Activities Database Style Guide

Thanks to the amazing work and dedication of our volunteer leaders and staff, AMC introduces thousands of people to the outdoors and to the AMC experience. It is this capacity to connect people to their local environment that makes AMC special and it is through this connection that AMC hopes to foster a community that is actively engaged with the conservation and stewardship of our region’s landscape and natural resources.

Included in this mission of connecting people to the outdoors is the goal of reaching a broader audience. We are proud of the Chapters’ role in introducing and welcoming people outdoors and we want to continue to feature that important role through one of the most important access points for new and prospective members of the AMC: the Activities Database (ActDB).

Overview:
As an important first point of contact for many non and new AMC members, our trip descriptions must be as clear and accessible to newcomers as possible. Over the years some habits have emerged where posts include shorthand or jargon that may discourage potential participants from signing up. This style guide will help you make the most of ActDB to promote your trips and keep the doors wide open for new and prospective members who want to get outdoors and/or volunteer. Together we can make our activity listings as inviting as possible!

Key aspects of a good activities listing:
- **Provides all important information**: answers the questions “what, where, when, and why”
  - What is the activity?
  - What do I need to participate? (any essential safety gear, for example)
  - Where will it take place? (Consider people viewing your listings from out-of-state.)
  - When will it be? (Include time of day.)
  - Why is this a great trip and why would somebody want to join in the fun?
- **Listing should be descriptive and fun**:
  - Use full sentences.
  - Describe the highlight of the activity or volunteer opportunity.
- **Easy to read**:
  - Break up the description into small paragraphs so it is easy on the eyes
- **Avoid using**
  - **AMC-specific jargon** (abbreviations, acronyms, codes, and any other terms that may confuse new and prospective members).
  - **Unwelcoming phrases**, such as “no stragglers” and “no dropping off the hike.” You can explain group ground rules either in screening or in your introductory talk at the start of the event.

  For examples of great trip listings, see the last two pages of this guide.
Entering a Trip
Follow the steps below to make your trip listing as inviting as possible!

**Title: Trip at a Glance**
- Location, Destination, Goal
- Duration, Distance
- Level of Difficulty (Easy/Beginner, Moderate, etc.)
- Make it catchy and interesting if possible

**Activity and Audience**
- Select all activities that apply by holding down "Ctrl" and clicking on appropriate activities. This helps with participants' searching for your listing.
- Do not select more categories than apply.
- Select the primary audience for which the activity was specifically designed.

**Description**
- Use full sentences and short paragraphs
- Describe the trip, e.g. **distance, elevation, terrain, conditions, scenery...**
- Explain the **level of difficulty** - what should they expect? Skills required?
- Say something about the **venue** (park, trail, area) that is interesting
- Provide an estimate of the **duration** of the activity, or return time
- Mention what is needed in terms of clothing, equipment, gear, food, and water; make it known if loaner gear/clothing is available
- Invite people to join. Make it interesting and fun!

**Important Tools: GPS, Photo, and Links**
- **GPS location and map** - this is a very important tool that will increase the visibility of your trip on AMC's website. It also helps people see how close they are to the event.
- **Event Photo** - your photo will appear on ActDB as a tile on the search page, along with the most important info about your event. Scenic shots are ideal.
- **Links for more info** - provide links to the park or other additional information that may be useful to participants

**Leader Info**
- **Leader bio and photo** - people like to see who they are going on a trip with. Depending on your comfort level, help them feel more at ease by saying something about yourself in "Bio 1" and adding a photo.
Snapshots of good activity listings:

MT. CARRIGAIN PHOTO ADVENTURE

Date and Time
Saturday, April 18, 2015

Location
Junction of Sawyer River Road and Rt 302,
New Hampshire, White Mountains,
NH

Overview
Hiking or Photography - it's all about the views! Here is an opportunity to combine the two and capture some stunning panoramic views from multiple viewpoints including a beautiful observation platform atop an old fire tower on the summit. The emphasis on this hike will be to stop and enjoy the woods and views to take photos, as well as discuss photography (although you don't have to be a photographer to come). On this early spring hike, we will ascend the summit via Signal Ridge Trail, which also offers beautiful vistas as it approaches the summit. Although the calendar will disagree, winter may still be alive and well in the mountains, so previous winter experience and full winter gear is required.

We will limit the group to 6 participants to facilitate photo opportunities and discussion. Although frequent stops will be taken to allow for ample photography, participants should be experienced hikers as the pace when we are moving will be moderate, and we will be covering 3.4 miles round-trip with an elevation gain of 4000 feet. Because our focus is on picture taking, be prepared for a longer than usual hiking time (10 hours, +/-). Join us on this excursion for good company, good conversation, and of course, wonderful views!

Register at https://regi.amcboston.org/365

Cost
Free

Related Link(s):
https://regi.amcboston.org/365
BACKPACKING WORKSHOP-(RE)IGNITE THE FLAME!

