

Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

Fall 2009



www.fingerlakestrail.org

Inside...

- ◆ New York's Mary Coffin and Al Larmann honored by North Country Trail Association - page 9
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President's Message

Pat Monahan

It was a summer that will be "rememberable" for me. It never really got started. Cool. Rainy. Stress. No vacation. Teenagers. Hiking in the Catskills—in the rain. (It took me 8.5 hours to hike 10 miles with the final two miles being on the road.) Need I say more? No. I needed to get away from it all. I found a place that makes all of this go away. It is in the outdoors. It is out in the woods. There is a certain quietness that comes alive if you stop, look and listen. It is a footpath across New York State that I call my home trail. It is the Finger Lakes Trail—my touchstone. I hope that it is there for me ... forever.

None of this would be possible without your help. There have been several Alley Cat crews and other work parties throughout the summer. These volunteer efforts have built new trail as well as improved existing trail. Thanks to the many volunteers for the hundreds of work hours donated to make the FLT better than ever.

Membership is slightly behind previous years. Membership dues continue to be reasonable and help the FLTC build and maintain a premier hiking trail that is open to the public. If you are reading this and not yet a member, please consider joining. If you are a member, thank you. Now here is my challenge to you. Take one of your friends out on the trail to your touchstone spot. Encourage them to enjoy the trail and consider becoming a member. If each of you asked one other person to join, we could easily surpass our 5% annual growth goal.

Finally, later this month you will receive a letter under separate cover asking you to financially assist the FLTC in its annual appeal. In addition to our membership drive in March, this is the only other time during the year that we ask you to support us financially. I recognize this has been a challenging year for many of us. I also know that the FLTC is a good investment in your community. If you are able, I hope you will give generously.

As we begin a new season, enjoy the beauty of Fall. The beauty of the canopy will soon be on the ground opening up some spectacular views before winter sets in. Plan ahead for hunting season. Find your touchstone spot.

Go take a hike.

pm



Photo by Jackson "Jet" Thomas

FLTC President Pat Monahan

Mulcahy Family Grants Trail Easement

The Robert Mulcahy family are from Rochester, but they have always enjoyed getting out to the country to their place in the woods in Danby, Tompkins County. Their six sons all grew up playing in that woods and creating many good memories. That included hiking on the Finger Lakes Trail that ran through their property. Robert Mulcahy has turned over the ownership of the property to his sons now and they unanimously agreed that granting a permanent easement for the trail to cross their property was "the right thing to do" so others will continue to be able to enjoy the outdoor experiences they grew up with. Kevin, Michael, Brian P., Robert G., Patrick J. and Gerard E., we thank you all. And we thank your parents for allowing the trail to cross your property in the first place and for raising such a fine group of community-minded sons.

Ron Navik
Vice President Trail Preservation

Join the FLTC Yahoo! groups e-mail list

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference's e-mail list is a discussion group hosted by yahoogroups.com. Its purpose is to allow the subscribers (approximately 400 people) to communicate information to each other pertaining to FLT hikes and other FLTC activities, and to also allow subscribers to post general hiking-camping-backpacking and/or FLT-related questions that can be answered by any of the other participants.

The co-moderators who will oversee the use of this electronic mailing list and offer help with questions are: Larry Blumberg (lblumberg@stny.rr.com) and Jack VanDerzee (vanderze@ithaca.edu).

To join the group, send a note to one of the co-moderators, or go to the FLTC website (fingerlakestrail.org) and follow the instructions for subscribing.



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!



Quinn Wright and Deb Elek installing steps on a steep section of the Conservation Trail.

page 22, Alley Cat Crew report

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Finger Lakes Trail Conference
Service Center
585/658-9320
FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org

Editor
Jo H. Taylor
jhtaylor@frontiernet.net

Editing Assistance
Sharon L. Galbraith
End-to-End Update
Edward J. Sidote

Trail Medicine
Bob Michiel
Wildflowers
RWW Taylor

Walking through Time
Irene Szabo, Tim Wilbur

Natural Connections
John A-X. Morris

FLT Archives
Georgianne Vyverberg

Invasive Species
Todd Bittner

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Send **address changes** to Gene Bavis, Executive Director, at the Mt. Morris address above or gbavis@rochester.rr.com.

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And on the back cover...

Favorite Trail Sections in Central New York, *a hike to Shackham Pond*

Cover: These mountain-ash berries were photographed by *Natural Connections* columnist John A-X. Morris, October 8, 2006. On the FLT, the Northern Mountain-ash, the species pictured here, is possibly found only on Balsam Mountain. Look for a reference to mountain-ash jam/relish in John's Thanksgiving-themed column in this issue. John writes, "I was out backpacking for a few days, so I'm not sure exactly where [the photo] was taken. I just wanted to shoot the berries because I knew that "someday" I'd work it into an article. I've been fond of Mountain-ashes since my Dad asked for one shortly before he passed away. I've got one growing in our yard in his memory. No berries yet, but when I get some, I'll try the jam/relish."

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference is doing "OK" despite the shaky economic times. Obviously, we wish things were a little better, but when we compare ourselves with other not-for-profits, we are better off than most. I believe that is because of two things: First, our membership and leadership are extremely dedicated to our mission: to build and maintain our trail across NYS, FOREVER. Secondly, we have managed to recruit talented leadership and workers. Our operations have become more sophisticated each year, and a VAST majority of that is being done by VOLUNTEERS!

Please be sure to read President Pat Monahan's comments about membership and our annual appeal. As of 8/24/09 we had 1252 members. Also as of that date 155 of our members whose memberships expired at the end of March have not yet renewed. We have 139 new members so far in 2009. This is a little behind last year. Our membership goal for the end of 2009 is 1372 members, SO in the next few months we hope to get 120 people to either renew their memberships or to join the FLTC. As Pat Monahan says, we hope that YOU will HELP US recruit those NEW members.

Thank you to those who volunteered to work at our display at the NYS Fair. We were there representing the hiking community. Our volunteers chat with people about hiking trails, clubs, and backpacking. We don't get huge crowds, but those who visit us are interested in knowing about hiking trails in NY. This is an important opportunity to get the word out and to partner with our friends at DEC in a public awareness effort. This year's volunteers included several people who had not worked at the Fair before.

We are on FACEBOOK! If you are a Facebook fan, please look for a group called "Finger Lakes Trail." We already have over 115 members. You can post pictures, comments, or questions there. It's just one more opportunity for people with common interests to network.



From the Desk of the Executive Director

.....
Gene Bavis

The Emerald Ash Borer has been found in Cattaraugus County! DEC officials are asking for our help. Please report any sightings of this pest by calling their hotline: 1-866-640-0652. Do NOT transport firewood. That is how these insects spread so rapidly. For more information visit the DEC website (www.dec.ny.gov and look for "firewood" in the subject index) or go to the USDA Forest Service site: www.emeraldashborer.info.

Liz and I are looking forward to the Fall Campout at Camp Turner in Allegany State Park. The Foothills Trail Club has put together an excellent program for us. We hope that you will be there, and if we have not met you before, we hope that you'll introduce yourself. Our weekend events are great gatherings. Our membership is a really interesting group of people from all walks of life. An interest in hiking and the outdoors is what brings us together. The fellowship is GREAT. If you have never attended an FLT weekend, we urge you to do so. They are held in the

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

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.

spring and fall at different locations across the state. We don't have details about the Spring 2010 weekend yet, but watch our website and also the Winter issue of the FLT News.

Last, but not least, THANK YOU to all of our dedicated volunteers and members for your support of our mission!

Happy Hiking!

Gene Bavis, Executive Director

gbavis@rochester.rr.com,

315/986-1474 (home office)

LAND FOR SALE

62 wooded acres on FLT Map M9, with access off Bishopville Rd in Almond, Allegany County, adjacent to Bully Hill State Forest. Hike the trail from your own back yard! Asking \$84,500. Contact Bryana Levitan at 585-298-2119 or nativel03@gmail.com

State Employees' Federated Appeal

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

Faces of the FLT

Sigi Schwinge

**Birthplace:**

Stuttgart, Germany, 1941, where as a teen I enjoyed hiking in a youth group from youth hostel to youth hostel.

Residence:

I now live in the Syracuse NY area with my husband Horst.

Occupation: Retired from foreign language college teaching, I have more time to travel, hike, and maintain and help build trails.

Favorite outdoor pursuits: I also kayak, cross-country ski, and snowshoe.

Other interests: Reading and needlecrafts when the weather does not cooperate. (Ask me about women4women-knitting4peace.)

How I “met” the FLT: When our sons were on their own, we became members of ADK Onondaga and began to go on scheduled hikes, then work hikes on the FLT. On one of those hikes George Z talked about an upcoming FLT Conference, and handed us an application. We went, joined the FLT and admired all those e2e’s. I could never do that, I was sure, but in 2007 I became #230.

Favorite section of the trail: Definitely not a road-walk, but there are many beautiful vistas, ponds, lakes, streams, etc. This year I organized an e2e on the Onondaga Trail for ADK-ON and surrounding chapters, and have become very fond of it, particularly “my” trail in O-2 in Highland Forest and the one on M-21.

Memorable FLT experience: 10 days before the first hike on the OT, Susan and I pre-hiked it. I did not think it necessary to go, because I know the trail, but Susan insisted, and I am glad she did. We found that a microburst had destroyed 1/4 mi. of the trail. Not being able to get a chainsaw person out, I was ready to “live” out there for 2 days with a handsaw, when Horst came to the rescue, and we were able to punch a rough trail out of the mess.

Editor’s note: Sigi is the newest member of the FLTC Board, recently appointed to fill a vacancy.

The Long Distance, Single Use Foot Trail

by Bill Coffin, FLTC Board Member

Bill Coffin presents the hiker’s viewpoint in support of trails devoted solely to travel on foot. His thoughts may assist you in speaking to others about the value of publicly supporting a single use foot trail in New York State.

Single-track trail mileage limited to hikers is the backbone of the Finger Lakes Trail, and it needs better protection from mechanical impact. Last year there was a proposal in Albany for a statewide multiple use trail system, which would be fine for broad spectrum trail riding recreation but a disappointment to hikers since it fails to recognize the value of single use hiking trails such as the FLT. The Board of Managers of the FLTC stands firm with its statewide foot trail mission.

A protected Finger Lakes Trail limited to foot traffic is of particular value to the NYS DEC, allowing it to provide the public with the opportunity to enjoy deep woods journeys on foot and escape the fast track of modern civilization. Something must be fundamentally wrong if conservation does not encompass saving a continuous track solely for the foot traveler.

Seeing nature at its very best, which is a major purpose of hiking, requires a foot trail with wilderness character. Too often the hiking experience gets lumped with other types of trail usage. It is wrong to believe that the woods should look the same to everyone and that multiple use trails are the answer. Wilderness is the experience hikers seek.

Wilderness is defined as an area that has no human habitation or cultivation, and is the most primitive of the state’s forest preserve classifications. Wilderness areas are closed to mechanization, and, while people may visit them, they must not remain. This is the principle used by the FLTC for its single track mileage in many attractive land areas that are beyond the boundaries of designated wilderness.

The heaviest and fastest trail usage determines the final shape and appearance of a multiple use trail and also dominates the experiences of others when they are on the trail. Unfortunately, on multiple use trails the hiking experience comes last.

A successful strategy used by managers of larger open space parks avoids the disadvantages that hikers experience on multiple use trails and satisfies a variety of trail users. The mechanized trails and horse paths are kept nearer the park perimeter where they still allow the open space experience. Hiking trails are then isolated deep within the interior park environment. Seasonally, snowshoers use the hiking trails and skiers use the wider and higher bike trails which are faster. In New York State the DEC is now using this principle in the Adirondacks with snowmobile trails. Some Adirondack snowmobile trails are being closed in the forest interiors and others are being opened to parallel the highways. Establishing separate trails for separate purposes in other areas of the state would provide a more satisfactory experience for all.

