

Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

Winter 2005



www.fingerlakestrail.org

The "forever" part:
easement news ~ page 4

Java Joe honored for
trail stewardship ~ page 9

North Country Trail Sampler:
Petoskey, Michigan ~ page 14

President's Message

Tompkins County Planning Department leads by example

The FLTC and members of local Cayuga Trails Club were invited by Tompkins County Planning to a September meeting in Ithaca to discuss what areas of our trail route were in need of protection. As the planning process unfolds, they are trying to garner input from many kinds of local land-use advocates to map where sensitive natural areas should be the focus of any potential future county efforts at protection or special status.

We regard this effort by the county to learn the protection needs of our trail, and which portions are especially vulnerable to loss of permission, as a pioneering project. While every one of the twenty-some counties our trail crosses is also in the midst of land management planning, Tompkins is the first one which has sought to include input from trail advocates.

We applaud their first steps, and hope their vision will start a trend wherein other counties will recognize the same need. For instance, echoing the example of Steuben County's original highway signs that mark FLT crossings so helpfully, both Schuyler and Cortland Counties now are following suit with signs of their own, so let us hope that other counties will see fit to include this grand recreational resource in their landscape planning.

And we thought we had troubles department

During attempts in late October to obtain updated trail condition information for a wee little Thanksgiving vacation I was planning, one which would combine trail and rail passions happily, I was talking to the single trail employee of Somerset County, Pennsylvania, just north of western Maryland and home to a long leg of the Great Allegheny Passage, a 150-mile bike trail along the route of the old Western Maryland Railroad that connects Pittsburgh to Cumberland, Md., where travelers can then continue on the 184-mile Chesapeake & Ohio Canal towpath all the way to Washington, D.C.

Somerset County includes terrific ridges over 2000 feet, winding rivers in deep gorges, and many miles of no apparent civilization, so the old Western Maryland RR and its rival Baltimore and Ohio (now CSX and still very active along a parallel route) required amazing feats of

by Irene Szabo



Joan Young

Y2K, 1 Jan 2000 or more probably 31 Dec 1999. Irene on the North Country Trail near Antrim, Michigan, during the great adventure of sleeping out in a snow fort. Gummy in attendance.

civil engineering madness to enable trains to travel through impossible countryside from the Potomac River valley northwest over mountains to Pittsburgh. For instance, in only twenty-some miles, the rails must climb from 600 feet at Cumberland on the Potomac to famous Sand Patch, at 2258 feet the high rail spot on this segment, so it is no wonder that long tunnels and scary viaducts on tall skinny iron legs are a part of this neighborhood... and of the rail trail, too!

However, I learned from Somerset County that the 3254-foot-long Big Savage Tunnel, while re-opened for public trail use with the infusion of several million dollars, still must be closed from just before Thanksgiving until April. This is because the north wind blows through it so fiercely that constantly dripping water inside the tunnel freezes into monster

icicles, and it was this freeze/thaw cycle that kept threatening to destroy the tunnel. During Western Maryland Railroad days, crews were kept there to whack icicles so that trains could get through, but now they have built massive doors to close off the windy tunnel, thereby keeping the interior above freezing. Pretty bizarre trail problem, eh? While a continuous trip through some fine and wild miles of southwest Pennsylvania might have been my original goal, I'll confess I won't mind being "forced" to omit that long drippy tunnel with only my puny headlamp and bike light to guide me. Scary boogums, indeed! Of course, my ultimate goal is to ride my bike down into Cumberland, and take the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's 80-year-old steam train back uphill for sixteen miles' worth of mountain climbing and breathtaking horseshoe curves before I have to get back on my bike. In fact, I may even pay for the special ride right up in the cab. However, it's not a trip along the FLT, so I can't tell you just how incredibly cool it was afterwards. Ha!

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FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS

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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 4 Winter 2005

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Jim Wade (left) and Dick Lightcap, volunteers from the Adirondack Mountain Club's Onondaga Chapter, raising a bridge on the Onondaga Branch Trail south of Syracuse in preparation for placing it on a new foundation. Read about this and other trail maintenance projects in Howard Beye's Trail Topics, page 18.



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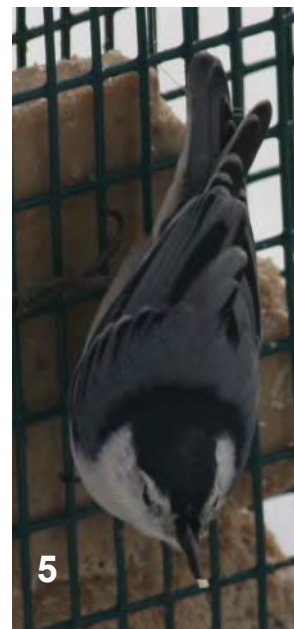
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And on the back cover...

Special Places on the Finger Lakes Trail: Allegany State Park

Cover: The Finger Lakes Trail in winter. Photo taken near the Foxfire Lean-to in Cortland County (Map M-19) by Ray Kuzia in March, 2005.



White-breasted nuthatch in characteristic posture

John A-X. Morris



From the Desk of the Executive Director

by Gene Bavis

Schuyler County Hike Series

Congratulations to all those who completed the Schuyler County Hike Series. This is the fourth year in a row that we have done such a hike series, and while I don't have the

statistics on how many people have participated in all four, I know there are many. This is the second go-round for this project. The idea originated with Ed Sidote around 1990, and a large number of people became "End-to-Enders" as a result of getting started this way. I had the privilege of attending this year's picnic on a beautiful day in October. It was obvious that a special camaraderie has developed among the participants. Several "special" awards related to some of the unique events from the hikes were made in good fun. There is no doubt in my mind that a good time was had by all. We also got to recognize Joe Dabes for *yet another* End-to-End achievement, his **sixth**! Ed Sidote was there to give him his patches. Thanks to Sigrid and Jim Connors and all of the Cayuga Trails Club volunteers who made this year's series (and last year's, too) possible. We are happy to announce that next year, we will continue the tradition in Steuben County, and that Kim and Terry Meacham have volunteered to coordinate it with able assistance from Irene Szabo. More information will be available in the spring edition of the *FLT News* and on our website. We hope **YOU** will take part next year.

Fall Campout

Thanks to all who attended our Fall Campout. Annette Brzezicki, Cheryl Peluso, Linda Parlato, and all the volunteers from the Foothills Trail Club did an excellent job of hosting it. The setting was absolutely beautiful... at the peak of the fall foliage (which never really happened where I live!), and for the most part, the weather cooperated. Camp Turner was a great facility, and the staff was very helpful. The weekend included a large variety of hikes, and I heard nothing but praise from our members about them. We had a special guest: Jennifer Tripp, Development and Communication Coordinator for the North Country Trail Association, paid us a two-day visit and brought along some beautiful NCTA 25th anniversary posters for us. I believe we set a new record for Fall Campout

attendance... 138 people registered! That says a lot for the attractiveness of the program. We look forward to an equal or larger number of attendees at our Spring Weekend to be hosted by the FLT-Bullthistle Hiking Club in Norwich on May 5-7, 2006. (Save the date!).

You should have received your annual appeal letter prior to Thanksgiving. We are thankful for your support as members and for those of you who can give a little extra to help fund our operations and keep our dues low. I'm sure that many of you have already responded generously. If you haven't done so yet, we would appreciate your consideration. Due to an oversight on my part, a few of the letters were mailed without the "pledge form" included. While the form itself is not absolutely necessary (you can just write "annual appeal" on your check), I'll be happy to email or send you the form if you'd like one.

Technology Upgrades

This year we are in the process of upgrading our technology at our service center. The biggest part of this project is our **NEW MAPS**! A plain-paper sample was mailed to you with the annual appeal letter, and I'm sure you will agree they are *much* easier to read. When we start producing them for sale next spring, they will be printed on waterproof paper using our new (soon to be ordered) color laser printer. The Maps and Guides Subcommittee of the Trail Management Committee has been working very diligently over the past few months on developing these maps. Thanks to Lynda Rummel who is chairing the committee and to Joe Dabes who is not only our new "map guy" but also made a significant financial donation to the project. I would also like to thank Brian Klotz, a District Executive in the Five Rivers Council of the Boy Scouts, for volunteering to help us evaluate, plan and implement our technology upgrades. At the same time as this was occurring, Scott Lauffer, one of our Board Members who happens to work for IBM, applied for a technology grant from his employer. Thanks to Scott's efforts, IBM has donated two new computers to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, one desktop model and one laptop. □

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

HELP WANTED: Volunteer Opportunities!

Apply to FLTC office at 585/658-9320 or 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.*

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), 607/835-6268, our marketing coordinator.

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.

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.

Position Filled!!

Technology Advisor: consultant with knowledge of computers, office machines, networks, and internet to assess and improve our efficiency at the FLTC Service Center.

--- our thanks to Brian Klotz!

Call for Nominations

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. Please send your nominations **by December 31st** to Ron Navik, VP Membership: 27 Edenfield Drive, Penfield 14526, ron.navik@att.net, and copy Gene Bavis, Executive Director: FLTC, 6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt Morris, NY 14510, gbavis@rochester.rr.com.

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

Four Generous Landowners

by Irene Szabo

Four new permanent easements have been granted by trail landowners along maps M-7, M-8, and M-9 heading east from the Genesee River toward Hornell through territory tended by the Genesee Valley Hiking Club. Ron Navik, GVHC Trail Chair, reports these four success stories, each of which was granted because he simply asked landowners who already permitted the trail through their properties if they would make the permission permanent.

Dale and Esther Howell own the other part of the trail block between South River Road and Pennycook Road (M-7), east of the Bruce Hesse property, where a wonderful easement was reported in our last issue. So now we have a complete permanent permission from road to road, a great relief when properties change hands in the future.

Every hiker who has walked the endless forested gullies and highlands between Delude Road and the village of Swain certainly appreciates those miles of permissions strung together to create our route. One longtime owner in the middle of that stretch of trail has now granted us a permanent easement, Dale Bailey of Dalton, and even though that property is bracketed by normal revocable permissions on either side, it's a first step toward protecting that long walk.

Almost every hiker will remember Robert and Kathleen Norton's place, even if they didn't meet the landowners: in the collections of homes known as Garwoods, Town of Canaseraga, shown on both maps M-8 and M-9, the east-bound route leaves a short roadwalk through the village by going down the Nortons' driveway and through a gate into their sheep pasture. There the trail splits into the white-blazed route up a rocky stream gully, or the gentler ascent up a blue-blazed farm lane to a wonderful view from the top pasture.

Observant hikers will already have a clue to the personalities of the owners if they notice the posted signs along the driveway: "Wildlife protection area. No hunting. Hiking and nature photography permitted." The Nortons are indeed happy to have the FLT on their

place, and this latest generosity guarantees our passage there.

