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Skiers make their way down Hurricane Trail on Cranmore Mountain in North Conway. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Welcome to North Conway

Welcome to winter in North Conway and the White Mountains. If summer activity was any indicator, the Mount Washington Valley will have a busy winter this year, with people flocking to the area to enjoy outdoor recreation while

socially safe distancing and wearing masks.

New Hampshire has been among the states leading the way on how to best implement CDC guidelines for safety in these uncertain times,

NORTH CONWAY MAGAZINE

Mt. Washington Valley's premier visitors guide

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with the Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce serving as an informative resource to help businesses and visitors alike on how to take in all of the valley's amenities safely.

Throughout the year, visitors have been turning to the outdoors for recreation, and the valley saw increases in hiking, biking, canoeing and kayaking throughout the summer and fall. Winter offers an array of other options for outdoor enthusiasts. From skiing and fat tire biking to snowmobiling and hiking, there's a world of outdoor adventure to be explored.

Add the valley's diverse range of shops and fine dining, and attractions like the Conway Scenic Railroad and the Mount Washington Auto Road, and you see why the valley offers such a great escape.

In this edition of North Conway Magazine, you'll find our guide to local downhill and cross-country ski areas, with a look at of how



Mount Washington as seen from Main Street in North Conway Village. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

things will be different as resorts work to provide safe conditions under which to play.

We also present a guide to some of the new backcountry skiing options that have been developed in the past few years, as well as information on fat tire biking, which has also been increasing in popularity.

We've got selections of trails for hiking, snowmobiling and biking.

Whether you're here for the week or a day, we hope this guide will help you make your visit a memorable one.

Above all, courtesy is the way of the day, for visitors and residents alike. Stay safe, wear your mask, practice safe social distancing and be kind as you take in winter's splendor here in this beautiful part of the world.

— Tom Eastman and Terry Leavitt

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Ski areas adapt

What you need to know

by Tom Eastman

First, the good news: North Conway was named by readers of USA Today as the “No. 1 Ski Town in North America” (and the Jackson Ski Touring Foundation was ranked fifth in a list of the top 10 cross-country ski resorts).

But the question remains in this “new normal” of pandemic times: What will COVID-19 do to the joy of skiing?

After shutting down last spring, New Hampshire’s ski areas are taking the governor’s new safety guidelines to heart.

The big message from Ski NH, ski resorts and touring centers is that knowledge is key.

“You need to know before you go what policies and procedures are in place,” said Shannon Dunfey-Ball, business manager for Ski NH of Conway, who said



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the industry is expecting a strong season, with increased demand, based on what the outdoor recreation sector saw throughout New England this past summer.

“New Hampshire has its ski area guidelines in place, and all New Hampshire ski areas will be abiding by those — but exactly how each ski area abides by those totally depends on the makeup of their ski area and their own operations,” she said. There’s no one-size-fits all policies for the specifics.

Dunfey-Ball said Ski NH is asking everyone to consult the web pages for the ski resort or lodging establishment they intend to visit. She added that most customers should expect to buy their lift tickets and passes online before leaving home.

“There are going to be some small ski areas that don’t have the ability to allow people to buy passes online — in those cases, people should make sure they go online to the ski area website to find out what the ski area ticketing policy is,” said Dunfey-Ball. “Or pick up the phone to learn the ski area’s various policies.



This ski season expect signage at ski areas similar to the ones seen at Bretton Woods. (MARTY BASCH PHOTO)

“At the larger areas, you are going to have to buy your pass or ticket online in advance, and at some of them, you will not even have the opportunity to buy a day ticket. It might not just be an everyday thing,” she added. “It might be for those weekends and holiday periods due to capacity.

“So, again, it’s best for everyone

to assume they need to buy a ticket online well before their arrival or do their research online to see if they ought to buy a ticket prior to their arrival,” she said.

Dunfey-Ball said using the parking lot as your base of operations is being encouraged, too. “We’re asking people to ‘boot up’ in their cars and not expect to be able

to spend a lot of time in the lodges,” she said. “Nor should guests leave their boot bags in the lodges because the indoor facilities are going to be very much monitored for capacity,” said Dunfey-Ball.

What about bathrooms? “There are going to be facilities for use indoors, and some will be porta-potties outside, to make sure there are enough opportunities for that,” she replied.

In terms of refueling, Gunstock and Cranmore, to name a few, are planning on having outside food trucks as an alternative to the traditional indoor dining options.

“Food trucks are going to be something that people are going to see, just because indoor dining options will be offered, but limited,” Dunfey-Ball said.

“Some may just offer grab-and-go for basic items like a bag of chips, a cookie and a cup of coffee. Others, like Cranmore with Zip’s Pub, will offer sit-down dining experiences.

“But to be able to go to that indoor dining experience, you’re going to have to go online and book a reservation for a time slot to be

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New rules by resort



Attitash Mountain Resort in Bartlett and **Wildcat Mountain** in Pinkham Notch, now owned by Vail Resorts, will be using a reservation system to limit access this season to allow for social distancing.



Tickets: The resorts will require all skiers and riders to make reservations before arriving at the mountain, including passholders and day ticket holders. Day lift tickets will be sold only on the ski resorts' websites and through Vail's call centers and will be limited based on space available after a passholder reservation period. To learn more, call Attitash at (603) 466-3326 or Wildcat at (603) 466-3326.



Black Mountain in Jackson will have its lodge open for skiers and riders to eat and drink while maintaining social distance, and has expanded its deck, adding tables, heaters and a service window. Guests are asked to use their vehicles as their lockers. **Tickets:** Black will not require reservations for skiing or advance ticket purchases. For more information, call (603) 383-4490.



Bretton Woods ski area, part of Omni Mount Washington Resort, has opened its new Rosebrook Lodge, providing skier services and multiple dining options near the summit and accessed by the eight-person gondola. The canopy tour, climbing wall and kid's snowmobile park will not open this season. Families traveling together will be allowed to ride the gondola together. On quad chairs, skiers and riders will be grouped with those they choose to ride with, and a quad may be limited to half-capacity (unless it's a family group). **Tickets:** Lift tickets will be limited on a daily basis to allow for social distancing. Bretton Woods strongly recommends purchasing tickets online, and such tickets are considered your "reservation." Season pass holders are not required to make a reservation. For more information, call (603) 278-3320.



Cranmore Mountain Resort in North Conway is reducing the number of lift tickets available on any given day as well as tickets for the tubing and Mountain Adventure Park to allow for social distancing. Season passholders got priority status with no restrictions (this could change). The Tubing and Mountain Adventure Park will be open and available in two-hour time blocks. **Tickets:** All tickets must be purchased online and in advance at book.cranmore.com (no sales onsite at the ticket office). Ticket dates can be adjusted up to 72 hours before original arrival date. For more, go to cranmore.com or call.



King Pine in Madison will have adjusted hours this year. Lifts will be running daily until 6 p.m. Midweek (non-holiday) lifts will start at 9 a.m. and weekends/holiday periods lifts will start at 8:30 a.m. King Pine will not be open until 9 p.m. Tuesdays, Friday and weekends/holidays as in the past. Snowtubing hours will be Fridays (non-holiday) 3-6 p.m., Saturdays-Sundays and holiday periods, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. For more information, call (603) 367-8896.

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able to go to the restaurant. So that whole 'know before you go' and book online is not just true for lift tickets — it's also for rentals and dining," said Dunfey-Ball.

Some ski areas may locate the food trucks in their parking areas; others, such as Cranmore, may have them in the general base area for a ski-in, ski-out type of food delivery, she said.

If alcohol is being served, the state requires a space for people to sit down, so there will be areas where one can get a drink, but customers will not be able to walk around with open containers — nor will people be able to drink in their parking lot vehicle base stations.

"Nor will patrons be able to overnight park their RVs or to have open fires in the lots," Dunfey-Ball said.

Base lodges like restaurants will offer cleaning stations. And face masks are now mandated by Gov. Chris Sununu to be worn everywhere in public, including at



Counters in the ticket house at Cranmore Ski Resort are protected with clear plexiglass as they are at many resorts in the Mount Washington Valley. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

ski areas.

On the lifts? Social distancing, masks — and riding with your group only. "Basically, when you are in the queue to ride the lift, everyone will be wearing masks and maintaining safe social distance," Dunfey-Ball said. "We will have 'ghost lanes,' with some empty space in between

so there is space in front of you and behind you and also 6 feet to the left and right of you."

On the chairlifts, people will be asked to stick with their "pod" — the family-friends group with whom they traveled to the resort.

"Right now, the guidance is no lift riding with strangers. We are

working on that guidance, and there may be some edits to that," Dunfey Ball added. "For updates, follow the SkiNH.com website."

Ski schools and programs will vary from area to area, so it's best to check their websites. As Bretton Woods Director of Marketing Craig Clemmer noted, "It's an evolving world, but to start out with, anyway, we are limiting lessons to individuals rather than groups."

