

Appalachian Mountain Club Delaware Valley Chapter Annual Report for 2020

Oh whar a year! An overview by the Chapter Chair

What a year it has been! In last year's overview a sentence in my opening paragraph stands out.

"Every day our Chapter is providing great activities for our members, welcoming new people into the outdoors, maintaining trails..."

There was every expectation that we would continue to grow and expand on our strong foundation. Well, we all know that things have not turned out for most of us the way we expected them to in 2020. Yet, I believe the DV Chapter has been able to grow and expand in very different ways in this challenging year.

In early March we had to make some quick pivots when deciding how to handle our large Activity Social and Gear Swap, always a popular gathering time for members. At that time news of COVID was very vague and confusing, but a group gathered and wisely decided to cancel the event. Shortly after this, the impact of COVID became more certain and all AMC events were put on hold for the next four months. Our Fall Gathering Committee continued to work on plans for our event in October, 2020, at Pocono Environmental Education Center, but found in July that this event would also be cancelled for 2020.

In June, a plan developed by AMC Outdoor Leadership Development Committee allowed for a restart of activities with small, pre-registered groups. AMC is currently in Phase 2 of the restart with Phase 3 development underway but not expected to be implemented until a vaccine or other treatments gain better control of COVID. DV Chapter is hosting an increasing number of activities. Thanks to our leaders who were the first trailblazers: John Rowen, Larry Priori, David Stein, Eric Pavlak, Jay Gross, Jay Sitkin, Adrian Noble and Greg Bernet.

When I reflect on the year, the one lesson I feel I have learned from our Chapter is the respect for diversity. I'm referring to respect for diverse opinions as we try to cope with losing our chance to be outdoors with others, cope with the anxiety about both our personal and community safety, and to try to sift through the developing medical information. Even though there have been many different opinions about what AMC should be doing, I have observed everyone trying to respectfully work together to make the best decisions. This ability to work together respectfully will be a great asset as AMC strengthens efforts to engage diverse populations in the outdoors during 2021.

There has been so much learning this year. Using virtual meetings for social time, training, and Chapter business has become part of our lives. A hybrid model Leadership training will be offered this fall. The DV Chapter hopes to build on donations made from our reserve funds to Mohican Outdoor Center and the Maine Wilderness Initiative in 2020 by supporting two local projects in 2021. Our big event, Fall Gathering has been rescheduled to October, 2021 and we are prepared for a great event.

The pandemic has created more interest than ever before in the outdoors. There is a great need for education in how to interact wisely and sustainably with our environment. The DV Chapter of AMC has the expertise to be a leader in these new times. We hope you all become part of this effort.

— *Sysab Weida, Chapter Chair*

2021 Executive Committee Nominees

Chair	Bill De Stefano**
Vice Chair	Karla Geissler*
Secretary	Midori Wakabayashi
Treasurer	Margaret McDonald
Backpacking	Cindy Crosser
Bicycling	Robert Liston
Communication	Eric Pavlak
Conservation	Adrian Noble
Family Activities	Annette Sheldon
Hiking	Julia Watson*
Inclusion	Janet Penner
Leadership	Jeffrey Fritzingler
Membership	Amy Williams*
Paddling	Eric Pavlak
Social	Karen Rossino*
Trails	Greg Bernet
20s & 30s	Katie Martins, chair*
	Kristen Falzon, vice chair*

* new to the Executive Committee

** new to this position

Appie Awards for 2021

Larry Priori, Appie of the Year

Joe Nanfara, Golden Appie of the Year

Backpacking

In putting together this report, I was taken back to my first one for the year written in February. At that time, we had 20 backpacking trips on the schedule and two backpacking workshops. Within one month, this all changed and nothing was posted; everything was canceled.

David Mong led the only backpacks that were on our schedule for the year, totaling perhaps four or five weekends. Many were canceled as well.

Both workshops were canceled.

We did not have any new leaders given that we were unable to present our outstanding leadership program in the springtime which is consistently a forum that excites potential leaders to follow through.

I am pleased to say that I have been contacted by several individuals about leading trips and doing the workshops. I expect that the flood gates will open with participants and leaders, once we are able to safely and

without such difficulty in posting, screening and leading trips, join with us again as we've seen in the past. I don't feel that the enthusiasm for our activities has waned, but that the process of posting online, registering online, and safety concerns have held us all back, but just for awhile!

We will be back when the time is right! Backpackers are waiting.

— *Cindy Crosser, Backpacking Chair*



Bicycling

Following are comments from previous reports during 2020, as well as an annual summary.

February: Two bicycling leaders have been added for 2020. Both are also very experienced leaders in the New York-North Jersey Chapter. They are David Mong and Dave Brooks. David Mong lives in West Virginia and wishes to have his trips listed with DV when they are held in our area. Dave Brooks is the Vice Chair of the New York-North Jersey Chapter.