Further east, nearing Hornell at the southeast corner of map M-9, our route parallels Webb Road to the north, crossing the face of a hillside above a small stream. One of the owners in the middle of that stretch of trail is Timothy Taft, a Boy Scout father Ron met while working with Alfred Scouts on projects described elsewhere in this issue. During a conversation about the problems Ron and many other trail volunteers face whenever a property changes hands, the topic of permanent easements came up, and Tim volunteered his own property as a candidate since he already had trail there!

These four landowners deserve gratitude and endless appreciation, for they have each made a tremendous gift to the walking public by guaranteeing forever that we, too, may enjoy their back woods and fields. □

IBM Donates Two Computers

Attentive board member Scott Lauffer, who donated our very first computer back in 2002, noticed that his employer IBM was offering technological assistance to not-for-profit groups, so Scott applied for more equipment for our office. The grant was approved, and the office has just received a new desktop and our first laptop. The former can finally replace Executive Director Gene Bavis's computer that has hosted our database, while the latter will be extremely helpful at remote locations. For instance, Secretary Jen Wilson has taken minutes at board meetings on Irene's moody and erratic laptop for two years now, so will be relieved to use this upgrade!

IBM is to be commended for their interest in employees' chosen charitable and not-for-profit organizations. We thank IBM and Scott! □

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) to sign up.

Article redacted at the request of the author



Walking Through Time in New York: #11 in a series

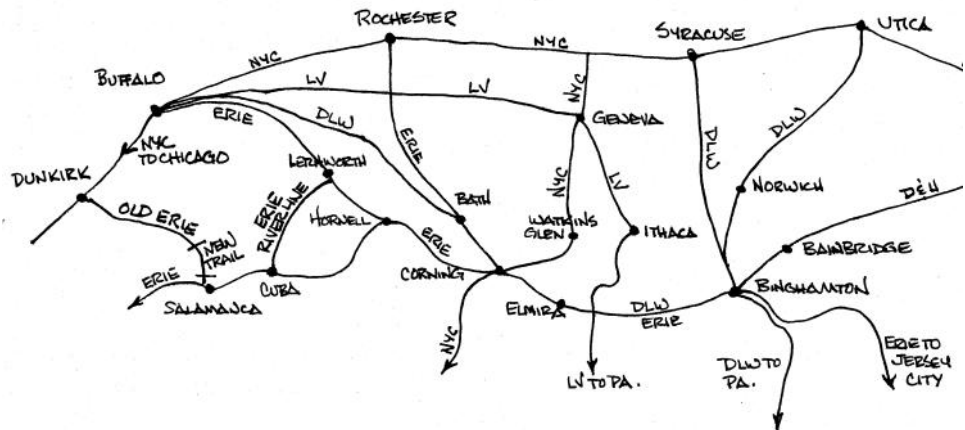
Along the Erie Railroad, Part 2

by Irene Szabo

Many of our readers of a certain age will better remember the name Erie Lackawanna than they do “Erie,” because from 1960 to 1976 two rivals, the Erie and the Delaware Lackawanna and Western (DL&W), finally tried to save themselves from their respective dooms by joining forces in a short-lived merger. While the Erie was a far larger network, reaching into the near Midwest, the Lackawanna had long been a successful line that linked Scranton’s coal fields with New York, Syracuse, and Buffalo. The two lines were such rivals in several markets that their rails ran parallel to one another, a uniquely American feature of the era of mad rail-building, duplicating services along several upstate routes.

For instance, the DL&W came north from Scranton to Binghamton, where it sent lines up several valleys to Utica, Syracuse, and west toward Corning and Bath, there paralleling the Erie. The Erie also had a side branch aiming for Rochester from Corning, so both theirs and the DL&W lines were so intertwined in Elmira, Corning, Bath and Wayland that today it is hard to identify which remnant of one of them is still active and not buried by the construction of Interstates 390 and 86, or NY 17. After their merger, duplicate lines were consolidated, so it takes research today on early 1900’s topo maps to determine which one we cross, for instance, when the trail puts us in the Cohocton River valley north of Bath on Knight Settlement Road, where there is also a rail crossing at road grade (Map M-11).

No matter that it was originally DL&W, the Knight Settlement Road crossing was last officially “Erie Lackawanna,” but now, of course, it is neither. Its current life as the B&H is fodder for a future tale.



MAJOR NY RAILROADS C. 1960

The merger suffered from the beginning from poor planning, and failed in its attempt to mix two different management styles. So business wasn’t good when Hurricane Agnes in 1972 dealt this railroad and others we’ve walked a fatal blow with three days of constant rain in the Allegheny, Chemung, Genesee, and Susquehanna River valleys. Huge portions of the main line between Owego and Hornell were washed out, causing loss of both plant and revenue in the millions. The Weary Erie could not survive its fifth bankruptcy, and by 1976 the government-created Conrail sought to run most of the rapidly crashing railroads in the Northeast.

Nonetheless, most of the major Erie routes are still with us, demonstrating their basic value to communities and commodities. While the Cohocton Valley line toward Rochester was long ago cut off at a dead end in Wayland, the main line from Hornell toward Buffalo remains active, and its most spectacular intersection with our trail is within Letchworth State Park.

The Letchworth Branch Trail departs the main east-west trail at the west end of Whiskey Bridge over the Genesee River (Map M-7/L-2) and heads north on what is also now the Genesee Valley Greenway atop

the Pennsylvania Railroad bed and canal towpath (yes, yet another future article!) In this neighborhood where so much antique transportation intersected due to topography, it's hard to separate the historic threads into different feature articles, yet now there is only one pair of intersecting NY two-lane highways, and...still...one active rail line, freight only for over fifty years now, but still busy as the Norfolk Southern. Norfolk Southern itself is the result of many mergers and acquisitions, and it split up Conrail's bones in 1999 with CSX, who runs the original main east-west line along the "northern tier" (Albany-Buffalo) that was once New York Central.

One trail mile north of Whiskey Bridge, then less than another mile north of the village of Portageville, our trail goes under the famous High Bridge that crosses Letchworth Gorge, just upstream from the spot where the Genesee River drops dramatically over high Upper Falls. Until the last of the 1960's there were Pennsylvania Railroad tracks where we walk now, where the Pennsy passed beneath the Erie Lackawanna, but the High Bridge line is of older lineage. In 1852 the first version opened, carrying level tracks 230 feet in the air across 900 feet of emptiness above a rocky river, and was built entirely of wood cut locally. Some 300 acres of pine went into its timber legs, but the material was its undoing: in 1875 it burned within hours, starting from a small fire that the watchman couldn't stop even with buckets of water posted along its length. Sparks from coal-burning steam engines could do that.



At the base of the Letchworth High Bridge, "1875", the year the iron bridge replaced the wooden burned one.

However, in 47 days it was entirely rebuilt in iron, on concrete pilings, and remains the same bridge as we stand beneath today. As trains grew heavier, the iron bridge has been updated with steel members and

repairs to the concrete, but it remains basically the same 1875 bridge! Weekend excursions to see natural and man-made wonders became all the rage, and by 1900 such larks brought thousands to the Erie station in Buffalo for day-trips to such sights as this one, Rock City below Olean, and Kinzua Bridge in nearby Pennsylvania. Passenger trains would stop on the Portage High Bridge to let people gawk, and it was just such a trip that introduced William Pryor Letchworth to this spectacular spot, which he promptly bought for himself!

While we can now walk beneath this marvel, and even take a side trail down to the nearest concrete base to give ourselves vertigo and shivers watching the might of water dropping over the falls, the Erie should endear itself to us for a few other accomplishments.

Aside from obvious transportation functions, railroads contributed immensely to the fabric of American life because they needed to STANDARDIZE some things we now take for granted. For instance, if one follows literal sun time, Albany is twenty-one minutes ahead of Buffalo. So before railroads, every town just plain *declared* what was noon, and everybody agreed, set their watches by the Presbyterian Church bells, and went about their business. This drove railroaders crazy, of course, since they wanted to publish timetables to let their customers know when they'd be where, so by the 1880's there were a staggering seventy-five systems of time in use by railroads in the United States and Canada, giving both customers and railroad people absolute hissy fits trying to figure meeting times.

The four time zones we now use across the continent were adopted by the railroads in 1884, but not by Congress until some years later. Nonetheless, railroad time pretty much organized life in many an American village or city then, so this clever convention became the practice.

Competition among railroads before anything was standardized also created a crazy system of different track gauges, too, which plagued railroads for their first fifty years. The "gauge" is the distance across the top of the rails, out to out, and whole lines were built to gauges anywhere from three feet to six feet, with five predominating in the South. The odd dimension of four feet, eight and a half inches was used by many in the Northeast, just because that was a common spacing in England where rails were first used in mines, and the British had merely lurched into that

(Continued on page 8)

Erie Railroad ...

(Continued from page 7)

convention because the ancient ruts of Roman chariots fit that space, a useful one for two-wheeled conveyances following a horse's fanny. Sometimes thus are momentous things decided.

The Erie's biggest early mistake in judgement was to build a six-foot-wide railroad when everyone else around them was going for 4' 8½". While those pesky legislators who tried to stymie the Erie's hopes of crossing New York to rival the New York Central thought this gauge might prevent the Erie from connecting to other lines (it did), it turned out that the Erie's resulting wider, higher clearances on bridges, for instance, made it very useful for carrying oversized loads during World War II. So a decision made in the 1830's, while it cost the Erie dearly in that century, repaid it somewhat over a hundred years later.



Photo taken from the east concrete pier of the Letchworth High Bridge. This is the view (well, from a higher vantage point) that people took the train to on Sunday jaunts, and that wooed Mr. Letchworth. See page 25 for a stunning photo looking up at the bridge from trail level.

However, they stubbornly held out for their six-foot gauge until 1880; many miles had three rails laid so

(Continued on page 28)

Article redacted at the request of the author

Java Joe Honored at Fall Campout

This year's Clar-Willis award for quality trail work of long and extraordinary devotion was bestowed upon Joe Dabes. Besides his six end-to-end treks of the whole Finger Lakes Trail, Joe has lovingly tended ten miles of trail in Cortland County along with his partner in stewardship, Ray Kuzia, for nearly thirty years. Not only have they been caretakers of white-blazed main trail from Babcock Hollow Road to the power line at mile 14 on map M-19, but they also created loop trails within state forest in that neighborhood. Not surprisingly, the side trails are named the Virgil Mt. Loop, the Dabes Diversion, and the Kuzia Cut-off. Some generous people aren't content with a straight passage from A to B, but like to bring hikers to additional beautiful places within the forest.

Joe is also especially proud that his trail was the first piece of FLT certified as North Country Trail back in 1985. In fact, he ensured that our route on his section will remain forever secure. The only private portion of Joe and Ray's section connects two state forests on either side of Babcock Hollow Road, so Joe bought the land, then granted the FLTC a permanent easement across the property. Now THAT's devotion!

