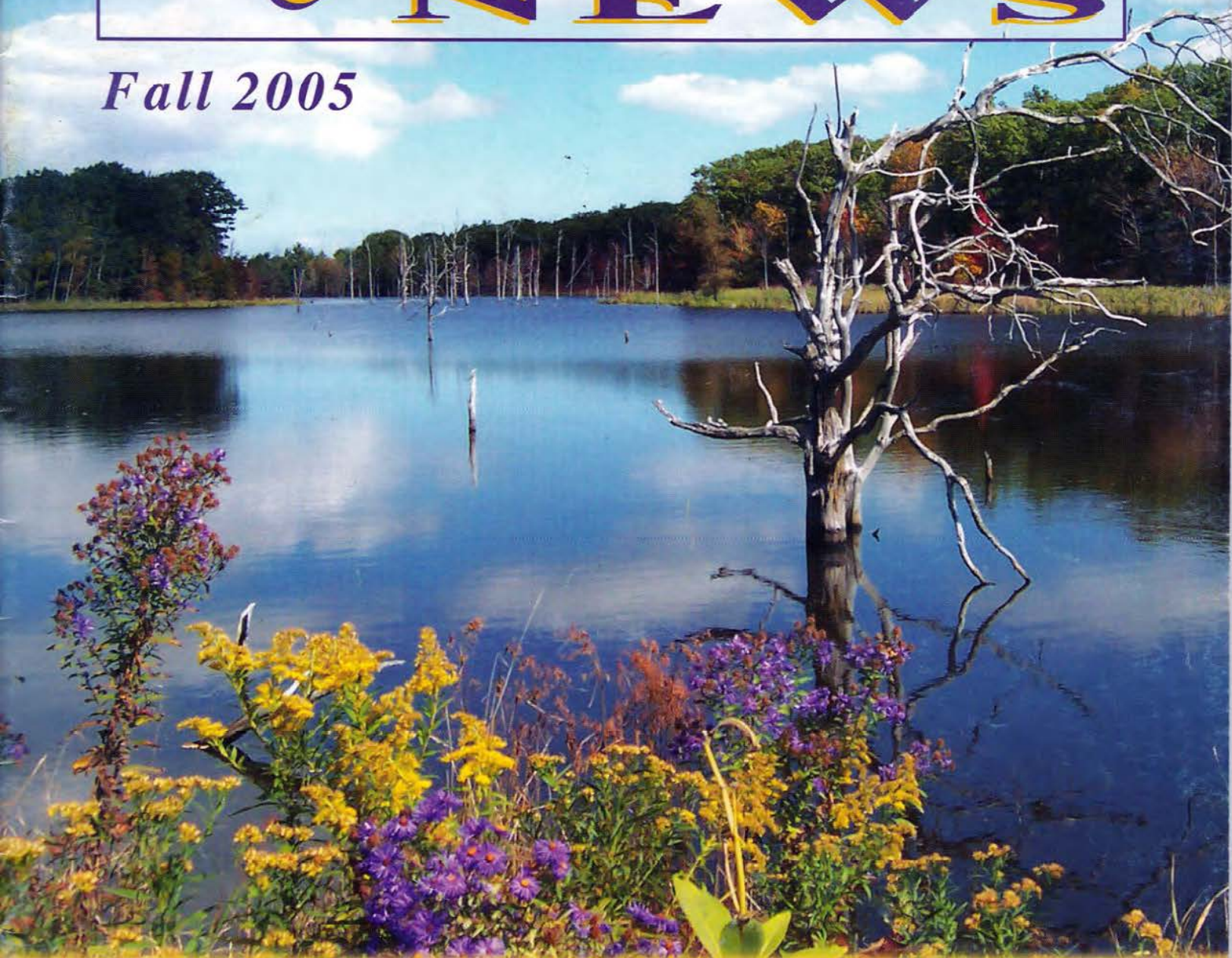


# Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

*Fall 2005*



“Sweater weather is here and the Finger Lakes’ finest hiking season is at hand.”

— John A-X. Morris, in this issue’s  
Natural Connections: October



**F**or those four or five of you out there who are equally fascinated along with Lynda Rummel and me by “ag-industrial archeology” finds in the hinterlands along our trail, one last(?) postscript: one of the sections of trail I tend on map M-12 includes a blue spur to nowhere that I simply couldn’t resist building back in 1990 just because it’s just so nice. It leaves the main trail for a 0.15 mile each way out-and-back, with an informal campsite at the far end (no water) but tiptoes along the mossy edge of a level finger of land that pokes out above Keuka Lake, affording winter views without leaves in the way, and, on this past July

2nd at least, totally surprising sounds of sirens, music, and other general parade raucousness. It’s a very weird effect, being able to hear the village below so easily, while standing in otherwise quiet woods.

That edge we walk was also the dumping spot for a farm that was still inland from that rounded point back in the 1950’s, when this end of Longwell Road was actually driven by cars and wagons, including the ford of the creek far below, even now a sometimes crossing for hikers. So for sixteen seasons I’ve tended that blue spur, occasionally glancing over the steep edge at the obvious farm dumps of old buckets, cans, jars, strap iron, and one long thingumbobby I’ve always assumed was sliding door track. Well, now I know it’s not!

After Lynda’s mystification two issues ago, and landowner Gerald Reynold’s elucidation in our last issue, now I can recognize it as a very long piece of ridge-line trolley track, complete with eye-hooks pointing UP. Best of all, I realized there is an intact trolley at one end, with the rusty wheels that traveled the tiny track, and a swiveling “reciprocating dingle arm with semi-collapsible popples” below for carrying hay. Blather in quotes is stolen from my father, who was *très amusante* about things mechanical.

So if you want to see the real goods (and I promise this is MY last word on this particular kind of hardware), climb M-12 from Winding Stairs Road eastward toward Longwell Rd. You will huff, you will puff, but you will be

## President’s Message

### Notes from the woods this time by Irene Szabo



Tom Witt

May ‘96, Irene working on a stainless steel federally-funded toilet at “her” campsite on map M-12 (uplands east of Hammondsport). She says this photo is one of her personal favorites.

rewarded with old junk of a certain *je ne sais quoi* coolness when you take the blue spur. Enjoy on the way the old rusted tilting “guard rail” that once was part of this town road. Biggest changes, of course, have been wrought by violent summer storms through the creek at the bottom; see if you can find where there was once a bridge. Even in our fifteen years there, the trail crossing of the creek has moved downstream due to a whole new dramatic embankment after one such storm.

I guess it’s no surprise by now that I have become enamored of evidence of older habitation, endeavors, and transportation

that we encounter by means of our tiptoe through the hinder parts of our state. Frankly, if somebody would pay me to combine screwing off in the woods with alternate days in local historical societies I’d be such a happy little soul. Who knew where this trail was going to lead me? What on earth did I do with myself before 1985?

The other biggest thing I’ve learned in my years on the trail and as a participant in its many meetings is to walk in The Other Guy’s Shoes before I open my big mouth. During the hike after the unveiling of the Wally Wood memorial (see page 25) we read entries in a register at an overlook high above the Genesee River (Map M-7), which included a reply from Mike Walsh of Trathen Logging to cranky remarks by earlier hikers who objected to the bulldozing of logging roads and spotty tree-cutting they’d just walked through. He said with complete justification, “How do you think landowners who own large tracts can afford the taxes if they don’t make some money off the land? Forest products are renewable and make the land affordable.”

It must have been raging ignorance that made anybody object to this particular harvest project. In only one spot was there soft mud we had to dance through, since there were many carefully placed drainage grooves. The logging lane often followed the trail, but care had been taken to preserve the blaze trees. Enough trees were left that shade would prevent a huge invasion of prickles and

(Continued on page 30)

### Did you know?

The FLTC has an email group (e-group) open to anyone interested. This service can be used to discuss hiking issues, inquire about trail conditions or find hiking partners. Go to the FLTC website ([www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org)) to sign up.



# FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS

Published for Members and Friends of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.

Fall 2005

Volume 44 Number 3

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference is to build, protect, and enhance a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever!

### FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS Volume 44 Number 3 Fall 2005

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*Setting up the FLT exhibit at the ADK Expo in June at Mendon Ponds Park near Rochester. The FLTC's volunteers were Sue Burchfield, Sharon Galbraith, Gene Bavis, David Marsh, and Jacqui Wensich.*

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Jacqui Wensich

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*And on the back cover...*

Special Places on the Finger Lakes Trail: Huckleberry Bog



Jacqui Wensich

**Cover:** Teeter Pond on the Interloken Branch Trail in the Finger Lakes National Forest between Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. Photo taken by Jacqui Wensich on September 27, 2004.



## From the Desk of the Executive Director

by Gene Bavis

**T**hank you, volunteers, for all that you do. I hope you don't mind me saying this on a regular basis in my column, but I feel a need to acknowledge the fact that 99.9% of everything that gets done on the Trail or on behalf of the FLTC is because of our dedicated volunteers. The more volunteers we have, the lighter the burden on each. A volunteer form for offering your time and talents, not just as a trail maintainer but in many areas, may be found on our website if you are so inclined (a hotlink under "Who Maintains the Trail?").

Another thank you goes to those who support the Trail and its operations financially through dues and contributions. We have had a number of memorial contributions recently. I am sure those (such as Harry Clar and Mary Years) who have gone on to their final reward would be pleased to know that they are being remembered in connection with the trail that they dearly loved. We have also had other gifts from various organizations. Most recently, the Finger Lakes Runners Club, which has held running events on the FLT, not only joined as an adult group, but also made a very nice donation. Three chapters of the Adirondack

Mountain Club (ADK) have also made donations in the past year: Onondaga Chapter, Finger Lakes Chapter, and Mid-Hudson Chapter.

Thank you to the FLT Bullthistle Hiking Club (a newly formed affiliate with Ed Sidote as President) for agreeing to host our 2006 Annual Meeting and Spring Weekend. More information should be available at the Fall Campout being hosted by the Foothills Trail Club (FTC) on October 14-16, 2005. We hope to see YOU there. Thank you, FTC!

Have you signed up for our "e-group?" It's a great way to communicate with other folks interested in hiking and backpacking on the FLT. Go to our website ([www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org)) and click on the large "e" on the homepage. □

*Gene Bavis, Executive Director  
gbavis@rochester.rr.com,  
315/986-1474 (home)*

**FLTC OFFICE HOURS:** We are normally open Mondays and Thursdays, 9:30 to 3:30, but there are frequent exceptions, so call ahead if you want to be sure. 585/658-9320

### State Employees' Federated Appeal

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference is listed among eligible recipients for your payroll deduction donations through the State Employees' Federated Appeal, or SEFA. We are listed as #96-0901 under "Unaffiliated Agencies" and will be grateful for your contributions made this way.

### Moving?

Instructions for notifying the FLTC of address changes appear at the bottom of the masthead on page 1 of every issue of the *FLT News*.

## A Special Deal for FLTC Members!

Now you can join the North Country Trail Association for just \$16 per year! You'll get a subscription to North Star magazine, and the satisfaction of helping develop the North Country National Scenic Trail. To join, send this coupon to: NCTA, 229 E. Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 or call 866-Hike-NCT

Name(s):
Address:
City, St Zip:
Phone (optional):
E-mail (optional):
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm enclosing a check for \$16 payable to NCTA
<input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my credit card (MasterCard, VISA or AmEx only)
Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____
Name as it appears on card: _____
Signature: _____

## Fessy Washburn's Ashes Returned to Adirondack High Peaks

by Larry Blumberg

**E**lizabeth "Fessy" Washburn, who passed away in August of 2004, served on the FLTC Board and was FLTC Treasurer for many years. At her request, she was cremated so that her ashes could be spread by her family on the twelve peaks of the Adirondack Mountains that she was not able to climb during her lifetime.

On the weekend of August 13, 2005, fifteen members of the Binghamton-based Triple Cities Hiking Club met in the High Peaks region of the Adirondacks with Fessy's nieces Louise Moose and Beth Truelove, along with her grand-nephew Jeff Truelove, who is hiking the twelve peaks to spread Fessy's ashes. Fessy was a founding member of the TCHC in 1947, and it was the family's desire to meet with some of those who had known Fessy during her life.

There should be no doubt that Fessy's legend will live on through her 26-year-old grand-nephew Jeff, a very thoughtful and self-assured world traveler, much like Fessy herself. He grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, and is currently a student at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. As of this writing he had spread ashes on Redfield, Gray, and Marshall, with plans for the



Scott Lauffer

*Jeff Truelove, far left, is shown with several TCHC members who traveled to the Adirondacks to meet with him and other members of Fessy's family. Jeff is holding a tin containing a portion of Fessy's ashes, which he is spreading on the twelve Adirondack High Peaks she had not climbed during her lifetime*

remaining nine peaks to be visited by the end of August before returning to the state of Washington. □

### **Kyle LaCotta Completes Eagle Scout Project on the FLT**

Kyle LaCotta, the son of Chris and Pat LaCotta, completed his Eagle Scout project on July 23, 2005. He has been a Boy Scout in Oxford Boy Scout Troop #65 since 1994. The project consisted of building a footbridge on the Finger Lakes Trail. There were five boys helping Kyle to make this project a success: Luke DeBrita, Joe DeBrita, Gabe DeBrita, Dan Fagnani, and Orrin Kenyon. Eagle Scout Carl Ludwig provided adult supervision. The project was completed after six hours of work. Some of the materials were donated by the Department of Environmental Conservation, and others were private donations. This Eagle project is located on the Finger Lakes Trail, in the Ludlow Creek area in the town of Smithville, Chenango County.

