



Appalachian Footnotes

Delaware Valley Chapter • Appalachian Mountain Club

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Where to ski

AMC office moves to historic mill

New Highlands Trail crew

Outdoor leadership programs

Boot failure revisited



Appalachian Footnotes

the magazine of the
Delaware Valley Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club
published using recycled electrons.

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A detailed directory can be found on our web site, amcdv.org.

When you use Adobe Acrobat Reader to view this newsletter (rather than using a preview program):

Just click on any e-mail or web link.

They all work!

Click on the bookmark icon  and you will get a clickable index!

Chapter Leaders' Hotline: stay in touch

Communication with our Chapter leaders is very important. The main source for communicating with our leaders is our DV Leaders Hotline through Yahoo Groups.

If you are a DV Chapter leader and feel you are not currently receiving e-mails sent out over our Leaders Hotline it is possible we do not have a current e-mail address for you. If you have changed your e-mail address within the past few years and have never notified us about it, we need your current e-mail address.

Please contact our Communications Chair, Rich Wells at communication@amcdv.org with your current e-mail address and he will send you an "invite" to join our DV Leaders Yahoo Group. You must accept this invite to begin receiving e-mails through our Leaders Hotline. We cannot simply edit your e-mail address due to spam considerations. Please help us to keep the lines of communication working by staying current with your contact information.

Membership Information

Moving? Please remember to change your address and desired chapter affiliation by going to the AMC Member Center at www.outdoors.org/membercenter or calling AMC Member Services at 800-372-1758. This will correct your address for AMC Outdoors and for Footnotes. Address corrections cannot be made by the newsletter editor.

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AMC Information Sources:

Delaware Valley Chapter Web Site: amcdv.org

DV Paddler's Web Site: paddlenow.com

Chapter e-mail: info@amcdv.org

E-mail Hotline: hotline-requests@amcdv.org

AMC General Web Site: outdoors.org

Chapter Ombudsman

Questions, complaints, concerns or comments about the Delaware Valley Chapter of AMC should be directed to Chapter Ombudsman, Allen Male at ombudsman@amcdv.org.



Cover: Andy Newell, US Olympic X-C skier from Bennington, VT is on our cover. Photo by Sue Bickford-Martin, who reports: "Reed Goossen introduced us to him while skiing at Prospect Mt. X-C Center near Bennington, VT. Andy was Reed's student at one time."

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Cross country skiing: where to go and how to connect

By Sue Bickford-Martin, X-C Skiing Chair, skiing@amcdv.org

This is the third winter we have a Yahoo Group for X-C ski enthusiasts in our chapter. The Yahoo Group will be for ski chat and last minute trips, either local or distant.

The weather people are saying this is going to be a El Nino winter. That means warmer temps and when it does snow Arctic air will be pushed down from Canada and we have the potential to have a big dump. Big dump doesn't mean that it will last long as the Jet Stream pushes warm air around and before you know it, the snow is bad due to freeze-thaw cycles. So grab it while you can.

Many times there is no snow at all in our region and we must head north to higher elevations like the Adirondacks and Vermont. Snow lovers have good tools these days for finding where the snow is, through word of mouth or snow websites.

When there is snow we need to go, hence the amc-dv-ski@yahoo.com. Please join this Yahoo Group either as a happy participant or lead a planned or last minute X-C ski trip this winter. E-mail me at ski@amcdv.org if you are interested in the Yahoo Group and I will send you an invitation. At present the amc-dv-ski Yahoo Group is private and non-searchable, so you must let me know by e-mail to join.

Any leaders that would like to join the X-C ski committee are most welcome and we will only have meetings with our "boards strapped on."

Below: Martin LaPlante on Ron Gonzales' MLK weekend trip to Stowe, Vermont. Sue Bickford-Martin photo.



Find out some of the best places to ski in last winter's Footnotes by clicking here. And remember to check the activities calendar on the chapter web site for ski trips!

Skiing for free, away from touring centers. No equipment rentals, no warming huts, no groomed snow or set tracks; but also no trail fees, no crowds, just you and the beautiful snow-filled woods — off-track skiing. In the backcountry in winter you should never go alone, find a friend or two to go with you. Some possible destinations include your local park, and:

Valley Forge National Park, when it has snow, often has lots of decent broken trails. Often skiable on four inches of snow, suitable for beginners. Closed park roads are also skiable.

Jacobsburg State Park, near Wind Gap, PA, a 1,167 acre park just off Rt. 33, seven miles north of the Lehigh Valley and Rt. 22. Good trails for novice and intermediate skiers.