As if all this weren't enough, we learned in the last issue that Joe has undertaken our Conference-wide mapping job, donated money to help with the



At the Fall Campout Joe "Java Joe" Dabes, left, received the Clar-Willis Distinguished Trail Volunteer Award and was presented with powerful loppers by FLTC President Irene Szabo, right. Later, thanking the FLTC for the loppers, Joe wrote, "Why, they can cut up to 2" trees!"

expenses of creating a totally new generation of maps, learned how to use ArcView himself, and still runs out to measure new pieces of trail with a GPS unit. It is probably quite significant that Ray Kuzia himself was the first person to nominate Joe for the Clar-Willis award for grand trail care. □

Schuyler County Hike Series Concludes

by Sigrid Connors



Tom Homa leads his group at the start of hike # 5.

September: Sugar Hill to Ebenezer's Crossing

Some think I've had an uncanny ability to pick sunny days for the cross-county hiking series, but this summer the odds were in my favor due to our scarce rainfall. So it is no surprise that eighty-four registrants and worker bees got to enjoy another warm and sunny day in September on the 5th hike of our Schuyler series on maps 13 and 14 of the FLT.

Our pep talk and promise of no big hills for the 9.7-mile hike was accurate this time as gradual ascents and descents were the norm throughout. Hikers left the Sugar Hill Road trailhead and progressed up to the hillcrest for

(Continued on page 29)



Eagle Scout Project (Map CT-5) by Mary Z. Domanski

The Conservation Trail has benefited from the hard work of Boy Scout Marc Bridon and members of Troop 8113, who made trail improvements and did general maintenance in the Erie County Forest on map CT-5. The scouts worked on approximately one mile of trail from Genesee Road south to the large bridge over the first main stream.

The trail along the stream edge as it approached the bridge was becoming quite eroded. Using stones gathered from the stream and dirt from various nearby places so as not to create a large hole somewhere else, the scouts rebuilt that section of trail to meet the grade of the existing trail. They also placed new and replaced old corduroy along various wet sections of trail.

A particularly large tree had fallen and was blocking the path over county-built bog bridging. After much discussion of not using chain saws, the boys tackled this tree and moved it off trail. While still in super-hero mode they also moved another fallen tree that was threatening to poke eyes out. All low-growing and encroaching shrubbery was cut back from the trail and debris was raked from the entire section of trail.

I went out to give one last inspection after Hurricane Katrina blew through, and there was no damage to report. In fact the scouts did such a great job that it looked as though the work was just finished.

The work was done by 15 people on two days. While all deserve to be congratulated on a job well done, Marc's mother Debra Bridon should have special recognition. After all, who would have been able to survive without the Popsicles and brownies she provided? □



Zac Edwards supervising trail improvement project

Eagle Scout Project (Map M-8) by Ron Navik

Alfred, NY Boy Scout Troop 19 keeps turning out Eagle Scouts with a love of the Finger Lakes Trail. Zac Edwards is the fourth Eagle Scout from the Troop to complete a major project to improve the Trail as part of the requirements for his Eagle Award. Zac's project was to make significant improvements to the crossing of one of the large, steep gullies west of the village of Swain on map M-8. It included installing and filling gabion baskets to stabilize the sides of the gully, building and installing puncheon bridges across the muddy areas and building stone steps on the steepest section.

All the members of the Troop have been active supporters of the projects, putting in many volunteer hours. They recently took the opportunity to enjoy their handiwork by doing a backpack that included traveling over all four projects, covering a large stretch of maps 8 and 9. These Scouts really appreciate the outdoor experience and have been working to help everyone else enjoy it too. □

Wildflowers along the Trail: Poppies

RW/W Taylor

To many, mention of poppies conjures up visions of a field of bright red blossoms tossing in the wind, as memorialized by World War I poet John McCrae. Or, possibly, stretches of orange-dotted hillsides sloping down to the Pacific. In colder climes the stately, long-stalked, varicolored blooms of the Iceland poppy can be seen decorating many a summer garden. However, those familiar with the flora of the eastern woodlands are likely to have a different perspective on poppies. Members of this widespread family present the hiker with attractive trailside displays through much of the year, from fragile ephemerals adorning the early spring woods to the last stubborn November blooms hanging on in sheltered corners.

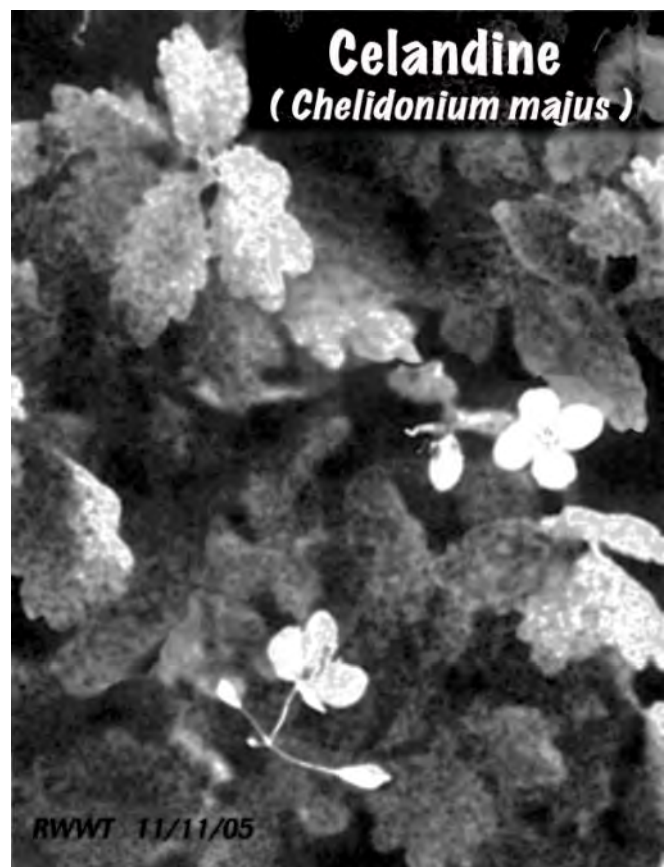
One common characteristic of all members of the poppy family is tender, easily-bruised foliage that exudes a golden juice when broken. This characteristic explains the name of the bloodroot that can be found growing in large patches in April woods. You can't dally if you wish to see this flower in bloom, since once the startlingly white flowers unfurl from their tight nests of gray-green foliage the petals drop in a matter of days if the weather is warm. Look closely—careful examination of the seemingly randomly petaled bloodroot blossom shows an interesting four-over-four structure.

Even as the blossoms of the bloodroot appear and fade, leaf-filled hollows across our region reward the careful eye with a display of members of the bleeding heart subfamily in quiet bloom. Wild bleeding heart, squirrel corn, Dutchman's breeches—each species has its own characteristically-shaped blossom, but each bears the soft, lacy, blue-green foliage that attests that these are poppies too.

These early heralds of the wildflower season move aside also as May comes along, only to be replaced by their summer-blooming relatives in the genus *Corydalis*, with their curious long-snouted flowers and similar lacy blue-green foliage. Golden corydalis (*Corydalis aurea*) can be an annoying—though attractive—garden weed, but it is a real treat to find a pink patch of pale corydalis (*Corydalis sempervirens*) flourishing atop a just-struggled-up peak in the Adirondacks!

Another member of the poppy family that doubles as a garden weed is the commonly-seen celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), also known as “greater celandine” to distinguish it from the botanically unrelated lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), an invasive member of the buttercup family. As with bloodroot, celandine's petals arrange themselves in fours, and its stems, when broken, exude an orange juice that can be irritating to the skin. It's easy enough to uproot a celandine plant from an undesirable location in one's yard, but turn around once and it will be back again, publishing its bright yellow petals to the local insect community and quickly forming its characteristic long, slender seedpods. This same persistence allows celandine to make its way quickly along summer trailsides and keeps it blooming away even as the winter cold closes in.

Wildflower guides indicate that a few more species of poppy are occasionally found in New York state (especially to the west), including the larger-blossomed celandine poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*) and the exotic prickly poppy (*Argemone mexicana*). One more reason to keep your eyes open while walking along! □



Thank you for the Erie RR article

"Walking Through Time" author Irene Szabo received the following letter from Lew Snyder, who has given permission to publish it here.

Irene (Ms Szabo?) –

I wrote you quite some time ago to thank you for the articles on the old railroads. I still have all the articles, and plan on referring to them when I do my FLT end to end hike in the next couple of years. Anyway, I am writing again to thank you for the article on the Erie Railroad. Since I live in Chautauqua County, I remember the Erie very well. I grew up listening to the trains as they traveled through Jamestown. You could hear them throughout the valley when they passed through. My wife and I have mentioned to each other that it is rather nice to hear the trains going through again.

I have also hiked the area you mention on Map 2. The day my wife and I hiked that particular section, we reminisced almost the entire time about traveling the old road to Allegany State Park. When you crossed the bridge on old Route 17, you knew you were almost there!

Anyway, thanks so much for rekindling many memories. I certainly look forward to the second part of the article.

By the way, you mention in your article that the original Erie terminus was Dunkirk, a village without a harbor. Dunkirk does have a harbor, and a rather large one, between Point Gratiot and Wright Point. There has been a light house at Point Gratiot since 1827 to help guide ships to the harbor. Here is the website [<http://dunkirkighthouse.com>], if you are interested. It is also noteworthy that one of the biggest industries in Dunkirk in the late 19th century was the Brooks Locomotive Works, which evolved from the Dunkirk shop facility of the New York & Erie RR, and in fact sold the first engine built there to the NY & E (further info here [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooks_Locomotive_Works]).

Thanks again for the article!

Lew Snyder

Irene's response:

Lew, I blush to learn that I had so dismissed Dunkirk! At your urging, I will indeed learn more. Thank you for the info and for your enthusiasm about the series.

Irene

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Trail Bucks

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by David Marsh, Finance Vice President

The Finance Committee of the FLTC plans to write a brief column titled "Trail Bucks" in each issue to address financial subjects that we feel are important for you to understand. Our financial statements, of course, are constructed strictly in accordance with accounting principles and reflect some of the value that is provided to us by our human "crown jewels", that is, members, volunteers, land owners, and employees. Member dues, donations, and contributed physical properties all stem from the committed support of these individuals. However, our financial statements do not reflect the value of volunteer labor, landowners' permissions to locate the FLT on their property, and the pure enjoyment that so many receive from using the trail system. The true value of the FLTC is far greater than any of our financial statements indicates, and I believe we all know that.

You should have received our annual appeal letter, and I hope all of you have been moved to contribute. I assure you that we must be successful in our annual appeal to continue operating this trail conference, as the appeal alone provides us with about 15% of our annual income. This year some of your contributions will be used for our very worthwhile project to provide you with the finest mapping available, and the rest will go to fund our day-to-day operations. We rely on you, our supporters, annually for nearly all of our income and we will appreciate whatever you are able to contribute.

The first audit of the FLTC financial statements performed by external auditors has been completed. Historically, our financial statements have been audited annually under the direction of an internal audit committee. We have been fortunate in the past to have dedicated people who have managed our funds and records in an accurate and responsible way. However, the FLTC has grown considerably over the years resulting in more complex operations, the need to manage larger funds (such as the recently established Endowment Fund), and the hiring of part-time staff. The Board of Managers therefore approved hiring an external audit firm to better assure themselves, the membership, and donors of the financial integrity of our books of account and activity.