Added Cranmore General Manager and President Ben Wilcox, "We will have private and semi-private lessons to 'like' parties who came to the mountain together, but no group lessons."

Ski NH's COVID-19 guidelines site says the two-week self-quarantine has been lifted for those traveling to New Hampshire from surrounding New England states (Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island). People coming for an extended period from outside New England are still asked to quarantine for a two-week period.

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Ski Area Stats

Attitash Mountain Resort in Bartlett has 11 lifts serving 68 trails on more than 300 acres, with 45 percent intermediate and 28 percent each of novice or expert trails; along with 60 acres of glades and terrain parks for all ability levels. For current conditions, call (603) 374-2368.

Black Mountain in Jackson has a vertical drop of 1,100 feet and five lifts serving 45 trails and glades (divided evenly between novice, intermediate and expert) on about 150 acres. For current conditions, call (603) 383-4490.

Bretton Woods ski area, part of Omni Mount Washington Resort in Bretton Woods, has 1,500 feet of vertical drop and 10 lifts serving 62 trails (50 percent expert, 27 percent intermediate and 23 percent novice) on more than 450 acres. For current conditions, call (603) 278-3320.

Cranmore Mountain Resort in North Conway has a vertical drop of 1,200 feet, with nine lifts serving 56 trails and glades (44 percent intermediate and 28 percent each of expert and novice) on over 170 acres. For more info, call (603) 356-5543.

King Pine in Madison has a vertical drop of 350 feet, with six lifts serving 17 trails and glades (44 percent novice, 31 percent intermediate and 25 percent expert) on 48 acres. For current conditions, call (603) 367-8896.

Wildcat Mountain in Pinkham Notch has a vertical drop of more than 2,000 feet, with five lifts serving 48 trails (47 percent intermediate, 33 percent expert and 20 percent beginner), a terrain park, a terrain-based learning area and 80 acres of glades. For current conditions call (603) 466-3326.

Each of the Mount Washington Valley's six local alpine ski areas has something unique to offer skiers and boarders. Your needs and desires may change from trip to trip depending on who's coming along and how you want to ski, and all these mountains are worth at least one visit. Whether you're looking for long smooth runs, terrain parks or steep glades, you can find something to fit.

If you are a beginner and looking for a lot of green circle trails to practice your basic skills, or have three kids going in four different directions, King Pine, Cranmore and Black Mountain are smaller mountains with plenty of beginner and intermediate trails, as well as glades and expert trails for when you are ready for a challenge.

Cranmore and King Pine both have graduated terrain parks, where skiers and boarders can start small and work their way up to big jumps, rails, boxes and other freestyle terrain, as do Attitash and Bretton Woods. Although it's the smallest of the local mountains, King Pine offers a variety of activities at an affordable price, with 20K cross-country ski and snowshoe trails, a tubing park and



Just learning or have small children? King Pine, Black Mountain and Cranmore are smaller mountains with plenty of beginner terrain. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Slopes & styles

Finding your perfect ski area



Whether you're looking for smooth runs, terrain parks or steep glades, you can find a mountain to fit your needs. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

skating, all of which are covered by the cost of the day's ski ticket (or can be purchased separately).

Known for its learn-to-ski programs, Cranmore also has a tubing park, mountain coaster, giant swing and zip line.

If your tastes run to variety in the black diamond category, Bretton Woods places the highest percentage of trails (50 percent) on the expert list. With more than 450 acres of skiable terrain, Bretton Woods also has plenty of beginner trails (23 percent).

Like King Pine, Bretton Woods maintains its own cross-country trails (and you can trade in your alpine pass for a Nordic pass if you're done with the day's downhill). There are also fat-tire bike trails, tubing and sleigh rides.

Wildcat and Attitash offer considerable expert terrain. If skiing among the trees is your thing, and both these mountains, as well as Bretton Woods, sport large acreages devoted to glade skiing, with 125 acres of glades at Bretton Woods, 80 acres at Wildcat and 60 at Attitash.

Black has also opened new glades and backcountry terrain, and in partnership with Ski the Whites, has added a backcountry skiing and snowboarding program with skiing and snowboarding lessons and rentals.

Uphill skiing

With the growth of backcountry skiing, many skiers also choose to bring their touring skis to local mountains and some resorts are encouraging that trend with special uphill tickets and passes.

Black Mountain has been working in partnership with Ski the Whites to add a strong backcountry skiing and snowboarding program with skiing and snowboarding lessons and rentals.

Black offers a \$99 uphill-only season pass, in addition to a \$10 uphill day pass, and extended uphill hours to sunrise-4 p.m. to let people get in some turns before work.

Cranmore also has an uphill season's pass for \$179, but otherwise requires a lift ticket for uphill skiing.

Wildcat allows uphill skiing with the purchase of a \$10 trail pass and Bretton Woods does so with a \$21 pass.



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Skiers climb the slopes of Cranmore on touring skis. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

King Pine offers a human-powered season pass for \$50 or trail pass for \$7, both of which also give access to the cross-country trails at the resort.

Only Attitash does not allow uphill skiing at this time. Mountains that do allow uphill skiing all require some sort of trail pass, lift ticket or season pass for access and those who do not buy such a pass are considered to be trespassing.

Ski resorts have posted uphill

travel policies on their websites, designating hours, specific trails and routes that skiers must use and appropriate equipment (generally skins or snowshoes).

Many also list recommendations for safety, such as traveling with a partner and proper uphill skiing etiquette.

Uphill skiers are asked to travel single file, stay to the side of the trail and yield to downhill skiers.

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Bretton Woods Nordic Center: 100 km — 95 km track-groomed, 90K skate-groomed, 5K backcountry, and lift-served Nordic High Country area. **Snowshoeing:** Shared trails; guided snowshoe expeditions, daily, 10 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m. Lift-served access to high-country snowshoeing near Mountain Road area. **Fat biking:** On the Deception and Fabyan's Fields Trail Network. Route 302, Bretton Woods; (603) 278-3322; brettonwoods.com.

Great Glen Trails: 45 km — 25 km skate- and track-groomed, 20K backcountry, 2K snow-making. **Snowshoeing:** Shared trails. Saturday tours at 1 p.m., evening tours with a naturalist on Jan. 16, Feb. 13 and 20. Ski and snowshoe rentals. **Fat bikes:** Open to fat bikes daily, afternoons only, conditions permitting. **Dogs:** Welcome on Aqueduct Loop only, on leash. Route 16; 603-466-2333; greatglenhills.com.

Jackson Ski Touring: 154 km — 93 km track-groomed, 88K skate-groomed, 61K backcountry. **Snowshoeing:** Beside ski trails or on 45K of snowshoe-specific trails. Ski and snowshoe rentals. **Dogs:** 15K dog-friendly trails in Prospect Farm area on Carter Notch Road and in Jackson Village: Covered Bridge, Kissing Bridge and Gray's Inn Cut-off Trails. Main Street, Jackson (603) 383-9355; jacksonxc.org.

Mount Washington Valley Ski Touring: 65 km — 45 km track- and skate-groomed, 20K backcountry. **Snowshoeing:** Shared trails. Saturday tours at the touring center at 1 p.m. Ski and snowshoe rentals available. **Fat bikes:** Allowed on designated bike trail and on ungroomed trails in Whitaker Woods. **Dogs:** Allowed in Whitaker Woods only. Ragged Mountain Equipment, Route 16, Intervale (603) 356-9920; mwvskitouring.org.

Purity Springs: 28 km — 15 km track- and skate-groomed, 13K backcountry. Snowshoe on cross-country trails and backcountry trails. Ski and snowshoe rentals available. **Fat bikes:** Allowed on Nordic trails. **Dogs:** Allowed on weekdays, not weekends or vacation weeks. Route 153, East Madison; (603) 367-8896; kingpine.com.

Trails in the Wood: 10 km Trails in the Wood system, developed for education and recreation. Trails designed for walking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, mountain biking, maple sugaring and nature observation. Open from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. or whenever the gate is open. Route 16, Intervale; (603) 356-9980; believeinbooks.org.

CROSS-COUNTRY



A skier races along the trail at Great Glen Trails. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Nordic ski areas expect a busy season

by Tom Eastman

Cross-country touring centers have been gearing up for what some expect could be a busier than usual season as people look for ways to recreate safely out of doors.

Some have predicted that sports such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing may see as much as a 30 percent increase, given what was seen this past summer for hiking and cycling.

Like alpine ski areas, the six cross-country touring centers in the Mount Washington Valley have been changing their programs in line with COVID-19 safety guidelines.

In general, visitors can expect to see limited access to indoor facilities and dining options, and fewer events than in past years. Online ticket sales as well as season passes will also make it easier for skiers to get on the trails without spending much time indoors.

The family-owned Bear Notch Ski Touring and Snowshoe Center in Bartlett, with 70 km of trails, is known for its dog-friendly policy and its laid-back, cozy atmosphere and home cooking. While still a friendly, full-service touring center, the home cooking is on hold for this season.