### **HELP WANTED: Volunteer Opportunities!**

Apply to FLTC office at 585/658-9320 or [information@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:information@fingerlakestrail.org). Training provided. Salary: negotiable, but still hovers near zero. Rewards: endless warm fuzzy feelings.

**Steward Training Coordinator:** provide training workshops, arrange and often conduct several regional steward meetings every year, write quarterly trail stewards' newsletter. Should be an experienced maintainer.

**Trail Projects Planner:** determine each year's special projects, apply for grants and programs that support costs, and complete follow-up paperwork. Much of the application process and follow-up involves North Country Trail programs. Does NOT include actual conduct of those projects, but will involve canvassing stewardship groups for project needs annually.

**Data Entry Helper:** applicant should have good computer skills, be reliable at transcribing information correctly, and be trustworthy with confidential data. Cyclical work with large projects at dues renewal time and after annual appeal, with little work between. Should live within an hour of Mt. Morris office. *One position filled, could use another.*

**Technology Advisor:** consultant with knowledge of computers, office machines, networks, and internet to assess and improve our efficiency at the FLTC Service Center. Need not live near Mt. Morris, but a few visits will be necessary.

**Phone Caller:** information checker who has access to free long distance, to make calls to check data for publications such as our B&B Guide, for instance, or to welcome new members, to remind members who haven't renewed, or to verify membership records. Multiple opportunities.

**County Marketing Aides:** one or two per county, to locate, arrange, and then keep supplied some good outlets for FLT promotional literature. To apply for this job only, contact Jay Zitter ([jmz11@htva.net](mailto:jmz11@htva.net)), 607/835-6268, our marketing coordinator.

*New!* **Car Spotter Trail Angels:** Ed Sidote, end-to-end coordinator and angel extraordinaire himself, is looking for more people willing to list themselves as car spotters for hikers with logistics problems. They will drive hikers to their beginning spots in a defined neighborhood, on certain days of the week, or will even offer a place to stay or a shower if they are near the trail. No "trail angel" need sign up for more than he or she wants to offer.

*New!* **GPS Assistant to Mapping Supervisor:** assistant to Joe Dabes should have Garmin GPS unit that will accept external amplified antenna. Help is needed especially in the western part of New York. Dabes will train. Not a large time commitment, since this need is mostly for GPSing small reroutes.

### **First Few Positions Filled!!**

**Mapping Supervisor:** keep our maps and guidebooks current, both text and actual maps, by coordinating information and working with our sources of digital mapping. May have one or more assistants. Will keep "trail conditions" department of website updated to webmaster.

--- our thanks to Joe Dabes, energetic new Map Guy!

**Meal Planner:** for Alley Cat work weeks, to plan meals and buy the food, delivering it to the crew at the beginning of their session.

--- hurray for Dorothy Beye! (and Howard didn't even ask)

## Our New Map Guy

by Irene Szabo

**J**oe Dabes may not run as much of our trail as he used to, but his enthusiasm and energy do not seem to have abated with age. Apparently working on his sixth end-to-end of the main FLT just wasn't occupying his retirement enough, so he has risen magnificently to the challenge of taking over our mapping functions from overburdened Howard Bey.

Little did any of us know what amazing bottle had been uncorked when this particular genie was unleashed! In the first half of this summer alone, Joe has retyped (we old people still call it that, you know, "typing") the descriptions on the back of every single map to make them uniform in font and level of information. Last year and this Joe had also been measuring parts of our trail with his own GPS equipment, enabling us to map accurate locations for all the branch trails and the eastern end of the main trail. Those parts couldn't be walked with the borrowed National Park Service unit which is for only those segments eligible as North Country Trail route; besides, we don't get to borrow it long enough each year.

The more Joe worked with mapping software, and talked to the professional mapping technicians at the North Country Trail Association, the more excited he became about the possibility of creating, revising, and printing our own maps from data stored in several computers (his, one at the FLTC Service Center where maps are printed, Howard's) so he made a proposition to the Board of Managers at our June meeting. He wanted the company who was already rendering some of our base



maps that had recently been GPS'd to re-do ALL of them into ArcView, so that we ourselves could revise them in the future, with the new program that Joe was learning to use.

For forty years our maps have been changed with a black pen on a clear plastic master copy, certainly a low tech methodology, but new ones in the last few years which have

### GPS Mapping

For those whose acquaintance with all things computeresque is similar to mine (for years, when asked what kind of computer I had, I answered "beige"), GPS stands for Global Positioning System. A hiker with a GPS unit walks the trail while receiving signals from at least three satellites orbiting the earth; where those locator lines intersect is the Red X on the map, or Where You Are. By recording those locations frequently, an amazingly accurate route of the trail can be drawn upon a topographical map already in the home computer, after the hiker gets back and asks his trail unit to upchuck, oops, upload the route locations.

—Irene Szabo

resulted from GPS measurement have to be revised by an outside company, which is both awkward and expensive for every little change.

Yes, it would cost almost \$5000 that had not been worked into this year's budget, but Joe made another proposition: he wanted to donate the money to pay for us to turn all of our maps into ArcView! "I was going to leave it to the trail after I died. Why not do it now?" he countered, when several board members collapsed with guilt that he offered so much. Thus the board ended up accepting a \$3000 donation from Joe, and authorized re-doing all of the maps in a version that we will be able to revise in-house.

At the same time, a map and guidebook subcommittee of the Trails Management Committee has been working very hard this summer on connected issues, like kinds of paper, different ways to print COLOR, yes, color! maps, with final decisions yet to be announced. However, it is easy to see that we hikers are in for a revolution in the looks of our maps, and soon! Save those old blue paper things, each day's hike colored with felt-tip markers; soon they will be valued antiques.

Paula Strain, our second FLTC President way back when, will be pleased. In 1991 she sent me a letter the first time I was President of the Board, sharing her opinion that our maps needed to be updated, modernized, and colored. Well, Paula, we aren't speedy, but we're finally getting there. □



## **Interloken Weekend**

**by Kim Meacham and Sharon Galbraith**

**O**n Friday, July 22, eight people parked their tents in various shaded and open sites at the Potomac Group Campsite on the Interloken Trail. When we had scouted out the campsite in the spring, the main gate was open, allowing cars to drive right up to the sites. Alas, we all looked like unseasoned backpackers, toting suitcases, firewood, and coolers! But many hands make short work, and hikers helped each other out carrying belongings and food to the sites.

We had a nice bonfire both nights, along with friendly chatter and worldly conversations. The campsite was shared by several teens from around the Northeast, from the Student Conservation Society, who were spending a three-week stint performing needed maintenance along the trail. Throughout the weekend, we saw their handiwork, with freshly painted blazes, mowed areas, downed tree removal, and gravel placement along many wet areas. (Some areas of the trail are also designated horse trail, which, as we all know, can make for difficult, muddy, rut-filled foot travel. I am not sure how the gravel placement will hold up under that usage.) These kids were high schoolers working for nothing more than a tent to sleep in, three squares a day, three showers a week, and, at the end, as a present, a week of camping in the mountains! We were amazed at their confidence, friendliness, and, most of all, their energy. After our

day of hiking and swimming, we collapsed in our camp chairs to rest, something they had obviously never heard of! After their day of trail work, in the heat, beginning at seven and ending at four, they proceeded to play SPUD, a game involving high energy and a nerf football. We watched in awe.

The next two days we were joined by various hikers and enjoyed a relaxing hike of the entire Interloken Trail. Many times the conversation and laughter were strong, and other times people were lost in their own thoughts, so typical of what makes hiking special. Blueberries and blackberries along the trail were prime, and feasting on these made up a good share of our snacks. Lynn had lived in that area long ago, and remembered a slate waterfall just off Rt. 414 on Peachtree Road. Our adventurous spirits and warm feet led us to this serene spot and then for a dip in Seneca Lake at the end of the day before dinner. As usual, dinner was better than anyone could imagine, and was shared by a lonely stray black cat, who watched us throughout the weekend. We put food out for him and discussed capturing him and taking him home, but alas, he was nowhere to be found when we left Sunday.

A good time was had by all, and we would like to make this an annual event, possibly including an extra day next year for a visit to the wineries! □

## **First Annual Ed Sidote Hike**

**by Larry Blumberg**

**H**ikers from various clubs including the Triple Cities Hiking Club, the Chenango County Bullthistle Club, and FLTC members-at-large made up the bulk of the folks who participated in the FLTC's first annual Ed Sidote Hike on Saturday, July 30.

The hike was held on Map M-18 in Tompkins County, ending at Shindagin Hollow Rd. but beginning at two different starting points so hikers could take their choice of going either 8 miles or 12 miles.

The group enjoyed a really nice rest stop at the Shindagin Hollow Lean-to, which had been rebuilt last summer by an FLTC Alley Cat crew.

All in all, it was an honor to honor Ed Sidote on a very pleasant outing on a very pleasant summer day!



Jeff Constable



## The Beast in My Forest

*Reprinted from "The Land Steward" of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, Summer 2005, with permission*

In 1982, my wife Lynn and I purchased a ten-acre woodlot overlooking Cayuga Lake. It was a lovely woods, dominated by oak, maple, hickory and cherry trees, and punctuated by splendid old white pines. The forest floor was covered by a delightful mixture of native flowers and shrubs — anemones, trillium, fragrant sumac and blueberry. To walk through the woods, we had to pick our way through thick underbrush. Occasionally we had a glimpse of a lovely, shy deer.

Those were fine days. Today, the deer have more or less stripped the forest floor bare, leaving mostly exotic weeds, such as garlic mustard and black swallow-wort. There are few remaining native shrubs or young tree seedlings. Herds of deer (I counted 25 of them in my woods yesterday) have pommelled the ground until it looks like a paved terrace.

Are Lynn and I poor caretakers of this once-lovely piece of land? Are we alone in losing the natural complexity of our little forest? Unfortunately no. We see the same symptoms of destruction of native flowers and shrubs in forests all around us, including the Cornell Plantations, the Cayuga Nature Center, and several of the nature preserves of the Finger Lakes Land Trust. The deer damage to our forests is a major regional problem and is widespread throughout the northeast.

For the past 20 years of living in our woodlot, Lynn has kept a phenological record of our forest plants — the dates of first bloom of the flowers and shrubs. In the first five years we recorded an average of 40 species of wildflowers. In the last five years, we have seen an average of only 27 wildflower species. So we have lost one third of our flowering native species, a devastating number.

In the meantime, deer population density in our Lansing community has risen from 15 to 20 deer per square mile to a scary 80 to 90 deer per square mile in 2002, according to estimates by the Cayuga Heights Deer Project. And the numbers continue to climb. Except for invasive plants, almost all vegetation from the ground to about six feet above ground (the limit of reach for a deer) has been eaten. As the ground cover disappears, we see the forest floor scarred by sheet erosion where none had been visible before.

Ordinarily we expect animal or plant pests to arise from exotic species. Think of the Norway rat, the Australian brown tree snake, European dandelions and purple loosestrife. But ecologists know that native species, too, can become pests. Most often this occurs when predators have been extirpated, or there are major changes in the

habitat or environment. The edge habitat created by suburban sprawl attracts deer to a smorgasbord of ornamental plants. Also, mild winters during the past 20 years have increased fawn survivorship. In northeastern United States, where large predatory animals like the gray wolf have been removed and deer-friendly habitat has been enhanced, deer populations have soared. Nationwide deer population was estimated to be about 500,000 in the early 1900s. Now there are about 25-30 million. The white-tailed deer has been transformed from a beautiful forest sprite to an ecological concern.

In our area, the only limiting factor for the deer herd seems to be collisions with cars, estimated by the Cayuga Heights study to kill about 20 percent of the deer population per year. Bloody doe carcasses along the roadside remind us of the dangers of overcrowding that we face daily and nightly. Gardeners and farmers also hate the damage deer can do to vegetable gardens, flowers and shrubs, and fields of corn and beans. Whatever the damage, deer herds have diminished the quality of our local natural communities, whether in the city, the suburbs, the open countryside or the forests.

We are privileged to live in a world composed of many complex and beautiful biological inhabitants, species that have evolved over millions of years. The white-tailed deer is one of these, as are the anemones and the trillium that they destroy. We carry an ethical responsibility to act as stewards of this natural biological system. Our inability to find a reasonable way to hold the deer to its appropriate status is a stain on our stewardship of the land.

As things now stand, populations of the once-cherished deer expand ever more as they ravish our gardens and our natural ecosystems, eliminating many of the beautiful living components of our habitat, while we debate futilely over this tough problem. Managing deer on any scale — backyard to forest — is complex. Management solutions must be both ecologically and socially acceptable and at a cost to both humans and deer that is sustainable. There are no simple solutions to this dilemma, but if we fail to act, our forest lands and their marvelous native plants may be impaired for generations.

