

# Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

*Fall 2010*



## Inside...

- ◆ "Ah, September, the epitome of Nature's fulfillment!"  
— John A-X. Morris, Natural Connections: September, page 13
- ◆ Alley Cat trail crews at work: an inspiring story, page 17

# President's Message

Pat Monahan

Looking back to summer for a moment, I must say it was a perfect summer. I was on vacation and had good weather at the same time to enjoy the outdoors on foot and on my bike. The hikes on the FLT and the high peaks in the Catskills as well as the bike rides along the Erie Canal and Pine Creek (PA) were outstanding. I also spent some time doing trail work for the Tamarack Lean-to and Tinker Falls Alley Cat Crews as well as helping to open about ten miles of new trail on the Crystal Hills Trail (GET in NY) this year. Oh yeah, my family, church and the lake, too. It was a perfect summer.

As we move into the fall season, I must reflect back on a few experiences from the summer. First, I am amazed at the number of people who volunteer to build or improve the FLT and other hiking trails. Each person that I have met has been more than willing to dig in to whatever needs to be done regardless of how grueling the task may be. It could be moving tons of logs to build a lean-to, cleaning out a privy, carrying materials uphill for what seems miles, manhandling a stone to inch it into place, placing a rope around a tree to lift a ladder system in place or benching into what seemed like a cliff. Volunteers took time from work, drove miles, and accomplished the tasks that needed to be done. I want to personally thank all who have volunteered their time, energy and talent to improve the hiking experience on the FLT.

Second, as I have hiked across the miles on many trails across New York and Pennsylvania, I always pay attention to where I am—private or public land. As the trail moves from one public land to the next, there may be a few feet or even many miles on private property. Some may take this for granted and never really appreciate the private landowner who has given permission to walk on his/her property. Most understand that the private landowner provides the connections from one public land to another for a continuous footpath across New York State. We must never forget that the private land belongs to the landowner. It is their land. We are guests on their property and can be respectful by staying on the path, leaving the property in better shape than we found it, and honoring any kind of closures to the trail even when it means backtracking for a couple of miles. I would like to personally thank each of our landowners for allowing us to enjoy the beauty of their property along the FLT. I encourage every hiker to thank the next landowner that you talk with on the trail or in the grocery store.



I also would like to welcome new FLT hikers to the FLTC. You may have discovered us through the FLTC hiking sampler series or the Passport program or with a friend out hiking for the day or on our website. I encourage you to join the FLTC if you haven't done so yet. Your support is critical to the health of the trail and the organization.

Finally, later this month you will receive a letter under separate cover asking you to financially assist the FLTC in its annual appeal. This is the only time this year that we will ask you to help financially in addition to your membership. This is still a challenging economy. Some of us are doing well while others still struggle to make ends meet. I encourage each of you to assess your personal situation and consider making an investment with the FLTC during its annual appeal. If you are able, I hope you will give generously.

Enjoy the fall in upstate New York in the outdoors. You can't beat it. Go take a hike!!

## Roger Hopkins

Finger Lakes Land Trust Volunteer of the Year



Tom Reimers

Left to right: FLLT Board President, Chris Proulx, award recipient Finger Lakes Trail Conference Board Member Roger Hopkins, and FLLT Executive Director, Andrew Zepp.

### Join the FLTC Yahoo! groups e-mail list

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference's e-mail list is a discussion group hosted by yahoo.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](mailto:lblumberg@stny.rr.com)) and Jack VanDerzee ([vanderze@ithaca.edu](mailto:vanderze@ithaca.edu)).

To join the group, send a note to one of the co-moderators, or go to the FLTC website ([fingerlakestrail.org](http://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, enhance and promote a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever!

### FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS Volume 49 Number 3 Fall 2010

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*Right: FLT at the State Fair. This family is interested in volunteering on the trail. Staffing the booth is FLTC volunteer Tony Rodriguez.*

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Jacqui Wensich

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Quinn Wright

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**Cover:** Fall on the blue-blazed trail along Lick Brook, just south of Ithaca. Photo by Tom Reimers. The quarter-mile, very steep blue-blazed trail joins at its upper and lower ends with the main FLT on Map M17. Both the main trail and the blue-blazed trail in this area are exceptionally beautiful, and in spring the wildflowers are outstanding.

**I**t's been a GREAT summer! I hope you have enjoyed getting into the out of doors, and hopefully you've had an opportunity to do some hiking.

I am happy to report that our Passport Project has progressed well, though not as quickly as I had hoped. I guess the first time you undertake such a project you don't think of all the things that can cause delays. Oh well! We are proud of what we have accomplished, and we hope to do two more such projects over the next couple of years assuming that we get sponsor support. By the time you read this article, I believe that we will have the passport booklets available in many locations throughout the Finger Lakes region. Those of you who live east of I-81 or west of Letchworth will not find them as easily because the hikes are concentrated along the central part of our trail system. A complete list of places to get a passport is posted on our website and a PDF of the passport book is, too. Please tell all of your friends about this opportunity. It is especially appropriate for families and beginners since the hikes are generally short. I want to thank all of those who had anything to do with this project, from



## From the Desk of the Executive Director

.....  
**Gene Bavis**

selecting the hikes to distributing the booklets and everything along the way. If you have done any of the passport hikes and would like to share your photographs, please send them to [FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org). We are especially interested in seeing some kids on the trail!

Thanks to those who have volunteered and helped out at the New York State Fair and other promotional projects. Without continuous outreach programs, we could not continue to grow. Our organization depends on an active membership with hundreds of volunteers to accomplish our mission.

By the time you read this, I hope you will have registered for the Fall Campout. We look forward to seeing many of our friends and hiking family. Next year's Spring Weekend event and

**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

annual meeting will be held on May 20-22, 2011 at Cazenovia College. It will be hosted by ADK, Onondaga Chapter. Please save the date! □

*Gene Bavis, Executive Director*  
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*315/986-1474 (home office)*

### *New Life Members*

Louise Cook  
Paul Schnipelsky

### *New Family Life Member*

Kyle Harold

## *Welcome!*

### **New and Returning Members May to July, 2010:**

Michael Anceravige, Skagway, AK  
Boy Scout Troop 155, Binghamton  
Joyce Bufano, Pittsford  
James Carpenter, Henrietta  
Kathleen Clerkin, West Seneca  
Merry & John Coburn, Alfred Station  
Steve Cooper, Ontario  
Chris & Rachel Correia, Mt. Morris  
Tony Crowley, Ellicottville  
Davidson Shoes, Inc, Canandaigua  
Carl Davis, Naples  
Christopher Demong, Chittenango  
Eleanor H. DeWitt, Penn Yan  
David Dickinson, West Seneca  
Paul Donath, Franklinville  
Dorr Dunbar, Holland  
Mitchell Ehrenberg, Rochester  
Kathleen Fish, Spencer  
Robby Gibb, Webster  
James Gibson, Canfield, ON  
Kate Hardiman, Livonia

Anne Hersh, Corning  
Tom Hildebrandt, Hyattsville, MD  
Amy Hockenberry, Canandaigua  
Don Holman, Avon  
Jeffrey Janicki, Westfield  
Judy Kaleta, Tonawanda  
Al Kidd, Victor  
Christina Lynn Kotula, Camillus  
Stephanie Kutzke, Stanley  
Harold Kyle, Syracuse  
Hilary Lambert, Ithaca  
Jordan Leicht, Thousand Oaks, CA  
Lorraine Manelis, Avoca  
Robert Marquez, Fairport  
Dwayne May, Geneseo  
Tara McGrain, Rochester  
Mark & Jan Medyn, Walworth  
Valerie Mettler, Hornell  
Andreas Metzger, Owego  
Barbara Morrissey, Lakeview  
Clyde Morrison, Hilton

Nickolas Morse, Buffalo  
Frank & Kathy Occhiuto, Lancaster  
Laurie Ondrejka, Rochester  
Michael Pixley, Binghamton  
John Riskosky, Tully  
Gayle & Brooks Schneider, Rochester  
Paul Schnipelsky, Pulteney  
Karen Serbonich, Ithaca  
Waynette Shafer, Pottstown, PA  
Pamela Southard, Bath  
Lisa & Stryder Underwood, Alfred  
Christine Van Veghten, Buffalo  
James Wade, Syracuse  
Stephen Witherow, Canisteo  
Jesse Wixson, Ithaca  
Jonathan Wolfinger, Rochester  
Jude Woodarek, Springville  
Neil Yoder, Painted Post

# When a New Virus Strikes: 2009 H1N1 Influenza

by Cynthia B. Morrow, MD, MPH, Commissioner of Health, Onondaga County

*Editor's note: I cannot say enough about how Dr. Morrow's tireless work has contributed to the wellbeing of our community. We can all contribute to the health of our community and our family by getting the influenza vaccination.*

—Bob Michiel

In public health planning, we have long said that the only predictable thing about an influenza pandemic is that influenza is inevitable but unpredictable. For public health workers, the question of pandemic influenza is not a question of “if”; it is a question of “when” and “how bad” the next influenza pandemic will be. With this in mind, the four fundamental functions in planning and preparing for a pandemic are communication, surveillance, community mitigation (such as encouraging hand washing and social distancing), and clinical interventions (vaccines and antiviral medications.)

Several years ago, public health officials across the globe ramped up their influenza pandemic preparedness efforts as knowledge of H5N1 avian influenza became available. While this new influenza virus usually did not infect humans, when it did, it had an exceptionally high fatality rate. At the time, the concern was that if this virus mutated in a way that improved its ability for human to human transmission, the world would face a deadly pandemic. Fortunately, human to human transmission of H5N1 avian influenza remains extremely limited to date.