The FLT is a long distance, single track hiking trail, reflecting the only kind of long-distance land travel that existed in North America 500 years ago. The natives moved in single file, trading and migrating over hundreds and even thousands of miles. But after that long prehistoric period the foot trails disappeared with the arrival of European wheels and roads allowing multiple usages. Many of those extinct trails lie hidden under today’s highways.

The Finger Lakes Trail brings back a semblance of wilderness prehistory. It is a highly valuable conservation and recreation resource that merits protection as a single-use footpath. □



Notes from the FLT Archives

Erv Markert

.....

Georgianne Vyverberg

Every autumn there is a special hike in honor of a very special man. Erv Markert held the position of Trail Committee Chairman for over 20 years. That kind of dedication most likely had its effect on Howard Beye who was mentored by Mr. Markert. Recently Howard's meticulous files were brought to the Service Center and there in the back of many of the folders was Erv Markert's voluminous correspondence. It details beautifully the growth of a trail that was less than 50 miles on the ground when Erv took his place as Trail Manager. In June of 1964 along with some friends he flew more than 350 miles in a small plane piloted by Fred Hiltz scouting out routes in the eastern part of New York State.

He also served as FLT president from 1971-1973. When Wally Wood retired Erv graciously made a place for the office in his home and though he recruited help for some of the endless tasks associated with record keeping, he and his family were the folks who answered the phone when anyone needed something or had a question.

Like many of the other people I have written about in this column, Erv heard about the trail from a news article and attended those first meetings. Erv and his wife Kathy met Wally Wood on the trail of the Bristol Hills Branch one day. Wally knew a good thing when he saw it because soon afterward he knocked on the Markerts' door and proceeded to talk Erv into taking the position of Trails Manager. During those 20 years he worked tirelessly for the FLT and was the perfect public relations liaison with Appalachian Trail Conference and other groups. He served on the Board of the National

Trail Council, North Country Trail Advisory Board and was instrumental in the establishment of the New York State Trails Council.

In 1985 Erv was awarded the FLTC's Wally Wood Distinguished Service Award. At the time he was still *Finger Lakes Trail News* editor. When asked why he became interested in the FLT his reply was simple: "I have always been interested in the outdoors but hunting and fishing didn't answer all my needs. The Trail offered a chance for my family to do something together."

Erv's legacy is truly phenomenal. When he received the Wally Wood Award the main trail was 420 miles and branch trails totaled 196 miles. Most of those miles were nurtured by the intelligence and carefulness of Erv Markert. After reading so much of his correspondence with state and national legislators as well as trail workers and hikers who all looked to him with respect and affection I wish I had known this accomplished man.

If you attend the Erv Markert Memorial Hike this year, think about this remarkable man who made so much of this trail happen. □



Photo: Ralph G. Baker

Officers and members of the Board of Managers pictured after the May 21, 1966, meeting at Chanticleer Motor Lodge, Geneva. From left, first row, are Paula Strain (President), Helen McBride, Frances Jacobi and Wallace D. Wood. Next two rows: Carlton Wright, John Beverage, Charles Embree, G. Frederick Mohn, Gary Klee, Ervin Markert and Ralph G. Baker.

History of the Finger Lakes Trail 1962–2002

Part 3 of 5: The Finger Lakes Trail and North Country Trail by Tom Reimers

“A Brief History of the Finger Lakes Trail” was written by Tom Reimers in 1992 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Finger Lakes Trail System. It was updated in 2002 for the 40th anniversary. The following article with minor 2009 updates is the third of five based upon these documents.

On February 8, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson sent to Congress a message on conservation of natural beauty. In the message the president said, “The forgotten outdoorsmen of today are those who like to walk, hike, ride horseback, or bicycle. For them, we must have trails as well as highways. Nor should motor vehicles be permitted to tyrannize the more leisurely human traffic.” The president then asked the secretary of the interior and his colleagues in federal, state, and local governments to recommend to him a cooperative program “to encourage a national system of trails, building up the more than a hundred thousand miles of trails in our National Forests and Parks.”

In President Johnson’s second message to Congress on February 23, 1966, he said he would submit legislation “to foster development...of a nationwide system of trails.” The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT) was first mentioned by specific name in the summer 1966 issue of *Finger Lakes Trail News* in reference to a Senate bill to provide immediate protection for the Appalachian Trail and to create at least nine other long-distance foot trails within the continental United States. On October 2, 1968, Public Law 90-543 established the National Trails System.

Inclusion of part of the Finger Lakes Trail into the NCT became a topic for lively discussion among FLTC members and within the board of managers during the 1970s and 80s. From the beginning, the FLTC insisted that it have the right to keep the same rela-

tionships with landowners that it always had. At the FLTC board of managers meeting of June 10, 1973, President Laura McGuire established an ad hoc committee to recommend to the board a formal position regarding the NCT. At a special board meeting on October 14, 1973, the committee presented its report. After long and heated debate, the following motion was offered to the board: “That the FLTC endorse the idea of the North Country Trail and of the NCT making use of sections of the FLT; further, that insofar as is consistent with NCT participation, the FLTC maintain its present relationships with private landowners and its present arrangements for decision-making; further, however, that the FLTC make clear now to its members and its private property owners the immediate and long-range implications of the decision to join the NCT.” The motion was passed in a mail ballot of the board by a vote of 14 to 3.

Concern and discussion about landowner relations and autonomy of the FLTC continued despite the vote. Many FLTC members felt that after years of planning and building the FLT, it should not be turned over to any other persons, groups, or governments who could become managers or administrators of the trail without having contributed to its development. Debate intensified when the Green Mountain Club of Vermont went on record in 1975 as being opposed to the NCT or any other trail that would draw more hikers to its heavily used trails. Fortunately, experience has shown that none of these worries had any validity.

On January 16, 1982, the FLTC board of managers decided to join the North Country Trail Association (NCTA) as an organizational member. The NCTA is the organization of volunteers promoting development of the NCT and fostering cooperation

among the chapters, individuals, clubs, and other groups associated with the NCT. The board also appointed Bill Ehling of Syracuse, New York, as its representative on the NCTA board of directors and decided to send Mr. Ehling to the NCTA meeting in Pennsylvania in 1982. Also in 1982, Secretary of the Interior James Watt appointed FLTC Trails Chairman Ervin Markert to be one of the four private-sector members of the new NCT Advisory Council. The council consisted of 14 members, one each nominated by the governors of the seven states through which the NCT would pass, three from cooperating federal agencies, and four private-sector members. The council was to consult with the secretary of the interior on matters such as trail routes, standards for trail markers, and administration of the trail.

In 1983 the FLTC finally signed a memorandum of agreement with the National Park Service to operate, develop, and maintain those portions of the FLT that become official segments of the NCT. The first section of the FLT certified by the National Park Service is located near Virgil Mountain in Cortland County. It received certification in November 1985 and was officially dedicated in a ceremony on December 12. Certification of the FLT in Birdseye Hollow Park in Steuben County in 1992 broke the 1000-mile mark for officially certified NCT. As of December 2008, there were 277 miles of certified NCT and 249 NCTA members in New York. Former FLTC President Tom Reimers was elected president of the NCTA in 1987, 1988, and 1989. Besides Bill Ehling and Tom Reimers, FLTC members Doris Abbott, Cliff Abbott, Howard Beye, Mary Coffin, Joe Dabes, Al Larmann, Laura McGuire, Ed Sidote, Harmon

(Continued on page 7)

Treating Back Pain on the Trail

by Noah Brown, PT

Editor's note: Noah Brown is a physical therapist and a runner in Syracuse who wrote a Trail Medicine article about knee pain in 2006. He has been one of the most important health care professionals in my life over the past few years, helping to keep me on my feet and moving.

—Bob Michiel

Autumn is a wonderful time of year to be on the trail. The leaves are changing, the temperature is cooler, and the days are getting shorter and shorter. Our time to be outdoors is less and less each day, and we're anxious to enjoy the days we have left before we have to dust the snowshoes off for winter. The last thing we want to think about is a back injury that would take away from our time outdoors. Even worse, what if an injury occurs during a weekend or a long day hike? Is it possible to treat a back problem on your own? Can you provide your own trail medicine?

Pain in your back can come from bones, ligaments, muscles, nerves, or disks. Most people who experience acute (sudden) back pain have trouble with muscles and ligaments and should be able to manage their symptoms with a little knowledge of the spine and its mechanics. Tingling, burning, or pain that radiates down the leg is often caused by a "slipped" or herniated disc or from stenosis/narrowing of the bony canals that surround spinal nerves. These types of injuries can also be treated conservatively with simple positioning, stretching, and strengthening exercises. However, radiating symptoms into the leg(s) or loss of bowel or bladder control may be a sign of something more serious. Therefore, don't automatically assume it can be treated conservatively. A good rule of thumb: when in doubt, call your physician.

An understanding of basic spinal mechanics is essential in prescribing the correct type of exercises to treat



your problem. The simplest way to think about the mechanics of your back is to picture two vertebrae with a disc in between as one joint called a *motion segment*. The combination of all the *motion segments* ("joints") in your back is what is responsible for your normal spinal range of motion. An easy way to visualize the motion of the spine is to watch your wrist move. It flexes forward and backward, bends right and left, and rotates right and left just as each *motion segment* in your spine does. Normally, you should be able to move your spine through your available range of motion in each of these directions. With an injury, one or more of these motions is usually affected.

The first step in treating yourself is to think about not only the events of the recent injury, but your complete history of back problems over the years. Have you had back problems in the past? Do you perform activities at work or home that are strenuous or repetitive? Do you find that you are often in one position throughout the day either sitting or standing? Do you always sleep in certain positions at night? Do you ever engage in an exercise routine that incorporates strengthening exercises for the back and abdominals? These are all common questions that a physician or physical therapist would ask during an evaluation of your spine.

Next, try to think about any patterns you notice with your injury. What were you doing when the symptoms started? Do you find the symptoms are worse at certain times of the day? What positions or activities make the symptoms better or worse? You should be starting to develop an idea of what caused the symptoms to start or at least have a sense of what makes you better or worse. If at this point your problem is still a complete mystery, you may need to seek guidance from a physician or physical therapist.

Physical therapists will often try to group patients into one of three groups which can be helpful for prescribing the correct type of exercises. First, some individuals will respond to *extension biased* exercises. These are exercises that involve arching the back, lifting the legs to tighten the muscles in your arch, and positioning on the stomach. Individuals who have a back strain or sprain and individuals who have an acute disc herniation will often respond very favorably to an extension program. Commonly these injuries result from lifting or repeatedly bending over forward. The pain is often worse in the morning, improves slightly with walking, and worsens with sitting or bending forward. If you think you fit in this category try the following exercise: lie on your stomach on a firm surface and place your hands beside you as if preparing to do a push up; take a breath and press your upper body up while leaving your hips flat; when your arms are fully extended exhale and let your back relax and hips sag downward.

Individuals who respond to *flexion biased* or forward bending exercises often report difficulty with prolonged walking and standing, frequent sleeping on the side or in a curled or fetal position, and symptoms in the legs that come and go and are relieved by sitting. If you think you fit in this category try the following exercise: lie on your back

(Continued on page 7)

on a firm surface with both legs flat; bring one knee toward your chest by grasping the back of your thigh with both hands; take a deep breath in and gently pull your knee toward your chest while exhaling holding the stretch for ten or fifteen seconds; repeat the same stretch on the opposite leg and then with both legs. In addition, using a cane or hiking poles can help a great deal due to the increased forward bending they promote during walking. These individuals may ultimately be diagnosed with an arthritic or stenotic condition. If so, then activity modification is part of the long term solution whether it be shorter hikes, frequent breaks, or uphill walking.

Finally, some individuals respond to *neutral biased* exercises. These individuals are often younger, more active, report increased symptoms with movement in several directions, and find that movement (especially walking) makes them better while being static or still makes them worse. Often, these people are very fit but do little to no exercise specific for the spine. *Neutral biased* exercises focus largely on “core” (back and abdominal) strengthening and postural correction trying to eliminate or decrease shearing forces on the spine. If you think you fit in this category try the following exercise: lie on your back on a firm surface with your knees bent; place

your hands on your sides close to the top of your pelvis gently grasping the abdomen with your fingertips; pull your abdomen inward to flatten your spine while breathing out; feel for the abdominal contraction with your fingertips; hold for five seconds and release slowly.