Nescopeck State Park, near White Haven, PA. Woods trails, holds snow well, intermediate.

Brady's Lake in the Poconos, state game lands. Holds snow very well, very large. Varied terrain, but you are on your own to find or break trail. It is not as good as it once was, but still decent.

Broad Mountain, Lehigh Gorge State Park, PA. Holds snow. If you can bike it in the summer, you can ski it in the winter.

Promised Land State Park, PA. Stay in the areas and on the trails where snowmobiles are not allowed. Easy terrain, holds snow better than most regional state parks.

Hickory Run State Park, PA. You need a lot of snow on the ground to ski here, but it holds snow well. A thousand foot climb awaits the energetic skier. Unless you are really good, it is safer to do it as a climb!

Blur Mountain Lake, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, New Jersey. A pretty lake and the now-abandoned roads of a never built housing development make this a good place to ski.

High Point State Park, in Sussex, NJ, with groomed trails, fantastic views, a heated lodge, snack bar and ski lessons.

Stokes State Forest, Branchville, NJ, dedicates miles of its unplowed roads in its southern section to X-C skiing.

Jockey Hollow near Morristown, NJ. Parking lot fills early if snow's good.

Wawayanda State Park. Northwest, NJ. Ask them to point out the no snowmobiles trails.

Find your park by searching on the web, but call ahead before driving any distance. It will save you time and frustration. The state parks often post snow conditions on their web pages, but be sure to check the date these were posted.

Also, many of our region's bicycle trails are good for a few hours or even a day of very local skiing, particularly the Perkio-men and Schuylkill trails.

Click here and send an e-mail to join our chapter's X-C ski group. Get the latest information on snow and cross-country ski trips



AMC mid-Atlantic office moves to historic mill in Bethlehem

Our Mid-Atlantic staff is thrilled to announce that they have moved their office from downtown Bethlehem to Illick's Mill in Monocacy Park, offering new opportunities for volunteering, meetings, and outdoor activities. Illick's Mill is a 150-year-old grist mill in the 99-acre Monocacy Park, the largest park in the City of Bethlehem.

The park is well-used and cherished by the community as well as having a fascinating history. It was the focus of a Works Progress Administration Project in the 1930s, during which over 170,000 hours of labor went into creating the beautiful stonework, tables, stairs and benches that are still in use today. The park also became a popular gathering spot for city residents, who enjoyed walking, fishing, picnicking, and also swimming in a pool above the dam. All of these activities are common today, except for swimming. The mill building itself fell into disrepair during the seventies, but in the early 2000s a community effort led by students at Liberty High School restored the mill to its current condition.

Today, AMC's residence at the mill offers us a fantastic opportunity to engage park visitors like fishermen, birdwatchers, and families enjoying nature, in conversations about outdoor recreation and conservation.

The first floor of the mill houses AMC's new office space, and the second floor of the mill is available for conservation groups to hold meetings and educational activities. The trailhead for the 1.5 Monocacy Way trail is also in the park, which offers us a great location to offer volunteer-led hikes, bike rides, or even snowshoe or ski activities in the winter. Monocacy Way connects to a larger system of trails within the City of Bethlehem, and beyond that, to the greater Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network, currently being developed by AMC's John Brunner.

— Catherine Reuscher, AMC Mid-Atlantic Policy Associate

Open House, Saturday, December 19

AMC will be hosting a holiday open house from 10 AM to 5 PM, December 19. Visitors are invited to join us for music, food and drinks, as well as tours of the historic mill and Monocacy Park, including the beautiful WPA-era stonework, Monocacy Way, and the native plants garden. Come for five minutes or stay for the day!

For more information, contact Cathy during the day at 610-868-6903 or e-mail her at creuscher@outdoors.org.



AMC staff members Cathy Reuscher, Mark Zakutansky and John Brunner at the mill during move-in this fall

AMC establishes Highlands Trail crew

As part of our ongoing efforts to establish the PA Highlands Trail Network, the AMC Mid-Atlantic office is partnering with the DV Chapter to form a volunteer crew of Highlands Trail Stewards to build new sections of the Highlands Trail and maintain existing trails. This new trails program is intended to enhance the Delaware Valley Chapter's considerable trail building and maintenance work at Valley Forge National Historic Park and a 15-mile section of the Appalachian Trail.



Adrian Noble and Greg Bernet exploring Ringing Rocks trail.

