THE GREAT GRAY KNOB MASSACRE
By Doug Mayer and Rebecca Oreskes

Editor’s Note: RMC’s Bill Arnold was recently interviewed by former RMC Trails Chair Doug Mayer, and Milan resident Rebecca Oreskes, for their Mountain Voices series in the Appalachia Journal. Bill’s interview has already appeared there, and also in the compilation Mountain Voices: Stories of Life and Adventure in the White Mountains and Beyond, published in 2012 by AMC Books.

We’re pleased to share one of the more unusual stories Bill told during his interview with Doug and Rebecca—an unusual moment in RMC history that didn’t make it into either the Journal or Mountain Voices. This tale has gone down in RMC lore as (with an allusion to Arlo Guthrie’s “Alice’s Restaurant Massacre”) the “Great Gray Knob Massacre.”

* * * * *

Bill: It was Labor Day of 1979. The caretaker was Bob White. Ben Phinney’s father, Fred, was passing by Gray Knob. There were, apparently, a lot of people up there. The caretaker handed him a note and said, “Take this down to somebody in the valley.” This was before we had two-way radios, of course.

He went down, and when he got out of the woods, he gave the note to Gordon Lowe, since Lowe’s Store was probably the

Continued on page 8


2013 VOLUNTEER WORK TRIPS: TO AND FROM THE ICE GULCH
By Jeff Bean

Hoping to build on the accomplishments of volunteer trail work over the past two summers, we now set our sights on brushing the trails into and out of the Ice Gulch. We will work on the Cook Path and Ice Gulch Path on four consecutive Saturdays: July 20 and 27, and August 3 and 10. As in 2012, this last day is the date of the RMC Annual Meeting. Please join your fellow club members and other volunteers, and bring useful hand tools such as hedge or pruning clippers, sickles, or a small hand saw for the brush clearing.

Though we are not planning to do trail work in the Ice Gulch itself, we can look forward to locating the four important sites named by William Peek: the Vestibule, the First Chamber, the Dell of the Fairy Spring, and Peboamauk Fall. Peek, as Judy Hudson noted in her history of the RMC, was the first of the early pathmakers to survey the Ice Gulch. Unfortunately we have, as far as I know, no original signs made by Mr. Peek to offer as a raffle prize to induce participation of volunteers. So—as in 2011, when Michele Cormier introduced volunteer trail clearing—we will raffle a gift certificate for current RMC merchandise. All participants will be entered in the raffle.

Continued on page 10

Above: Trail junction: Ice Gulch Path at the Peboamauk Loop. R. Meiklejohn photo.

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Once again the buds on the sugar maples have burst, birds have returned, and fiddleheads have appeared from beneath the leaves, all signaling the beginning of the spring/summer season in Randolph, and for the Randolph Mountain Club.

This also marks the time of year when our trail crew will soon be arriving for introductions, orientation, and required safety classes and certifications. Then it’s off to the hills for early summer patrol clearing blow downs and any other trouble spots on the trails that have occurred since the fall. Once that work is completed, regular planned trail maintenance projects on Cliffway and the Link will be the focus of this year’s trail work activities.

Our summer caretakers will also be on scene, greeting overnight guests, maintaining the camps, packing up supplies, offering good advice to those less experienced, and assisting fellow hikers in need.

At Stearns Lodge, residence of the trail crew, we have replaced three more tent platforms this spring, and installed a new refrigerator in the kitchen. We also put in a new back door at the lodge, to allow direct access from the laundry area to the outside clothesline, so that our employees may dry their mountains of work clothes in a more environmentally friendly way.

In projects for the upcoming year, we are putting together a vegetation-management proposal to the Forest Service to re-establish some of the viewsheds where brush and trees have grown in over the decades. Locations include destination viewpoints such as Dome Rock, Kelton Crag and White Cliff, as well as Crag Camp and Gray Knob. Members, please send us copies of any of your old photographs at these locations, especially around the camps, so that we may include historical documentation of the twentieth-century conditions we are seeking to restore. Contact me, or archivist Al Hudson, or any director.

The very successful Saturday volunteer trails work days will take place again this year; see Jeff Bean’s article on page 1. The trails maintenance work completed by volunteers on these work trips allows our regular trails crew to remain focused on the more technical projects that must also be completed during our short summer work season. All are welcome; again, thank you to those who have participated in the past.