In reality, most people will respond very well to a combination of extension/neutral or flexion/neutral exercises. Part of each program should focus on “core” strengthening which will help in recovering from and preventing future back injuries. Unfortunately, abdominal strengthening is often mistakenly viewed as curls, sit-ups, or crunches. However, these types of movements do not specifically target the deep spinal musculature and are potentially harmful to certain individuals. Most “core” exercises can and should be done with the spinal in a neutral position avoiding flexing, bending, or rotating the spine. Furthermore, “core” musculature can be engaged during upper or lower body exercises with positioning, use of physioballs, or incorporating other balance equipment into the exercise program. Basic “core” strengthening exercises are appropriate for individuals to attempt on their own. However, a comprehensive program for spinal strength would be best established by a physical therapist that specializes in spinal conditions.

Remember, most back problems can and should improve on their own. The layperson is very capable of treating their back injury with simple exercises and positioning. The challenge lies in determining which exercises, or combination of exercises, will work best in resolving the problem quickly to get you back on the trail. If your back injury happens during a hike hopefully you have enough confidence now to try and treat the problem proactively.

We as physical therapists encourage individuals to seek our assistance in the early stages of an injury to prevent progression into something more serious. Therefore, please don't wait if your problem is not improving quickly or if you feel it is serious. Also, if you have a history of back problems then consider utilizing the expertise of a therapist to establish a “core” or spinal strengthening program for you as a preventative tool. A recent development in the state of New York is that patients now have access to physical therapists directly without physician referral. This can significantly reduce time and monetary concerns when it comes to conservative treatment of your back problem. Therefore, be on the offensive and take charge of your injury by using the knowledge you have or by seeking help from a professional.

Good luck and good health on the trails! □



History of the FLT ...

(Continued from page 5)

Strong, and Irene Szabo have served on the NCTA board of directors.

Four NCTA national conferences have been held in New York. The first was in Ithaca in 1988. The second FLTC-sponsored NCTA conference was held in August 1995 at the Watson Homestead Conference Center, Coopers Plains, New York. Special events for that conference included evening

presentations by Steven M. Newman and Bill Irwin with his Seeing Eye® dog Orient. Steve Newman, author of *Worldwalk*, was the first person to walk around the world alone. Bill Irwin, author of *Blind Courage*, was the only blind person to have completed the 2,168-mile-long Appalachian Trail.

The most recent NCTA national conferences held in New York were at

Cazenovia College in 2001 and 2008. Both were organized and sponsored by the FLTC and co-sponsored by the Central New York NCTA chapter and the Adirondack Mountain Club-Onondaga Chapter. The FLTC's own Howard Beye was awarded the NCTA's highest honor, its Lifetime Achievement Award during the 2001 conference. □

North Country Trail Through-Hiker Receives Warm Welcome in Central New York

by Mary C. Coffin

The Onondaga Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK-ON) and the staff of Highland Forest Park near Syracuse co-sponsored a welcoming reception and lunch on August 24 for through-hiker Nimblewill Nomad. A famous FLT end-to-ender, Ed Sidote, was on hand to welcome him too.

M.J. Eberhart, aka Nimblewill Nomad, is a through end-to-end hiker on the 4600-mile North Country National Scenic Trail. Through-hikers hike a trail from one end to the other continuously as opposed to section by section with breaks in between. Nimblewill started at Lake Sakakawea, North Dakota, in March and reached Central New York in August. By Labor Day he will have reached the eastern terminus at Lake Champlain and the Vermont line.

Fourteen ADKers and FLTers were on hand to welcome him at Highland's beautiful Skyline Visitor's Center as he passed through. Highland Forest Park provided a great location as the North Country National Scenic Trail and concurrent Finger Lakes Onondaga Trail cross the park. The staff at Highland and caterer, Orchard Vali, donated a wonderful buffet lunch to the group. Highland Forest is proud to host both these prestigious foot trails and ADK Onondaga members enjoy maintaining them as FLT sponsors.

We had the opportunity to pick the brain of this through-hiker, a 70-year-old retired optometrist, to determine the enjoyment he receives from such a feat. Nimblewill has hiked nearly 20,000 miles including six original National Scenic Trails (Appalachian Trail, etc). He commented that his "grand dad and dad died in the woods" and he hoped to also. He loves the outdoors and the woods as he feels that "God is there;" it is a spiritual experience and he added, "There is no cathedral as grand as a half acre (of woods)." Being outdoors

"recharges his batteries". In this busy world we can all take a lesson here. Most of us who are hikers can relate to the feeling. In Nimblewill's opinion, if one is reasonably fit and packs light, long distance hiking is 80% mental. It is most important to take care of one's feet.

Nimblewill's friend Gordon Smith provides a support van/sag wagon to assist Nimblewill if he needs it along the way and intersects him at the end of a day hike or a backpack section to help him re-provision and coordinate maps. Gordon has provided support service for many distance hikers including his sister, Sue Lockwood.

Admittedly, Nimblewill does miss friends and family when he is on the trail for extended periods and has to make a conscious effort to phase back into a daily routine and social interactions when a trip is over. He is not a weirdo but a very warm, personable individual with a lot of character. When asked what is next on his list he said that in 2010 he plans to hike Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail and the three newly recognized National Scenic Trails (Arizona, New England, Northwest), a total of 3300 miles. He just keeps on trekkin'.



Nimblewill Nomad and Ed Sidote

For more information or to follow Nimblewill's daily journal or to send him an email message check his website: www.nimblewillnomad.com/odyssey_2009.htm. □



The group assembled to welcome Nimblewill Nomad (center).



Mick Hawkins

Left: Mary Coffin receives the Distinguished Service Award from NCTA Executive Director, Bruce Matthews.



Mary Kuntzler-Larmann

Right: New York's Al Larmann, recipient of the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award.

North Country Trail Annual Meeting In North Dakota or what you missed...

by Irene Szabo

The Sheyenne River Valley Chapter of the North Country Trail Association hosted a really good event in Valley City, North Dakota, despite the violent and widespread flooding that inundated their area this past April. Despite its distance from the eastern end of the NCT, where we hosted the same event last year in NY, eight New Yorkers attended, Dan and Ruth Dorrough, Bill and Mary Coffin, Al Larmann and Mary Kuntzler-Larmann, Dick Lightcap, and I, with my usual hiking companions Sandy and Pearl, the golden boo-betriers.

Those of you who are members of the NCTA will see in the next *North Star* issue pictures from hikes (many through open grasslands), evening programs, and the annual

auction, featuring treasures both silly and precious, topped off this year by a quilt made by the SRV host chapter that included front panels from a dozen historic NCT t-shirts. SRV had also offered several day trips designed for families, but all were cancelled for lack of registration, even though the local children's hikes were enjoyed by families from both North Dakota and Minnesota. At least they tried!

Otherwise attendance was very good, weather good enough, and flood damage mostly repaired, other than the Main Street bridge over the Sheyenne River. During the annual award presentations Saturday night, our members were well represented among those honored. Joe Dabes was nominated by Ray Kuzia for a "chapter honor"

for his years of trail care and current map work, while our editor Jo Taylor received her embroidered shirt for 400 cumulative volunteer hours from the National Park Service.

Mary Coffin was awarded the Distinguished Service Award for her longtime dedication to trail work, her leadership in the ongoing extension of the Onondaga Trail, her service on the NCTA board, and the latest contribution, her creation of the first-ever NCT guided tour.

Calling on her long experience planning trips for the Adirondack Mountain Club, Mary is offering a day-hike trip, with food, camping facilities, and transportation all planned for the participants, on the beautiful Superior Hiking Trail, which carries the North Country Trail northward from Duluth. The tour takes place in autumn 2010, a time of year when the SHT is stunningly beautiful (imagine red maple leaves against white birch trunks, along a trail which crosses frequent rocky streams on bridges,

(Continued on page 29)

Wildflowers along the Trail #27: Feeling Blue?

RWV Taylor

Think of a field of wildflowers waving in the wind, viewed from some trailside spot. Unless you just happen to have in mind a hillside covered with Texas bluebonnets (which in reality are often more purple than blue in hue, anyway), you are likely to be envisioning flowers of some color other than blue. Maybe yellow—dandelions in spring, buttercups in high summer, goldenrod in the fall. Maybe white—oxeye daisies or Queen Anne's lace filling open spaces as the seasons progress. Perhaps a prickly field of thistles in full pink bloom.

But flowers in our area that are recognizably and specifically blue in color do not seem to enjoy congregating in this way. The most visibly abundant species of blue flower to be sighted in midsummer is likely to be the common roadside chicory (more poetically known as cornflower or blue sailors) with its wiry stems and large composite flower heads. The color of this flower can be fugitive, however, escaping in some specimens through pink to near-white.

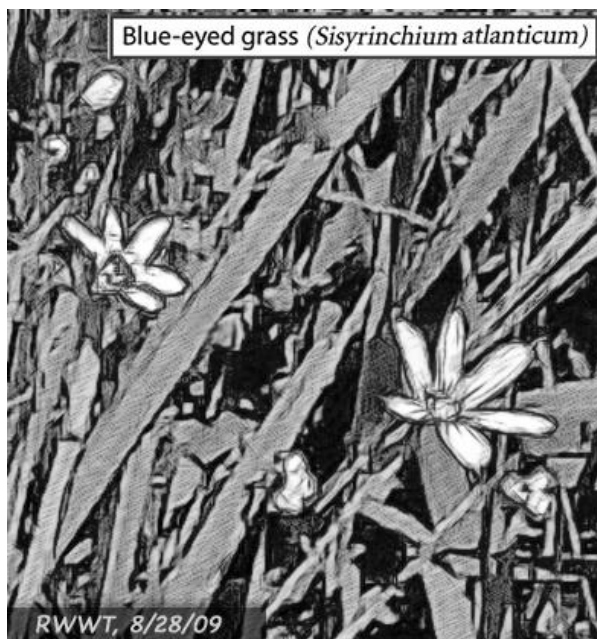
Fugitive also is the warmer sky-blue hue characteristic of flowers of the forget-me-not, frequently spotted blooming in wet ditches and along small waterways, as attractive as the shape of the small five-parted blossoms may be. The true connoisseur of deep-blue flowers in the wild needs to push into special corners, at the right time of year, to locate a wet-footed congregation of Virginia bluebells (in spring) or a scattering (in late fall) of very blue gentians in bloom.

The rest of the time it is catch-as-catch can, and look sharp, perhaps to find a small patch of deep blue dayflowers in some damp spot or some hairy specimens of viper's bugloss flourishing in a weedy roadside spot. Or bend over and take a very close look at what is growing right at your feet—the very tiny flowers of the common corn

speedwell plant are arguably the bluest flower of all, but are very rarely noticed except by those specifically looking for specimens.

A special treat occasionally encountered (usually in early summer) is a trailside sprinkling of delicate six-parted blooms of so-called blue-eyed grass. Despite the name, and though they seem to bear grass-like leaves and are likely to be found in grassy areas, these plants (in the genus *Sisyrinchium*) are not really true grasses, but belong to the lily family. The hard-to-spell genus name here is a compound formed from two Greek roots, and basically means "pig's snout," reportedly from a habit of pigs of grubbing up the apparently tasty roots of this plant.

Blue-eyed grasses are native to the New World, and species can be found across both North and South America, sometimes in colors other than blue. Those in our area, however, typically display flowers ranging from deep to light bluish purple in hue, together with a cluster of spiky grass-like leaves, and develop a round nut-like seed. Writers of wildflower guides—and botanists in



general—are not likely to agree on exactly how to divide members of this genus into species (see the article at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sisyrinchium> for more information). Such disagreement does not, however, take away from the pleasure of running across a number of small specimens of this attractive flower in the course of a summer walk across the woods and fields. □



Why "Neversink"?

