



Randolph Mountain Club Newsletter

The mission of the Randolph Mountain Club is to promote the enjoyment of the Randolph area through hiking, trail development and maintenance, upkeep of camps and shelters, and the sharing of the collective knowledge of its members.

June 2026

Volume 24, No. 1



RMC CAMPAIGNS 2026-27: “FOR THE CAMPS / FOR THE FUTURE”

by Scott Meiklejohn and campaign committee members (see page 8)

Editor’s note: Following an announcement at the 2025 Annual Meeting and a preview in the December newsletter, the RMC’s campaigns for the camps and for an endowment kicked off this spring. The committee’s March letter, included with the President’s dues appeal mailing, shared the news of two anonymous challenge grants received by then, and listed the near-term projects at the camps as well as the long-term benefits of a Club endowment.



Thank you to all of the individuals and families who have contributed to the two RMC fundraising challenges launched in March.

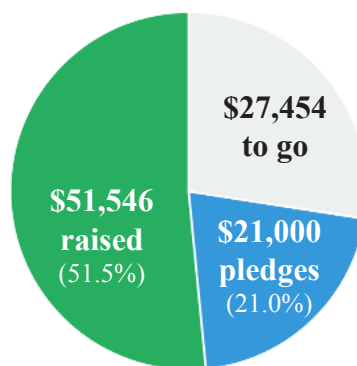
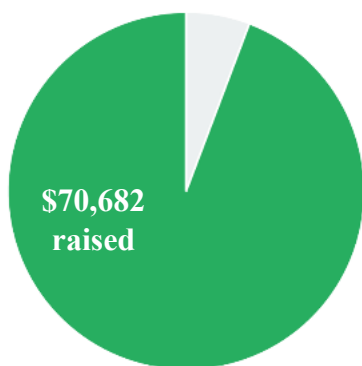
As of May 2, we had \$70,682.70 in gifts towards the \$75,000 Camps Challenge – fantastic progress!

As of that same date, we had \$51,546.70 in gifts towards the \$100,000 Endowment Challenge and another \$21,000 in pledges – also a great and generous response from RMC members and friends.

Camps Challenge

\$75,000 Goal

94.2% Complete



Endowment Challenge

\$100,000 Goal

72.5% Progress (raised + pledged)

CAMPAIGN RECEIVES SIGNIFICANT NEW GIFT!!

In late April, the Club received news of a donation of \$175,000 to support the campaigns and/or to be used where it is needed most, including for the operating budget.

A gift of this size, with the flexibility generously provided by an anonymous donor, is something far beyond our campaign aspirations. It gives us the certainty that the most immediate needs for our campaigns will be met, and it allows us to raise our sights.

The Board of Directors has tentatively set aside \$35,000 of this gift against the projected 2026 operating deficit noted in the March letter to all members. In addition, \$15,000 will go to Capital Reserves to assure us that there are adequate funds to cover the Camps projects and unanticipated future needs – these are rainy day funds that the Club should have, given our stewardship of 102 miles of

continued on page 8

Also in this issue:

Annual Meeting Notice, and Speaker profile..... page 3
 Summer Events Calendar..... page 5
 Meet the 2026 Trail Crew..... page 6

Meet the 2026 Camp Caretakers..... page 7
 Treasurer’s Report page 10
 Volunteer Work Trips page 11

Randolph Mountain Club 2025-2026

Officers, Directors,
committee chairs and honorary members

President	John Phinney, Randolph NH
Vice President	Eric Sandin, Freeport ME
Treasurer	Adam Berger, Seattle WA
Secretary	Joel Douglas, Andover MA
Clerk	Howie Wemyss, Randolph NH
Other Directors:	Steve Chase, Middleburg VA Chris Cross, New York NY Eliza Horton, Ewhurst, Surrey UK Beth Krusi, Norwich VT Jenna Maddock, Seattle WA Laura May, Oakton VA Scott Meiklejohn, Harpswell ME Adam Ritchie, Bedford MA Thomas Strayhorn, S. Portland ME Willow Wysesession, Portland ME
Camps	Pete Antos-Ketcham, JP Krol, Cheryl Byrne
Trails	Deva Stekete, Ben Lieberman, Andy Gallop
Trips	Sarah Geiwitz
Merchandise	Michele Cormier
Events	Eliza Horton, Joan Ostergren
Planned Giving	Randy Meiklejohn
Membership	Michele Cormier
Work Trips	Benzo Harris, Sarah Geiwitz
Stearns Lodge	Howie Wemyss
Alumni	Benzo Harris
Revenue Dev't.	Chris Cross, Scott Meiklejohn
Investments	Samarjit Shankar
Trail Easements	Randy Meiklejohn
Trail Adoption	Christoph Geiss
Communications	John Phinney
<i>Newsletter</i>	Randy Meiklejohn
<i>Website</i>	Tom Breunig, Jenna Maddock
Archives/History	Steve Chase, Judy Hudson
Honorary members	Bill & Barbara Arnold Paul & Michele Cormier Bob Drescher Judy Hudson Edith Tucker

www.randolphmountainclub.org

The Randolph Mountain Club is a diverse organization, committed to equal opportunity in employment and program delivery. The RMC prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, military status, veteran status, income level, political affiliation and familial status.



