



The Fall Line

"Read it if you can."



Winter 2021

A Letter from our President

I hope this letter finds you and your families well.

I've been on this board for close to 15 years and have had the pleasure of working with many of our great past presidents. We all owe **Trey Gregory** a huge thank you for doubling down and taking on that role for the past four years. I looked through our list of past Presidents and only a few have done a four year or longer term; Roland Palmedo for nine years and R. Bruse Estelle was also President for four years. After being voted into the role, I (and a few others) received an email from Trey with helpful suggestions including an important list of contacts and most significantly a very nice note that ended with "Thank you all for helping run the lodge. It is an interesting experience and would make a great reality TV show." He was not kidding.

I thought I had a pretty good sense of the inner workings of the club. My first week as president included a board meeting and the drafting of the letter to membership about our club's financial situation and lodge policies adapted for COVID. That week I received and responded to over 250 emails that included the word COVID. I felt like I should be wearing a mask while sitting at my computer. I was definitely not expecting this level of communication.

The great news is our membership was highly engaged, completely understanding with the new policies put forth and generously responsive to the financial challenges we face. Thank you to everyone who stepped up to help in various ways. A special thank you to the COVID committee (**Ann and Rich Gervase, Betsy Raftery, and Margie Gregory**) for helping with some of these initiatives. We are financially secure for the coming months but still need to proceed with caution.

My plans for winter skiing have been a game of wait and see, make a plan, change the plan, make a different plan, etc. and then cross our fingers and maybe even say a small prayer. I suspect many others had a similar experience. Not a day goes by when I don't remind myself that even thinking about skiing is a privilege, especially these days. Being outside, and especially being on the mountain at Mad River Glen lifts me up and fills me with energy. I hope that all of you are able to go the places that make you feel the same.

I am hopeful that next winter our lodge will be refilled with members, laughter and tired skiers. Until then, mask up if you can, so we can ski it if we can!

Hooey Wilks
President

Help us forecast

Please check your user profile and make sure we have up to date information on you and your family. Please make sure your account lists **all children** under 21 and their birthdates. If you need help, contact **Tony Richards** (trichards18@gmail.com). This information helps us forecast our membership additions in the years to come. It is critical for planning as we look to the future.

ASCNY News

While the lodge and mountain are considerably more quiet than usual, the board has been busy. This fall we voted in 4 new board members, **Emily Mooney, Alex Merrill, Jeff Hopkins** and **Ann Gervase**. They are introduced on the following pages. We also voted in a new slate of Governors and changed up some of the roles within the board. Here is the new slate as well as committee contacts.

Governors:

Hooey Wilks, President
Margie Gregory, Vice President
Richard Gervase, Treasurer
Tony Richards, Secretary

Committees:

Betsy Raftery and Ann Gervase, Reservations
David Clark and Ann Gervase, Lodge
Stephen Pettibone and Alex Merrill, Races
Hooey Wilks and Emily Mooney, Communications
Hooey Wilks, Alex Merrill and Jeff Hopkins, Website
Gregg Stone and Rich Gervase, Legal Matters
Doug Walker, Events
Scott Alexander, Legacy Cup

We are always looking for additional hands. If you can't commit to being on the board, but want to help in some way, please reach out.



The Races Must Go On!

BREAKING NEWS

Saturday, February 27th
Tentatively 10am

Ticket price includes
race participation
in 2 GS runs

Mount Southington
Connecticut

The Vermont State travel restrictions have made it challenging for many members, especially those with children attending in person school to visit Vermont. New board member and our latest addition to the Race Committee, **Alex Merrill**, had the brilliant idea to move our club races south to Connecticut so more members could participate. The ability for the vast majority of our members to come from neighboring states to Connecticut for less than 24 hours increases and follows the state's safe travel guidelines. Our club has held races every year but one (1968) since 1935. For years, our club held their races in the Berkshires before moving them to Vermont. Finding a place that could take our group was a challenge, but with the help of **Scott Alexander**, **Stephen Pettibone** and an offer by **Stuart Randall**, they found a venue. Mount Southington will be the host for two GS runs. Sorry, no Slalom this year. We realize it is last minute, but like most of us, we don't have many plans these days, so hoping we can see some familiar faces on the slopes. We won't be hosting