In contrast, in early spring 2009, reports began circulating about outbreaks of influenza-like illness in Mexico. Rumors spread about hundreds of people dying of this unknown illness. The cause of illness was quickly identified as a previously unknown influenza A H1N1 virus of swine origin and a distant relative of the flu virus that caused the 1918 pandemic. Routine influenza surveillance confirmed the presence of this same



virus in the United States. Within a few weeks, the novel virus was identified in numerous countries, primarily in individuals who had traveled to Mexico. Once established in a community, the virus quickly spread, indicating that the novel influenza A virus, unlike H5N1 avian influenza, was readily transmitted from person to person. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization declared that this novel virus represented the emergence of the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. The rapid identification of and response to the 2009 influenza pandemic can be attributed in large part to the global preparedness activity that had occurred in the preceding years. For the first time ever an influenza pandemic was aggressively tracked as it spread across the globe.

Like communities across the world, Onondaga County was profoundly affected by the threat of this new virus as we witnessed unprecedented levels of late spring and early summer influenza activity. In April and May 2009, the Onondaga County Health Department began investigating cases of this new influenza virus. One of the early limitations was that because this was a new virus with which the health community had no experience, we could not predict how severely the disease would impact our community. We had no record of the morbidity and mortality associated with 2009 H1N1. Using our surveillance and communi-

cation plans, we quickly learned that school children and young adults were disproportionately affected. This resulted in social disruption as children were excluded from school (community mitigation) and parents or guardians needed to stay home to care for them. Locally, by June some schools experienced absentee levels as high as 40%. As more people became ill, it became clear that while 2009 H1N1 had a high attack rate, the associated mortality was much lower than initially feared.

Over the summer and early fall, Onondaga County Health Department (OCHD), in close partnership with the New York State Department of Health, worked tirelessly to respond to and prepare for more influenza activity. The OCHD maintained regular communication about the pandemic with health care providers, hospitals, schools, governmental and community-based organizations, and the public throughout the summer and fall. Knowing that the international priority was to produce and deliver an effective and safe vaccine as soon as feasible, the public health preparedness staff focused efforts on developing a mass vaccination plan, targeting school age children who were most likely to both get the disease and spread the disease. Communication about the importance and safety of the influenza vaccine as a means of protecting the community was a fundamental role for the health department.

After a brief lull in influenza-like illness in July and August, in September 2009 influenza cases started to dramatically increase, with the second wave of the pandemic ultimately peaking the last week of October. Fortunately, by the time vaccines started arriving in October, the health department was poised to rapidly deliver it, in large part because of our partnership with Onondaga-Madison-Cortland Counties Board of Coopera-

*(Continued on page 21)*



# FLTC Policy on Geocaching, Letterboxing and Similar Activities

by Lynda Rummel, Vice President, Trail Quality

At its June meeting the FLTC Board of Managers adopted a policy on geocaching and similar activities. The rules governing these activities may be found in the box on the next page.

## A Little History

As described in *Wikipedia*, in the outdoor activity of “geocaching,” participants use a GPS receiver to hide and seek containers that are called “geocaches.” A typical geocache is a waterproof container such as a plastic storage bin (see photo) or a military ammo can. The cache contains a log book and typically small trinkets to be swapped. The cache is not supposed to be visible from the trail, which means the geocacher must leave the trail in order to hide the cache. The geocacher hiding the cache posts the cache’s coordinates on an Internet listing site. Other geocachers obtain the coordinates from the listing site and seek out the cache using their GPS handheld receivers. Geocachers who find the cache record their search adventures in the logbook and online.

Geocaching is similar to the sport of “letterboxing,” which has been practiced along the FLT for at least a decade and a half. According to *Wikipedia*, the letterboxing practitioner follows clues, now usually posted on the Internet but previously left in boxes or in personal communications. The clues may include puzzles which must be solved, compass coordinates, directions, paces to be followed, or other clues to find the hidden waterproof container that is filled with a special stamp and a log book.

Letterboxing originated in Britain in 1854. *Atlas Quest*, an online site for the letterboxing community, explains that letterboxing grew at a crawl until 1976 when a map locating existing letterboxes in Dartmoor National Park was published and letterboxing suddenly became wildly popular. So many participants trampled property, destroyed historic features, and

defaced locations with graffiti that the sport was almost banned. It was saved by practitioners voluntarily organizing around and following a set of rules that, among other things, respected private landowner rights. Letterboxing was popularized in the US by a 1998 article in *The Smithsonian* magazine; it has since been overtaken by geocaching as use of hand held GPS devices has grown.

## The Context for Geocaching and Letterboxing on the Trail

Trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System are allowed by agreement with or permission from public land managers or private landowners. Permission granted to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference by land managers and landowners covers only hiking and other forms of foot travel and trail maintenance; permission is not asked for, or given for, any other activities or sports. Standard FLTC Trail Use Regulations dictate that trail users must not litter, and so should not leave their own items on or along the trail. Trail Use Regulations also state specifically that trail users must not stray from the trail when on private lands.

The FLTC understands that these activities emphasize skills useful in the outdoors and acknowledges that geocaching offers an engaging approach to exploring the outdoors that appeals to a segment of trail users that seems to be growing. The FLTC also believes that letterboxing, geocaching, and other similar activities, **if carried out carefully with appropriate concern for the environment and with proper permission**, can be relatively low impact activities.

At the same time, the FLTC also recognizes the potential serious disadvantages to letter boxing and geocaching if not enacted with consideration for the environment and landowner or land manager permission. These potential drawbacks include infringement of property



*A typical geocache found while clearing trail*

rights, conflict with landowner and land manager permissions and FLTC regulations, degradation of resources, and conflict with “tread lightly” trail use ethics. **Of greatest concern is that any of these disadvantages could lead to loss of permission for the trail.**

Hence, the FLTC Board adopted this policy in order to strike a balance between the value of geocaching and similar pastimes as outdoor recreational activities and the potentially significant negative impacts to natural and cultural resources and landowner/land manager permissions that unmanaged geocaching and similar activities can cause. The Board enacted this policy for the primary purpose of protecting and preserving the continuity and long-term viability of the trail. The FLTC desires to minimize impact on the environment, maximize the hiker’s wilderness experience, and support the right of landowners and land managers to control public access to, and use of, their lands. The FLTC’s policy is also intentionally consistent with North Country Trail Association Geocache Policy and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s Policy on Geocaching.

□

## **FLTC's Policy on Geocaching, Letterboxing and Similar Activities: The Rules**

To minimize concerns and to protect the trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System, the FLTC acknowledges that geocaching, letterboxing, and similar activities on trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System may be appropriate, **but only under all of the following conditions.**

- **Where written permission has been obtained in advance from the landowner or appropriate land manager, providing a specific timeframe and a description of the location sufficient for the landowner or land manager and the FLTC to identify the site area.** Geocachers, letterboxers and the like are responsible for knowing the ownership of the lands they intend to recreate on, contacting the appropriate land-management unit or private landowner, and obtaining written permission and any permits that may be necessary. Written permission from the landowner or land manager is necessary to establish the temporary right of the "cacher" to carry out geocaching or letterboxing on the land and will exempt temporarily the cacher from applicable Trail Use Regulations. [Note: The geocacher or letterboxer may use the generic written permission form provided with this policy.] The lack of written permission will result in removal of the cache from the property.
- **Where the written statement of permission stipulates that the geocacher must take proper care to avoid damage caused by digging or trampling to vegetation, archeological evidence, trail tread and corridor or other fragile resources in the area, or damage to other aspects of the landowner's property.** The absence of this stipulation from the permission statement will result in removal of the cache from the property.
- **Where this written permission has been forwarded to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference office for review at least two weeks in advance of the start date.** The FLTC will confirm the written permission with the landowner or land manager. Failure to forward the written permission to the FLTC at least two weeks in advance of the start date will result in removal of the cache from the property.
- **Where the cache is labeled with the owner's name and complete contact information.** The contact information in the label and the written permission must correspond. Unlabeled caches will be removed.

Written permission is a necessary precondition for listing the geocache on geocaching websites. Registration with the geocache website's administrator for that location will be protested if any one of the above terms is not met.

The FLTC reserves the right to remove any geocache or letterbox found along the trail.

The FLTC's Policy on Geocaching, Letterboxing and Similar Activities and a generic permission form that geocachers and letterboxers may use can be found on the FLTC's website or obtained by contacting the FLTC Office at [FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org](mailto:FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org).

## **Mary Coykendall In Memoriam 2/22/1942- 6/6/2010**

Mary Coykendall was a woman whose many talents and energies will be greatly missed but certainly not forgotten. She was an early member of the FLT and her contributions to its early growth are many. She and Florence Pier took over the editing of the newsletter in 1973 for several years after Wally Wood resigned the job. She also wrote a well-researched and fascinating series of three articles about Indian Trails in NY State for the newsletter and also was the Conference Librarian for several years. She was the first woman Trail Sponsor and around 1967 completed a long section of the southern Bristol Hills Branch. According to Irene Szabo who is now the caretaker of what she fondly refers to as "Mary's Trail," this included obtaining landowners' permissions in addition to trail building. Mary was also a Life Member of the Conference.

Mary was born in Missouri but her work brought her to Rochester where she worked as a chemist in Eastman Kodak's Research Labs. She eventually became a catalog librarian for the Rochester Public Library. An avid hiker and biker, she rarely drove her car and preferred to walk to work from her home on Goodman Street. An accomplished musician and singer, she was a member of the Rochester Bach Festival Chorus, Rochester Oratorio Society Choir and the choir of First Unitarian Church of Rochester. She was an active volunteer in groups concerned with preserving the environment and seeking social justice.

The poet Mary Oliver has said "what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" I think Mary Coykendall knew exactly what to do. Hers was a life "well lived" and I believe we can all take inspiration from it.