—Carl Leopold

*Carl Leopold is the Founding President of the Finger Lakes Land Trust and is the W. H. Crocker Scientist Emeritus at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research at Cornell University.*

## Schuyler County Hike Series is Moving Right Along

by Jim Connors

This year's hike series sponsored by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference takes us across Schuyler County. The Cayuga Trails Club is hosting this event. The hike organizers are Sigrid and Jim Connors, the hike leader coordinator is Jack VanDerzee, and the trail chairpersons are Gary Mallow for the Cayuga Trails Club and Lynda Rummel/Jean Gerow for the Finger Lakes Chapter of the ADK. May, June, July and August saw enthusiastic groups of hikers take on the Finger Lakes Trail from Connecticut Hill into Watkins Glen and the Goundry Hill/Sugar Hill State Forests.

May's hike had 98 hikers and a cast of support people leading, sweeping, and spotting their way from Connecticut Hill through Cayuta Gulf and on to the eastern edge of Texas Hollow State Forest. The skies were sunny and the landscape picturesque. The group got an extra bonus on the trail leading up to Rogers Lean-to. The "Single Shot" shooting club was performing at their club location just off the trail. The performers were dressed up in old-time cowboy outfits complete with spurs and six shooters on their hips. When asked about

June's hike offered up a blistering hot and extremely humid day for the 80 folks in attendance. Nonetheless, this group rose to the challenge and took on the climb out of Texas Hollow, into the Finger Lakes National Forest, and on to Satterly Hill Road's fantastic vistas. Hikers had

a chance to see for the first time a new bridge over Logan Creek designed and constructed by the Cayuga Trails Club. (See the article on page 26.) Thank goodness for Gatorade and water; fifteen gallons were consumed. Many thanks go to trail landowners Neal and Diane Melvaney for bailing us out with fresh well water when we ran out.

July's hike boasted splendid views of Seneca Lake and Catharine Creek Valley for 90 hikers. Although much of this hike was on roads, it was downhill (really). The blackberries were bountiful and enjoyed by many including the author of this article. The village of Burdett and the nearby twin tunnels were like stepping into a

Norman Rockwell painting. Excelsior Glen provided a nice transition from road hiking to Clute Memorial Park on Seneca Lake in Watkins Glen where many stopped at the cool water's edge for lunch.

August brought high humidity and an end to the long string of county series hikes with no rain. The day started off with a hiccup as our normally reliable buses did not

*(Continued on page 9)*



*Sweep Susan Collier makes certain the medium-fast group stays together on Schuyler County hike #3 as they head towards Excelsior Glen.*



*The school teacher comes out in Jay Zitter on Schuyler County hike #2 as she addresses the "Turtles".*

their activities, one gentleman told me that the group is "a bunch of people who as kids always wanted to be a cowboy".



*The "Jack Rabbit" group takes a brief rest at Corbett Hollow Road before moving on to Goundry Hill State Forest.*

## FLT and NCT member awarded AHS regional honor

**M**ary Kunzler-Larmann won the American Hiking Society's Northeast Region Volunteer of the Year award, one of only nine granted in 2005. Since the beginning of the Central NY Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, whose charge has been to continue the NCT northeastward from the FLT to the edge of the Adirondacks, Mary has been one of their essential sparkplugs.

A guide who leads trips for a living, usually into forbidding territories around the Arctic Circle, Mary has stretched herself immensely to provide an astounding array of volunteer accomplishments to the new chapter. No one is surprised that she has led the chapter since 1998 in much of their 22 miles of new trail building, but she has also been their lead contact with all of the landowners and agencies whose properties now host the Link Trail/NCT. These efforts at negotiation have been capped off by her supreme accomplishment, convincing the NYS Office of Parks to permit the trail to be built upon several forested miles of abandoned railbed south of Canastota, which Parks had owned for years but left idle. "I hate meetings," Mary said several years ago, when they seemed to rule her life during conversations with state agencies, but she persisted anyway.

Then she taught herself another new skill, and applied for a \$15,000 Recreation Trails Program grant to enable the chapter to replace culverts and do other reparations along the railbed. That was a success, too! Now she is attending yet more meetings to garner enthusiasm among other likely outdoor groups to the north of Rome for adopting yet more miles of NCT route. It is often



*Mary Kunzler-Larmann, left, was presented her American Hiking Society award by the NCTA Central New York Chapter's President Kathy Eisele, right.*

astounding how a passion for trails leads the enthusiast from that original urge to do stuff outdoors into learning a whole new array of skills needed to further the cause. Mary has risen again and again to the necessary challenges faced by the CNY Chapter, so certainly deserves this honor. □

### American Hiking Society

The American Hiking Society is a Washington, D.C., based advocacy and lobbying organization which promotes National Trails Day and Volunteer of the Year awards. They would like to count all hikers as members. A \$25 membership in the AHS now includes a "free" subscription to *Backpacker* magazine, which is featuring...at last!...hikes on the FLT in its Northeast Regional edition.

### Schuyler hikes ...

(Continued from page 8)

show up. We quickly implemented a contingency plan and used 16 cars to shuttle the 76 hikers to the trailhead. The return of hike leader Tom Homa was met with applause. All hikers were on the trail by 10:35 a.m. and all were finished by 4:35 p.m. Even with the slow start, rain, humidity, and bees' nests near Switzer Hill Road, all seemed to enjoy this rugged hike.

Sigrid's luck at selecting hike dates with no rain ended at nine in a row. Let's hope to start a new string with the September hike. Many thanks go to Gary Mallow who

made certain all trail trouble spots were cleared up on the first three hikes. I am working with Lynda Rummel and Jean Gerow, whom I have found to be wonderful people and excellent trail stewards, on the trail conditions for the second set of three hikes. Thanks as well to all the hike leaders, sweeps, sag wagoneers, FLT trail maintainers, and landowners throughout Schuyler County.

We are looking forward to the last two hikes which will take us through the Sugar Hill/Art Kopp Trail section of the FLT and will finish with a picnic at Clute Memorial Park. □



## Mary Years Memorial

by Irene Szabo

On August 20th, four generations of family and friends of Mary Years gathered at Birdseye Hollow Park southeast of Bath (Map M-13) to celebrate Mary's life and dedicate a resting bench along the Finger Lakes Trail. Daughter Penny Shaw (FLT end-to-ender #99) and son-in-law Gary Shaw (#138) regaled dozens of people ranging in age from eighty-something to infancy with Mary's story: this widow with six young children was finally able to indulge herself in long hiking vacations in her fifties, so became the 99th person to complete the Appalachian Trail, at a time when fewer women were found on that trail.

Then, shortly before her 75th birthday, she completed the Finger Lakes Trail to become #61 in 1996, sometimes trekking with Penny and Gary. Ed Sidote told us amusing tales of Mary's stubborn determination to finish planned segments, no matter her seeming exhaustion. FLT member and longtime friend Mona Rynearson reminded all four daughters that she and Mary had been their Girl Scout leaders back in the 1960's when they built and tended a long stretch of trail near the south end of the Bristol Hills Branch Trail. Granddaughters giggled over recollections of



*Mary Years' pack, hat and absolutely required bandana on the new bench. Penny and Gary tend this spot along the trail, a short way south of Rhinehart Road.*

Mary scolding them for failing to bring their bandanas, an indispensable hiker's tool. Many wore one this day.

Penny and Gary had installed a simple locust-wood bench, purchased from the Finger Lakes Land Trust, in front of the basement remains of what was once a grand home before the area became state forest. They figured that this was a good spot for a rest, where a hiker may contemplate the passage of time and the

huge home that once presented a view across the Birdseye Hollow valley below, with two immense corner trees, a white oak and a honey locust, lording it over the vastly younger pipsqueaks now growing in what was once the front yard, with lily of the valley carpeting the ground.

Our gathered presence there completed a lovely circle: back in 1989 Ed Sidote was one of the chief builders of this part of main FLT, when it was the third-from-last section to be completed in our state-wide white-blazed main trail. It was part of "my" trail section then, has since been bequeathed several times over, and is now tended by Gary and Penny. Two valleys to the west, my long-cherished section of the Bristol Hills Branch is where Mona and Mary used to work with their Girl Scouts, including Mary's daughters. □

## 7,778 Miles and 339 Days Later: Andrew Skurka Completes His C2C Adventure

You may remember that in the Winter 2004 issue of the *FLT News* we featured hiker Andrew Skurka as he passed through our FLT neighborhood in October on his way across North America from the Atlantic at Cape Gaspé, Quebec, to the Pacific in the state of Washington. On July 10 he completed his hike. You can read about his trip and see his photos at [www.andrewskurka.com](http://www.andrewskurka.com). *Backpacker Magazine* named Skurka its 2005 Person of the Year. They quote him as saying of his motivation that "It gives people a sense of the great potential of a national trail system."

## Wildflowers along the Trail: Small Flowers

RWW Taylor

**H**ow large should a wildflower be? Why, large enough to accomplish its objective, which is to attract an appropriate pollinator or otherwise ensure that members of its species will flourish again during the next flowering season. This is different from the strategy of the garden flower, which aims instead at simply being showy enough to entice us humans into actions that will ensure its propagation on into the future.

This fundamental difference requires an adjustment by the newcomer to observation of wildflowers—to match what one sees in the fields and woods and swamps to the listings in a field guide it becomes necessary to shift attention to less conspicuous and often less colorful features of a plant being observed. Above all, the observer needs to scale down his or her conception of the size of the typical blossom, and to realize that a flower just 1/16 inch (2 mm) wide can, viewed on its own, be just as much a visual gem as the showy items to be found in the aisle of the florist's shop.

In discussing the size of the typical wildflower we may as well exclude those species that choose to array their individual blooms in spikes, heads or clusters (known technically by such terms as racemes, panicles and umbels) in order to concentrate their visual effect. The individual florets making up a clover head, for example, are themselves quite tiny. Likewise we may as well exclude from our discussion composite flowers such as dandelions, where the florets have completely surrendered their identity in order to become part of a larger, conceptually single blossom. Composite flowers are a study in themselves, of course, and range in size from the tiny few-rayed golden blooms of the Canada goldenrod, crowding arching stems, that a view through a hand lens will disclose, to the massive, equally-golden disks of the elecampane that can sometimes be spotted growing in open fields.

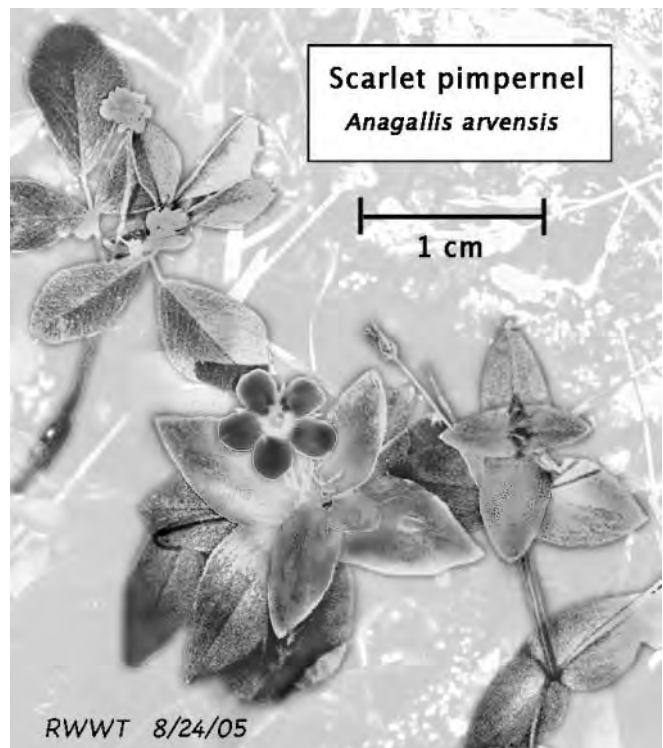
But it is the flowers that grow singly, one to a stem or else scattered along the nodes of a spreading branch, that give us the best idea of the range of wildflower size. The largest blossom that might easily be seen growing wild in our area would be the swamp rose mallow, or hibiscus, that adorns marshes and swamps in late summer. This too is the time for showy lilies to appear, from the common day-lilies waving along

roadsides everywhere to the rarely-spotted woods lily growing in stately seclusion—stop and take a good look when you run across one of these!

To view flowers at the other end of the size scale you will certainly need to bend over, nose to the ground, and may need to apply some magnification. But a close look will show you that the maxim about “good things coming in small packages” applies here too. It would be hard to beat the starry perfection of a tiny blossom of thyme-leaved sandwort for elegance, or to match the blue, blue hue of a miniature flower of corn speedwell for attractiveness.

Watch also for the unusual brick-red shade of the small, tidy flowers of the scarlet pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*), particularly where the trail crosses or runs alongside a road and especially growing low to the ground around the base of signposts or markers. This plant is sometimes called “the poor man’s weather-glass” because of its habit of closing up its blossoms whenever rain threatens.