April: All AMC activities have been canceled through April 30. Hopefully, we will discuss when activities will be resumed at the EC meeting on April 14th. As of the time this report was written it looked likely that activities scheduled for May would also be canceled.

June: Hopefully, AMC activities may resume in the next few months. I participated in a video conference call with bicycling chairs from other AMC chapters on May 9. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Rubric for resuming activities from the perspective of bicycling. An article was published in the last few months that discussed the need for bicyclists riding in a single file to maintain distances of up to 30 meters (about 100 feet) to avoid exposure to COVID-19 during the pandemic. The article has yet to be peer-reviewed.

I am interested to see how other bicycling organizations are planning to implement rules for bicycling once such activities are again permitted. It seems that wearing face covering may allow for shorter distances between riders. I noticed posted rides on Meetup for three local bicycle groups listing rides beginning this weekend in eastern Pennsylvania. One group is allowing distances of no less than 20 feet with face covering to be available, but not necessarily worn. I understand that bicycle riding would be difficult with face covering but may be possible depending on

the difficulty of the ride. Once AMC-DV bicycling leaders have completed AMC COVID-19 training we can determine what requirements to impose when bicycling resumes.

September: Bicycling chairs from AMC chapters have been sharing information via email. There has been varying success in resuming bicycling activities. The Delaware Valley Chapter has had 3 bicycling activities since the reopening on July 1. It seems that bicycling chairs are in agreement that bicyclists should be spaced at least 20 feet apart while riding in single file during phase 2.

Fall Gathering was cancelled this year due to the coronavirus. DV is planning to lead the activity at the Pocono Environmental Education Center in 2021 instead. Tammy Brown and I are also planning to lead bicycle rides on the McDade Trail, with other leaders serving as co-leaders. I was able to explore the routes between Jerry Lees and White Pines (northern route) and between Jerry Lees and Bushkill Village (southern route) during August. Riding on the McDade Trail is demanding because of coarse gravel and some slopes. The distance to be covered and difficulty levels will be adjusted accordingly. The southern route is easier than the northern route.

October, Annual Summary: This has been a disappointing year for bicycling in the DV Chapter. Very few activities were held during 2020. Most of our previously active leaders have not lead bike rides this year as a result of COVID-19 concerns. Bicycling is typically inactive in our chapter during the cold weather months. It is entirely possible that we may be able to resume normal activities starting in Spring of 2021; it is also possible that a COVID-19 vaccination may be available by then. I am looking forward to rebuilding the bicycling program together with leaders during AMC's phase 3.

— *Robert Liston, Bicycling Chair*

Communication

Weekly Bulletin: I have been handling the weekly bulletin entirely by myself, since there is a bit of editing to do each week on the online activities (I don't think we want the Boston EC meeting or the New Hampshire hiking social), plus additions that would not be possible with the older copy-and-paste from a generated form method.

One of these is the combining of the advanced notices into the first weekly bulletin of the month. It did not seem reasonable to send out a separate bulletin with only one open trip. Also, we are now including more brief news items.

We now have 1,160 subscribers, up from 1,130 in February and 750 when I took over in May 2017.

Photo page: During the lockdown, I set up a photo page where anyone could post snapshots from their daily walks or rides. No need to set up an account or log in, unless you wanted to. We kept it up until late May and had 140 postings.

Earth Day 50 Art and Photography Contest: Set up a web page (<http://amcdv.org/contest.html>) to publish entries, which are shown both as smaller images and full size. The vote was tabulated by Kathy Kindness. Prizes were two \$50 REI gift cards, one in each category, plus lesser prizes. All entrants received something.

COVID Heroes: We have been honoring our chapter's COVID Heroes with a weekly addition to our web news page (<http://amcdv.org/news.html>) and with an item and link in the

weekly bulletin. Lennie Steinmetz gathered the information from nominations made by chapter members.

ActDB: There have been many problems with the activities database and electronic registration system, too many to enumerate here, including three days of outage of the automatic email notification system. This not only resulted in hours of extra work for chapter volunteers which was compounded by poor or no communication between AMC staff and the chapters,

Website: With numerous problems besetting electronic trip registration, I developed this page, accessible from the leaders' page: <http://amcdv.org/registration.html>. I also added a guide page for leaders wanting to take COVID training.

The list of leaders who have taken COVID training provided by AMC is in the form a spreadsheet posted to a secure server site accessible only to approvers. I created and update daily a list at for activity chairs, with the leaders' names in alphabetical order by last name. Unlike the spreadsheet, there is no personal information on this page, just names.

I have begun the work of migrating the website to Wordpress from our current platform.

— *Eric Pavlak, Communication Chair*

Conservation

We started the year on a strong footing and managed to hold seven conservation-specific events before the advent of the coronavirus; including tree plantings at Saunders Wood and Pauncussing preserves; a trip to a presentation by climate scientists; and invasive species removal at Mariton Wildlife Sanctuary and Crowes Nest Preserve.

