



**BE
OUTDOORS**
APPALACHIAN MTN CLUB

Annual Report 2023

New York–North Jersey Chapter



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2023 Executive Committee Officers



Dawn Riley
Chapter Chair



Ed Spirko
Chapter Vice Chair



John Allman
Treasurer



Peter Gourri
Secretary



Steve Galla
Activities Liaison



Rebecca Goldberg
Communications Liaison



Scott Frank
Facilities and Services Liaison

In addition to the Officers, the Executive Committee of the New York-North Jersey Chapter recognizes the following Ex-Officio Executive Committee Members



Crystal Williams
Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion Chair



Ed Sobin
Leadership Chair



David Hartree
Conservation Chair

2023 Committee Chairs

Advisory

Kaspar Alexander, Chair

Backpacking

David Mong and Christopher Bickfod, Co-Chairs

Bicycling

Richard Weinberg, Chair

Canoe and Kayak

Brian Horowitz, Chair

Climbing

Sarah Brockley, Chair

Fire Island Cabin Committee

Crystal Williams, Chair

Hiking

Steve Galla, Chair

Nominating

Henry Schreiber, Chair

Ski

Ed Sobin, Chair

Stephen & Betsy Corman Harriman

Outdoor Center Programming

Jim Om, Chair

Trails Committee

Ed Spirko, Chair

John DiStefano, Supervisor - Urban

Rene Ruel, Supervisor - West of Hudson

Wilderness First Aid

Richard Dabal, Chair

Young Members

John Perilli and Thomas Meehan, Co-Chairs

► Report from the Chapter Chair

I am pleased to present the 2023 Annual Report for the Appalachian Mountain Club New York - North Jersey Chapter. It is with great pride and gratitude that I share the highlights and achievements we have accomplished together in our ongoing pursuit of preserving and enjoying the great outdoors.

This past year has been filled with both challenges and successes. It is through the resolve of our executive committee and leaders that the chapter has been able to advocate for its members and volunteers. It is also through the remarkable efforts of our volunteers and the support of our members that we continue to be a vital part of the organization in mission delivery; fostering the protection, enjoyment and understanding of the outdoors.

One of our primary missions is to protect and conserve the natural world. In this regard, our chapter made significant strides through the Conservation Committee and Trails Committee educating our community on conservation, removing invasive

species to improve forest resiliency, and protecting marine habitat through active conservation, partnerships and as a site sponsor.

By promoting outdoor activities and providing leadership skills we are creating a deep connection between our community and nature which supports sustainability and the protection of these spaces. This year the Leadership Committee provided training sessions to 56 new leaders in training and our chapter leaders led over 400 outdoor events and activities. In addition, we came together during several large events throughout the year including the holiday party, annual summer picnic, Young Members Take Over of the

Corman Harriman Outdoor Center and FallFest at Mohican Outdoor Center.

In addition, chapter leaders supported several organization priorities, committees and working groups including The Greater New York Committee, DEI initiatives, Outdoors Connector, Build Capable, Leader Level Reclassification and the Excess Reserve and High Performing Teams Working Groups.

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the dedication of our executive committee, committee chairs, leaders and volunteers and to our loyal members without



whom this chapter would not be possible. I also want to recognize the outgoing executive committee officers and thank them for their efforts, commitment, and support; John Allman, Chapter Treasurer and Peter Gourri, Chapter Secretary.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to reach out. Our chapter is as strong as the collective voice of its members, and your feedback is essential.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Riley

► Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEI)

The purpose of the DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion) Committee is 'to bring social justice outdoors' for AMC's New York-North Jersey Chapter. We are committed to growing our membership and advancing new leadership opportunities for those not historically represented by outdoors clubs.

We kicked off the Fire Island season with a feature in N.Y. Newsday and the opening of the Fire Island Cabin. Memorial Day Family Weekend has always been the FIC opening weekend. This year over half the participants were from the NY/No.J chapter DEI community.

Kids Passport to Adventure, a non-profit whose mission is to provide children and families opportunities to explore nature as a means of developing life-tools for wellness and empathetic awareness to others, has been a strong partner advancing the chapter DEI initiatives.

Additional DEI Events included:

Mohican Outdoor Center: April mid-week: NYC Kids spent a week exploring, hiking, and horseback riding at a local ranch.

F.I.C.: July mid-week: A full house of NYC kids who had the run of the beach!

Harriman Outdoor Center: August mid-week: End of summer overnight with s'mores, hiking, kayaking, and more.

BIPOC Women and Allies Weekend Courageous Conversations: This was an intentional weekend. Participants engaged in courageous conversations, dialogue on issues you would rather avoid – the “undiscussable.” These discussions require courage, speaking candidly and listening openly, and are often the ones that make the biggest impact.



► Membership Committee

The Membership Committee Chair was vacant in 2023. The Executive Committee continues to recruit for this role to lead membership efforts for the chapter. Membership as of September of 2023 was 8,832. This represents a decrease in members from 9,018 for the same time period in 2022 and an overall downward trend for the last 5 years. The retention rate for second year members is approximately 65% and approximately 32% for first year members.