Date and Time
Saturday, August 22, 2015

Location
Willow Grove, PA,
Pennsylvania, Eastern,
PA

Overview
Do you want to backpack, but don’t know how to get started? Did you backpack years ago before the kids came along? Come and enjoy a day of information and fun, either as an introduction or as a refresher. Either way, you are sure to glean information to get you started or to reignite your passion. Topics include fitness, footwear, backpacks types, materials, packing, pack care, repair, clothing for all types of weather, shelters (tents, bivouac bags, sleeping bags/pads), the wilderness kitchen, comfort, safety, hygiene, terrain, wilderness hazards and trip planning. We will have sample gear for you to handle and discuss. Coffee, snacks and lunch will be provided. There is no charge for this workshop, but registration is required. Note: This workshop was rescheduled from 4/26/2015.

Cost
Free

7-MILE HIKE IN PRINCE WILLIAM FOREST PARK

Related Link(s):
Prince William Forest Park,
This Hike on Potomac Chapter Meetup

Driving Directions
FROM I-95
Take exit 150B and turn right (west) onto VA 619/Joclin Road (a left turn if you are traveling I-95 northbound; a right turn if you are traveling I-95 southbound).
Stay in the left lane.

Leader
I have been a day hike leader for many years and enjoy exposing other hikers to new and interesting trails in local, state, and national parks.
Registration is required for this activity. See context above.
Entering a Volunteer Opportunity

1. The First Field on the Entry Form is ‘Event Type’: select ‘Volunteer Opportunity’. Listings with this Event Type will appear on the ‘Volunteer Opportunities’ tab of ActDB, making them easily searchable for people who are looking for ways to give back.

2. Select the appropriate ‘Volunteering Type’.

3. If it is a non-date-specific volunteer opportunity such as ‘committee chair’, select ‘ongoing’ under the date and time fields. Ongoing volunteer opportunities will need to be renewed every 30 days to ensure up-to-date listings.

What is a volunteer opportunity?
‘Volunteer Opportunity’ covers any volunteer opportunity such as grilling at the leader picnic, becoming a leader trainer, tabling at events, or serving as a committee chair. We know that members, and particularly young members, are looking for ways to meet people through service. When listing a ‘Volunteer Opportunity’ you will have all of the fields you have for a “chapter trip” plus a field where you can indicate the type of volunteering: trail work, volunteer committee, communications, etc.

Where do volunteer opportunities get highlighted?
‘Volunteer Opportunities’ will be pulled to the ‘Volunteer Opportunities’ tab on ActDB. Some volunteer opportunities will also appear in AMC Outdoors Magazine.

How do I manage overlapping situations – is it a trip or a volunteer opportunity?
The first thing to do when listing a volunteer opportunity is to ask the question “what is the primary goal of the listing?” If it is volunteering or one of the ‘Volunteering Types’, then the Event Type should reflect that. Here are some examples:

- **Paddling River Clean Up** – Post as a volunteer opportunity. The goal is not a paddling goal. Paddling is how the cleanup will happen, but the goal—the primary activity—is cleanup. Select ‘conservation’ under ‘Volunteering Type’ and ‘paddling’ under ‘activity’. Then the activity will show up under the ‘Volunteer Opportunities’ tab and on the ‘Paddling’ page.

- **Activities day with service project** – sometimes chapters have an event like a spring picnic where they offer a range of activities such as paddling, trail work, and cycling. This is best posted as a ‘chapter trip’ where the contributor selects all relevant activities from the activities list ‘paddling’, ‘cycling’, etc., and then leaders create listings for each independent activity—including the volunteer opportunities—with the title reflecting that it is part of a larger even. This increases overall visibility of the event on outdoors.org and allows leaders to manage registration for separate activities.

- **Trail work & BBQ** – post as a ‘volunteer opportunity’ that includes the description of the BBQ, select ‘trail work’ under ‘Volunteering Type’, and ‘social’ under activity.
### Entering a Volunteer Opportunity

Follow the steps below to help you create an inviting volunteer opportunity.

| Title                  | • If relevant, indicate where the volunteer opportunity will occur.  
|                       | • Describe the volunteer opportunity in just a few words.  
|                       | • Highlight the purpose, fun, or goal of the volunteer opportunity. (clear brush, register people, edit our newsletter, etc.) |
| Volunteering Type & Activity | • Select the appropriate "Volunteering Type" as well as any relevant activities.  
|                       | • Select "Ongoing" if the volunteer opportunity is not date-specific.  
|                       | • See the previous page for advice on how to label overlap, such as a river clean-up, which is both paddling and a volunteer opportunity. |
| Description           | • Provide details, and in a positive and motivating tone and let them know about required equipment, skills, time, etc.  
|                       | • State if there is training available.  
|                       | • Describe what will be accomplished with their time/help.  
|                       | • Use full sentences and short paragraphs. |
| ActDB Tools           | • Links - Provide other additional info that may be useful to potential volunteers such as Directions to the location, an equipment list, etc.  
|                       | • GPS location/map - this increases the visibility of your volunteer opportunity on outdoors.org. |
| Other Additions       | • On the new website, your photo will appear as the backdrop to your listing when someone clicks it. Scenic shots are ideal.  
|                       | • Leader bio & photo - people like to see a photo. Depending on your comfort level, say something about yourself in "Bio 1" and add a photo.  
|                       | • Testimonials: ask other volunteers to write about their experience. |
Examples of good volunteer opportunity listings:

**CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY, AND THE OUTDOORS: EVENT VOLUNTEERS**

**Date and Time**
Tuesday, October 6, 2015 - Friday, December 18, 2015

**Location**
AMC, 5 Joy Street, Boston, MA 02108.
Massachusetts, Boston Area, MA

**Registration**
Registration is required for this activity. Please contact leader.

**Overview**
Volunteer for a series of events focused on Climate Change, Energy, and the Outdoors. This program is a cooperative effort between the Appalachian Mountain Club, Mass Audubon, and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

We will offer four programs at AMC’s Headquarters at 5 Joy Street, Boston, MA 02108 and we need help with set up, clean up, and spreading the word.

Together we will raise awareness and inspire action and greater understanding of climate change and energy conservation.

**AMC Trip Policy**

**Cost**
Free

**Activities**
- Conservation
- Social Events
- Volunteer
- Cultural

**Offered By**
Boston

**Status**
Open

**Nearby AMC Destination**
Boston Yawer Center

**Audience**
Adults (18+)

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**VOLUNTEER AT A CSA-FARM IN FRAMINGHAM**

**Overview**
Come join AMC YM and BARPCV to support a CSA for the day at Steam's Farm in Framingham, MA!

What: Outdoor volunteering at a CSA farm
Where: Steam's Farm, 862 Edmands Road, Framingham
When: 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Bring: Gloves (if you prefer them), water, LAYERS of clothing, hat, sunglasses, appropriate outerwear, and a bagged lunch (there is no trash or recycling on site. so please plan on carrying everything out with you).

RSVP Required - Please add your name below and indicate if you are interested in carpooling. Participants in need of transportation are encouraged to contact each other. Therefore please also include your location and contact information. Questions? Contact event leader and AMC YM Volunteer Coordinator /BARPCV Community Service Chair Rachael White at rachael.elizabeth.white@gmail.com / service@barpcv.org (603-459-3501).
Bay Circuit Trail Saturday Work Party

Date and Time
Saturday, November 7, 2015

Location
MEDFIELD, MA
Massachusetts, Boston Area, MA

Registration
Registration is required for this activity. Please contact registrar below:
Beth Guia
617-391-6996
(email this person)

Overview

***If you submitted an email contact form through the link below PRIOR to 10/20, your inquiry was unfortunately lost. Please resubmit if you would like to attend, or email bgui@outdoors.org directly.***

Get out, give back, get dirty, and get to know the Bay Circuit Trail! Why volunteer? Ever wonder what goes into maintaining a trail? Looking for a way to give something back to the local trails you already use? Perhaps you are looking for a way to enjoy the outdoors, learn new skills, and meet like-minded people? Interested in exploring nature “gems” of the greater Boston area? Our one-day trail events offer the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of trail maintenance or building from skilled AMC Trail Crew Leaders right in Boston’s backyard. 2015 Bay Circuit Trail work parties will take place between April and November at various eastern Massachusetts locations along the trail. Consider coming out for an event close to your home, or use this as a reason to get to know new natural places.

When & Where? Saturdays and certain Sundays
•November 7, Medfield

What should I expect? NOV 7, MEDFIELD 9-4pm (or until finished, possibly earlier); we will be cutting a new section of the Bay Circuit Trail to open a new route through the woods, moving the trail off of a nearby paved walk. Participants bring their own lunch, water, snacks, long pants, sturdy hiking boots, and other clothing appropriate for the weather (propane run rain or shine). The AMC Trail Crew Leaders will provide all personal protective equipment, trail tools, instruction and supervision. No experience is required to participate, but we encourage beginners and experienced trail volunteers alike. Programs are suitable for individuals, small groups and families with children 12 years and older.

Tell me more about the Bay Circuit Trail:
The Bay Circuit Trail (BCT) is a 330-mile front country recreational resource that arcs around greater Boston.

Activities
Conservation
Trail Work
Volunteering

Offered By
AMC, BCT

Status
Open

Duration
Day

Audience
Adults 16+

Contact
Beth Guia
617-391-6996
(bgui@outdoors.org)

Contact Beth to sign up: Beth Guia is AMC’s Bay Circuit Trail Volunteer Programs supervisor based out of AMC’s Boston headquarters. Beth works with the Bay Circuit Trail Committee and local partners to provide expanded trail volunteer opportunities and support existing volunteer networks.

Berkshire Chapter Communications Volunteers

Overview

Do you have experience in the communications field, or are you interested in giving it a try? Whether you love writing, editing with a big red pen, or using social media, we have just the opportunity for you! We are assembling a communications team and are looking for volunteers to manage our newsletter, social media, and emails. We are also looking for a Communications Chair to manage the team.

The Communications Chair would be responsible for managing our communications team, which is responsible for the Berkshire Exchange (our triannual newsletter), monthly chapterwide emails, and keeping the content on our website up to date, as well as maintaining a Chapter Communications calendar.

If you have any questions about the position, please contact Secretary Roger Beer (link to email below). We look forward to working with you!

AMC Trip Policy