an award ceremony this year, but next year will be twice as fun. If you can make a day trip to Mount Southington in Connecticut, please try and attend. These guys worked hard to make this happen. This could be your year to bring home a cup! Please contact **Stephen Pettibone** at spp@pettibone.net if you plan to attend. More information will be coming via email.

New Board Member - Emily Mooney

When did you start skiing? Where? I started skiing at 4 years old at MRG. My first ski memory is being plopped on my Uncle **Rob Young**'s lap as the single chair came around and sent the two of us up the mountain. Very scary for a 5-year-old! Don't recommend.

Who introduced you to the ASCNY and when? The Young family introduced my family to the ASCNY.

Your best and/or worst experience at the Lodge? Best experience at the lodge was beating out my older sister for the crown jewel of race weekend; the Mightymeister. There are no bad days at the lodge.

Tell us about you best road trip to MRG? Your worst? The worst road trip up to MRG came as a result of a wild goose chase in Putney, Vermont. My Mom, sister and I were driving up from Connecticut on a Friday night and we saw a sign for Santa's Land USA off Route 91. We got off the highway in search of Santa and spent the next two plus hours trying to find him. This was pre google maps. We eventually gave up and never found Santa's Land, it was devastating.

Best day at MRG? Super Bowl weekend 2019! My partner Alex and I decided last minute to go up to the lodge. We had just moved back to Boston from Colorado. Forgetting that it was Superbowl weekend and the Patriots were playing, we basically had the mountain to ourselves. It ended up being the best days of skiing as it dumped all weekend and we lapped a lineless single chair all day!

What is your favorite trail at MRG? Bunny Woods!

If you weren't skiing at MRG where would you rather ski? Arapahoe Basin! This local gem was our go-to mountain when I lived in Colorado. The mountain has a parking lot dubbed "the beach" where very fun tailgates take place.

Who is your fantasy ski buddy? Gus Kenworthy!

Favorite après ski beverage? Lawson's Switchback.

Favorite ski outfit and skis? On April Fools day in Jackson Hole when the snow starts to melt they celebrate "Gaper Day." Everyone dresses up in the most ridiculous outfits. I was visiting a friend that weekend who lived in Jackson and wore a neon pink jacket with jean shorts. Probably my favorite skiing outfit ever!

Why did you join the Board of Governors? MRG and ASCNY are where some of my fondest childhood memories took place. I want to help keep the lodge a special place for generations to come.



Emily Mooney

New Board Member - Jeff Hopkins

When did you start skiing? Where? I grew up in Maine and skied at Sugarloaf on and off starting when I was around 4. I really got the bug in the early 2000's when I met my wife and we started exploring New England's ski towns together.

Who introduced you to the ASCNY and when? Dave Clark back in 2003 or 2004.

Your best and/or worst experience at the Lodge? This is a tough one, I think they have all been great, even the time it was 70 degrees at the end of March and we were skiing in mud. Hand's down favorite experience was a time when it was bitter cold and nobody left the lodge. Jim Byrne and his buddy Mike were there playing blue grass and sang "You are my Sunshine" with my daughter Amelie who was probably 7 at the time. Quintessential ASCNY community – long live Amelie & the Weasels! Looking forward to the reunion tour someday.

Tell us about your best road trip to MRG? Your worst? We love driving up to the club combining an escape from the Northshore and our weekend responsibilities and obligations with the energy and anticipation of a weekend of adventure and community. It's intoxicating. Our favorite time to drive up is early afternoon when we can take our time, enjoy the views, and check out little towns along the way. It is rare that we get to make the drive with day light so it is always special. Worst road trip, I ate a burrito on the drive up one time and somehow managed to get hot sauce in my eye. It burned like nothing I have ever experienced, and I couldn't see out if for the rest of the night fortunately it recovered by first chair the next morning.