On August 10th, please be sure to join us at the Town Hall the 2013 Annual Meeting where our guest speaker will be former RMC trail crew member and current Bates College professor Dykstra Eusden. He is co-author of the recent book The Geology of New Hampshire’s White Mountains. The book and presentation will cover everything from the oldest bedrock and tectonics, through the glaciations, and up to the arrival of the first humans through the Randolph-Jefferson valley hunting caribou! A free ranging question and answer session will follow. This is sure to be a great presentation! The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM.

This summer should once again be a great adventure, and I look forward to seeing all of our friends and RMC members around town and on the trails.

Till then - John
Welcome New RMC Members!
Names and locations of new members since November 2012.

Trails Report – and Meet the 2013 Trail Crew

By Mike Micucci

Once again the most difficult task we have to do, as keepers of the RMC trails, is sift through the pile of applications for trail crew positions for the new season. It is at this time of year that I grow tired of hearing the oft-repeated refrain lamenting the state of our youth: their lack of motivation, their sense of entitlement, and so on. At no time during the 2013 interview process did that thought ever cross my mind; in fact, quite the contrary. We had five openings (more on this later) and twenty-five applicants for these positions, and all but a few had serious trails experience. Each and every one had enthusiasm and motivation, and what was most decisive was the social skills that would help to forge a connection with the other members of the crew and the community.

Every year – and I’ve been interviewing trail crew candidates for over 15 years (!) I come away from the process impressed with the quality of the applicants, and this year is no different.

Continued on page 5
I’m looking forward to a new season with returning crew members Hart Minifie, Jordan Cargill, Ethan Denny and Deva Steketee, who will be field supervisor for her second year. I welcome our first-year crew members Kate Orlofsky, Leeann Reid, Sarah Allen, Lauren Anzalone, and Brian Behr. Look for everyone’s photos on the opposite page. This should be another fun and productive season.

The work this season will be ongoing maintenance of our 100 miles of trails, with particular emphasis on the Cliffway and Link trails. We have applied for a State of New Hampshire Recreational Trails Program grant, but as of this report we have not heard whether we are successful in securing this funding. With U.S. Forest Service grant money all but gone, we have to get creative; but there are few resources available to fund our program. We are trying to grow our membership and studying alternative funding sources, but in the long term, we need money in place that will secure our program and our trails. We are in crisis and we are not alone. Every trails organization in the country is in the same position. AMC is struggling and has cut their trails program for 2013. That is really not a viable option for us as our crew is already small.

At no time have member contributions to the RMC, particularly the trails program, been more important. If you can manage to put $10, $100, $1,000 or more into an envelope then please do so. If you love these trails as I suspect you do, please help us keep the program and the Club in the path (I couldn’t resist that, sorry).

The 2013 Crew will be moving into town on June 1 & 2, and beginning orientation on the 3rd. I do hope you can find your way during the summer to stop by the Stearns to visit or invite the crew to your home for dinner or a cookout. I hope too, that you’ll make it to Picnic and charades this year, on the hundredth anniversary, and cheer on the RMC trail crew as they try to stump the rest of the community and membership at this historic and fun event.

* * * *

Earlier I mentioned that we had five openings. We started with four openings for this coming season, but sadly we lost Joe Murad on December 28. He was killed in a tragic accident on Wildcat Mountain while sledding with friends. Joe was a valued member of the summer 2012 trail crew and worked through the fall as well, cutting the Mount Crescent and Cook Path relocations to the new trailhead. From my first meeting with Joe, I was struck by his enthusiasm for the job. He loved being here and being part of the crew, and truly connected with each and every person he worked or spent time with. His quick smile and his easy and non-judgmental demeanor endeared him to everyone. I was fortunate to know him, and will forever remember the outpouring of love for him that I witnessed at his funeral.

After his time with the RMC, I persuaded him to apply for a position at the AMC and gave him a recommendation for that job. He continued to make friends there and from time to time, he would stop by to visit with me and talk about the future – his future and his plans. He would also talk about his family and his love and admiration for his dad and his little sister (sadly, his mom passed away shortly before he came to the RMC). He loved life and the people in it and accepted everyone into his. He will be missed by many.