We also held a series of Land and Water Fund themed hikes in local areas that have received LWCF funds, with trailhead talks (given by AMC's Mid Atlantic Policy Manager, the chapter Conservation Chair or the hike leader) about the importance of LWCF and full funding. Participants were encouraged to use the AMC and DV Chapter links to send emails to their representatives, in some cases using their smart phones to do so while on the hike.

Unfortunately, due to restrictions introduced in March to fight the pandemic, many planned events were cancelled, including all in-person Earth Day 2020 activities.

On the web, we continued to focus on the issue of full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund with information about this and a link to allow members to learn more and to contact their Congresspersons to urge their support of, and to vote for bills to achieve this. We hope that all this activity was a contributing factor in the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, the Conservation highlight of 2020.

When in-person activities became impossible we highlighted virtual events such as the Earth Day 50 Photo & Art Contest and BeOnlineWithAMC events.

We are hoping for a return to in-person events in the very near future.

— *Adrian Noble, Conservation Chair*

Diversity, Equality & Inclusion

The following provides a summary of the 2020 projects undertaken by the DEI Committee. Unfortunately, due to COVID cancellations, most of the projects stayed in the planning phase for 2020 and hopefully we can implement more of these in 2021.

This committee's focus is to ensure that membership and activities of the chapter align with the DEI goals as outlined by AMC headquarters. Our focus is to identify and reduce



barriers that limit membership and participation in activities, and to expand the diversity of the Chapter's outreach within the community.

The information from a tabling event that took place at the Delaware Water Gap trail head was analyzed to understand what opportunities might be attractive to new members where we could offer information not just about hiking skills, but also offer hikes featuring other educational opportunities (history hikes, cultural hikes, wildflower identification, etc.) Additional tabling events at other locations (such as Wissahickon Valley Park) will take place (post-COVID) and it is expected that this will allow us opportunities to reach other diverse groups of people. Based on the feedback from the DWG tabling event, we would like to offer some shorter, easier, "themed" hikes. At least some of these would be in locations that can be reached with public transit (or other transportation alternatives) to see if we can tap into a more diverse participant base. An example of this would be an urban hike in downtown Philadelphia to see some of the renowned Murals around the city.

This year the DEI group also connected with a local program called Bike Works that works with at-risk inner-city children of Allentown and the Lehigh Valley. In their flagship program, Earn A Bike, students team up with adult mentors for a 12-week course in bike mechanics and safety. The program covers a range of topics include tire and tubes, brakes and hubs. They also host a bike rodeo where essential bike safety skills are enforced. Through the course, each student maintains a journal chronicling their learning journey in bike repair and maintenance. While working on their bikes, students learn work skills by following their manuals, working as a team, and seeing the satisfaction of turning a broken bike into a functional one. Once students complete their classes, they earn their refurbished bike

and new helmet. In addition, there are year-round cycling opportunities with CBW staff and local cycling clubs. The DEI group has worked on a grant proposal for our Chapter to help support this important program.

The DEI committee has participated in web-based discussion groups with like-minded organizations (other AMC Chapters, NextGen Advisory Council, etc.) with a focus on tackling issues related to diversity and inclusion in outdoors-oriented groups. We are looking for opportunities to use some of the ideas picked up from these larger groups to improve our Delaware Valley outreach.



Upcoming Goals and Initiatives for 2020: Many of the initiatives the DEI committee explored earlier in the year were put on hold for 2020. Some of the key activities we are anxious to relaunch in 2021 are as follows: Expanding on our engagement with Bike Works to reach youth in Allentown. Further develop introductory hikes with themes that are interesting to potential new members (based on feedback from tabling events).

For this we will want to tap into the expertise of our hike leaders who may have knowledge that would help us plan these special events.

We'd also like to investigate opportunities to expand our reach through colleges and universities to reach younger diverse audiences. This has been a successful strategy used by other similar organizations that we would like to try here. And finally, we plan to continue to collaborate with other AMC chapters and other like-minded groups to find more ways to expand our DEI efforts.

— Janet Penner, DEI Chair

Family Activities

There were two Family Adventure Weekend Mohican Getaways: July 10-12 and August 21-23. The former had 10 attendees in all, and the latter had nine. Participants reported satisfaction with both events.

There were four family hikes offered: November 17, 2019 at Washington Crossing (NJ) State Park with four attendees, March 8 at Palmyra Cove Nature Park, Palmyra, NJ, September 27 at Princeton Battlefield/Institute for Advanced Study Woods, Princeton, NJ, with six attendees, and October 4 at Witherspoon Woods, Princeton, with 10 attendees.

We observe that there is interest in local family events, but reluctance by families to travel far for short events.

