



## THE ENGAGED SIERRAN

### PUTTING SOLAR ON THE FRONT BURNER



Longtime Sierra Club members Larry and Susan Chase (pictured) settled in Andover after quitting their day jobs, Larry having summered there for 60 years. Their primary home and summer camp are now only six miles apart, and they are enjoying day hikes and rail trail walks in their “free” time, while continuing to be involved in local conservation activities. Susan is a certified Natural Resource Steward and budding permaculture gardener; Larry is a member of the Andover Conservation Commission and amateur nature photographer. As this article is being written, they are pursuing their passion for travel in Alaska -- again!

The Chases were inspired by an initial gift membership to the Sierra Club to start traveling, mainly out West and Alaska, and they have completed several extended National Park and Nature Conservancy volunteer work assignments. While in Alaska a few years ago, they became interested in a local project centered on alternative energy sources and overall energy efficiency, and decided to explore the possibilities in New Hampshire.

Their decades of wilderness travel and volunteerism, coupled with

this inspiration, led them to join in a community effort to dramatically improve energy efficiency. The [Andover Energy Group](#) was formed in 2011. The group has held numerous informational events and field trips to explore alternative energy sources and funding arrangements, made direct improvements in town, and has been working with government and non-profit entities. The Chases, meanwhile, invested in solar for their own primary residence, and are about 50 percent self-generating.

Out of these activities was born [Solarize Kearsarge](#), which includes the communities of Andover, New London and Wilmot, a project ultimately leading to the collective purchasing of residential PV systems. Larry (Andover), NH Representative Tom Schamberg (Wilmot) and Colby-Sawyer business professor Bill Spears (New London), form the core team of Solarize Kearsarge. The group is currently interviewing potential solar installers, looking for a good fit for their cooperative.

Solarize Kearsarge is part of a wider effort known as Solarize Upper Valley, sponsored by [Vital Communities](#), a Vermont-based non-profit organization.

We are very proud to see how the Sierra Club principles impacted the Chases' lives, and how they actively apply those principles in their volunteer efforts throughout the country, and more particularly at home. For more background on the Solarize initiative, you may want to read the Solarize Handbook. [Download a PDF.](#)

#### LAUNCH EVENTS

**Solarize Kearsarge**  
**Saturday, October 18 - 10 a.m.**  
Clements Hall, Ivey Science Center, Colby-Sawyer College, New London

**Solarize Orford**  
Saturday, October 18 - 1 p.m.  
Rivendell Academy

**Solarize Hanover**  
Thursday, October 23 - 6:30 p.m.  
Hanover High School

If you are a resident of one of these communities, or simply interested in the possibility of starting a project in your area, learn more at a [Launch Event!](#)

#### IT'S ELECTRIC!

New Hampshire's 3rd annual National Drive Electric



Week culminated in Plug-In Day, held Saturday, September 20 in Concord, directly in front of the State House. Car owners and dealers both invited the public to check out the newest electric and hybrid cars on the market today. Electric car owners were excited to talk about their typical drive times and the low monthly cost to plug in.



Event organizers included Granite State Clean Cities Coalition, NH Automobile Dealers Association, Plug-In America, ConVerdant Vehicles, and your own NH chapter of the Sierra Club.

Want to drive electric? Visit [www.sierraclub.org/electric-vehicles](http://www.sierraclub.org/electric-vehicles) for more information.

## MEET AMANDA GOURGUE, FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE CHAIR



We are so excited to have Amanda Gourgue volunteer to chair the chapter's Fundraising Committee. Funds help us do our work to preserve and protect New Hampshire!

### **Amanda, why don't you tell us about yourself?**

First of all, thank you for letting me have this opportunity to share a little bit more about myself and why I volunteer for the NH Sierra Club!

I have lived in New Hampshire for almost my entire life. I have lived in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Florida, but nothing has ever felt like home... except New Hampshire! I have a B.S. in Hotel/Restaurant Management but went back to school to get a Masters of Business Administration in Sustainability and a Masters of Environmental Law and Policy. In 2008, I started a company called Meeting Revolution, which specializes in sustainable meetings/events,

business strategy and non-profit management.

I live in Lee with my boyfriend and two kitties (Cookie & Cream). When I'm not working, I like to kayak, read and bake.

### **How did you get started with fundraising?**

Back in 2001, I was in between jobs and looking to add experience to my resume. I started to volunteer with the Cocheco Valley Humane Society in Dover. I became their Volunteer Fundraising Coordinator and did this for four years. I liked doing this because I could directly relate what I was doing to helping the animals.

### **What kinds of things would a committee member do?**

There is a myth about fundraising committees, they don't just ask for money randomly. To be honest, randomly asking for money doesn't work enough of the time to make it worth doing. People who donate want to have their opinions heard, they want to be part of the conversation, and they want to feel special. But in the end, don't we all want that? So I'm looking for people who love having conversations. I'm also looking for people who can help write thank you letters, plan fun events and other fun activities. This really is a fun committee. I wouldn't be doing it if it weren't.

### **What concerns you most regarding New Hampshire's environment?**

As you could probably tell by now, I love animals... all creatures! So I am most concerned about protecting rivers, wetlands, wildlife habitat and state parks and forests.

## BUTTON UP NH

**Tuesday, October 14, 2014 ~ 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

New England College, 62 North Main St., Concord, NH

It's time for a long look at your home's ability to keep you comfortable, despite the weather. Come to a **free** Button Up workshop to find out the latest info on energy improvements and efficiency. Along with all the information you will need on energy audits and state-of-the-art recommendations, there will be refreshments and energy-saving door prizes!

This workshop is presented by Bob Eldredge, ABC Energy Savings. [Register today!](#)

In related news: Customers of Liberty Gas Utility NH, can now get a low-cost home audit, and qualify for lots of



related goodies. Contact your natural gas provider for details.



## NAME THIS SUMMIT

Last month, we asked if you could name the well-known mountain in New Hampshire.

The answer is... Mt. Eisenhower! Topping out at 4,780 feet, Mt. Eisenhower's bald dome provides excellent views of the Presidential Range in the White Mountains.



We thank everyone from the Granite State who could attend the people's March in NYC. **Now that you have marched, are you ready for local action? [Email us](#)** and tell us what you think we could do next in New Hampshire.

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