The firm of Freed Maxick & Battaglia, PC, Certified Public Accountants audited the financial statements for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2005. The auditors have recommended that certain changes be made regarding segregation of duties, inventory accounting, capitalization of fixed assets, and our fiscal year all of which they believe will further assure the integrity of our financial operations. The Finance Committee of the Board of Managers is pleased with the audit results, agrees with the recommendations, and plans to implement the changes.

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Birdseye Hollow Bridge Repair

by Hannah Catherman,
Girl Scout Troop 942

On August 14th, 2005, Girl Scout Troop 942 of Hammondsport met at Birdseye Hollow Park. Our goal was to fix a bridge that was located on part of the FLT near Bradford on FLT map M-12. We chose this for our Silver Award Project. Seven Girl Scouts participated in the reconstruction of the bridge: Hannah Catherman, Jennifer Lane, Amanda Miller, Autumn Makarick, Keisha Day, Charlene Drake, and Toshia Newman. We met at Birdseye at 9:30 a.m. and the entire job took approximately seven hours to complete. Our work consisted of replacing and strengthening the two stringers under the bridge, replacing the treads on the stringers, and constructing a new handrail.

At the end of the day, the bridge was fixed and we all went home feeling very accomplished. For most of us it was a new experience and a very rewarding one at that. We would like to thank Lynda Rummel and Howard Beye of the FLTC and Gretchen Cicora of the NYS DEC for their help and guidance along the way. Many thanks also to Scott Makarick and Carl Lane for their construction knowledge and advice. We're happy we were able to make a contribution to the community while completing our Silver Award Project. We hope everyone enjoys the use of the bridge. □

Welcome!

New and Returning Members - August through October 2005:

Tom Attridge	Hamburg
David Barr & Donna Resue	Memphis
Gary & Judi Bennett	Lyons
Boy Scout Troop 372	Rochester
Mel Chapman	Hornell
Robert Collins	Snyder
Melissa & Michael Cummings	North Syracuse
Richard Dattner	New York
Connie Field & Rich Spooner	Rochester
Finger Lakes Runners Club	Ithaca
Thomas A. Hawkins	Springville
Joe Herrod	New York
Diane S. Hill	Freeville
James & Elaine Hilton	Middlesex
Gina Horowitz	Hornell
Richmond Hubbard	Colden
Donald Phillips	Phelps
David L. Robertson	Shortsville
Pete Scheid	Rochester
Mark Schneider	Lancaster
Ken Seggerman	Walton
Steve Shaum & Nancy Kleinroc	Trumansburg
Jolene Sims	Clifton, NJ
Carol Skrenes	Syracuse
Travis Thaine	Oakfield
Eugene Vivalda	Chantilly, VA

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

North Country Trail Sampler: Petoskey, Michigan

by Irene Szabo

Every time I think I know pretty well what Michigan is like, I get to plumb a new layer of my ignorance. For instance, I had thought the Upper Peninsula featured only bland young aspen trees after everything handsome had been cut over, and fairly flat countryside, but then I got out of my car and into the woods during the 2003 North Country Trail annual meeting in Marquette. Laughing Whitefish Falls was not only the spectacular highlight of one hike, but the tortured steep route required to get there really earned us some badges! Who knew? Then again, would we want everybody to think they'd really seen New York if they had traveled only the Thruway? Quite the contrary, my own backcountry acquaintance with New York is one of the cherished possessions left from my own FLT hikes.

I had thought from driving the state's highways that it would be bicycling heaven, nearly level with only gentle slopes in the Lower Peninsula, the "mitten" of Michigan. Ha on me yet again.

The northwest corner is indeed a region created by Lake Michigan, but there is much more variety here than experience of our own flat lake counties prepared me for. This year's annual meeting of the North Country Trail Association was held in Petoskey, in that upper left corner of the "mitten," in a land riddled with bodies of water and sculpted by wind. Our first hike was north of Petoskey, where we walked up and down and all around the funny humpy territory created by forestation of sandy lake dunes. Oak, blueberry, and pine had colonized the dunes but never tamed their capricious shapes, making for a lot of challenging trail building. A second hike in that region featured even sandier trails, sometimes perched on narrow ridges, where the occasional sign asked that bicyclists walk, not ride through fragile territory.

Programs and eating were centered at North Central Michigan College, where the NCT arrives on campus along trail through the college's own 200-acre Natural Area, featuring a creek crossing, a cedar-lined walk above the Bear River, and a



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: _____

long portion now forested that was once a family farm. How wonderful to have more than a mile of beautiful walking start right outside the dorm doors!

Another hike sampled part of the Jordan River Valley Pathway, a segment of the NCT south of Petoskey and well inland from the lake shore, where there were actual hills, including one high overlook across rolling forests. Of course, where a river is concerned, the trail must descend from such an overlook into the valley, and cross a few side valleys along the way where streams feed the river. Here was tall mixed forest, full of magic mushrooms after recent rains, where the trailhead was attained only by driving down winding one-lane puddle-filled roads, eek. Every visit to Michigan assaults that particular sissy in my closet, except that more often soft sand or snow is involved, too. My dogs loved all the streams, of course, and one

independent hike several of us took along the NCT aimed intentionally for an inland lake, just for the dogs' delight. Perhaps if we had camped at the clearing there, we might have heard loons at dawn. □



Don Windsor

Welcome to Chenango County by Donald A. Windsor

Hikers traveling from east to west along the FLT will now know when they are entering Chenango County, because the FLT-Bullthistle Hiking Club put up a sign that welcomes them.

On Sunday morning, October 9, 2005, we erected our sign near the eastern border of Chenango County. It is "near", not "on", because this is the closest site for which we could obtain land owner permission. Much of the FLT is on private property and depends on the continued permission of the property owners. Unfortunately, we lost a nice piece of the trail to a housing development. Nevertheless, we persist.

Hikers entering Chenango County from Delaware County and points east will now be greeted by this sign. Hikers entering Chenango County from Cortland County and points west will be greeted by a similar sign as soon as we secure landowner permission over there.

These signs proclaim our dedication of the Chenango County section of the FLT to Ed Sidote, "Mister Finger Lakes Trail", because he has been so instrumental in establishing the trail in our county, maintaining it, and promoting it. His tireless efforts and persistent inspiration enabled us to form the FLT-Bullthistle Hiking Club, which now has over a hundred members and is growing. In fact, we are hosting the Spring Outing next May 5-7 in the historic City of Norwich.

We encourage other counties to label their borders also. □

Left: FLT-Bullthistle Club members admiring the sign they just installed, which reads, "Welcome to Chenango County, Land of the Bullthistle", "This Section of the Trail Dedicated to Ed Sidote". The FLT-Bullthistle Hiking Club patch is depicted in the center. The sign was designed by Bob Wightman. From left to right are: Jeff Constable, Jane Conklin, Ed Sidote (with ceremonial bottle of non-alcoholic champagne), Anne Altshuler, Warren Johnsen, June Granz, and Betty Constable.

Classified Ads

FLT Property For Sale/Wanted

We have decided to add a new feature to the *FLT News*. Beginning with this issue, those landowners with a portion of the Finger Lakes Trail (main or branches) who would like to sell their property may submit a **FREE ad** of up to 40 words advertising the property for sale. If the property is listed by a licensed real estate agent, he or she may submit the ad on your behalf.

Our rationale for this free service is first, to thank our landowners for allowing us to cross their land, and secondly to help attract a "trail-friendly" buyer. Occasionally, new owners have asked us to leave the property. We hope that perhaps one of our members or someone who likes hiking trails might see the ad and purchase the property, and therefore allow us to continue to maintain the trail as it is. FLT members may submit a free ad seeking to purchase trail property under the same guidelines.

Ads should list the location (road, town, county), FLT map number, parcel size, asking price (or price range for "want to buy" ads), and contact information. If submitted by a real estate agent, the agent must identify himself as an agent. We reserve the right to edit or reject ads and to modify the guidelines as needed. Remember, this applies only to land that has a portion of the Finger Lakes Trail on it. Ads and/or questions may be directed to the Editor or to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference office.

Advertisement

Trail Property for Sale

For Sale. 19 acres on VanAmburg & Longwell Rds., Hammondsport, Steuben Co., Map M-12. Beautiful site. Recorded easement for FLT. David Larrimore, Licensed Real Estate Agent, Forrest Clark Realty. 607-776-9543, dlarrimore@verizon.net

FLTC Fall Campout 2005



RWW Taylor

Camp Turner is surrounded by the beautiful hills of Allegany State Park. The yellow sign marks the FLT store, where Gene Bavis and Steph Spittal set up shop to sell FLT logo wares.



Jim Connors

Snacks and conversation before dinner



Jim Connors

A frozen surprise visitor regaled the Saturday night crowd with a dramatic retelling of Jack London's "To Build a Fire." His first person account of his unsuccessful struggle to save himself from freezing to death accompanied Dan and Donna Barski's slides of their snow camping trips! Some may see this as a cautionary tale: this could happen to you if you don't heed the advice in Ed Kasperek's Friday evening presentation on "The 10 Essentials of Wilderness Travel."

The weather held out and the leaves were near "peak" as 138 hikers enjoyed the weekend, hosted by the Foothills Trail Club.

Friday evening's program "The Ten Essentials of Wilderness Travel" was humorous as well as educational.

Friends of the Ancient Forest hosted the Saturday Zoar Valley hike and all who attended were "wowed" by the old-growth forest, the giant grapevines, and the grave of an early Gowanda tavern keeper who was murdered by a posse of angry villagers at that spot. We can't forget the creek crossings—or maybe we should. *[Editor: You may wonder why Annette says that. Well, SHE slipped and sat down in several inches of water on the last re-crossing of the creek.]* There were many other hikes as well, and these also were praised by the participants.

Special guests included Daniel and Mary Tarnowski, landowners on the Conservation Trail, and Jennifer Tripp, Development and Communications Coordinator for the North Country Trail Association.

In the time-honored tradition of FLTC weekends, Gene Bavis and Irene Szabo gave out various awards including some end-to-end badges and rocker patches for 5-, 10-, 15-, etc. year members. Barb and Ron Navik received their 25-year rockers, and Joe Dabes was honored with the Clar-Willis trail maintainer award. (See page 9.)

Saturday evening's program was a dramatic retelling of a Jack London tale that made you feel like you were there experiencing all the obstacles of the snow, freezing cold and ice breaking on the pond. This awesome program put on by Dan and Donna Barski also included slides of their snow camping trips.

The meals and accommodations at Camp Turner in Allegany State Park were wonderful, and we hope to return there in the future.

— Annette Brzezicki

FLTC Fall Campout 2005



Ascending "the pyramid" for a view



Zoar Valley Hike

Photos by Jim Connors

Changing out of boots for the stream crossing.