— Georgeanne Vyverberg



## New Yorkers Win Big Awards at North Country Trail Annual Meeting

Over August 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, NCTA members gathered in Ashland, Wisconsin, luxuriating at a Lake Superior beach hotel for the annual conference of workshops, evening programs, hikes, boat rides, and that heart-warming evening when recognition is given to some of the most valued volunteers who contribute in special ways to the trail. New Yorkers fared well this year, thanks to several good nominations sent in by the board of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, the Central NY Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, and by individual members.

**Annette Brzezicki** of Foothills Trail Club, our own Wally Wood awardee this spring, received the **Leadership** nod from the NCTA, too, for her ability to whip others into enthusiasm and effort they didn't know they were capable of. You read about her special leadership style in the last issue of this magazine.

The **Communicator Award** was given to **Irene Szabo** for her work editing and writing for the NCTA magazine, *North Star*, and for promoting the North Country Trail in the *FLT News*.

**Distinguished Service** was bestowed on **Kathy Eisele**, active with ADK-Onondaga and the CNY Chapter of the NCTA. When those who know her heard of her award, every one of them reacted, "It's about time!" Kathy has been one of those steady contributors in many ways, a person one could always count on to finish whatever she promised...and on time...a person whose thorough conduct of any task is so welcome. She has served long years on the boards of both the FLTC and the CNY Chapter and has been trail care coordinator for both ADK-ON and CNY.

Our longtime super-volunteer **Ed Sidote** received the NCTA's highest award, **Lifetime Achievement**, for precisely that, over forty years' worth of outreach, trail building, great ideas like the county hike series, starting the Bullthistle Club in Chenango County, and his ongoing efforts to help ambitious hikers succeed as end-to-enders. He even provided information and encouragement to Nimblewill Nomad, last summer's hiker who walked the entire North Country Trail, all 4600 miles of it. Because he declined to drive to Wisconsin to be honored in person (that he can still drive in daylight at the age of 92 is amazing enough!), George Zacharek and Irene Szabo met him at Bowman Lake State Park to tell him about his award in front of George's video camera. The video was then shown during the award ceremony in Wisconsin, which was a big hit.

Actual presentations of the several award plaques will be made at our Fall Campout in October. □

*NCTA Awards (top to bottom):*

*Annette Brzezicki - Leadership Award*

*Irene Szabo - Communicator*

*Kathy Eisele - Distinguished Service*

*Ed Sidote - Lifetime Achievement*

Jacqui Wensich



Lynda Rummel



Al Larmann



Marty Howden





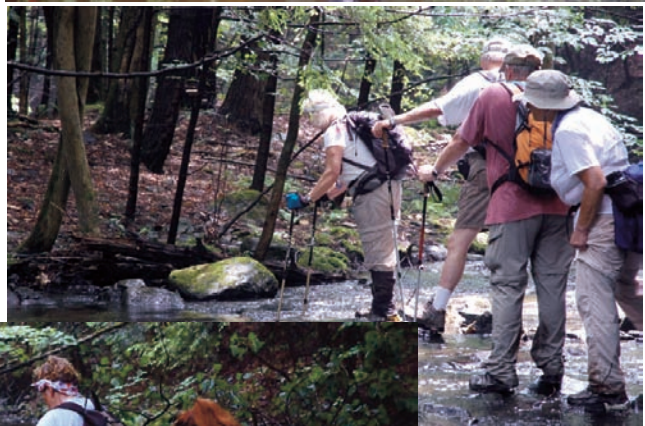
# Hiking Bullthistle Country, Chenango County

by Jon Bowen , Hike Series Coordinator

**T**he county hike series has completed five hikes and 59.2 miles across Chenango County, Ed Sidote's home area. Ed has been at each hike cheering on hikers and helping with the sag wagons. Ed seems to know everyone along the trail and has been able to provide us with terrific parking areas. June's hike utilized the parking lot of the Outpost restaurant where hikers enjoyed liquid refreshment and some ordered dinner after completing the strenuous hike.

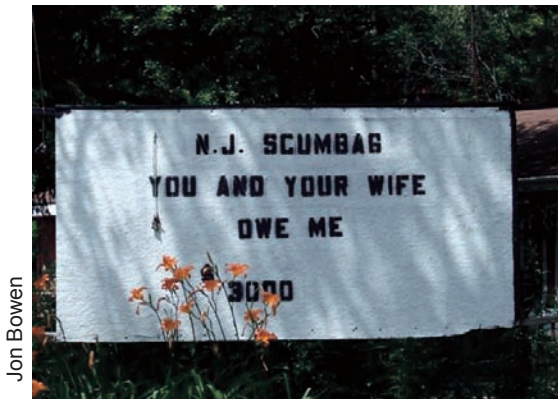
Chenango County trails are gently rolling with few large ascents or descents. Weather at times has been quite warm, but watermelon at sag wagons has spurred on the hikers. The trails have been in great shape and are a joy to hike thanks to Roy Dando and his crew from Triple Cities Hiking Club and Tom Bryden and his crew from the Bullthistle Hiking Club. This year we have had a terrific group of "prehikers" who complete minor trail work and help prepare for the onslaught of the hike series.

We have two hikes remaining in September to complete the remaining 14.5 miles of trail. The participants will be looking forward to finishing the hike series on September 25 and the final picnic at the DeRuyter Fairgrounds.



June: Fording Ludlow Creek. Below: Why hikers had to ford the creek.

Photos by Jackson "Jet" Thomas.



Jon Bowen

July: A memorable sign



Jackson "Jet" Thomas

August: Picking blackberries





## Wildflowers along the Trail, #31: A walk through vine country

RWW Taylor

**M**ost of the trailside plants referred to by the informal term “wildflower” fall into the more formal category of **forb**. This unusual-looking term (derived from a Greek word meaning “food” or “forage”) means simply an herbaceous—or non-woody—plant other than a sedge, rush or grass, especially one growing in a field or meadow. Forbs are plants whose above-ground parts die away each winter, plants that need to re-grow from seeds or roots each flowering season. This characteristic distinguishes forbs from **shrubs and trees**, plants with woody parts that persist through the winter cold.

Cutting across this botanical characterization is the idea of a **vine**, a weak-stemmed plant that cannot support itself and must make its way in the world by climbing, twining or creeping. A fair percentage of the plants whose blooms lend color and interest to our summer landscapes—for example, a great many of members of the widespread bean and pea family—are in fact vines by growth habit.

While most of the vines filling in the niches along our trailsides are forbs, some species do form woody stems, occasionally of impressive size. Under the right conditions, for example, a vigorous stand of wild grape vines can steadily, year by year, take over and essentially strangle a large woodland tree. A (fortunately) slightly less aggressive climber is common poison ivy [*Rhus radicans*], a compact aggregation of whose woody stems can sometimes be seen in midsummer bursting into attractive but noxious bloom at head height.

Late spring is the time when fields and hedges fill with masses of sprawling vetch plants, bearing clusters of purple blossoms accompanied by spreading tendrils at the ends of neat parallel rows of leaflets. You may have to look hard to find the small sparse blossoms of the most delicate species of this tribe, slender vetch [*Vicia*

*tetrasperma*]. No one needs to look hard, though, to spot blossoms of the related crown vetch [*Coronilla varia*], a non-native species whose irregular pinkish flowers now cover vast stretches of roadsides and fields each summer as a result of deliberate propagation over the years by highway departments as a ground cover. Crown vetch does not actually qualify as a vine, as it is able to establish its own independent upright stems. This is not true of another non-native member of this family, everlasting pea [*Lathyrus latifolius*], whose sturdy twining tendriled stems crawl along through other vegetation to set up the common midsummer sight of a prominent, tangled patch of vivid pink blossom.

A more delicate vine, one that is a native species, is virgin's bower [*Clematis virginiana*]. Given the right conditions, this plant can spread thickly through a neglected trailside spot during the hot days of August, trailing across trees and bushes alike, and

proffer a wild profusion of four-petaled white blossoms to the late-summer sun. Later on each flower will form a wispy seed structure, deservedly earning this plant its alternate common name of “old man's beard”.

In the same sort of low, damp spots that favor the vigorous summertime growth of virgin's bower can sometimes be found flourishing another native vine, wild cucumber or balsam-apple [*Echinocystis lobata*], which occurs across much of the US and was used by native Americans for a wide variety of medicinal purposes. The genus name here refers to the spiny fruit of this interesting plant, while the species name refers to the easily-spotted, star-shaped lobed leaves. When in full bloom, a wild cucumber plant typically sports masses of white flowers rising in vertical clusters from a horizontally-growing stem, the longer clusters bearing male flowers and the shorter clusters female flowers, and can be an impressive trailside sight. □





# End-to-End Update

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

## New End-to-End Hikers

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

- #290 Lois Justice
- #291 Linda Busko
- #292 Ken Shaw

Ken Shaw of Buffalo completed the trail in 49 days (he had estimated 50) as a fund raiser for TOY (Theatre of Youth in Buffalo). Last I heard they had reached \$5000 in pledges.

[Donations can be made to TOY by calling 716/884-4400 or online at [www.theatreofyouth.org/backwoods.php](http://www.theatreofyouth.org/backwoods.php) or mailed to Theatre of Youth (Attn: Backstage to Backwoods), Allendale Theatre, 203 Allen Street, Buffalo, NY 14201.]

