



# The Southeast Breeze

The Newsletter of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club | April 2025

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Choose **Go to Activities Database**.

Under **My Dashboard** on the left, click **Manage Digest Emails** and **Create new digest**.

Or call 603-466-2727 for help. Find the most recent issues of *The Southeast Breeze* on our [website](https://www.amc.org).

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## Have a story for *The Southeast Breeze*?

Please send your Word doc and photographs to [breeze.editor@amcsem.org](mailto:breeze.editor@amcsem.org).

Please send original, full resolution photos as separate attachments, including the name of each photographer. Include the words "Breeze Article" in the subject line.

## Shop the Breeze Market for equipment bargains!

Members looking to sell, trade, or free-cycle their used equipment can post for free. Send listings to [breeze.editor@amcsem.org](mailto:breeze.editor@amcsem.org).

Business ads start at just \$10/month. Send inquiries to [breeze.editor@amcsem.org](mailto:breeze.editor@amcsem.org).



Hikers at the Punch Bowl in Bebe Woods. Photo by Robin McIntyre

## Cape hikers enjoy Beebe Woods & Peterson Farm

By Robin McIntyre, Cape Hiking Chair

On a brisk March 27 morning, Debbie Hayden welcomed 15 hikers to Beebe Woods and Peterson Farm in Falmouth. She shared that these properties, 383 acres and 88 acres respectively, are owned by the Town of Falmouth.

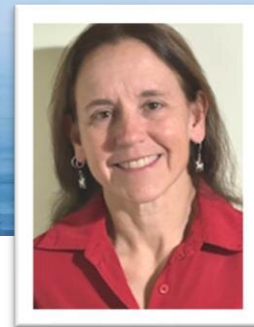
Beebe Woods was given to the town in 1972 as conservation land when it was slated for a development of 500 homes. The farm, one of the oldest on the Cape, has been farmed since 1679. It was also donated to the town for conservation and is actively used to raise sheep.

The 4.4-mile loop has some hills through wooded trails, two pond views, and a lovely farm visit with some very pregnant sheep. The birds were sharing their spring songs on a blue-sky morning. Thank you, Debbie, for leading Cape Hikes!



Sheep grazing on the farm in Beebe Woods. Photo by Robin McIntyre





## View from the Chair: SEM Springs into Action for You

Greetings! Spring has sprung...though very damp. The flowers are starting to bloom, and the peepers and birds are chirping. Our AMC-SEM Chapter has a variety of activities planned. Check out the Outdoors Connector [here](#).

Earth Day is this month, and SEM's Conservation Committee has in-person and virtual educational events, as well as some trail clean-up activities planned. In this issue of the *Breeze*, check out the article by our SEM Conservation Vice Chair, Jonah Sakwa-Novak, about efforts to stop local sand mining. Read about Nominating Committee Vice Chair Joe D'Amore's experiences in sharing with others on the trail.

Spring is also the time for SEM's educational activities: Leadership Training, Wilderness First Aid, and Map and Compass training are scheduled and filling quickly. Consider taking these training opportunities and becoming a leader for SEM



Massasoit State Park showed clear signs of the transition from winter to spring—ice-free water, patches of green, and nascent tree buds—during a SEM hike on April 4th.

*Photo by Ken Cohen*

We greatly appreciate our leaders and celebrate them. See related articles in this issue introducing you to our new SEM leaders.

Finally, our annual Open House is scheduled for Saturday, May 24, at Borderland State Park in Easton. Come to check out the activities, information, and gear swap tables. Hope to see you outdoors!

Happy Trails,

*Jeannine Audet, Chapter Chair*

### 2024 Executive Board

Chapter Chair ..... Jeannine Audet  
Vice Chair ..... Jenn Wong  
Secretary ..... Sue Franconi  
Treasurer ..... Larry Petrone  
Past Chapter Chair ..... Paul Brookes

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20's & 30's Chair ..... Dave MacDonald  
20's & 30's Vice Chair ..... Jeff Gilbert  
Bicycling Chair ..... OPEN  
Bicycling Vice Chair ..... OPEN

Cape Hiking Chair ..... Robin McIntyre  
Cape Hiking Vice Chair ..... Janis Delmonte  
Communications Chair ..... Lara Szott  
Communications Vice Chair ..... Bee Butterworth  
Conservation Chair ..... Zoe Rath  
Conservation Vice Chair ..... Jonah Sakwa-Novak  
Education Chair ..... OPEN  
Education Vice Chair ..... OPEN  
Nominating Committee Chair ..... Ken Cohen  
Nominating Committee Vice Chair ..... Joe D'Amore

Hiking Chair ..... Bill Belben  
Hiking Vice Chair ..... Tracy Hawes  
Membership Chair ..... Nancy Piedra  
Membership Vice Chair ..... Stacey Steele  
Paddling Chair ..... OPEN  
Paddling Vice Chair ..... OPEN  
Skiing Chair ..... Dia Prantis  
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Trails Chair ..... Steve Scala  
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Regional Director ..... Cindy Crosby  
The Breeze Editor ..... Mo Walsh  
Blast Editor ..... Marie Hopkins

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[chair@amcsem.org](mailto:chair@amcsem.org) or

[nominatingchair@amcsem.org](mailto:nominatingchair@amcsem.org)

if you are interested in any open position.