In short, there is often a lot more to be seen in the way of wildflowers at a given location than a first, casual glance discloses. A willingness to “think small” may well lead you to new discoveries, right under your nose. Bring along a small lens and be prepared to open your eyes a bit more on your next hike! □





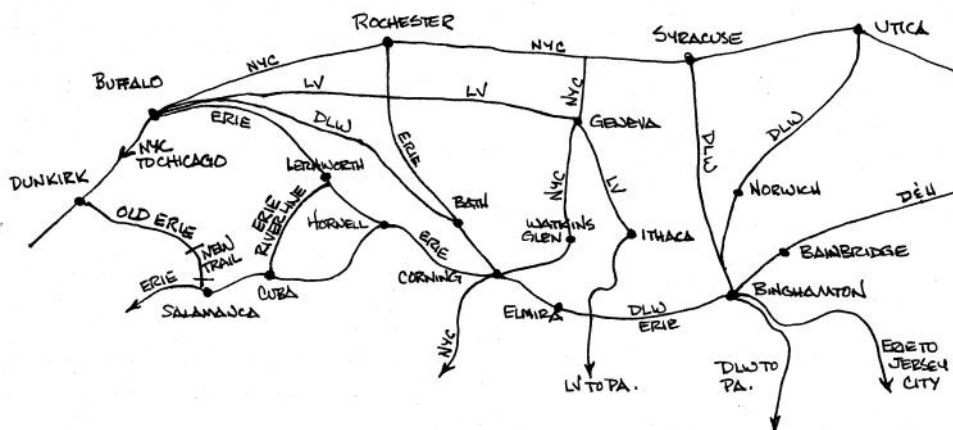
## Walking Through Time in New York: #10 in a series

### Erie Railroad, Always the Bridesmaid by Irene Szabo

Rivals along the basic New York-Albany-Buffalo route popped up, like the West Shore Railroad that tried to challenge the New York Central by running up the other side of the Hudson, but were quickly bought out by the giant and added to The System. The REST of New York's bravely competing railroads follow alternate routes, and are the ones our trail most often walks with, well south of that busy "Water Level Route" featured in #6, Fall 2004.

We have already met a few of the north-south lines that the FLT crosses, and the majority of those were originally bent upon carrying Pennsylvania coal northward to New York's growing canal corridor cities. However, there was one brave railroad that tried its damndest to rival the New York Central's east-west monopoly, and it just kept on trying for over a hundred years, through four bankruptcies and "reorganizations"—the famous Weary Erie, a railroad that figures in our trail route more than any other. In fact, we cross the Erie in enough places that our *News* time spent with this line will be in two parts.

The Erie's first dreamers wanted to create an *alternate* east-west route across New York along the Southern Tier, building from scratch since no railroads were there yet in the mid-1800's. An entrance to New York City was critical, but the Central's predecessor lines were already powerful enough that the Erie's builders had to settle for an eventual hiney-end access, through Jersey City. Rail cars were ferried across the Hudson River to get into New York City! The Southern Tier route required some astounding bridges across rivers like the Susquehanna and the Chemung and considerable climbing and winding to find relatively level routes, and then STILL the powers that ruled Albany wouldn't let the Erie build directly to Buffalo,



MAJOR NY RAILROADS C. 1960

but gave them the illustrious western terminus of Dunkirk on Lake Erie, plumb in the middle of nowhere and a village without a port. To build a railroad, or even to sell shares of stock, required government permission, but so did the route, even though the taxpayers contributed nothing to the huge capital expenditure of building the railroad. (To this day, railroads are galled that trucks, their chief modern competition, ride on publicly-provided highways.)

The map shows a simplified version of the primary Erie routes, each of which plays a part in our trail. The main Erie originally came northwest from north Jersey along the winding Delaware River, then crossed the Southern Tier through Binghamton, Elmira, and Corning, where its tracks are still often visible, now used by the black locomotives of the current giant company Norfolk Southern. Originally the main line turned northward at Salamanca toward Dunkirk, but the Erie's assignment to the Dunkirk terminus didn't last forever, thankfully, so it bought up the Atlantic and Great Western in the 1860's which continued along New York's southern border to gain access into Ohio on its quest to rival the New York Central to its north and the equally mighty Pennsylvania Railroad to its south as a viable route to Chicago.



Where the trail leaves Allegany State Park on map M-2, we walk a ghostly old road that predates the expressway by thirty years then crosses the Allegheny River on an abandoned bridge. South of the river one of the straighter ATV paths we cross was once a branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, long since drowned out of existence when Kinzua Dam created wide waters on the west side of the park. But on the north side of the river, we come to a railbed to cross, our first time on the Erie.

When I first walked there in the early 1990's, freight trains hummed along frequently, and gave no warning of their presence, since there were no "real" road crossings in that area to blow a horn for. While the Erie in any of its versions had been gone since 1976, the line was still active as Conrail, as I discovered when I used it as a return route for a loop hike: only a deep elemental *thrummm* felt, rather than heard, made me look behind me. Eek!

We still cross those tracks, which went out of service soon after I walked there, but are now reactivated by a new company, Western NY and Pennsylvania, so STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN! This was the Erie Railroad's primary historic route to northern Ohio and Chicago, where the Erie's claim to fame in the 20th century was its high-speed transportation of meat, fruits, and vegetables. (Remember the lettuce disaster in *East of Eden*?) Insulated refrigerator cars that still depended upon huge blocks of ice through the 1940's were sped to eastern markets, and the Erie could brag that it alone could get from Chicago to New York (well, Jersey City) with only two re-icing stops. Passenger service has been gone for years, but I have read a delightful reminiscence by a man who traveled from North Jersey to college in Olean on the Erie, where he recalled the conductor talking about "magazine day," when heavy bundles of popular magazines like *Life* and *The Saturday Evening Post* had to be delivered to every station.

On the seam between maps M-2 and M-3, where the trail crosses NY 353, we also used to cross an out-of-service line which was the Erie's original route from the Southern Tier to Dunkirk. Salamanca was the place where these branches met, one north to Dunkirk and the other the westward line we just crossed above the state park. That sleepy northbound railroad crossing on Woodworth Hollow Rd. just west of the golf course we pass on our way uphill to Rock City, has just been transformed into a rail trail, first open in 2005 from Salamanca north twelve miles to the town of Cattaraugus, and named on this National Trails Day for Patricia McGee, recently deceased state senator.



Irene Szabo  
*Antique concrete mile marker, 417 miles from Jersey City on the old Erie route, a few hundred feet north of our trail on Woodworth Hollow Road, north of Salamanca, seam between maps M-2 and M-3, on the new Pat McGee Trail.*

I sampled a few miles of it, and was delighted by the dense black cherry and elm trees lining the way, its many bridges over Little Valley Creek, and intact railroad mile markers. Concrete pylons with incised legends like JC 417, JC 416 that once bore black paint on a white background reminded the engineer how many miles he was from Jersey City. The trail bed is crushed stone and dirt, with new culverts and safety

*(Continued on page 14)*

### **Reefers (railroad refrigerator cars, not illegal smokes)**

Before mechanical refrigeration, stored ice was the only means of food preservation. The thick ice on winter ponds was sawed into blocks then stored in tall warehouses, usually sited at the far edges of towns, since their walls, several feet thick, were filled with sawdust for insulation, and too frequently provided a spectacular fire hazard. Alert observers can still spot old ice houses today.

A significant manufacturer of insulated rail cars, Merchants Despatch Transportation, was located in East Rochester, and there is an excellent display of interpretive signs and pictures inside one old "reefer" at the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum on NY 251 at Industry, open summer weekends.

## Erie Railroad ...

(Continued from page 13)

railings plus wooden decks on the original railroad bridges. The old wooden ties were obviously just removed, even though a good twenty years' worth of young trees are closer to the track line than would have been permitted along an active line. There are interpretive signs, and in the villages of Little Valley and Cattaraugus pavilions and picnic areas enhance the trail. So now our Woodworth Road FLT walk features a parking area at the railbed.

However, a Southern Tier route toward Chicago still did not take advantage of that second-biggest railroad hub, Buffalo, so Hornell became the point where the Erie split itself to angle northwest, too, and incidentally provide us with a host of places where our trail route visits the old Erie. That busy route, still active today as Norfolk Southern, goes from Hornell toward Swain and continues northwest below our trail on map M-7 toward its most spectacular western New York accomplishment, the High Bridge over Letchworth gorge. From there, the railroad continues northwest toward Buffalo until we cross it again on the Conservation Trail (Fall 2004, #6 in this series).

Jumping eastward from our first two Erie crossings in Cattaraugus County, the FLT approaches the north side of Hornell in Steuben County at the east edge of map M-9, where our route crosses the active ex-Erie, now Norfolk Southern, single track at the bottom of the long forest walk on Bald Hill, then heads north toward the road along the black cinders of what was obviously another railbed. This path is black with coal dust because the rails were taken up in 1947, near the end of the coal-fired steam engine era, when the Pittsburg Shawmut and Northern finally stopped running in its perpetual bankruptcy. We last walked the route of the PS&N southeast of Swain, wedged below a wooded hill on our way to Garwoods (Summer 2003, #1 in this series). This Hornell piece of the PS&N was just a ten-mile dead-end spur from Canaseraga.

When the Erie decided to split its main route at Hornell, that town became a rail center, hosting major locomotive shops for the Erie Railroad. While its place as a railroad station or service shop has disappeared today, two modern industries grew from that earlier business: Morrison Knudsen, which refurbishes graffiti-covered subway cars from downstate, and Alstom, a manufacturer of commuter

train engines so *moderne* they look more like rockets than locomotives.

For many hiking days westward from Hornell, we can hear several daily freight trains below us in the valley from Garwoods through Swain toward Dalton (maps M-9, M-8). Driving to the trailhead on Short Tract Road (map M-7), we cross the tracks: look west to see a concrete platform on pillars, now lost in weeds, that once held a water tank for the necessary refills for steam engines of an earlier time. In the farm fields north of our trail, a mile west of Short Tract Road, the main Erie used to split into the main line to Buffalo and the River Line, a shortcut with fewer steep sections that traveled through woods and swampy valleys to Cuba, NY, where it rejoined the Erie line toward Ohio and Chicago. We will revisit the River Line later, when it shadows the Genesee Valley Canal between Belfast and Cuba, but our trail does cross it here on M-7.

Shortly after westbound hikers pass the new stone memorial to Wally Wood at the Hesse family shelter, we walk South River Road, drop downhill into woods, then soon cross the surprise railbed. This ghost of the River Line is still covered with gray ballast rocks, a layer usually reclaimed by departing railroad companies for its salvage value. We cross it in the wooded middle of nowhere, continue on the other side, and then it is gone. It is hard to envision earlier steam engines or diesels pulling long freight trains here until the early 1970's.

A few miles later, the trail has finally descended to the level of the Genesee River, where there is a junction on the west side of Whiskey Bridge with the south end of the Letchworth Branch Trail. A north turn onto the Branch trail puts walkers on an abandoned branch of the once-mighty Pennsylvania Railroad AND on the towpath of the Genesee Valley Canal, but that, too, is food for another article. A few miles north on the Letchworth Branch takes us under the stunning High Bridge that continues the old Erie to Buffalo, but that visit, too, will have to wait. □



## Bill Coffin Receives NCTA Distinguished Service Award

**A** past recipient of the FLTC's Wallace Wood Award, Bill Coffin, an FLTC trail builder and maintainer since the 1970s, was recognized by the North Country Trail Association for "exceptional volunteer service in furthering the goals of the Association and outstanding contributions towards the dream of the North Country National Scenic Trail." The award was presented at the NTCA Annual Meeting in Petoskey, Michigan in August.

Bill has been a trail steward for over 25 years and has served on the Boards of both the FLTC and ADK and their respective trail committees. For four years he chaired the ADK statewide Trail Committee and helped to formulate its single-use hiking trail policy. It was during Bill's eight-year tenure as ADK Onondaga Chapter Trail Chair and overseer of 93 miles of FLT that the gap in the FLT/NCT in Central New York was closed (1992, 30th anniversary of FLTC). Once the gap in the main trail was closed Bill revived the initiative to extend the North Country Trail in Central New York via the Onondaga FLT Branch Trail.

Bill's major contribution and strength is networking with local organizations and land trusts and negotiating

Aaron Phipps



*Bill Coffin receiving award from Pat Leinen of the NCTA*

with private landowners. Without this background work there would be no trail to construct. At present he is the ADK Onondaga's Landowner Liaison for over 60 FLT/NCT landowners and an active participant in scouting and constructing the Onondaga NCT extension eastward to Tioughnioga Wildlife Management Area and the Link Trail junction. □

## A Great New Read for Hikers

by Irene Szabo

**J**oan Young, webmaster for both the North Country Trail Association and the FLTC, has set herself a huge goal, to walk the entire 4200-mile NCT. While she has walked over 2600 miles already (and taken fourteen years to do it in chunks large and small), and is backpacking for two weeks in the forested Upper Peninsula of Michigan as I write this, she has just published a book on her adventures for the first 2300 miles.

Each chapter recounts another hike on this vast trail, the longest by far of the National Scenic Trails, and they vary as much as the trail itself, from cityscapes like Duluth to hot open plains in North Dakota. Some of the adventures are wonderful to remember, while a few of them surely elicit shudders in retrospect. Joan's accounts are frequently funny, always capable of putting her readers into that particular place, and occasionally will make you cry.