Thank you to our leaders and volunteers for ensuring member engagement and promoting the benefits of membership to existing and potential members through chapter activities, programs and events.

We would like to give special thanks to those New York- North Jersey Chapter Members who have reached the 50 and 25 year milestone memberships for their dedication to the chapter and the mission of the Appalachian Mountain Club. Those members are recognized by name in the membership section of this report.

8,832 Chapter members

► Leadership Committee

This is the 8th year of the Leadership Committee. There was no in-person weekend this year but we did a pilot of a 1 day in-person class at CCNY that was very successful. We still are using Zoom for the 4 1/2 hour training sessions which we plan to continue.

This year (September 2022- September 2023) we ran three zoom based training sessions attended by a total of 46 people, and an in-person weekend with 10 participants for a yearly total of 56 new leaders in training. This is 10 more than we had last year. The classes were held in October of 2022 and February, April, and September of 2023. Some participants attending the classes were from other chapters. AMC staff continue to run a zoom based leadership training that any chapter can attend. A few of our leader trainees were in those classes and are working on becoming leaders.

Leadership Committee Goals

- Make it easier to get new leaders trained and leading activities
- Make sure potential leaders learn the basic AMC leadership skills that are not activity specific (i.e. trip planning, incident reporting, trip talk at the start, using the ActDB and social media, liability issues, etc.) so activity committees can concentrate on the skills needed for specific activities
- Make it easier for AMC leaders to lead for different chapters if they move out to a new area

Plans for Next Year

- Improve tracking of the leaders in training as they progress towards becoming leaders
- Continue to improve communication and assistance to help the leaders in training become leaders
- Focus on getting those that have taken the class to do the required co-leads in the activity committees they want to lead for so they can start leading trips on their own
- Run 3 Zoom based training classes followed by half day in person training in the NYC parks

► Conservation Committee

The Chapter hosted an AMC table at the Earth Day Festival at Union Square in NYC on April 16. Passers-by learned from Chapter members about the AMC and its recreational possibilities and conservation initiatives in the Mid-Atlantic region. The event sponsor, the Earth Day Initiative, has a mission “to carry the enthusiasm and spirit of Earth Day into the 21st Century, to meet today’s environmental needs”. To our knowledge, this is first year that the AMC has had a presence at this annual festival. The sponsors have invited the Chapter to participate next year.

In April, the Chapter hosted a table at Earth Fest at Bergen Community College (NJ) at the invitation of the Outdoors Club of Bergen Community College.

We restarted Leave No Trace training in the Chapter this year after a gap of several years. Two chapter members with Leave No Trace trainer certifications held a one-hour workshop at the June Annual Picnic at the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center. More sessions are planned next year and may include more advanced Leave No Trace trainer course. Anyone interested in teaching Leave No Trace at chapter events is encouraged to apply to the Conservation Chair.

The Chapter held a beach cleanup at the AMC’s Fire Island Cabin to coincide with International Coastal Cleanup Day on September 16. Volunteers cleared plastic and other harmful marine debris from sections of beach nearby. On the next day several made the kayak trip to the outer birding islands to remove beach debris there. A conservation talk at the cabin by a park ranger naturalist rounded off the weekend.

On Oct 1, the Chapter hosted a Climate Week NYC trail maintenance day at Pelham Bay Park in association We appreciate the support received from the Natural Areas Conservancy for this work as part of our partnership with them for furthering forest and wetland stewardship in New York City.

Invasive species removal trips at South Mountain Reservation in Essex County New Jersey also took place during the year (in association with South Mountain Conservancy).

The Conservation section of the chapter web page continues to post new and updated Action Alerts. The most recent of these a potential amendment to the New Jersey state constitution that would grant every person the right to a clean and healthy environment and require the State to protect public natural resources.

► **Learn More Online**
www.amc-ny.org/conservation

► Young Members Committee

The NY-NoJ Young Members group had a successful year, hosting a large winter event in February at Sugarbush and our annual Harriman Takeover in July! Additionally, we’ve continued organizing group hikes, hosting 1-2 hikes each month, as well as monthly planning meetings and the re-start of a monthly climbing social in coordination with the Climbing committee.

In 2023, the YMs successfully hosted our two annual headline events - the Winter Weekend and the YM Harriman Takeover. First, we had an amazing winter weekend in February at Sugarbush mountain. There were hikes to nearby peaks, downhill skiing at the slopes and hours spent by the fireplace at the wonderful Hostel Tevere that our group rented out! We had over 20 people join the festivities, and look forward to having this event as part of our featured events again in 2024.

Then we set about staging their summer weekend at the Corman Harriman Outdoor Center in Harriman State Park. Planning and organizing for the event began early in the year, and the YMs were able to put together an action-packed weekend of hiking, rock climbing, swimming, paddling/kayaking, fishing, bonfires, and meeting other folks who are passionate about the outdoors! Over 125 AMC members from various chapters and guests attended the weekend-long event! Special thank you to the whole planning committee and the dedicated AMC staff and volunteers at CHOC and Fire Island.

