



Hikers trek through Bradley Farm Trail in Lanesborough.

Love to hike but hate going it alone? Find a local group hike

By MEGGIE BAKER >> *The Berkshire Eagle*

If you love to hike, but hate going alone, here are some local groups in Berkshire County you can join if you want to get out and enjoy the Berkshires, no matter the season.

Berkshire Knapsackers has been around for over 40 years, and they schedule hikes throughout the year — so you never have to take an off-season — in the Berkshires and nearby New York, Connecticut and Vermont. The best part? All hikes are rated by distance, pace and terrain, so you know what you're getting into. (And many are listed as dog friendly, too!)

Dues are \$10 a year from September through June and new members are always welcome. Learn more at berkshireknapsackers.org.

Another local group, [Taconic Hiking Club](https://taconichikingclub.org/) offers guided outings throughout the year, on weekdays and weekends, in the Berkshires, the Capital Region, the Rensselaer Plateau and Taconic Range. They change seasonally from summer hiking, biking, and paddling to winter hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, and new members are always welcome.

According to the group, the THC is more than a hiking club. Its primary responsibility is to maintain the 37-mile-long Taconic Crest Trail that runs from Route 20 in Pittsfield to Route 346 in Vermont.

Volunteers work in conjunction with New York's Department of Environmental Conservation and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Upcoming outings include a moderately easy trek around Hopkins Memorial Forest on Dec. 28 and a hike hike past the Shaker Reservoir and along the Shaker Brook, Jan. 4. Hikes are rated by level of effort, elevation gain and distance. Seasonal cycling and paddling trips are also rated by difficulty.

Membership is only \$10 per year, and potential members can join a hike first to see if they want to join the club.

Adirondack Mountain Club is another local group offering activities year-round, but it isn't a club in the traditional sense: Programming is open to anyone, but joining allows Adirondack Mountain Club to continue pursuing their mission to protect New York's public lands and waters.

Their Connecticut Chapter is based out of Old Lyme, and according to the group, they hike almost every trail in Connecticut and nearby states. You can request to join to see upcoming trips.

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