Yes, I even get my mug into a few chapters, since I was along for a very few of her hikes, both here in New York and once over New Year's Eve in 2000, when we spent a big deal Y2K in a snow fort in northern Michigan. Yes, Joan can persuade otherwise sane people to follow her into the wilderness, like her

childhood friend (and FLT member) Marie Altenau, who backpacks with her two weeks every summer. See what Girl Scout Camp can lead to?

It's a great read for hikers: color pictures, riveting tales, and endless adventures, all told from the hiking experiences of a mere mortal (as opposed to thirty-mile-a-day long-legged youngsters like Andy Skurka!), a white-haired fifty-something wife who isn't much over five feet tall and creates websites for trail organizations to fund her passionate hiking goal. Partway through the book, you almost start thinking you could do it, too.

You can order the book (*North Country Cache: Adventures on a National Scenic Trail*) online at [booksleavingfootprints.com](http://booksleavingfootprints.com), or by sending a check made out to Shark Enterprises to:

Joan Young  
861 West U.S. 10  
Scottville, MI 49454

The price is \$24.95. Shipping is \$5 for the first copy plus \$2 for each additional copy. Michigan residents add 6% sales tax.



## National Trails Day Across The FLT: June 4<sup>th</sup>

The FLT Bullthistle Club declared all of Chenango County “Sidote Country” with signs placed at the county’s trail borders during their celebratory hikes.



Warren Johnsen



Marty Howden

Cake made for the occasion by Lynn Howden

~ ~ ~

Eight Triple Cities Hiking Club members embarked on a day of trail maintenance and blazing along their Chenango County sections, while Susan and Larry Blumberg made it their own mission to work on Mike Gebhard’s section east of NY 8 south of Masonville.

“The section...is a grassy pathway, so I brought along an old (very old) lawnmower and set the wheel height at its maximum. Was working quite well until one of the back wheels fell off. Literally fell off. Not to be deterred, I continued with the remaining three wheels until the bridge over Cold Spring Creek. At that point, I switched to a relatively new grass whip up to the lean-to, where the blade broke in half. I guess they just don’t build things like they used to!”

— Larry Blumberg

~ ~ ~

The Onondaga Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club gave back to their community by performing trail work at Green Lakes State Park outside Syracuse, with trail work on their section of the Finger Lakes Trail scheduled for June 5th.

— Kathy Disque, Chapter Chair

~ ~ ~

The Ithaca DeWitt Middle School Dolphin Team celebrated National Trails Day with a Saturday hike on the Abbott Loop (Map M-17) and a Sunday hike through Shindagin Hollow along the FLT (Map M-18). Three dozen students, parents, siblings, and furry-footed friends (canines, hobbits, etc.) enjoyed Foamflowers, Wild Geraniums, May Apple, Starflower, and spectacular Pink Lady’s-Slippers and Columbine. Youngsters from many decades shooed more than five dozen Red Newts from the trail, a Leopard Frog was spotted, and a brown Green Frog was examined.

A discussion of glacial geology was led by two parents who happened to be geologists with the Andes Project and an explanation of the inheritance of the striping patterns on the hairs of the Gray Squirrel was offered by another Cornell parent/scientist. For any sedentary parent who thought, “I wish I were dead!” five cyanide-spewing millipedes were also found. There were, however, no fatalities. There were just numerous Ovenbirds calling “Teacher, teacher, teacher” incessantly, reminding the group leader where he would be Monday morning.

— John A-X. Morris, hiking science teacher

## National Trails Day Across The FLT: June 4<sup>th</sup>

Thirteen members of the Cayuga Trails Club and other friends performed some arduous physical labor when they began construction of a new outhouse to serve the Chestnut Lean-to in Danby State Forest along the FLT/NCT. These committed and energetic volunteers transported the not inconsiderable amount of lumber needed a half mile or so into the woods, 3 and 4 boards at a time. They then dug the pit, constructed the base, built the frame and completed the subroof. To complete the job, club members returned the following weekend to finish the roof, nail up the siding, and build a door and a “throne.”

— Gary Mallow, CTC Trail Chair

~ ~ ~



Jay Zitter

A dozen walkers joined the Marshfellows, the FLT’s volunteer caretakers of the Queen Catharine Marsh Trail Loop, south off the main trail in Watkins Glen. A mom and her sixth-grade daughter read about the hike in a local newspaper and joined us at the marina, while other participants enhanced our walk with local historic information. Some even volunteered to help with maintenance! Our walk followed the Catharine Valley Trail Annual Meeting, which is a railtrail being built between Watkins Glen and Horseheads, with several miles shared with the Queen Catharine Marsh Trail of the FLT.

— Jay Zitter

~ ~ ~

The Foothills Trail Club celebrated National Trails Day with a 25th anniversary celebration for the North Country Trail. With all due respect for the official motto of NTD (Take the path to a healthier you), Foothills decided that an NCT anniversary party sounded like more fun. A large cake with the NCT logo scanned into the frosting was created by the intrepid bakers at Wegman’s. Hikers had to earn their cake, though. Foothills offered three hikes of varying lengths on the FLT/NCT in beautiful Allegany State Park. After the hikes, there was a potluck supper, a campfire, and CAKE! Several participants earned extra pieces of cake by chainsawing for hours and hours to get the trail into shape during previous weeks. Trails, food, and good fellowship—a perfect anniversary celebration.

— Ellen Gibson

Irene Szabo

*New bridge over a little stream in the field walk north of Bean Station Rd, Prattsburgh, Bristol Hills Branch Trail map B-3, made with lumber sawn and half-donated by Shirley Lumber of Bath. Dave Shirley, also a trail landowner, made this gift without even being asked! Jim Peek, recently retired supervising forester from DEC in Bath, takes on this volunteer project for the FLT.*



## Trail Topics

by Howard S. Beye, Chair  
Trail Management Committee

### Alley Cat Trail Crews

As I sit here in front of the computer trying to get this article done for the FLT News on the same day I will be leaving for the second Alley Cat Trail Crew at Hammondsport, it has me thinking how many of these crews I have been a part of. It all started back in the mid-1980's when we felt we needed crews out on the FLT to do jobs which were too big or time-consuming for smaller clubs or Individual Trail Sponsors to handle. So we established a couple of weekend crews as starters. They did not have the name Alley Cat attached but were the basis of what we have today.

In about 1993 the National Park Service (NPS) opened up some real opportunities for the portions of the FLT System that coincide with the North Country Trail, some 415 miles on which we could apply for Challenge Cost Share projects that would help pay for the materials as long as we had the volunteer resources to match the cost. Back then the hourly rate applied for work done by volunteers was in the \$8.00 range. Today it is in the \$19.00 range. We were also able to provide food for the crews under the Volunteer in the Parks program of the NPS, which allocated funds for National Scenic Trails like the North Country National Scenic Trail.

In 1994 what had been weekend crews began working for a whole week, and in 1995 the crews were named the Alley Cat Trail Crews. You might ask how we came up with such a name as Alley Cat. Back when the Conference organizers were searching for an appropriate name for organization, someone had suggested it be called the Allegany-Catskill Trail Conference. This was not accepted (although it is a better description of the actual route of the main trail than "Finger Lakes") because some thought it would be shortened to Alley Cat Trail and Alley Cat Trail Conference, which was not dignified in the eyes of our founders. So they selected Finger Lakes Trail Conference. Although our crews are not alley cats, it is a name that most remember and if you tell people why we have the name they understand the connection that we do trail work along the whole trail system from the Alleghenies to the Catskills.



With these two programs of the NPS to assist our own contributions and those of our agency partners in the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, we have been able to conduct many major as well as numerous smaller projects. Just to give you an idea of how much assistance we have received from these programs, I tabulated the contributions the FLTC has received to pay

for the projects undertaken during the last 15 years. A total of 46 Challenge Cost Share projects had a contribution from the NPS of \$80,871. The amount of challenge share we and our agency partners have provided, with additional hours still to be worked, amounts to \$179,718. Many of you who use the trail, I am sure, have seen the tremendous benefit the trail has had from the Challenge Cost Share Program. Under the Volunteer in the Parks program we have received over \$4,000 to provide food for the crews over the past 15 years. If you communicate with your Congressional Representative or Senators, let them know how much this program has helped the FLTC do a better job at making the NCT a great experience for those who hike or backpack the trail.

### New Lean-tos along the FLT

Word has just been received that in Sugar Hill State Forest located west of Watkins Glen (M-14) two new lean-tos have been constructed by a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Region 8 Operations Crew. The new lean-tos, of Adirondack-style design, holding about four persons, are near the relocated FLT/NCT, approximately 0.5 mile south of the recreation area where the fire tower is located. The lean-tos are near a new pond which the DEC constructed about two years ago. There is a metal fire ring in front of each lean-to. Toilets are going to be installed soon according to Gretchen Cicora, the Forester in Region 8 with whom the FLTC works on trail projects. With these new lean-tos in place, the two old lean-tos near the recreation area may be removed or may remain for the use of those who do not wish to hike to the new lean-tos. The DEC has not made a final decision on their fate. These lean-tos, funded by the DEC, are a great addition to the FLT,

and we thank the DEC in Region 8 for taking the lead in getting them completed.

### **Trail Evaluator Training**

The North Country Trail Association (NCTA) and the National Park Service combined efforts and provided a new Trail Evaluators Workshop on August 10 and 11, before the start of the Annual Meeting of the NCTA in Petoskey, Michigan. There were 30 participants at the workshop with six from the Finger Lakes Trail Conference: Howard Beye, Bill and Mary Coffin, Gene Cornelius, Lynda Rummel, and Irene Szabo.

The purpose of developing a group of Trail Evaluators is to have an independent group of knowledgeable people throughout the length of the NCT. They will be asked to go out in pairs to evaluate existing certified North Country Trail that the responsible NCTA Chapter or Affiliate (for example, the FLTC) wishes to have elevated to the Gold Star Certification Standard. They will also be asked to evaluate new trail being considered for certification as North Country Trail to ensure it meets the new higher level of Trail Design and Construction Standards and does not allow bike or horse use.

You might ask why the Gold Star Certification is a desired condition when the trail is already certified as North Country Trail. The reason is that many miles which are currently certified as NCT only met minimum standards: open to the public at no cost, motorized vehicles cannot use the trail, marked as NCT, and has a maintenance program in place with persons assigned to perform the maintenance. In the case of the FLT and most of the other portions of the NCT, this has allowed trail to be classified as a National Scenic Trail, but in many cases the trail certainly does not meet the higher level that should be expected by hikers on one of the eight National Scenic Trails.

So what are the problems the FLTC and most others responsible for the NCT find? Speaking for the FLTC, we find many sections of NCT with slope far in excess of 10 percent, horse and bike traffic allowed in some areas, or going through permanently wet areas or sections with extensive briar and berry bushes which cannot be controlled. The list could go on, but I know you get the picture.

Well, what has the FLTC, through its Trail Sponsors, been doing to try to improve its sections of trail? Just recently over five miles of trail were rerouted in Sugar Hill State Forest and on private land to get the trail off of multi-use trail which allowed horses and snowmobiles and onto hiking-only trail. In Taylor

Valley State Forest the slope of the trail on both sides of the valley has been reduced by new trail construction to get the slope to 10 percent or less. These are just a couple of examples of the efforts being made all along the trail system and even beyond the NCT portion to improve the quality of experience hikers will have on the FLT System.

The Gold Star Certification program will now provide a recognition program that is based on meeting all applicable Trail Design and Construction Standards found in the NCT. Sections to be so designated will run between access points or other recognizable points. Trained trail evaluator teams of two persons not affiliated with the trail group requesting Gold Star Certification will make the inspection. If they find conditions that need to be addressed to bring the trail up to standard, they will explain what needs to be accomplished before the Gold Standard can be awarded.

Internally on the FLT System the FLTC evaluators can be a valuable resource to help Trail Sponsors who desire advice as what should be improved and how it can be accomplished. Since this program is intended to upgrade the trail to a better level of basic design, we will be working through the Trail Management Committee and at our Area Meetings to bring this program to our trail maintainers for the NCT portion of the Trail System, as well as assessing how our evaluators may be able to help in non-NCT areas. Additional Trail Design and Construction Workshops will also be scheduled to assist Trail Sponsors in having trained personnel locally available.

### **Trail Sponsorship and Maintainer Opportunities**

Currently, we have a couple of openings for Individual Trail Sponsors in the Catskill-West Section of the system, which runs from map M-26 in Bainbridge to M-27 at the junction of County Road 27 and 47. If you would like more details, please contact Jim DeWan, Section Coordinator, at [goshawkbait@aol.com](mailto:goshawkbait@aol.com) or 607-775-3001, or the Trail Operations Office at [fltc@frontiernet.net](mailto:fltc@frontiernet.net) or 585-288-7191. An Individual Trail Sponsor is defined as being one person, a small group, or a family. An Individual Trail Sponsor takes on more responsibilities than a Trail Steward (maintainer), who works for a club or large group.