Owner Doug Garland said: "We will follow CDC and state guidelines; we won't be serving our soups and breads as we have in the past. We will still do rentals — outside on the porch."

At Great Glen Trails Outdoor Center, located at the base of the Mount Washington Auto Road in Pinkham Notch, no reservations will be required for a trail pass (includes skiing, snowshoeing and fatbiking).

Marketing Manager Crispin Battles said, "Our base lodge will be open, but we'll be trying to limit people in the common areas. We may or may not be opening the Glen View Cafe — that decision hasn't been made yet."

He noted that season passes cover trail activities, but not the tubing hill, which will run in two sessions (9 a.m.-noon, and 1-4 p.m.) with a maximum of 50 tubes each session. Reservations will be required, and season passholders get no preference.

The trails and other facilities around the base at Great Glen were revamped last year as the resort opened its new Glen House Hotel and a new ski-in, ski-out teaching center adjacent to the base lodge that provides better protection from the elements and is perfectly situated for beginner skiers.

Great Glen was named one of the top 10 cross-country ski resorts in the country in a USA Today reader poll last year.

This year, one of the top slots in that same poll went to Jackson Ski Touring Center, which ranked fifth. JSTC also made the list in 2018.



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Cross-country skiers ski to the trails in Whitaker Woods in downtown North Conway.
 (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Starting in the heart of picturesque Jackson Village, the 154-kilometer Jackson Ski Touring Center is the largest in the Northeast.

Jackson XC Executive Director Ellen Chandler said the center will not have indoor seating this season.

"We will sell bottled soda and packaged cookies, but there will not be indoor dining. We will have a covered outdoor area plus a firepit, but we will have to make sure people don't over-congregate," she said. "We have trailside access to local restaurants with daytime service, including Christmas Farm Inn, Black Mountain cafeteria, Eagle Mountain House, J-Town Deli, Yesterday's and Red Fox (weekends), and there is a likelihood of a takeout window at Madeline's."

JSTF will not take reservations, but passholders will have direct trail access, no stopping at the ticket window.

The center will be promoting Ski-NH's "know before you go" effort; and providing portable toilets at trailheads, where feasible. More trailhead access points have been added to help disperse lodge traffic.

Mount Washington Valley Ski Touring and Snowshoe Center has 65 kilometers of trails extending from Whitaker Woods in North Conway Village to Intervale.

The center's president, Cort Hansen said the center is looking

forward to a strong season, but added, "The Whitaker House will be closed this winter. And we won't be able under current conditions to host our Snowshoe Scramble nor our Chocolate Festival."

Among the best value/low-cost options are season passes for The Reserve at Purity Spring Resort in Madison and the 100-Acre Wood in Intervale, each priced at \$50.

Director of Marketing Thomas Prindle said the resort has added a "Human Power Pass" to its list of season passes, in part in recognition of people seeking alternative outdoor recreation options this year.

The pass is good for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and fat-tire biking at The Reserve, as well as uphill access on the mountain, and skating in the resort's Tohko Dome.

The 10 km of trails at the 100-Acre Wood, while small, offers a fun outing especially for those with young children.

Part of the Believe in Books Foundation, the trail system was developed for education and recreation, and features a Storybook Trail where families can read a book together as they walk or ski along the trail. Stories are changed each Wednesday.

For more information, go to individual centers' websites, skinh.com or call the Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce at (603) 356-5701.

Touring Centers

More than skiing

by Sally McMurdo

Once upon a time, cross-country ski centers were just about cross-country skiing. They might have grooming or not. Trails that were narrow and untracked, “groomed” by the skier in front. Then some Nordic centers began grooming trails with snowmobiles and contraptions resembling bedsprings.

Trails were single or double-tracked for two-way traffic, but no “skate lanes” existed then. With the advent of skate skiing in the 1980s, centers widened some trails and groomed them for both classic and skate skiing.

In the past decade, many cross-country centers added showshoeing as technical advances in snowshoes made them easier to put on and use. Initially, snowshoers used the same groomed trails, but then centers added “snowshoe specific” trails that made outings more fun.



Canine companions are welcome to some extent at most cross-country touring centers in the Mount Washington Valley. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)



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Soon, dog lovers asked if they could bring Fido, too, when they went skiing and snowshoeing. Each center had to develop its “dog” policies — whether to allow them or not and where. Some centers added snow tubing to expand their offerings and attract families.

The latest addition that many Nordic centers are offering is “fat biking.” Fat bikes are large frame mountain bikes with tires wider than 3 ½ inches.

The tires are run with low pressure, making for little damage to the trail and lots of fun for the year-round rider.

The Mount Washington Valley has seven Nordic centers: Bear Notch Ski Touring Center, Bretton Woods Nordic Center, Great Glen Trails Outdoor Center, Jackson Ski Touring Foundation, Purity Springs Cross-Country and Snowshoe Reserve; Mount Washington Valley Ski Touring and Snowshoe Center and Trails in the Wood. Ski and snowshoe rentals are available at all but Trails in the Wood.

Each center is unique in its offerings. All have cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Dogs are allowed to some extent at each, and fat bikes are continuing to make inroads. At some areas, you’ll also find snow tubing, ice skating or sleigh rides. One has a snowcoach ride halfway up Mount Washington, another has a biathlon range, and another has Nordic lift-served access to high country alpine trails.

It’s not just about skiing anymore.



A pair of fat-tire bikers get ready to head out on the Mount Washington Valley Ski Touring trails at Whitaker Woods in North Conway last season. (SALLY MCMURDO PHOTO)



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Backcountry

A growing sport

The popularity of backcountry skiing has surged in recent years, and more people are searching the White Mountains for untracked powder each winter.

The non-profit Granite Backcountry Alliance was formed in 2016 to promote the sport across New Hampshire and Western Maine.

The group has been focusing on rehabilitating old Civilian Conservation Corps ski trails and creating new backcountry skiing areas as well as supporting human-powered recreation and conservation efforts, winter education and avalanche/safety programs and to raising awareness of winter management issues.

GBA volunteers have worked on the John Sherburne Ski Trail and Gulf of Slides Ski Trail on Mount Washington, the Doublehead Ski Trail in Jackson and the Maple Villa Ski Glade in Intervale, among other trails.

Upcoming events include the M.W. Otto Rhode Memorial Backcountry Ski Race on Jan. 25 at the Mt. Washington Auto Road. Participants in this event raise money for the alliance to participate in a race skinning up the Auto Road and skiing down.

For more information, go to granitebc.org



Hilary McCloy skis Intervale Dream, a glade line at Maple Villa. (ANDREW DRUMMOND PHOTO)

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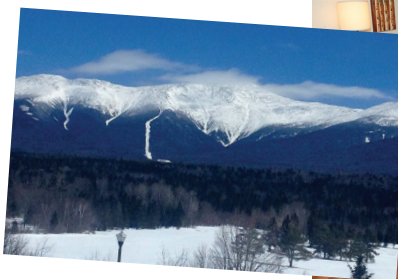
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New glades

The Granite Backcountry Alliance has created several backcountry gladed skiing areas for those who want to earn their turns. Here are a few:

Maple Villa Glade. Just beyond North Conway Village, Maple Villa Glade in the White Mountain National Forest on Bartlett Mountain features a variety of terrain for all abilities. Constructed in 1933 by the Civilian Conservation Corps and revived in 2018 by the Granite Backcountry Alliance, the glade blends a mix of expert to intermediate terrain including a meandering skin track to the upper elevations. Seven glade lines. Highlights: Spectacular views of Mount Washington from No. 3 glade. Plan a full day touring. Parking: 70 East Branch Road, Intervale. Overflow parking at 15 Town Hall Rd (1/2 mile) at White Mountain Stove Shop. Vertical drop: 1,700 feet.

Hypnosis Glade. Hypnosis Glade is an excellent introductory GBA glade zone as it offers mellow yet colorful skiing opportunities for all abilities. Just off Route 113 in Madison, Hypnosis gets its name from being on the private property held by the White Mountain Hypnosis Center. The skintrack ascends right out of the parking lot at the center and allows the uphill skier to enjoy the peaceful nature of the property and efficiently ascend to the upper traverse to access one of four glade lines, with options for exciting and twisty skiing, perfect for kids, and more challenging lines with opportunities to catch air. Family friendly. Vertical drop: 400 feet.

Baldface. Baldface is located in the northeast corner of the White Mountain National Forest in Chatham. Intrepid backcountry skiers have long been drawn to explore the open ledge alpine terrain. The open slab on Baldface Knob now connects to new ridgeline glades. The glade zone begins at treeline at the bottom of Baldface Knob, at about 2,500 feet. The glades begin steeply in upper elevations and transition to mellow cruisers midway and toward the bottom. The Slippery Brook Trail (maintained by Chatham Trails Association) serves as the uphill skin track. Vertical drop: 2,500 feet. Parking: Baldface Circle Trail (Route 113 in Chatham).