New branch trail end-to-enders:

Quinn Wright

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

Aaron Keller, Rochester  
Larry Silba and his son, Newark Valley  
John Snyder, Wilson  
Jan Snyder, Wilson  
John Mangus, Orange, CT  
Harold Herring, Las Cruces, NM  
Irene McCarty, Rochester

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

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Scott Bahantka         | Irene McCarty     |
| Kevin Brown            | Jeff Keenan       |
| Larry & Susan Blumberg | Mike Schlicht     |
| Kirk Doyle             | Larry Silba & son |
| Jerry Lazarczyk        | Carol Watts       |

and for the branch trails:

|                           |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Mary Ann Cascarino        | John Morris    |
| Kirk House                | Will Rodin     |
| Aaron Keller              | Mike Schlicht  |
| Dave Marchner & son, Mike | Don Sutherland |

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

## Car Spotters

Added:

Ann Keller, Franklinville, Map M3, Ellicottville thru Farmersville, and Conservation Trail from Fancy Track to Darien Lakes State Park

Removed:

Don French, Hornell, Maps M8 through 11  
Don Doster, Hornell, Maps M8 through 10

## Annual Sidote Hike a success

The Annual Sidote hike was a success again this year. Thirty hikers from far and wide participated. The forecast was for rain; however, it did not rain. Sidote passed out snacks before and during the hike and acted as the sag wagon, but no one dropped out of the hike which was strenuous, as it started with a long and steep climb up Truman Hill. Two routes were offered in the Partridge Hill area on Map M22. The short hike started at Will Warner Road and ended at the Braxton Memorial Bench and the long hike started at the Otselic Creek fishing access parking lot on Rte. 26 at base of Truman Hill and ended at the Braxton Bench where hikers had lunch. The short hike was two miles and the long hike was an 8-mile loop.

Remember Gerry Benedict's cartoon about the runway, in the last issue? There is another airplane runway for one-seater planes on a farm on Will Warner Rd. en route to the trailhead. You have to cross the runway in order to reach the trailhead a half mile or so away. I have never seen any of the planes flying.

## Excerpt From a Trail Register Notebook

*Between Tucker Rd. and Stone Quarry Hill Rd., Chenango County (M24) 04-16-08. Second visit (with my dogs Betty & Buster again). Glorious spring day. The area is clean. Thanks so much. I cleaned the trail as I walked. My husband (Chris) and I own part of the FLT. This place is wonderful. Keep it nice please. Pat LaCotta*

*The LaCottas' son did his Eagle Scout project on the parents' section of trail. He built a bridge over a ravine.*

*Happy Hiking!*

Edward J. Sidote, [ejsidote@frontiernet.net](mailto:ejsidote@frontiernet.net)

5 Clinton St., Norwich, 13815-1903

607/334-3872

**Our sincere thanks for  
gifts in memory of:**

***Richard Carlson***

from

Pat Monahan  
Joyce Hallenbeck

***Mary Coykendall***

from

Joyce Rikert

## Pooh-Bear & Happy-Tails' Big Adventure on the Finger Lakes Trail

April 4, 2010 - May 14, 2010

by Jan Barlow (#289), Brimfield, MA

**W**ith my old hiking boots on my feet, my old ultra-light backpack and ultra-light tent on my back, it was time to hit the trail again. With my faithful hiking companion by my side, complete with her doggie backpack, we were ready to start our big adventure on the Finger Lakes Trail. Since I had been laid off at work, it seemed like a good opportunity for me to indulge in my passion for hiking until I received that call to go back to work. It was a last minute decision to go hiking which became a wonderful experience for Happy-Tails and me. We were dropped off at the western end of the trail late on Easter Sunday afternoon. It was a beautiful sunny day....the best way to start a hike!

This is how we got our trail names: my trail name is **POOH-BEAR**. While I was hiking the Appalachian Trail the bugs were horrible!!! It was just one big black cloud of black flies; they were in my nose, mouth and ears—you get the drift; they were unbearable. I went “pooh-pooh” to get the bugs out of my mouth and then I was called **POOH**. About two miles further on I saw eight big black furry legs which looked like bear cubs. My eyes got big, my mouth dropped, my stomach tightened and did flip-flops as I knew enough not to come between a bear cub and its mother. I did not move but froze in my footsteps. When those legs came out from behind the brush, I was relieved to see that it was only two big black dogs (oops!) so after that I was dubbed **POOH-BEAR**. **HAPPY-TAILS** got her name on the Long Trail in Vermont because she is always so happy. If you look at her mouth you can actually see that she is smiling. She shakes her tail when her backpack is first put on to get it set just right on her back and is eager to go. She looks at me with that “let’s go” look.

It is so great to have the opportunity to be able to get out and hike with my



*The eastern end!*

dog. We both just love it out there. She is an awesome trail dog and sniffs her way around the trail, and it is just amazing how sometimes when there is no trail, just white markers, it is as though she knows how to read the markers. I know it is a coincidence but she will look up at the white marker and then off she goes in the correct direction. (Smart dog!)

We started out on this hike with the idea that it would be a week or two long, but it turned into just under six weeks and we ended up doing the whole trail. During the hike, I felt like the postman who delivers the mail through rain, snow, sleet, freezing rain and dark of night, and 90-degree weather (all of which conditions we had). We even had hail, which did hurt when it hit my legs as it came down sideways with the wind blowing at 40 mph. I had shorts on and the hail was coming fast. But we made it through the entire length of the trail. Out of all the trails that I have completed (I have done a lot), I found that this trail was one of the prettiest hikes, and the one with the longest road walks. All of the road walks that were on dirt were very pretty and enjoyable. We saw deer every day on the trail; I can’t believe how many deer are out there in New York. It was very neat to watch the season come alive from the stage of no green to being surrounded by green and

beautiful flowers. A lot of the trail was hiking along rivers, streams and waterfalls which were oh so pretty. Happy-Tails is a great hiking partner; if only I could get her to carry more....just kidding! She sniffs out the trail and is usually correct. She even made friends with the cows and horses that we passed along the way. Everyone that we ran into just loved Happy-Tails and thought she was so cute sporting her own doggie backpack. With our matching blue backpacks, we made quite a pair heading down the trail.

The Finger Lakes Trail is a beautiful trail. If you would like to read more of my story, go to [trailjournals.com](http://trailjournals.com) and type in **POOH-BEAR** and enjoy reading my day-to-day hiking adventure. This trail was an awesome trail to hike. We did not see any hikers for weeks, but had the trail to ourselves as it was early in the season. It was nice to be out there and away from everything. Some people will say to me, “you call this fun?” and I say “yes, we are having fun!!!” There is never a bad day on the trail!!

If you get the chance, I suggest that you hike the Finger Lakes Trail, and I guarantee that it will be a great adventure for you.

Happy Hiking!!



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## The Adventures of Two Cousins on the FLT

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**April 29, 2005 - May 25, 2010**

**by Lois Justice #290 and Linda Busko #291**

*"We could not have completed this hike without the support of each other. We had each others' back and hoped out health would hold up until we finished!"*

**L**ois, from North Tonawanda and Linda from Huntingdon, PA, had been meeting in the Ellicottville area, hiking the ski trails, checking out the historical sites when Kevin, son of Lois, gave us a map of the Finger Lakes Trail. That was all it took. We purchased the maps, discovered more about the Conference and that was the beginning of an unforgettable journey.

At the FLTC's Montour Falls Spring Meeting in 2005, we completed three hikes in the Watkins Glen area. We had a champagne toast with other hikers in honor of our first official hikes. In October of 2005 at the Allegany State Park Fall Campout we completed Map M1. In May of 2009 at the Frost Valley Spring Weekend, we finished the Catskill area hikes. The conferences were a wonderful introduction to the trail; we were greatly encouraged by our fellow hikers.

We met some interesting people on the trail. Lynda Rummel was painting blazes; a work crew had just finished the grading the day before, and we were the first hikers to come through. Kathy Foote organized some great hikes in the Catskills. We met other nice hikers including Pat Monahan. After the hikes, we had lots of laughs which we will long remember.

We introduced two friends to the trail on what, unfortunately, turned out to be the "Hike from Hell"—the east end of Alder Lake to the Balsam Lake trailhead was 8.2 miles and seven grueling hours. There was no snow when we started (October, 2005), but two miles in the snow hit. Pine boughs were pressed to the ground; we couldn't see the white blazes and the snow piled up to over ten inches. We reached the highest point of the FLT



*#291 Lois Justice, #290 Linda Busko*

(3750'). It was dark as we signed the register.

On the remainder of the hikes, it was just the two of us. We camped some—less mileage and gas and being right on the trail, as well as experiencing the woods at night, were plusses. Other times we stayed in lodging, getting a hot shower, good food and a soft bed with less weight to carry, and meeting the local people and seeing the local sights.

There were some memorable sights, like at the end of the day when the last few miles are all uphill, when you think you have crossed the last hill and look up to see a fire tower, beautiful in the dark. Waterfalls, beautiful streams, vistas, long rows of red pine in plantations with white blazes, old farmsteads with stone fences, and an

outcropping of huge rocks inspire us to move forward. Pastures with grazing animals, tree sentinels of oaks, maples and cherries, and the fall leaves, the first snow move us forward. The spring awakening of the forest with its masses of hepatica, trillium, trout lily, lady's slippers and jack-in-the-pulpit move us forward. There were coyote tracks in the snow; there was a foggy dawn with the rising mist, and there was ice on the trail and birds galore. We saw a stump that looked like a bear and a real 300-pound bear grazing near Interstate 88. We saw a yellow bellied sapsucker feeding its young in a dead tree. We watched a migration of orange efts and heard owls calling in the night. We watched a raptor drop two moles and a snake on the trail. There was a snail eating the gills of a toadstool and a toad hopped over both of them. We saw several garter snakes and a water snake. We were allowed to eat grapes in a vineyard. All this inspired us to move forward yet remember as we went along on our journey.

The weather did play a part in our hiking. With the tar bubbling underfoot and an umbrella over our heads, we hiked in western New York on the hottest day of the year (95 degrees on an August 1, 2006, map M5 road-walk). In October 2006 we completed 8.6 miles in our ONLY day of rain! It was torrential. We hiked this with Kathy Foote on map M27 in the Catskills. Later there were flash floods on M28 with much storm damage to the area, including damage to homes. In March of 2009, we hiked in light snow but with extreme winds

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Two Cousins End-to-End ...