I hope to see you all on the trails during the coming year.
For those of us who felt like we were cheated out of a real winter in 2011-2012, this winter more than made up for it. It was a long, cold, and snowy winter at the RMC camps. As I write this article in mid-April, we still have over seventy inches of snow at Gray Knob and no end to the winter weather in sight. It looks as though we’ll have a traditional northern Presidential spring with the snow pack lingering well into May and possibly June.

Our winter caretakers ended their season in late March. Jenny Baxter and Caleb Jackson thoroughly enjoyed the snow along with all our guests and had an excellent season. This spring the camps were staffed by Cheryl Byrne, Kevin Ross, and Mac Griffin. JP Krol was scheduled to return for a second spring but unfortunately injured his knee in March. JP’s shoes were ably filled by Kevin Ross, who most recently was working for the Maine Hut and Trails Association as part of their backcountry staff. Joining Kevin was Cheryl Byrne who was new to RMC but no stranger to caretaking and backcountry work as she is a seasonal field assistant with the Green Mountain Club during the summer and fall. To round out the crew, we were fortunate that 2013 summer caretaker Mac Griffin was finishing up his current job with AMC at the Pinkham Notch front desk in time to help fill in for JP for the rest of the spring. Our thanks to the spring staff for a job well done preparing the camps for the busy summer months ahead – which was no easy task as much of the infrastructure was thoroughly buried in snow.

The 2013 summer staff are new to RMC camps but not to the backcountry. Over at Crag Camp, RMC welcomes back Hannah Marshall. Hannah most recently was a member of RMC’s trail crew during the summer of 2012. At Gray Knob we welcome Cormac “Mac” Griffin as the summer caretaker. Mac comes to RMC with several seasons of work under his belt with the AMC as a Hut Caretaker, Naturalist, and member of their Front Desk crew. Hannah and Mac will work with our returning Field Supervisor Deva Steketee to implement capital improvements and perform general maintenance and repairs of the camps. You can read more about Hannah and Mac in their own words, on the opposite page.

2013’s work projects will largely be focused on general maintenance and upkeep of the camps. This work includes staining of the log structures, repairing damaged windows and doors, oiling of the floors, operating the composting toilets, performing area trail work, teaching Leave No Trace, and welcoming guests to our facilities. A major effort will be made early in the season by the caretakers and the trail crew to secure the winter wood supply for Gray Knob. RMC will be working with a consulting forester and staff from the White Mountain National Forest to identify and mark areas for current and future firewood harvesting that will ensure a reliable and sustainable source of fuel while protecting high elevation forests.

As always, we encourage all members to come up and visit the camps this summer, spend a night (or two), meet the caretakers, and experience the finest backcountry facilities in the northeast.

**John D. Eusden, 1922 - 2013**

Former RMC President (1973-74) John Eusden died on April 27, 2013 in Brunswick, Maine. He is remembered in a longer article appearing in the June issue of the Randolph community newsletter, the Mountain View. All are welcome at a memorial service at the Randolph Church on Saturday, August 3rd at 2:00 PM.

John is shown at left on the summit of Pine Mountain in 2008, at age 86, in a photo provided by the Eusden family – whose three generations have served the Club on the board of directors, at the camps and on the trail crew. Although this newsletter is printed in black and white, many readers will recognize John’s trademark fluorescent-yellow jacket. Behind him is the eastern flank of Mt. Washington, his route to bicycle conquest of our highest summit.
Meet the 2013 Camp Caretakers:

Mac Griffin, Gray Knob; photo page 6
Hannah Marshall, Crag Camp; photo page 7

Courtesy photos.

MAC: I grew up exploring the forests and fields around my home in western New Hampshire. At the age of 15 I moved to south Florida and completed high school there one year later. I returned to New Hampshire and sought out the mountains after having grown tired of the strip malls and superhighways which dominated the landscape of south Florida. After learning luthiery in Nova Scotia and working at Mammoth Mountain in the eastern Sierra, I attended the University of New Hampshire, where I graduated in 2008 with a B.S. in Environmental Science.