We also need one or more Trail Stewards for portions of Allegany State Park on map M-1/CT-1. There is a 11.1 mile stretch between access points 4 and 8 which

*(Continued on page 20)*



## Trail Topics ...

(Continued from page 19)

could easily be separated into 4.7 mile and 6.4 mile sections based on road crossings. Contact Margaret or Ken Reek, Section Coordinators, at [mmr-flt@cs.rit.edu](mailto:mmr-flt@cs.rit.edu) or 585-293-3241, or the Trail Operations Office.

In addition we would like to find several people who would be interested in becoming Trail Stewards for small sections of the 11.9-mile Interloken Trail located to the northwest of Watkins Glen. They would work under the Hector Ranger District of the Finger Lakes National Forest, which has been the Trail Sponsor since the trail was built in the 1960's. The Trail Stewards would receive instruction and assistance with tools and other supplies needed to maintain the trail. Those who

are interested in learning more about this opportunity are asked to contact Chris Zimmer, Finger Lakes National Forest, Ranger District Office at 5218 State Route 414, Hector, NY 14841 or email [czimmer@fs.fed.us](mailto:czimmer@fs.fed.us) or call 607-546-4470. If you do take on the job of Trail Steward, please let the FLTC Trail Operations Office know of your assignment so we can mark our database accordingly. You can do this by emailing [fltc@frontiernet.net](mailto:fltc@frontiernet.net) or calling 585-288-7191.

We also keep lists of persons interested in being notified if an opportunity becomes available to become an Individual Trail Sponsor or a Trail Steward with an organized club or group in an area near their home. If you are interested in having your name put on either of these lists, please contact the Trail Operations Office as described above. □

## Call for Nominations

So many people give so much of themselves to keep this hiking trail open to the public; let us remember to honor them. Who in your club is an unsung hero? Whom do you always count on when something needs fixing, or doing, or arranging? What landowner or other non-hiker has contributed to our trail's continued existence? Do not let them remain unsung.

Nominations are requested for the following awards every year; please send them to Ron Navik, VP Membership: 27 Edenfield Drive, Penfield 14526, [ron.navik@att.net](mailto:ron.navik@att.net), and copy Gene Bavis, Executive Director: FLTC, 6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt Morris, NY 14510, [gbavis@rochester.rr.com](mailto:gbavis@rochester.rr.com).

Nominations, especially for the Wally Wood, are requested before the end of December.

**The Wallace D. Wood Distinguished Service Award** is the highest annual honor given by the FLTC to a volunteer who has contributed extraordinary quality and quantity to the ongoing health of the trail system and its organization. Pairs of people who have worked miracles together have also received this award.

**The Ervin Markert Distinguished Contribution Award** goes to an individual, group, or organization in the public or private sector who has made a significant contribution toward the improvement of hiking trails in New York. This could be a trail landowner, a donor, or someone working for an agency such as the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, for instance, who has been especially effective and generous.

**The Clar-Willis Distinguished Trail Volunteer Award** is presented to an individual (or pair) who has made a significant contribution over a period of time as a trail worker within the FLT System. The recipient(s) may be a member of the FLTC or of one of our trail-sponsoring organizations.

# Osteoporosis

by Patrick Riccardi, M.D.



*This is Dr. Pat Riccardi's second contribution to Trail Medicine. Above and beyond Pat's willingness to prepare excellent Trail Medicine articles, I am grateful to him personally for evaluating and treating me for this problem so that I might avoid debilitating fractures. I have learned from Pat to be more sensitive to the possibility of osteoporosis in men as well as women, and as with many disorders, to pay attention to family history.*

— Bob Michiel, Trail Medicine editor

**O**steoporosis ("thin bones" in layman's terms) is the most common bone disorder. The National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) estimates that 20% of postmenopausal white women in the USA suffer from osteoporosis. More than 1.5 million fractures due to osteoporosis occur annually in the U.S., including more than 300,000 hip fractures, more than 800,000 vertebral fractures and 250,000 wrist fractures. The NOF estimates that one out of every two Caucasian American women will experience an osteoporotic fracture at some point in her lifetime.

Bone remodeling is a normal component of bone metabolism. Up until the time of peak bone mass (approximately age 25) the formation of new bone exceeds bone resorption. Thereafter, the rate of resorption exceeds formation of bone, resulting in a decline in bone density of approximately 1-2% per year. After the loss of estrogen production from the ovaries at the time of menopause, this decline can increase to 2-4% reduction per year.

In addition to aging and menopausal status, additional risk factors for osteoporosis include Caucasian background, thin build, tobacco use, taking corticosteroids for more than three months, poor health/frailty, lifelong low calcium intake, low level of physical activity and more than two alcoholic drinks per day.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation has published guidelines regarding the use of DXA scans (bone density scan) to help identify correctly those at risk for fractures. Currently DXA scans are recommended for all women at age 65, and for all postmenopausal women younger than 65 who have additional risk factors, or who suffer a fracture. Medicare has also

approved sequential scanning on an every-two-year basis.

The first step in any treatment program for osteoporosis is ensuring adequate calcium and vitamin D intake. Patients should maintain total daily intakes of 1200 mg calcium and 400 to 600 units of vitamin D, using supplements as needed. Specific pharmacologic therapies include low dose estrogen supplements, estrogen receptor modulators, calcitonin compounds, oral and intravenous biphosphonates, and human parathyroid hormone injections. Your physician will

help you choose the proper medication for your individual set of circumstances. In addition, tobacco cessation and limitation of caffeine and alcohol intake is recommended. For patients who are elderly and frail, an environment that fosters safe ambulation should be provided (eliminating small or loose rugs, poor lighting, electrical cords, lack of handrails, stairs, etc.). In addition, providing hip protectors to those patients reduces hip fracture risk.

Furthermore, osteoporosis is not just a disease of women. One in every eight men over the age of 50 will develop a fracture related to bone fragility. Over 2 million American men are diagnosed with osteoporosis. Density testing should be done on men who have coexistent illnesses requiring chronic steroid therapy, those who have sustained a fracture not associated with significant trauma, and those who have developed hypogonadism with low testosterone levels. Low testosterone levels are frequent in men past age 70, and are frequent in patients with prostate cancer receiving androgen hormonal deprivation treatment. Also, men who have chronic excess alcohol intake frequently develop osteoporosis and should be tested. If diagnosed with osteoporosis, treatment options similar to those mentioned to treat women need to be implemented, and testosterone replacement therapy for those with hypogonadism should be implemented.

Lastly, weight-bearing exercise provides a mechanical stimulus for bone formation and is strongly encouraged. In addition, exercise that strengthens muscles, particularly the quadriceps, helps improve balance and prevent falls. Another reason to keep on hiking! □

To learn more: National Osteoporosis Foundation at [www.nof.org](http://www.nof.org)

*Press Release*

## **Here Comes the Big Mully !!!**

(June 1, 2005)

FLTC member Ken Lewaine of Middletown, New Jersey—a.k.a. “The Big Mully”— has begun an end-to-end hike of the Finger Lakes Trail. Bigmully, a 1982 Maine-to-Georgia Appalachian Trail thru-hiker (known then as “The Jersey Giant”) and a six-year member of the FLTC, is a 28-year backpacking veteran who just this May entered his “Golden Decade” upon turning 50.

Bigmully’s FLT end-to-end hike is part of a larger odyssey that he’s dubbed “*The Ramble Across New York*” (“*TRANY*”). Begun in May of 1996, *TRANY* is a piecemeal hike from the western side of the George Washington Bridge near New York City to Niagara Falls. The route consists of walking the Long Path, the Appalachian Trail, the Shawangunk Ridge Trail, the Long Path again, the Finger Lakes Trail, and finally, the Conservation Trail. The anticipated total mileage upon completion is in excess of 800. As of this writing, approximately 180 miles of *TRANY* have been completed, over 18 hiking days. The timetable for completion of *TRANY* is uncertain, but hopefully within the next 10 years.

While Bigmully had previously day-hiked or overnight-backpacked several sections of the Long Path route and one section of the FLT in the Catskills, he is re-hiking every step in order to create one continuous linear adventure.

The *Ramble* in its first sections consisted exclusively of sporadic day hikes along the New Jersey Palisades into Harriman State Park. While most of these day hikes consisted of out-and-back hiking, one section near Alpine, New Jersey, involved spotting a vehicle at the hike’s end, and bicycling to the Palisades Park Police station, where Bigmully chained his bike, walked to his car, and later retrieved the cycle. In Harriman State Park, there was one multi-day loop hike from Lake Skannatati out of the Park and over to the Palisades Interstate Parkway at Mount Ivy, and then a hike along the Long Path back to the car. Once out of Harriman State Park, all of the trips have involved point-to-point hikes with companions, with a vehicle spotted at the start and end points.

Bigmully had read in the *FLT News* with some dismay that one or two others have done or are in the process of doing the GW Bridge-Niagara Falls trek. However, he believes he may have actually begun his trek before the others. Bigmully, while undertaking this quest solo, frequently enjoys the company of one or both of his young sons and/or members of a loose-knit hiking club he co-founded with fellow Metropolitan Transportation Authority employee Joe Herrod called “*BUHC*” (rhymes with luck), the *Bureaucrats Unlimited Hiking Club*, of which there are a dozen or so members, none of whom are actually government bureaucrats.

This past Memorial Day weekend, Bigmully and 4 fellow *BUHC* members traversed 28.3 miles from just east of Kerhonkson, New York on the Long Path to the Denning trailhead. As part of this trip, Bigmully officially began his FLT end-to-end quest, having hiked a whopping 1.2 miles of the FLT. Plans are being formulated now for the next leg of the *Ramble*, beginning with the 10-mile road walk west from the Denning trailhead to Campbell Mountain Road.

Fellow FLT members will find Bigmully out and about over the next several seasons on the FLT. He’s hard to miss: Grey-bearded and talkative, at six-foot-five and 250 pounds, keeping a low profile is not his forte.

*Editor: As of this writing, Bigmully and friends were planning on backpacking another 50 miles of the FLT in the Catskills at the end of August. His plan is to complete the FLT on weekends, extended backpacking trips, etc., and not as a “thru-hike.” He invites you to join him for the rest of his hike or just to tag along for parts of it. His email is bigmully@aol.com.*

Article redacted at the request of the author



Article redacted at the request of the author

## **Our Wally Rock: Monument Dedication and Delicious Surprises!**

by Irene Szabo

**E**d Sidote once suggested that we should memorialize Wallace Wood for his great idea for this upstate trail, so Ron Navik, trail chair of the Genesee Valley Hiking Club, took on the project. GVHC was not only Wally Wood's own club, but it continues as steward for over forty miles of some of the oldest trail in our system, from the Genesee River eastward to Hornell. Ron thought an appropriate place for a true monument would be along the trail near the Hesse shelter on private land, but the Board asked Ron to work with Bruce Hesse to enact a permanent trail easement so that our monument would be protected. Over the past year, Ron said the Hesse family showed genuine interest, but was procrastinating over the final document.

Meanwhile Ron asked Tim Tedone of Marrion Monuments in Rochester to create a smooth boulder with engraved letters, explaining the mission, and Ted thought it was a great idea. In fact, he supplied the rock, did the engraving, and delivered it to a remote spot over an hour south of Rochester all for a mere \$160.00! Then Bruce Hesse, sons, and grandsons lifted the rock to a cart and drove it up to their shelter with an ATV, along with the Sakrete required for the base.

National Trails Day was chosen for the monument's dedication at the beginning of a hike hosted by GVHC, as advertised in our last issue of the FLT News. We walked the short way eastward from South River Road, across boards laid over a wet spot by our thoughtful Hesse hosts, and circled about for the unveiling of the striking rock monument. Not only did all present ooh and ahh over the handsome monument, but then Ron shared with us the stunning news that Bruce Hesse had given him a signed permanent trail



Jacqui Wensich

*Four generations of the Hesse family gathered around the new monument honoring FLT founder Wallace Wood erected on their property. FLTC Vice President and GVHC trail chair Ron Navik is on the far right.*

easement that very morning! It was a great day in the woods, indeed! We cannot thank the Hesse family enough for this gift, which gives us another half-mile free from worry about the future of our route.

The surprises continued, however. The night before, I received an email from Darrow Wood of Brooklyn, son of Wallace, who just happened to visit the FLT website for the first time that day and read about the memorial dedication. He wrote, "I can't be there but do know that Dad would be proud and delighted with all that the conference has continued to do. I remember Dad going off time and again to blaze more trail. No man or woman more loved the great outdoors. And that distinctive FLT logo! I can still see him working on the design, chiseling it into a solid piece of wood..."

Barb and Ron Navik had also arranged with Wally's daughter Lisa Scamp to meet the GVHC carpool in Rochester, but signals were crossed, so we missed having her along, too. □

### **FLTC Business Members**

Cheshire Inn  
Downsville Motel  
Map Shop  
Holiday Valley Resort  
Sedona Trading Company

Laura Moats  
Al Carpenter  
Seelye "Zeke" Little  
Jane Eshbaugh, Mktg. Dir.  
Scott Boboltz

Naples  
Downsville  
Pittsford  
Ellicottville  
Okemos, MI

*We encourage all members to thank and use the services of these  
businesses which support the Finger Lakes Trail.*

*Addresses, contact information and links to these businesses can be  
found on the FLTC web site: [www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org)*

For \$75 per year, business members receive all the benefits of regular membership PLUS a listing and link on our website. We will also list our business members in the *News* at least once a year.

