

Finger Lakes Trail

NEWS

Fall 2013



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- * ***Hiking with Ghosts in the Catskills***
- * ***Confessions of an Alley Cat Cook***
- * ***Thru Hiking the Great Eastern Trail***

President's Message

Pat Monahan

As many of you know, I am also the project manager for the Crystal Hills Trail in Steuben County. Over the past eight years, hundreds of people from across NYS and beyond have rolled up their sleeves and dug in the ground for well over 55 miles to create our newest branch trail. It was a rainy June day when Terry Meacham (Board member and trail maintainer) and I cut out a very dense section of honeysuckle with the flagline barely visible in the middle of this thicket. It was a great day knowing that the trail was one step closer to completion. In a mere couple of weeks after our efforts, the first two Great Eastern Trail (GET) thru hikers, "Someday Jo" and "Hillbilly Bart," would walk this very spot on their journey to reach the northern terminus located at the junction of the Crystal Hills Trail and the FLT main trail at the Moss Hill leanto in Steuben County. It was quite a celebration in the woods with their friends from New York as they both became end to end hikers #1 on the GET.

This adventure, and each of your adventures into the woods, would not be possible without the hundreds and hundreds of volunteers who have built and maintained the FLT trail system as a premier footpath across NYS. Thank you for your volunteer efforts whether they be large or small.

I also would like to congratulate three New Yorkers for their outstanding volunteer efforts along the North Country Trail. They were recognized for their work at the North Country Trail Association's Annual Conference in August at Slippery Rock University, Pennsylvania. Congratulations to Mary Coffin, Lifetime Achievement Award, Larry Blumberg, Sweep Award, and Tony Rodriguez, Trail Maintainer Award. It is very humbling and exciting to witness several of our own members receive national recognition for their efforts. They are truly an inspiration for all of us.

On November 15-17, the Board of Managers will hold its annual retreat at Watson Homestead Retreat and Conference Center near



Pat Monahan joined the Hiking 101 July session, and here the group is arriving at CR 13 near Hammondsport, from the south on the Bristol Hills Branch, map B3, after they hiked new sponsor Kirk Mishrell's tidy section

Corning. Over the weekend, we will be study our long range planning document with a focus on membership and marketing issues. We will also review our financial investment plan and its role in fulfilling our mission to build, protect, enhance and promote the FLT. We will review and approve our 2014 budget as the FLTC begins its 52nd year as an organization.

Finally, later this month you will receive a letter under separate cover asking you to assist the FLTC financially in its annual appeal. This is the only time that we will ask you to help financially in addition to your membership. 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.

Add some New York color to your life—go take a hike!!! 🍁

Join the FLTC Yahoo Groups E-Mail List

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference's e-mail list is a discussion group hosted by yahooogroups.com. Its purpose is to allow the subscribers (approximately 650 people) to communicate information to each other pertaining to FLT hikes and other FLTC activities, and to also allow subscribers to post general hiking-camping-backpacking and/or FLT-related questions that can be answered by any of the other participants.

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

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

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!

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FLTC Office Hours

We are normally open Mondays and Thursdays, 9:00 to 2:30, but there are frequent exceptions, so call ahead if you want to be sure: 585-658-9320

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COVER PHOTO :

8-year-old Thayerin Coppola, son of Marcus, digging the latrine during last year's Alley Cat to build a shelter in McCarthy Hill State Forest on the Crystal Hills Branch. We're sure he'll protest that now he's NINE!
Photo by Jacqui Wensich

This page: Trailside swamp on Map M6, southwest of Letchworth State Park. Photo by Jennifer Hopper

Almost There: Hiking the Crystal Hills Trail

Joanna "Someday" Swanson with input & inspiration by "Hillbilly" Bart Houck

New York always seemed so far away, but one calm morning we woke up to the sounds of Pennsylvania's Cowanesque Lake waving us northward. Pennsylvania was almost behind us, and by noon we would be in our final state. The Great Eastern Trail (GET) was coming to an end, and we were almost there.