From the President ...

Summer, already? As I write this in early May, Randolph just saw another snowstorm — probably not the last one, either — but soon the ‘7’ will break, the mountains will fill with hikers again, and the summer season will officially begin. It promises to be one of the busiest, most exciting, and most meaningful seasons the RMC has seen in years.

This will also be my last summer as President, and I’ve been grateful for the opportunity to serve in this role for the last four years, following two years on the board. In that same timeframe I also became a year-round resident here, and I’ve learned what we can accomplish together in this Club and this community through our willingness to volunteer and collaborate.

In this issue of the newsletter you’ll see many invitations to do both of those things, and I hope you will find ones that resonate with you. Of course there is plenty of work to be done on the Club’s outdoor projects and in the planning work by our committees, but there are also more relaxing ways to enjoy Randolph together at our events or on hikes. There are opportunities small and large to support the RMC’s future, too; you could help our fundraising with a purchase of a “historic camp hoodie” (*p.11*), or make a pledge to the 2026-27 campaigns covered on the front page of this issue. Everyone’s participation makes a difference, and sustains the traditions that have made Randolph such an extraordinary place: collective volunteering, enjoyment of the outdoors and welcoming all to the mountains of northern New Hampshire.

The Trails program will be very visible in the summer season, with the crew working mostly on the Crescent Range, while also continuing its alpine-zone work supported by the Waterman Fund. RMC members and friends are encouraged to join one of the volunteer work trips on the same trails where the crew is working, and you can explore other trails on other work trips or by becoming a Trail Adopter. During the same time, capital construction projects will be going on up at the camps, starting with a May airlift to deliver materials for metal roofs, tent platform construction and improvements to the composting toilets. This work is funded by one branch of our 2026-27 fundraising campaigns, and you can look for a report on the projects here in December.

Being based on Randolph year-round has helped me to recognize and act on opportunities for the RMC to broaden its engagement with the community. Currently, we’re working with a Boy Scouts chapter in Gorham to introduce its young members to the Club’s camps and trails, and with the Horton Center, where their seasonal campers might assist with trail improvement projects led by our own crew. Sarah Geiwitz and Maya Barnett, in new and evolving staff roles (*p. 4*) will be key to helping these partnerships develop and flourish.

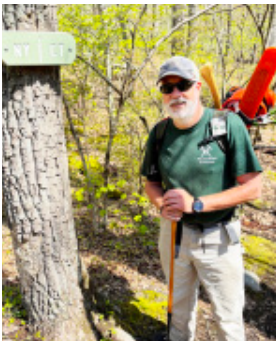
My thanks to all of you in the RMC’s membership, and to the Club’s amazing board of directors, and to our generous anonymous donors, for contributing to this remarkable organization. I look forward to seeing you in Randolph this summer.

John Phinney, President
President@randolphmountainclub.org
(862) 222-5566 mobile



Annual Meeting Notice
by Joel Douglas, RMC Secretary

The Annual Meeting of the Randolph Mountain Club will be held at Town Hall on Saturday, August 8th, 2026 at 7:00 PM. The meeting is open to the public and all are welcome to attend. Following a business meeting for officer and committee reports, and for election of new directors and a new president, we will have a presentation by a guest speaker (*see below*). Refreshments will be served, and Club merchandise and the new Directory will be for sale.



2026 Speaker: Christoph Geiss
by John Phinney and the editor

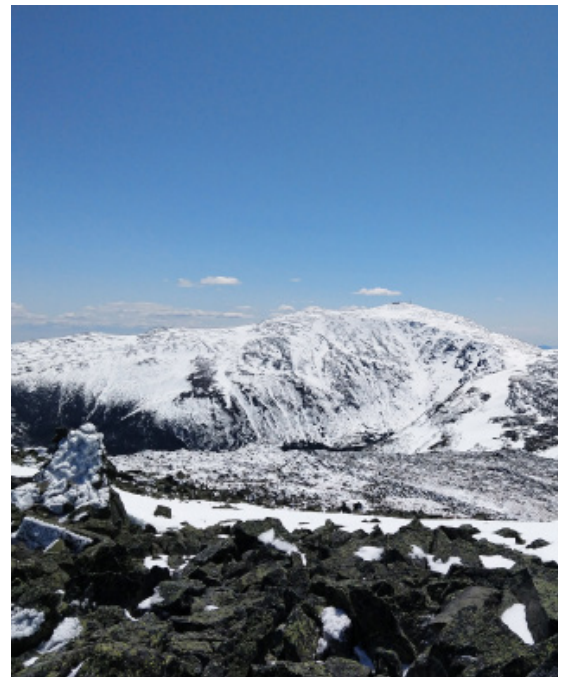
The Club is very pleased that RMC member and volunteer Christoph Geiss will be the guest speaker at this year's Annual Meeting. You may have already met him on our annual work trips or at events, or learned about him through this newsletter, for his "Golden Loppers" award for volunteer trail maintenance, (12/2024) or the RMC Trail Adoption program which he leads (12/2025).