## Spring is in the air, so hit the trails with AMC-SEM hike series!


By Tracy Hawes, Hiking Vice Chair


It's time to swap those snowshoes for three-season boots and lighter hiking gear—spring is here, and we can't wait to get outside! Our Spring Hike Series is in full swing, running through the end of May 2025, and we have something for everyone. Whether you're a seasoned hiker or just looking to stretch your legs, we'd love to have you join us—as a participant or a leader! We meet on Tuesdays and Sundays at a variety of beautiful locations, with a special focus on the Blue Hills in Canton. With its mix of rocks, roots, climbs, and open trails, it's the perfect place to build your hiking stamina. Hikes typically start at 9:45 AM and wrap up by 2:00 PM.



### Choose your adventure:

 Gentle Hikes—Led by Ken Cohen and Larry Petrone. These are perfect if you're easing back into hiking or simply want a more relaxed pace. Great for stretching your legs and building endurance for longer adventures.

 Regular Hike Series—If a pace of 1.5–2.5 mph with up to 1200 feet of elevation sounds like your sweet spot, join our Tuesday series! Spearheaded by our Hiking Chair, Bill Belben, these hikes feature a variety of leaders and offer a great mix of climbing, meandering, and sauntering through the Blue Hills.

 Conditioning Hikes—Ready to level up? Our Tuesday and Sunday Conditioning Hikes are designed to push a little harder with faster pacing, more elevation, longer distances, or all three! These hikes are limited in group size for a more focused experience.

All hikes include a simple screening to make ensure a good fit for everyone. Whether you're looking to take it easy, build your strength, or really challenge yourself, spring is calling and so are the trails! Grab your boots, pick a hike, and get some fresh air with us. We'd love to see you out there! Go to [Outdoors Connector](#) for more information. Login at the bottom of the Home page, choose "Go to Outdoors Connector" and "Hiking, Local Walks, Trail Running" under "All Activity Types."

## AMC-SEM Upcoming Events

### SEM Signature Events: Save the Date

April 22, Tuesday  
Earth Day events (see Upcoming Conservation Events)  
May 24, Saturday  
SEM Open House  
Sep 26-28, Friday-Sunday  
[Chapter Hut Weekend \(Cold River Camp\)](#)  
Nov 1, Saturday  
[Annual Dinner \(Bay Pointe Club\)](#)  
[Annual Meeting \(Bay Pointe Club\)](#)

### Upcoming Education Events

April 26, Saturday  
[Leadership Training](#)  
May 3 & 4, Saturday-Sunday  
[SOLO Wilderness First Aid | AMC](#)  
May 10 & 11, Saturday-Sunday  
[Beginner Map and Compass for hikers \(Sat/Sun\)](#)

### Upcoming SEM Conservation Events

April 19, Saturday  
[Conservation Conversation Panel](#)  
April 23, Wednesday  
[Dinner and Movie : Inundation District + Q&A with Director David Abel](#)

### Upcoming SEM Social Events

April 24, Thursday  
[Musical Bingo at Barrett's Alehouse](#)  
May 9, Friday  
[Food Truck Friday at Roger Williams Park](#)  
June 29, Sunday  
[Disc Golf at Borderland State Park](#)

### First Ride of the Season

Dust off your bikes, lube those chains, for the first ride of the season!  
April 19 Saturday  
[Spring Daffodil Bike Ride](#)

### Hiking Series

Enjoy our ongoing hiking series:  
[Cape Hikes](#)  
[Tuesday Hikes including Blue Hills Conditioning](#)  
[Thursday Morning Gentler Hikes](#)  
[Saturday Hikes](#)  
[Sunday Hikes \(including Blue Hills Conditioning\)](#)





College student Jonah Sakwa-Novak hopes to gain valuable experience working on the Conservation Committee.

*Courtesy photo*

## Greetings from new Conservation Vice Chair Jonah Sakwa-Novak

By Jonah Sakwa-Novak, Conservation Vice Chair

My name is Jonah Sakwa-Novak. I am currently back in college working on a BS in Business Management, and I think that volunteering as Conservation Vice Chair would be a great way to learn and practice the higher-level skills needed once I graduate.