DV Chapter member Greg Bernet has volunteered to serve as the first crew leader for Highlands Trail Stewards. A resident of Holland Township, New Jersey, Greg is an experienced trail maintainer having worked on sections of the AT with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference. Greg and DV Hike Leader Adrian Noble have already begun surveying the Ringing Rocks Trail with plans to improve and blaze a loop trail in the main section of Ringing Rocks County Park.

The Highlands Trail Stewards will focus on areas within the Pennsylvania Highlands region in Bucks and Montgomery Counties including Ringing Rocks and the Unami Hills. We've also explored the possibility of partnering with the New York New Jersey Trail Conference on a section of the Highlands Trail near the Delaware River (Hunterdon County).

To sign up for the crew please e-mail me at jbrunner@outdoors.org, or contact Greg Bernet at gregbernet@gmail.com

Gear swap & sale; backpack cook-off planned for March Activities Social

Closet getting a little crowded? Next March, the Delaware Valley Chapter will host our first Gear Swap and Sale event along with our annual Activities Social. This is a garage sale for outdoors enthusiasts of all kinds and is open to all comers.

Buy! Sell! Barter! Come and find that piece of equipment that never seems to go on sale! Put a little cash in your pocket while you do your spring clean and help others gear up for the coming season. Everyone's inner gear geek will be satisfied as we peruse the tables. Just be sure equipment is in satisfactory condition and apparel should be recently washed and not torn or frayed.

We'll be organizing volunteers to provide skills demonstrations and tips on lightening your load. If you fancy yourself as a chef, you can compete for bragging rights for best backpack meal so bring that lightweight stove and titanium pot and just enough ingredients to share with our "hungry hiker" judges.

If you plan on selling some stuff, share a little knowledge or register for the backpack cook-off, contact Denis McCartan at dmac7154@gmail.com

Meet the new Mohican managers



Assistant manager at Mohican, Sara Morris-Marano, and manager Gabby (Gabrielle) Andrews.

This past August, visitors to the Mohican Outdoor Center in the Delaware Water Gap were being welcomed by some new faces. Former manager Katie Moran left to pursue a career in public health administration, and former assistant manager Gabby (Gabrielle) Andrews took over as Mohican Manager.

Gabby has a passion for the Delaware Water Gap, since this is where she led her first teen trail crew in 2008. She has a degree in ecotourism and adventure travel. She also has a great love for the outdoors, and her dog Boone. She would like to invite all DV Chapter members to come visit Mohican for some wonderful hikes and amazing views!

The new Assistant Manager at Mohican is Sara Morris-Marano. Sara is a recent graduate of Rutgers University who earned a B.S. in ecology, evolution, and natural resources. She has worked extensively in urban environmental education, and is excited to reinvigorate the interpretive program at Mohican Outdoor Center. Her background in hospitality and food service make guest services one of her favorite parts of the job. Sara enjoys hiking and other outdoor activities, fitness, and cooking in her spare time.

Visit Mohican sometime soon to meet Gabby and Sara, and to see some of the changes made to the center in recent months.

For a complete schedule of the Getaway Weekends scheduled at Mohican in 2016 (led by volunteer leaders from the DV and NY-No. Jersey Chapters), [click here](#).

Leaders: make your activities sound like fun; improve your trip descriptions

DV Chapter leaders, one of AMC's missions is to get more people outdoors. To experience the joys and benefits of time spent outdoors recreating. To help you with this mission a committee of volunteers from the Chapters Committee has created a helpful Activities Database Style Guide with suggestions and guidance on how to improve your activity descriptions.

Your descriptions should make your activities sound fun, interesting and welcoming. When you are writing your descriptions try to include as much information as possible to reduce the number of questions you will have to answer from participants. This easy to use Style Guide can be found on our website at the following link: amcdv.org/assets/activities-database-style-guide.pdf

Outdoor leadership training, scholarship programs set for 2016

The Delaware Valley Chapter will host an AMC Outdoor Leadership Training Workshop on the weekend of April 15-17, 2016.

To make this event easily accessible for DV Chapter members, this session will take place at Nockamixon State Park and the Weisel Hostel near Quakertown.

Everyone is welcome to attend: leader wannabes, new leaders, new members, experienced leaders, members who just want to learn what leadership is all about. Topics to be covered are the elements of outdoor leadership common to all AMC outdoor activities:

Activity planning

Leading safe and enjoyable activities

Leadership styles

Group dynamics

Liability issues

Decision making model

Accident scene management

Conservation and minimum impact issues

AMC leadership requirements and guidelines

How to become a DV Chapter activity leader

Map and compass skills

Instructors: Experienced AMC volunteers and staff

If you want to step up to leading outdoor activities, the workshop will give you the confidence and skills that you need. If you are already an experienced leader, this workshop will make you a better one.