(Continued from page 11)

and a half inch of sleet. All in all, it was not too bad.

Our most memorable off-trail experience was in the Catskills at Bethel Woods, site of the Woodstock Festival. We then drove 142 miles and 3½ hours round trip for three days, just so we could stay a whole week in “Brook Cabin” in Claryville; it was well worth the effort.

A memory of a different sort is of the time we met a dairy farmer on M15 (Schuyler County) with terminal cancer who was fishing from a bridge. He was with a twelve-year-old boy who helps him milk. This young boy had had a heart valve replaced at the age of six. We talked for awhile, giving encouragement and hugs. We gave thanks to God many times along the way as the sun’s rays shone through the trees.

Thanks to our families and friends for all the encouragement and interest. We would also like to thank everyone, past and present, for their volunteer time and hard work. We appreciate the trail maintainers, local clubs and FLT Board members and car spotters. Special thanks to the property owners who allow us to cross their lands and for being there sometimes to cheer us on. Thanks to Robert Muller for establishing the end-to-end badge fund. Thanks to Ed Sidote for his vision and love of the trail and for making it special for each and every end-to-ender by giving us a handwritten certification card along with the patches. Finally, thanks to our president Pat Monahan for all of his hard work. Thanks for the beautiful memories. □

### ***Congratulations, Joan!***

On August 3, Joan Young of Michigan, until recently the webmaster for the FLTC, became the first woman to complete the 4,600 miles of the North Country National Scenic Trail on foot.



Don Holman

### ***Rain or shine, they got their Wegmans Passport rubbing***

*Hiking 101 series hiker doing a passbook rubbing on M12 along the Mitchellsville Gorge (Passport Hike #7). It rained the entire hike, so hike leader Kim Meacham held up a rain jacket to keep the passbooks dry enough for the rubbings (co-leader Terry Meacham on left). The 12 passport hikes are easy and attractive hikes, designed to be fun for new hikers and families with children. You can get your copy of the passport booklet at any of the dozens of distribution sites listed at [www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org), where you can also download a PDF version of the booklet.*

## **Landowner Profile: Pat Carroll**

**by Jacqui Wensich**

I met Mr. Carroll in 2003 when I took over a two-mile piece of the Foothills Trail Club’s Conservation Trail in Genesee County just south of Darien Lakes State Park (Map CT8 between access points 1 and 2). We chat several times each year. I always ask if he is receiving the *FLT News* and if he has encountered any problems on the trail. There has never been a problem from hikers. I sometimes bring him cookies.

This past spring, I decided to try to get more historical information from Mr. Carroll. He and his wife Helen have lived on this property for nineteen years. He purchased it as a hobby from the grind of fifty years as an auto worker for General Motors.

Pat and Helen Carroll had over 125 acres and farmed mostly buckwheat. Their farming hobby became a full time job. He has long since retired from GM and sold much of his land, keeping the corner acres on Mammoth and



Warner Roads (thus allowing hikers access for the .2 mile before the woods). Mr. Carroll often tells me about the “new” neighbors and what has occurred as it affects the trail.

Mr. Carroll allows parking just off the road near the Warner Road trailhead if it is dry. The Carrolls have been exemplary landowners, enjoying and encouraging the hikers.



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Article removed at author's request



## Trail Topics



# TQ

**Lynda Rummel**  
**Director of Trail Quality**

### Improving Trail Quality and Maintainer Safety: FLTC Chainsaw Policy and Training

The second of two chainsaw courses scheduled for last spring was held on May 15 and 16, at Birdseye Hollow State Forest near Hammondsport. Our fabulous instructor, Bill Lindloff, again put the students through 16 hours of intense and rigorous training; but, as we have come to expect, the students greatly appreciated the experience and the new skills and knowledge that they gained. In between, participants stayed for free at the Reginald Wood Memorial to Scouting (aka, The Scout House) in Hammondsport. Breakfast was supplied by an anonymous donor. Thanks to a grant from the National Park Service, free PPE (Personal Protective Equipment, including chaps, helmet, gloves, and first aid kit) was also provided. The Finger Lakes Trail Conference paid the minimal rental fee for the Scout House and picked up the instructor's stipend for the second course.

Last April, Marty Howden, the FLTC's chainsaw training coordinator, and I prepared a summary of our FLTC chainsaw training program for the National Park Service (NPS) and the North Country Trail Association (NCTA), both of which have been involved in funding the courses. It describes, especially for the benefit of new staff, the step-by-step plan that Marty and I developed and have been following since the spring of 2007. Following is a brief summary of the plan and our progress towards our goals:

Three years ago, the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC) began to ramp up its chainsaw capacity, primarily to better meet the needs of its growing number of *individual* trail section maintainers. The first step was to identify two volunteers to lead the charge—one [Marty Howden] to learn exactly what training was necessary and to secure funding and instruction, the other [Lynda Rummel] to put together a plan and work on putting proper policies, procedures and expectations in place. The second step was to establish an FLTC chainsaw policy that, along with supporting the NCTA's chainsaw policy, addressed the needs of individual trail maintainers. The policy asks sawyers to roam outside their "home areas" so they can help each other and form the core of temporary crews

### How to Contact Trail Management

Steve Catherman, Vice President of Trail Maintenance  
7399 CR 89  
Bath, NY 14810  
stevec@roadrunner.com  
607/569-3453

Lynda Rummel, Vice President of Trail Quality  
968 Esperanza Drive  
Keuka Park, NY 14478  
ljrassoc@roadrunner.com  
315/536-9484  
315/679-2906 (Jan-Mar)

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

Quinn Wright, Director of Crews and Construction  
3 Roberts Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14206-3031  
wrightquinn@hotmail.com  
H 716/826-1939, C 716/818-6990, Fax 716/826-1786

Joe Dabes, Director of Trail Inventory and Mapping  
kabjnd@msn.com  
607/844-3872 (Apr. 20 - Oct. 20)  
352/861-0563 (Oct. 20 - Apr. 20)

mustered to help with problems or projects beyond the individual maintainer's capabilities. The third step was to put into place the expectation that sawyers would work in teams of at least two whenever possible. Fourth, we set the objective of trying to train enough sawyers to average a team of two for every 20 miles of NCT/FLT and National Forest trail.

We have now reached this goal, and in the process, have also certified several volunteers from the NCTA's Central NY Chapter. However, since sawyer certification is good for only three years, we will need to continue to provide training annually so that sawyers can be recertified and replacements can be certified. We do not yet know our average retention rate; but we are guessing that one course a year of 12 students, with seats reserved for re-certifiers first, will meet our needs.

We expect to hold this one course in the spring, just as the trail maintenance season begins. In light of the likelihood of reduced funding from the National Park Service, we expect that trainees will be asked, as they once were, to provide all of their personal protective equipment except perhaps the chaps, which we *hope* to provide for them in order to

ensure that the chaps are UL-approved (participants may be asked to contribute to the cost of the chaps, too).

If you need to take the course next spring in order to be recertified, please be sure to contact Marty Howden ([howser51@yahoo.com](mailto:howser51@yahoo.com)). If you are interested in becoming a certified sawyer, contact Marty, as well.

*Postscript:* Curious to see how the one-day course offered at the NCTA Conference on August 5<sup>th</sup> differed from our two-day course, I attended the morning lecture and then talked with several attendees afterwards to learn what had been covered in the afternoon field work. The United States Forest Service instructor was an experienced sawyer crew boss; his two C-level assistants were certified to teach sawyer training. The class of 11 students consisted of both re-certifiers and “newbies.” The instructor said upfront that

the class was “a real abbreviated course,” which would certify students only at the most basic skill level (A). The class provided once-over coverage of chainsaw operation and maintenance, saw and site safety, basic rules for bucking, and the fundamentals of felling *small* trees using the traditional notch and the open face cut with wedges. When asked, the instructor explained the plunge (bore) cut and re-certifiers were coached in its use. Re-certifiers to whom I talked thought the course (especially the movie on chainsaw maintenance and operation from chainsaw manufacturer STIHL) was a good refresher for them, but they also felt that without the time for reinforcement and practice, newbies were somewhat overwhelmed and possibly lost. Students going through our two-day course are certified to both A- and- B-levels *and* have been taught some skills associated with level C.

*Right: May 1-2 class.*

*Bill Lindloff (instructor), Jeff Darling, Marty Spoor, Dave Knights, Malcolm Comfort, John Wallenhorst, Bob Husband, Tom Wallenhorst, Marty “Chainsaw” Howden, Pete Wybron, Peter Marks, Gary Mallow, and Roger Hopkins (the photographer, not pictured)*

Roger Hopkins



*Left: May 15-16 class.*

*Front row, L to R: Pat Monahan, Joe Wawrzyniat, Paul Hoffman, Mark Musso, Kirk Doyle.*

*Back row, L to R: Gary Haff, Tom Trifuso, Carol Worden, Quinn Wright, Bob Kremens, Dan Wilson, Gus Phillips, Bill Lindloff (instructor)*

Lynda Rummel







## **Trail Topics, continued...**

**Quinn Wright**  
**Director of Crews**  
**and Construction**

### **Tamarack lean-to in Danby State Forest (2010 Alley Cat project #1)**

I was thinking to myself early in the spring of this year, “Most of my working career has involved planning, so why are you so nervous about this project?” I couldn’t come up with an answer other than that I’d never even used a lean-to and here I was responsible for getting one built. What a foolish waste of mental and emotional energy! The crew that volunteered for the various aspects of this project was absolutely phenomenal! For much of the time during this project I was afforded the opportunity to really study how a lean-to is built—how lucky for me. I couldn’t be happier about how the project developed and was completed.