After college I completed a solo bike tour from Newmarket, New Hampshire to Breckenridge, Colorado, where I spent the following four winters pursuing my passion for skiing. In August 2009, I returned to the White Mountains from my position as a wedding caterer in Bend, Oregon to work as a Hut Naturalist for the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) at Mizpah Spring Hut. The sublime beauty of the White Mountains kept luring me back to work for AMC during the springs, summers, and falls over the next four years. I continued with AMC as a Hut Naturalist at Carter Notch and Zealand Falls Huts in 2010, as a Hut Caretaker at Lonesome Lake and Carter Notch Huts in 2010 and 2011, as a Research Assistant in 2011 and 2012, and at the Front Desk at Pinkham Notch in 2012 and 2013.

I currently live in Glen, New Hampshire and still try to spend as much time outside as possible. I’m looking forward to getting back into the woods this summer at Gray Knob, exploring new trails, working on my photography skills, and continuing to meet others with a passion for the mountains.

HANNAH: Though I grew up in Manchester, NH, the weekends and summers I spent in the north country as a kid allowed me to appreciate mountain life. I rock-climbed in the summer and skied in the winter with my family. After a brief stint at the University of San Francisco I took this past year away from my studies. I came to the RMC last summer as a member of the trail crew and have not left the area since! In the winter months I worked as a ski patroller at Wildcat Mountain, and I am thrilled to return to the Randolph community this summer. In the fall I will resume my studies as a transfer student at Colorado College, where I plan to study environmental sciences as I build the necessary certifications to become a rock-climbing guide.

Meg Norris, continued from page 12

What RMC trail is next on your to-do-list, and why? I haven't made it to the Ice Gulch yet. It has a unique microclimate with plants usually found at much higher elevations. I've read all about it but haven't put boots to the ground yet! That's on the summer agenda.

Where did you work for the RMC? Winter at Gray Knob.

What do you miss most about that position? Meeting the people and hearing their stories. Many of them are repeat visitors.

What made you want to volunteer as an RMC director? Transitioning from working in the back country to taking "a real job", I wanted to find a way to stay linked to the Whites and its community.

What is your favorite piece of RMC merchandise, and why? Randolph Paths is one of my favorite guidebooks, and I buy one pretty much everywhere I go. The geology highlights and historical anecdotes associated with the trail really connect you to the hike you're about to go on.
Gray Knob Massacre, continued from page 1

first place he came to. Gordon opened it up and the note said, “We’ve been taken over by a crowd of drunken kids. Send help.”

So, the call went out. I’m not sure of the order but at some point, I was notified because I was Camp Director, and I was working for the Forest Service at that time. Went to the State Police, went to Fish and Game. Klaus Goetze was the president of the club.

We all got together and, you know, Fish and Game was like, “This is a law enforcement problem. We don’t deal with this kind of stuff.” The State Police was like, “Well, it’s a woods and mountain problem. We don’t deal with that. Sorry.” But, somebody was calling for help. I was saying, “Well, why don’t we just send up two or three people and see what’s going on.” State Police was saying, “No, this is a big thing. They’re calling for help. We’ve got to call out the troops.”

So, everybody agreed to send a representative. And I went for RMC and also as a Forest Service representative. There were maybe three or four state troopers, including one with a police dog. We had several Fish and Game people, and a couple of state trooper trainees. Someone had a strange sense of humor on that one, sending the trainees along. Mike Pratt who had been a caretaker for RMC, worked for AMC and somehow the word got to him and he said, “Oh, I’ll come too.” Mike Johnson, who was with State Parks at the time and also a former caretaker, he got involved. His wife Kathy Mitchell came, too. Mike Pelchat was working with Mike Johnson that summer, so he came also.

It was about 25 people, total, all headed up to Gray Knob.

We met at Lowe’s pretty late, like 10 or 11 o’clock at night. It was decided that I was going to go first and set the pace, because I knew the way. We started off on Lowe’s Path, and I’m looking at the crowd. It’s a big crowd, and I don’t know each person’s shape. I realize it’s going to be a long night. So we started out kind of slow. Somebody towards the back says, “We’re going pretty slow up there.” So I thought, I’ve been working backcountry for the Forest Service all summer. I can go any speed you want. So, I stepped it up.

By Log Cabin, two of the State troopers were throwing up. They’d apparently all gone to McDonalds earlier on in the evening.

Part of this group, which it turns out was from Worcester [Massachusetts], was at the Log Cabin. They’re all asleep. The two troopers who were throwing up, said, “We’ll stay here and keep an eye on this crowd.” So, we lost two right there.