The cost for the course is \$35 for AMC members, \$50 for non-members, \$20 for AMC members who complete one co-lead by April 1, 2016.

If you'd like to stay overnight at Weisel Hostel (four miles from Nockamixon), the cost is \$15 for one night or \$24 for two nights. The Saturday night dinner cost is \$15.

To register, or for additional information, contact Leadership Chair Lennie Steinmetz, leadership@amcdv.org or 610-694-8677.

**Citizen science.
Real environmental science you can do.
Real conservation science!**

Click here or see amcdv.org/conserv2.html

AMC Adventure Travel Opportunities

If you are looking for Adventure Travel in the next six months, we still have spots available on some trips. Here are a few trips that we are offering. Click on the title for more information:

Winter in Yosemite -- Skiing and Hiking

Exotic Hiking Holiday in the Azores

Easter Island Adventure

Family Exploration of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island

Visit our site, www.outdoors.org/adventuretravel, for a complete list as well as more information about Adventure Travel programs!

Young leaders 18-29: fully paid training, free membership

Young outdoor enthusiasts age 18 to -29 who are interested in becoming activity leaders for the Delaware Valley Chapter will be provided with a full scholarship to the next Outdoor Leadership Training course this fall if they agree to lead at least two activities for the chapter within a year. In addition, a one-year AMC membership will be provided free of charge by the chapter for these new young leaders.

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter offers a wide variety of outdoor activities including hiking, backpacking, paddling, cycling, and skiing. The Outdoor Leadership Training course covers such things as activity planning, leadership styles, group dynamics, liability issues, map and compass skills, accident scene management, conservation and minimum impact issues, and AMC leadership requirements and guidelines. New leaders will be paired with an experienced leader who will provide support and mentoring and assist them with their required two co-leads following the course.

If you know any people between the ages of 18-29 who enjoy the outdoors and might like to share their enthusiasm with others, please let them know about this special program being offered for this year only. For additional information, they should contact leadership@amcdv.org.

Full reimbursement for Wilderness First Aid now available to DV Chapter leaders

The DV Chapter is pleased to announce an exciting new two-year pilot program for reimbursing chapter activity leaders who take the Wilderness First Aid course.

Any leader who leads trips within the 18-month period starting six months before, and up to one year following, the successful completion of the WFA course will be reimbursed: 50 percent of course fees for leading two trips, 75 percent for leading four, and 100 percent for leading six. Maximum reimbursement is \$300. Two day or longer trips will count as two trips.

Course fees refers to registration and relevant lodging costs (for example, a two-day WFA training course by SOLO at Mohican Outdoor Center), and excludes travel and meal expenses unless such expenses are included in the registration fee. Reimbursement allowances apply for all original, renewal and recertification classes.



Trip leaders deal with all kinds of problems! John Rogers changed a flat tire on a trip participant's car at the Dunnfield Creek trailhead on this September hike. – Jeanne Mantell photo.

Boot Failure



Since I originally published this article a year and a half ago, I have had numerous reports of sudden boot failure. Some have told tales of boots shedding their soles in the White Mountains or in the Rockies. I have personally seen other hikers' boots fall apart on the trail and at trail heads. There is even a internet video of a hiker lamenting his boot failure on top of a mountain in Norway. I decided to reprint this article as a warning. **Be warned!**

By Eric Pavlak

Various responsibilities had kept us from any of our backpacking gear for almost four years, so before doing a tough trip this summer, we loaded our packs and laced up our rugged, high-topped boots.

We decided to do the Pulpit and Pinnacle loop, and carried the same weight as we would on our vacation trek. We were mostly concerned how we, not our gear, would do.

Halfway up to Pulpit Rock, Barbara noticed that the soles of her boots were detaching. By the time we got to the top, both soles flopping loose, attached only at the toes. Half way to the Pinnacle, a sole fell off her boot, and I noticed that mine were beginning to detach. By the time we began our descent, she had lost both soles, and I was effectively walking in flip-flops. Fortunately, I had brought along my low-cut hiking shoes. She finished the hike wearing my shoes and several pairs of socks.

Our boots were both of the same age and make: Birkenstock's that were about 13 years old. Could we get them fixed?