— Annette Sheldon, Family Activities Chair

Hiking

This year, 2020, will be one to remember, or perhaps one better to forget, though likely some of both. Of all the annual predictions, New Year resolutions and plans for the year, it's fair to say that no one realized what was to come.

New Year's Day 2020 seemed like such a nice start to another great year. We celebrated and enjoyed life in traditional ways – ringing in the new year at midnight, coming together with family, enjoying holiday meals, and gathering with friends for healthy and fun activities.

At Delaware Valley Chapter, sixty-six of us enjoyed New Year's Day with hikes along the Delaware River or at French Creek State Park. In that first week of January 2020, DV hike leaders scheduled 13 hikes that were enjoyed by 198 hikers. It all seemed so routine at the time.

Delaware Valley members and friends continued our daily outings during the first months of the year. Many hike leaders and hundreds of hikers enjoyed the trails, even as word of Covid-19 began spreading around the world. By March the virus had spread out of control in the northeast and we knew it was time to suspend in-person activities. From mid-March until July, all hikes and other in-person events, were cancelled.

AMC relaunched limited in-person small-group hikes in July, after establishing new guidelines and safety measures. At the same time, Chapter Leaders completed training in new safety protocols designed to minimize the risk of catching or spreading Covid. Thanks to some of our very best leaders, our chapter has run two to four hikes each week since July, plus held special events at Harriman and Mohican.

Our reduced hike schedule is expected to grow slowly through the next few seasons. Autumn colors will lead to winter's stark beauty, Spring's bright colors, and summer warmth. The Delaware Valley Chapter will be there for every step — leading hikes and organizing other outdoor adventures, as always with the health and safety of our members in mind.

Forecasting the future in these times seems like folly, yet I'll be bold enough to offer a vision of the future: there will again come a time when life and activities return to normal. Not a new normal, but the life we took for granted before 2020. Only we'll be a little wiser and appreciate it more. There will be a time when we will again freely gather to enjoy hikes with friends old & new. A time to renew smiles and break bread together, and create new memories of adventures yet to come.

It may be some time before all this comes to pass, perhaps not in 2021. Yet my optimism sees a better future that is as inevitable as the changing of the seasons. The time will come when another New Year's Day is celebrated and enjoyed as it was in 2020.

— John Rogers, Hiking Chair

Leadership

Outdoor Leadership Training Course: In early 2020, planning for DV Chapter's Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT) was in full swing, when we ultimately had to postpone it for safety reasons due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Considering the challenges of the COVID-19 environment, our Leadership Committee took its time to establish virtual



training to substitute most of the OLT sessions. We were excited to welcome several new facilitators, many of whom attended AMC's Train the Trainer (T3) program in 2019.

The training took place in late fall 2020. This virtual platform will likely be representative of the new norm for leader training. Initial learning is conducted via interactive online sessions, followed by a shorter, in-person module. Some new enhancements and considerations for training include:

1. Collaboration with AMC staff and other chapters to develop a best-in-class learning experience;
2. Limited group size to support greater interaction;
3. Expanded DEI session, given social justice movements such as Black Lives Matter, with plans to roll out DEI as a continuing education series to existing leaders;
4. Replication of the in-person experience of leader training in the virtual environment, which is so important to showcase our chapters' culture and camaraderie.

Reflecting on the events of 2020, while life's disruptions presented challenges, they also fostered opportunities for positive change. We are very excited about moving forward to enhance our leadership training and welcome new leaders, as well as beginning a continuing education platform for our existing leaders.

I sincerely want to thank our virtual facilitation team who worked so hard to make our training impactful and fun: Barbara Beatrice, Katie Barok, Jeff Fritzing, Karla Geissler, Raun Kercher, Bob Liston, Denis McCartan, Adrian Noble, Larry Priori, Julia Watson, and Amy Williams. I want to extend special thanks to Raun Kercher, who not only instructed trainees, but also shared his technical expertise, which was instrumental in making DV's virtual training a success.

We all look forward to building on this in future trainings.

Other Leadership Initiatives: April 22, 2020 marked the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. To commemorate this momentous event, I launched an AMC-wide campaign in which leaders across all chapters planned multiple Earth Day-related activities. While COVID-19 unfortunately forced all activities to be cancelled for the remainder of 2020, plans are underway to reschedule these events in 2021 under the program name Earth Day 50 +1. We at the Delaware Valley Chapter are looking forward to again take the lead on this important initiative.

Our Outdoor Leadership Development Committee chapter representative, Barbara Beatrice, actively participated in the development and implementation of AMC's rubric, which defined the standards for which AMC was able to reopen activity

offerings. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our chapter leaders who have stepped up to offer safe activities now that we are open.

The AMC Center for Outdoor Learning & Leadership (COLL) offers a Train the Trainer course, emphasizing experiential training methods to enhance outdoor education platforms. I remain very active in planning and instructing for this highly regarded program. In 2020, that program was offered virtually and focused on the unique challenges of experiential learning in a virtual environment.