The Neversink River, a beautiful gem of a stream at the far eastern end of the FLT, takes its name from an Algonquian word variously spelled as Newasink, Narrasing, Nevisinck, and Naewersink, and variously translated as "wild or mad river" or "a continual running stream" or "high land between waters."

Source: *From Abbots to Zurich, New York State Placenames*, by Ren Vasiliev.



Photos: Jacqui Wensich



The FLT table at the Mendon Ponds ADK Expo in June near Rochester drew a good crowd. Above: Volunteer Tim Wilbur answers questions about the trail.

Welcome!

New and Returning Members May '09 through July '09:

Melinda Ames	Camillus	Michael Janiak, Fitness Forum Health & Wellness Center	Fayetteville
Jean-Pierre Arnaud	Jupiter, FL	Allen Kerkeslager, Saint Joseph's University	Philadelphia, PA
Brooke Ashbridge	Syracuse	Peter Kogut	Pittsford
Andy Avery	Endicott	Steven Kuss	Tully
Deana Bahrman, RPA-C	Charlottesville, VA	Martin Loftus	Candor
Jody Benedict	Newark	Judy Luce	Geneva
Sally Bialy	Buffalo	Willard (Bill) McGeary	Honeoye
Stacey Black	Groton	Parth Mewar	Amherst
Douglas Buchanan	Roanoke, VA	Aurel Mihai	Manilus
Sue Burchfield	West Henrietta	Debra Nero	Ithaca
Jay Campbell	Scarsdale	Randy Nonenmacher	Marcellus
Robert M. Childs	Hammondsport	Thomas & Barbara Obrien	Corning
Mark Cobb	Auburn	Patrick J. O'Mara	Cortland
Jenny Cole	Corning	Dolly Parker	Fairport
Paul Collins	Avon	Thomas Potochniak	Endicott
Marc Connor	Long Island City	Mike Preston	Churchville
Maria Costanzo	Ithaca	Mark Russell	Lancaster
Shirley Cummings	Norwich	Peter & Marcia Santelli	Hornell
Joseph Damrath	Hornell	Vince Schoppy	Ambler, PA
John & Jo Ellen Del Campo	Alfred	George & Laurie Schwalb	Webster
Susan Dessena	Hornell	Tony Serviente	Ithaca
Andrew Elklund	Hornell	Kenneth Shaw	Buffalo
Nancy Feinstein	Hammondsport	Dominic Shea	Norwich
Heidi Ferman	Canandaigua	John Snyder	Wilson
Paul Good	Horseheads	John & Renee Snyder	Owego
Jane Gram	Cuba	David & Peggy Soule	Penn Yan
Karl Grohs	Warsaw	William & Joyce Spence	Rochester
Sheryl Harnas	Hammondsport	Sarah Stackhouse	Bluff Point
Russell Harris	Newark	Kathie Stedina	Wellsville
Bob Hohman	Webster	David & Donna Willome	Rochester
Nanda & Alan Hopenwasser	Churchville	Marcus Wilson	Gloversville
Mary Beth Houser	Savona		
Brian Irvine	Jasper		

Paula Strain, Our 2nd President, Dies At 93

by Georgeanne Vyverberg and Irene Szabo

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference recently lost another pioneer of the organization with the death of Paula Strain. She was a charter member who became the first editor of the *Finger Lakes Trail News* and remained in that post for four years until she accepted the nomination to become our second President of the Board of Managers. She lived in New York only a few years, but it was our great good fortune that she did, because her knowledge of trail organizations and not-for-profits gave the FLTC a tremendous jump start on the learning curve.

There may be only a handful of earliest members who remember Paula as President, so we rely on wonderful insights Georgeanne has gleaned from hours spent with the archives, reading Paula's correspondence and early FLTC newsletters.

Paula was already an avid hiker and a member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club in Maryland before moving to New York, and apparently it didn't take her long to hook up with the Cayuga Trails Club and Triple Cities Hiking Club near her new home in Owego, NY, a small town in the Southern Tier of Tioga County. Paula was a Technical Librarian for IBM Corporation in Owego and was also President elect for the Upstate New York chapter of the Special Libraries Association. She told the Board of Managers that she could serve only one year because of prior commitments. That year would be filled with amazing accomplishments.

She began her term in May 1966 and immediately began work. Her time as newsletter editor must have revealed to her the things that really needed to be changed and improved. The Conference in four years had grown from infancy to what can only be described as teenage angst. It desperately needed guidance and a sense of where it was going in the future. Paula used her skills as a librarian for organization and

excellent people skills to set things moving. Her letters to various people asking for help are written with humor and engagement. People found it difficult to refuse her.

It's hard to know where to begin so I will outline some of the more important and lasting accomplishments of this remarkable woman in a very busy and remarkable year. She realized the conference had grown to the point where too few people were doing all the work and so set about establishing committees. Up until then there were few standing committees. She asked everyone on the Board of Managers to write down their duties and what they saw as their other responsibilities. From this simple exercise came the FLT's first Guide to Responsibilities. Anyone who has worked on such a guide can tell you what a monumental job it can be. At the end of 1966 the first FLTC Directory was published, which included not only members of the organization but also lists of Officers and Committees and most importantly that Guide to Responsibilities of Officers and Committees, as well as the status of the trail. I have come across this document before but never really realized it was basically the brainchild of Paula Strain. In just six months as President it is a tremendous achievement.

Paula dealt with so many other issues. There had been an article about the FLT in the DEC *Conservationist* and suddenly the office was deluged with requests for maps and trail guides. There were none. She reactivated a committee to work on maps and guidebooks, but she was heavily involved in working on that problem as well. Where to find the money to pay for maps and guidebooks was a big problem for an organization that ended 1966 with a balance of little more than \$800. She appointed Robert LaBelle, who was to eventually become our fourth President, to work on maps. She also

worked closely with Erv Markert in the development of trails. She even managed time to lead trail building workshops which she regarded as fun and encouraged others to have the same kind of experience.

One of her main concerns was the election of officers to the BOM of which there were only five at the time. There were no specified terms for these offices and no clear way of nominating those officers. A nominating committee was formed and suggestions for changes in the bylaws were discussed and implemented. She also sought the services of an auditor and advice on setting up a better way of keeping the financial records.

These are just a few of her contributions to our Trail Conference. In 1968 she left New York to take a job as Head Librarian in Bethesda, Maryland. She kept in touch with her NY hiking friends and sent articles to the *Finger Lakes Trail News* of her many trips around the world.

After her return to Maryland, Paula was very active with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of which she was a member for over 50 years. She served as President and in numerous other capacities and was their archivist at the time of her death. Her life is truly an inspiration.

Irene reminisces about more recent years:

Paula never stopped paying attention to the Finger Lakes Trail, even though most of her volunteer life was spent with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, a longtime major caretaker of many miles of the Appalachian Trail from southern Pennsylvania across Maryland, West Virginia, and northern Virginia. She always remained an FLTC member, so in 1991, when I was first elected president of the FLTC board, Paula wrote me a letter, sharing applause that a woman had been chosen by the

(Continued on page 13)

Paula Strain ...

(Continued from page 12)

board for the first time in many years. She reminisced a little about early projects, sent me a few 1960's pictures of people still with us then (Laura McGuire with black hair!) and ended with a bit of strong advice:

She was adamant that we elevate our map style to include more information and do them in color, like the "big" trails were already doing even then. Some of our newer members won't remember maps before the current style, but until quite recently we still had hand-drawn line drawings of roads, rivers, and the trail, same scale, on stiff blue paper. Not until this decade were we able to produce maps in color, showing state land, for instance, in green, with elevation lines and rivers.

Of course she had to "read" that news in our magazine with a smart machine she used in recent years after macular degeneration rendered her legally blind. It could read to her in its robot voice from printed material, so she kept up. In fact, she flew to Rochester from her home in Maryland for our 40th anniversary in 2002, hiked with us, and participated in a filmed interview with several early members. Her failing sight didn't stop her zest for travelling, either, since we read in local obituaries that she travelled to the Amazon and Hudson Bay within the last few years.

Among the many projects she continued after she moved back to Maryland from her brief time in NY were two books combining trail lore and history in her home state. In 1993 she wrote *The Blue Hills of Maryland*, an enjoyable walk along the Appalachian Trail on a ridge through Maryland, recounting history along the way. There was plenty of it, too, since both Civil War battles and the first "National Road" through that string of mountains provide ghostly reminders to hikers, along with subtle signs of early mountaintop settlements--old rock

foundations of both settlers' homes and summer resort hotels.

Soon after publication I carried Paula's book on my own hike across Maryland on the AT, savoring the perspective provided by her research. One night I slept among foundation stones of the defunct Black Rock Hotel in a modest dip in the ridge, and the next day reveled in a shower at the AT campsite just south of the historic South Mountain Inn still open along US 40, the *National Road* where once upon a time drovers ushered flocks

and herds to market over this rocky spine. It made for such a special hiking trip, to have this book that described what had passed before along every mile, and I was grateful for her presence...and her trail maintenance for three of those miles.

□

Call for Nominations

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

Nominations are requested for the following awards every year; please send them to:

Chery Peluso, Program Chair, cherylp17@verizon.net, 3168 Howard Rd, Hamburg, NY 14075, and copy Gene Bavis, Executive Director: FLTC, 6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt Morris, NY 14510, gbavis@rochester.rr.com. **Nominations, especially for the Wally Wood, are requested before the end of December.**

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

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

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

Hiking in the Year 2088: An FLT Sequel

by Alex Gonzalez

The first installment of this fantasy appeared three years ago. [Fall 2006]

It all started when Joe Dabes won the lottery back in 2075. He's the guy who finally gave in and got his body cloned and who's been going end to end on the FLT four times a year and is now working on his 80th! Well, Joe decided to turn most of his winnings over to the FLTC by creating the conference's first multi-billion-dollar endowment. There were some stipulations, however.

Joe laid out a plan, accepted and endorsed by all managers and committees, that would have wells—the old hand-pump variety—located at every lean-to and bivouac area in the entire FLT system. Potable water would now be readily accessible for hikers: no more carrying full, heavy water bottles up those hills! No more water filters! No more malfunctioning steri-pens! Joe's plan included the hiring of a system of energetic retirees who would take on the job of being well caretakers; their role would be to go out in the spring and turn on the wells in their area, being sure to turn them off in the early winter. They would report pump malfunctions to a plumber on FLTC retainer, who would come out to fix the problems. For this, the caretakers would have all of their utility and housing bills regularly paid by the endowment—people did, indeed, literally line up to get one of these plum positions.

Secondly, Joe stipulated that there be food shacks located no more than twelve miles apart. These food shacks, operated by college students in need of extra income, would be open all year long and would supply trail travelers with fresh or dehydrated food, water, and, from Joe's perspective most importantly, coffee and beer, all at reasonable prices. No more long-distance carrying of food for end-to-enders! No more side trips

to pick up supplies! No more food drops to deal with! For this, the young folk working the shacks would be paid five times the minimum wage. Competition for these positions was, in fact, intense.

Now it's thirteen years later and Joe can note with pride that the FLT is easily the most popular long-distance hiking trail in the nation: you can strap on a small backpack and go 560+ miles generally without having to carry any food or water and without having to leave the trail unless you want to. Some people stay for years, just hiking back and forth at their whim; one couple is working on their five-year anniversary of staying exclusively in the woods. Must be wealthy folk. And, oh yes—back to that endowment for a moment—the FLTC has used some of the funds to purchase the entire trail corridor from willing sellers except where the FLT is on public land. This means no more road walking!

Two more advances for hikers that have also resulted because of the endowment are the personal force field and the "horse force." The former keeps you insect-free without keeping out the smells and sensations of nature and also prevents major accidents, such as broken bones that might ordinarily be suffered during a fall. It also protects you from angry dogs or rabid raccoons. The latter senses a horse's illegal presence through instant DNA analysis and then creates a force field that will not allow the horse and its rider to pass onto the trail. Horse forces are secretly installed at all places where horses are forbidden, usually right near the signs past which the lawbreakers are riding. Sensitive areas, where a horse's passage destroys all the hard work of trail volunteers (especially side-hilled trail, switchbacks, stone staircases, etc.) are now protected. Besides, it's been fun for me to watch the selfish oafs trying

to find a way around the device—which is impossible—after they've read the warning signs and then proceeded on, not caring what damage they would have caused.