I love hiking and the quiet of being in the middle of forests. My conservation issue is the massive amount of sand mining going on in Plymouth. A lot of areas are being torn down and mined for the highly profitable angular-type sand underneath at the expense of the local forests. I hope to bring my skills and passion for the outdoors to this chapter as vice chair.



Jonah is passionate about protecting forests from increased sand mining.  
*Courtesy photo*

## Sand mining: A massive ecological controversy about deforestation

By Jonah Sakwa-Novak, Conservation Vice Chair

As you pass the Triple M dispensary on Route 3, you might notice how what was once a lot of trees encircling the building has been turned into a wasteland of dirt. Throughout Plymouth and Carver, this has been the case for many forested areas and cranberry bogs. The reason for that has been the rise of mining the ground and selling the sand under the guise of development.

A lot of the sand in the ground around southeast Massachusetts is an angular type, which makes it much more desirable for use in concrete and other building materials compared to other types of sand in the world. This, combined with a global supply shortage of angular sand, has made sand mining a very lucrative business for land developers and cranberry bog owners, with prices rising to \$12.20 per metric ton. With cranberry prices also falling in Massachusetts, it becomes a very tempting financial opportunity for struggling cranberry farmers.

On the other hand, this has caused massive amounts of deforestation in the surrounding areas. As you walk along some hiking trails in Myles Standish State Forest, you can see the areas where the scenery completely breaks from trees into a lifeless desert. Even if the companies stop mining and let nature take it back, it will take many years to restore the areas back into full forest.

One of the recent controversies that made it into the local news involved the mining and development of land set aside for the Wampanoag tribe in the 1600s. Although they do not own the land, they are opposed to the mining because it is on their ancestral lands and the project may disturb or destroy burial sites and cultural artifacts.

Given all that, the tide seems to be turning. Increasing awareness of the issue due to protests and coverage by mainstream news sources have made people pay attention to why, in the past few years, there is so much development and deforestation in the surrounding areas. Hopefully with increased scrutiny, the practice will stop, and the bogs and forests can remain for generations to come.

For more information, visit the [Community Land and Water Coalition](#) and this article on [Reuters](#). Two proposed bills on this issue, [H.918](#) and [S.601](#), have been referred to the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources





## Volunteer of the Month: Kate Sullivan

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

Each month SEM recognizes one of our amazing volunteers. We are so fortunate to have people who give their time, energy, and resources to make our chapter one of the best. This month, it is with great pleasure that the Hiking Committee recognizes Kate Sullivan.

Since progressing as a Local Hike Leader to a Three-Season Mountain Hike Leader, Kate has been a very active volunteer for our chapter. She has either led or co-lead close to 20 hikes and backpack trips that range from helping out with the Thursday Trail Trace the Blue Hills series to White Mountain hikes, a hut-to-hut Presidential Range traverse, and a backpack trip up in the Whites.

Recently Kate has taken the lead in planning and running a series that encompasses the entire Bay Circuit Trail. She was also a volunteer helping out with the leading of our Beginner Winter Hike Series.

We are honored and lucky to have Kate as part of our chapter and thank her for all of her efforts. Kate will receive a Volunteer of the Month Certificate and a \$60 gift card.

Thanks Kate!



## Celebrate Earth Day with 10 easy ways to help the environment

By Zoe Rath, Conservation Chair

1. Participate in [DCR Park Serve Day](#) or attend [SEM-AMC Earth Day](#) events!
2. Create a CHEAP and EASY Compost with a [32-Gallon Trash Bin](#)
3. Grow your own fresh food without using pesticides.
4. Find out more about climate change and how you can make a difference here in Massachusetts: <https://www.massclimateaction.org/home>
5. Find out more about your [carbon footprint](#) and how you can make changes to have a smaller footprint.
6. Turn down or shut off your water heater when you will be away for extended periods.
7. Use cloth napkins instead of paper ones.
8. Wash clothes with warm or cold water instead of hot.
9. [Carpool](#) to your next AMC event or otherwise!
10. Play [SEM - Earth Day Bingo](#)!

Find more tips at the Sustainable Living Association, [20 Easy Sustainable Actions](#), and the University of Wisconsin Madison, [100 Ways you can improve the environment](#).

## There's goats in them thar hills!

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

We have all heard of Mountain Goats before. Some of us may have even seen them before in person. But how many of us have seen goats in the Blue Hills before? Well, I know of 19 who were lucky enough to meet them on one of our Tuesday morning hikes. These four-legged friends were just as happy to see us and were eager to partake in some carrots and broccoli donated from CiCi MacWilliams and perhaps a piece of Marcus Isenberg's poncho for dessert.

Now lest you think goats are running wild in the Blue Hills, please note that Bubba, Rex, Nellie, and Stacy belong to "Goat Walks Plymouth," which is a small company that offers—you guessed it—goat walks.