Additionally, we had an amazing Fire Island Cabin weekend in June. Folks were able to enjoy a revitalizing weekend of hiking, yoga, canoeing/

kayaking, and exploring the dunes, forest, beaches and marshes of the national seashore of Fire Island off of Long Island!

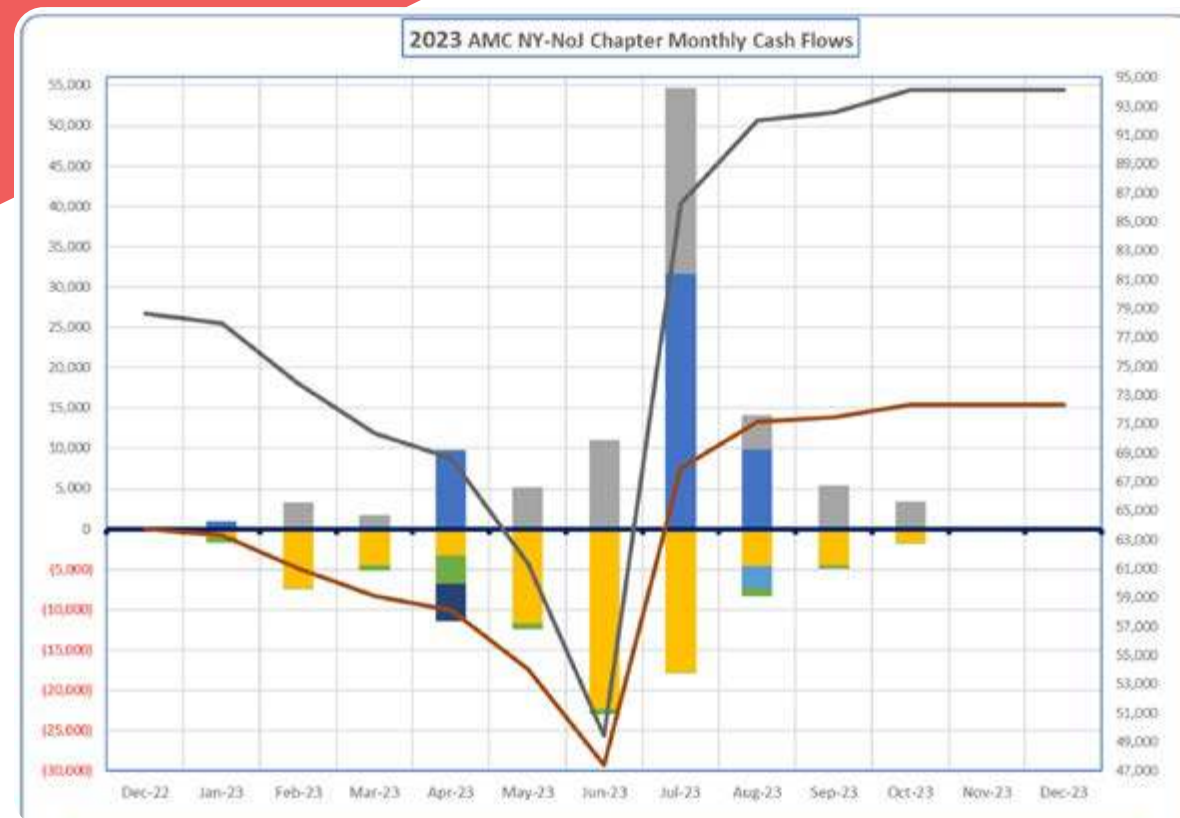
In addition to continuing to host our major events, the Young Members continued working on building up their committee and training new leaders. YM monthly planning meetings were held at Sheep Meadow in Central Park at the start of the year before transitioning to the more central location at Bryant Park over the summer and fall. The YMs have been making progress in this area by continuing to host monthly planning meetings/socials, and it will continue to be a major goal for the remainder of 2023 and beyond.

2023-2024 Young Members Committee Goals

- Continue having a full calendar of hiking, climbing, and social/planning events
- Continue building the committee and training new leaders
- Continue to foster and grow our relationships with the committees across the NY-NoJ chapter, as well as with the other YM groups across the AMC chapter at large

► Report from the Chapter Treasurer

The year-to-date (YTD) through October 2023 for the AMC NY-NoJ Chapter has continued to reflect a good level of activities, as well as further progress towards other financial goals. The local cash position remains healthy, with a surplus being generated YTD, however the Chapter's reserves position may become challenged, should currently active discussions with AMC staff result in a withdrawal to fund AMC-level operating deficits become a mandated reality. Positive investment earnings were earned on Excess Reserves and Endowments in the half year to June 2023.



Net monthly cash flows generated for 2023 so far (11/7/23) The larger receipt in July represents cash received from the YM Harriman Takeover and the Chapter's endowments (invested by AMC).