Best day at MRG? Easy, any day that it is snowing, free refills!

What is your favorite trail at MRG? Anything with trees, getting worked over by Chute, or skiing Rat with my kids, always a blast.

If you weren't skiing at MRG where would you rather ski? In New England Sugarloaf. I love the views of the Bigelow's. New Zealand also has an appeal to me, probably Warren Miller's fault (Steep and Deep back in the 80's).

Who is your fantasy ski buddy? My grandfather Waldo, a hard core old school Mainer with more flannel than anyone I ever met. I never got a chance to ski with him, I would have liked that.

Favorite après ski beverage? My dear friend and longtime companion Sierra Nevada Pale Ale. Always goes down easy after a hard day skiing, mountain biking, hiking, or otherwise enjoying nature.

Favorite ski outfit and skis? I have used the same olive green ski pants that my wife gave me 19 years ago when Bonfire was her client. They are a great weight, moved well with me, and have been wonderful to me in some pretty stupid conditions in some places I probably shouldn't have been. I will be sad when I have to replace them. Currently on a pair of K2's that treat me well and help me ski better than I actually can.

Why did you join the Board of Governors? The ASCNY is a special community that has been a big part of my family's winters since Dave Clark introduced us. I am thrilled to have the privilege to become more involved and help ensure that our special club remains that way.



Jeff Hopkins

New Board Member – Ann Gervase

When did you start skiing? Where? At Bromley during my first-grade winter. I loved it despite both my dad and I coming home with frostbite in the same fingers one day and him losing control and nearly wiping out my ski class. Unfortunately, my dad decided he didn't want to be that guy on crutches commuting to New York on Metro North and he and I never skied in Vermont together again. I had to content myself with occasional trips to Birch Hill in Pawling, NY (now Thunder Ridge). I didn't really get to ski with any consistency until after I met Richard in my twenties and more steadily my thirties as we traded off on childcare until our children were old enough to be in ski school or day care. If you've watched my skiing progress through the years at MRG, this explains everything you need to know! I choose to believe my love of skiing triumphs over form (or lack thereof!)

Who introduced you to the ASCNY and when? Our children Katie and Will learned to ski on the mountains of Southern Vermont (memorably first at Bromley like their mother). The Christmas after Will had finally mastered the art getting on and off the chair lift, we decided to take a last-minute trip to Vermont between Christmas and New Years 2006 and push further North. Richard had always loved the times he'd skied at MRG in college and had been reminiscing about it with paddle partner and ASCNY member **John Nesbett**. We arrived in the valley in December 2006 and as a family fell in love with the Valley and the Mountain and never left!

The next few years were filled with fun times skiing with the Nesbetts and meeting other ASCNY members and we participated in races from that first winter of 2007 onward. We officially joined the club in 2011 but it had already been a big part of our family experience.

Tell us about your best road trip to MRG? Your worst? One of my favorite trips to MRG was one year when we made a last-minute decision to pull the kids out of elementary school on a Wednesday night on the rumor of snow. It dumped in the night and we had the most amazing day of skiing and exploring followed by a memorable apres ski with The Point giveaway at General Starks. The kids kept winning swag and they thought we should cut school way more often after that!

The worst was a Thursday night last year when Richard flew back from California, packed up the car and picked me up at Westchester Airport. The snow began to fall gently on the Taconic in New York and became a white out blizzard somewhere between Rutland and the Lodge. Richard pressed on while I held my breath and white knuckled it and we made it eventually, but the last hour of that drive took more like three. However, like so many trips to MRG there was a silver lining with a reward of a long weekend of amazing skiing and camaraderie at the Lodge.