Hikers in the Introduction/Refresher series in 2024 climbed to the Eliot Tower atop Great Blue Hill.

Photo by  
Ronald  
Cadillac

## Summer Hiking Series planning meeting on Monday, April 21st

By Tracy Hawes, Hiking Vice Chair

It's never too early to start carving out space for summer hikes! Just yesterday, snow covered the trails and today, we're basking in sunny skies and 65 degrees—somewhere anyhow.

Our AMC-SEM hiking community is excited to announce the early planning of a local Summer Hiking Series in the beautiful Blue Hills, organized by Madelyn Atwood. The Reservation's rugged trails and sweeping views make it the perfect summer escape, just minutes from the city! This will be our second summer series, and with schedules now more familiar, we're gearing up for even bigger participation. Hikes will start earlier in the day to help us beat the heat and enjoy the best of the season.

Want to get even more involved? Whether you're ready to lead, co-lead, or step into a leader-in-training role, there's a place for you to grow and contribute! Planning is happening for our summer hikes, backpacks, and other adventures.

Save the date: We're hosting a Summer Hiking planning meeting Monday April 21, 2025, at 7:00 PM. We'll be sharing ideas, dreaming up new adventures, and mapping out all kinds of hikes, from casual rambles to challenging summit quests. As Bill Belben says, "Let your imagination flow!" The possibilities are endless: Blue Hills, NH48s, 52 With a View, Belknap's, NE67s, Terrifying 25s, hut-to-huts...and maybe some creative new twists of our own!

Come be part of the AMC-SEM hiking adventure—sharing your ideas and energy are what make this community thrive!

## High heels to hiking boots: New Level 1 Hike Leader Julie Young

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

On April 6th, Julie Young gracefully led a small group of hikers through an early spring walk of the Arnold Arboretum to complete her qualifying hike as a Level 1 (Local) Hike Leader for SEM. Special thanks to Ann Hargelroad for assisting Julie with her hike.

Growing up a self-proclaimed "City Girl," if you had asked Julie to go on a hike, she may have told you to "take a hike." But 15 years, a husband, and two multi-sport sons later, Julie is a converted "outdoorswoman." From the Arboretum to National Parks across the U.S. (four in New Mexico and Texas later this month), Julie loves to get outdoors and to share those times with her family.

Julie grew up loving the stage as an actor and a competitive dancer. She is still taking adult dance classes and attending Broadway musicals whenever she can.

And while the above activities, along with working full time as a behavior analyst, may keep the average person busy, Julie also enjoys reading up to 60 books a year and baking for family and friends. Her search for the perfect chocolate chip cookie and buttercream icing recipes is on-going. She is now experimenting with Dubai chocolate-inspired treats. (I know who I am inviting on my next hike!)

Julie is also passionate about helping women gain the knowledge and experience to enjoy the outdoors, as she was helped along by many AMC leaders. She'd like to start a series to help women gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to get outdoors. In Julie's words, "I hope to be that leader who can teach more women to independently explore what nature has to offer."

We are so lucky to have Julie as one of the new members of our team, and we know that she will be an amazing leader for AMC-SEM.



Photo by Jameson Young



World traveler and outdoor adventurer Warren Ackerman has taken on the added challenge of AMC-SEM group leadership.

*Courtesy photo*



## Hikers ask of new Level 1 Leader: 'Where's Warren....Ackerman?'

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

SEM has a new game called *Where's Warren Ackerman?* Actually, it should be called *Where's Warren Ackerman not been or what's he not done?* That's because he has lived in, or visited, more than 40 countries (yes you are reading that correctly), along with many places in the U.S., and he has done almost every outdoor sport you can think of in those countries. From sailing in New Zealand and Australia, to kayaking in Thailand and surfing in Ireland (who knew?), he has just about done it all. It's safe to say if you need help planning an international outdoor adventure, Warren is the guy to talk to.

Now Warren can add one more accomplishment to his long list of adventures, and I am sure this one will rank up there with summitting Mt Meru in Tanzania. Warren is now certified as a Local Hike Leader for SEM!

On April 4th, Warren partnered with Eva Das to plan and lead a 6.5-mile hike of Weir River Farm, Whitney and Thayer Woods, in Hingham MA. As he does with any of his adventures, Warren checked all the boxes to make sure his participants were prepared and had a safe, enjoyable hike. He even threw in some great views and encounters with farm animals along the way. A special thanks to Eva for her help, along with Ken Cohen, who also helped Warren along his leadership journey.

We are proud and excited to have Warren as one of our Local Hike Leaders. Now if only we can keep him in-country long enough to lead some hikes and adventures for us!