The Zoar Valley near Gowanda is famous for its old-growth forest. Our guide Albert Brown (above), a member of Friends of the Ancient Forest, led us to magnificent, tremendously big and tall trees of many varieties: tulip, black walnut, black cherry, sycamore, white ash and more...

Bear Caves Hike



Donna Frantz

A bear?

Trail Topics

by Howard S. Beye, Chair
Trail Management Committee

Alley Cat Trail Crews

Since the last issue we have completed the August and September Alley Cat Trail Crew work weeks. Both these crews completed all the planned tasks as well as adding a few extra projects to the list.

During the week of August 22-26, working out of our base location at the Reginald Wood Memorial Scout Building in Hammondsport, the crew consisting of Lynda Rummel, Peter Nye, James Pascucci, David Marsh, Georgiana Binder, Lee Parks, Joe Dabes, Bob Emerson, and Howard Beye put in a total of 307 person hours on the FLT/NCT. They completed



significant trail improvements in Goundry Hill State Forest on map M-13 between Goundry Hill Road and Corbett Hollow Road and on Mt. Washington on map M-12.

The first project was to reduce a very steep slope on the trail from the creek going west to the top of the rise. This slope ranged from 20 to 30 percent, which is way outside the maximum sustained slope of 10 per cent, which the new switchback

trail provides. In addition to the reduced slope, the new trail was benched its entire length of 0.3 mile to a side slope of between 3 and 5 percent.

The crew also moved the trail between Goundry Hill Road and the creek to get the trail off a severely eroded steep section, which resulted in a new trail between the road and the creek to the south of the original trail route. This reroute of approximately 0.1 mile also required a switchback and sidehill benching. This major project was undertaken after crew member Jim Pascucci slipped on a small stone on the steep slope down to the creek when we were going in to work on Tuesday. Unfortunately, Jim had to leave the crew; we took him to the local hospital in Bath, and then his son came to take him home to Rochester. A specialist determined on Wednesday that he had torn 90 percent of the quadriceps tendon away from his kneecap. He had surgery the next day and has been recovering since with a series of casts for about 10 weeks and now is into physical therapy for the next three to eighteen months. Last report from Jim is that he is walking around his house without any leg support. The doctor said he is pleased with his recovery to date. We are all looking forward to Jim's full recovery and seeing him on the trail when he feels ready to venture out.

An important project was taken on by Joe Dabes to correct some trail marking and to brush out the trail on Mt. Washington on map M-12 going up from NY 54.

The September 19-23 crew at Allegany State Park accomplished a number of tasks with a crew consisting of Ron Navik, John Gray, Kathi Aldrich, Jacqui Wensich, Mark and Susan Hittle, Georgiana Binder, Billie Mae Hampton, Ray Abercrombie, Anna Cozzy, Mary Lynn Morgalis, Billie Nicholson, Gene



Photos by Jacqui Wensich

Alley Cat Crew - Allegany State Park, September 2005

Cornelius, Justin Thaine, and Richard Gastauer. This crew put in a total of 545 person hours of work on the FLT/NCT.

Work included installing hemlock siding both inside and outside on the walls of the Stoney Brook Lean-to, plus covering the rafters and purling with wire fabric because of severe porcupine damage. Gene Cornelius led a crew of four on this project throughout the week. Gene and park personnel also spent a large amount of time getting materials and construction tools and supplies to the site. Joe Dabes led a group for a day using GPS route data to flag a new route eliminating several slopes over 10 per cent on the trail near its northern end in the park. This new route, after approval by the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, will be about a mile in length, reducing the total miles in the park by a very small amount.

Other projects taken on by the crew were the installation of two new direction/mileage signs, reblazing of 5.8 miles of trail, clearing trees and brush from the trail, repairing the trail in the area west of NY 219 due to logging operations on map M-3/CT-3, and mowing of about one mile of trail.

Here are the dates of the three Alley Cat Trail Crews for 2006 (more detailed information will be available early in 2006):

June 12-16 at Camp Sam Wood near Pike on map M-6.

August 14-18 at Sugar Hill State Forest near Watkins Glen on map M-14.

September 18-22 at either Taylor Valley State Forest near Truxton on map M-21 or Allegany State Park near Salamanca on map M-1/CT-1; location depends if bridge project can be finalized for Taylor Valley State Forest.



Tony Rodriguez

Group from ADK-Onondaga repairing a bridge on the Onondaga Trail

Bridge Repaired on Onondaga Trail

The Onondaga Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club recently completed the correction of a serious erosion condition which occurred due to very high water flow in the creek to the east of Shackham Road. The repair necessitated the building of a substantial crib on one side of the stream on which to place the two beams of the bridge, which was nearly in the creek bed. With the help of come-alongs (ratchet lever hoists) and an adjacent large tree, the entire bridge was lifted into the air and a temporary support was built to hold the one end of the bridge while the permanent foundation cribbing was constructed. The temporary support was then removed and the bridge was lowered onto the new

(Continued on page 20)



Before - SEVERE porcupine damage



After - hemlock siding inside and out
Stoney Brook Lean-to

Photos by John Gray

Trail Topics ...

(Continued from page 19)

foundation cribbing.

New Lean-to on the FLT

We are pleased to announce that another lean-to is available on the FLT System, located in Darien Lakes State Park about 0.8 mile east of the Conservation Trail on a blue-blazed trail in a white-pine grove. The lean-to, which can hold 6-8 backpackers, has two picnic tables and grilles. The Finger Lakes Trail Conference just found out about the lean-to, which was completed during May of 2003! It was built as an Eagle Scout project of Justin Yaw of Troop 67, Corfu. Our appreciation and that of future backpackers go to Justin and all his helpers, who made the project possible.

Trail Sponsorship and Maintainer Opportunities

Jim DeWan, Coordinator for the Catskill-West Section, reports that he has filled two Trail Sponsor openings which were announced in the last issue of the *FLT News*.

Currently we have openings for Trail Stewards (Maintainers) for a section in Allegany State Park on map M-1/CT-1 between Access Points 4 (ASP 3) and 5 (ASP 1) that is 5.1 miles long and another between Access Points 5 (ASP 1) and 8 (Bay State Road) that is 6.4 miles long. Both of these sections can be split approximately in half. If you would like more details or to apply, please contact Richard Gastauer, Trail Chair, Foothills Trail Club at r.gastauer@verizon.net or 716/839-4644 or contact Genesee-West Trail Coordinators Ken and Margaret Reek at ken@kmrconsulting.com or 585/293-3241.

In addition we would like to find several people who would be interested in becoming Trail Stewards (Maintainers) for small sections of the 11.9-mile Interloken Trail located to the northeast 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 1960s. 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 or call 607/546-4470.

If you become a Trail Steward, please let the FLTC

Trail Operations Office know of your assignment so we update the database accordingly. You can do this by email to fltc@frontiernet.net or by calling 585/288-7191.

We also keep lists of persons interested in being notified if an opportunity to become an Individual Trail Sponsor or a Trail Steward (associated with an organized club or group) becomes available 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.

Cabin Becomes Available Near Canaseraga

Recently the Genesee Valley Hiking Club was asked by one of their landowners south of Canaseraga on map M-9 if they might like to have the use of a cabin on their farm. The owners asked Ron Navik if he wanted to take a look and decide if it was appropriate as it is located only a short distance off the trail in a wooded section of the farm. The cabin was on the property when the family bought the farm about 15 years ago, but they have not used it in the years since. They indicated it would need some inside cleanup, replacement of some broken window glass, and some other minor repairs. They also indicated their interest in helping with the cost of repairs and helping to cart away the material we did not want. Ron Navik and Howard Beye looked over the cabin on November 5th and then met with the family to accept their offer of the cabin for use by backpackers and hikers passing through on the trail.

Our initial plans are to gather a few individuals who are available on weekdays to start doing some of the initial cleaning out of the cabin. This should only take a day or two with the remainder of the work, including building an outhouse, to be done next spring.

There will be more information on the planned spring workdays in the spring (March) issue of the *FLT News*.

□

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*.

Keep Your Fingers and Toes Warm

by Michelle Dix, RN, PA-S and Guillermo Quetell, M.D., FCAS

Dr. Quetell has had experience with frostbite and cold-related injuries both as a military surgeon and in his practice as a plastic surgeon in Syracuse. He currently has an office at Community General Hospital in Syracuse and is a US Air Force Reserve Plastic Surgeon. Michelle Dix is a Physician Assistant student being supervised by Dr. Quetell.



With the winter months quickly approaching, Dr. Bob Michiel asked for an overview of cold-related injuries. He specifically mentioned frostbite, which is what we will focus on. Working in the plastic surgery business, we do a lot of skin evaluations for various types of lesions. Typically, patients will often seek emergency medical attention from their primary care physician for cold-related injuries. However, surgical consultation may be indicated for debridement (removal of dead/damaged tissue or material) of blisters or necrotic (dead) tissue. Thankfully, early surgical consultation for amputation is rarely needed.

It is interesting to note that for many years cold injuries were seen mostly in the military. Napoleon's surgeon was the first to explain the mechanism of frostbite (a freezing injury). "Tropical immersion foot" (a non-freezing tissue injury) was seen during the Korean War when soldiers were constantly exposed to warm water temperatures. Other such injuries have been reported after soldiers were exposed to freezing and non-freezing water temperatures. Usually, cold-related injuries are classified into three categories: (1) non-freezing tissue injury such as trench foot or immersion foot; (2) freezing injuries such as frostnip or frostbite; and (3) systemic or accidental hypothermia.

Important factors contributing to cold injuries are temperature, length of exposure, presence of wind chill, altitude, and wet clothing. Other predisposing factors may include but are not limited to alcohol consumption (impairs judgment and dilates blood vessels), smoking (constricts blood vessels), illicit drug abuse (impairs judgment), winter and high-altitude athletic activity, extremes of age, a previous cold injury, and use of inadequate or constrictive clothing. Underlying medical conditions such as peripheral

vascular disease, diabetes mellitus, atherosclerosis, thyroid disease, infection, or arthritis may also predispose an individual to cold injuries.

What is frostbite? Frostbite is the most severe form of localized cold injuries characterized by freezing of tissues which leads to their destruction. Cold exposure causes ice crystal formation, cellular dehydration, protein denaturing, inhibition of DNA synthesis, abnormalities of cell walls,

and damage to capillaries. The earliest manifestation is called frostnip, which can be reversed by warming the affected areas. After a frostbite injury is re-warmed, it is categorized into four different degrees of severity:

- First-degree injury: characterized by erythema (redness), edema (swelling), hard white plaques, and decreased sensation.
- Second-degree injury: characterized by erythema, edema, and blisters filled with a clear or milky fluid that form within 24 hours.
- Third-degree injury: characterized by hemorrhagic or blood-blisters which progress to black eschar over two weeks.
- Fourth-degree injury: involving full-thickness damage affecting muscles, tendons, and bones.

Roughly 90% of cold injuries affect the fingers and toes. Other areas that may be affected are the ears, nose, cheeks, and male genitalia. Frostbite has been found to be more prevalent in males between ages 30 and 49 years old.