Best day at MRG? All the days of exploring MRG with the kids (back before they left mom behind)! We covered so much of the mountain on and off the map and had great adventures together. Katie and Will could be counted on to come up with a colorful name for each new place we found. These days I'm content to let them do their thing and ski my own lines but they still let me tag along sometimes!

What is your favorite trail at MRG? I love the toll road through Narnia, the vibe of Antelope and then winding my way down covering as much mountain as I can to make the run last. If it's the run before lunch and the family is with me it's Antelope all the way down Lower Antelope to earn a cold Single Chair and something hot and cheesy. Lynx with powder but no moguls. Actually, anything without moguls or cliffs!

If you weren't skiing at MRG where would you rather ski? I love Alta. I had a blast at Big Sky with a group of women from ASCNY in 2016 and want to go back there with Richard someday! I'd also like to explore some of the places in Chamonix and Switzerland where we hiked as a family a few years ago and experience them on snow.

Fantasy Buddy? The fantasy would be for me to be able to keep up with my kids on some of the most challenging terrain that they think nothing of!

Favorite après ski beverage? Beer never tastes so good as after a day of skiing so a Single Chair or Switchback at Starks are my go to after a day at MRG. A glass of wine in front the fire at the lodge with fellow ASCNY members also can't be beat!

New Board Member – Ann Gervase (Continued)

Favorite Equipment? I demoed some Rossignols in Big Sky that I found in the sale bin at Alpine Sports the following season. They are my favorite because I really got to know them before I picked them AND they bring back great memories!

Why did you join the Board of Governors? I saw this as an opportunity to be able to give back to a place and a Club and a group of people that are the bedrock of some of my family's very favorite experiences and times together. Skiing has been such a foundational part of our family and that really flourished through the years in our shared love of MRG and ASCNY and our time there. I'm happy to give back to a place and the people we've come to know and love so dearly over the past 15 winter.



Ann Gervase



Planning Ahead For Next Fall

This has been a difficult year to plan events, but I am hopeful that this coming fall we will be able to use the lodge more freely. Several people have offered to organize and participate in a work weekend to get the lodge ready for next winter. Given the financial strain we experienced this winter due to the significant reduction in room revenue, a work weekend is a great way to fix some things around the lodge without incurring tradesman expenses. Are you handy? Even if you are not, but want to help out? Have some ideas of things that need fixing, but never have time when you are only there to ski for two days? We'd love to find out who is game for a deep cleaning and touch up paint for the boot room, wiping down the tops of the globe lights, cleaning the big windows, etc. I've already got a spreadsheet started. It won't all be work. A hike and fun will be planned too. Please let us know if you are interested in helping as we set a date in late September or October. Contact hooey@optonline.net to help out.



The new curtains are up and look FANSTASTIC!

New Board Member – Alex Merrill

When did you start skiing? Where? I first skied at Mad River when I was about three or four, staying at the ASCNY, though I will confess to not remembering the details. My first real snow memories were all in Bedford at my grandmother's house which was at the top of a hill as steep as the practice slope with about 1/3rd the vertical. Family activities when it snowed included every possible way of getting down and up that hill usually resulting in getting soaked and needing to warm up and dry out near the fire.

Who introduced you to the ASCNY and when? My parents were members from the time I started skiing.

Your best and/or worst experience at the Lodge? There are a lot of highlights — race weekends as a kid, surprising early- or late-season storms, great times with friends — but the best for me has been that Celina and our kids Raquel and Fritz love the place just as much as I do. It is indeed a highlight to think that I can pass this experience on to a 4th generation of Merrills.

Tell us about you best road trip to MRG? Your worst? I've always loved that ASCNyers bond over how horrible their trip was! My worst trips were the three where the weather or vehicle got the better of us, one resulting in a return to NYC, another with an overnight in Kingston, and the third with a failure to get over the gap and a night at the Sugarhouse Motel in Middlebury. The best was last winter when our daughter Raquel was in the seasonal program and I could experiment with different routes to the mountain on our ten round trips and discovered that US-7 in Vermont is an absolute pleasure to drive and cuts 15 or 20 minutes off the trip.