In summary, to use a phrase so common in 2020, this year has witnessed many unprecedented challenges, but:

We are AMC-DV Strong!

We will embrace change!

We will not stand still!

And we will move forward and become even greater in 2021.

— Jeff Fritzing, *Leadership Chair*

Lehigh Valley Group

The Lehigh Valley Group, now in its twenty-eighth year of existence, had a less-than-typical year this year thanks to COVID. Meetings usually take place on the third Wednesday of every month (except December, July and August). The January and February meetings took place as usual at Illick's Mill in Bethlehem, the home of the AMC's Mid-Atlantic Region office.

Then the COVID shutdown resulted in the cancellation of the scheduled March meeting and the re-scheduling of the April program. But 28 years of existence has taught us how to be resilient, so starting in May the LVG meetings resumed as ZOOM programs.

AMC Mid-Atlantic Region staff member Kimberly Witt provided the technical assistance to help us launch these first ZOOM meetings, and our members learned to use ZOOM technology so that we could at least get together in the virtual world. We discovered some added benefits to these ZOOM meetings were that they were attended by people who lived as far away as South Carolina, and we were able to have presenters from as far away as New Hampshire who were able to share their programs from the comfort of their own homes!

Programs this year have included presentations on a wide range of topics including: "Geologic History of Pennsylvania", Frank Pazzaglia; "Trail Talk from an Old Dirt Kicker", author J. Robert Harris; "Intro to Birding in the Lehigh Valley",

Marilyn Guidry; "Earth Day Then and Now", Jeff Fritzing & Mark Zakutansky; "Tramping New Zealand's Great Walks", Sam Jamke; "Discover the Highlands Trail in Pennsylvania", Patricia McCloskey, Cathy Poppenwimer, Kimberly Witt, & Mark Zakutansky; and "Fire and Ice: Peru, Chile, and Argentina", Margaret Moore.

Chapter Chair Susan Weida provided information on upcoming AMC plans and events, and Conservation Chair Adrian Noble provided information on local & national conservation efforts.

While our in-person meeting attendance usually ranges from 30 to 40 people, our ZOOM meetings included as many as 75 participants. We look forward to continuing these meetings in 2021, in the virtual world or in person as COVID allows!

— Phill Hunsberger, *Lehigh Valley Group Chair*

— Lennie Steinmetz, *Lehigh Valley Group Co-Chair*

Membership

Due to the pandemic, all the Membership and Publicity Committee's plans for new member activities, the gear swap, welcome hikes, volunteer opportunities, and community events went on hiatus in March. We did hold an ice-skating social and maintained a tabling presence at the Banff Film Festival before quarantine began, however.

When we could not be outdoors together, DV AMC pivoted to offer virtual touchpoints to keep our members engaged. Raun Kercher, Publicity Chair, enhanced our presence on social media by sharing ideas for activities, profiles of members and leaders, a video about the new AMC activity rating system, and articles about recreation and environmental issues. In addition to creating custom-produced video content (or occasionally using content provided by Hanna Hergenrather of the Boston office) for social media, Raun made the extra effort to add the correct hash tags and "sharing" with other regional social media groups to gain maximum social media reach. As a result, DV AMC's many social media posts have gained the attention of thousands of members and non-members alike. And with kudos to Raun, the DV chapter had the most popular social media post (compared to other AMC chapters) thus far in 2020 with 14,355 unique users!

As in-person community events became online community events, Raun created several informative media presentations for April's virtual Earth Day celebrations in Hope, NJ and Langhorne, PA. I served as a resource for Temple University's Virtual Great American Campout in July by providing information and AMC-created video content about hiking, backyard camping, and AMC activities. In September, Raun created and produced an exceptional *AMC Delaware Valley Overview* video initially intended for showing at the virtual Peace Fair in Lahaska, PA. Going forward, we expect the video will become a valuable presentation and marketing tool for some time.

As Membership Chair, I continued to answer questions regarding AMC in general as well as individual member accounts. I also provided support for DV AMC's leader recognition program, our newsletter outreach, our virtual photo album, and our first Earth Day photo and art contest.

All of us in DV AMC recognize our members as our greatest asset. We value your continued interest in and support of club activities, conservation efforts, and volunteer programs. We look forward to seeing you again in person in 2021. In the meantime, be well – both indoors and outdoors - safely.

— Kathy Kindness, Membership Chair

Paddling

We have run only one paddling trip this year, one I led on the Schuylkill River and Canal at Phoenixville. This is one of two river canal loops in our area that can be done with no shuttle and two short portages.

I have called or emailed several other paddling leaders, and none seem interested in running trips without shuttles, or with a limit of 10 participants. I pointed out to them they ran lake paddles in previous years.