What are some symptoms of a frostbitten body part? Initially, expect to feel coldness, firmness, itching, stinging, burning, numbness and/or clumsiness. Additionally, some signs to look for may include excessive sweating, joint pain, pallor or blue discoloration, hyperemia (really red area that blanches with pressure), skin necrosis (death), and/or gangrene.

How do you treat frostbite? Before you get to a hospital, treat any life-threatening conditions first. Follow the ABC's: maintain airway, breathing, and circulation. Next, replace wet clothes with dry soft clothes to help prevent further heat loss. Attempt to start the re-warming process of the affected area as soon as possible. Re-warming should not be done in an

area where there could be a risk of refreezing; it should be done in a warm environment. Never rub the area; wrap it in a blanket for protection and immobilization during transport. It is important to also keep the rest of the body warm with appropriate head gear and warm clothing.

At the hospital, life-threatening conditions will be addressed again, if any exist. Usually, fluid resuscitation will be initiated and core body temperatures will be assessed. Warmed, humidified oxygen and warming blankets will be given. In general, circulating warm water at 40-42°C is the technique used for re-warming for up to 40 minutes, or until capillary refill returns and tissue is supple. Intravenous narcotics such as morphine can be given for pain control. The injured body part will be covered with dry, sterile dressings, elevated to reduce swelling, and splinted when possible. Tetanus vaccination and antibiotic therapy may be considered depending on the degree and mechanism of injury. Blisters may need debriding (removing any damaged skin, blood clots, or other particles that could be a source of infection). It may take up to 3 months for frostbitten tissue to be considered viable.

What are some ways to prevent cold injuries? There are many of them. Besides avoiding the cold, you should plan for the threat of cold, windy, and wet

conditions. Check the weather forecasts. Limit your exposure time. Bring appropriate gear such as wool blankets, a change of dry clothing, and warm beverages. Follow the rule of safety in numbers. Have communication devices such as cell phones or walkie-talkies available, keeping in mind that reception may not be available in remote areas. Wear layers of clothes. Waterproof outer clothing is important. Wool, wool blends, and polypropylene are good materials; cotton should be avoided. Two layers of socks help protect the toes. The first layer should be a polypropylene material and the second layer wool. The head and sometimes face (depending on wind chill) should be covered—fleece materials are nice. Goggles will help protect the eyes from corneal freezing. Avoid exhaustion during wilderness endeavors. Maintain fluid intake and adequate nutrition. Bring high-calorie foods, even if you may not feel hungry. Don't eat cold ice or snow!

Be aware of your surroundings, your body, and your limitations. Recognize the signs and symptoms of frostnip in order to prevent frostbite. If a body part does become frostbitten, make immediate efforts to re-warm the area and follow up with medical personnel. Prevention is crucial, but early recognition and action help avoid the need for surgical intervention. □

Trails Coalition Meets to Plan the Great Eastern Trail

At a November 5th meeting in Virginia the Mid-Atlantic Foot Trails Coalition agreed to undertake creation of the northern half of the Great Eastern Trail, a several thousand mile north-south route from the Florida panhandle to Vermont, on an alignment well west of the Appalachian Trail. Primarily existing trails will be used, with linkages to be built between them. The South East Foot Trails Coalition will tend the southern half, while organizational assistance will be provided during the first few years by the American Hiking Society and the National Park Service/Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program.

Existing host trails will continue their current identity, with the overall Great Eastern Trail route overlaid.

The largest link needed will be built in southwestern Virginia, almost entirely on public land, and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club has volunteered to undertake this task. In New York, the new trail would come north from Pennsylvania's Mid-State Trail on our proposed link in the Corning area, turn east onto the main FLT/NCT, and then follow the NCT's eventual route through the Adirondacks to Crown Point at the Vermont border.

Board member Dave Marsh attended the Virginia meeting on behalf of the FLTC/NCT. □

End-to-End Update

by Edward J. Sidote
FLT End-to-End Coordinator

End-to-End Hikers

Six more hikers have completed the FLT since the fall issue:

- #193 John A-X. Morris, Dryden (2nd trip)
- #194 William Baum, Rochester
- #195 Sharon Wheat, Brockport
- #196 Deborah Patterson, Fulton
- #197 Michael Whelsky, Fulton
- #198 Joe Dabes, Dryden (6th trip)

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

- Adele Cook, Rochester
- Horst Schwinge, E. Syracuse
- Sieglinde Schwinge, E. Syracuse
- Sigrid Connors, Groton
- Carl Luger, Alfred
- Gina Mushynsky, Baldwinsville

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

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sue & Bob Bliven, Oxford | Mahlon Hurst, Penn Yan |
| Sigrid Connors, Groton | Carl Luger, Alfred |
| Adele Cook, Rochester | Phil Metzger, Norwich |
| Kathy Eisele, Syracuse | Gina Mushynsky, Baldwinsville |
| Karl Eurenus, Naples | Kathy Perry, Cortland |
| Sheila Ferrari, Rochester | Craig Thomas, Binghamton |
| Carrie French, Bath | Carol Watts, Bath |
| Kathy Foote, West Seneca | |

I am very disappointed that only ten end-to-enders completed the FLT in 2005, and of these only eight were new end-to-enders. John A-X. Morris finished his second trip, and Joe Dabes finished for a sixth time! I'm assuming that the extreme hot weather and high cost of gas were factors. Hopefully, the price of gas will decrease next year. Please offer to reimburse car spotters for their gas.

Trail Conditions

Yesterday I had my cousin download the Trail Conditions list from the FLTC website. I was amazed to discover there are 29 pages of items on this list. I urge you to download this list, which is arranged by map number, so that you will be aware of all the changes along the trail that might not be in the guidebooks or on the maps as yet.

If you are unable to download this list, contact the FLTC office. If you are backpacking and using the guidebooks you may be able to make entries at the appropriate places in the guidebook if there is room

enough, or you may be able to arrange to have pertinent pages sent to you along the way.

Spring Outing 2006

The FLT-Bullthistle Outing Committee is working diligently to finalize details for the FLTC Spring Outing on May 5, 6, and 7th, 2006 here in Norwich. A wide choice of hikes will be offered in both Chenango and Cortland counties, covering a portion of map M-22 and all of maps M-23 and M-24 plus the section of the trail in the Chenango Day Use Area on M-21 where trillium grows in abundance.

Alternate events for non-hikers will be available. A new museum for miniature die-cast (Matchbox-type) cars is opening shortly in our museum district with a total of 2000 miniature cars. As 2006 is the 100th anniversary of the Grace Brown murder at Moose Lake in the Adirondacks, a visit to her birthplace in Chenango County is planned following the dedication of the new lean-to in memory of Rufus Perkins near Church Hill Rd. Two movies have been made and three books written about the Grace Brown murder. One movie was based on Theodore Dreiser's best selling novel "An American Tragedy" (in turn based on the actual episode), and the other movie is "A Place in the Sun" with Elizabeth Taylor.

In addition, for Volksmarchers we have planned a 3k and a 6k route through our Historical Homes District and along the scenic Chenango River. A night hike is planned for Saturday night and an early morning hike to a hilltop for a spectacular view of the City of Norwich. If there are enough pre-registrants for a chain-saw course and one on blood-borne disease, we will provide these also. Our intent is to have events for members with varied interests and abilities.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you next May.

Happy Hiking!

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My Branch Trail End-to-End Hikes

by Jacqui Wensich, Branch Trail End-to-End Hiker #39



Interloken Trail: *Heidi, Jay and I had a difficult time leaving beautiful Teeter Pond on a perfect hiking day in September 2004.*

It took 32 hiking days to complete the 300 miles of Finger Lakes Branch Trails.

I started September 1, 2003 with one of my hiking partners, Heidi Bellinger (main trail end-to-end hiker #168), who had introduced the FLT to me earlier that year while completing her end-to-end along with Jay Zitter (#169).

The three of us hiked several pieces of the branch trails in the next year including the eleven-mile Interloken Trail. After I finished my main trail end-to-end quest (#178) in August 2004, I decided to complete the remaining 120 miles of the branch trails. Jay, Heidi, and I hiked the Queen Catherine Marsh Trail in October 2004, later (along with several other maintainers) adopting it as the MarshFellows.

My niece and two nephews had their first hiking experience on the challenging Onondaga Trail. As usual, my trusty dog Mina



Bristol Hills Branch: *Beaver pond on the Bristol Hills Branch about 2.7 miles south of the northern terminus in Ontario County Park. October 12, 2004.*

Queen Catherine Marsh Trail: *View from Rock Cabin Road across the Queen Catharine Marsh, October 2004.*

Branch Trail End-to-End: Wensich

(Continued from page 24)

was there too. Heidi continued to join me when she could on the Letchworth, Bristol, and Conservation Trails. Irene Szabo spotted me for several Letchworth hikes.

After making my final plans to finish the Conservation Trail, I took a short organized hike with the Foothills Trail Club and decided to join their helpful club. Richard Gastauer, trail chairman for Foothills, spotted me several times. Donna Flood spotted me and joined me for several days of hiking. Mary Domanski encouraged me along the way. Charlie Mowatt spotted me several times. As usual, Ed Sidote followed my progress with encouraging words. I completed the branch trails on August 15, 2005.



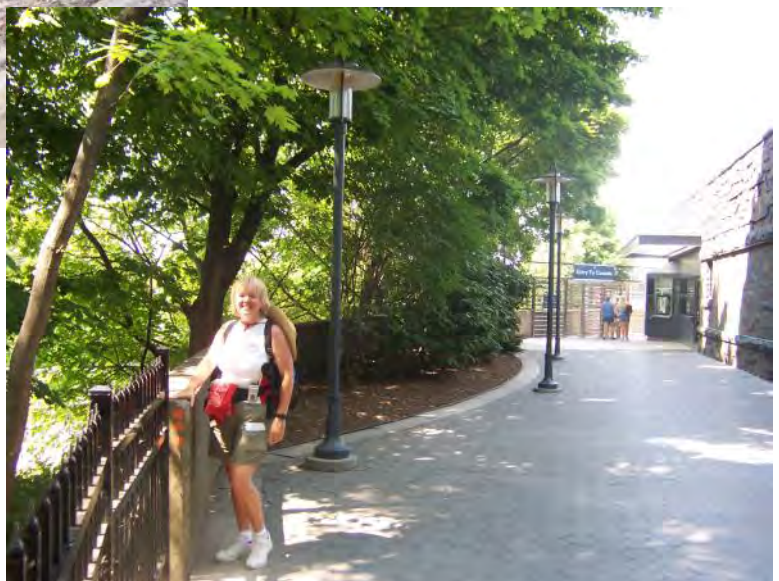
Letchworth Branch Trail: *One of the many interesting perspectives from the Letchworth Branch Trail side of the gorge. May 30, 2005.*

[For more about the Letchworth High Bridge, read Irene Szabo's "Walking Through Time #11" in this issue. Quoting Irene, "rather puke-making to think immensely heavy trains cross these stringy things."]