Christoph is also a longtime volunteer for the AMC and serves as a trail maintainer on the AT in Connecticut. As an outgrowth of this work, he began telling stories as a volunteer naturalist in the AMC huts. Soon he became an evening speaker at the AMC's Highland Center (Crawford Notch) and at Pinkham Notch, on geology, mountain weather and the color of the sky. His talk for the RMC will cover these same themes in the context of Randolph and the Northern Peaks.

A fluent and engaging lecturer, Christoph teaches and conducts research as a Professor in Physics and Environmental Science at Trinity College. Originally from Germany, he earned a Diplom at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, then a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, both in Geophysics. His research focuses on the magnetic analysis of soils and sediments to reconstruct past environmental conditions, and contributes to a broader scientific understanding of landscape evolution, climate variability, and ecological change over time.

Christoph shares his knowledge and his curiosity with the community, and encourages us to expand our understanding of the natural world, as do others in the unusually rich vein of geologists and earth scientists that runs through Randolph. In fact it was the intersection of science and the outdoors that brought him here. At Trinity he has long been a departmental colleague of Jon Gourley, a member of the Torrey / Frueh family. Jon invited Christoph and his family to Randolph years ago, and they're now the owners of the former Frueh cottage on the Hill.



2026 Directory
by Joel Douglas, RMC Secretary

We have updated the RMC Member Directory for 2026! Available in print only and to members only, it will be for sale at Club events all summer. Members are included in the Directory if they explicitly "opted in". If you wish to "opt in" for inclusion in future member directories, please write to me at secretary@randolphmountainclub.org

Top, director Christopher Cross speaking at a previous Annual Meeting, and the audience at Town Hall. G. Umiker photos. Row 2, Christoph at the NY/CT state line on the AT; and on Randolph Hill in May. Courtesy photos. Row 3, view south to Mt. Washington under a deep blue sky, from upper Lowe's Path on Mt. Adams, in 2020. Photo by spring 2020 camp caretaker Matt Rebolini, via Carl Herz.



Sarah Geiwitz
2026 Field Coordinator

New RMC Staff Positions in 2026

by Ben Lieberson, Trails co-chair, and John Phinney

For more than 25 years, the RMC's Field Supervisor role has been the cornerstone of the Club's summer operations. It has served as the critical link between the volunteer Trails and Camps chairs and our seasonal trail crew and caretakers — our "boots on the ground" — helping ensure that trails projects and camps operations run smoothly. The role has also provided an important pathway for leadership development and employee retention by allowing experienced staff members to grow into positions of greater responsibility.

Readers may notice that this summer we do not have a Field Supervisor listed among our staff. Instead, the board of directors has authorized two new positions, in a trial for 2026: Field Coordinator and Trails Supervisor.



Maya Barnett
2026 Trails Supervisor

This provisional restructuring grew out of conversations with last summer's Field Supervisor, Annalise Brinks, and builds on years of discussion among staff, volunteers, and board members about how best to support the Club's expanding operational needs.

The Field Supervisor role had become exceptionally broad. While the RMC has been fortunate to have highly capable individuals serve in the position — supported by a tremendous volunteer network — it became increasingly clear that improvements to our structure could benefit the Club.

One major change has been the growing administrative and logistical complexity of our programs. A decade ago, a trails project on the White Mountain National Forest could often move from concept to completion within a year or two. Today, because of extensive environmental review requirements and limited Forest Service staffing, project approvals can take five years or more. This has required substantially greater attention to long-range planning, permitting coordination, project logistics, and volunteer engagement.

At the same time, major infrastructure projects at the camps now require increased oversight and coordination, including helicopter-supported roofing projects, privy rehabilitation, and the proposed caretaker tent platform at The Perch intended to help manage growing visitor use.

With the busy 2026 season in mind, the Board decided this summer would be an ideal opportunity to test a new structure that

divides the former Field Supervisor responsibilities into two complementary leadership roles. Both Maya and Sarah bring strong experience, enthusiasm, and deep commitment to the RMC's mission, and the Club is fortunate to have them step into these important positions.

As Trails Supervisor, Maya Barnett will focus primarily on leading and supporting the trail crew, allowing her to spend more time in the field while also dedicating greater attention to trail assessments and long-range planning for future projects. Her field experience, leadership abilities, and knowledge of trail operations make her exceptionally well suited for the role.

As Field Coordinator, Sarah Geiwitz will oversee caretakers, camp operations and maintenance, and support major camp infrastructure projects. She will also coordinate volunteer work trips, organize/oversee projects for service groups, communicate with the USFS and other partner organizations, and collaborate with Maya on trail assessments and broader program planning. Sarah's organizational skills, collaborative approach, and energy will be tremendous assets to the Club.

We look forward to evaluating how effective this structure proves to be, and what resources would be required to continue it in future seasons. Most important, we are excited to welcome Maya and Sarah into these new leadership roles, where their complementary skills and experience will help support one another and strengthen the Club's work throughout the summer season.

Rescue on Lowe's Path, continued from page 7

The four hikers in the group were fit and well prepared. Before Declan reached them, they had already splinted the lower leg and they were making efforts to butt-scoot down the trail. They successfully scooted 0.4 miles before Declan caught up! AVSAR first responders reached the group shortly after Declan arrived on scene. He helped with the carryout as far as the King Ravine Trail junction, at which point he was relieved by additional AVSAR volunteers. The carryout concluded at 7:30 PM, when the injured hiker opted to seek medical care independently.