I submitted the following to the Interchapter Paddling Committee (IPC), of which I am our chapter's representative, and to

the OLDC via our representative Barbara Beatrice:

The one change I want to make in the leader rules for paddling trips is to allow shuttles, with the following provisos:

- All shuttle car occupants including the driver must have non-ventilating face coverings. This excluded urban cycling masks and valved construction masks.
- Windows must be open.
- No more than two people per row of seats. (No pack 'em in clown cars.)

It is very limiting not to shuttle on paddling trips, particularly in our area with few lakes and a long drive to the saltwater bays. I do not believe these rules are in violation of our rubric and would safely allow shuttles.

This change was not added to the latest version of the reopening rubric. While this type of shuttle is not specifically forbidden by the rubric, it would be much better if it was specifically allowed.

At an August 5 meeting the IPC also reviewed and modified five proposals for funding under the Waters and Rivers Protection Fund, a newly-established AMC fund that is supported by chapters donating some of their excess reserves.

The projects totaled a little less than \$19,000 and were all in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. None of the \$25,000 currently in the fund came from DV. Boston Chapter, which has by far the largest reserves, donated most of the



money. All five projects were approved by email vote over the two weeks following the meeting. DV voted yes.

— Eric Pavlak, Paddling Chair

Leroy Smith Shelter

The Shelter Watch care taking program is on-going since the Shelter's dedication in 1973.

The watchers check the condition of and remove debris at the Shelter, composting privy and adjacent camping site, three lower springs and the Katellen trail, and report their findings to the shelter chair.

The Shelter Watcher Winter, Spring-Fall 2019-2020 season was interrupted and revised by the COVID-19 virus crisis,

its dangers and related restrictions. Five Winter Watches (March - May) were cancelled, and Spring-Fall Watches (every week) did not begin until July 1, 2020. Winter Watches (every two weeks) are scheduled for November 2020 through April 2021. No Ridge Runner was assigned to the AT this year.

The Katellen trail, 3/4 mile from the parking lot to the shelter, was rehabilitated September 19 (nine workers) and October 4 (seven workers). Its rocky, storm damaged condition challenged even the most sure-footed among us.

— Patricia Sacks, Shelter Chair

Social

The Activity Social/Gear Swap: Mmm... penne pasta with vodka cream sauce, meatballs, grilled chicken, cole slaw, fruit salad and cake! Sounds delicious, doesn't it? We were all ready to celebrate our past years' accomplishments, maybe trade some gear, and enjoy the company of fellow members over a delightful dinner. But no! Covid came along and put the brakes on that plan.

But we kept the faith - the Annual Picnic was an entire 3 months later. We'd celebrate then, right? We reserved the park pavilion and kept our fingers crossed. It didn't take long before we realized that would not be happening either.

And the Annual Meeting/Dinner? Here we are almost at that date and are finalizing plans for a Zoom meeting. It will be different from past meetings. But it will allow us to thank and honor our members that help us be the incredible organization that DVAMC is.

Our future is hard to predict, but we will make every attempt to continue to hold social events that allow us to renew old friendships and establish new ones. We will explore new activities employing Zoom or social distancing, but we need your help. Let us know your ideas and your level of involvement. Would you like to see a virtual book club formed that would focus on books exploring the environment, travel, history, etc.? What about periodic virtual social gatherings by area of interest such as biking, hiking, backpacking or paddling? Would you be interested in watching a documentary about our national parks, or an individual essential to protecting our environment or other topics and having a Zoom discussion afterwards? We need your ideas!

Please keep in touch by emailing social@dvamc.org. Let's stay safe and stay social!

— Jeanne Mantell, Social Chair

Trails

Since I took over as Trails Chair last November, trail activities stayed active in the late fall and winter. Maintenance at Valley Forge National Park under Jose Ibarra continued while gaining many new first-time participants. The Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Stewards were active building new trails at Ringing Rocks County Park and Veterans' Park, as well as exploring the possibility of repairing and maintaining trails at the Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center at Fox Gap; and the New Jersey Highlands Trail Crew continued maintenance at Jenny Jump State Forest, including Dan Loughner and I clearing massive storm damage in December and January.

Then COVID struck and everything shut down in March. This was especially problematic because the AMC professional



crew was planning to work at Valley Forge in late March, and they were going to offer a one of a kind trail leader training there so that our chapter could identify new trail leaders and get involved maintaining new trails in addition to the two we already care for. I was also scheduled to meet with V.F. park officials to negotiate a new memorandum of understanding for trail maintenance at the park. All these events were cancelled with no re-scheduled date. The COVID closure also shut down our Leroy Smith shelter on the Appalachian Trail as well as our AT crew headed by Dan Schwartz, which normally only starts doing maintenance in late March, so there was no maintenance done on the AT. And of course, the Highlands Trail crews shut down, my planned trail maintenance workshop never got off the ground, and the COVID closure has financially affected the Kirkridge Center, making it unclear as to their future status and if we will be taking on the trails there.