Onondaga Branch Trail: *Mina, Sammy (12), Cody (8) and Jet (15) were amazed to find ice in a very warm April 2005 at Tinker Falls on the Onondaga Trail.*

Conservation Trail: *Jacqui at the Rainbow Bridge, the northern terminus of the Conservation Trail.*



My hike of the Finger Lakes Trail really began 40 years ago in the Blueberry lean-to of the Calvin Coolidge State Park in Vermont. Our parents let my older brother and me stay overnight by ourselves while the family vacationed nearby—I was nine years old. We kept our milk cold in the spring, started our own campfire, and walked in the woods.

Two years later we graduated to weekend hikes with the next-younger brother in the Harriman State Park, near West Point on the Hudson River: the Long Path, the Ramapo-Dunderberg Trail, the Seven Hills Trail, and of course the mythical AT. At first my father carried the heaviest old canvas tent, but soon we simplified to sleeping under ponchos if we weren't in a lean-to—sleeping under a poncho in the rain or waking up buried under snow. Once in late fall we boiled water from a mud puddle to drink. Yes, those hikes were the best and ultimately set me on the path to the FLT.

A generation later, now in Rochester, and I found myself in front of my son and a group of Boy Scouts. Enough dodge ball and car camping, let's go hiking! With groups of 4-10 boys we began the 10-mile day hikes required for the Hiking Badge. The Bristol Hills Branch was five day hikes, the Letchworth branch two hikes; we connected up the two branches on the main FLT and over three years 18 boys earned their Hiking Badge.

The day hikes were fun, but there was no group enthusiasm for carrying overnight packs, and we were getting too far from Rochester, so I have finished the trail in solo backpacking trips over the past three years. Most often they have been three-day hikes, although one four-day hike convinced me that I could just keep going if I wanted.

Backpacking the FLT

Bill Baum (#194)



Hiking the FLT has been satisfying on so many levels. The physical challenge of every hour and day is obvious. There are the familiar aches and pains of the first two hours, but they're followed by a great period of gliding over the trail. Of course my pack has gotten lighter and lighter, and hiking poles are a great invention. And I'm back to sleeping under a poncho. I have convinced myself, after many hours of completely unscientific thought, that each day hiking will extend my life by a week.

The Goal of completing such a long trail was a major motivator. It was great to read about the End-to-Enders and dream of being one of them!

Hiking alone has also been great mentally. The peace and quiet and time to think, or not to think, is so rare. Each hike has what is now a familiar pattern: several hours of privately debriefing on work, home, house, and kids, and then I would notice the woods, the sounds, and the views (all that I was walking

through) and finally an uncontrolled mental mix of past, present, and future. I don't talk out loud to myself much, but I did have a great chat with a box turtle once!

The last selfish satisfaction has been pride in the skills and experiences of 562 miles: never canceling for bad weather, learning how to handle straight days of rain, a little cold, a lot more heat, and walking quietly enough to get close to a deer.

Hiking the Finger Lakes Trail has been beautiful, peaceful, difficult, and a joy—and one of my proudest accomplishments. I'm hooked on backpacking now and will walk the Northville-Placid Trail in 2006.

Thank you to the entire FLT community—volunteers, landowners, and car-spotters—you give a gift to every hiker. Thank You! □

Once upon a time long, long ago [1997] in a small Western NYS village [Brockport] lived a moderately-active middle-aged woman. During gatherings that fall she heard of the great adventures her friends John and Sheila Myer and Judy McNamara had over the summer. It seems they had joined a group from some organization called the Finger Lakes Trail Conference that was hiking in a far-off county called Cattaraugus. They had been bitten by the hiking bug and spoke in a strange language of “end to end”, “sag wagons”, and “car spotters” and told of gorgeous country. They enthusiastically began planning more hikes. Needing to up my workout and add challenge to my day, I signed on in the spring of 1998 thinking only of sharing an experience with friends, no “end to end” in my future.

So began a six-year tour of New York State with John and Sheila plotting the course through each summer’s county of choice. Over hill and dale we wandered, through forest and fields, and up shale trails next to lovely streams and waterfalls, always seeking the elusive “white blaze”. Occasionally we would have swollen spring creeks to walk through, or there were cows and horses looking at us curiously or birds calling out a warning to woodland creatures. There were animal tracks and scat to be observed and warnings of bears to keep us alert. (We did see an impressive paw print.) These adventures had to be done in foul or fair weather. I learned of backpacks, fanny packs, hiking boots of various styles and sizes, blisters, scratches, pedometers, compasses, rain gear and sweat bands. I learned words like “dehydration”, “hypoglycemia” and the dreaded “vapors”.

Yes, the days were long—hours of driving for hours of hiking—but the challenge and beauty were there. No hill was too high for the “Hail Marys” that became my mantra, with John calling out “I see the top,

The Princess Takes a Hike

Sharon R. Wheat (#195)

my husband act as a car spotter for the weekend hikes in the Catskills. Is there anyone on the FLT who doesn’t know the Roscoe Diner? Okay, by now I was hooked. We saw the miles add up, John and Sheila were seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, and in September 2004 they became End-to-Enders #182 and #183!



*She’s an End-to-End! 9/24/05
Sharon Wheat receives her patches from John Myer.
Photo by Sheila Myer*

I had only Cattaraugus County to complete and was sure I could join an FLT group to finish up, but, NO, in a gift of generous friendship (later to be challenged as insanity) John and Sheila said they’d see me through; they’d “do it again”. The summer of 2005 was dedicated to my finishing the Finger Lakes Trail—at times it felt like the trail was trying to finish us. We lost the trail many times as if novices, the hills were continuous and higher than expected, the county is large and it was a record hot summer. We

adapted by adding more hiking dates, shortening the mileage of each, and slowly crossed the county. It was good to have Judy join us for a day, and Doug Cunningham joined on for some miles he needed.

Throughout the years we have blessed those unsung heroes, the Car Spotters, but never more than in Cattaraugus. Gene Cornelius got us started with insights into Allegany State Park and a ride at the western end to start the summer. Then Ray Zinn became our savior by meeting us at various locations early in the morning on six occasions and taking us to the start of the hike. One morning his wife Gail came to meet the folks who needed so much help.

Suddenly the miles were down to a precious few; my turn was coming. It was like the day before my wedding or before graduation; the anticipation really amazed me. Saturday, September 24, 2005 was my

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End-to-End: Wheat ...

(Continued from page 27)

day; we hiked out of the woods and into End-to-End. Appropriately John and Sheila awarded my patch. End-to-End had not been a goal initially, but with these very special friends it became one. Because of

them, I never had to plan a hike or read the map, although I became expert at spotting blazes and more blazes, but truly I was the Princess who hiked across New York State. □

Erie RR ...

(Continued from page 8)

that other lines could travel by agreement on their tracks, but that meant their cars' wheels wouldn't fit other lines. It was a giant pain, so with lots of planning, they changed the entire system's gauge in one day with crews sent out to cover every mile, all trains cancelled. As much work as could be done beforehand had been accomplished: a new set of spikes was ready, so one rail just needed to be pried up and moved over. However, the biggest expense was changing out the wheel sets beneath every single car and locomotive in the system, which nearly bankrupted the Erie yet again. Naturally, they could have done this in 1850 for a fraction of the expense. Today all commercial American railroads are 4' 8½" (the South lost that war, too), a rather delicious irony considering that dimension's origin.

Sometimes the Erie was the smart innovator, nonetheless: they pioneered using the newly invented telegraph to send messages ahead to distant stations, so the chattering telegraph key became a fixture in every station. Multiple lines could be tapping in Morse code all at once, so operators poked tobacco tins behind the backboards of each keyset in order to change their respective resonances, and thereby distinguish which line was saying what! Information about delayed trains ahead that might block the way was still handed up to passing engineers in a note tied to a slender wooden wand, or conveyed by which colored lens of a semaphore arm was in front of the oil lamp at the top of a tall ladder pole, but even those crude communications were truly modernized by the Erie in 1951 with the adoption of radio for train-to-station, engine-to-caboose, or train-to-train communication, a great stride for safety after years of an astounding number of collisions.

In 1951 the last passenger train left Hornell for Buffalo on the Erie, ending 99 years of service to travelers who were slipping away to personal cars on

improving highways, and even to airlines. The Erie-Lackawanna merger lumbered along with freight-only trains from 1960 until '76, but the final cruel blow to an already shaky enterprise was Hurricane Agnes in June 1972. So much rain fell that the Genesee River filled the Letchworth Park gorge for a distance of fifteen miles behind the Mt. Morris Dam, which was filled to its very top. The raging muddy torrent flooded first stories in the village of Portageville and swept over the roadway on the NY 436 bridge across the river. The High Bridge held, but miles of the Erie were swept away elsewhere across the Southern Tier, a blow from which the old company never recovered. But even though the branch to Rochester was killed off, as was the River Line shortcut, it does my heart good to know that most of the old Erie still functions, carrying long freight trains several times daily. Stop, look, and listen! □



Holiday Gift Ideas

Delight your hiking friends and relatives with a gift from the FLTC store. See photos of FLT-logo products and order on-line at www.fingerlakestrail.org or call the Mt. Morris service center at 585/658-9320. The office staff will be happy to help you choose the perfect gift.

Some popular items are:

- Low-profile cap. Cotton, green with yellow embroidered FLT Logo, \$13.00 (\$11.50 Members)
- Duofold VariTEC long-sleeve t-shirt in weathered green with green FLT Logo, S-XXL \$20.00 (\$18.00 Members), XXL \$22.00 (\$20.00 Members)
- Polar Fleece Vest in forest green with embroidered FLT Logo, \$32.00 (\$28.00 Members)

Schuyler hikes ...

(Continued from page 9)

fine views of Lamoka and Waneta Lakes. The trail then descended and crossed over several marshy areas and streams before heading uphill for a crossing on Maple Lane. A 4+-mile reroute dating from 2004 turned the trail east and northeast to a height of 2080 feet near the Sugar Hill Tower. Then the trail headed downward again to cross some bog bridges and CR 21.

Unbeknownst to the hikers they almost missed their refreshments because we “saggers” were waiting at the old trail crossing from prior to the reroute. Phil Dankert and I were wondering why the hikers were taking so long when my fellow coordinator Jim Connors realized our error. We scurried over just in time for the twenty-three hikers in the medium-fast group led by Joe Dabes, but we had missed nine in the fast group led by Joe Wertyschyn. (Now you know, Joe!).

After the sag spot the trail descended on a gentle slope to Glen Creek before heading up the 1850 Road and passing Buck Settlement Cemetery. Hikers then walked the flat rocks and cool shallow water of Ebenezer’s Crossing to their very dusty cars.