That endowment is paying scientist-inventors plenty to develop whatever is needed to keep hiking the most pleasurable experience it can be. Hiking has never been better. □

Alex Gonzalez, a trail builder and maintainer for many years, won the FLTC's 2002 Clar-Willis award for his hard work and dedication to trail maintenance.

Hunting Season

On the FLT (in the DEC's "southern zone") the 2009 deer hunting dates are:

Archery: 10/17 to 11/20, 12/14-12/22

Regular: 11/21 (Saturday) to 12/13

Muzzle loading: 12/14 - 12/22

Bear times fall somewhere within these dates.

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

Great Eastern Trail in New York on the Finger Lakes Trail by Pat Monahan

Fall 2009. The Great Eastern Trail in New York (GET in NY) is now officially a branch trail of the Finger Lakes Trail system. The Board of Managers approved the unnamed trail earlier this spring. The naming process will begin in 2010 with local input to assist in naming the trail. The trail, which is currently planned to be about 45 miles long, will be part of the 2000-mile-long Great Eastern Trail from NY to the Florida/Alabama border. It starts at the Moss Lean-to on Map M-13 (Steuben County), heads south near Painted Post, and passes through the Village of Addison as it approaches the NY/PA border to connect with Pennsylvania's Mid State Trail.

Work efforts in 2009 were concentrated on the northern section of trail in NY. Hikers can now leave the Moss Lean-to in the South Bradford State Forest and head to Meads Creek Road for approximately 3.5 miles on a single-use footpath in the woods. Thanks to the many volunteers who participated with community work parties, Eagle Scout projects, a Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) Wellness Weekend and an Alley Cat Crew. Special thanks go to Kyle Pruden and Jake Olson for becoming "crew leaders" for each of their separate Eagle Scout projects. Special thanks also go out to the Alley Cat crew who spent 6 hours a day benching (digging) into the side of the hill for what seemed like miles. (It was 1 mile.). With one work weekend left on Oct. 24-25, we will



complete the 2009 season somewhere in the West Hill State Forest (Steuben County). It is not too late to sign up. If you are interested in becoming involved in any aspect of building this yet to be named branch trail on the FLT, please contact Pat Monahan at pmonahan@stny.rr.com. Your name can be added to the listserv for all information about the GET in NY. □



Alley Cat crew members on the GET in NY project included (left to right) Aaron Wightman, Melanie Okoniewski, Mark Hittle, Shellie Northup, David Drum, Emory Morris, Quinn Wright, and two canine assistants.

Be sure to read Quinn Wright's description of the project on page 23.

Hiking the Catskills, Delaware County

by Jon Bowen , Hike Series Coordinator

After five months of hiking, with about 17 miles remaining, the end is in sight. We started at Butts Road, near Bainbridge, back in April, and we will end at Big Pond at the county line in October. The September and October hikes are in the Catskill Park and will be more strenuous with climbs over several summits near 3000 feet. It appears that approximately 70 hikers will finish the series in October. Several participants have become or will become end-to-enders and will receive their patch from that very famous FLTer, Mr. Ed Sidote, at the final picnic in Little Pond Park.

Pat Monahan introduced “Where’s Waldo” to the hike series in the past, and Waldo continues to be a part of the hiking experience. Hikers have found him upside down in a stream, in the guise of a large mosquito and as a bear/raccoon. (I thought it was a bear, but I’ve heard he may have been a raccoon.) Waldo continues to raise money for maintenance on the FLT.

Four of the hikes have had great weather; the only exception was a rain storm at the end of one hike. Two groups finished in a heavy downpour, but they were still smiling. They were happy it wasn’t 90 degrees, sunny, and humid. We’ve been fortunate so far that trail maintenance has been good. Jim DeWan and his crew went out days ahead of us in the spring to clear trail sections. We were very fortunate in August when Bob and Sue Bliven, assisted by Ed Sidote, spent many hours clearing humungous briars from the Campbell Brook section. Their work was greatly appreciated. The final two hikes look good with trail maintenance done by Mike Gebhard, Kevin Millar and their crews. □

Photos by

Jackson “Jet” Thomas



Delaware County in August



Delaware County in June—Bonnie, a member of the fast group



Theresa and Hal



*Geri Kell
and Ralph Lynn*



Right: Don



JoAnn Radajczak completed hiking the FLT main trail on the August hike, becoming end-to-ender #273.

Article removed at author's request

Article removed at author's request



SM

Steve Catherman

Director of Trail Maintenance

Trail Topics

And now for the bad news regarding trail sponsorship, which I will present in Want Ad format with nowhere near the flair Irene has in previous issues:

WANTED (NEEDED!)

Volunteers to sponsor the following beautiful sections of Finger Lakes Trail

In Cattaraugus County, on Map M-4 east of Ellicottville, there are 2.3 miles of trail in a mix of mature forest and open fields that extends from the intersection with the orange-blazed Conservation Trail to the western border of the property donated by John Cobb to the FLTC in 1998. About 0.5 mile of the trail also follows two Town Roads, South Canada Hill and Fancy Tract.

In the western edge of Catskill State Park, on Map M-30, there is a short 1.2 mile section of the Campbell Mountain Trail that is begging for attention after the recent retirement of Sponsor Fred Salvante. This piece of trail starts at the Campbell Mountain lean-to, drops down to a stream crossing, and ends at NY 206.

A little further eastward on Map M-30, there is a 3.2 mile stretch of trail that begins at Holiday and Berry Brook Road, climbs to the top of Mary Smith Hill at 2942', encompassing an exceptional view to the southeast, and then descends to Mary Smith Hill Road. This trail could be yours!

Also, in the Catskills, on Map M-31, a Sponsor is needed for 4.2 miles of the Touch-Me-Not Trail between Barkaboom/Big Pond Road and the east end of Alder Lake at the junction with the Mill Brook Ridge Trail. This is a rugged section of trail perhaps best suited to be maintained by a group, club or class.

If any of these sections of trail appeals to you, or you know of somebody else that may be interested in joining the FLTC as a Trail Sponsor, please let us know by responding to me at stevec@roadrunner.com.

Trail Sponsor Information

We have good news to report regarding several sections of trail that had recently become available for adoption:

Map M-5 near Rushford straddling the Cattaraugus/Allegany County border: Thanks go to existing Sponsors, **Kevin and Deb Fridman**, and Regional Trail Coordinator, **Marty Howden**, for splitting up and taking over maintenance of everyone's favorite, 5.2 miles of road walking. Kevin and Deb now sponsor the trail between Access Point 4 on Huyck Road and Access Point 5 on Fairview Road, while Marty is picking up at Access Point 5 and maintaining the trail along Williams and Rushford Roads to the western entrance to Swift Hill State Forest.

Map M-6 near Fillmore in Allegany County: **Dansville Boy Scout Troop 38** and their Scout Master, **David Knights**, have helped Sponsor Bob Emerson out by taking over 2.4 miles of his trail between Access Point 3 on County Route 3, Buffalo Road, and Pond Road.

Also on Map M-6, FLTC Treasurer, **Peter Wybron**, has agreed to adopt the 3.1 miles of trail continuing on from Pond Road to Access Point 5 at Camp Road. Peter takes over this section of trail from Sponsors John and Kathi Gray, who were recently married and moved to the Syracuse area where they are interested in working on trail a little closer to their new home. Congratulations John and Kathi!

I also need to report on some new Sponsors who took over trail sections from overworked Trail Sponsor Kevin Millar around the first of the year, and may have been overlooked in the interim Trail Management shuffle:

Map M-30 in Catskill State Park: **Tom Adolfsen** and **Laura Battelani** have taken over 6.2 miles of trail, including portions of the Campbell Mountain, Pelnor Hollow, and Mary Smith Trails between NY 206 and Holiday and Berry Brook Road.

Map M-31 also in Catskill State Park: **Aaron Bennett** has taken over 4 miles of the Touch-Me-Not Trail between Beech Hill Road and Barkaboom/Big Pond Road.

Regional Trail Coordinator Position (Vacant)

As mentioned in the summer edition of the *FLT News*, we are still searching for a Regional Trail Coordinator to oversee the management of the trail from NY 206 on Map M-30 in Delaware County to the eastern end of the FLT at the Long Path in Ulster County on Map M-33. The responsibilities of this position were outlined in the summer newsletter. If you would like further information regarding this opportunity, please contact me at stevec@roadrunner.com.

(Continued on page 20)

Trail Topics, continued...

Off-Road News

Trail Sponsor Rick Roberts is in the process of obtaining landowner permissions to move approximately 6 miles of trail off Trout Brook Road and River Road through the communities of Shinhopple, Gregorytown and Corbett in Delaware County. The new section of trail would connect Bear Spring Mountain Wildlife Management Area with Corbett. Thanks go out to Rick and FLTC Board member and Off-Road Subcommittee Chair Bill Coffin for their efforts in this endeavor.

AANR Agreements with NYSDEC

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference enters into Adopt-A-Natural Resource (AANR) Agreements with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to enable volunteers to maintain the FLT through State Forest Lands across New York. The agreements spell out the terms and conditions under which the FLTC may operate, including specifications for trail maintenance, dimensions, signing, training and reporting. These reports are sent to the NYSDEC annually, compiling the work accomplished and number of volunteer hours spent in the Forests. The agreements also contain contact information for both parties and a list of FLTC volunteers participating in the program. This list is important as it ensures protection for the volunteers under the State's liability and workers' compensation coverage.

The AANR Agreements generally cover a five-year period and are renewed at the request of the FLTC with the approval of the State. Presently, we are in the process of renewing the agreements with NYSDEC Regions 3, 4 and 7, which had lapsed due to the change in our Trail Management personnel. Agreements in Regions 8 and 9 remain in effect.

Giant Hogweed Alert!

Giant Hogweed, the invasive plant species described in previous editions of this newsletter, merits renewed attention due to the severity of the long-lasting skin reactions and even blindness that it can cause. Please take the time to visit NYSDEC's website: www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html and read about Giant Hogweed and its control methods. The NYSDEC contact person for reporting locations of Hogweed is Naja Kraus, who can be reached on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 845-256-3111 or at NEKRAUS@gw.dec.state.ny.us. For those of you living in the Steuben County area, and wishing to view the plant firsthand, Trail Sponsor Paul Smith has located a large plot of Giant Hogweed along Spencer Hill Road in the Town of Howard on Map M10. Paul has strung tape along the roadside and placed signs warning hikers about its presence.



TRQ

Lynda Rummel
Director of Trail
Quality

Mark Your Calendars!

Fall Regional Meetings in November!

This year's fall regional meetings are scheduled for November 1st (Sunday) at the FLTC Office in Mt. Morris and November 7th (Saturday) at the DEC office in Cortland. The meetings are primarily for maintainers, sponsors, regional coordinators, and agency representatives in these areas, but anyone with an interest in or concern about trail maintenance or management is welcome to attend.

Who? All those working along the Genesee River and between the Genesee River and NYS 415 in west Bath (M--7 through M11, plus the Letchworth Branch, L1 & L2) are specifically invited to attend the Mt. Morris meeting. *Excepting* the Finger Lakes National Forest (which will be covered in next year's meetings), all those working from NYS 14 in Watkins Glen east to Sherman Rd. by Bowman Lake State Park (M-15 to M-24 at Sherman Rd., plus the Onondaga Branch) are specifically invited to attend the Cortland meeting. If you're not working or involved in these areas but would like to come anyway, and especially if you are a new trail maintainer, you are more than welcome!