After the COVID hiatus, things started to return very slowly, especially since by then it was summer, a time when trail work generally slows down anyway because of the heat. Dan did not call the AT crew. Valley Forge has STILL not allowed volunteers to return to work as of this writing, and to make matters worse, I was sidelined all summer with an injury and required surgery and recovery, so the Highlands Trail crew never got out.

In September, work started to return. Dan and his wife, Noelle, and Mike and Kieu Manes did some unofficial maintenance on the AT and Dan and I chainsawed storm damage that

was reported there. Tropical Storm Isaias wreaked tremendous damage on the Katellan approach trail to the AT, so I organized my first official trips to take care of that damage and the repairs are now complete. The PA Highlands Trail crew has also been back to work at Veterans' Park and we expect to finish our new trail there soon, and we will be returning to Ringing Rocks for maintenance, and I expect to have the New Jersey crew out at Jenny Jump in the near future.

As to the upcoming year, I hope that trail leaders will step forward and offer more activities and that more volunteers will participate so that we can return to our normal work schedule. I also hope that the National Park Service at Valley Forge will allow volunteers to work again soon, and that I might be able to offer an in person trail maintenance workshop. A couple of new developments add hope for the future: there is a possibility that the Highlands Crew will be building new trails on a Bridgeton Twp. tract near Ringing Rocks and on the northeast side of Lake Nockamixon State Park. We have been scouting possible trail routes in this area. And work on the Upper Bucks Rail Trail and connection to Veterans' Park were able to continue during the COVID closure by an exemption given to the construction company. These trails should be opening soon.

— *Greg Bernet Trails Chair*

20s & 30s

The year started off with a variety of scheduled hikes for members in their 20s & 30s. Leading up to mid-March, eight trips for young members in their 20s & 30s occurred. Generally, folks coming to these outings are looking to specifically meet others in their age range to create a peer group with shared interests.

By the time mid-March rolled around any upcoming trips were cancelled. To support 20s & 30s chapter leaders, AMC staff conducted Zoom meetings to help leaders look further down road to brainstorm how to support this demographic. The most promising idea was sending a welcome email to individuals purchasing an Under 30 membership letting them know about 20s & 30s chapter opportunities. In the Delaware Valley Chapter, the 20s portion of 20s & 30s has less representation, and this may be one way to help ensure that 20-somethings know about 20s and 30s-specific activities.

As all of us continue to navigate through these unusual times, new leadership will take over representing 20s & 30s on the Delaware Valley Executive Committee this autumn. Hopefully new leadership brings new ideas on how to engage young members, and support leaders, during this unique time.

— *Kate Prisky, 20s & 30s Chair*

Treasurer

Overall Financial Assessment: The activities of the Delaware Valley Chapter resulted in a surplus for the 12 months ending on September 30, 2020. Notably, the surplus for 2020 is twice the surplus for 2019. This is because most activities which would have generated expenses in 2020 were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic however the 12 months ended September 30 included some revenue from October 1 to December 31, 2019.

Financial Details: The Chapter's books are maintained on a cash basis in a computerized accounting system.

The Delaware Valley Chapter operates as a branch of the Appalachian Mountain Club, a non-profit corporation with headquarters in Boston Massachusetts. Chapter financial activities comply with rules established by the AMC, including the AMC fiscal year from January 1 through December 31. The Chapter provides an annual financial report, within one month after completing the fiscal year, for the AMC audit and inclusion in the annual club wide financial report.

Chapter income comes primarily as an allocation of a portion of the AMC dues paid by members who reside in the Delaware Valley area. In the 12 months covered by this report, the dues allocation provided 34.6 percent and 27.6 percent in 2020 and 2019 respectively of the annual income.

Because this report occurs before the end of the official fiscal year, it follows the format from recent prior years and covers a 12-month accounting period from October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020.

— *Margaret McDonald, Treasurer*

Financial report follows

Delaware Valley Chapter Appalachian Mountain Club
 Comparative Statement of Operational Income and Expenses
 For 12 Months Ended September 30

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
<u>Income</u>		
Allocation from AMC Dues	\$ 16,294.50	\$ 15,021.25
Membership Sales	650.00	2,490.00
Reimbursement from ATC	8,275.12	7,590.52
Contributions	473.00	-
Other Income	2,995.22	7,423.28
Interest from Bank Accounts	6.40	5.33
Activities-Trips	<u>18,338.30</u>	<u>21,756.58</u>
Total Income	<u>47,032.54</u>	<u>54,286.96</u>
 <u>Expenses</u>		
Communication	1,574.91	1,307.34
Attendance at Club Wide Meetings	1,394.05	2,992.20
Trails and Shelter Maintenance	8,730.69	9,498.20
Recognition	2,005.27	1,703.85
Chaper Social Events	2,334.95	4,872.09
Committee Expenses	718.14	1,745.57
Membership Activities	19,637.26	21,878.74
Leadership and Outdoor Skills	913.45	4,269.61
Other Expenses	1,643.88	2,008.87
Donations	<u>890.00</u>	<u>750.00</u>
Total Expenses	<u>39,842.60</u>	<u>51,026.47</u>
 Income over Expense	 <u>\$ 7,189.94</u>	 <u>\$ 3,260.49</u>