By all accounts the old lean-to was about 70 years old and firsthand inspections by Cayuga Trails Club (CTC) members along with the DEC’s Rich Pancoe confirmed that the lean-to was in very poor condition. The DEC and CTC concurred that the lean-to needed to be replaced. Thus began the need for an Alley Cat project. CTC approached the FLTC to ask for an Alley Cat project, and the wheels were then in motion to find funding and the staffing necessary to replace the lean-to.

#### **A daunting task**

So, how does this daunting task get accomplished? Well, first we needed a project manager. Gary Mallow of the CTC was reluctantly convinced to fill that role and what a blessing for me that he agreed to do so. Gary was absolutely spectacular in his efforts—virtually every contingency was accounted for in his planning. Ken Reek agreed to be the construction manager and was equally spectacular in leading his crew to a very successful conclusion within the scheduled five-day construction schedule. Bob Collins graciously agreed to try to document the entire project on video and still photographs. The major highlights deserve some detail: funding, demolition, housing, food, materials and purchasing, construction, documentation and clean-up.

Funding is always a major issue! The DEC cut the trees, had the logs milled and debarked, and then stored the logs for several years until we were ready to use them (my most recent information reveals the value of the logs to be \$3,500); we received the logs at no cost. Still we needed

money for purchased materials to complete the installation, for miscellaneous supplies and equipment, and for food to feed the hungry crews. We approached the National Park Service (NPS) about a Challenge Cost Share project and asked them to provide a financial contribution of \$3,270 toward the anticipated full value (\$26,000) of the lean-to. The NPS agreed to make that contribution. That money was used to purchase materials for the lean-to, food, and a generator. A final accounting for the project reveals the value of the project to be \$41,000! On top of that, CTC received a donation from the Eastern Mountain Sports store in Ithaca in excess of \$2,000. That money was used to pay for supplies and housing. The biggest cost was, and always will be, the time to plan and accomplish the project. Thirty-nine different people worked on this project. Almost 1000 direct labor hours, almost 250 travel hours, and almost 200 administrative hours were donated by these wonderful volunteers; federal guidelines value charitable hours at almost \$21/hour. The total value of the volunteer time contribution was \$29,000!!!

We couldn’t put a new lean-to up unless the old one was demolished and all traces of the shelter removed except for logs that could be used as fire wood. So on April 3<sup>rd</sup> Gary Mallow’s crew of Matt Branneman, Joe Cobb, Phil Dankert, Samuel Hernandez, Roger Hopkins, Peter Marks, Eric Mastroberti, Shellie Northrop, Tom Reimers, Paul Rumsey, Dave Schurman, Jennifer Shirk, and Jack VanDerzee tore down the venerable Tamarack Lean-to. (The previously buried time capsule was never found.) There was some final clean-up and material and site preparation work done by Dave Burnett, Jim Connors, Mike TenKate, and Paul Warrender. Thanks to their marvelous work, the site, access to the site, and materials were ready for construction of the new lean-to.

#### **Housing and feeding the crew**

I have heard from countless volunteers that they are willing to camp out, if necessary, in order to accomplish a project. Well, camping for me has become a room with a bed AND with a separate room with running hot and cold water for personal hygiene. Call me spoiled, but it’s just not in my make-up to ask people who are working in difficult conditions to “rough it.” So, I challenged Gary Mallow to find someplace close to the work site where people could rest and recover from their hard day of labor. Not only did he find space at the Lions Club Camp Badger, but the rooms slept two people and each room had its own bathroom. The price was quite reasonable, but thanks to the generosity of Eastern Mountain Sports, our hard-working volunteers did not have to spend any money for housing. If any of you feel particularly generous, the Lions Club Camp Badger, which provides summer camping services for disabled children, could use some donations. Most of its



funding came from New York State and its state funding was totally eliminated this year.

Originally, we were going to have to cook outdoors. That turned out not to be the case! Jacqui Wensich, who took on the task of preparing breakfast and dinner for the entire crew for the full week, somehow convinced the management of Camp Badger to let her use their commercial kitchen. Jacqui, along with her extremely competent partner Laurie Dando, presented absolutely wonderful meals complete with desserts every night. Breakfasts were another matter!! Whoever would suggest that Alley Cat crew members could ask for an individual made-to-order breakfast might be asked, “Are you nuts?” Well, I would have been asked that very question. Jacqui and Laurie did that very thing—Laurie would come up and ask how I wanted my eggs and what I wanted with them, and Jacqui would make it exactly as ordered! I thought I was in a restaurant. These ladies have set the bar very high. I’ll never promise this kind of cooking arrangements in the future, but I’ll always hope that it can happen again.

### **The “glamorous” part—construction**

Materials and purchasing are a big headache on any project. The difficulties here are alleviated because of the



*Photos by  
Bob Collins*

*Above: Eggs made to order for the crew by Jacqui Wensich (top) and served by Laurie Dando.*

*Top left: Ever higher! Clockwise from left: Ben Petryszak, Dave Drum, Roy Dando, Melanie Okoniewski, Ken Reek, Bob Kremens.*

*Group photo. Front: Bob Emerson, Melanie Okoniewski, Jordan Leicht, Quinn Wright, Shoki, Joe Cobb*

*Back: Don Sutherland, Roy Dando, Dave Drum, Roger Hopkins, Ken Reek, Georgia Binder, June Meyer, Gary Mallow*

marvelous “How to Build a Lean-to” manual authored by Ken Reek and Bob Emerson. It contains a complete list of necessary-to-purchase materials as well as the number and size of logs. The ever-present in many capacities Roger Hopkins took on the task of soliciting quotations (five in total) and awarding the contract for the building materials. Unintentionally, he even provided an example of “just-in-time” delivery. Most materials were delivered a day before the project started. However, the roofing panels arrived approximately one hour before they were needed. I didn’t dare ask him if that was accidental; I just credited him with perfect timing.

The glamorous part of the project is building the lean-to. However, there are technical and non-technical aspects to it. The technical and often very physical crew members who built this shelter’s foundation, walls and roof were Matt Branneman, Roy Dando, Dave Drum, Bob Emerson, Bob Kremens, Melanie Okoniewski, Ben Petryszak, Ken Reek, Margaret Reek, and Don Sutherland. Others of us helped as needed and were used to perform many other important tasks that included ground preparation for the lean-to foundation, material handling, privy repair, privy installation, bench construction, picnic table construction,



stone walkway construction, water diversion berm, trail work, signage, site clean-up, firewood cutting and stacking and whatever miscellaneous work came our way. These very important helpers were: John Andersson, Georgianna Binder, Vito Brancato, Joe Cobb, Joe Dabes, Emily Hughes, Jordan Leicht (14 years old and all the way from California), June Meyer, and Pat Monahan.

The first major task, requiring a very significant and mathematical skill set, is that of sorting and determining which logs are used where. I was totally unaware of this job and if Margaret Reek were not so skilled at this task I could see many problems cropping up. While Margaret set about that task, a crew of people set about the task of digging a flat, square and level base for the foundation. Then Ken and his crew began the task of constructing the lean-to. The author had the privilege of oftentimes just watching this large group of dedicated hard-working, selfless volunteers transform a pile of logs and piles of other materials into a finished lean-to that should stand at least another half-century.

The efforts of Bob Collins should not go unrecognized. He has provided several video disks of the construction process as well as hundreds of pictures. These will be available to be used in conjunction with the Ken Reek's construction manual to assist future lean-to builders. Roger Hopkins also has a vast inventory of photographs of the project on the CTC website ([cayugatrailclub.org](http://cayugatrailclub.org)). The project was not complete until several of our chainsaw sawyers with helpers walked our way out felling dead or disfigured trees to obscure the access trail used to transport the logs and materials to the worksite. With a few years of re-growth there will be no evidence of that trail. I cannot thank each of the volunteers enough for doing such a thorough and professional job on this project. Through-hikers and day-hikers looking for a spot of comfort will surely enjoy this lean-to and picnic area, and on behalf of them I thank all thirty-nine people who contributed to making this lean-to project happen.

## Tinker Falls trail reconstruction (2010 Alley Cat project #2)

Several years ago the DEC approached the ADK Onondaga Chapter about rerouting the trail above the crest of Tinker Falls because it was deemed to be too dangerous. Slowly, but surely, ADK was making progress to complete the trail relocation, but the progress was not as fast as the DEC or ADK would have liked. ADK approached the FLTC about having an Alley Cat project. We met with the DEC and it was agreed that stairs would be necessary to escape the stream bed and to traverse the very steep slope to an area where extensive switch-backing trails would begin. Tony Rodriguez agreed to be the project manager.

Tony believed that building two sets of stairs and two landings as well as the lower set of switchbacks would fully occupy five days. I had no reason to disagree with his

(Continued on page 20)

Our sincere thanks for a gift in recognition  
of:  
**Ken and Margaret Reek**  
in appreciation of their help as car spotters  
from  
**John Mangus**

Tony Rodriguez



Tinker Falls group photo: Shoki in front. Front row: Tony Rodriguez, Frank Occhuito, Bill Coffin (Quinn Wright behind Bill), Gus Phillips, Ray Sergott, Dave Drum. Second row: Dave Potzler, Barb Navik, Ron Navik, Melanie Okoniewski, Shellie Northrop, Georgia Binder, Gerry Benedict, Mike Loftus, Steve Cooper, Jason Benedict. Joe Cobb in rear.

Quinn Wright



Installing mesh and railings, top to bottom: Joe Cobb, Frank Occhuito, Dave Drum, Melanie Okoniewski

# Trail Topics, continued...

(Continued from page 19)

evaluation since he had flagged the route for the switchbacks with the DEC's forester, Rich Pancoe. Tony believed that the upper sets of extensive switch-backs might require another three to five years to complete. What we didn't anticipate was that a total of thirty hearty volunteers would be involved in this project; there were an average of 18 to 20 people on each work day!