Highlights

Endowment distributions for 2023 of \$31,627 were 9% higher than 2022, however membership allocations and website revenue were 13% lower YTD. Program revenue of \$56,972 reflected a 5% increase YTD over 2022, while program expenses of \$78,901 were up by 9% YTD. Administrative costs of \$12,395 have trended 13% higher YTD.

Overall, the Chapter has generated a surplus though October 2023 of \$19,780, 13% less than YTD 2022, and closing locally held cash is \$93,780 (up from a \$74,000 adjusted starting balance). Meanwhile, AMC-held Capital reserves (including funds from the Bishop gift in 2020) have a balance of \$181,000, while Excess reserves of \$361,970 include investment returns of \$22,916 partly offset by a \$12,000 investment in programming costs for Educators Outdoor.

Operations through October 2023

The Chapter started 2023 with \$74,000 in adjusted local cash balances. Revenue or expense generating activities for the year to date have occurred at Corman Harriman Outdoor Center, Fire Island Cabin and elsewhere, including events by Harriman Program Committee (HPC), Trails, Canoe & Kayak, Conservation, Wilderness First Aid (WFA), Young Members, Hospitality and Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI). Additionally, the Young Members (YM) conducted their annual Harriman Takeover on July 21-23, and the Chapter Picnic was held over the June 9-11 weekend. Other commit-

tees (including Biking, Hiking, Backpacking, Leadership, Climbing and Programs) have also conducted various free outdoor or virtual events during the 2023 year. Chapter members have also supported AMC-led cleanup work at Baker Camp.

Remainder of 2023

Aside from the annual meeting, holiday events, volunteer recognition, sundry administrative and receipt of December membership allocations from AMC, most financial activities for 2023 have already occurred. A surplus of ~\$23,000 is anticipated to be recorded for the year, as compared to the original breakeven budget. A transfer of ~\$34,000 from the Chapter to Excess Reserves held by AMC in Boston will likely be made by year-end, in accordance with club policies.

2024 Planning

Our 2024 budgeting process is well advanced. The goals include supporting volunteer recruitment, outdoors training, volunteer appreciation, engagement activities for existing and future members and participants, conservation stewardship/advocacy and exploring new ways to support AMC's mission, while managing Chapter funds carefully.

Reserves Investing

During 2023, the Chapter invested \$12,000 to assist in programs run by AMC's NY Educators Outdoors. The ExCo considered many potential investments of its

Treasurer’s report continued

capital and excess reserves. AMC and the Chapter have a number of potential funding initiatives for 2024 and 2025, and we continue to identify ways to make a portfolio of positive step-change investments to accelerate progress towards AMC's mission, in alignment with local Chapter goals.

During October, AMC's Board of Directors Finance Committee advised a meeting of all Chapter Chairs and Treasurers that it will withdraw a total of \$1 million from Chapter reserves to fund 2024 projects which actively support AMC's mission. These will include costs related to the anticipated Q2 2024 launch of the Outdoor Connector (OC) project (an updated database interface for searching and signing up for AMC events), subsidized WFA training for AMC volunteers, and providing background checks for volunteers that are free of charge. Analysis and due diligence by the Board and staff continues. It is expected that our Chapter's share may be in the \$320-341k range. We have shared our concern that this funds reallocation will reduce potential future local growth and mission enhancement initiatives.

Financial Processes – changes in the works

During 2023, progress was made towards achieving various financial and administrative efficiencies that will improve future operations. including migrating bank accounts to what will be a common AMC-wide platform, streamlining certain payments, receipts and processing measures. and preparations for the OC

project launch. Another initiative involves an 11-chapter Excess Reserves Working Group, which is exploring ways to further improve financial management, operations and investment of Chapter funds. These activities will continue into 2024.

AMC Greater New York Committee

I have represented the Chapter on the GNYR committee, a sub-committee of AMC's board of directors, which is charged with identifying and supporting strategies to progress AMC's growth and mission achievement in our area. This includes general and project specific fund-raising, including Baker Camp, volunteer model evaluation and seeking synergies with area partners. It is encouraging that the board and GNYR committee see our region as key planks in the future of AMC.

Financial Summary

The following sheet shows more details around the financial position for YTD October 2023, forecast for 2023, actuals for 2018-2022 and the preliminary Chapter budget for 2024. It reflects the Chapter's local cash positions, as well as Chapter reserves, Excess reserves and Endowments held by AMC. The Chapter is in a financially strong position.

After starting as Chapter Treasurer in 2018 and serving for the past five years, I have reached the end of my term limit. In 2024, will fully support Scott Frank, who is nominated for the Chapter Treasurer role going forward.