Crescent Ridge Glade. Situated in the 10,000 acre Randolph Community Forest, the Crescent Ridge Glade is designed to appeal to all abilities providing a little something for everyone, including stunning views. Expect a moderate ski with challenging features. Five glade lines in the upper pitch of the zone vary in design but generally contain a mellow slope angle then quickly drop in the range of 30-35 degrees for about 200-300 vertical feet. The middle section is about 20-25 degrees and extends an additional 300 vertical feet with a variety of features. The lower section contains a tree-less wildlife area at 10-15 degrees with views of the northern Presidentials. Vertical drop: 600 feet. Parking: Randolph Hill Road (lot at the end of the road).

Maps and more information are available at granitebackcountryalliance.org.

Skiing Mount Washington

New Hampshire's original backcountry ski destination, Tuckerman Ravine on Mount Washington, attracts thousands of skiers every spring to climb the steep slopes and ski down.

The John Sherburne Ski Trail, which starts below the bowl and ends near the Pinkham Notch Visitors Center on Route 16, is also popular with backcountry skiers.

In addition to Tuckerman Ravine, which is accessed most easily from Pinkham Notch, some skiers hike up Mount Washington from the Cog Railway base station on the other side of the mountain in Crawford Notch.

The Cog Railway owns 39 acres of land plus its 99-foot-wide corridor from base to peak and plows the Base Road from the Four Corners intersection to the parking lots and charges a winter land use permit fee of \$10 a day or \$100 a season.

Last spring, the U.S. Forest Service closed the ravine to protect employees, volunteers and the public from risks of crowds congregating spreading the coronavirus, as well as the potential need to rescue people injured while skiing or climbing on Mount Washington.

While no plans have been announced to close the ravine again, the Forest Service and N.H. Fish & Game warns hikers, climbers and skiers to maintain social distance, be well prepared, know their limits and exercise a high degree of caution and avoid unsafe behaviors that could lead to rescues and put first responders in danger.



Skiers hike into the bowl in Tuckerman Ravine on Mount Washington. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)



Tyler Ray skis a glade at Maple Villa in Bartlett. (ANDREW DRUMMOND PHOTO)

Schooling new backcountry skiers

Granite Backcountry Alliance joins nationwide effort

by *Marty Basch*

In a sport conducive to social distancing, Granite Backcountry Alliance is preparing for a surge of skiers in the glades. Anticipating an increase in backcountry skiing interest similar to that seen in hiking and mountain biking around the valley this summer and fall due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the non-profit is taking part in a national education effort to school newcomers to the pristine pursuit.

Expecting a 20- to 30-percent increase in backcountry skiing usage around the area, the GBA (granitebackcountryalliance.org) has joined the Ski Kind movement (skikind.org) through the non-profit Winter Wildlands Alliance to educate users about etiquette in the woods.

“The sport is dependent upon everyone acting for the greater good of the outdoor community,” said GBA founder Tyler Ray of North Conway.

GBA, which helps maintain and develop skiing glades in the White Mountains and western Maine with various landowners, will help spread the backcountry responsibility code through social media, traditional media, products, glade signage and veteran backcountry skiers as ambassadors.

The code is summed up with seven topics — ski no trace, ski self-reliant, ski inclusive, ski aware, ski respectful, ski smart and ski kind.

Elements include taking only photos, keep waterways clean, pack out poop (dogs, too) and don’t trash the place. Carry what you need, prepare for worst-case scenarios and don’t put yourself in a precarious situation. Be or find a mentor and be a positive part of the community.

Understand snowpack, terrain, conditions, weather forecasts and avalanche possibilities. Have a plan. Keep your eyes and mind open.

Be nice, park appropriately. Don’t posthole or pee in the skin track. Know your gear and limits. Be a good neighbor.

Be kind even to someone who is being a jerk.

Tyler said by late spring the backcountry ski community identified this season with red flags written all over it.

“We felt it was in the best interest of the backcountry community to come up with a code of conduct to address the issues,” he said.

So GBA is joining forces with groups from New England like Vermont’s Catamount Trail Association to California and Nevada’s Tahoe Backcountry Alliance to spread the gospel.

“It is really important that folks think about the education side of the sport and the good neighborly relations that are required,” he said. “I think people

need to ask themselves, ‘Is this the right thing to do?’”

Backcountry skiing is based on partnerships with land owners and won’t survive incredible acts of ignorance.

“If those relationships become breached, it is all for naught,” he said.

GBA oversees eight glade zones and four Civilian Conservation Corps trails. This fall, observing safety protocols, four public volunteer glade days were held to maintain the Black and White Glade in the Rumford, Maine, area, Cooley-Jericho Glade around Franconia and the Sherbie-GOS Glade around Pinkham Notch. Part of Project Haircut, the crews trimmed the glades while Rumford’s White Cap received two new lines. Private crews also were at work.

“We gave a trim to every glade zone because next year we have bigger ambitions and want to make sure we have everything in tip top shape before we move on,” he said.

Though Tuckerman Ravine is a rite of passage, GBA has some glades amenable for backcountry



Skier Colin Wroblewski rips it up on Glade No. 3 in Maple Villa on Bartlett Mountain in Intervale. (TYLER RAY PHOTO)

entry for newcomers — and that’s an ambiguous term as expert alpine skiers can be forest rookies.

Madison’s Hypnosis Glade off Route 113 is a gentle family-friendly pod with about 400 feet in vertical drop while Chatham’s Baldface in Evans Notch in the White Mountain National Forest with 2,500 feet of vertical drop offers both above and below treeline skiing so newbies can develop their

skills at lower elevation before progressing upward.

GBA’s website has up-to-date information about its glades while its coffee table/guidebook “Graniteland” is an excellent backwoods companion.

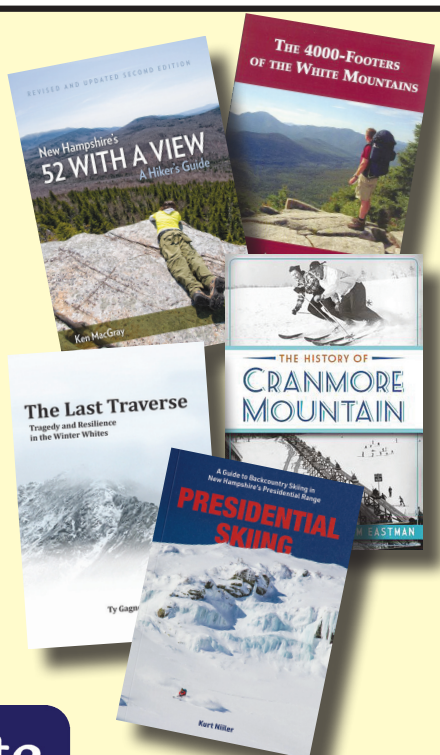
GBA is planning to hold its M.W. Otto Rhode Memorial Skin & Ski and spring Wild Corn Shindig, but will adhere to any state-wide pandemic mandates.

Uphilling is seeing healthy usage numbers. According to the SIA Participation Study 2019-20 alpine touring had 705,000 participants and 652,000 snowboard participants nationwide last season. In 2018, as part of an economic impact study GBA reported 1,706 visitors to Randolph’s Crescent Ridge, 4,288 to Maple Villa in Intervale and 3,684 visitors at Baldface.

“People should contribute to the sport and give back,” said Tyler. “Volunteer for glade days, help at events, become a member or help in other ways.”

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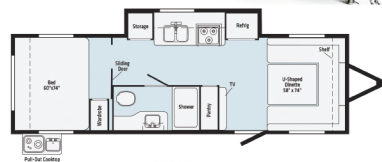
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Fat bike riders take to the trails at the Marshall Conservation Area in Conway. (TERRY LEAVITT PHOTO)

Rolling through winter

While many local outdoor recreation enthusiasts trade in bikes for skis at this time of year, a growing number of people, aided by the latest evolution of the bicycle — fat-tire bikes — are opting to keep two wheels on the trails all winter long.

Many bikers seek out mountain bike trails like those in the trail system being developed by biking clubs on the Marshall Conservation Area off West Side Road in Conway.

The Marshall Land is an increasingly busy multi-use area, visited by walkers, skiers and snowmobilers as well as bikers.

There are now several miles of trails there, and club volunteers are working to groom some of them for winter biking. To get there from Conway Village, take West Side Road for 2 miles

and look for the sign and parking on the left.

There are also trails around Echo Lake State Park that are connected to the White Mountain National Forest by a snowmobile trail (Red's Trail), and at the Pudding Pond Conservation Area off Artist Falls Road in North Conway.

Four local ski touring centers have added fat tire biking on some trails.

Mount Washington Valley Ski Touring in North Conway allows fat biking in Whitaker Woods.