When and What? The meetings start at 10:00 and end at 3:00. Topics will include: the latest information on the reorganization of the trail management function plus the expanded responsibilities of the Regional Coordinators, the need to verify trail location and land ownership using maps, the urgent need for better signage (what signs to use and where, using strip signs and decals in state forests throughout the FLT System), lessons learned from this season's Alley Cat crews, a review of attendee's trail sections and concerns, what needs to be done, and ideas for future work crews. If you have an item that you would like put on the agenda, please contact Lynda Rummel at ljrassoc@roadrunner.com (315/536-9484)—we want to talk about what's important to you! Again, although these meetings are intended primarily for folks working in the two areas identified, anyone is welcome to attend. Bring your lunch!

FLTC Field Maintenance Manual

The much expanded and completely revised *FLTC Field Maintenance Manual (FMM)* was e-mailed to all trail

sponsors in mid-August. The *FMM* was last updated by Howard Beye, our late Vice President for trail management, in October, 2006. Over the past few months, the *FMM* was given a thorough overhaul by Steve Catherman, Joe Dabes, Lynda Rummel, and Irene Szabo, primarily to capture the changes in the FLTC's trail management organizational structure that have come about since Howard's passing last September, especially the heightened role that the Regional Coordinators now have to play.

Many of you will remember previous editions of the *FMM*. It was a small manual, usually with a green cover, either folded over at the top and held together by "saddle stitching" or comb-bound along the side, that was thin enough to fit easily into a pack or a (large) pocket. Its purpose was to present just the basic—but all the essential—information that an FLTC trail maintainer needed in order to do a good job of keeping a section of trail in good working order.

The purpose of the revised *FMM* remains the same and the *FMM* still focuses on just routine trail maintenance (it does not cover trail design, layout or building, or facilities construction), but the manual now sports a new cover that de-

picts all the trails in the FLT System and the other hiking trails that connect to it. The content has been updated and expanded, too, and includes: new or revised standards necessary for a uniform trail (e.g., tread and corridor width, and acceptable blaze patterns and blazing materials), new policies and requirements relevant to trail maintenance, more technical information (concerning, for example, paint and basic tools), tips and best practices learned over the years, some sample signage, and, since trail sponsors are usually the first in contact with landowners, information about the trail that is useful to property owners. New this year is a "Trail Maintainer Registration Form" that the FLTC Service Center hopes all maintainers will fill out so registration with the NYS DEC and OPHRP can be facilitated.

The FLTC Field Maintenance Manual is your guide to the basics of trail maintenance. If you would like a copy of the revised *FLTC Field Maintenance Manual*, please email your request to Gene Bavis at FLTCoffice@frontiernet.net or call the office at 585/658-9320. The pdf

(Continued on page 22)



Certified Sawyers and their Instructor, Birdseye Hollow State Forest, Spring, 2009.

Sawyers certified or recertified, May 30-31, 2009: Front row, L to R: Wayne Smith, Terry Meacham, Ken Reek, Paul Hoffman, Bill Lindloff (instructor), Don Keipper. Back row, L to R: Kevin Fridman, Tony Rodriguez, Bob Bliven, Dave Drum, Pete Nye, Marc Potzler, Lynda Rummel, Dave Potzler, Tom Bryden, Ben Petryszak. Recertified but not pictured: Jim Wade.

Trail Topics, continued...

(Continued from page 21)

document requires the free Adobe Reader to open. Gene will also mail you a printed copy by request.

FLTC Trail Manual

Although the title sounds somewhat similar, the *Finger Lakes Trail Conference Trail Manual* consists of many of the documents that underlie and support the information in the *FLTC Field Maintenance Manual*. The manual houses handouts, forms and documents related to New York's recreational use statute, American with Disabilities Act Guidelines, NYSDEC Adopt-A-Natural Resource Stewardship Program, FLTC forms for reporting hours worked and the conditions of lean-tos and bridges, types of landowner permissions, the Trail Use Agreement, sample Trail Easement and guidelines and answers to landowner questions, NCT certification steps and forms for reporting hours, summary of the Alley Cat crew concept, tool inventory and locations, FLTC library inventory, list of agency contact persons, sample FLT signs and FLT, NCT & DEC decals and disks, and a list of linear and loop trails.

The manual's first section consists of the FLTC's Safety Handbook, which includes a review of all types of trail tools and their use. The FLTC's Treasurer and long-time trail maintainer, Peter Wybron, prepared and recently updated the Safety Handbook. The rest of the manual is now in need of serious revision and various sections will be sent out to individuals to review and update shortly. **Once revised, this manual will be your resource for all documentation and information underlying the FLTC Field Maintenance Manual.**

Trail Construction

For those of you interested in basic trail layout and construction, the United States Forest Service has published a "new" (2007) edition of its *Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook*. This pocket-sized manual is a tremendous resource and can be downloaded, **for free**, from: www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/fspubs/07232806/index.htm. The 2004 edition is still very useful and is also available on the web.

Sawyer Certification Training

A second training weekend under the FLTC's new sawyer certification policy is planned for September 12th and 13th, 2009, again at Birdseye Hollow State Forest. The class filled quickly, so Marty Howden, the FLTC's coordinator of chainsaw training, is now planning another class for next spring. If you are interested in attending the spring class, please contact Marty at howser51@yahoo.com. Anyone

working regularly on any part of the FLT System is eligible, but all are expected to work outside their home territory and on the NCT during their three-year certification period. Attendees must hold current certifications in Basic First Aid and Adult CPR or be signed up to take those courses. These certifications and this course will qualify sawyers to work in any state forest or state park in NY or the Finger Lakes National Forest.



cc

Quinn Wright
Director of Crews
and Construction

"The Holland Ravines" – not what they used to be!

Unbelievable, simply UNBELIEVABLE!! Who would have thought that this once arduous section of the Conservation Trail on Map 6 between Access points 4 and 7 would now be termed moderate? Three straight Alley Cat crews have literally transformed this eight-mile stretch into a very pleasant and beautiful walk through the hills of Holland. The ravines have become a "pleasing and beautiful sight to behold" rather than an "intimidating and sometimes threatening sight to endure."

The quality of the work experience could not have been achieved without the attention to detail and careful planning of the project manager, Annette Brzezicki, and the construction manager, David Potzler. This year's crew continued the truly amazing volume and quality of work that had been achieved in the prior two years.

The benching, wooden step and re-route crews (Georgianna Binder, Annette Brzezicki, Deb Brzezicki, Mary Domanski, Kathy Foote, Patti Foote, Helen Fredericks, Marion Hanover, Pat Haynes, Alan Hess, Kate Matthews, Pat Monahan, Melanie Okoniewski, Gus Phillips, Sherry Schleede) built and installed 160 steps of wood, two re-routes, countless benching and stepping stones.

The remarkable stone steps built and installed by David Potzler and Mark Hittle enabled the viewing of a small waterfall to remain a treasure for hikers of the trail. The

Bob-Rob-Bob of Pittsford bridge construction team built two bridges. Special thanks to Bob Emerson, Bob Kremens and Rob Vlosky who traveled to Holland to build these bridges and to clear felled trees from the trail.

Again this year four sets of ladder stairs and “Marshall” (household) stairs were built under the leadership of Frank Occhuito with the able assistance of Ed Olesky, Ben Petryszak, Gus Phillips, and Mike Schlicht.

I would be remiss in not recognizing those people who ensured that we were properly fueled with food and drink. The food was absolutely phenomenal!! All of us who were blessed with the food at the end of a hard day’s work thank Anne Beiter, Kathy Boni, Ann & Bill Curry, Pat Haynes, Kathy Laynor, Jean Moog, Barb Morrissey, Gloria Potzler, Carol Racey, Shari Senefelder, Connie Umland and Tara Welty. Liquid refreshments were donated by David Potzler, one of our very thoughtful landowners, Linda Ruckdeschel and an anonymous source.

And most significantly, this work could not have been accomplished this year without the help of the landowners upon whose property this section of trail is located. We who maintain and hike the Conservation Trail salute the landowners who provided alternate access to the work sites: John Bathrick, Norbert Bennett, James Joyce, Mike Kasprzyk, Paul Kubicki, Ron Pilkington, Rex & Michelle Webber.

Finally, it is worth noting that this three-year project changed the access to nine ravines, eliminated five ravines with reroutes, and repaired or improved the trail in many other areas. The total number of man-hours for work and travel was 2004 hours! At federal standards for grant writing purposes that is \$39,098.04. Material costs for this three-year project totaled about \$6200. None of these figures include the several hundred administrative hours required to plan and oversee this project from the following people: Annette Brzezicki, Dave Potzler and Mike Schlicht who planned these projects, and Lynda Rummel who helped evaluate the projects, secure funding and provide trail-construction training, and Donna Flood who worked on securing funding by writing and applying for grants. This year’s expenses were approximately \$2100. An American Hiking Society grant covered two-thirds of that expense, and hiking enthusiasts generously donated the balance. Everyone involved with this project over the last three years should be very proud of the work that was accomplished.

Connecting the FLTC to the Mid State Trail is “GET”ting along

This year’s second Alley Cat project was not as “romantic” or “sexy” as building a lean-to or a bridge, but it absolutely addresses the mission of the FLTC—“to build, protect, and enhance a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever.” Pat Monahan (with his dog, Nike) has undertaken the responsibility of connecting the Finger Lakes Trail to

the Mid State Trail in Pennsylvania as part of the Great Eastern Trail (GET) system and that means identifying and then building about 45 miles of NEW trail. Over the past few years trail-building has occurred and will continue to occur for several years into the future. This year the FLTC committed its time and resources to help in this task.

Sixteen people, “assisted” by five dogs, built about one mile of new trail up a steep hill that required some switchbacks near the top. That meant chain-sawing and clearing fallen trees, removing dead and rotten trunks and branches, seemingly endless side-hilling, removing rocks, installing stable footing areas in some unavoidable wet and low spots, and the typical removing of brush and saplings to clear the trail for passage by foot.

I remember thinking to myself when Pat said that our day would start at 9:15 AM and end around 3:30 PM “that’s not a very long day.” Well, I am happy to say that Pat couldn’t have been more proper in his planning. We were all too tired to have done much more on any day, except Aaron Wightman who sprinted down the trail so as to be on-time to pick up his girls from camp.

I don’t think I’ve ever seen anyone as wet with perspiration as David Drum after his six hours of chain-sawing. (He signed up for one day and worked four days). The rest of us just did our chain-gang routine under the watchful eye of Commander “Adolph” Monahan. Our days were started off with wonderful bacon and egg preparations by Melanie Okoniewski (plus two dogs). She also prepared our spaghetti dinner on Saturday and even found time to help re-decorate the Monahan kitchen. Mark Hittle was grill master for three wonderful meals of hot dogs and hamburgers, chicken thighs and breasts, and ham steaks – great cooking and he even figured out how to get a hamburger to slide into the coals through the narrow grating.

Other noteworthy laborers were: Jeff and Amy Ahrens (plus dog), Gene Binder, Dick Carlson, Candy Dietrich, Emory Morris, Ron Navik, Larry Newman, Shellie Northrup (another person who signed up for one day and worked four), and Lynda Rummel.

I anticipate another Alley Cat or two (a shelter in 2011 or 2012) for the GET sometime in the next few years. Enough accolades cannot be given to Pat Monahan for his dedication to this project and his exceptional planning and implementation skills.

(Photos on pages 24 and 25)

Trail Topics, continued...

Alley Cat 1 - Holland Ravines



*Pat Monahan, Melanie Okoniewski, Kathy Foote,
Georgianna Binder, Mary Zuk Domanski*



*Melanie Okoniewski and Kathy Foote sidehilling
and installing steps.*



*Frank Occhuito, Mike Schlicht and Quinn Wright
building stairs.*



Positioning stairs



Stone steps

Photos by Annette Brzezicki



Clockwise from top left:

Nike waits patiently for the workers to arrive at Meads Creek State Forest.

Quinn Wright and David Drum dig in for a day's work.

Mark Hittle and Nike take a break from working.