The hiking group being well-prepared contributed significantly to the success of this rescue. Notable also was Declan's ability to simultaneously manage an emergency situation, technical terrain, and a heavy, unwieldy packboard!

Summer 2026 Events

by Eliza Horton and Joan Ostergren, Events co-chairs

- Saturday, June 6**
5:30 - 8:00 PM
 20 Glen Rd., Gorham
- Beer and Bites**
 Join us for this annual RMC fundraiser, outside under the tent at Big Day Brewing in Gorham. Proceeds and donations benefit the Club. Please go to the RMC store randolphmountainclub.org/store to buy a ticket as soon as possible. \$15 per person; all RMC members are welcome. A ticket includes one drink and appetizers. There will be raffle baskets and opportunities to sign up for volunteer work trips.
- Saturday, July 4**
3:00 - 5:00 PM
 98 Randolph Hill Rd.
- The 4th of July Tea**
 Come kick off the season at Mark and Kathleen Kelley's great lawn. Join us for punch, iced tea, and delicious baked goods. Catch up on the latest Club news; meet this year's trail crew and camp caretakers; stock up on new merchandise; sign up to lead a hike; and connect with friends, new and old. Help us bring together all the Club's generations.
- Saturday, July 25**
12:00 noon
- The Rendezvous / Gourmet Hike**
 Hike to a lunch spot; route to be determined. For updates and details, check randolphmountainclub.org/rmc-events/. Rain date will be Sunday, July 26.
- Saturday, August 8**
afternoon
 Ravine House
 recreation area
- Ravine Mixer**
 This year the Ravine Mixer will include a new event: the final match of a tennis tournament, with qualifying matches taking place over a few days in the lead-up to the event. All are welcome to sign up for the tournament; sign-ups will go live in early June. Smooth-soled athletic shoes must be worn for play on the clay tennis court. Come cheer on the finalists and enjoy a picnic, refreshments, music and games. Please bring a dish or snack to share. More details to follow, check randolphmountainclub.org/rmc-events/ for updates.
- Thursday, August 13**
7:00 PM
 Town Hall
- Songs for a Summer Evening**
 Join us for an evening of music. Concert to benefit the RMC with refreshments served following the performance.
- Friday, August 14**
8:00 PM
 Town Hall
- Randolph Boogie**
 Join the fourth annual intergenerational boogie! Dance to classic hits old and new with DJs Willow Wysesession and Eliza Horton. Refreshments provided.
- Saturday, August 15**
12:00 noon - 2:00 PM
 Mossy Glen,
 off Durand Rd.
- The 113th Annual Picnic and Charades**
 Bring a picnic lunch and your own mug (punch provided). Charades will begin at 12:30 PM. Rides up to Mossy Glen will be available. Sign up now to lead a charade for your part of town.
- Saturday, August 15**
2:00 PM
 11 Cold Brook Rd.
- Community Softball Game**
 Join us for a community softball game after the Picnic and Charades. Teams will be assigned before the start of the game. Spectators encouraged.
- Saturday, August 15**
7:30 - 9:30 PM
 232 Randolph Hill Rd.
- The Barn Dance**
 Join us for an evening full of fun and dancing. Thanks to the Beringer family for their ongoing sponsorship. All ages and experience levels are welcome!

Volunteers are needed for all of these events! Would you like to help out at the Tea to welcome people, bake or serve punch, lead your section of the Charades, or donate a silent auction or raffle item? To sign up or ask a question, contact Eliza Horton and Joan Ostergren at eventschair@randolphmountainclub.org.



Top to bottom: Paul Cormier, Thomas Strayhorn on stage at Big Day; Rick Umiker, Katia White and Carol Doyle at the Tea; Franklin Wenk and Jenn and Ethan Scarinza in the Hill charade at the Picnic. 2025 photos by Joan Ostergren, Franklin Wenk and Eliza Horton.

Meet the 2026 Crew, and Trails Preview

by Deva Steketee,
Trails co-chair



Maya Barnett
Plainfield, New Hampshire
Trails Supervisor - 4th year

This summer you can look for the crew on the “hill side” of our trail network, on the Mt. Crescent Trail and the Castlevue Loop. Come see trail work happening right in town, visit with the crew, bring them some refreshments now and then, and maybe join a volunteer work trip (*see page 11*) to do brushing and blazing on these trails while the crew does the heavy work. This project is funded by the New Hampshire Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and in late 2025 we learned about the success of our grant application in time to feature it briefly in the December newsletter

The Mt. Crescent Trail was constructed in 1885 as the most direct route for hotel guests and cottagers to a summit with a view, and it continues to be a well-used trail and a favorite of RMC members and residents. It now lies mostly within the Randolph Community Forest, since 2001, and has been further affected by the extension of Randolph Hill Road and construction of the Community Forest trailhead and parking, completed in 2014. Since then the trail has seen increasing use by the general public year-round, including for the Randolph Ramble every fall, and this has accelerated problem conditions at locations where the trail was already wet or eroding.