I took them to Pisano & Sons Shoe Repair (Malvern and Phoenixville), the only shop that I knew that could repair hiking boots. They were authorized subcontractors that did repairs for Birkenstock and several other major top brands of hiking boots. The answer: No! They have the tools, molds and equipment that used to allow them to resole boots in the days before the manufacturers switched to injection molded polyurethane soles.

"We used to be able to fix them right here for \$50. We can't do that any more," I was told. "These boots are not repairable."

I was told that this type of sudden failure was not limited to any particular brand, and in fact was inevitable in all boots with

polyurethane soles. Depending on the exact formulation mixing and molding of the sole, some will last longer than others, but all will eventually fail, with the soles peeling from the boot and disintegrating into black crumbs.

Despite rumors, dampness and reasonable temperatures do not seem to accelerate the disintegration process, although it is probably not a good idea to store your boots in a blazing hot attic all summer. Also, frequent use does not prolong the shelf life of the material.

Polyurethane is susceptible to biodegradation by naturally occurring microorganisms, specifically from enzymes from fungus and bacteria commonly found in soil. If you want the technical details, see *Microbial biodegradation of polyurethane*, Gary T. Howard, Department of Biological Sciences Southeastern Louisiana University. E-mail me and I will send you a copy. Note that trying to sterilize your boots will likely do much more harm than good.

Since that experience, I have learned of similar boot failures that have occurred on recent AMC hikes. One member had her boots disintegrate during a snowy winter hike, another on a recent chapter hike.

What is a hiker to do? Since almost all manufacturers have gone to injection molded polyurethane soles, we are stuck with them. They grip well, they wear well.

I guess we will just have to keep an eye on them. If your boots are more than five years old, you might want to get new ones before undertaking a major trek.

You can contact me at eric@outings.org

Your boots could suddenly fall apart

Always...
a once-in-a-lifetime
experience

AUGUST CAMP 2016

photo: Ned Beecher

Explore Olympic National Park **WITH US!**

In 2016, AMC's August Camp positions itself for the first time on the shore of Lake Leland in Quilcene, Wash., located in the northeast corner of the Olympic Peninsula on the outskirts of the National Park.

The forest, coastal, and mountain ecosystems of the Peninsula combine to create a spectacular wilderness park. We will explore this diverse environment not only with daily hikes but also with special activities such as sea kayaking, biking, swimming, and various tours to unique destinations in the area.

August Camp offers multiple hikes each day for all levels of ability. Delicious meals and trail lunches are provided. Great camaraderie and nightly campfires make for a memorable experience. Round-trip transportation between camp and the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and to and from daily activities is provided.



photo: M. Solomonis

**Plan your one- or two-week adventure beginning any Saturday
and become part of AMC's oldest tradition.**

July 16 – August 13

Sign up early for the week(s) you want!

WEEK 1: July 16 - July 23

WEEK 2: July 23 - July 30

WEEK 3: July 30 - Aug. 6

WEEK 4: Aug. 6 - Aug. 13

ONE WEEK: \$925 for members
\$975 for non-members

TWO WEEKS: \$1,800 for members
\$1,900 for non-members



**Applications are accepted beginning
January 2, 2016 in the order in which
they are received.**

**Get sign-up documents and more info after
12/1/15 at www.augustcamp.org**



photo: Michele Grzenda

www.augustcamp.org



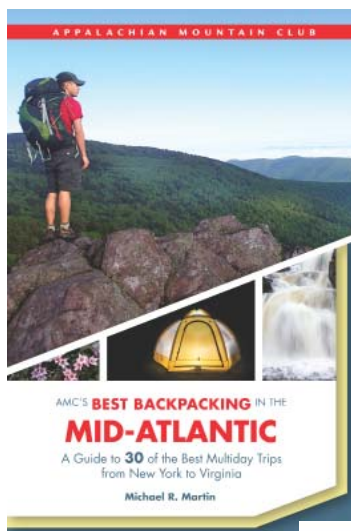
Available Now!

By Susan Charles
Our chapter's
Conservation Chair
Member Price: \$15.16

Outdoors with Kids Philadelphia is the latest addition to the AMC's Outdoors with Kids series. Providing comprehensive guides to low-cost adventure, the book includes destination and trip information for locations in and around Philadelphia. It focuses on the "pay-off" for children of each age group while specifying which locations are good for hiking, swimming, paddling, biking, etc. It features safety tips and a "Plan B" for each destination.