We continued up Lowe’s Path to the Quay, just outside the cabin. We regrouped. We decided that now it’s a police thing, you know, and decided that they would go in first and see what was going on, and the rest of us would stay out in the yard. This was the old Gray Knob building, of course.

So, the State troopers go in. They went in two doors -- two troopers in the same door at the same time. We could hear everything from outside. Everything’s dark now. It’s -- I don’t know – maybe two o’clock in the morning.

Everybody’s asleep. We hear the doors opening and we hear the State Police saying, “State Police. We’re taking over. Everybody stay where you are.” And there was one poor guy. I don’t think he was part of the group but he was there in the cabin. He was asleep right in the main room downstairs. Had a wicked bad stutter. And he’s like “Wha, wha, wha… what’s going on?” The trooper’s all pissy, though, and this guy gets thrown out. It turns out all the kids are upstairs. There are bottlenecks everywhere. They had a hell of a party. And the trooper yells up the stairs, “State Police. I want you to come down, one at a time. We’re taking over.”

From upstairs comes this, “Bull----!” or maybe it was “F--- you!” I don’t know exactly what it was, but it was not the right answer. So the trooper climbs up the ladder, and grabs the first person by his shirt collar. He throws him down the ladder. Next trooper is there with a dog. The dog’s barking. Threw him out the door into handcuffs. They wind up, one after another. Boom! Boom! Boom! Banging them down the stairs. Their shins are all banged up. The dog growls at them. He wasn’t biting but, you know, he was growling and pretty intimidating. In ten minutes, there’s something like 20 of these kids all lined up. Boys and girls, all from Worcester. The police are taking names and addresses and are interviewing the caretaker, getting the story. It’s decided that a
couple of us should go over to Crag, because some of the group apparently is over there. They’re everywhere.

So, I’m going to go over with Doug Menzies, from Fish and Game. We started over, and one of the kids says, “I want my coat,” or something else over there. “I need to go and get it.” Menzies says, “Okay. You come with us, but you’re on probation. You’ve got to behave.” “Okay, I’ll be good.”

We just get down to that little swampy place right down below Gray Knob and he starts getting real mouthy. “You f---ing a------s!” So Menzies says, “Okay, you can’t come with us.” So we go back up to the cabin. We’re going right where the trail goes by the wall of the cabin and he takes a swing at Doug. I grabbed the kid and got one arm pinned up again the wall and he’s swinging at me with the other one. Everybody else is around the corner in the yard. It’s dark, of course, and they didn’t see what had happened. I’m yelling, “We need some help over here.” I don’t know where Doug went at this point. “We need some help over here.”

The first person around the corner was Mike Pelchat. He grabs the kid’s other arm. So, we had the kid pinned to the wall. The next one around the corner is Peter Roberts, the state trooper. He’s got a big flashlight. First person he sees is Pelchat. Wham! Right over the head. Yelling, screaming, headlights flashing, you know. “Wrong guy! Wrong guy!” Now the kid’s bolting, you know. He gets tackled. It was just chaos.

So, we go over to Crag. Things are pretty much okay over there. I think Bill Rising was the caretaker at Crag. We march all the kids out from Gray Knob. They’re getting marched all the way down Lowe’s Path at night in handcuffs, for Christ’s sake.

I can remember walking at the end of the line with Keith Kidder, who was Fish and Game. There were like little bags of dope on the trail all the way down. These kids had been jettisoning them in the dark.

There is a rather famous picture* that I’ve seen in several slide shows of sunrise at Lowe’s Store. All these kids lined up with like a mountain of bottles. And this is after the party! I mean, you know, these are just the leftovers. Sunrise at Lowe’s. I think they prosecuted one or two for underage drinking, but that was it. They never really got much out of it.

It was an epic party. As to whether it could have been handled better by the caretaker -- who knows. Whether it was any more epic than a lot of other parties, I don’t know. Obviously, it got out of hand and it was bad.

So now, move up-- holy smokes, nearly 30 years later. I’m up at Mizpah Hut with Barbara and a group from Gorham High School. I think it was the Honor Society. A bunch of 10th graders, 11th graders from school. None of them had ever been to the mountains, even though they live here. They’re up at Mizpah for an overnight. It was a great trip. Peter Roberts is now long retired from the State Police, and I knew him from being around the mountains, and he’s still working in the mountains, filling in at Mizpah. He’s having a great retirement.