Respectfully submitted by John Allman,
AMC NY-NoJ Chapter Treasurer, 11/9/2023

AMC NY-NoJ Chapter 2023 Financial Summary	10 Months Oct-23	10 Months Oct-22	Variance vs. Oct-22 %	To EOY 2023 vs. FY 2023 %	Budget 2023 vs. Actual 22 %	Revisions 2023 vs. Budget %	Forecast 2023 vs. Actual 22 %	Actual 2022 vs. 2021 %	Actual 2021 vs. 2020 %	Actual 2020 vs. 2019 %	Actual 2019 vs. 2018 %	Actual 2018 vs. 2017 %	Draft Plan 2024 vs. FY 23 %
AMC Revenue													
Chapter Allocations	17,346	17,355	(609)	8,755	27,100	(1,000)	26,300	36,681	36,631	26,676	31,529	42,402	26,000
Endowment Income	31,627	29,146	2,481	-	26,100	5,527	31,627	29,146	25,537	25,112	24,647	23,030	32,300
Web Membership Bonus	1,970	4,230	(2,260)	1,030	7,100	(4,100)	3,000	6,240	4,540	3,990	4,730	5,640	3,700
Interest Income & Gifts	3,808	200	3,608	192	200	1,800	3,000	200	3,150	7,027	-	-	1,000
AMC Revenue	52,750	51,530	1,220	9,976	60,500	2,227	62,727	62,767	59,868	63,795	60,896	71,872	63,000
	87%	80%	7%	16%	64%	8%	0%	5%	-6%	5%	-15%		0%
Program Revenue													
Chapter	5,697	11,150	(5,453)	2,302	16,000	(8,400)	7,990	11,153	444	2,709	22,043	11,505	9,000
Activities	24,594	17,842	6,752	-	38,000	(13,400)	24,594	17,842	14,260	10,236	38,387	26,541	27,000
Facilities & Services	26,882	25,195	1,687	-	33,500	(5,818)	26,882	25,395	34,244	38,159	37,925	53,615	27,000
Program Revenue	55,972	54,186	2,786	2,302	87,500	(26,227)	59,273	56,189	43,444	31,094	100,138	90,111	63,000
	65%	60%	5%	4%	58%	-32%	5%	14%	54%	-80%	6%		6%
Total Revenue	109,722	105,716	4,006	12,278	148,000	(26,000)	122,000	118,956	109,306	94,889	161,039	163,989	126,000
	71%	60%	4%	10%	121%	-18%	3%	6%	15%	-41%	2%		3%
Program Expenses													
Chapter	(25,112)	(27,024)	1,912	(3,763)	(45,400)	16,500	(26,895)	(32,567)	(19,092)	(7,710)	(23,403)	(35,444)	(43,000)
Activities	(25,812)	(20,074)	(5,738)	(675)	(42,000)	16,312	(26,889)	(20,034)	(16,226)	(6,238)	(27,245)	(27,702)	(72,000)
Facilities & Services	(27,876)	(25,003)	(2,873)	-	(35,800)	7,924	(27,876)	(25,003)	(27,140)	(17,484)	(39,635)	(53,082)	(30,000)
Program Expenses	(78,800)	(72,061)	(6,739)	(4,438)	(124,000)	40,641	(83,559)	(77,604)	(52,351)	(34,438)	(90,281)	(115,829)	(105,000)
	64%	60%	9%	2%	60%	-32%	7%	24%	62%	-62%	-22%		20%
Administrative Expenses													
Chapter	(8,385)	(8,424)	(563)	(1,949)	(11,000)	965	(10,935)	(11,032)	(5,441)	(15,052)	(43,496)	(27,692)	(13,000)
Activities	(1,299)	(1,720)	421	(600)	(5,200)	7,301	(1,899)	(3,294)	(1,843)	(9,298)	(7,433)	(6,900)	(5,000)
Facilities & Services	(2,110)	(806)	(1,304)	(692)	(2,300)	93	(2,607)	(915)	(3,665)	(3,538)	(476)	-	(3,000)
Administrative Expenses	(12,395)	(11,000)	(1,395)	(3,241)	(24,000)	8,553	(15,641)	(15,240)	(14,963)	(27,848)	(53,407)	(34,592)	(21,000)
	52%	72%	12%	21%	57%	39%	3%	2%	-46%	-40%	40%		38%
Total Expenses	(98,295)	(83,061)	(15,234)	(7,709)	(148,000)	43,000	(69,000)	(62,845)	(77,314)	(52,289)	(111,689)	(150,421)	(126,000)
	62%	60%	10%	8%	59%	-32%	7%	20%	24%	-58%	-6%		27%
Chapter Net Operating Result	18,427	22,655	(4,229)	4,573	-	23,000	29,000	26,111	31,792	32,608	19,393	13,562	-
	n/a	87%	-18%	20%	0%	#DIV/0!	-12%	100%	100%	100%	100%		-100%
Change in Prepayments	1,354	-	1,354	(1,354)	-	-	-	(2,029)	384	10,546	(9,130)	(3,600)	-
Chapter Net Cash Result	19,780	22,655	(2,875)	3,220	-	23,000	29,000	24,083	32,176	43,154	10,221	9,962	-
TFR (to)/from Reserves	(4,902)	-	(4,902)	(34,000)	2,000	(40,000)	(36,000)	(31,400)	(61,870)	(18,735)	(63,670)	(4,722)	2,000
Net Local Cash Flow	15,098	22,655	(7,558)	(30,780)	2,000	(17,000)	(5,683)	(7,317)	(23,803)	24,419	(53,449)	(5,640)	2,000
	75%	-310%	-32%	300%	-27%	-884%	114%	-75%	-220%	-147%	-1046%		-112%
Opening Local Cash Balances	78,683	86,000	(7,317)	-	71,000	4,683	78,683	86,000	115,803	90,985	144,334	138,694	63,000
Closing Local Cash Balances													
Chapter	98,780	108,655	(14,875)	(10,760)	74,000	(11,000)	63,000	61,627	63,627	107,967	92,401	124,022	65,000
Camp & Kayak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,373	3,784	4,296	18,335	-
Softball	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,057	4,208	1,967	-
	98,780	108,655	(14,875)	(10,760)	74,000	(11,000)	63,000	61,627	66,000	115,908	90,985	144,334	65,000
	127%	130%	-14%	-46%	91%	-15%	-23%	-9%	-20%	27%	-37%		3%
Chapter Balances held by AMC													
O/bal - Chapter Reserve	181,000	181,000	0	-	181,000	-	181,000	181,000	192,700	106,600	4,322	-	163,000
O/bal - Excess Reserves	346,372	375,608	(33,236)	-	346,372	-	346,372	375,608	266,982	200,612	205,450	214,926	413,970
	527,372	556,608	(33,236)	-	527,372	-	527,372	556,608	459,682	307,212	209,772	214,926	576,970
Gifts/Bequests Received	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	-
Chapter Reserve Invested	-	-	-	-	(44,000)	44,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
** Excess Reserves Invested	(12,000)	(7,500)	(4,500)	-	(51,000)	39,000	(12,000)	(7,500)	(20,000)	(5,000)	-	-	(341,447)
Chapter Transfers	4,902	-	4,902	34,000	(2,000)	40,000	36,000	31,400	61,870	30,335	63,670	4,722	(2,000)
^ Interest/Investment Income	22,916	(57,171)	80,087	-	9,626	(12,363)	22,916	(57,136)	98,946	39,135	33,870	(9,476)	-
Closing Balances held by AMC	542,970	435,935	107,035	34,000	439,998	136,972	576,970	527,372	550,608	459,682	307,212	209,772	238,528
	127%	94%	9%	0%	87%	31%	9%	-6%	22%	50%	46%		-60%
Endowments held by AMC													
^ NY-NoJ Chapter @ donors	738,552	721,731	16,820	-	883,517	(144,966)	738,552	721,800	883,123	743,992	648,527	561,922	706,252
	84%	100%	2%	0%	122%	-16%	2%	-18%	19%	15%	15%		-4%
CHAPTER FINANCIAL ASSETS	1,375,302	1,326,323	48,979	3,220	1,397,315	(18,994)	1,378,522	1,380,799	1,529,791	1,385,477	1,046,724	916,028	1,004,775
	96%	100%	4%	0%	105%	-1%	4%	-12%	16%	20%	14%		-27%
^ Assumes Investment Return	0.0%	> June '23		**	2023 = Educators Outdoors NY, 2022 = NJ Palisades/Groundworks, 2021 = WRPF, 2020 = CRFF								
					(341,447)								
					2024 - BoD Finance Committee will cause a withdrawal to fund Outdoor Connector project shortfall								