Bretton Woods has designated trails in its Nordic system on which fat bikes are allowed.

Great Glen Trails in Pinkham Notch allows fat bikes on its trails when snow surface conditions permit it.

Purity Spring in East Madison allows fat biking on cross-country ski trails.

Ski touring centers require trail passes for fat biking and offer rentals so you can try out the sport.

They also require bikers to use the proper equipment — generally bikes with tires wider than 3.7 inches and with a tire pressure less than 10 psi. Rules for fat tire biking also include yielding to skiers, riding on the firmest part of the track and only biking when conditions allow for non-impactive biking. The snow is too soft if the bike leaves a rut or if you are having trouble keeping the bike in a straight line.

Shops offering sales of fat bikes include the Bike Shop (603-356-6089) and Stan & Dan's Sports (603-356-6997).

Exploring the world at treeline

The Mt. Washington Auto Road offers SnowCoach tours 4½ miles up to the “home of the world’s worst weather.” And, oh what a ride this is!

That’s how Crispin Battles, director of marketing, and Kevin Devine, director of operations, enthusiastically describe the adventure. “I did four tours this summer, and every one was different,” Battles said. “You see every variable condition. It can begin as a bluebird day, and then you step out of the coach into what feels like a hurricane at 4,200 feet.” He adds: “Most of the time, bad weather is just bad weather.” But not on Mount Washington. Here, it is an attraction.

“Jokingly, we apologize if the weather is too perfect. People come to see the world’s worst weather,” he said.

Devine was a tour driver in the summer and then stepped in to the operations manager role this past April. “Above treeline, well, it looks like the moon,” Devine added. “It is fun to watch people, their expressions and surprises at what they see 4,200 feet up.”

What drives up the Auto Road “is a standard, 4-wheel drive, 12-passenger Chevy van with American truck tracks,” Battles explained. For the summer, the coaches ride with large tires in two-wheel drive, and for winter, a lift kit is added, shifting into



The Mt. Washington Auto Road has equipped its fleet of Chevy vans with snow tracks to take passengers up the mountain in winter. (COURTESY PHOTO)

four-wheel drive and adding snow tracks. “We pull the tires off and put on the tracks,” Devine said.

Safety and a seamless guest experience are paramount to the running of the stages and SnowCoaches, owned by the family-owned Auto Road. The

company also operates Great Glen Trails Outdoor Center and The Glen House hotel, all a stone’s throw away.

“Safety has always been our main concern,” Battles said. “In the winter, we send someone up the road first to check the conditions, to

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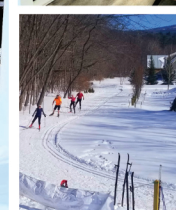
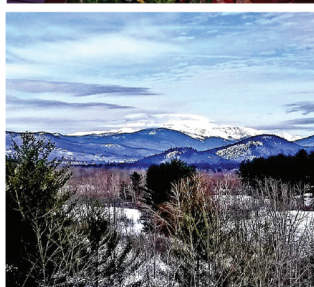
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The stark landscape above treeline on Mount Washington in winter can resemble the surface of the moon. (COURTESY PHOTO)

see if there are icy spots, so the drivers don't come across any surprises."

Pandemic precautions also are in place.

"We were the first attraction to open," Battles said. Guests and drivers wore masks, and the 12 passenger van became a six-passenger one.

Guided winter tours aboard the Mount Washington SnowCoaches are about 1.5-hours long and depart daily from December through March from the Great Glen Trails base lodge at the base of Mount Washington on a first-come, first-served basis. Advance reservations may be made for

the 9 a.m. trip only.

The SnowCoaches climb to about 4,200 feet, otherwise known as treeline, at about two-thirds the way to the 6,288-foot summit of Mount Washington. Riders have a little time outside at the high point of the trip before riding back down or snowshoeing down if they choose.

More information can be found at snowcoachnh.com or by calling (603) 466-3988.

—Rachel Brown

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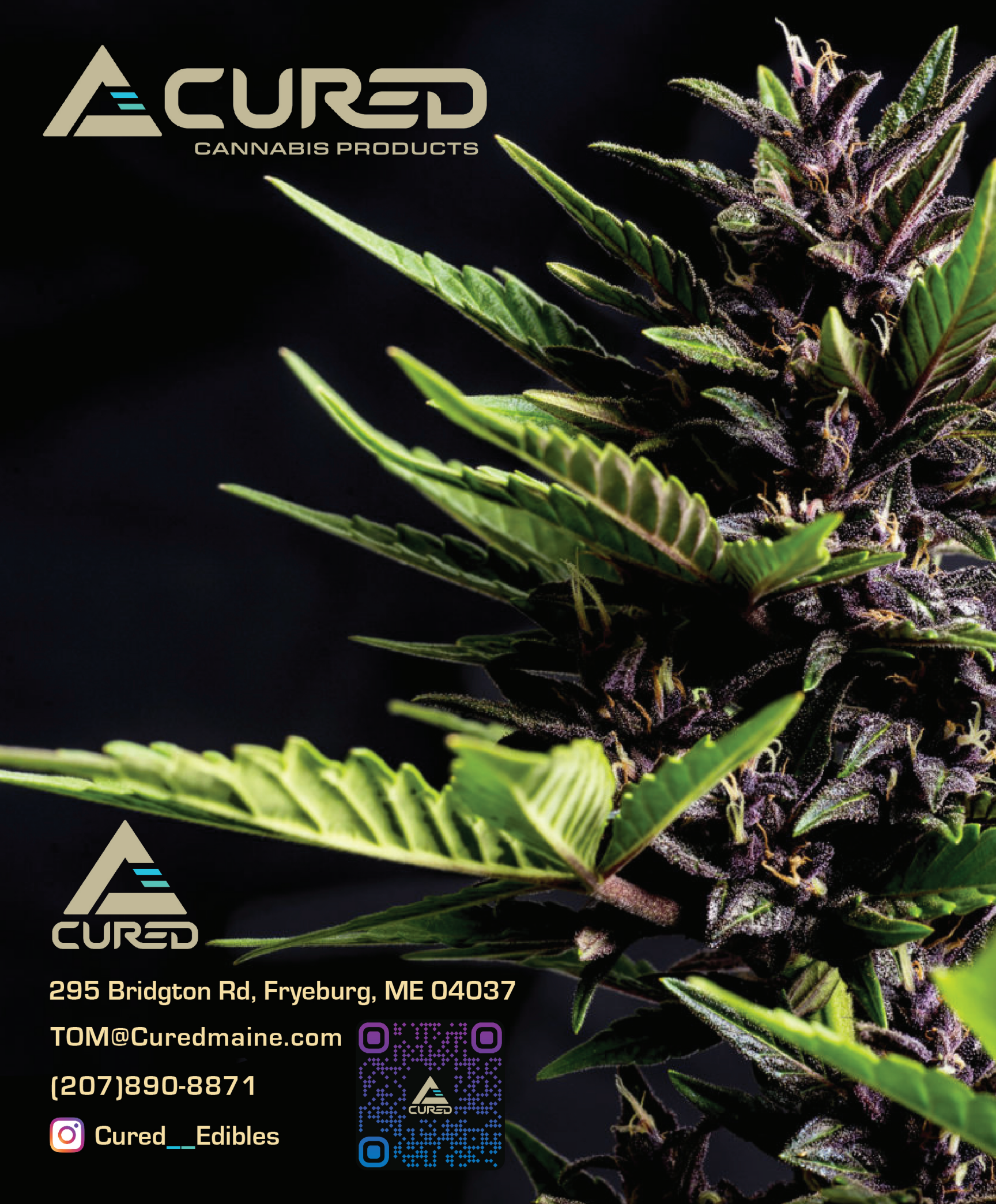
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Winds on Mount Washington are usually 10-15 miles per hour. On May 16, 2016, they topped out at 109 mph. A weather observer was lifted off the ground by the wind as he tried to walk across the observation deck. The highest wind ever recorded on the mountain was 231 mph on April 12, 1934. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Quick Facts

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History: First recorded summit: Darby Field, 1642.

Science: Mount Washington Observatory maintains a year-round weather station on the summit and conducts weather and climate research as well as scientific research under extreme conditions.

Current weather: Mount Washington Observatory provides daily weather forecasts for Mount Washington and the higher summit at mountwashington.org or at tinyurl.com/highersummitsforecast.

Danger: More than 150 people have died on the mountain since 1849, many due to the extreme weather, falls and avalanches.

Best views: Up close on the summit, on a drive through Pinkham or Crawford Notch, from the Scenic Vista on Route 16 in Intervale and from the summit of Wildcat.

Find it in books: "Not Without Peril," by Nicholas Howe, gives an eminently readable account of hiking misadventures on the mountain over the past 150 years. "The White Mountain," by Dan Szczesny explores the the history and mystique of New England's tallest mountain. "The AMC White Mountain Guide" provides maps and descriptions of hiking trails.