The seventeen M&Ms (medium-medium group) welcomed Tom Homa back as their faithful leader who no doubt educated them about any mushrooms encountered along the trail. Gary Mallow led twenty-six in the medium slow group, and Jay Zitter brought up the rear with eight in the turtle group. Our only unfortunate note of the day involved a few encounters with many angry stinging insects. Fortunately an EpiPen and Benadryl were close at hand. Once the hikers were safely on their way home Jim, Jack VanDerzee and I then scouted out the final hike of the series.

October: Art Kopp Trail through Watkins Glen State Park

October 1 was our final hike of the cross-county Schuyler series. Eighty-eight registrants, guests and worker bees enjoyed this brief 5.6-mile hike completing the series. Buses took all and sundry from the meeting place at Watkins Glen Middle School to the start of the hike on Templar Road. Everyone headed up and east through some stately pine groves and soon found themselves peering down the very steep Glen Creek ravine. Within a mile the trail entered Watkins Glen State Park, passing the gorge’s



Sigrid Connors

Larry Newman, Ed "the legend" Sidote and Jim Connors wait while hikers arrive for Schuyler Hike #6.

south rim and Punch Bowl Lake. This section on M-14 is also certified as official North Country National Trail for good reason due to the stunning sights along the gorge. A plaque passed on the way credits both the FLTC and the NCT with contributions to the park trails. Hikers followed the trail down alongside the gorge until it emptied out on the road parallel to the south entrance. Then amidst the ubiquitous souvenir shops it was only a short jaunt through the village streets back to the cars. All hikers made it back by 1:00 p.m. and quickly found their way to the delicious picnic awaiting them at the lake.

For Jim and me, this ended two years of serving as coordinator and co-coordinator of the series through Tompkins and Schuyler County. It was yet another successful year. The cross-county series introduced many new hikers to the trail, to the Cayuga Trails Club and to the FLTC. Many learned that they had the stamina and endurance to hike up and down the hills and glens of our region. Others gained new friends and got re-acquainted with old friends. All will take home new muscles and fond memories. It truly was an honor and a privilege to be in such good company.

October 1st Picnic

The Watkins Glen Clute Memorial Pavilion was a perfect setting to celebrate the end of the 2005 Hike Across Schuyler County. One hundred three hikers, “worker bees”, friends and family enjoyed the bright sunny day and Seneca Lake breezes. Many picnic attendees enjoyed Jim Connors’ slide show of hike pictures while others shopped extensively at the FLTC store hauled over by Gene Bavis. An overflowing table of homemade desserts was the *pièce de*

(Continued on page 30)

résistance for the bountiful feast of salads, casseroles and barbequed burgers and dogs.

As our stomachs settled, Ed Sidote began the award ceremony by recognizing Joe Dabes's sixth and John Morris's second end-to-end achievements. John Andersson expressed appreciation to the many landowners who allow hikers on their private land and to Trails Chairs Gary Mallow, Lynda Rummel and Jean Gerow who cleared the way. Jim Connors thanked the Watkins Glen school bus drivers for safely busing hikers to the trailheads over the countless dusty county roads, and Jack VanDerzee thanked hike leaders Marsha Zgola, Joe "Java Joe" Dabes, Gary Mallow, Jennifer Wilson, Tom "the mushroom man" Homa, Terry Meacham, Lee Miller, Joe Wertyschyn, and Jay Zitter. Jack gave perfect attendance certificates to sweeps Susan Collier and June Granz and thanked other steadfast sweeps Nancy Bergenstock, Arnie Fisher, Don French, Lee Miller and Gina Mushynsky.

My fellow co-coordinator Jim and I presented John Andersson with a sponge to wash his car after his service as Sag Wagon Coordinator. Jack the "must have fun guy" received a can of foot power for serving as Hike Leader Coordinator and attempting to hike with every speed group on each hike. Phil Dankert also deserved the sponge for sagging on several of the hikes. Special mentions were given to our youngest hiker 11-year-old Peter Newman, our "best dressed" hikers Ray Fornarola and Jim Loomis and our most "bee buzzed" Terry Meacham who fortunately survived the invasion he encountered on the trail. Alice Carter was presented with an angel for driving the hard-earned patches from Mt. Morris to



Peter Newman helps out by flipping burgers under the watchful eyes of two more senior hikers.



Jim Connors

Many great dishes are shared at the post-hike-series picnic at Clute Memorial Park, Watkins Glen.

the picnic just in time for the ceremony. Lastly Irene Szabo and Gene Bavis were thanked for their behind-the-scenes work at the main office. Hikers presented Jim and me with a school bus ornament in good humor and appreciation for our service as the series coordinators despite an August day with no-show buses.

The finale of the afternoon was the presentation of certificates and new grape cluster patches to sixty-six hikers who completed the 49.3-mile series. And along with parting words I shared some still-timely "strained" definitions by Cayuga Trails Club charter member Paula Strain from 1962:

Remarkable views – anything looks good when you are out of breath

Minimum amount of climbing – only straight up the first mile after lunch

An easy eight miles – plus four more that sneaked in when nobody looked

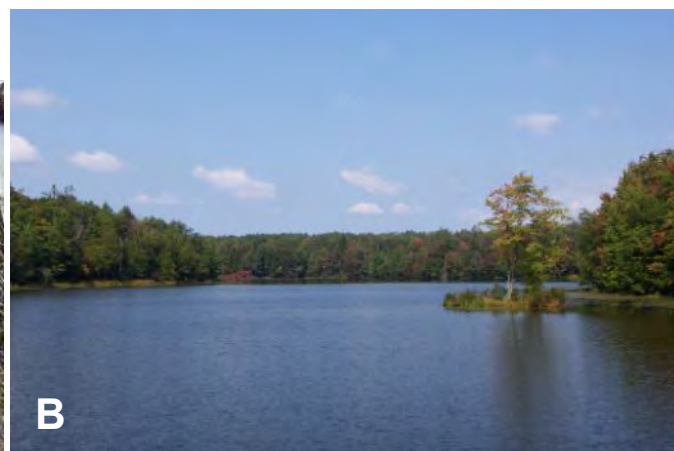
Some bushwhacking – the last people through were Daniel Boone and the local natives

A relatively easy hike – the leader hasn't been over it either

Only moderate amount of climbing – no grade over 20%

As the second year of coordinating the series concludes for me, I have many fond memories of the beauty of the trail and the beauty of the many friendships found on the trail. Jim and I were pleased to serve as the co-coordinators this year. I look forward to hiking the Steuben trails under the capable stewardship of Terry and Kim Meacham next year. □

Article redacted at the request of the author



namethatmap@fingerlakestrail.org



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



Photos by Jacqui Wensich

Can you place these scenes along the trail? Send your guesses to Jacqui Wensich at 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.

Answer to the Fall Quiz: Fall's photo showed one of many interesting stone cairns along the side of a field on M-9 (Allegany County). NO guesses were submitted. Come on, folks! Jacqui says people comment to her on the photos, but she's not getting many answers in her Name That Map mailbox.

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Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc. Calendar of Events

- January 20-22 Board/Officer/Committee Retreat, Letchworth
Conference Center
- February 3 Deadline for submitting material for spring issue
of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*. See box on
page 1 for instructions.
- February 25 FLTC Trail Management Committee Meeting,
Canandaigua
- March 11 Board of Managers meeting, Virgil
- May 5-7 **FLTC Spring Weekend/Annual Meeting** hosted
by the FLT-Bullthistle Hikers in Norwich,
Chenango County. Annual meeting and election
of the Board of Managers, May 6.
- Sep 29 - Oct 1 **FLT Fall Campout 2006**, eastern FLT, location
still TBD. Save the date.

Alley Cat Crews 2006

- June 12-16 Camp Sam Wood, near Pike
- August 14-18 Sugar Hill State Forest, near Watkins Glen
- September 18-22 Taylor Valley State Forest near Truxton
(primary), or Allegany State Park near
Salamanca (secondary)

In the interest of legally protecting those landowners who have
permitted us to build our trail across their land, the Finger Lakes
Trail System will be closed on all private lands for 24 hours on
Monday, February 6, 2006.

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

Allegany State Park: the western end of the FLT by Irene Szabo

Our fall campout within the park this year brought me back after a long absence, and afforded time for just plain enjoyment for once, with no strict Calvinist agenda for hiking from A to B. In the process, I became better acquainted than ever with this delightful and immense park, and now simply must go back for more.

The drive there on October 14th through Cattaraugus County where sugar maple reigns was a joy: even through drizzle, fog, and low clouds the riot of maple colors glowed orange and yellow and warm. The woods had taken on that new fall lustre, when suddenly one could SEE through the trees which had seemed an impenetrable green mass earlier. Yellow beech and maple leaves seemed to emit light of their own and backlit the stark dark trunks of trees for a new cherished feeling of visible depth to the surrounding forest. Even walks on familiar trails seemed new, while one walk I took, on the Black Snake Mountain Trail, was still partly remembered, probably 37 years after my first visit there. A mysterious ghostly remnant of built-up railroad embankment through the woods had stuck in my memory all this time.

How can I remember what year I first visited this park, and walked the Black Snake? Well, I can't, of course, but do recall that one scraped-off raw valley in the southwest part of the park looked like it had just been rudely bulldozed into a huge new lake, which was still filling with water. That faint recollection makes the year 1968, when Quaker Lake was being filled after its massive construction from a previous agricultural valley over the previous two years.

This largest of New York's state parks was begun in 1921, and used to feature many leased children's camps within its borders, now only a few. Many of the early camps either dammed creeks for swimming or built concrete pools, but eventually the park created three artificial lakes to replace all of the pools and offer more swimming, canoeing, fishing, and ice sports. Science and Red House Lakes were created early by damming existing creeks. Yes, big Red House Lake was once an open valley with a crossroads and family farm at its center, even if it does seem to contemporary visitors as if it has always been there. By now, as can be seen from Warren's picture, Quaker Lake, too, looks like it has always belonged, so 37 years' worth of tree re-growth have done their magic.



Quaker Lake

Warren Johnsen

Our trail takes a leisurely winding route through the park for twenty miles, connecting the North Country Trail at the Pennsylvania border with the cloverleaf at the Red House exit on Interstate 86 (old expressway 17), and then walks along an even older ghost-town remnant of two-lane NY 17 through reservation lands out to an abandoned highway bridge over the Allegheny River. On its way, the route of the FLT/NCT through the park climbs up and down a bit, of course, crosses funny linear brushy clearings that were once downhill ski slopes on the way to a lovely stretch of large old oak, white pine, and hemlock, and offers hidden log huts for overnight hikers' shelter.

Our route does not go along any of the Park's three created lakes, but every visitor deserves to stray from the trail to revel in some of the nearby treats. Besides the placid lakes, house-sized rock jumbles are featured at both Bear Caves and Thunder Rocks, and a special trail winds through acres of total tornado damage from 1990, by now showing just how fantastic young tree growth can be in fifteen years. Century-old logging roads and rail beds are now a network of trails, one batch of them famous for cross-country skiing in the northeast corner of the park, where the park entrance road offers a view westward up Salamanca's valley that is unrivalled.

Me, I deserve to go back again and again.

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Mt. Morris, NY 14510

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