## Veteran hiker Brenda Trapani rocks as a new SEM Level 1 Leader

By Bill Belben, Hiking Chair

On March 12th, Brenda Trapani skillfully led a hike in the F. Gilbert State Forest to earn her Level 1 Hike Leader certification. In preparation for the hike, Brenda planned the route, wrote and posted the event in OC along with Larry Petrone, and handled the screening. As Brenda led the hike, her warm and upbeat personality kept the group engaged, and she even took a few route diversions to show them some interesting sights along the way.



*Courtesy photo*

Brenda is new to SEM, as she moved to the Plymouth area with her husband and golden retriever in 2024, but she is not new to hiking. She started hiking in Baxter State Park and Acadia National Park at a young age, which cultivated a strong interest in the outdoors. Since then, she has completed the 67 New England 4,000-footers (NE67), many of the peaks accomplished while backpacking solo.

One of her best solo trips was thru-hiking the Long Trail in Vermont, which required a lot of up-front planning and problem solving along the way. Brenda also backpacked through the 100-Mile Wilderness area of Maine in 2019 and the Northville to Lake Placid Trail in New York in 2017 with her son Diego.

Additional hikes/backpacks on her resume include the Grand Canyon, Havasupai Falls, Mt Ranier National Park, the Olympics, Maroon Bells, and most recently Joshua Tree National Park. Throw in some winter hikes in New Hampshire with AMC, for good measure. Next up on the list for Brenda is to thru-hike the Bay Circuit Trail.

And if all that wasn't enough to keep her busy, Brenda is also an accomplished singer who currently sings in a rock-and-roll choir called Rock Voices. She often can be heard singing on a trail before you even see her. She also loves to swim with her dog, and she was most recently employed as an elder companion.

We are so excited and lucky to have Brenda join our hike leader team, and we are looking forward to seeing her share her love for the outdoors with our members through creative and exciting hiking adventure.



# Map & Compass

## Weekend Workshop May 10 & 11

*For more info or to register, click the picture*

*"So much fun using topo map to find flags hidden in the Blue Hills"*

*"It was great that we were broken into small groups, and that each had its own teacher."*

*"Two days gave us enough time to practice the skills, I finally got it!"*

*"I now feel comfortable hiking alone; I can take a different trail if needed to avoid a shady character and still find my way back."*

## Mountains & Sea

### AMC's August Camp 2025

### Olympic National Park

Enjoy both mountains and ocean at magnificent Olympic National Park. Hike, bike, paddle and more, visiting many stunning waterfalls and scenic vistas on dozens of activities led by trained AMC volunteers.

This million-acre park protects a vast wilderness, thousands of years of human history and several distinctly different ecosystems. These include glacier-capped mountains, old-growth temperate rain forests and more than 70 miles of wild coastline.

Camp just outside the park in Quilcene, WA. Arrive and enjoy the activities and camaraderie. Everything's provided: tents, hearty, delicious meals prepared by our staff; plus local transportation and a free shuttle from and to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

Photos by Janine Brancale and Lennie Stelmets, August Camp 2016

**July 19 through August 16.** Apply to attend for one of the four weeks. Detailed information, pricing and registration are available at [augustcamp.org](http://augustcamp.org). The last time August Camp was held on the Olympic Peninsula, it was filled by mid-January!

Online registration opens January 2, 2025 at 9 AM. All applications received between then and midnight on January 15 will be treated equally by random selection.

Week 1: July 19 — July 26    Week 2: July 26 — Aug. 1

Week 3: Aug. 1 — Aug. 9    Week 4: Aug. 9 — Aug. 16

**Each week:** \$1700 for members, \$2040 for non-members

**Questions:** Please visit [augustcamp.org](http://augustcamp.org).

[augustcamp.org](http://augustcamp.org)



# Join SEM for our upcoming Earth Day Series

Co-sponsored and located at the Norwell Public Library

64 South St, Norwell, MA 02061

by Zoe Rath, Conservation Chair

## Conservation Conversations: Earth Day Panel 2025



### Conservation Conversations: Earth Day Panel 2025 (Hybrid Event)

Saturday, April 19, 2:00-4:00 PM

Do you want to learn about local conservation projects and leaders in your community? Join the Appalachian Mountain Club's Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter this Earth Day at the Norwell Public Library to hear about all types of environmental activism and engagement including state-level climate advocacy, sustainable beekeeping, and the intersection of art and nature. Hear from local environmental experts and learn more about how you can get involved with efforts to protect and restore our natural resources.

The panel includes: **Scott Redfern**, Senior Manager of the Doherty Climate & Resilience Institute at Save the Sound, and **Peter Scavongelli**, Farm Manager for Fox Rock Farms in Norwell and **Rae Ettenger**, AMC, New England Conservation Policy Coordinator.