My best friend Bart and I are trail-builders for the West Virginia section of the Great Eastern Trail. Looking for adventure, we left the GET's southern terminus at Flagg Mountain, Alabama, with the vague and questionable notion that somehow we'd make it to the Moss Hill Leanto in New York. The new GET had yet to be hiked from end to end, so it was no surprise that most people we met along the way weren't familiar with it. The Great Eastern Trail is a collage of local trails linked together to create an extraordinary long-distance footpath ending in the north on the Finger Lakes Trail. Along the way, existing trails host the GET and retain their own identity and markings. In places where there aren't linkable trails, clubs and intrepid individuals have taken on the challenge of creating a linking trail, a project that, if we're lucky, will take only years and not decades.

Five months on the trail gave the two of us a long list of character-building experiences: we struggled with freezing rain, surprise snowstorms, wrong turns, deer ticks, occasionally questionable blazes, gear malfunctions, and each other. We hiked north with winter, but gradually spring caught up and we watched the world blossom. Summer had not officially begun as we hiked the last miles to the New York border, but it truly was a perfect summer day nevertheless. A country roadwalk currently links the Mid State Trail in Pennsylvania with the Crystal Hills Trail of New York. Roadwalking was something I dreaded at the beginning of the trip but learned to enjoy due to often expansive views and a lack of things to trip on. We hiked a little faster as we neared New York, reaching the state line around noon. We stood at the NY/PA border, thrilled and a little dumbfounded: after almost 1,600 miles of hiking, we had just New York's 55 miles to go. Almost there.

The sun wasn't any brighter on the northern side of the

border, and I'm sure my pack wasn't any lighter, but it felt that way as we meandered on bucolic roads to McCarthy Hill State Forest. The trail winds past Levi Pond at the Pinnacle State Park on its way to a much-appreciated, well-kept shelter built in 2012. Our 20-mile day flew by more happily thanks to a surprise visit from Pat Monahan, Trail Angel

Extraordinaire, who left us goodies and some newspapers. He was either trying to ease us back into the real world or give us fuel for a fire, but both worked. For only the second time in the entire five month trek, we had the energy to make a campfire. The terrain of New York was gentle compared to what we were used to, so although we were tired, we did not ache. I settled in to write in my journal, detailing the twists and turns of the day, and ended with



Almost there in South Bradford State Forest less than 1 mile to the Moss Hill leanto.

Pat Monahan

"We are happy."

From McCarthy State Forest, the Crystal Hills Trail/GET travels through Pinnacle State Park, through Addison, past colorful Victorian homes, through the coolest cemetery on the trail, and near a beautiful waterfall known as Little Niagara on its way to the Erwin Wildlife Management Area. The trail is a mixture of blazed, flagged, and soon-to-be blazed sections that will be worthy destinations for backpackers and dayhikers alike. Pat and his dogs Nike and Callie helped us find our way through a couple of tricky spots in an unblazed segment, and although we humans put in a 20-mile day, the dogs shamed us and did at least 30 miles each.

Quiet forests and rolling countryside made for relaxing hiking with frequent breaks near streams and small waterfalls, and at night we settled in for a stay at Watson Homestead. The kind folks there helped us slowly ease back into civilization in a charming location. The Crystal Hills Trail has some incredible landowners who make this trail possible.

Almost there. I awoke on the morning of June 18th in a bit of a daze. We were only six miles from the end of the trail, an easy 3-hour walk despite a slow but persistent uphill grade. A group of FLT enthusiasts were meeting us at the last road crossing of the trail at 1:00, meaning we had the entire morning to cover only 5 miles, a mere 0.3% of the overall trail. We

continued on next page...

hit the trail around 9:00, hiking up the Watson Homestead's Huff and Puff Trail (perhaps the most accurately named trail of the entire journey). The sky threatened with a few dark clouds, keeping the day cool. As we continued the gentle climb through Meads Creek State Forest, the orange blazes seemed to become landing beacons for our long-wayward feet. And although we'd had months to think about the end, the reality was still a little hard to fathom.