Jeff Ahrens smiles after a serious afternoon of deep side hill digging

Photos by Pat Monahan

Alley Cat 2 - Great Eastern Trail

End-to-End Update

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

End-to-End Hikers

The following hikers completed the FLT main trail since the last issue:

- #271 Laurie Dando
- #272 Roy Dando
- #273 JoAnn (Kish) Radajczak

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

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Howard Camp | David Acenowr |
| Carole Camp | Lisa Acenowr |
| Gerry Benedict | Henry Abbink |
| Stacey Black | Teresa Blenis |
| Sarah Hoffman | |

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

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| David & Lisa Acenowr | Jerry Lazarczyk |
| Scott Bahantka | Carole Morris |
| MaryAnn Cascarino | Will Rodin |
| Charles Ferguson | Don Sutherland |
| June Huston | Tim Sweeney |
| Jeff Keenan | Sue Thomas |
| Ann Keller | |

I apologize if I omitted your name. Please let me know.

Completed the branch trails on 08-12-09:

- Abe Allen, Plymouth, CT, Main Trail End-to-
Ender #25 (06-02-1991)

New additions to the branch trail end-to-ender list:

- Roy & Laurie Dando
Kathy Foote
Jerry Lazarczyk

Please let me know if you are hiking the branch trails. See our FLTC website for the application for the Branch Trail Patch.

Car Spotter Additions

Arnold Aronson - Maps M-26, 27, 28

About a month ago I sent out approximately a dozen Car Spotter Questionnaires and received four refusals, and the rest have not answered yet. If you received a form, please complete it and return it to me in the enclosed envelope.

Delaware County Hike Series

If you are planning on receiving your end-to-end patch at the end of the hike series on 10-03-09, you need to complete an End-to-End Questionnaire in September and snail mail it to me. I have to complete some paperwork after I receive the

Questionnaire so I would like to have it in September as early as possible. I will be at the September hike so you can also bring it and give it to me there. One important item is the date that you started your hike.

You can email me for the End-to-End Questionnaire as it is not on our website. My email address can always be found at the end of my End-to-End Update.

On 10-03 you need to have completed an FLT Application for FLT End-to-End Patches and also a Hike Record which shows the dates you started and finished each FLT map. Bring these two forms with you to the last hike. They are on our website.

Trail Registers

If you are a Trail Steward, please make sure that any trail registers on your section are in good condition and contain a trail register notebook. Carry a new book with you and if the book is full, or almost full, replace it and mail the full book to me. I will reimburse you for the postage if you wish.

It is very important for all hikers to sign the trail registers as trail registers can be used to demonstrate usage when requesting funding. Notebooks are available from me. Another reason for signing the registers is if you are backpacking and there is an emergency in your family, I try to locate you by checking the trail register notebooks.

Excerpt From a Trail Register Notebook

04-14-07: One last hike before the big storm. 2" of fresh snow with more in the air. Beautiful use of the woods.

Bruce and Linda Baxter, Shingletown, CA
Larry Baxter, Beaverton, OR
Mary Hubbard, Triangle, NY

In the same register there were out-of-state hikers from southern states.

Happy Hiking!

Edward J. Sidote

5 Clinton St., Norwich, 13815-1903

607/334-3872

ejsidote@frontiernet.net

"Only 65 years ago..."

by Irene Szabo

Reprinted from Jan-March, 2008, issue of the North Star, magazine of the North Country Trail Association, with permission.

During my typical winter-time twitchy frustration at having no Useful and Productive activity to do outside (it's a great burden being raised Protestant), I turned this winter to resurrection of a three-mile loop I built some years ago through my neighbors' woods (yes, with permission, silly you) so that I could have a nice place to take a dog walk, a trail through some drop-dead gorgeous full-growth hemlock and white pine, on a route that would avoid the mistreated ATV and horse tracks nearby. Finger Lakes Trail work elsewhere usually means that this trail gets left behind, and I'll admit that some parts of it haven't seen my attention in over two years.

If it weren't for my good trail memory, there are many places where the path could not have been found, due only to tons of fallen branch litter obscuring the cleared tread. What stuns me about this quick trail disappearance most of all is that I am simultaneously reading a collection of articles about life during World War II, where I'm learning a lot about how radically my parents' lives were altered just before I was born.

One has heard that the Appalachian Trail, for instance, got virtually no maintenance for at least four years, and I can believe it. Tires and gasoline were tightly rationed, so even if there were able bodied people left at home, they probably could not get to the trail at all. Here in upstate New York, most of us trail stewards drive at least an hour to get to our sections, while some North Country Trail chapter members will drive more like four hours to get to theirs!

Gas prices now are painful enough, but what if we couldn't even buy ANY beyond our ration coupons? Or replace tires? If we went to the trail at all, we

would simply have to make a week of it, and get everything done for the entire season in one dedicated trip. That is not, of course, how good maintenance works, since every trail deserves two or three clean-ups per year. Nor would we be able to fire up chain saws or run mowers down the trail in weedy old field sections. The implications for the quality of trails are scary, especially since hiking usage would be down, too.

One Rochester hiking club responsible for a segment of the Finger Lakes Trail has been in existence since 1928, and prides itself on hosting a hike somewhere every Sunday, no matter the weather, holidays, or World Wars. I remember reading in their fiftieth anniversary booklet that older members could recall taking the trolley to the end of the line during the 1940's, which got them to the countryside outside Rochester, and just walking where they could before they had to take another trolley back. Sometimes this Genesee Valley Hiking Club also mustered forces to help pick crops, since helpful hands were in short supply!

Meat, coffee, and sugar were rationed, too, so ingenuity provided some odd snacks for thousands of travelling Army recruits. A phenomenon that arose primarily in the Midwest and

West was a scattering of so-called canteens for giving soldiers a dollop of home during their train journeys to distant bases or ports. Local volunteers met troop trains and managed to give every soldier a cup of coffee, and a sandwich, cookie, or piece of fruit during the few minutes it took to give the steam locomotive more coal and water. Women young and old, all of them in dresses and the younger set sporting ankle socks and saddle shoes, managed to scrape together enough food to make all these offerings. Because most of the small town depots where canteens arose had surrounding farms to supply eggs and apples, there was heavy reliance on home-made mayonnaise, egg salad, and "bologna salad" sandwiches. (I don't want to know.)

There were two such railroad-station canteens in Pennsylvania, one in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a record twelve in Ohio, plus another thirty scattered westward.

Even the oldest parts of the Finger Lakes Trail were begun in 1962, so fortunately avoided the drastic measures affecting everybody during World War II, but it gives me pause to contemplate how recently life was so different...and how easily our relatively well-supplied lives could change again. □



Favorite Trail Sections in Central New York: Onondaga Trail

DeRuyter Lake Dam Road to New Woodstock, FLT Map O-1

by Mary C. Coffin

Continued from the back cover...

the top of the falls. The best egress down to Route 91 is on the north side where the trail intersects an old road. Look for occasional orange blazes. The slippery herd paths are only for the very sure-footed. The blue-blazed trail continues climbing north, crossing an old road several times to the place where it is joined by the orange-blazed Skyline Trail coming up from Labrador Pond. The Skyline Trail is still a work in progress.

At the maximum elevation you will encounter one of the most spectacular views on the Onondaga Trail. Jones Hill, elevation 1964 feet, overlooks Labrador Pond (the remains of a glacial kettle hole) and Labrador Hollow Unique Area in the glacial valley 720 feet below. This valley has dramatically steep sides, and there can be visibility for 30 miles on a clear day. Hang

gliders love to take flight from this hill, catching the rising thermals, and then later landing in the valley below.

The trail turns and continues eastward over the hill and drops to Spruce Pond, elevation 1700 feet. This pond is stocked with fish and offers three-season parking and free camping with a DEC permit. A North Country Trail kiosk and sign board are located there. Parking is available on the east side of the pond.

The trail proceeds south from the kiosk along the picturesque Spruce Pond outlet stream. The pond and stream level fluctuate in response to beaver and muskrat activity. The trail eventually turns east through a very peaceful forest, crossing this stream and several more little streams before dropping to Shackham Road (1560 feet) at a point northeast of the start. Before hopping into your car, follow the trail to Shackham Pond. Look for more beaver activity and an ever-

growing beaver dam as you approach the pond. The blazed trail skirts the edge of the Hodgson Family cemetery with huge old pines pushing over gravestones.

Return to a car spotted here or make a loop by hiking about 1.2 miles south on Shackham Road where you left a car before you entered the forest .

Accumulated mileage: Shackham Rd. south = 0, Tinker Falls = 1.4, Jones Hill = 2.8, Spruce Pond = 3.9, Shackham Rd. north = 5.6, Shackham Pond = 5.7, Shackham Rd. south = 6.8. □

This is the second of four articles by Mary Coffin on her favorite walks in the four seasons. Mary, VP East for the North Country Trail Association, was the 2009 winner of the FLTC's Wally Wood Award AND a 2009 winner of the North Country Trail Association's Distinguished Service Award (see page 9)..



FLTC President Interviewed on Outdoors Webcast

FLTC President Pat Monahan was invited to speak about the FLT via a webcast. The two thirty-minute segments were aired at www.huntfishnyoutdoors.com in August.

Says Pat, "Terry has invited me back to speak about the GET in NY. This is a great opportunity to speak on behalf of the hiking community in a positive way with other user groups."

Tick Removal

A Tip from the KTA Newsletter

Reprinted from the Keystone Trail Association Newsletter, August 2009, with permission.

Apply a glob of liquid soap to a cotton ball. Cover the tick with the soap-soaked cotton ball and swab it for 15-20 seconds. The tick will come out on its own and stick to the cotton ball when you lift it away. This technique is not traumatic for the patient and works in places where it is difficult to reach with tweezers. Unless someone is allergic to soap, this treatment should not be damaging in any way.

Submitted by Carl Lorence

NCTA Meeting in N. Dakota ...

(Continued from page 9)

with views sometimes across hills and lakes in the interior, sometimes across Lake Superior itself). For more details, watch future issues of *North Star* or contact Mary: mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com or 315/687-3589

Best of all, nominations from members as widely scattered as Minnesota and New York made it a cinch for the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award, given in 2001 to Howard Beye, to be granted to Al Larman from Canastota, NY. More than a hundred of our FLTC members are also members of the Central NY Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, so get to read of the accomplishments of the 12-year-old chapter that has created many miles of trail where there was none before, eventually to link the extension of our Onondaga Trail

with the rest of the NCT route in the Adirondacks. We read in the excellent newsletter, written mostly by Al himself, of the dizzying accomplishments of this young chapter, including major construction projects carried out by, for instance, National Guard units, and paid for by complex grants with arduous paperwork requirements not for the faint of heart. What is never clear in the newsletter is that Al himself has been one of the primary actors in negotiating, arranging, and even parleying grant applications into real money.

At eighty-something, he still joins some of those projects in the field, moving rocks and building wooden switchback stairs, while participating in the national organization, too. He has served on the NCTA board for six years, and has distinguished himself there by participating five times in the annual trek to

Washington, D.C., to work on seven states' worth of senators and representatives to garner the NCTA and its National Park Service partner enough federal appropriation each year to keep this National Scenic Trail going.

We are thrilled that these FLT members have been so honored for their contributions to the bigger picture, the national trail that utilizes our New York trail for nearly 500 miles on its way to its eastern terminus. Hope to see more of you at next year's annual conference, August 5-8 in Ashland, Wisconsin, a LOT shorter drive than this year, and way north in Wisconsin, right on the shore of Lake Superior. You won't believe the fabulous cascades over orange and rusty rocks in Copper Falls State Park, loons are practically guaranteed, and anyone who takes the trouble to learn how to pronounce Chequamegon Chapter, next year's hosts, gets a discount on registration. □

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2009

Fall / Erv Markert hike

Leader: John Morris, JaxmBird43@aol.com, 607/753-7256

FLT and Spanish Loop in Cortland County, FLT Map M19

Hike: This will be a hilly and moderately strenuous loop hike created by combining sections of the Spanish Loop and the FLT. Two hike distances will be offered: the 5.5 mile loop and an additional 4.4 miles (total) out and back to a viewpoint overlooking Dryden Lake. We'll "gather" afterwards at the Gatherings, a restaurant in nearby Virgil near the Greek Peak Ski Resort, where each hiker will receive their choice of a free coffee, tea, soda, wine, or beer!