## Creative solutions

As with any project, Tony had to worry about getting money, food, housing, and, of course, volunteers to go along with a plan to make this project happen. Funding is always a major issue! Tony had obtained a small grant from the North Country Trail Association (NCTA) when he had hoped to accomplish this project last year; he hadn't used that money so it was still available. But, last year's plan had not included a stairway up the slope; nor had it included food for a large crew. Realizing that we needed more money, we sought and obtained another grant from the NCTA and we were ready to go.

Now, what about food? Who would prepare it? As I have said earlier, I cannot find it in my heart to ask people who had toiled through a hard day of work to then cook for themselves. What about housing? Tony had only imagined a very basic camping arrangement near the worksite. No beds, no showers, and no toilets—I just find those conditions unacceptable. However, I also know that many of our volunteers will still volunteer under those conditions. Regardless, I challenged Tony to see if he might improve on the cooking, eating, and living arrangements. Through a lot of hard work, Tony came up with some significantly better conditions.

Tony found four people who volunteered to cook the evening meals at home and then bring them to wherever people were going to rest for the night. Wonderful meals were prepared and served by Mary Coffin, Sigi Schwinge, and Lucy Hawkins. Jacqui Wensich was prepared to provide a fourth meal, but that meal was not required as the reader will discover later.

Tony found a wonderful compromise to a full rough-camping experience. The Highland Forest County Park of Onondaga County graciously agreed to allow our campers to camp in a tenting area that is not normally made available to any group other than youth groups. But, beyond that they allowed us to use a park community shelter that has a stove, refrigerator, and sink. So, the meals prepared at home could be kept warm or re-heated and then served at tables under a roof. This also allowed our campers to make a variety of breakfasts and lunches in a kitchen.

In addition there were complete lavatories with running water near the shelter. On top of that, Mike Gebhard loaned

a propane-heated portable shower with an enclosure that we connected to a hose attached to the lavatory building that allowed people to clean up after a hard day of work. So, even though the tenting area, with privy and a shelter in case of inclement weather, was over a mile from the community center, people had a chance to rest comfortably before beginning a night of restorative sleep.

## An amazingly successful project

A group of volunteers (Rafal Kulczynski, Mike Loftus, Frank Occhuito, Ed O'Shea, Gus Phillips, Ross Piciucco, Dave Potzler, Tony Rodriguez, Mike TenKate, and Jack Wheeler) showed up the day before the construction began to deliver tools and materials to the work site. Indeed, this was the beginning of a very successful project.

Monday morning arrived and a crew of 18 began work. A stone base to support the stairs out of the dry stream bed was needed—Tom Babcock, Dave Drum, Mark Hittle, Pat Monahan, and Ray Sergott pursued that essential task with enthusiasm, expertise and vigor. The stairs needed to be ready once the base was firmly established so Mike Loftus, Frank Occhuito and Dave Potzler began that task. Tony Rodriguez took Georgianna Binder, Joe Cobb, Bill Coffin, Ron and Barb Navik, Larry Newman, Shellie Northrop, and Gus Phillips to work on the lower switchbacks that were needed. Tony fully expected this task to take all week. Little did he realize how skillful and hard-working this crew would be; they finished this task in ONE day!!

Tuesday and Wednesday arrived. The stairs and landings traversed a full thirty-six feet of hillside! The pictures don't really do justice to show the steepness of the hillside—even my dog could not find enough footing to stay in place! But, by the end of the day on Wednesday the stairs and landings were complete—a day longer than we had hoped, but a beautiful result. We needed to bring Joe Cobb and Dave Drum from the trail work to help with the stairs because the task was just too heavy and the slope too steep. Melanie Okoniewski helped with final stair details and trail step work on the lower section on Wednesday. The trail workers added Steve Copper, Sigi Schwinge, Gerry Benedict and his son Jason (all the way from Bandera, Texas) and the whirling dervish trail construction efforts continued. The progress was beyond the planners' (Tony and Quinn's) imaginations, but not beyond this skillful and focused crew of volunteers.

On Thursday, to add frosting to the cake, a group of men (Gerry and Jason Benedict, Joe Cobb, and Ray Sergott), working in a steady rain, built a new set of stone steps on the other side of the creek. By mid-day on Thursday, the entire section of stairs and switchbacks (including return of tools, scrap) that the ADK group and I had thought would take three to five years had been completed in three and a half days!! Final finishing trail work was done this day. The dedication, energy, expertise and quality of the volunteers who help on the FLTC Alley Cat projects continue to amaze me and I thank every one of you. □



## Trail Medicine ...

(Continued from page 3)

tive Educational Services and every school superintendent in our community. By mid December, over 19,000 school age children were vaccinated in school-based clinics across the County by the health department and thousands of other county residents were vaccinated by their health care providers.

Now, in the aftermath of the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, we have learned many valuable lessons:

1. The unpredictability of influenza A viruses remains predictable: We must never let our guard down and never minimize the impact that a new virus can have when it strikes. While we were extremely fortunate that mortality rate associated with

2009 H1N1 was not as high as initially feared, mid-range estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that about 20% of the US population had H1N1. The rapidity of spread of this pandemic is sobering.

2. A safe, effective vaccine is the cornerstone: Vaccination has been and will continue to be the most effective weapon that we have against influenza viruses. Vaccination protects the individual and high vaccination rates in a community protect everyone. The decades old safety record of influenza vaccines has consistently proven that influenza vaccines are safe. A 2009 H1N1-like vaccine virus strain will be one of three influenza vaccine viruses included in the 2010-2011 seasonal influenza vaccine.

3. Good old fashioned common sense can impact on disease transmission: Using good hand washing techniques and appropriate cough etiquette, and staying home when you are sick can protect the people around you!

4. It takes a community to protect a community: Successful strategies for communication, surveillance, community mitigation, and equitable distribution of vaccines or medications require that multiple stakeholders work together to minimize the impact of a pandemic. The traditional public health system can only be effective at the local level if it fully engages health care providers, school systems, businesses and community based organizations, local, state and federal government agencies and the media.

Happy hiking and get vaccinated! □

### 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.

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

Correctly located the sign on the Letchworth Trail (Map L2):

Irene Szabo

Kirk Dolye

Melissa & Anthony Duell (both Passport hikers)



## 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:

Irene Szabo, Recognitions Committee Chair, [treeweenie@aol.com](mailto:treeweenie@aol.com), 585/658-4321, 6939 Creek Rd, Mt. Morris NY 14510, and copy Gene Bavis, Executive Director: FLTC, 6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt Morris, NY 14510, [gbavis@rochester.rr.com](mailto:gbavis@rochester.rr.com). **Nominations, especially for the Wally Wood, are requested before the end of December.**

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

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

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

*About half of Shawn's crew are pictured (those who were still there when the photo was taken). Shawn is second from the right in the front row.*



**Eagle Scout Project Completed in Klipnocky State Forest**

**by Ron Navik**

Shawn Buono, from Boy Scout Troop 9 in Hornell, completed a major trail improvement project in Klipnocky State Forest on Map M9, just north of Access 3. The trail there goes through an area of basketball-sized rocks as it descends into and out of a gully. The footing there has always been difficult, especially in wet conditions. The trail now traverses several long, gentle switchbacks down to the creek, instead of the steep direct descents. Even on the switchbacks, the footing was still difficult because it was impossible to get all the rocks to fit together enough to prevent movement when people walked on them. The

solution was to haul gravel and dirt by wheelbarrow from other areas to fill in the spaces between the rocks, and make a much smoother walking surface.

Shawn had some difficulty recruiting enough Scouts for the project because many were working or traveling with their families, so he recruited his whole extended family, from grandparents to young cousins, who all pitched in.

This section of trail is now much easier and safer thanks to their hard work. Many expressed interest in getting to know more of the trail, and the troop is planning a hike to include this section so they can get to enjoy their efforts. □

**FLTC Business Members**

|                                    |                           |                   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Bath Veterinary Hospital           |                           | Bath, NY          |
| Bloomfield Animal Hospital         | Catherine Stiner, DMV     | Bloomfield, NY    |
| Bristol Views Bed & Breakfast      | Henry & Barb Owens        | Naples, NY        |
| Davidson Shoes, Inc.               | Mark Hogan, President     | Canandaigua, NY   |
| Downsville Motel                   | Al Carpenter              | Downsville, NY    |
| Eastern Mountain Sports            |                           | Peterborough, NH  |
| Hickory Hill Family Camping Resort | Randy & Janet Lehman      | Bath, NY          |
| Holiday Valley Resort              | Jane Eshbaugh, Mktg. Dir. | Ellicottville, NY |
| John M. Andersson Engineering      |                           | Ithaca, NY        |
| Monro Muffler Brake                |                           | Rochester, NY     |
| Wegmans                            |                           | Rochester, NY     |
| William G. Becker & Sons, Inc.     | Brian W. Becker           | North Java, NY    |

*We encourage members to thank these businesses, which support the Finger Lakes Trail, and to use their services. Addresses, contact information and links to these businesses can be found on the FLTC web site:*  
[www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org)





### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2010

#### Fall / Erv Markert hike

**Leader:** John Morris [john.ax.morris@gmail.com](mailto:john.ax.morris@gmail.com)  
607/753-7256

#### Queen Catharine Marsh Loop Trail, Watkins Glen, Map QCMLT (also shown on map M15)

**Hike:** The QCMLT, in combination with the FLT Map M15, makes an eight mile loop through the Catharine Creek Wildlife Management Area, a protected natural wetland at the south end of Seneca Lake in the Village of Watkins Glen. This is a very level, easy hike, utilizing a rail trail and other passageways through the wetland. Waterfowl and other wildlife, along with the changing colors, promise to be abundant this time of year.