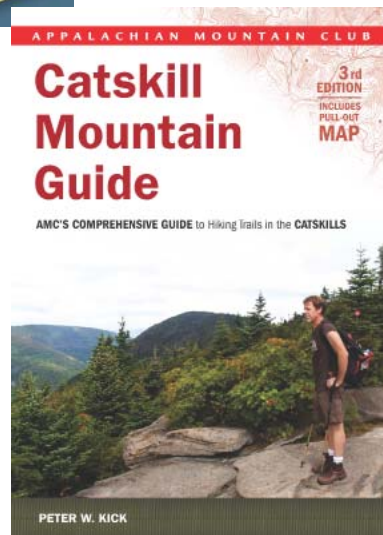
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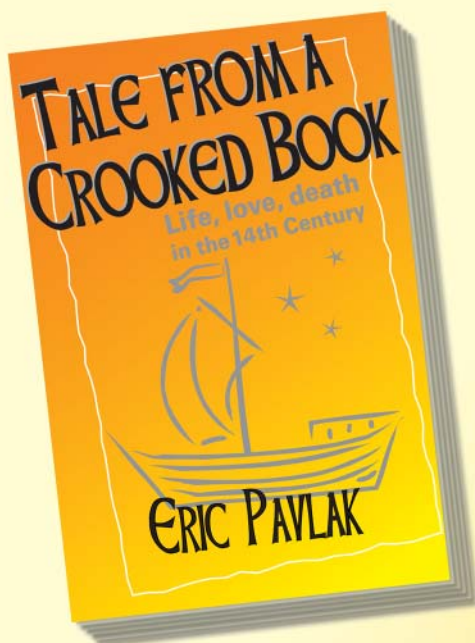
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For a limited time, by request, AMC readers can get free e-books.

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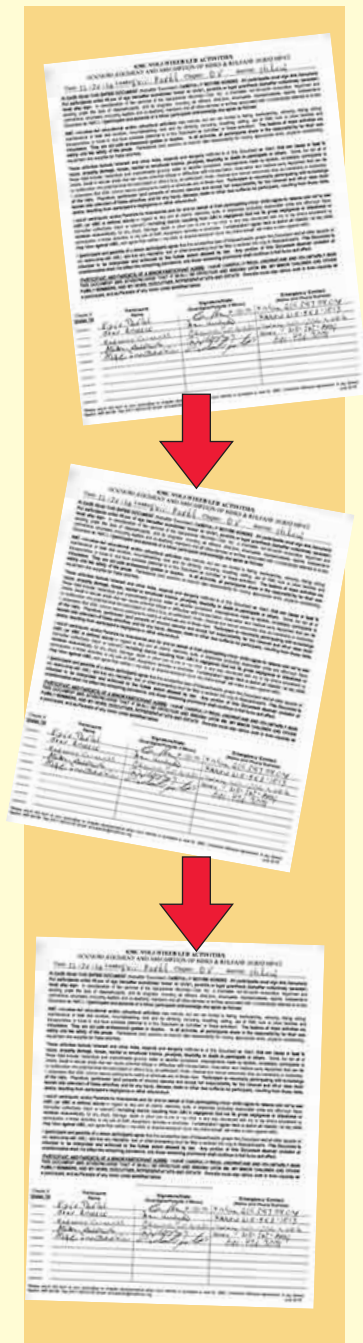
Electronic trip reporting: you no longer need to mail forms!

With our new on-line trip report system, AMC-DV leaders can file trip reports electronically, instead of mailing them to the appropriate activity chair.

You will need to:

1. **Get a User ID and password.** If you have not yet been sent a link to set up your User ID and password, or if you have forgotten your ID, please contact login-help@amcdv.org. This help mailbox is monitored by a volunteer, so it may take a day or more to get a response, particularly on weekends. Please be patient!
2. **Scan or photograph your trip sign in sheets.** We just need the side with the signatures. The file format should be either PDF or JPEG. [Click here for some very useful help](#) with scanning or photographing your sign in release sheets. After you are done scanning, look at the file, and make sure that you could read it.
3. **Fill out the trip report** on line at <http://amcdv.org/TripReport.php>

When you report on line, here is what happens:



Sign-in sheet,
plus on-line trip report..

This goes to the activity chair. You can get a copy e-mailed back to you if you check the appropriate box.

A copy automatically goes to our volunteer activity logger, who enters the trip and participant information. This is how we track miles hiked, rivers paddled, trails worked on, etc. This will be used for our new annual awards.

A copy automatically goes to AMC headquarters in Boston, where it is used for statistical purposes, and kept as a legal record.

Click Here to go to the log in page
<http://amcdv.org/TripReport.php>