Activity Committee Reports

Backpacking
Bicycle
Canoe and Kayak
Hiking
Ski

► Backpacking Committee

The backpacking program in 2023 faced another challenging year with total trips net of cancellations being down 52% from the previous year (14 this year versus 27 last year).

The reason for the decline is primarily due to a very active leader no longer leading AMC trips. This has resulted in fewer leaders in training finishing the process of becoming leaders. That said, many of the trips this year were from one of the new leaders from last year and we are thankful she is so active.

The trip's run did cover all 4 seasons and went to a variety of locations in the northeast and mid Atlantic.



► Bicycle Committee

The Bicycle Committee faced setbacks this year due to injuries and several longtime leaders moving out of the area, and for that reason had fewer than a dozen rides on the calendar in 2023.

We are considering various ways to recruit new leaders for the Spring 2024 season, including a modified new leader training program which draws on the expertise of adjacent AMC chapters. One of the suggestions being discussed for 2024 is expanding the number of bike-packing and multi-day rides overnighting at motels.

The reasoning behind this is that our members are not cyclists who ride 30 to 50 miles (or more) each and every weekend, as is typical of a traditional bicycle club, of which there are many in our area. Instead, the outdoor experience of our members is broad when it comes to hiking and trekking adventures, and so if we can figure out the logistics of bicycling along the Erie Canal Trail,

for example, for a 3 to 5 day trip, we may find this niche is an activity our members would appreciate and support.