## Bridge over Troublesome Waters

by Jim Connors

Jim Connors



*Bridge over Logan Creek. This photo shows the "sandwich" compression bridge joint and the anchor supports. That's Greg Lawrence seated on the bridge.*

**T**he heavy rainstorms and flooding in central New York this past spring created havoc in Schuyler County. Not only were roads washed out, many of which are required to access the Finger Lakes Trail, but some bridges over normally tame creeks were also washed out.

In preparation for the Schuyler County hike series we learned of a problem area near the Finger Lakes National Forest. The banks supporting the bridge over Logan Creek, map M-15, on land owners Neal and Diane Melvany's property experienced significant erosion. The long, monstrous tree-trunk span dropped five feet down into the creek. You may remember this bridge, which was enhanced with a support rail fashioned out of tree branches that were nailed to the main trunk. Loss of this bridge left a significant obstacle in getting across Logan Creek as we could not take our large group of cross-county hikers through this area. We needed a bridge, and we needed it fast.

In studying up- and downstream locations for a new creek crossing, Cayuga Trails Chair Gary Mallow and I

realized that the wide path of erosion would require a very long bridge span to reach solid banks on both sides. We also realized that the only time this area requires such a long span was in the spring after the winter-snow thaw and spring runoff. Normally, Logan Creek has only a modest water flow. We decided on a bridge design that could be built in two 18-inch-wide by 8-foot-long spans using pressure-treated lumber, that could be prefabricated, carried to the creek site, bolted together, and anchored on the corners with 4-by-4's sunk deep into the creek bed. This temporary-permanent bridge span can be unbolted in the fall from the 4-by-4 corner anchors and relocated to high ground for storage until after the high water has subsided the following spring. The Cayuga Trails Club has replicated this design near Michigan Hollow Road in the Danby Forest.

Former Cayuga Trails Club chairperson Tom Reimers suggested that we share this bridge design so that others with similar needs can use it. If anyone would like more information, please feel free to contact me ([jconnors@tcwny.rr.com](mailto:jconnors@tcwny.rr.com)). □

# End-to-End Update

## End-to-End Hikers

Two more hikers have completed the FLT since the summer issue.

#191 Deborah Hammond, Olean

#192 Katherine Woznek, Olean

There is also a new branch trail end-to-end:

#39 Jacqui Wensich, Pittsford (main trail #178)

Future end-to-enders recently added to my list are:

James Greene, Endicott

Robert Bliven, Oxford

Sue Bliven, Oxford

Karl Eurenus, Naples

Jack Sexton, Vestal

I received progress reports from the following hikers on my end-to-end list:

Sue & Bob Bliven, Oxford

Bill Baum, Rochester

Leo Douglas, Endicott

Kathy Eisele, Syracuse

Gail Ellsworth, Marathon

Wes Ernsberger, Endicott

Karl Eurenus, Naples

Carrie French, Bath

Jim Greene, Endicott

Eric Malmberg, Marathon

Deborah Paterson, Fulton

Kathy Perry, Cortland

David Preston, Central Square

John Sexton, Vestal

Georgeanne Vyverberg, Naples

Penn Watson, East Aurora

Carol Watts, Bath

Michael Welsky, Fulton

## Car Spotters

New additions to the car spotter list:

Richard Sholar, McGraw

Bob & Sue Bliven, Oxford

## Japanese Monastery in the Catskills

While en route to the Balsam Mountain Lake trailhead you will see a sign in Japanese adjacent to Beaverkill Road. The building on your left near the road is the caretaker's residence for a Japanese monastery (the Dai Bosatsu Zendo) and the building on your right has living quarters and storage space. The caretaker is very friendly, and you can summon him by using the gong on the left side of his door, which is in the center of the building.

Between these two buildings there is a 2-mile, one-lane blacktop road that goes uphill all the way to the former Harriett Beecher Stowe family residence, now a guest house for the monastery, on the shore of Beecher Lake. A hundred yards past the Beecher Guest House is a seven-million-dollar monastery building. It is beautiful inside and out. Depending on what event is taking place when you visit, you may be able to have a monk take you through the monastery. I have been through it guided by a very friendly monk. It is worth your time to

visit the monastery grounds, buildings, and lake. The second time I was there I ate my lunch at the lake outlet and was very

reluctant to leave as it is a very peaceful, serene place. I plan to go back again to take pictures. People come from all over the world to attend religious events at the monastery, which also offers Zen training.

## Spring Outing 2006

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference Spring Outing will be held in Norwich (Chenango County) on May 5-7. Save the dates. The FLT-Bullthistle Hikers will be the host club. This is our first attempt to host an Outing and we hope to provide events for members of all abilities.

One of the highlights of Norwich is our Northeast Classic Car Museum which exhibits over 100 antique cars including Duesenbergs, Pierce Arrows, Cords, Auburns, Packards, Lincolns, Cadillacs, and a large exhibit of air-cooled Franklins manufactured in Syracuse, in addition to cars you have never heard of. There is also a special exhibit rotated every six months. Even if you are not an antique car buff this exhibit will boggle your mind and bring back memories of the "good ole days".

Across the street from the Car Museum is the Railroad Museum, and just a few houses east of it is the Chenango County Historical Museum.

Even if you can't hike there are many things to see and do. Our new college is worth seeing. This is going to be a different type of Outing which will appeal to all our members, both hikers and non-hikers.

Many future end-to-enders have expressed a desire to meet and talk with me. As I will be 88 in September, this could be your last opportunity. One never knows what the morrow has in store for us. For my other 192 end-to-enders this will be an opportunity to renew our friendship and reminisce. Looking forward to seeing you in May, 2006.

Happy Hiking!

Edward J. Sidote

5 Clinton St., Norwich, 13815-1903

607/334-3872

*[ejsidote@cnyconnect.net](mailto:ejsidote@cnyconnect.net)*



## **Backpacking the FLT**

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**Deborah Hammond (#191) and Katherine Woznek (#192)  
Olean, NY**

**K**athy and I discovered the FLT in 2001 on Memorial Day weekend while hiking the North Country Trail through Allegany State Park in the western section of New York State.

That weekend hike is what made us decide to hike the entire main trail of the Finger Lakes Trail system. We decided to do the trail because it would be fulfilling a goal and a dream. Besides it's practically in our back yard. It would also be a tune-up for us in preparing to hike the Appalachian Trail and other trails. The FLT is closer to us and we could hike on the weekends. Of course, further east we would need to expand our weekends to week-long trips with a week's worth of food in our backpacks, carrying 35 to 45 pounds. We hiked the western section in both directions, but I recommend going east: the maps are easier to follow.

Kathy and I have hiked the trail with friends, with club members, and together with our daughters and our dogs. Kuby started hiking with us. He passed away, and then our two dogs Tucker and Norman hiked with us. Neither one of us has had the desire to hike alone; we feel it's too risky.

I believe we have only seen around 55 hikers on the trail in the four summers we have hiked. The largest group was thirteen Cornell University wilderness students out for a week. We also ran into end-to-ender Phil Lund (#164) and hiked with him for a short time, as well as another hiker, Bill Blume, who hopes to finish the trail this year.

The wildlife we encountered were coyotes and a black bear. The coyotes were a nuisance mostly in the middle section of the 562-mile trail. Then there was the black bear near East Pharsalia. We heard the bear coming for us, but we were in our tent so what could we do? Well, he decided to come to my side of the tent, right by my ear. His snorting was an awesome sound. My side of the tent fly was open, and if he had taken one more step it was face to face with a black bear, not my cup of tea. For the most part the FLT was in reasonably good hiking condition. We thank all the volunteers and stewards for the work they have done. We only had some incidents with briar bushes and lots of stinging nettles in the Catskills. That was awful. The privy at Campbell Mountain Lean-to had a yellow

jacket hive inside. I was attacked while attempting to use the privy, leading to some medical attention.

The landowners are great people, and we thank them for allowing the trail to go through their property. We had quite a few people helping us with transportation to and from the trailheads and we want to thank the following: Jeff Bartholomew, Antoinette and Paul Faucher and Fred Bailey of Olean, Sarah Justo from Manlius, Pam Hammond and Bob Lovell from Port Allegany, PA, Stacy and Al McDonald from Walton, and, of course, Ed Sidote.

I also need to thank a couple others because, without their support and expertise, I would never have

Ed Sidote



*Kathy Woznek (left) and Debbie Hammond (right)*

finished this hike. Dr. Bruce Fink, Coudersport, PA, Dr. Kathleen Kerr and the physical therapy department at the Olean medical group and, of course, Kathy. To think that seven months ago I was down and not able to walk. After six months of physical therapy three days a week I was well on my way to finishing the hike till 34 days prior to our June 25th hike. Kathy came home to find me not able to move, roll over, sit up or walk. After ten minutes of moving me and getting me to my feet, taking baby steps, I was walking again the next day. After icing my back all night I was almost back to normal. Who would have guessed that 34 days later I'd be on the trail with a 35 lb pack on my back wearing a back brace finishing the trail? I feel great and I did it.

I think I speak for Kathy, as well, that we are happy, proud and sad all in one that the hike is over, leaving us wondering what's next. I kept a daily journal and photographs along the way. We saved the worst part of the trail for last and didn't even know it. The mountains are steep in the Catskills. We would recommend hiking the FLT either by day hiking or backpacking.

At Christmas time we sent all our trail angels an angel to hang on their Christmas tree as a thank you. We have heard back from a few, and they really appreciated getting the angel.

Happy trails to you.

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### Hunting Season

On the FLT (in the DEC's "southern zone") the 2005 deer hunting dates are:

Archery: 10/15 to 11/18

Shotgun: 11/19 (Saturday!) to 12/11

Black powder: 12/12 - 12/20

Bear times fall somewhere within these dates.

What is critical is that the beginning of guns is SATURDAY the 19th, no longer the following Monday, another weekend lost for us'ns, alas.

There are many spots on the trail that are closed for some or all of the legal hunting seasons, so checking beforehand when you want to hike any time from October 15th through late December, or during the month of May, is the only way to ensure that you won't irritate a permitting landowner. Sections of the trail closed during hunting season are generally noted on the FLT maps, but permissions change so make sure you have an up-to-date map. The very latest information can be found listed under "Trail Conditions" on the FLTC website.

### Finger Lakes Hiking Elderhostel – 2006

**H**aving just finished our first "Hiking the Finger Lakes Trails" Elderhostel, we now turn our thoughts to the next one! This is scheduled for the week of May 21, 2006, at Watson Homestead near Corning. We'll be featuring longer hikes this time, probably concentrating on the Hammondsport and Ithaca areas. For last month's session, we had hikers from as far away as California... and ideal weather! Elderhostel is a world-wide series of non-credit educational and enrichment experiences for those at least 55 years of age, or accompanying someone of that age. You can get more information from me, through [www.watsonhomestead.com](http://www.watsonhomestead.com), or via [www.elderhostel.org](http://www.elderhostel.org).

Kirk House, [jasperj14810@yahoo.com](mailto:jasperj14810@yahoo.com)  
6/7/05

*This was an email sent to the fingerlakestrail e-group by Kirk House. Reprinted with his permission.*

### Annual Erv Markert Fall Hike

Saturday, Oct. 8, 2005, 9 a.m.

Pharsalia Wildlife Management Area

Hike Leader: Claire Ders, 315/653-7776

This year's annual Erv Markert Hike will be in the lovely Pharsalia Wildlife Management Area, Jackson Pond, and Grouse Gorge section of M-23, Chenango County. The time should be right for wonderful fall colors. We will hike 9.5 miles from Johnson Street to the intersection of Stewart Road and Hoag-Childes Road. The area is relatively flat, but has a few ups and downs going through Grouse Gorge. This section also features a micro-burst (tornado) blowdown area that was rejuvenated a few years ago.

Meet at the intersection of Stewart Road and Hoag-Childes Road at 9:00 and carpool to Johnson Street. Bring lunch and water. You will find Stewart Road by going east on County Route 10 through East Pharsalia, with Stewart Road being the first left off Route. 10.

## President's Message...

(Continued from inside the front cover)

weeds on the lanes. There were no tree tops or slash piles in the way. And I'll bet every complainer lives in a wood-frame house. Yeesh.

So we should educate ourselves before we complain (and I was lucky to have as mentor a state forester who grabbed my brain years ago before my mouth blatted too much ignorance): the FLTC is indeed grateful for large tracts under one ownership, because that reduces our landowner negotiation worries. And large tracts even in counties like Allegany and Steuben still cost significant money, so extracting forest products is a logical way to afford ownership. In other words, dear hikers, think before you whine. And, yes, loggers and owners do read registers. And, yes, often large tracts are sold off into dozens of building lots (especially at the eastern end of our trail), which means we have to deal with twenty landowners instead of one. So hold your opinions until you're sure what you're dealing with. Perhaps a communication with the FLTC would be better first, eh? Of course, we cannot reach all those hikers who are not members, but still feel free to air their opinions in trailside registers.