Meet: 9 a.m. on Daisy Hollow Rd at the FLT crossing at FLT milepost 5.0 on FLT Map M19.

Directions: Daisy Hollow Rd intersects NY Rte 38, about 6 miles south of Dryden. Turn north on Daisy Hollow Rd for about 2 miles to the FLT crossing.

Carpooling from the Binghamton area: Contact Larry Blumberg, LBlumberg@stny.rr.com

Join the North Country Trail Association

A Special Deal for FLTC Members!

Now you can join the North Country Trail Association for just \$23 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

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Phone (optional):
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<input type="checkbox"/> I'm enclosing a check for \$23 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: _____

VOLUNTEER WANTED!

The FLTC Recognitions Committee receives nominations from members and others, makes decisions, then arranges public recognition of our award recipients, usually at FLTC spring and fall weekends. Previous chair John Andersson served several years (thank you!) but has stepped down, so remaining committee members Mary Zuk Domanski, Steph Spittal, and Irene Szabo hope that a new chair might volunteer from among our members. None of the current committee members can take on the responsibility now to keep nominations organized, remember to advertise for nominations, and remember to acquire prizes and arrange award ceremonies for the recipients, so that's the "job" we need a volunteer for.

To ask questions or, bless you, volunteer, contact Gene Bavis, Executive Director, or Cheryl Peluso, board member who is also our Program Chair. Phone and email contacts inside back cover.



Larry Blumberg

Ed Sidote (left) poses with hike leader Don Windsor

Annual Ed Sidote Hike Draws a Large Crowd

by Larry Blumberg

Coordinator for the 2009 FLTC "Named Hike Series"

July 25, 2009 -- Between 45 and 50 hikers showed up on a gorgeous day to honor the FLT's end-to-end coordinator, Ed Sidote, at the annual "Summer Ed Sidote Hike" sponsored by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference.

Led by Don Windsor of Ed's "home club", the Bullthistle Hiking Club of Chenango County, the group completed a six-mile loop along the FLT and seasonal back roads near Pharsalia and Jackson Pond, on FLT Map M-23.

Ed arrived early and set up "court" in the parking lot greeting all the participants, as only he can, with cold bottles of water, cookies, and other snacks left over from his club's National Trails Day outing earlier this summer.

Don, who regularly leads hikes for the Bullthistle Hiking Club, entertained the participants with stories of local lore and plant identification. Don is also the Deputy Historian for Chenango County when he's not out leading hikes.

Our sincere thanks for
gifts in memory of:

Howard Beye

from

Dorothy Beye

Pat Monahan

Our sincere thanks
for a gift in honor of:

Jon & Terese LeGro

from

Pat Monahan

Answer to the Summer "Name that Map!" quiz

Those correctly locating the cemetery on the Onondaga Trail, map O-1, are listed below. By chance, the cemetery picked for "Name that Map!" is on Mary Coffin's "favorite hike." See the back cover of this issue.

Michael Loftus
Michele Gonzalez
Alex Gonzalez
Patricia Hazard

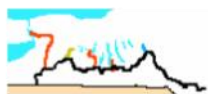


The participants came from far and near; many were from the Bullthistle Hiking Club with some of the others from the Cayuga Trails Club, the Triple Cities Hiking Club, and elsewhere.

This was the second of the three "named hikes" for 2009 to be sponsored by the FLTC. The third and final one, the Fall Erv Markert Hike, will take place on Saturday, Oct 24. That one is being led by John Morris and will be on a section of the FLT/Spanish Loop over near Dryden on FLT Map M-19 in Cortland County. □

*Our vision is for hikers to step
forward. No one else will love
our trails for us.*

Thyra Sperry
President, Keystone Trails
Association



NAME THAT MAP!
So, you hiked the FLT or
parts of it. Let's see how
observant you were!
Send your guess to:

jwensich@rochester.rr.com

Can you place the scene on the right? The answer to
the spring issue's Name That Map is on page 30.

Photo by Jacqui Wensich



Any Reroutes?

*A reminder from "Java Joe"
Dabes, FLTC GIS guy*

Please send the locations of
any FLT trail reroutes to Joe
(kabjnd@msn.com) if they
are more than 100 feet from
existing trail. This is not so
important for our maps, but
very important for the GPS
data we now sell. Joe, or one
of his GPS helpers, will then
"GPS" the reroute.



A gift to the Finger Lakes Trail
Conference helps to protect and preserve
the Trail forever. Gifts may take several
forms, such as MEMORIALS,
HONORARIUMS, and PLANNED
GIVING. Information about how gifts
may be designated and/or for a brochure
explaining the Planned Gift options may
be obtained confidentially by contacting
FLTC, Inc.,
6111 Visitor Center Road Mt. Morris,
New York 14510
(585-658-9320), or
e-mail address
information@fingerlakestrail.org

Club Presidents Council

The Club Presidents Council is composed of regional organiza-
tions that find strength and support through association. If you wish
to join, volunteer for trail work, or participate in the activities of these
organizations, contact may be made through the telephone numbers
or websites listed.

Buffalo Area

ADK Niagara Frontier Chapter	www.adk-nfc.org
Foothills Trail Club	www.foothillstrailclub.org

Rochester Area

ADK Genesee Valley Chapter	www.gvc-adk.org
Genesee Valley Hiking Club	www.fingerlakestrail.org/gvhc.htm

Syracuse Area

ADK Onondaga Chapter	www.adk-on.org
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Ithaca and Elmira

ADK Finger Lakes Chapter	607/936-3988
Cayuga Trails Club	www.cayugatrailclub.org

Corning Area

Three Rivers Outing Club	607/962-5157
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Binghamton Area

Triple Cities Hiking Club	triplecitieshikingclub.org
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Chenango County

FLT-Bullthistle Hikers	www.bullthistlehiking.org
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Eastern NY

ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter	www.midhudsonadk.org
------------------------	--

Thank You



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Finger Lakes Trail and the North Country National Scenic Trail

FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE

6111 Visitor Center Road,
Mt. Morris, NY 14510
585/658-9320, fax: 585/658-2390
www.fingerlakestrail.org
FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org

FLTC Staff

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

Stephanie Spittal, Office Manager
FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org

Jennifer Hopper, Accounting/Database Assistant
FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org

Officers

Pat Monahan, President • 141 West 5th St, Corning, NY 14830 • 607/936-8312 • pmonahan@stny.rr.com

Ronald Navik, Vice President Trail Preservation • 27 Edenfield Rd, Penfield, NY 14526 • 585/377-1812 • ron.navik@frontiernet.net

Jarett Lobb, Vice President Finance • 14 Locke Dr, Pittsford, NY 14534 • 585/383-1938 • fltboard@lobbonline.com

Jacqui Wensich, Vice President Membership & Marketing • 425 East St, Pittsford, NY 14534 • 585/385-2265 • jwensich@rochester.rr.com

Roy Dando, Secretary • 601 University Ave, Endwell, NY 13760 • 607/785-3141 • rdando@verizon.net

Peter Wybron, Treasurer • 2722 Chestnut St, PO Box 158, York, NY 14592 • 585/243-5351 • prwybron@rochester.rr.com

Board of Managers**Terms Expiring 2010**

Phil Dankert • 32 Dart Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850 • 607/257-2578 • pdankert@twcny.rr.com

Cheryl Peluso • 3168 Howard Rd, Hamburg, NY 14075 • 716/648-9027 • cherylp17@verizon.net

Georgianne Vyverberg • 8964 Atlanta-Garlinghouse Rd, Naples, NY 14512 • 585/455-2015 • gvyverberg@pls-net.org

George Zacharek • 3125 Fiddlehead Glen, Baldwinsville, NY 13027 • 315/635-8438 • hikinggz@verizon.net

Terms Expiring 2011

Jon Bowen • 1626 Gunbarrel Rd, Baldwinsville, NY 13027 • 315/638-8749 • jkbowen@gmail.com

Bill Coffin • 328 Deep Springs Dr, Chittenango, NY 13037 • 315/687-3589 • wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com

Terry Meacham • 7147 Tobes Hill Rd, Hornell, NY 14843 • 607/324-0374 • meach@infoblv.net

Ray Recchia • 3155 State Route 206, Whitney Point, NY 13862 • 607/692-2584 • rrecchia@frontiernet.net

Sigi Schwinge • 212 Tilden Dr, East Syracuse, NY 13057 • 315/437-6906 • sigischwinge@aol.com

Terms Expiring 2012

Patricia Haynes • 6543 Donlen Drive, Ellicottville, NY 14731 • 716/699-6056 • phaynes508@roadrunner.com

Roger Hopkins • 163 Asbury Rd, Lansing, NY 14882 • 607/257-9778 • roger@naturalhighs.net

Phil Metzger • 120 Thompson Creek Rd, Norwich, NY 13815 • 607/334-2407 • pmetzger@frontiernet.net

John A-X. Morris • 2449 Gee Hill Rd, Dryden, NY 13053 • 607/753-7256 • jaxmbird43@aol.com

Ken Reek • 3090 Griffin Rd, Churchville, NY 14428 • 585/293-3241 • ken@kmrconsulting.com

Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.**Calendar of Events**

October 16-18 **Fall Campout at Camp Turner, Allegany State Park** hosted by the Foothills Trail Club.

Oct 17 - Dec 22 **Big game hunting season** along the FLT. Hikers, be sure you know the latest hunting season trail closures. Also, please take appropriate safety precautions.

October 24 Annual FLTC Erv Markert (Fall) Hike, FLT and Spanish Loop. See page 29.

October 24-25 Great Eastern Trail in NY work weekend (Steuben County). Contact Pat Monahan pmonahan@stny.rr.com for details. Day trippers or weekenders welcome.

November Regional Trail Maintainers Meetings. See Trail Topics, p 20. Contact Lynda Rummel at ljrassoc@roadrunner.com (315/536-9484),

November 1 Mt. Morris
November 7 Cortland

November 6 Deadline for submitting material for winter issue of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*. See box on page1 for instructions.

November 13-15 Board/Committee Retreat, Letchworth SP Delaware County Hikes: Sep. 19, Oct. 3.

Please check the FLT website (www.fingerlakestrail.org) for up-to-date calendar information.

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 Dec. 31 will be applied to the next membership year.)

Individual..... \$25 Contributing:

Family \$30

Student (full-time; give Pathfinder \$45

permanent address)..... \$15 Trailblazer \$75

Youth organization \$15 Guide \$100

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

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

Favorite Trail Sections in Central New York: Onondaga Trail

Shackham Road South to Shackham Pond , FLT Map O-1

Text and photos by Mary C. Coffin

Reprinted with permission from the North Country Trail Association North Star, July-Sept. 2008. Minor updates by the author, Aug. 2009.

Those familiar with New York State know that the topography, shaped by the glaciers and subsequent rivers, is quite hilly. Central New York is characterized by steep north-south ridges that cut through layers of limestone resulting in very interesting, diverse and scenic trails.

One of my favorite sections of the Finger Lakes Trail and concurrent North Country Trail's Onondaga section starts on Shackham Road just south the Cortland-Onondaga County line. This blue-blazed six-mile route is in Morgan Hill State Forest. The trail here is complete with waterfalls, brooks, ponds and spectacular overlooks so take your camera.

As one hikes northwest from Shackham Road (elevation 1350 feet) there is steep 450-foot climb in a fern-filled mature forest to a ridge with great views of Labrador Valley to the west. The trail then drops steeply to the rim of Tinker Falls. This steep section is slated for grade improvement over the next few years. You will notice the improvement on the north side completed in 2009.

The trail crosses the top of Tinker Falls (elevation 1400 feet at the rim). There is a small flume of water running between layers of shale and limestone that drops 50 feet off the overhanging ledges. Take care when crossing the stream at the top of the falls. The safest crossing is upstream a bit. The waterfall runs year round but is particularly beautiful in spring and fall. A parking lot is available on Route 91; however there is no formal, maintained trail from Route 91 to



Above: Shackham Pond, Below: Hodgson Family Cemetery



Continued inside on page 28