Our 2026 project covers seven sites that will be familiar to members who use these trails, including chronically wet areas on the lower part of the Castlevue Loop, areas in the up-and-down middle section of the Mt. Crescent Trail that are either low and wet, or have steep ledges with advanced erosion; and finally the very steep ledge immediately below the South Outlook. At this last location the crew will be building a wood ladder next to the ledge (using native spruce harvested from the immediate area), closing an informal side path, and removing other spruces at the side of the trail to increase passage width.



Max Buttrill
Jacksonville, Florida
Crew Leader - 4th year



Izzy Hughes
Smithfield, Rhode Island
Crew Leader - 2nd year



Dustin Baker
Arcata, California
3rd year



Owen Hoggard
Annapolis, Maryland
3rd year



Willa Hudson
Pelham, Massachusetts
1st year



Cielo Martinez
Oakland, California
1st year



Sam Milioto-Crowe
Barrington, New Hampshire
1st year



Ian Ruggiero
Franconia, New Hampshire
1st year



Ainsley Marsh



Jack Buffington



Elliot Layton

Meet the Camp Caretakers for 2026, and Camps notes

bios by Ainsley, Jack, Elliot, and Declan; notes by Cheryl Byrne and Sarah Geiwitz

More winter caretakers: Thanks to these guest-star fill-in caretakers, most of them RMC alumni, who helped provide coverage at Gray Knob since Dec.:

Bailey Nordin (new to RMC), Dec-Feb

Dylan Young (TC 2014-16)

Matt Rebolini (TC 2017, 2020; CT spring 2020)

Nikki Dresser (CT 2024, Crag Camp)

Maya Barnett (TC alum and 2026 Trails Supervisor)

Danielle Johnson (CT fill-in 2023, Gray Knob)

Ainsley: I've now completed three consecutive seasons as a caretaker at Gray Knob and overwintered in Randolph on my valley weeks. This winter I picked up Nordic skiing, got out for some winter hiking, and experienced wind chills down to -75°F at the Knob. With the return of spring, I've especially enjoyed getting above treeline more frequently. Seeing the landscape shift from summer to deep winter and slowly come back to life this spring has been a great experience.

Hey, my name is **Jack!** I live in west central New Hampshire but have spent many days and logged many miles in the White Mountains, where I call "home" for the summer. The Northern Presidential range has become very close to heart over the past year from spending last summer caretaking at Gray Knob for RMC. I'm happy and proud to be a returning caretaker this summer. I enjoy working with RMC alongside the US Forest Service to preserve and maintain the wild aspect to the White Mountains while overseeing the four camps and trails that RMC operates and maintains for other hikers in the Whites! Looking forward to exploring more trails and meeting more guests this summer so, come stop by Gray Knob and say hi, hope to see you out there!

I'm **Elliot** and I'm the new Crag Camp caretaker! I grew up near Boston. After I dropped out of college, I spent roughly two years in a Conservation Corps. I got to work in some very cool places such as Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota and the Boise National Forest in Idaho. Following AmeriCorps, I spent a summer on trail crew in Glacier National Park, a place I have returned to several times. In the past couple years I've spent more of my time back home in New England, among birch, beech, and maple in the valleys and those remarkable alpine and subalpine areas up top. I've done winter caretaking at several AMC huts and enjoy being able to have a lifestyle where my daily activities are in touch with the natural world around me. I'm excited to get to know the RMC and explore all the lovely little trails in the Northern Presidentials!



Declan: Here's a photo from a gathering at The Quay on New Year's Eve 2025, notably documenting attendance by a majority of the summer 2025 Trail Crew, plus other alumni and friends! Front row is myself and Maya Barnett; back row is Sam Marshall (Field Supervisor 2021-22), Dustin Baker, Schilke cousin Lily Goodwin, Aidan Schilke, and Izzy Hughes.

Hiker Rescue on Lowe's Path: On March 15th, Gray Knob caretaker Declan Kiley responded to a call for an injured hiker in a party of four on Lowe's Path. He had first met the group the night prior to the rescue, when they spent an evening at Gray Knob. In the morning, the guests departed Gray Knob in pursuit of Mt. Adams, reached the peak, and descended via Lowe's Path. At about 2:00 PM, approximately 0.6 miles down from Gray Knob, one of the hikers experienced a lower leg injury that prevented him from walking or bearing weight.

A member of AVSAR called Declan on the caretaker phone to request support. Unfortunately, due to early season melting, it was not possible to drag the winter sled litter. Instead, he tied the summer litter to a packboard and used crampons to safely make his way down the ice flows that had formed on the trail.

Rescue continued on page 4; more Camps notes on page 9



Campaign Report, continued from page 1

trails and RMC camps and other facilities that must be maintained in mountain weather. Finally, \$125,000 from this wonderful gift will go to endowment, allowing us to raise our goal.

A NEW GOAL FOR RMC ENDOWMENT:

We started with an idea to raise \$100,000 for an RMC endowment, to be matched by \$100,000 from an anonymous challenger -- a total of \$200,000. With gifts of \$51,546 and endowment pledges of \$21,000, we need just over \$27,000 to reach our initial target.