### Dinner and a Movie: *Inundation* District + Q&A with Director David Abel

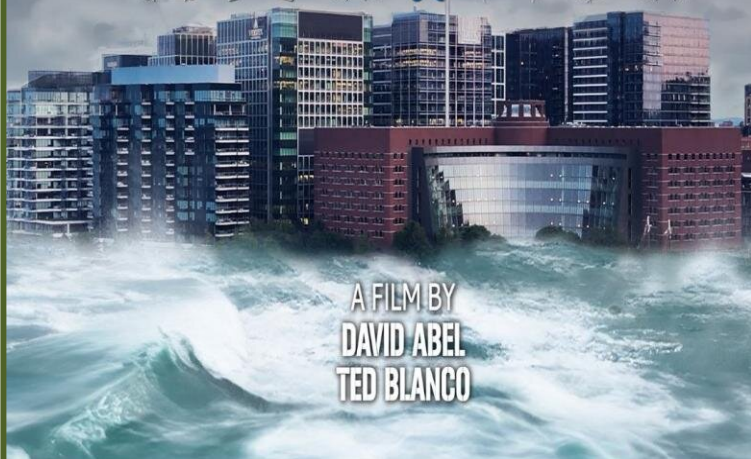
Wednesday, April 23, 5:00—8:00 PM

As part of our Earth Day series, we will screen the documentary *Inundation District* about threats of climate warming and rising tides on Boston's Seaport district. After the film, there will be a virtual Q&A with Director David Abel.

This film is sponsored by the Norwell Public Library, the Appalachian Mountain Club. The Southeastern MA Chapter (SEM) is providing the pizza dinner. Location Norwell Public Library.

In a time of rising tides and intensifying storms,  
what happens when a vulnerable city builds by the sea?  
Its new Innovation District becomes one of the  
world's most imperiled neighborhoods, known as the ...

## INUNDATION DISTRICT







The view  
from the  
porch of  
Zealand  
Hut.

*Photo by  
Joe D'Amore*

## Surprising revelations shared on the side of a mountain

By Joe D'Amore

Paul Brookes is an AMC hike leader from the Southeastern Massachusetts chapter. I recently joined him and a group for hiking and a winter overnight stay at Zealand Hut, a beautiful AMC cabin perched on a mountainside beneath the summit of Mt. Hayes (Shelburne & Gorham, NH).

The view from the front porch of this hut was a breathtaking sweep of mountains, valleys, and ravines that seem to undulate. Experiences like this in New Hampshire's "Presidentials" are normal. At night, there was a burst of scintillating powder in the sky, which I recognized and have experienced only a handful of times in my life in all its glory, the Milky Way.

The next morning, we prepared to hike the ravines and mountain passages. We formed a group, a convention of sorts we call "trail talk." This is when hike leaders engage in small talk but also relay instructions pertaining to safety issues and technical requirements and conduct a gear check. Inevitably hike leaders will then end with a lighter delivery of an open question to begin making connections

with hikers who oftentimes either meet for the first time or see each other infrequently.

We're all used to the standard versions: "Tell us where you're from and why you like to hike" or "What's your favorite ice cream?" or "What travel/trips are you planning?" Paul asked, "Tell us something about you that nobody knows about here."

I did my best, paying attention to what others were saying because I was half-frozen from the cold—but also from the sudden emotion of contemplating a monumental disclosure, one I had never made on an outdoor excursion in the four years that I've been serious about hiking.

Most folks offered very interesting tidbits which I speculated they had not shared before. Nothing serious, of course, as Paul has the ability to make everyone comfortable. I saw smiles on people's faces, a good indicator that each of us was able to share something that was within our comfort level. One hiker confided in me about a very personal matter. It was completely unexpected, and I was flattered to be so selected.

When my rotation arrived, in all its glory, I happily shared, "I am an immigrant. I was born in Geneva, Switzerland, and then we moved to Montreal, and then we landed here. I was seven years old when I arrived here speaking French and Italian, and I was dumped in second grade—I was all screwed up." I felt relieved. It's something I am proud of and have been public about, but sparingly.

I was surprisingly comfortable sharing this all with "intimate strangers," which is the realm I've seen materialize on long hikes. We had six miles to go to leave the frozen hut high in the mountains to our vehicles. With five-plus hours, I had time to burn to tell my story to anyone willing to listen. I had takers. A couple of hike mates heard the rest of the story—and it goes something like this:

We all learned in school that the Marshall Plan saved Europe from the destruction of World War II. It helped lift millions from pending death and poverty and funded the reconstruction of Europe. What our history books didn't tell us is that the Plan-sponsored resources never reached most of southern Europe, except for the largest cities.

My parents, in their late teens, were faced with harsh choices that millions in poor southern Italy faced. Whether they married because their union was formally arranged, or they fell in love, they were faced with three prospects: 1) Seek work in the industrial north. 2) Stay in place and scratch out a living in dire poverty. 3) Emigrate. (My parents were in love.)