Best day at MRG? Two days stick out: one when I completed the "Tour de MRG" by skiing every marked trail over one standard weekend, and the other when Raquel first skied Paradise. I cannot wait for Fritz to do the same next winter.

What is your favorite trail at MRG? Favorite marked trail is Lower Antelope; favorite un-marked tends to change each time I discover some new shot in the woods.

If you weren't skiing at MRG where would you rather ski? I've always wanted to ski in Argentina and Chile but not had the chance so far. My most recent discovery of a place I very much want to return to is Mont Tremblant in Quebec, which has some great trees itself.

Who is your fantasy ski buddy? It would be super cool to ski with **Roland Palmedo**, Ernie Blake, or any of the early ski pioneers.

Favorite après ski beverage? Hot chocolate with the family in the base box as the lifts are closing.

Favorite ski outfit and skis? Anything from the 80s, namely my wool ski pants and my 216cm Rossignols with Marker MRRs.

Why did you join the Board of Governors? I'd like to do my part to pass on the great traditions of the Amateur Ski Club of New York to my kids, and part of that is pitching in wherever I can. I am honored to join the board and look forward to the years ahead.

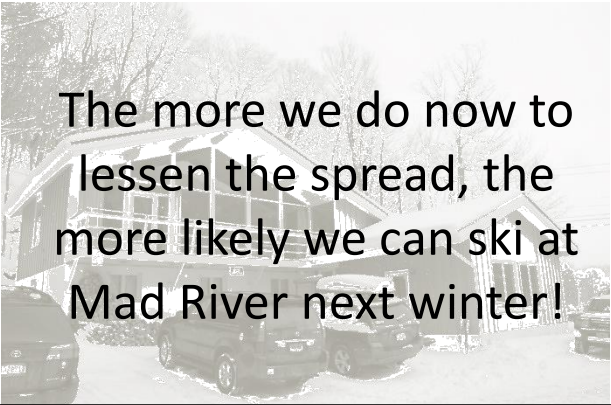


Alex Merrill

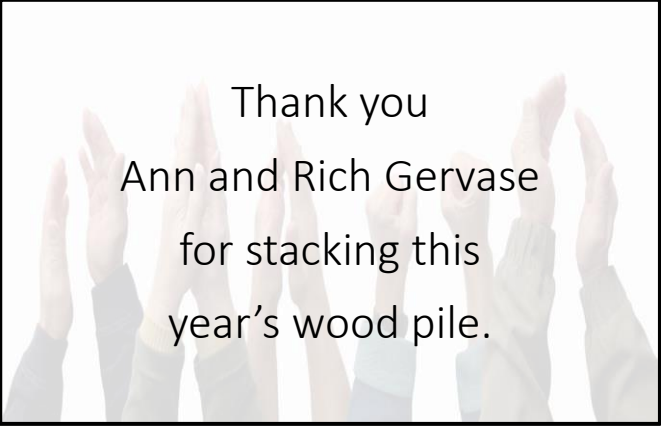


Amateur Ski Club of New York Newsletter

319 Ponus Ridge Road
New Canaan, CT 06840



The more we do now to
lessen the spread, the
more likely we can ski at
Mad River next winter!



Thank you
Ann and Rich Gervase
for stacking this
year's wood pile.

BREAKING NEWS
Race Weekend moved
to Connecticut this
year.

February 27th
Mount Southington



The single chair at
MRG, one of the
safest places on the
planet and social
distancing long
before that was cool!

The Fall Line is a publication of the Amateur Ski Club of New York

For submissions, ideas, or to share photos contact Hooey Wilks at hooey@optonline.net or Phoebe Wilks at pwilks315@gmail.com