Adding \$125,000 from the new gift received in April allows us to raise our overall endowment goal to \$325,000, as summarized in the chart to the right:

The endowment will grow over time, guarded by sound investment decisions and best practices around the prudent use of the income. These and other important steps will be organized by a new Investment Committee appointed by Club President John Phinney. At 116 years old, it is more than time for the RMC to have an endowment to help support our core commitments to trails and camps.

All gifts for the Camps will help fund new roofs on Crag Camp and Gray Knob, a caretaker's tent platform at the Perch, new windows at Gray Knob and best-in-class composting toilets at those three camps. By early June of this year, the Perch platform site will be cleared and the first helicopter fly-in of construction materials should be completed so that work can be underway as the summer season begins.

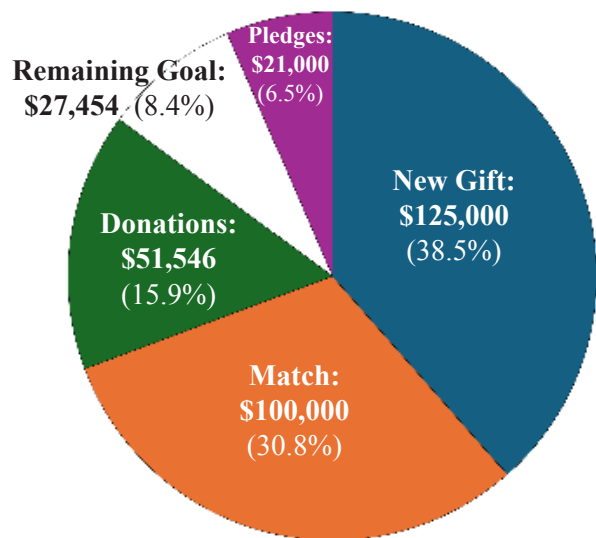
Please consider a gift to help meet these important RMC priorities. More information is on the RMC website at randolphmountainclub.org/donate/camps-future-challenge/.

Thank you.

RMC For the Camps/For the Future Campaign Committee

Scott Meiklejohn, chair	Steve Chase	Christopher Cross
Sarah Eusden Gallop	Beth Krusi	Ben Phinney
Howie Wemyss		

New RMC Endowment Goal of \$325,000



Top, the Northern Presidentials from Mt. Crescent; photo by 2020 Field Supervisor Justin Taylor. Above, Izzy Hughes on May 12, the date she, Maya Barnett and Ian Ruggiero hiked up to clear the wooded site near the Perch for the tent platform. Photo by Ian.



Pine Marten

Camps Notes, continued from page 7

Critters at the Camps: Throughout the winter season, caretakers have enjoyed some repeat visitors at the camps. Notably, Ainsley observed a pine marten perched atop a sign at the junction for the Hincks Trail (*her photo at left*). You might remember a pine marten photo featured in the December newsletter. Ainsley believes this is the same one! She reflected, “I think pine martens are solitary animals that maintain a certain territory, so I would guess it is the same one that I saw in the fall. He is very active around here.” If you’re planning a visit to the camps this summer, keep your eyes peeled. Pine martens are crepuscular (most active at dusk and dawn) so an early morning walk or after dinner stroll might be your best bet!

Ghost Trails, continued from back cover

At the time, I was aware of the New Spur by name. I knew it had been closed in the mid-1970s, reportedly due to erosion concerns. What I did not know was that it was built by Chris Goetze.

Goetze’s hiking exploits in Randolph during the mid-1950s are well-documented in both Appalachia and by RMC folklore. Chris, well known for his speed and super-human stamina, preferred direct routes, often taking the fall line instead of gentler paths. During this period, while working on the RMC trail crew, he undertook work along Spur Brook, cutting in 1955 what became known as the New Spur. This new trail was established in response to storm damage affecting the original Spur Trail alignment, and it reflected Chris’ philosophy of always preferring paths that took the most direct route.

Descriptions of the New Spur from the RMC tell the story of the path’s wild route. In *Letters from the Mountain*, Tad Pfeffer writes:

“The New Spur climbed steeply through a fascinating sequence of rock steps and slots, always within a few feet of the brook. It was possibly the steepest and most interesting part of the entire route (up to Crag) ...”

Similarly, Klaus Goetze, Chris’s father and the longtime supervisor of the trail crew, said that the trail brought the hiker into “the very spray of the cascades,” emphasizing its intimacy and exposure with the brook. Editions of *Randolph Paths* during that time said:

“The New Spur departs the Pentadoi to follow the eastern bank of Spur Brook closely, offering intimate views of the gorge and the dramatic 50-foot slide of Chandler Fall before merging with the original path.”

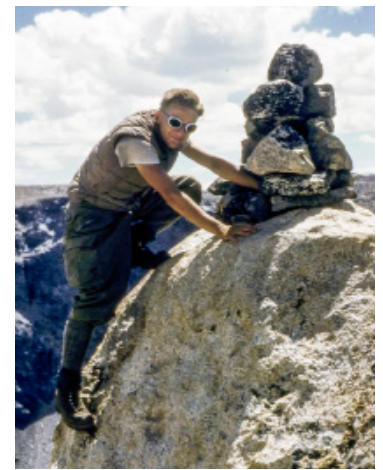
Taken together, these accounts describe a route that was both physically demanding and closely tied to the character of the brook itself—steep, direct, and with climbers exposed to moving water and rock.