**Meet:** 10:00 AM at Lakeside Park (labeled as Clute Park on Map QCMLT) in Watkins Glen at the southern tip of Seneca Lake.

**Directions to meeting location:** From Rt 17/86 take exit 52A (NY 14) into Watkins Glen. Turn right on E 4th St (NY 414), Lakeside Park will be on your left in about 1/2 mile.

**Carpooling:** From the Binghamton area, please contact Larry Blumberg, [LBlumberg@stny.rr.com](mailto:LBlumberg@stny.rr.com) or 607/797-0912

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2011

#### First Annual winter / Howard Beyé Hike

**Leader:** Cathy Concannon, [catrina616@gmail.com](mailto:catrina616@gmail.com)

#### Bristol Hills Trail, FLT Map B1

**Hike:** Break out those boots and snowshoes and start working off all of those cookies, cakes, etc., you ate during the holiday season. As Howard spent quite a bit of time maintaining parts of the Bristol Hills Trail, we will celebrate his service by hiking his favorite area, High Tor, where we will utilize both the Bristol Hills Trail and the High Tor Blue Trail to complete a loop of approximately 5-7 miles.

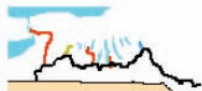
You can expect some climbing and possible views of the lake. Please pack a lunch and water and dress in layers appropriate for the weather. And although Bob & Ruth's is closed for the season, Monica's Pies is open year round. Pack a spoon or fork as people have been known to dig into one of their famous grape pies (or one of many other varieties!) on the ride home.

**Meet:** 10 am at the parking area near access point 5 of FLT Map B1. There is some additional parking at Bob & Ruth's Restaurant at the intersection of NY Routes 21 and 245 in Naples, although they do not plow during the winter. Please try to carpool to reduce the number of cars.



*On a very warm and muggy day in July, thirty people came out to enjoy the FLT Conference's annual summer hike, named for Ed Sidote. This hike took place in Chenango County, and each of the hikers had the opportunity to meet and greet Ed, the hike's namesake. The hike was planned and led by Don Windsor of the Bullthistle Hiking Club, Ed's home club. Photo by June Granz.*

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  
summer issue's Name That Map is on page 21.*



Bob Collins

## Hunting Season

On the FLT (in the DEC's "southern zone") the 2010 deer hunting dates are:

Archery: 10/16 to 11/19, 12/13-12/21

Regular: 11/20 (Saturday) to 12/12

Muzzle loading: 12/13 - 12/21

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.



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

FLTC, Inc.,

6111 Visitor Center Road Mt. Morris,

New York 14510

(585-658-9320), or

e-mail address

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

## Club Presidents Council

The Club Presidents Council is composed of regional organizations 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](http://www.adk-nfc.org)

Foothills Trail Club

[www.foothillstrailclub.org](http://www.foothillstrailclub.org)

### Rochester Area

ADK Genesee Valley Chapter

[www.gvc-adk.org](http://www.gvc-adk.org)

Genesee Valley Hiking Club

[www.fingerlakestrail.org/gvhc.htm](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org/gvhc.htm)

### Syracuse Area

ADK Onondaga Chapter

[www.adk-on.org](http://www.adk-on.org)

### Ithaca and Elmira

ADK Finger Lakes Chapter

607/936-3988

Cayuga Trails Club

[www.cayugatrailclub.org](http://www.cayugatrailclub.org)

### Corning Area

Three Rivers Outing Club

607/962-5157

### Binghamton Area

Triple Cities Hiking Club

[triplecitieshikingclub.org](http://triplecitieshikingclub.org)

### Chenango County

FLT-Bullthistle Hikers

[www.bullthistlehiking.org](http://www.bullthistlehiking.org)

### Eastern NY

ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter

[www.midhudsonadk.org](http://www.midhudsonadk.org)

## Thank You



Landmax Data Systems, Inc.

5919 E. Henrietta Rd.

Rush, NY 14543

(585) 533-9210

[www.landmaxdata.com](http://www.landmaxdata.com)

Donor of land boundary research and property information for the Finger Lakes Trail and the North Country National Scenic Trail



## FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE

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**Roger Hopkins** • 163 Asbury Rd, Lansing, NY 14882 • 607/257-9778 • [roger@naturalhighs.net](mailto:roger@naturalhighs.net)

**Phil Metzger** • 120 Thompson Creek Rd, Norwich, NY 13815 • 607/334-2407 • [pmetzger@frontiernet.net](mailto:pmetzger@frontiernet.net)

**John A-X. Morris** • 2449 Gee Hill Rd, Dryden, NY 13053 • 607/753-7256 • [john.ax.morris@gmail.com](mailto:john.ax.morris@gmail.com)

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**Phil Dankert** • 32 Dart Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850 • 607/257-2578 • [pdankert@twcny.rr.com](mailto:pdankert@twcny.rr.com)

**David Drum** • 9105 S. Lake Rd, Hammondsport, NY 14840 • 607/569-2294 • [drumdl@gmail.com](mailto:drumdl@gmail.com)

**Donna Flood** • 5010 Salt Rd, Clarence, NY 14031 • 716/759-6442 • [dmflood@roadrunner.com](mailto:dmflood@roadrunner.com)

**Gail Merian** • 392 Whaupaucau Rd, Norwich, NY 13815 • 607/334-9794 • [rockhound48@hotmail.com](mailto:rockhound48@hotmail.com)

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

September 25-29 ....Alley Cat Crew, Allegany State Park, Map M1.

**October 1-3 .....Fall Campout, Hickory Hill, Bath.** Registration form at [www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org)

October 16 .....Annual Erv Markert (Fall) Hike. Queen Catharine Marsh Loop Trail, Watkins Glen. See p. 23

Oct 16 - Dec 21 .....**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 29 .....Deadline for submitting material for winter issue of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*

November 6-7 .....Crystal Hills Trail (Great Eastern Trail in NY) trail construction in Corning area. Contact Pat Monahan for details [pmonahan@stny.rr.com](mailto:pmonahan@stny.rr.com)

November 12-14 .....Board/Committee Retreat, Letchworth State Park

January 15, 2011 ....First Annual Howard Beye (Winter) Hike. Bristol Hills Branch Trail near Naples. See p. 23.

**May 20-22.....FLTC Spring Weekend and Annual Meeting, Cazenovia College. Save the date!**

Please check the FLT website ([www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://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

## ***Trail Towns: Blodgett Mills***

**by Ray Recchia**

In Cortland County on Map M20 of the Finger Lakes Trail there is a 5.9 mile road walk that forms a hairpin shape. The trail leaves Tuller Hill State Forest, and then travels north along West River Road on the west side of the Tioughnioga River (pronounced "Tie off nee OH gah") to the nearest bridge, and then heads south along the east side of the river along U.S. Route 11. It heads east again along Hoxie Gorge Road, and shortly thereafter leaves the road again.

The Tioughnioga River is a tributary of the Susquehanna and it flows south, but the valley it lies in is actually broader in the north and narrower in the south. In addition the tributary streams, such as the one that enters at Hoxie Gorge, flow in a northerly direction. These clues have led geologists to believe that at one time the Tioughnioga River, too, flowed in a northerly direction instead of south as it now does, with the change most likely occurring during the glaciation of the northeastern United States

At the center of the hairpin and located mostly on the west side of the Tioughnioga, is the small hamlet of Blodgett Mills, with a population of perhaps one hundred people. There is one four-way stop sign in Blodgett Mills where the Finger Lakes Trail makes a 90 degree turn, and there are three points of interest within a few dozen yards of that stop.

First, on the two separate roads leading west and north of the intersection, there are bridges that cross a small creek that flows, not surprisingly, northward. Along the banks of that creek, it is very easy to find fossil trilobites, brachiopods, and other marine creatures from Silurian and Devonian periods between 450 and 350 million years ago.

Second, on the northeast corner of that intersection is a house that may have had ties to the Underground Railroad that helped runaway slaves escape to Canada prior to the Civil War. In the 1970s, the family that owned that home was doing some renovations when they discovered a hidden extra cellar space that no one knew was there. In 1849, in the village of McGraw four miles away, there was a college founded that had roughly 50% African Americans as students, and there were definitely homes in McGraw that were used to shelter runaway slaves. Given the age of the foundation of the home in Blodgett Mills, and the concealed nature of the basement, it is thought that this space too may have been a shelter for slaves on their way to safety.



Ray Recchia

*View from the bridge in Blodgett Mills looking down the Tioughnioga*

Blodgett Mills has a much more recent historical link to the infamous presidential election in 2000, when Al Gore lost in the Electoral College despite having more popular votes. In 2000, Ralph Nader ran his strongest Green party presidential bid, and many pundits speculate that if the votes that went to Nader in Florida had gone to Gore instead, he would have clearly won the state and thus the election. 2000 was Ralph Nader's second run at the presidency though, and in 1996, a woman named Betty Wood ran his first campaign out of her home in Blodgett Mills, New York. At the four-way stop, there is a playground extending back from the southeast corner. At the back of the playground is a church that has been converted into a home. That building was where Betty Wood ran the 1996 presidential campaign for Ralph Nader. The 1996 Nader campaign did not get anywhere near the notice that the 2000 Nader campaign got, but more than likely it laid the ground work, and Betty Wood, operating out her converted church home in Blodgett Mills, played a crucial part in that campaign.

It is easy to imagine a path going down from Tuller Hill State Forest, and then a bridge going from there right across the river straight to Hoxie Gorge Rd, so the whole hairpin could just be removed. There is no such bridge though, and instead the dedicated end-to-ender gets an extra five miles added to their trip. But now our faithful end-to-ender has a river that flows backwards, the Underground Railroad, and presidential politics to think about along the way