Bart and I truly enjoyed sharing the trail with friends old and new who came to share our hike, and we were particularly humbled that several people planned to make the trip to the Moss Hill lean-to with us. When we approached the rendezvous location on Bailey Road and heard sounds of cars and laughter, we took a moment for private reflection. We tiptoed back into the woods for a tenth of a mile and sat down for one last trail lunch and few quiet moments alone together before sharing the last mile.

Almost there. We popped out of the woods and reached Bailey Road only to find a gathering of trail enthusiasts along with print and media outlets to document our last steps along the trail. After a brief blitz with media reality, we began the final

mile to Moss Hill lean-to and the end of our journey. The trail down to the lean-to is well constructed, switchbacked at a 10% grade losing 800 feet as its way to the creek. Together, Bart and I approached the shelter and sat on its floor at the exact same moment; we started the hike as a team and had planned to finish as such. While we and our new friends feasted on cheese and goodies, it still didn't seem real. Our new friends soon retreated back up the hill while Bart and I enjoyed one last night on the trail. The crackling of the fire (#3 of the trip!) kept us company along with a lifetime of memories that had been crammed into less than half a year. We were done.

In the end, it is not the views of the trail that stick with us, though they were breathtaking. It's not the mileage hiked or even the act of finishing the trail that means the most. The most memorable aspect of the adventure was the kindness of people we met. We got by with not a little, but *a lot* of help from our friends – friends whom we often hadn't met before. They offered assistance, experience, and company. This is a trail made by volunteers, trail angels, and an adventure that belongs to you. A spectacular section of the Great Eastern Trail is in your backyard; GET hiking. 🍁

Maintainers and Hikers Invited to Trail Management Meetings at Hickory Hill (10/26) and Springville (11/9)

Every fall, Trail Maintenance and Trail Quality hold two meetings for trail maintainers and any other interested parties in either the western or the eastern part of the state. If you can't make the drive this year, next year's meetings will be held near Virgil and Bainbridge.

The meetings this fall will be held at:

Hickory Hill Campground, 7531 County Route 13, just north of Bath, October 26th, from 10-3, especially for folks near the main trail from west Portageville (M 7) through Watkins Glen (M 14), the Letchworth, Bristol Hills, or Crystal Hills Branches, and the QCM/MFHL

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 591 E Main St, the east side of Springville, November 11th, from 10-3, convenient for those who hike or work on the main the main trail from Allegany SP east to west Portageville (M 6) and the Conservation Trail

The content of both meetings will be roughly the same, although each will be informed by your experiences and the problems you have encountered. [This year's meetings will feature:](#)

Marty Howden, Western Regional Trail Coordinator for the FLTC and Coordinator of our Chainsaw Training, who will teach you about Operational Safety Leadership, a risk assessment program in which Marty was trained by the National Park Service that can improve the safety and overall quality of your hikes and your work outings. Marty is a retired park administrator for the NY State Parks.

Bob Kremens, one of our most colorful and energetic trail builders, who will speak about his personal experiences dealing with emergencies in the backwoods. Dr. Bob (PhD, not MD) is a certified sawyer, trained forest fire fighter, and EMT for his local ambulance corps, as well as a professor of Imaging Science at RIT.

Irene Szabo, trail maintainer of long experience, who will explain how to restore any of the routed destination signs present on your trail. They need it now!

Who should attend? Hiking club members, hike leaders and participants, section sponsors and maintainers, potential club and "alley cat" crew members, land-owners and land managers, from anywhere across the state, but especially if you live in the western or west/central part of the state!

Why? Well-informed FLTC members, trail users, and trail maintainers are key to keeping landowners enthusiastic about the trail, providing hikers with good hiking experiences, and attracting new members to the FLTC. In short, the continued existence of the FLT System depends on all of us – those who build and maintain the trail and those who host it or hike it -- knowing more about who owns the lands the trail runs on and their expectations for maintenance and user etiquette, how and why the trail is laid out the way it is, safe trail building and maintenance practices, so we can speak intelligently to landowners and land managers, other trail users, potential hikers, policy makers and potential supporters of hiking whenever we meet them. 🍁

BRING YOUR LUNCH, YOUR QUESTIONS, AND YOUR IDEAS!