By the mid-1970s, the New Spur had been closed, most likely due to erosion concerns. Unlike other rerouted or reconstructed trails, it was not replaced; rather the old Spur was cleaned up and reopened. Over time, the trail has largely disappeared, with only fragmentary evidence—such as my lost sign or perhaps small sections remaining.

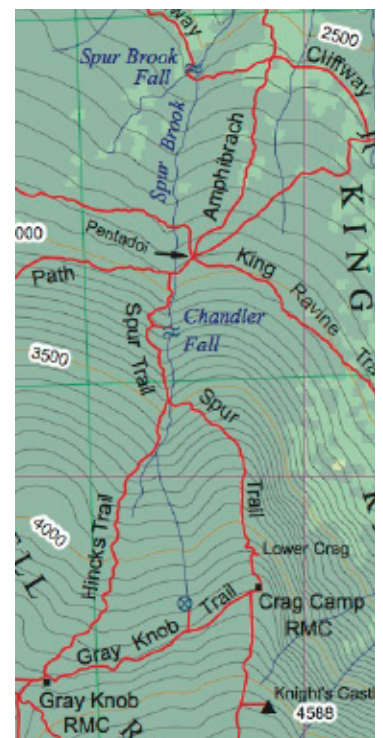
I did not have the opportunity to pack the New Spur during my time at Gray Knob or in my many climbs to Crag Camp in the 70s. I wish I had. The section of Spur Brook above the Pentadoi remains much as it was described—wild, steep, confined, and marked by the series of sublime cascades draining Chandler Falls. It is not difficult to understand both the appeal of such a route and the challenges it would have presented for long-term maintenance.

The New Spur represents a particular moment in the history of the RMC trail system—one shaped by individual initiative, local conditions, and a different set of assumptions about trail design. Its absence today is consistent with the evolution of trail standards toward durability and resource protection.

Even so, its memory persists in the historical record and in the accounts of those who knew it, marking it as one of the more distinctive—and short-lived—routes in the RMC’s trail network.



Chris Goetze in the Wind River Range, 1960’s; Goetze Collection, RMC Archive. Below, a detail from the 2016 RMC trail map.





Clearing Winter Blowdowns on RMC Trails; or, How I Learned to Operate a Chainsaw

by Alex Roberts

After a powerful windstorm swept through northern New Hampshire on December 19, 2025, our beloved Pasture Path and many other trails were blocked by fallen trees and debris-- on the same day Josh and I were scheduled to host the town Christmas Caroling Party for the first time! The storm hit hard enough that I felt like the party might be cancelled, but Barbara Arnold assured me that caroling had taken place in much worse weather through the years and not to worry. The mountain of cookies that I had baked would be eaten, Bill’s buttered rum would be served and Paul Cormier’s recital of Sam McGee would be performed!

The day after the storm, I headed out for a run and was shocked at the number of large trees that had fallen. I thought about how so many of us love to ski on Pasture Path in the winter and if we didn’t clear these now, they would be difficult to deal with as more snow fell over the season. So, we got to work! It was my first time using a chainsaw, and Josh and I spent the day clearing nine zones to reopen Pasture Path and Grassy Lane.

Clockwise from top left: “Before”, looking west on Pasture Path between Wood Path and EZ Way; Alex making her first-ever chainsaw cut; “After” view of the re-opened trail; Josh Gleiner and Alex. Photos by Alex Roberts, who shared them with John Phinney, and John reports similar clearing work after the storm by David Ruble on the Diagonal, and by Jamie, Jim and Jenna Maddock and Ainsley Marsh on the Amphibrach.

Treasurer’s Report

by Adam Berger

<i>all data YTD 04/29/2026</i>	Admin.	Camps	Dev’t.	Stearns	Trails	Trails Grants	Total
Operating Revenue:	\$22,509	6,660	29,885	-	-	37,682	\$96,735
Operating Expenditures:	\$8,806	12,636	2,136	666	20	-	\$24,264
Net Operating Revenue:	\$13,703	(5,977)	27,749	(666)	(20)	37,682	\$72,471
Other Revenue:	\$2,718		61,186				\$63,903

The financial situation of the RMC remains strong with over \$425,000 in current (liquid) assets, including donor-restricted and board-restricted funds, as well as over \$40,000 in donations towards the endowment. (See separate article this issue for the most up-to-date report on the campaign for camps and endowment.) Although membership dues and camp fees are running behind last year’s numbers and budget projections, this has been offset by increases in individual and corporate-matching donations to the general fund. On a calendar-year basis, current revenue was also boosted by receipt, in January 2026, of the RTP grant covering our 2025 trail work, after delays in processing our reimbursement request. Overall operating expenses are also within budget and comparable to last year. Other (non-operating) revenues, including interest and dividends and donations to the endowment and capital campaigns, have been very strong and are creating a firm foundation for RMC’s future finances. In light of a large anonymous gift that should be received shortly, we foresee no problems in covering this year’s operating expenses and advancing our goals for the two campaigns.