MOUNT WASHINGTON



A windy day atop Mount Washington as seen from Intervale on a day in February when winds gusted to almost 70 mph and temperatures dipped to -63 F. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

The Rockpile

The highest mountain in the Northeast, Mount Washington is an iconic peak that lends its name to the valley below. It can be seen from North Conway Village and many points in the area rising above neighboring mountains in the Presidential Range. Legends and stories date back to the first settlers, if not earlier, and the mountain has beckoned tourists, adventurers and scientists to its heights since the 1800s. Thousands hike it every year, mostly in summer, although many experienced climbers make the trek in winter (guided trips are available), and ice climbers find world-class climbing in the ravines. Skiers also flock to its slopes, particularly for spring skiing in Tuckerman Ravine and on the Sherburne Trail. The mountain's unpredictable extreme cold and high winds can be deadly for unprepared hikers. Winds exceeding hurricane force occur an average of 110 days per year.



A skier looks around the summit of Mount Washington on a spring afternoon after climbing the mountain. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)



Cherry Pond at Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge in Jefferson. (FILE PHOTO)

Above the Notch

Finding your adventure in the Great North Woods

Just “over the Notch” from North Conway are Berlin and Gorham, truly the heart of New Hampshire’s North Country and the entry to what is called the Great North Woods. To get there, go north on Route 16 through picturesque Jackson, then up and over Pinkham Notch.

On the way of this 35-mile scenic trip are the Appalachian Mountain Club Visitor Center (base station for hikes up Mount Washington, including Tuckerman Ravine), Wildcat Ski Area and Great Glen Trails Outdoor Center, which offers Snow Coach tours up part of the Mt. Washington Auto Road, as well as ski touring and tubing.

Popular recreation north of the Notch includes snowmobiling — there are hundreds of miles of snowmobiling trails — along with backcountry skiing, cross-country and snowshoeing on trails in state parks and the White Mountain National Forest. Some local outfitters also offer dogsled rides.

North of the Notch is Gorham, truly the entrance to another world. Here you’ll enjoy nearby attractions, quaint shops, and culinary delights. Gorham is at the crossroads of the north-south-running Route 16 and east-west Route 2, and has the feel of a tourist town.

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A skier out with his dog in the Nansen Ski Club Trails in Berlin. (FILE PHOTO)

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GREAT NORTH WOODS



The Jericho Warming Hut, located in Jericho Mountain State Park, is an offgrid cabin constructed and maintained by the White Mountain Ridge Runners. (FILE PHOTO)

by people of French Canadian descent, but also a melting pot of European immigrants, who worked in the now shut-down paper mill, this once vibrant city of 20,000 has turned a corner from a long decline.

Here you'll find cultural offerings like a Russian Orthodox church and St. Anne's Church, one of the most beautiful Catholic churches in New England.

The city has a rich winter sports tradition. The Nansen Ski Jump in Berlin is being brought back to life after years of inactivity, with the hope of attracting a sanctioned jumping competition for top junior ski jumpers as a centerpiece of the annual winter festival put on by the Nansen Ski Club, the oldest ski club in the nation.

The natural gems, though, are found outside the city. Just a few miles northwest of downtown Berlin is one of the newest additions to the state park system. Jericho Mountain State Park provides opportunities for miles of trail riding for ATV, UTV, trail bike, cross country skiing and snowmobile enthusiasts alike. The place is great to ride the 100-plus miles of trails with plenty of views and wildlife to see.

And it's worth a drive even further north along the Androscoggin River through 13 Miles Woods to its source: Lake Umbagog, a huge National Wildlife Refuge.



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Don Tucker and daughter Dakota, 16, of Newburyport, Mass., take in the view from Black Cap Mountain on a Polaris Indy 600 rented from Northeast Snowmobile in Fryeburg, Maine. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

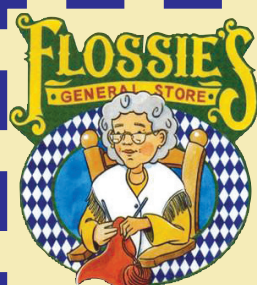
Open the winter world

Snowmobiling opens up a world of winter fun for everyone, whether you're an enthusiast with your own machine or you rent from a local outfitter.

Terry MacGillivray of Northeast Snowmobile Rentals and Peter Gagne of Northern Extremes agree that snowmobiling is a sport the family can

enjoy. "We get people to places in winter that they otherwise would not have a chance to get to physically," said MacGillivray, who has locations in Gorham, N.H., and in Fryeburg and Bethel, Maine. "A lot of people think snowmobiling is for motorheads who want to spin their tracks and go fast.

"But it's really about getting out to scenic places to enjoy the view, shut



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A snowmobiler enjoys a foot of fresh powder in the Slippery Brook area of Town Hall Road in Bartlett. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

off the machine, and enjoy the quiet of the woods. We take people to the top of Black Cap (behind Cranmore in North Conway), which would otherwise take a long time, and they would never get there," said MacGillivray.

Added Gagne, whose company has locations in Bartlett and Bretton Woods: "It's a great opportunity to explore the outdoors. It's an alternative to skiing for folks who might not normally venture

outdoors in winter. Some like the feel of the power in the machine. Most of our customers are non-skiers, families who want to go out and see the wilderness."

With operations in different locations, Gagne and MacGillivray cover their bets when it comes to weather and snow conditions. North Conway does not always have the snow, but Bear Notch is a snowbelt," Gagne said.

—Tom Eastman

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Resources

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- **Northern Extremes of Bartlett and Bretton Woods:** (603) 374-6000 or northernextremessnowmobiling.com.
- **Profile Powersports** in Albany offers sales: (603) 447-5855

- **N.H. Snowmobile Association:** (603) 273-0220 or nhsa.com
- **N.H. Fish and Game:** (603) 271-3129 or wildlife.state.nh.us/OHRV/ohrv.htm
- **N.H. Bureau of Land and Trails**, which updates state snowmobile conditions: (603) 271-3254 or nhstateparks.org/experience/snowmobiling.



Hundreds of miles of snowmobiling trails have been developed in northern New Hampshire. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)



A family goes for a sleigh ride from Nestlenook Farm in Jackson. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Old fashioned sleigh rides

Local stables offer the classic experience of riding fields and wooded trails in a horse-driven sleigh or wagon. Some also offer horseback rides.

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Nestlenook Farm in Jackson has sleighs equipped with runners and wheels, depending on the terrain.

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Hiking with a group or with a guide is a great way to find out about new trails and learn the ins and outs of winter hiking. (ED PARSONS PHOTO)

Winter hiking

by Ed Parsons

For the uninitiated, winter hiking may seem like entering a cold, cold world. But the benefits of camaraderie, healthy exercise and beautiful vistas offer great rewards for those who learn its secrets. It's also a good way to experience fabulous outdoor adventures at a minimal cost.

The best way to get started is to learn from experienced people. These can be found in many ways. On the internet, check out Northeast hiking websites like "Views From the Top" and "Rocks On Top." Here you can find veteran hikers' answers to questions from beginners as well as announcements about group hikes.

The Appalachian Mountain Club offers guided and group winter hikes to its members. You can sign up online at outdoors.org. Local outfitters also offer guided hikes and climbs.

If you drive to a place like the AMC's Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, north of North Conway on Route 16, you can ask at the hiker's information desk about hiking suggestions and trail conditions, and rent snowshoes there if needed. Reach the center at (603) 466-2721.

However you go, pack the essentials, pay attention to safety guidelines, trail conditions and weather reports. Snowshoes may be needed.

Good preparation can make all the difference between a fun experience and a dangerous misadventure. Find out how to be prepared at hikesafe.com, and consider buying a N.H. Hike Safe card at wildlife.state.nh.us. It supports N.H. Fish & Game rescues, and people who have the cards are not liable to repay rescue costs if they need to be rescued.

Beginner Trails

Pinkham Notch



Lost Pond: This pond, called a "glacial tarn," is reached by a 1-mile trail directly across Route 16 from Pinkham Notch Visitor Center. This hike is a "must do" for beginners.



Liebeskind's Loop, Crew-Cut Trail and George's Gorge Trail: A short, fun network of trails, easily reached from Pinkham Notch Camp, by starting out on the Tuckerman Ravine Trail and then turning right on the trail known as the Old Jackson Road. Visit Brad's Bluff and Lila's Ledge, where great views of the notch can be found.

Crawford Notch



Around-the-Lake Trail: The 1.2-mile loop hike that starts next the Highland Center and winds down to the shore of a small secluded pond called Ammonoosuc Lake and continues around it. Across the lake, a 0.3-mile spur path called the Red Bench Trail continues to a comfortable red bench, with a good view of the Presidentials.



Mount Willard: The 1.6-mile Mount Willard Trail is another must for aspiring hikers. The trail is likely well packed, and the summit gives a classic view of the U-shaped Crawford Notch. The trail begins behind the Depot, just south of the AMC Highland Center. It begins as the Avalon Trail and in 30 feet turns left on the Mount Willard Trail.