We also continue to support and encourage the use of Class I pedal assisted bicycles on our rides, which many local bicycle clubs do not welcome, as a way of encouraging folks who can no longer hike 8 to 10 strenuous miles to take up cycling as an alternative outdoor activity.

While the 2023 bicycle year did not develop as we hoped and expected, the members of the Bicycle Committee remain committed to ensuring our chapter's members and guests can continue to enjoy this activity for years to come.



► Canoe and Kayak Committee

The Canoe/Kayak Committee had scheduled a full slate of activities for 2023, and was able to find much success despite extreme weather challenges throughout the year.

The planned activities included:

- our annual Paddlers Party
- a series of winter pool sessions, run jointly with the Kayak and Canoe Club of New York
- 7 quietwater day and weekend trips
- 17 whitewater day and weekend trips
- 4 extended expedition trips (Pine Barrens; Southern Rivers; and two Adirondack trips)
- 1 Leader Training Workshop
- 2 Paddling Instruction Workshops

The weather extremes throughout the year created challenges for us. Some trips were canceled due to too little rain, others because of too much rain. Our four Esopus Creek trips – among our most popular whitewater runs – could not be conducted because NY State canceled the scheduled dam releases.

But there were also several success. Over 35 paddlers toasted the New Year at our Paddlers Party. The committee conducted a leader training workshop for Fire Island paddle leaders. Our trip leaders scouted new river routes in the Catskills and Adirondacks for future trips. And 15 students attended the two paddling workshops, five of whom joined our subsequent whitewater trips.

18 of our paddlers volunteered this year to be trip leaders or paddling instructors. The scheduled Leader Training Workshop, intended to develop new trip leaders, did not attract any registrants.

Our committee's finances ran at a small deficit. Our main source of revenue is the instructional workshops (\$1,542.)



► Hiking Committee

This year has been a relatively good year. Our numbers of hikes have increased, our number of leaders have increased, and the hiking committee has been actively leading a nice variety of hikes.



We currently post walks and hikes of interest and variability, and the public continues to show their support by attending our walks and hikes in moderate numbers. We hope to continue in this tradition next year as we introduce the Outdoors Connector, our new program.

We thank everyone who participated in our program in 2023 and we hope to see everyone again on the trails as we finish up the fall season and enter our winter season.



► Ski Committee

While there are still too few active leaders we have gained some new leaders in the past year. But again this season the lack of reliable snow within a couple of hours of NYC makes it difficult to run any day trips. And weekend trips are a challenge as well as the greater distance to snow requires 3 day weekends to be worthwhile.

Our leaders are focused on cross country and backcountry skiing but there are sometimes trips to lift served areas. These are usually not for downhill skiing/riding but mostly to practice on backcountry equipment for when the snow is good enough.

The new trip series that was started last year by our most active ski leader Ron Gonzalez (with Ron also being a Hike leader) to scout possible backcountry ski locations in the off season has continued and expanded this year. Ron is continuing to run most of the trips and is also mentoring the new leaders so hopefully more trips are on the way.



Facilities & Services Committee Reports

Baker Sebago Outdoor Center
Fire Island Cabin

Stephen & Betsy Corman Harriman Outdoor Center
Mohican Outdoor Center
Trails
Wilderness First Aid

▶ Baker Sebago Outdoor Center

From April through October, we hosted monthly volunteer clean-up days at the Baker Outdoor Center.



Each day featured a guest speaker, including AMC's President & CEO, Nicole Zussman, who was the speaker for the year-end volunteer day and fall celebration on October 21st, as well as a tour of the Baker camp and time for cleaning-up and cleaning-out the landscape and some of the buildings. The accessibility plans for Baker have been approved by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC), which account for approximately 27% of the \$16M campaign total. In addition, drawings and designs for both the landscape, and interior and exterior of the buildings are currently being finalized.

▶ Fire Island Cabin

The AMC Fire Island Cabin Committee welcomed back the first normal season after COVID 19.



The season opened on May 26, 2023 for Memorial Day Family Weekend and ended October 6, 2023 with Grand Finale Warm Waters. The AMC Fire Island Cabin had a full calendar for the 2023 summer season and many of the events, activities and trainings were led by the NY-NoJ Chapter leaders.

► The Stephen & Betsy Corman Harriman Outdoor Center (CHOC)

The Corman Harriman Outdoor Center had a full season in 2023 with 19 programs from May to October with just over 200 participants. We could not run our programs without our wonderful CHOC leaders who generously gave of their time to share their wisdom and expertise with everyone.



We are planning a few new programs in 2024, including an Introduction to Canoe Camping Weekend and an Introduction to Self-Defense in the Outdoors Weekend as well as adding another Trail Maintenance Weekend. We look forward to seeing many more people on the trails in Harriman and paddling on Breakneck Pond next season.

We also want to give a special shout out to Trish Bansi, as she led numerous CHOC programs this season and will be co-chair with me in 2024.. We hope to gather more feedback from our CHOC leaders and develop the quality of our programs for this coming season.