Continued on page 10





Joe D'Amore, left, and Zealand Hut hike leader Paul Brookes prepare a hot meal after a day of hiking and sharing by their group. *Photo by Mystery Participant*

## Revelations

Continued from page 9

An entire generation from villages and towns, such as the one they came from in southern Italy, disappeared.

My parents, seeking work, a chance to save money and start a family, travelled to Geneva, Montreal, and then Boston. They were tumultuous times when opportunities materialized and vaporized in one breath.

In the end, we experienced a fulfilling immigrant experience, eventually emerging as proud naturalized American citizens. This is a remarkable revelation in today's societal season. I shared it in the safest environment I know outside my circle of family and friends, fully aware that the national register on the topic of migrants is running hot.

But what is astonishing is that I shared this with people whose names I can't remember, but I can see their happy faces in the Zealand Hut weekend photos. These are my "hike-mates."

I've not only been able to share aspects of my life with hike-mates—and fulfill my passion for writing about it through prose and poetry—but I've also collected some incredible stories about other people. Recently, I heard from a hike leader that he learned about his mother's Jewish/ Russian background through a death certificate and the discovery of her grave late in his life. His family lived through the Depression and World War II. Despite

sacrifice and losses, they landed on these shores, survived, and eventually thrived.

It was surprisingly personal, unsolicited, and unexpected. We discussed briefly the issues of the day, and it brought us both back to family history and the privilege of the freedoms we now enjoy. I mentioned to him that I recently re-watched, after many years, the movie *Schindler's List* to contemplate the lessons of strife past generations have experienced, which to some degree or other all immigrants have experienced. It was particularly vexing to him to hear this, and he may have contemplated details not shared with me.

He wrote his mother's last name on a piece of paper and turned it over to me. He was a bit tearful. It is seared in my mind, as the telling of it brings a smile still.

I recently completed leadership training in New Hampshire and plan to "co-lead" hikes for a long time at SEM. I welcome the opportunity to work with leaders like Paul to hone the craft of making people comfortable with each other while engaging the wonders of nature.

I relish the future opportunity to add to my hiking experiences and personal development. The best part is the spontaneous and honest human interactions that are born on a long hike, especially in challenging conditions. It's something I didn't expect to the degree to which I've experienced it.

I've noticed since the moment I met Paul that he has an accent, so maybe he has an interesting immigration story, too. I'll ask him at a trail junction during a break.

## Your input is invited to make changes to Outdoors Connector

By Paul Brookes, Past Chapter Chair

Outdoors Connector released in January and AMC has been working studiously with its development partner, Deloitte, to fix the issues as quickly as possible with a new release every three weeks. I have been hired for 12 weeks on a temporary contract with AMC to help prioritize improvements.

To request changes or make suggestions, email [VolunteerSupport@outdoors.org](mailto:VolunteerSupport@outdoors.org). When you send an email to this address, a ticket is automatically created to track your request, so it won't get lost.

The next release will be Tuesday and I have created a short video of the new features as part of the [release notes](#). Also check out the [FAQ](#) which contain user guides.





## Home-made protein balls boost your energy and save money

Submitted by Jodi Jenson

### Chicken Tahini Protein Balls

From [Tasty-Thrifty-Timely](#)

Author: Kathryn Alexandre

Total Time: 20 minutes Yield: 20 pieces

Quick and easy chickpea tahini protein balls can be a healthier snack for a midday boost. Less than 10 ingredients & no baking required.

#### Ingredients:

1/2 cup walnuts, toasted  
1/2 cup pitted Deglet Noor dates (about 11)  
1 cup chickpeas, rinsed & drained  
1 cup oats  
1/3 cup tahini  
1-1/2 tbsp maple syrup  
Pinch of salt  
1/4 cup toasted sesame seeds (optional topping)



#### Instructions:

1. Start by toasting the walnuts. Spread on a baking sheet and toast at 350 degrees F for 6-8 minutes or until the nuts are fragrant and nicely browned.
2. Meanwhile, soften the dates in warm water for 5 minutes so they will be easier to blend.
3. When the nuts are cooled, remove the dates from the water and add them to the bowl of a food processor (the reserved soaking water can be used later if your mixture is too dry). \*See notes if using a blender.
4. Add the remaining ingredients, minus the sesame seeds, to the food processor and pulse to break down the nuts and chickpeas. Then blend the dough until it comes together and starts to form a ball in the food processor. You may have to stop your machine periodically to scrape the sides and ensure even blending. You should be able to pinch the dough between your fingers and have it stick together. \*If the dough is too dry, add little splashes of the water the dates soaked in to help it blend (or use extra maple syrup or tahini if desired). Too much liquid will make the dough too sticky and difficult to handle so go slow. \*If your dough is too sticky, add more oats to soak up some of the moisture.