Mount Washington Valley



Boulder Loop Trail: Pick up a brochure at the Saco Ranger Station about this self-guided nature trail. There is a gradual climb with some steep pitches. Offers spectacular views of Mount Chocoma and the Swift River. The 2.8 trail begins near the Covered Bridge Campground on the Kancamagus Highway, east of Conway.



Cathedral Ledge: The 1.4-mile auto road to the top of Cathedral Ledge is unplowed in the winter, and is a nice climb to a classic view of the Mount Washington Valley. To get there, turn left on River Road at the lights at the north end of North Conway. In 1.5 miles, bear left on Cathedral Ledge Road and continue in. The road bears right and the plowed section ends. Walk past the gate and continue up the road. At the top turnaround, bear left through the woods toward the cliff edge, but stay well away from it, as there may be ice under the snow. There is a section with fencing if you want to get close. Be sure to go to the southern end of the summit for more views and safe terrain. The view of the valley is great.

Hike Safe

Every year, Mount Washington and the surrounding mountains exact a toll on unprepared and unlucky hikers, but seasoned hikers will tell you the better prepared you are, the better able you can handle any bad luck that comes your way.

N.H. Fish and Game this year released a statement saying outdoor enthusiasts must be aware that recreation this year requires personal awareness, preparation and responsibility for oneself and toward others while continuing to practice the recommended social distancing of 6 feet on all trails, at all trailheads, and in common areas such as parking lots.

“People must be aware of their physical limitations, weather conditions, and know when to turn back,” said Fish and Game Law Enforcement Chief Col. Kevin Jordan. “It is imperative that people enjoying New Hampshire’s natural resources exercise a high degree of caution. Unsafe and irresponsible behavior puts first responders at extreme risk of injury and exposure to COVID-19 because social distancing becomes very difficult to manage in search and rescue situations.”

Jordan also said hikers should follow the hiker responsibility code (check the weather and terrain conditions before you go), leave your plans with someone and carry the appropriate gear (read more at tinyurl.com/y4cct6fn). Outdoor enthusiasts are also encouraged to buy their voluntary annual Hike Safe card at wildnh.com/safe to help defray the costs of training and rescue equipment for the state.

HIKING



From Mount Kearsarge you can see North Conway in the valley below. (ED PARSONS PHOTO)

One of the best ways to appreciate the valley in which North Conway sits is to see the view from any of the many peaks that surround the town.

The village sits just south of Mount Kearsarge North, and the 3.1-mile trail to its 3,268 foot summit winds steadily upward — first through a shadowy hemlock forest, then past scattered ledges, and finally through shady evergreens on the north side — to a bare summit with a restored

historical fire tower. The empty tower is open to the public, providing shelter from the wind and many windows for a nearly unobstructed 360-degree view.

To get there from North Conway take Route 16 north and just across the railroad tracks after the scenic vista in Intervale, drive up Hurricane Mountain Road on the right. In 1.5 miles, pull into a small parking lot on the left, next to a trail sign.



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Located on Route 16 in North Conway, Settlers Green Outlet Village opened in 1988, and is home to a collection of 75 national brand, high-end outlets, grouped together in an outdoor village setting.

Commissioned art installations are part of the complex at Settlers Crossing. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)



Shoppers look for specials at Settlers Green. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

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Settlers Green today has stores on both sides of Route 16, with Settlers Crossing, home to L.L. Bean and REI among other shops, and its latest build-out, Settlers Streetside which opened in 2018.

The complexes' outdoor courtyards help with complying with state distancing guidelines.

Settlers Green holds promotional and entertainment events throughout the year to enhance shoppers' savings and fun.

The mall also features art installations throughout the complex, commissioned to promote local artists.

Farther north in North Conway Village, shoppers can find an array of small boutiques, featuring local and New Hampshire-made items, many of which you won't find elsewhere.

Many of the shops in the village are members of the White Mountain Independents, a group of local business owners who promote shopping locally.

The downtown shops include Zeb's General Store, which sells many New England-made items and has a large candy counter.

The Penguin offers a quirky selection of gag gifts, hand-made jewelry, cookbooks, unique toys and greeting cards.

There's also an old-fashioned 5 and 10 cent store; White Birch Books, an independent bookstore; and Fields of Ambrosia, selling bath and body care products; as well as two coffee shops and several restaurants.

As always, New Hampshire has no sales tax, so thrifty bargain-conscious shoppers can save on their purchases compared to shopping out of state.



ABOVE: Visitors do a little window shopping at Spruce Hurricane in North Conway Village. BELOW: Shops on Main Street in North Conway Village are seen from Schouler Park. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTOS)



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Skaters in Schouler Park in North Conway. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Off-slope fun

You don't have to be a skier to have fun in Mount Washington Valley in the winter. There are plenty of activities to enjoy before, after or instead of hitting the slopes.

Adventure parks: Cranmore Mountain Resort (603-356-5543) offers thrilling downhill

rides on its Mountain Coaster on a half-mile track where you control the speed. The two-person cars are perfect for parents and kids. The Mountain Adventure Park also features a Giant Swing and the Soaring Eagle Zipline.

King Pine/Purity Spring Resort (603-367-

8896) in Madison is offering ice skating, fat biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

Ice skating: Indoor skating available at Conway Village's Ham Arena. Public skating is limited to 20 people for the immediate future. To reserve a spot you will need to contact the Ham Arena by phone or email at (603) 447-5886 or skatemail@hamarena.com. Guests are prescreened with a COVID questionnaire and temperatures are taken prior to entering the facility. Masks are required.

You'll also find skating at King Pine/ Purity Spring Resort (603-367-8896) and in Schouler Park in the center of North Conway (depending on cold weather). Skate rentals for the latter are available through Sun & Ski Sports (603-356-9411) in North Conway. Ice skating and rentals are offered at the enchanted Victorian Emerald Pond at Nestlenook (603-383-7101) in Jackson, conditions permitting.

Tubing: No special equipment or skills necessary here. Skiers, riders and non-skiers alike will experience the thrill of the downhill run at Mount Washington Valley's tubing parks. Facilities include Cranmore Mountain Resort's Tubing Park (603-356-5543), Purity Spring Resort/King Pine (603-367-8896), Bretton Woods Mountain Resort (603-278-3320 or 603-278-1000) and the walk-up tubing hill at Great Glen Trails (603-466-2333).

Most of these facilities have limits on tubing in order to allow for social distancing. Reservations are strongly recommended.






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Concerts

STONE MOUNTAIN ARTS CENTER

While many venues have put concerts on hold or gone to livestream events, Stone Mountain Arts Center in Brownfield, Maine, is still scheduling events, including a New Year's Eve concert with Jason Spooner, and several concerts in January and February.

This past summer, owners Carol Noonan and Jeff Flagg began presenting music indoors by limiting the audience to just 50 people. They offered pre-show dinner on the porch and in the spacious barn and curbside takeout service.

Noonan, a well-known performer who co-founded Stone Mountain with her husband in 2005, noted that masks are required when patrons are not at their tables.

"We get that not everyone is OK with that; we just ask them not to visit us at this time if they are not. We are all making very personal choices at this time, and we all need to be kind and respectful of our differences," said Noonan.

She said ticket prices are higher to offset the lower attendance as she still has to cover the staff and the artist. "These shows are not profitable for us except in spirit," Noonan added.



The stage and seating for shows at Stone Mountain Arts Center in Brownfield have been spread apart and the venue now seats 50 people at each show. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

The center posts updates to its website, stonemountainartscenter.com, including the cancelation of its Christmas concerts. The site notes: "As we wait to see what our state mandates in the coming months, we know many shows will go away that are scheduled. In addition, many artists continue to cancel

tours. That is not to say that the coming months may hold some new possibilities like smaller regional bookings, or just a fun dining experience. ... There are many factors that will weigh on us about any kind of reopening ... what will make the most sense for us is to stay healthy during this closure."

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How about a spicy Baklouti green chile olive oil paired with a mango balsamic for a fish taco or mango salsa? Just the right amount of heat and sweet! A Tuscan herb olive oil and an 18-year-old balsamic creates an unbelievable dipping oil for bread. Another great idea is an espresso balsamic to marinate your steak tips or meat. Just stop in and let the friendly staff suggest something for you. They promise you will be blown away by the taste and freshness.

North Conway Olive Oil Co. olive oils are ranked 95-98 out of 100, some being crushed just over a month ago, and containing high levels of polyphenols, an antioxidant in olive oil that research has shown



to reduce blood pressure, lower cholesterol and have cancer-reducing abilities. There is also research indicating it helps with Alzheimer's disease. North Conway Olive Oil is also only one of a handful of olive oil stores in the United States with the designation of ultra premium olive oil. This standard exceeds world standards for olive oil quality.