► Mohican Outdoor Center

The AMC Mohican Outdoor Center in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is enjoyed by many AMC members and outdoor enthusiasts. The Mohican Outdoor Center was also the location of the 2023 Fall Fest on Saturday, September 30th.



The event was a great success despite rain on and off all day. AMC staff and volunteers from the Delaware Valley, New York-North Jersey, and Potomac chapters helped organize this annual picnic and celebration. Nearly 200 members and guests enjoyed a day filled with activities including kayaking on the lake, hikes and nature walks, birding, archery, soccer, volleyball, and several others. The backpacking gear demonstration was very popular, as was the Conservation table, and Wilderness First Aid training took place throughout the day. The camp managers prepared delicious and hearty food for everyone, and in the late afternoon a rockin' band took center stage.

Fall Fest 2024 is planned for Saturday, September 28, 2024, so mark your calendars now and don't miss out on the fun and excitement.

▶ Trails

The Trails team at AMC in NY-NoJ works to keep trails clear and well-marked to enable a great hiking experience. The team has had a very busy 2023 to date.

Pelham Bay Park

Two trail maintenance events were held at Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx helping to clip and remove some invasive species that quickly cover the Siwanoy Trail. This rekindling of AMC's connection with NYC Parks will lead to many clear and well marked trails in the future.



Harriman/Bear Mountain State Park

34 NY-NoJ chapter members work in coordination with the New York Trail Conference to maintain the trails in Harriman/Bear Mountain State Park. An additional 25 AMC volunteers participating in 3 trail maintenance events were based out of the Harriman Outdoor Center. The central focus of the AMC trails team was reblazing. Many trails were difficult to follow and the old blazes were not reflective. Reflective blazes are now required for nighttime search and rescue needs.

Accomplishment Highlights

- A reroute and reblaze of a section of the Appalachian Trail was completed onto sections of local trails maintained by AMC members.
- Many miles of trails in the Northeastern section of Bear Mountain State Park have been reblazed. Rationalizing blaze location on some of these trails has not been done in decades.
- A section of the Suffern-Bear Mountain trail near Harriman Outdoor Center has been reblazed and carefully clipped.

▶ Wilderness First Aid

In 2023 the Wilderness First Aid committee (WFA) held five classes. The classes were held at the New Weis Center in Wanaque, New Jersey and at AMC's Harriman Outdoor Center in Harriman State park. A total of 54 students attended the classes. For comparison, in 2022 we had 53 students attend four classes.

For the past two years, the busiest classes were in April and May. The summer classes have the lowest number of students. The most common reasons for higher attendance in early classes is going on summer trips, camp counselors, leading trips.



Rich Dabal also assisted in conducting one additional WFA, class held in Mohonk State Park, New Paltz, New York. The lead instructor was from the Delaware Valley chapter and requested support. The class was geared toward climbers. The Delaware Valley (DV) has assisted in co-teaching NY-NoJ chapter classes and Rich has supported DV's chapter weekend for beginner hikers by presenting WFA basics.

If you're interested in becoming a WFA instructor or have any questions on the program contact Richard.

► Member Recognition

The New York—North Jersey Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club is proud to recognize longstanding members who celebrate their 25th and 50th years of membership in 2023.

50 Years of Membership

William Clements
Richard Erickson
Ann Gastrich
Bernard Gastrich
Rita Geoghegan

Gwen Kelly
Judy Kossover
Steve Latham
Ann Lesk
Michael Lesk

Sue Spencer
Frances Tesser
Ruth Wiener
Charles Wilson

25 Years of Membership

April Barth
Debbie Bell
Debbi Bernstein
Steve Bernstein
Alice Brillantes
Sandra Byard
Matthew Carballal
Arthur Chassen
Arthur Colligan
Nestor Danyluk
Tom Dolan
Elaine Drummond
Dennis Dubin
Ken Feder
Sheldon Freidenreich
Louise Glover
Peter Gordon

June Gordon
Robert Hans
Nigel Hawkins
Patricia Hogan
Monika Jaeger
Norman Jones
Andrew Joyce
Dana Kababik
David Kababik
Barry Kaplan
Thomas Kennedy
Barbara Kieffer
Stan Kline
David Landaeta
William Leavitt
Rebecca Linn
Vincent Marino

Edwin Maynard
Nicholas McKenna
Donna Nye
Robert Radler
Deborah Reed
Thomas Rock
Noel Schulz
Carolyn Smith
Joseph Smith
Joseph Tag
James Temple
Richard Weinberg

► In Memoriam

In memory of our friends who shared a passion for the outdoors

Vlad Broz

Albert Nelson

Mel Corwin

Pamela Nugent

Michael J Dalton

Loanis O’Neill

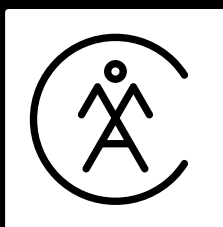
Helga Feder

Dottie Peters

Sandor Halasz

Kip Smith

Linda Loveland



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