Another example: recently in the center of the state a hiker hollered at an ATV user on private land. The hiker did not ask first if this was a permitted usage on that private land, and it turns out that the driver was the grandson of the permitting landowner. A lot of apologies were required to make up THAT social gaffe, and it's not the first time, alas, that righteous indignation on the part of ignorant hikers has annoyed the bejesus out of permitting landowners. Some years ago a hiker hollered at the landowner himself for hunting on his own land, while another threatened a woman riding horseback on her own property.

Please. Check your mouth until your brain is fully filled in. Thank you. There are only so many social repairs we can make on your behalf.

Back to the woods. □

Irene Szabo, President of the Board  
6939 Creek Rd, Mt Morris NY 14510  
585/658-4321 (fax 4438)  
[treeweenie@aol.com](mailto:treeweenie@aol.com)

## Memorial Gifts January through July 2005

### In memory of Harry Clar from:

Aaron & Ellen Altman  
Marilyn & Lou Baskin  
Howard & Dorothy Beye  
Canadace C. Kramer  
Jon C. Kreckman  
Ray & Barb Kuntz, Jr.  
Dr. Lee D. & Mrs. Arlene B. Pollan  
Cathy & Lou Schneider  
Joseph & Marilyn Smith  
Susan B. Soper  
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### In memory of John D. Conklin, Sr. from:

Jeffrey G. & Betty Lou Constable  
Edward J. Sidote  
Smith C. Sliter

### In memory of Ruth Dunckel from:

Edward J. Sidote

### In memory of Fran Lauman from:

Jennifer Wilson

### In memory of JoAnn Linsley from:

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### In memory of Anthony Moribito from:

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### In memory of Loretta Nicholson from:

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### In memory of Mary Years from:

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Walter H. Burgess, Jr.  
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Glenn Leary & Fred DeRossett  
Susan A. Maslyn & Joan Boyd  
Karen M. Miller  
Mona J. Rynearson  
Christopher J. Shaw  
Edward J. Sidote  
Barbara W. Wells

## Answer to the Summer "Name that Map!" quiz

The correct "responders" were:

1. Bob Muller, who was trail sponsor for that section for 8-9 years in the 1990s. He remembers the sign well and painted the blaze on the tree.
2. Irene Szabo
3. Steve Catherman, the current trail sponsor for that section
4. Lee Douglas



Map M-12

***Welcome!***

**New and Returning Members - May through July  
2005:**

John F. Brand, Jr.	Rochester
James Carranti	Marcellus
Andor Steven Czompo	Webster
Mary Ann & Joe Delpriore	Buffalo
Cynthia S. Dunham	Arkport
Richard H. Elliott	Endwell
FLT-Bullthistle Hikers	Norwich
Sven E. Hammar	Tonawanda
Donald Harris	Delhi
Joellen & Glen Hoffman	Hudson, OH
Marty Howden	Oxford
Charles Krebs	Belmont
Sam Law	Ithaca
George Leedom	Massena
Joseph Markham, MD	Manlius
Donald K. McCabe	Basking Ridge, NJ
Merry McCall	Sodus
Angele McQuade	Ithaca
Patricia Millard	Waverly
Hugh Mitchell	Rochester
Margaret O'Keefe	Rochester
Michael Ofsowitz	Pittsford
Angelo M. Ortiz, Jr.	Unadilla
Buddy Owens	Norwich
George L. Parker	Rochester
Lois A. Petote	Elba
Gerald M. Poshkus	Canandaigua
Anne & Kent Salisbury	Branchport
Larry Telle	Rochester
Susan Timian	Naples
Barbara Van Kerkhove	Rochester
Elizabeth Vassileva	Liverpool
Lynn K. Watnik	Pittsford
Faye A. Williams	Morris
Andrew Zepp	Ithaca







A gift to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference helps to protect and preserve the Trail forever. Gifts may take several forms, such as MEMORIALS, HONORARIUMS, and PLANNED GIVING. Information about how gifts may be designated and/or for a brochure explaining the Planned Gift options may be obtained confidentially by contacting

FLTC, Inc.,  
 6111 Visitor Center Road Mt. Morris,  
 New York 14510  
 (585-658-9320), or  
 e-mail address  
[information@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:information@fingerlakestrail.org)






## FLT Regional Club List

These are the clubs who maintain segments of the trail and conduct regular hikes. To reach one of them to volunteer for trail work or to enjoy a walk in your neighborhood, look at these websites.

Affiliate Clubs	Website	Area
ADK Finger Lakes Chapter	<a href="http://web.empacc.net/~scottez/">http://web.empacc.net/~scottez/</a>	Ithaca Area
ADK Genesee Valley Chapter	<a href="http://www.gvc-adk.org/">http://www.gvc-adk.org/</a>	Rochester Area
ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter	<a href="http://www.midhudsonadk.org/">http://www.midhudsonadk.org/</a>	Eastern NY
ADK Niagara Frontier Chapter	<a href="http://www.adk.org/chapters/niagra.aspx">http://www.adk.org/chapters/niagra.aspx</a>	Buffalo Area
ADK Onondaga Chapter	<a href="http://www.adk-on.org/">http://www.adk-on.org/</a>	Syracuse Area
Cayuga Trails Club	<a href="http://www.lightlink.com/ctc/">http://www.lightlink.com/ctc/</a>	Ithaca Area
FLT-Bullthistle Hikers	Contact: Ed Sidote, 607/334-3872, <a href="mailto:ejsidote@cnyconnect.net">ejsidote@cnyconnect.net</a>	Chenango County
Foothills Trail Club	<a href="http://www.foothillstrailclub.org/">http://www.foothillstrailclub.org/</a>	Buffalo Area
Genesee Valley Hiking Club	<a href="http://www.fingerlakestrail.org/gvhc.htm">http://www.fingerlakestrail.org/gvhc.htm</a>	Rochester Area
Triple Cities Hiking Club	<a href="http://www.tier.net/~tchc/">http://www.tier.net/~tchc/</a>	Binghamton Area

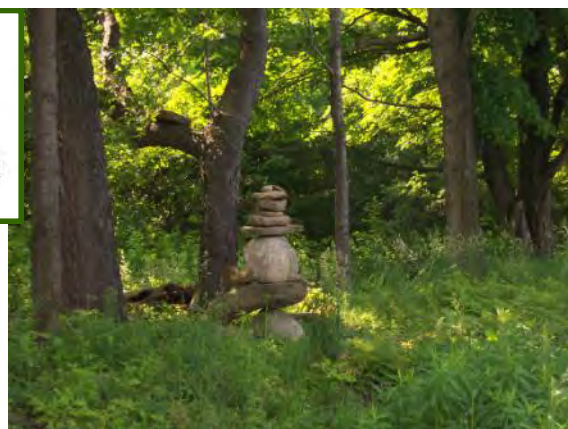


[namethatmap@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:namethatmap@fingerlakestrail.org)

So, you hiked the FLT or parts of it. Let's see how observant you were! Name that map.

*Photo by Jacqui Wensich*

Can you place this scene along the trail? Send your guess to Jacqui Wensich at [namethatmap@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:namethatmap@fingerlakestrail.org). The answer will appear in the next issue of the News along with the names of those who sent in correct answers. The answer to the Summer quiz can be found on page 30.



## FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE

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**Jacqui Wensich** • 425 East St, Pittsford, NY 14534 •  
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## Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc. Calendar of Events

- October.....Trail Maintainer Meetings. Contact: Howard  
Beye 585/288-7191 or fltc@frontiernet.net  
Area 2 October 1 Mt. Morris, FLTC Office  
Area 4 October 8 Cortland, NYS DEC Office  
Area 6 October 22 Delhi, Delhi College
- October 8.....Erv Markert Hike, Pharsalia Area, Chenango  
County. Claire Ders, 315/653-7776. See  
page 29.
- October 14-16 .....FLT Fall Campout hosted by Foothills Trail Club  
at Camp Turner, Allegany State Park.
- Oct 15-Dec 20 .....**Big game hunting season** along the FLT. See  
page 29. Hikers, be sure you know the latest  
hunting season trail closures. Also, please take  
appropriate safety precautions.
- November 4 .....Deadline for submitting material for winter issue  
of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*. See box on  
page 1 for instructions.
- November 5 .....Club Leader Summit
- November 19 .....FLTC Board Meeting. Geneva Chamber of  
Commerce
- May 5-7, 2006 .....**Annual Meeting of the Finger Lakes Trail  
Conference** hosted by the FLT-Bullthistle Hikers  
in Norwich, Chenango County. Mark your  
calendar now.

### JOIN THE FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference and  
mail to 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14510 along with this  
application.

Annual dues (Membership year runs from April 1 to March 1. Dues paid  
after December 31 will be applied to the next membership year.)

Individual.....\$25 Contributing: receives enamel pin

Family .....\$30 designating contributing level

Student (full-time; give Pathfinder (emerald) \$45  
permanent address).....\$15 Trailblazer (ruby) \$75

Youth organization .....\$15 Guide (diamond) \$100

Adult organization .....\$35 Life (individual) \$350 (family) \$500

Business/Commercial ( includes a listing on the FLTC website) \$75



## Special Places on the Finger Lakes Trail

### Huckleberry Bog

by Margaret and Ken Reek

This issue's special place is a family-friendly, beautiful, educational and serene place: Huckleberry Bog on the Bristol Hills Branch (map B-3). We went during the first week of June when the pink lady slippers were in bloom, along with myriad other wildflowers. What makes this area really special is the nature trail with its accompanying guidebook that you can pick up and return at two places on the trail. The region we describe is also home to the most elegant lean-to we've ever encountered!

Our hike is a 4.5-mile loop that starts a few miles south and east of Prattsburg at the grass parking area on Bean Station Road marked with a small wooden sign labeled "FLT parking" at Access Point 16 on map B-3. Cross the road and head east a short distance until you see the trail leave the road going south. Almost all of the 600-foot elevation gain of the hike comes in the first three quarters of a mile after leaving the road; fortunately there are interesting places for you to explore on the way up to disguise your rest stops. The trail is well marked with the orange blazes typical of branch trails, and travels through a mixed forest so there was plenty of shade in this hot summer. The trail is in good condition although we found some of the first tenth of a mile a little squishy underfoot, even though it had been dry for quite a while.

The first artifact you'll come to is a small enclosed cemetery with headstones from the 1820's to the late 1880's. Continuing up the hill at about .3 mile from the start you will come to the very classy Evangeline Shelter. This is on private land, and the land owners ask that you let them know you are staying there (there is a register with instructions just after you get on the trail at Bean Station Road). We've never seen a lean-to with a loft, covered fire pit, and furniture! Please be sure to give it and the owners the respect it deserves, which includes abiding by the rule of no alcoholic beverages.

After your visit to the Evangeline Shelter, continue up the hill for about .4 miles to a large kiosk describing the nature trail. Inside you will find a map, some history of the area, and copies of the trail guidebook that explains what you will see at the dozens of markers along the trail and what many of the wildflowers look like. You are welcome to borrow the guide for the duration of your walk, but must return it either to this kiosk or at another kiosk on the trail. The guide contains the following warning: "Removing this guide from the forest



*Pinkster azalea*

will result in visitations from howling banshees, Amway solicitors, IRS auditors, swarms of bloodsucking black flies, severe rashes and warts. Don't say we didn't warn you!" We thought it should be modernized to include computer viruses and 1000 spam emails a day for Viagra! The nature trail and guide are the work of Stephanie Spittal, Irene Szabo, Bob Muller, Rob Hughes (also the author of the warning, Irene says) and the Wayland-Cohocton School District.

The nature trail is very easy to follow, and in addition to the orange blazes it has large round white disks with black numbers to

mark features of interest. You'll find artifacts from old farmsteads from a hundred years ago, a bog overlook, the "hugging trees", and other trees, plants, and objects described in the guide. During our visit on the nature trail we saw the following wildflowers (not all were in bloom): wild geraniums, arum lilies, dame's rocket, false solomon seal, jack-in-the-pulpit, jewelweed, mustard, pink lady slippers, pinkster azalea, star flowers, starry false solomon seal, trillium, violets, wild roses, wild strawberries, and lots of others we couldn't identify. The guidebook mentioned several spots for the lady slippers, but we found them at signpost 40. We saw (and smelled) the azaleas between signs 15 and 16; if you are unfamiliar with these, they are a native species with beautiful pink flowers on a 6-foot-tall shrub and a fragrance to make a lilac jealous. We never heard any human-made noises while on the trail, even though it was a lovely Sunday in June. Don't forget to drop your guidebook off at the kiosk before you leave.

Eventually your orange-blazed trail will meet a blue-blazed trail that heads west. Follow the blue blazes for about a mile, which will swing you north, then back east to end at the orange trail you came in on. Turn left and head back down the hill to your car.

This hike would be suitable for a snowshoe in winter. The nature trail would make a nice cross-country ski trail, but you would want to come in from a different access point to avoid the large hill.



*Squaw root*

Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.  
6111 Visitor Center Road  
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