5. Scoop tablespoons of the dough and roll the dough between your palms to create a ball. Roll the ball in toasted sesame seeds for a crunchy topping and more sesame taste if desired. Continue with the remaining dough. \*See notes for instructions on how to toast the seeds.

6. Store finished protein balls in the fridge or freezer in an airtight container. These will last well in the fridge for up to 1 week and 1-2 months in the freezer.

#### Notes:

Approximate Cost: US \$2.24 (\$0.13/each) using chickpeas cooked from scratch or \$2.87 (\$0.14/each) using canned chickpeas. Sesame seed topping adds about \$0.56. Store-bought protein balls cost about \$0.70 each.

Depending on the moisture in your chickpeas and tahini, see instructions in the recipe to get the right consistency. If using a blender, I would recommend pulsing the nuts, chickpeas, and dates first to break them into smaller pieces. Then add the wet ingredients and blend until you get as smooth a texture as you can. You will likely have to stop the blender and push the ingredients around a bit. Add more liquid as needed to get a sticky dough but be careful not to add too much.

To toast sesame seeds at home, place the seeds in a frying pan over low heat on your stovetop. Shake the pan periodically to move the seeds around. After a couple minutes the seeds will start to brown. Use a spatula to move the seeds around and encourage even browning. Once most seeds have a light golden color, remove them from the hot pan so they don't burn.

#### SEM Memory:

**'Maps on the beach, too!'**



Finding their way around Scituate, circa 1993.



## Outdoors Connector

AMC launched a new activity listing and registration platform on January 10, 2025, to replace ActDB. Outdoors Connector offers some new features, including the ability to pay online for fee-based activities. See articles in this and future issues of *The Breeze* for more information.

At this time, the Chapter-wide Newsletter listings and the personalized Activity Digest are not available through Outdoors Connector. [Visit here](#) regularly for the updated list of activities.

## Activities

For the most current information, [search activities online](#)

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### Volunteer Opportunities

**Ongoing. Bicycling Chair & Vice Chair - Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA.** SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on "[Responsibilities](#)" under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing [nominatingchair@amcsem.org](mailto:nominatingchair@amcsem.org) or Jeannine Audet by emailing [chair@amcsem.org](mailto:chair@amcsem.org).

**Ongoing. Education Chair & Vice Chair – Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA.** SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on "[Responsibilities](#)" under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing [nominatingchair@amcsem.org](mailto:nominatingchair@amcsem.org) or Jeannine Audet by emailing [chair@amcsem.org](mailto:chair@amcsem.org).

**Ongoing. Paddling Chair & Vice Chair - Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA.** SEM is run by volunteers, and we need your help to offer the programs that we all enjoy. Would you consider contributing to SEM as the vice chair of our biking committee. This is a great way to ease into a role under an existing Chair and you do not have to be a long-time member to volunteer as a Vice Chair, just interest and enthusiasm. For more information click on "[Responsibilities](#)" under Related Link(s) however note that although positions have specific responsibilities, what gets done and how it's done is up to whoever fills that position. None of these roles should be overwhelming either in duties or time commitment but should give you a chance to give back to your chapter in a meaningful way. To discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities please contact Ken Cohen by emailing [nominatingchair@amcsem.org](mailto:nominatingchair@amcsem.org) or Jeannine Audet by emailing [chair@amcsem.org](mailto:chair@amcsem.org).

**Ongoing. Committee Members - Southeastern Mass Chapter, MA.** Our committees are always looking for new members. For more information email the Committee Chair or the Chapter Chair. **Nominating Committee** Do you regularly attend activities and are comfortable talking to people about open positions. If so, please consider the nominations committee. We are looking for people from all over our region, but especially someone from the Cape. **20's & 30's Committee** As we all know, our younger members are the future of our chapter. We are looking for people in their 20's & 30's who like participating in and organizing events for a younger crowd including social events. **Membership Committee** If you're a fan of SEM and regularly promote SEM to those you meet, this committee could be for you. In addition to supporting our Open House and other outreach events, you would help our new members fully engage with the chapter by organizing new member activities and social events. **Communications Committee** We are looking for people to train under our current Communications Committee volunteer staff as backup and support for the following roles: \*Social Media Administration: Will work with Lisa Robitaille our Social Media Administrator \*Web development and maintenance. Will work with Cheryl Lathrop our Web Mistress who maintains our SEM Website \*Editing and typesetting: Will work with Mo Walsh who produces our monthly Breeze magazine. \*We are also looking for someone with Video editing skills to help generate video content for our website. L Jeannine Audet ([chair@amcsem.org](mailto:chair@amcsem.org)). For more information, you can discuss this position or any other volunteer opportunities by contacting our Nominating Committee chair Ken Cohen by emailing [nominatingchair@amcsem.org](mailto:nominatingchair@amcsem.org)





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