spirit that he brought to the committee now constitute a void that will be a challenge for us to fill.

Spring Hiking Program: Bob Knudsen reported that planning for the program is proceeding apace. He is about to order White Mountain Guides, and (**Action**) Gary will give him details on how to order SHP manuals.

Spring Leadership Program: Brian confirmed that he and Claudine Kos are leading the SLP this year. The program dates are Tuesdays 4/6 and 4/13 (6:45 - 9:30) at Joy Street, and the weekend of 4/23-25 at Friendly Crossways in Harvard, MA. **Action:** Judy will follow up with the Boston Chapter Executive Committee to make sure that all committees are aware of the dates and can send participants as appropriate.

Leader Training Subsidies: No subsidies were processed over the past month.

Leader Applications: Ellen reported that there were no Leader applications over the past month.

Winter Social: Julie reported that 28 leaders and 2 co-leaders attended the appreciation dinner. Nine people received awards in our various eclectic categories: Judy Dillman, Chris Pollari, Aldo Ghirin, Brian Glenn, Robert Freed, Mike Seward, Joan and Cliff Chambers, and Joe Comuzzi. Attendance was lower than in the past. After some discussion of whether or not to move it back to April in next year, the consensus was to leave it in January, coupled with improved publicity and outreach. People agreed that the correct event for April is the trip planning evening. To improve attendance at the dinner, Gary suggested that personal invitations from H/B committee members (invitees divvied up among H/B committee members) might place the event higher on people's priority lists.

Spring Trip Planning Meeting: The date for the spring trip planning meeting will be May 5th. We will stay with a 4-meeting-per-year schedule.

Protocol for Search and Rescue at Cardigan: As tasked by the committee in January, Bob Knudsen reported that he and Phil Jones spoke with Cardigan Lodge's manager. They learned that a robust set of risk management procedures are already in place at the lodge, overseen by the salaried, professional manager. In recognition of this, the group agreed that the old H/B protocol document from the 1990s is superseded by Cardigan Lodge's new procedures. The group voted to rescind the old procedures. Stan observed, with agreement from all, that as good and up-to-date as they may be, Cardigan Lodge's current protocols are only as effective as the degree to which an H/B program leader is in sync with the Cardigan Lodge manager during a Cardigan-based program.

Holt Trail: Michael, Gary and Stan volunteered to serve as a subcommittee to frame the key issues and facts surrounding any decision the Committee may make to place limits on Leader discretion to use the Hold Trail in conjunction with the Winter Hiking Program. Empowered with their report next month, the committee hopes to be able to decide the issue. **Action:** The subcommittee will meet to conduct its task, and then present its report at the March H/B Committee meeting.

Policy on Disseminating Leader Contact Information: Because the meeting was running over, this item was deferred to the March meeting. Silvia will place it earlier on the agenda to ensure that we get to it the next time around.

Agenda Items for Future Meetings:

- Discuss a possible monthly H/B communiqué to Leaders and Co-Leaders - **March meeting**
- Policy for Leader contact information dissemination (Alex) - **March meeting**
- Report on issues and facts surrounding the use of the Holt Trail for WHP hikes (Michael, Gary, Stan) - **March meeting**

Future Meetings:

Tuesday, March 9, 2010 - Bob Kittredge

Tuesday, April 13, 2010 - Judy Dillman

Tuesday, May 11, 2010 - Florrie Johnson

Adjourn: 9:14 pm

Recap of Action Items:

- **Judy** will put a notice out to the leader community seeking people to lead activities for the April Mountains and Music program on the Cape.
- **Robert** will also start reminding leaders each month to consider posting trips.
- **Joyce** will remind leaders to be sure and use the new 12/2009 release form on their trips.
- **Gary** will assemble a set of volunteer Leaders to work with Dirk to help beta test and shake down the new trip registration system.
- **Ellen** will work on identifying and obtaining a thoughtful gift for Phil to show the committee's thanks for all the great work Phil has done on its behalf.
- **Silvia** will confirm Matt Pearson's interest in coordinating WFA, and work with him on dates that mesh appropriately with the Spring Leadership Program schedule. She will keep the committee apprised.
- **Julie** will try for a date later in April for the *Trail Work in Russia* slide show to avoid a conflict with the Spring Hiking Program
- **Gary** will send Brian, Alex and Silvia an editable version of the WHP Manual.
- **Gary** will give Bob Knudsen details on how to order SHP manuals.
- **Judy** will follow up with the Boston Chapter Executive Committee to make sure that all committees are aware of the Spring Leadership Program dates.
- The Holt Trail subcommittee (**Michael, Gary, Stan**) will meet to conduct its task, and then present its report at the March H/B Committee meeting.

Alex Nedzel

2/11/2010

Appendix A: Excerpt from Recent E-Mail from Paul Dale

Hello to the Boston Chapter Executive Committee (and friends),

Thanks to all of you who participated in last week's Executive Committee meeting. I hope it was fun and useful. (Several people told me it was a good meeting.) I'd like to take a moment to summarize some of the discussion because not everyone can make the meetings, and because I think some of the topics are important opportunities for the Chapter.

Additional Participants in Chapter Activities. There are two specific areas that we talked about where we could benefit greatly if we got more people involved: the Membership and Conservation committees.

Of the 13,000 (and more) Boston members, there are certainly some for whom the participation in outdoor activities may not be a necessary or driving force, but are interested in “giving back”, in conservation and in other areas. We discussed ways to reach out more effectively to our members. Specifically, we talked about ideas to contact new and renewing members since this is a moment when they might be receptive and attentive to local, Boston-area ways to contribute some time. I think we are in agreement that the Membership committee properly “owns this topic”, and of course we have a chicken and egg problem here because there are currently only a couple of people on the Membership committee.

(Other chapters have pot lucks and social events, sometimes on a regularly scheduled basis. We noted that the Club has email addresses for only a little over ½ of the current members, although the percentage may be higher for new and renewing members. A Communications Committee was formed at the Chapter Chairs meeting at the Annual Meeting to work on the topic how and when Chapters can/should use the Club's database to communicate with chapter members.)

On the theme of “giving back”, I have the view that the Club's large-scale conservation initiatives are worthy of support as individuals and as a Chapter, but as a Chapter we should follow the old adage of “Think globally; act locally.” For example, there are currently issues at the Quincy Quarries south of Boston, and the Middlesex Fells north of Boston. Steve has mentioned to me the possibility of an “urban eddies” program where we help with local areas that don't have a “friends” group already. At a larger level, the DCR has invited the AMC to consider taking an active role in the management of state properties. And there are opportunities to act locally in terms of how we get to the starting point for trips and activities – topics such as use of mass transit, hired vans and buses, car pooling, etc. These are examples; I'm certain that a Conservation committee would have a wealth of good projects to consider, but currently it's only Steve. We should change that.

→ I'd like to ask each of you to think about, and where possible to “do more” to help identify possible new participants for Chapter activities that don't necessarily involve outdoor activity, such as taking a role in Membership and Conservation, in communication generally, in writing and speaking and representing the AMC at local events and so forth. We and our trip leaders meet both members and non-members through our AMC involvement.

Specifically, if we could find ways to capture the names and contact info for participants in trips or instructional programs, especially for those that a trip leader notices as engaged or receptive. In this regard think outside the box of the particular trip; we're especially interested in people who might have some “give back” interests and/or good technical, organizational, or communications skills.

At the next couple of meetings, I'd like to ask you for ideas or plans you might have made to help expand the level of help available so that we can eventually expand the roles and capabilities of the Chapter. The Chapter has financial resources; what we need are more folks doing what you all do extremely well – getting engaged and staying engaged.

Best regards,

Paul Dale