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Recognition of Past Service and Awards

Appie of the Year is awarded to a newer chapter member who has provided extraordinary service to the chapter. Past winners:

2019 Kathy Kindness	2006 Craig Smith
2018 Jay Gross	2005 Jim Catozzi
2017 John Rogers	2004 Jennifer Decker
2016 Greg Bernet	2003 Kevin Perry
2015 Denis McCartan	2002 Chris Cayer
2014 Sue Bickford-Martin	2001 Andrea Deaton
2013 Terry Berntsen	2000 Paul Davis
2012 Rich Pace	1999 Bill McCaughey
2011 Midori Wakabayashi	1998 Kevin Burkman
2010 Rhoda Eisman	1997 Kevin Kramer
2009 Anne Murphy	1996 Rajat Tandon
2008 Joan Aichele	1995 Rich Kajander
2007 Rich Wells	1994 Marty Seibert
	1993 Kathy Kelly-Borowski

Golden Appie of the Year is awarded to a chapter member who has provided extraordinary service to the chapter over many years. Past winners:

2019 Mike Manes	2008 Joseph Bell
2018 Phill Hunsberger	2007 Eric Pavlak
2017 Jim Catozzi	2006 Lennie Steinmetz
2016 Pat and Ken Sacks	2005 Walt Underhill
2015 Rich Wells	2004 Dan Schwartz, Lois Nichols
2014 Esther Underhill	2003 Gary Leander
2013 Nancy & Cliff Hence	(None for 2002)
2012 John Rowen	2001 Bill Steinmetz
2011 Mark Kern	2000 Helmut Gude
2010 Allen Male	1999 Malcolm White
2009 Peter Jarrett	1998 Jane Shepard

Chapter Committee Recognitions. The Appalachian Mountain Club and the Delaware Valley Chapter gratefully acknowledge the volunteer hours and many contributions of all outgoing and continuing Chapter Executive Committee members as well as the Nominating Committee members.

Past Chapter Chairs

Susan Weida 2019-20	Alan Kahn, 1990-91
Lois Rothenberger 2017-18	Kent Johnson, 1987-89
Joan Aichele 2014-16	George Heckler, 1985-86
Allen Male, 2012-13	Kay Cox, 1982-84
Craig Smith, 2010-11	Jane Shepard, 1980-81
Jim Catozzi, 2009	Malcolm White, 1978-79
Paul Davis, 2007-08	Win Howe, 1976-77
Andrea Deaton, 2005-06	Fred Cox, 1973-75
Chris Rapacki, 2003-04	Gardner Dean, 1971-72
Peter Jason, 2001-02	Ruby Horwood, 1969-70
Priscilla Estes, 2000	Martin Davenport, 1967-68
Lennie Steinmetz, 1997-99	Ted Talbot, 1965-66
Bill Steinmetz 1994-96	Dr. Robert Tyson 1962-64
Tom Stress, 1993	

Outgoing Executive Committee Members: Kathy Kindness, membership John Rogers, Hiking; Kate Pribyl; 20s & 30s, Jeanne Mantell, Social

Many thanks to the members of the 2020 Nominating Committee, Adrian Noble, chair plus Dan Loughner, Raun Kercher, Marcia Telthorster, Larry Priori and Amy Williams. The Nominating Committee members are active chapter members, of which no more than one may be a voting member of the current Executive Committee.

Member Anniversary Recognitions

The Delaware Valley Chapter is proud to recognize the following for their many years of membership with AMC. We thank each of them for their commitment and continued support of AMC. If you have reached either the 25 or 50 year milestone and are not on this list, please contact the membership chair so you can be included at next year's annual dinner.

Fifty years: This member joined AMC in 1970 and has faithfully continued membership for the past 50 years:

Swanson Fletcher

Twenty-five years: These members joined AMC in 1994 and have continued their membership for the past 25 years:

Alan Breach	Blake Krapf
Sandra Christman	Lila Lapides
Rosalind Dutton	Jeffrey Lippincott
Priscilla Estes	Michael Ritterman
Sanford Fisher	Nicholas Rosato
Virginia Fisher	Michiyo Salen
Margaret Fuoco	Philip Salen
William Galanes	Kathleen Schea
Frank Gentile	Frederick Schea
Lorraine Gentile	Joseph Walker
Joseph Hanley	Kathleen Walker
Deborah Hart	Kenneth Warren
Michael Inskeep	Paul Wulfinf

Electronic copies of this report are available at: <http://amcdv.org>