He came up to me and he said, “Bill, do you remember that night at Gray Knob with that group from Worcester?” Of course, I said, “Yeah.” And he said, “Well, I can remember, I hit a guy over the head with a flashlight. I cut him pretty badly and I’ve always felt bad about that. And who was that?” Somehow he never knew. I said, “Well, it was Mike Pelchat” -- who Peter knew. And he said, “I thought it was him. You know, I felt badly about that.” This was years and years later. It was just one of those things that happened in chaos, in the middle of that night.
Ice Gulch, continued from page 1

The trail sections to be cleared and meeting places follow below, and the RMC map of the area appears at the bottom. If you’re coming from within Randolph, please consider walking to the trailhead, instead of driving, especially on August 3 and 10.

July 20th: Meet at the parking lot at the end of Randolph Hill Road at 9:00 AM. We will plan to clear approximately half the distance on Cook Path from the Mt. Crescent Trail to the head of Ice Gulch, about 1.3 miles.

July 27th: Same meeting time and place as July 20th. The goal will be to complete brushing Cook Path to the head of the Gulch, i.e. the second 1.3 miles.

August 3rd: Meet at the beginning of Ice Gulch Path by the Kenyons’ barn on Randolph Hill Road, 9:00 AM. The plan will be to clear approximately half the distance from Randolph Hill Road to the Peboamauk Loop, about 1.0 mi. Because of the limited parking on the south side of Randolph Hill Road it will be worthwhile to consider offering rides for volunteers to avoid having too many cars at the trailhead.

August 10th: Same meeting time and place as August 3rd. Continue from where we left off clearing the previous Saturday, and clear the rest of the way to the Peboamauk Loop.

Please contact Jeff Bean, (203) 565-1597 or Michele Cormier, (603) 466-5841 for more information or to let us know that you will be coming.

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Treasurer’s Report
By Regina Ferreira

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| TOTAL INCOME | 123,600 | 7,797 | 13,658 |

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| TOTAL EXPENSE | 116,010 | 12,432 | 11,689 |
| NET          | 7,590   | -4,635 | 1,969  |

For further information about the Club’s finances, please contact the Treasurer at (603) 466-3176.
RMC Merchandise
By Barb Phinney

It's time to celebrate 100 years of our RMC Annual Picnic tradition, and what better way to remember this unique happening than with a new poster reflecting the creativity of this wonderful community?

So, come to the 4th of July Tea at the Kenyons’ barn for the "unveiling" and sale of our picnic-centennial poster, along with a new RMC Classic T and a first-ever RMC mug. And our usual array of RMC items will be on sale at the Tea as well as at various events throughout the summer. Most of our items are also available again this season at the Tucker’s vestibule, on Durand Road, and of course, on the RMC website at www.randolphmountainclub.org.

Order merchandise on the website: www.randolphmountainclub.org; click on “Stuff We Sell”.
To order by mail, download the printable order form at the website.
For membership also you may use the website, or the form at the bottom of this page; complete it and send with your check in U.S. dollars to Randolph Mountain Club, PO Box 279, Gorham NH 03581

**Membership Form**

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*The Randolph Mountain Club is a diverse organization, committed to equal opportunity in employment and program delivery. The Randolph Mountain Club prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political affiliation and familial status.*
**RMC Volunteer Profile**

**RMC director Ryan Smith, who is also the managing editor of AMC Outdoors,** spoke recently with fellow director Meg Norris.

**Name:** Meg Norris

**Age:** 29

**Lives in:** Jackson, soon to be North Conway.

**Preferred outdoor activities?** Back country skiing, hiking

**Describe the RMC in 5 words or less.** Independent Mountain Community

**What is your favorite RMC trail, and why?** Having overwintered at Gray Knob, I am very familiar with the Gray Knob Trail. Any trail, once you get above treeline, gets pretty special, I think.

**What makes RMC trails unique compared to other trails in the WMNF?** To me, it’s their history. It wasn’t a large organization or agency that put them in, it was a community dedicated to finding beautiful spots.

*Continued on page 7*