From the RMC online store

by Michele Cormier

To support the 2026-27 Campaign for the Camps / Campaign for the Future, we're raising funds through the sale of special-edition hoodie sweatshirts! Commissioned for 2026, these cozy tops feature historic photographic views of Crag Camp and of Gray Knob as they were in the twentieth century, and the fundraising campaign logo on the left sleeve. They'll be available starting at the Big Day fundraiser in June, and again at the 4th of July Tea, for \$50.



The Crag Camp version is in a cool green, and shows the building c. 1964, in an RMC archive photo by Christopher Goetze, before the current Crag was built in 1993. The Gray Knob version, in light brown, shows a 1915 view from the earliest years of the Club. At that time the camp was still owned by the Hincks family, who gave it to the Town of Randolph after the 1930s. The current Gray Knob is a newer structure built in 1989. Photo from the former Hincks-Blatchford cottage, courtesy of Guy Stever.



Also camps-related: at left is the cover of *Letters from the Mountain*, the collection of camp caretaker essays published in 2025 and still in stock.

For these and many other merchandise items, head to our online store at the RMC website. Selected items will be available also at summer events.

Trail Volunteer Work Trips for 2026

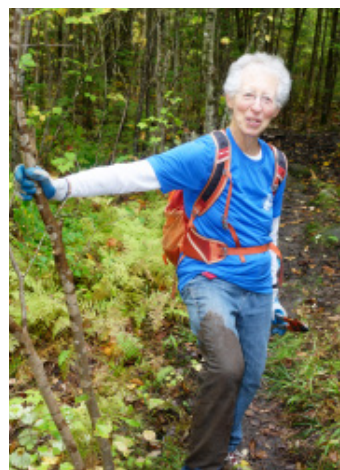
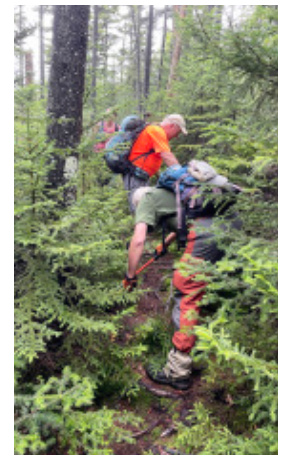
by Benzo Harris

In 2026 we'll again be organizing half-day and full-day work trips on RMC trails, and these volunteer events are a great way for members to lend a hand in maintaining our trail network, as well as to meet other folks in Randolph. Conveniently, many work locations this year will be easy to reach from the Community Forest Trailhead on Randolph Hill.

We'll be picking up where we left off on the Four Soldiers Path, the King Ravine Trail and the Cook Path, to continue the brushing, blazing and drainage-clearing work begun in 2025, and possibly also some "viewshed management" cutting. In addition, we will have work days on Castleview Loop and the Mt. Crescent Trail, to directly support the RMC trail crew who will be doing heavier trail reconstruction and repairs there this summer (*see page 6*). Matching the crew's labor hours with volunteer hours helps the Club meet the cost-matching obligations of the grants that keep the crew's work funded.

First-time volunteers are always welcome on these trips, and each day's leaders will provide guidance and instruction for the work. If you have never used a swizzle stick but have always wanted to (and you know you have), this season is your chance! The RMC will provide all tools, from the Goetze workshop.

Work trips will take place in June, July and August, mostly on Saturdays; check the RMC website and the *Weekly* for dates, durations and meet-up locations. All trips will start at 9:00 AM. You can sign up to offer your time at the "Volunteer" page, or at the Tea, or you can email me at worktrips@randolphmountainclub.org. Trip leaders are still needed for some dates, so consider that if you have a little prior experience.



Volunteers in the field on earlier work trips:

Above left, Lucas Geiss blazing, and at left, Renee Dunham brushing, on Owl's Head. Christoph Geiss photos. Above right, a group working its way through the robust "carwash" understory growth on the Kelton Trail, above Inlook Trail junction. R. Meiklejohn photo.

Ghost Trails of the RMC: The New Spur

by Steve Chase, RMC Archivist

The Randolph Mountain Club network has seen its share of changes over the years, with some paths disappearing due to natural forces like blowdowns or erosion, and others changing due to reroutes. On Lowe's Path, for example, a switchback was constructed to replace the steep section below the Log Cabin that was long degraded by weather and use. In some cases, paths were simply closed and left to natural succession, the forest gradually reclaiming the line. These former routes can be thought of as **ghost trails**.

During my time as spring caretaker at Gray Knob in 1990, I encountered evidence of one of these paths. That spring season was exceptionally wet. Combined with snowmelt, runoff along Spur Brook spread across the slope above the Pentadoi, turning the trail corridor into a braided stream nearly 150 feet wide. Getting across while carrying a load required careful footing and, more often than not, wet feet.

While crossing this section, I noticed a white flash in the current that appeared to be a trail sign. Retrieving it from the water, I found a weathered painted pine board with very intact lettering:

"To New Spur Trail."

continued on page 9



Above, Pentadoi in winter, 1960s. Christopher Goetze photo, from RMC Archive. Left, the sign fragment from Spur Brook. Steve Chase photo.