The store's balsamic vinegars are also the highest quality and are aged from 12-25 years. All are from Modena, Italy, and contain no added sugars, preservatives or salts and all of the store's products are non-GMO and gluten-free.

At North Conway Olive Oil Co., you'll find "a taste to excite your imagination."

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www.ncoliveoil.com**

Resources to help you plan your trip

VISITOR INFORMATION

North Conway Village

Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce
(603) 356-5947
2617 White Mountain Hwy
North Conway
mtwashingtonvalley.org

Scenic Vista

(603) 356-2769
3654 White Mountain Hwy • Intervale
visithnh.gov

Saco River Ranger Station

(603) 745-3816
33 Kancamagus Hwy • Conway
fs.usda.gov/whitemountain

Conway Village

(603) 447-2639
250 Main St. • Conway

Medical

Memorial Hospital

(603) 356-5461
3073 White Mountain Hwy
North Conway
memorialhospitalnh.org

Huggins Hospital

(603) 569-7500
240 S. Main St. • Wolfeboro
hugginshospital.org

Saco River Medical Group

(603) 447-3500 • (603) 383-3005
7 Greenwood Ave. • Conway
15 US Route 302 • Glen
sacodocs.com

White Mountain Community Health

Center • (603) 447-8900
298 White Mountain Hwy • Conway
whitemountainhealth.org

Grocery Stores

Hannaford Supermarket

(603) 356-6341
32 Mountain Valley Blvd
North Conway
Hannaford Supermarket
(603) 539-7531
891 NH 16 • Ossipee
hannaford.com

Shaw's Supermarket

(603) 356-5471
1150 Eastman Road • North Conway
shaws.com

Grant's Shop'n Save

(603) 383-4282
9 US Route 302 • Glen
grantsshopnsave.com

Valuland Food Store

(603) 539-4416
Indian Mound, 280 NH 16B
Center Ossipee

Walmart Supercenter

(603) 356-0130
46 North-South Road
North Conway

Libraries

North Conway Public Library

(603) 356-2961
2719 Main St. • North Conway
northconwaylibrary.com

Conway Public Library

(603) 447-5552
15 Greenwood Ave. • Conway
conwaypubliclibrary.org

Bartlett Public Library

(603) 374-2755
1313 US-302 • Bartlett
bartlettpubliclibrary.org

Jackson Public Library

(603) 383-9731 • 52 Main St • Jackson
jacksonlibrary.org

Madison Public Library

(603) 367-8545
1885 Village Rd • Madison
madisonlibrary-nh.org

Freedom Public Library

(603) 539-5176
38 Old Portland Rd • Freedom
freedompubliclibrary.org

Chocorua Public Library

(603) 323-8610
25 Deer Hill Rd • Chocorua
chocorualibrary.org

Cook Memorial Library

(603) 323-8510 •
93 Main St • Tamworth
tamworthlibrary.org

Ossipee Public Library

(603) 539-6390
74 Main St • Center Ossipee
ossipee.lib.nh.us

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Liquor Stores

New Hampshire State Liquor and Wine Outlet Stores do not sell beer, which can be found at convenience stores or supermarkets in the state.

NH Liquor & Wine Outlet #23

(603) 447-2782
234 White Mountain Hwy • Conway

NH Liquor & Wine Outlet #54

(603) 383-9000 • 65 US 302 • Glen

Discount Beverages

Plus Cigarettes
(603) 356-8844
1130 Eastman Rd • North Conway

Vista Bev & Market

(603) 356-5084
10 Hurricane Mountain Rd • Intervale

Movie Theaters

Mt. Valley Mall Cinema

(603) 356-6410
Route 16 • North Conway

Magic Lantern

(207) 647-9326
9 Depot St • Bridgton, Maine

Police Stations

Conway Police Station

(603) 356-5715
35 East Conway Rd • Center Conway

NH State Police Troop E

(603) 323-3333
1864 White Mtn Hwy • Tamworth

Carroll County Sheriff

(603) 539-2284
95 Water Village Road • Ossipee

Ossipee Police Station

(603) 539-2011
7 Dore St, Center Ossipee

Tamworth Police Station

(603) 323-8581
100 Tamworth Road, Tamworth

Madison Police Station

(603) 367-8334
1923 Village Road • Madison

Freedom Police Station

(603) 539-8268
218 Village Road • Freedom

Effingham Police Station

(603) 539-5380
218 Village Road • Freedom

Bartlett Police Station

(603) 356-5868
56 Town Hall Road • Bartlett

Jackson Police Station

(603) 383-9292
54 Main St • Jackson

Mailing

North Conway Post Office

78 Grove St. • North Conway

Conway Post Office

175 Main St. • Conway

The UPS Store

(603) 356-4881
1857 White Mountain Hwy
North Conway

Laundromats

Seavey Street Laundromat

60 Seavey St. • North Conway

Jem Coin Laundry

73 Main St. • Conway

Acorn Wash & Dry

175 Main St. • Conway

DIRECTORY

Coffee Shops

Dunkin Donuts

Conway: (603) 452-5311
402 W. Main St. • Conway
North Conway: (603) 356-5676
1946 White Mountain Hwy • North Conway
Glen: (603) 374-9088
539 US 302 • Glen

Starbucks

(603) 356-6860
1456 White Mountain Hwy
North Conway

The Met Coffee House

(603) 356-2332
2680 White Mountain Hwy
North Conway and at Settlers Green

Aroma Joe's Coffee

(603) 662-0491
Shaw's Way • North Conway
2315 White Mountain Hwy
West Ossipee

Frontside Coffee Roasters

(603) 356-3603
2697 White Mountain Hwy • North Conway

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Skiing history

For anyone who loves skiing, The New England Ski Museum in North Conway Village is not to be missed on a visit to the Mount Washington Valley.

The North Conway branch of the Franconia-based museum opened in 2018 and is the newest museum in the Mount Washington Valley.



The North Conway branch of the New England Ski Museum is located next to Schouler Park. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)



An exhibit on Hannes Schneider features ski equipment and the suitcase he brought with him to North Conway when he arrived in the 1930s. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Located in the old North Conway Community Center building adjacent to Schouler Park, the museum's exhibits pay special attention to North Conway and the Valley's place in skiing history. Among the displays are a full wall mural of Tuckerman Ravine and exhibits featuring Hannes Schneider, a world famous Austrian skier who revolutionized ski instruction and

brought his Arlberg technique to North Conway's Mount Cranmore in the 1930s.

A rotating temporary exhibit, a ski library, a vintage ski collection and a Cranmore Skimobile on loan from Spike Smith of Conway round out the exhibits.

For more information, go to skimuseum.org or call (603) 823-7177.



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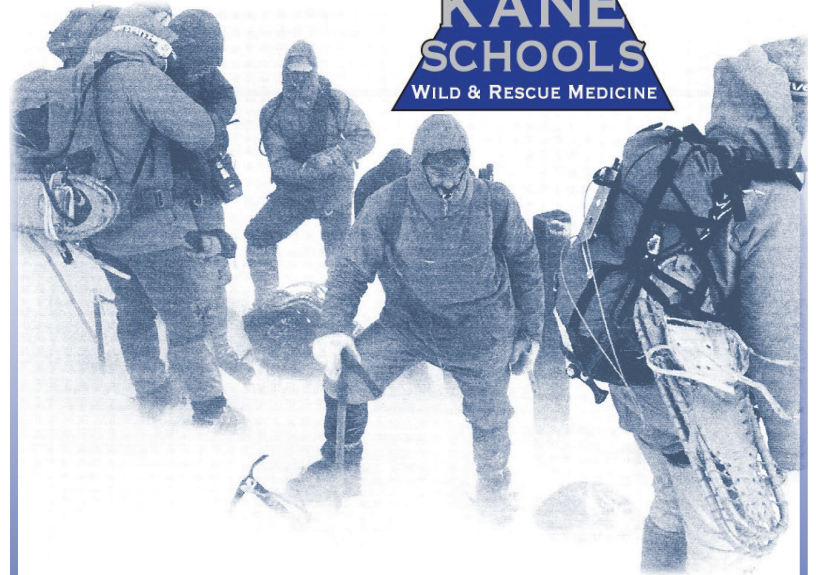
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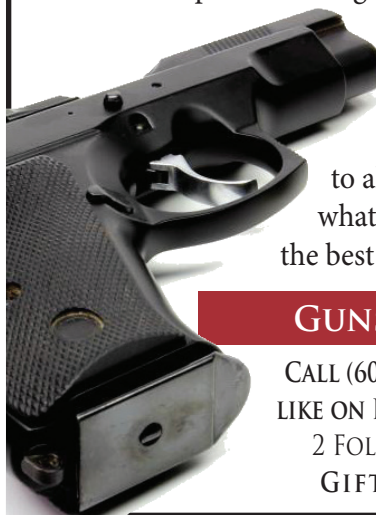
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