End-to-End Update

Jacqui Wensich, End-to-End Coordinator

Newest End to Enders

Main Trail:

- #354 Georgiana Binder, Wayland - June 25, 2013
 - #355 Alan Bangel, Candor - July 14, 2013 (Alan is also a 46er and did the Catskill 3500.)
 - #356 Susan Thomas and
 - #357 Tim Sweeney, Binghamton- July 27, 2013
 - #358 Irene McCarty, Rochester- August 25, 2013
- Branch Trail: #78 Theresa Evans (#310 main trail), Syracuse -August 3, 2103

Updates:

The trio of Will Roden, Mary Ann Cascarino and Don Sutherland completed the Crystal Hills Branch Trail June 23rd. All three are Branch & Main Trail end-to-enders. Mike DuMont has begun his Branch Trail hikes with the Bristol Hills despite the torrential rains slowing him down. Main trail updates were received from Geoff Rose, Mike Martina, Michael "Bodhi" Rogers, Anna Keeton, Melissa Cohen, Sue Finn, Scott Brooks, Scott Geiger and Michael Maue. Dan LoVullo and Jesse Voremberg of Hamilton College Class of 2015 are backpacking the main trail and so is Ken "Bigmully" Lewaine of Belford, N.J. Dennis Dooley, Fairbanks, Alaska, started his thru hike August 11th and Joshua Doan started on August 22nd. Tim Boltz of Butler, Penna., completed a long backpacking trip on the main trail meeting up with Jackson Thomas and the county hike group. David Grant of Liverpool is beginning his E2E hike in August. Paul and Kathy Good of Horseheads plan to finish with Steuben County early next year. Susan and Larry Blumberg of Binghamton are getting closer. (For those following Thad Lunceford, he had to stop with his thru hike July 24th due to poor health. He has less than 80 miles to go, so I am sure he will finish when his health permits.)

TIPS for aspiring End-to-Enders:

1. Review the End to End Hiking section on the FLT website.
2. Join the FLT yahoo group (often find more spotters, specific location hints.
3. Purchase Joe Dabes' updated FLTC manual for thru hikers through the website.
4. Purchase New MAPS (remember FLT members receive a 20% discount for all purchases)
5. CHECK Trail Conditions on the website frequently and look back over the last few years' worth if you have older maps!
6. If you are not already a member, join the FLTC; membership supports this wonderful trail
7. LET ME KNOW you plan to complete the main/branch trails.
8. Email captioned photos as you hike and keep trail notes so you can write your E2E article.



Judith Keller #56 & Joseph Anastasia #57

A recent comment by Michael "Bodhi" Rogers is an excellent example of what to do when planning an end to end hike:

"This is just a quick email to let you know that I'm working toward becoming an E2Eer. Although I've previously hiked several sections of the FLT the official start of my E2E was on June 2, 2012 during the 50th anniversary celebration. I've been doing many of my hikes with my wife Anna Keeton, who started her E2E hiking a few years before I started (so I'm working to catch up to her). I'm hiking with the Schuyler County Cross County Series hike this summer and by the end of the summer I hope to complete Schuyler, Ulster, and Delaware Counties. I'm using Java Joe's MS Excel spreadsheet to track my miles. I've also been using my GPS to record all of my hikes, and it has been fun to upload my progress to Google Earth.

"Way to go, Bodhi!!"

Car Spotters:

From hiker Ken Fellers-

"I completed a 4-day hike on Monday from access 1 on map M1 to access 12 on map M3. Pat Haynes spotted my car for me. Thanks much for the assist. She was very nice and it was very helpful."

From #355 Alan Bangel-

"Ray Zinn was spotting for me again and he was available for all three days. That alone took a lot of pressure off because we now knew each other and had developed a routine; we could count on each other. "

We ALWAYS need more car spotters, so please email jwensich@rochester.rr.com to apply or find the form directly from the website. This includes the Branch Trails. (For a complete list call or email below)

Sad news: #57 Joseph Anastasia of Vermont passed away July 23, 2013. He was 83. Joseph's wife Judith (#56) was at his side. He remained a very active hiker, climber and skier. He hiked over 9,000 miles on treks following his retirement at 59. He was active in trail concerns, gardening and his church.

"Happy Hiking" from Ed Sidote 🍁

Contact: Jacqui Wensich
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A Bout of Nostalgia

Irene Szabo

Photos by Jacqui Wensich

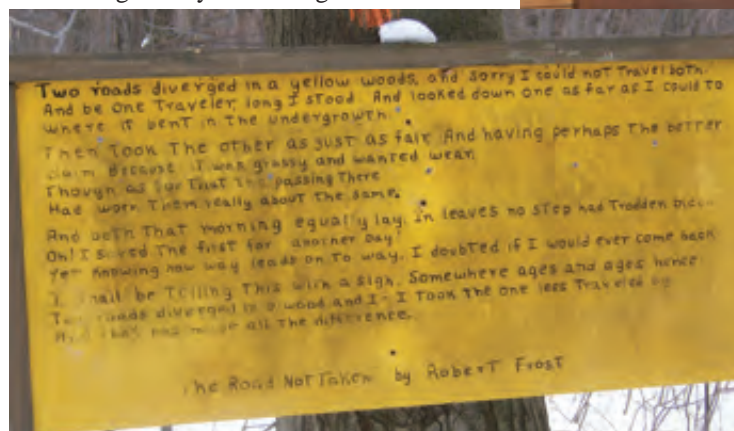
If ever there were a good example of why trail easements are vital for protecting our trail route, the former Garrison property on Bean Station Rd., south of Prattsburgh on Bristol Hills Branch map B3, is ideal. Bill and Ellen Garrison were only our second easement, and the first landowners to OFFER to protect the trail route permanently on their property, which thereby guaranteed us access to many miles of state forest trail south of there. Ironically, even this generous couple grew older, so had to move away to an easier home. Now we are hosted by yet a third landowner there in fairly rapid succession over less than ten years, and while the current owner, Peter Sutera, is perfectly friendly to the trail, this rate of turnover COULD have resulted in problems for us had there been no permanent easement protecting our route.

I first met Ellen Garrison in the late eighties when I was backpacking the Bristol Hills Branch. Poor maintenance and marking forced me to lose the trail leaving the swampy bottomland north of Bean Station Rd., so I just bushwhacked to the road, then walked along it until I found the trailhead. Ellen hailed me from her front porch, asking if I needed water or anything, and, yes, she knew the trail crossed just a few hundred feet further east. Even before her friendly gesture, I knew kind people lived here, because there was a beautifully painted sign roadside with the chorus from Woody Guthrie's *This Land is Your Land*.



Then in the early 90's I took over as caretaker of this segment of trail, giving me more occasions to talk to the Garrisons. Bill actually INVITED the trail onto more of his property rather than the route further east, so that we could walk by the fascinating Covell Cemetery, essentially in their back yard, which Bill and friends were restoring from years of neglect. As soon as the trail was rerouted to come down through their upper woods and by the cemetery, new signs sprouted in the woods.

At a divide where two faint lanes split, Robert Frost's "Two Roads Diverged in a Yellow Wood" appeared, painted on, of course, yellow wood, and



next to the cemetery, pensive lines from William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis" soothed us with a view of death as a peaceful return to the natural world.

Next the Garrisons proposed that together we build a shelter in woods above the cemetery. The Evangeline Shelter is one of the nicest to be found on our whole trail system; even after a local child mistakenly burned the whole thing down, Bill used his homeowner's insurance to pay for its replacement, now an even better hiker palace. Inside is this fancy routed sign with a few words from that horrid ponderous *oeuvre*, "Evangeline," which Bill was able to quote from at great length before a stroke crabbed his memory.

Probably nowhere else has there been such a welcoming private property, with signs obviously aimed at us hikers, and niceties like fresh water and firewood supplied at the shelter. After Bill and Ellen moved to be near a daughter, the next landowner took down all the signs except the one inside the shelter. Those of us who got to enjoy them in the past miss them but are grateful to have hiked here during that charmed period.



Wally Wood Award 2013 - Jacqui Wensich

You see her quarterly columns all the time, “Name That Map” and “End-to-End Update” in every issue of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*. In both that magazine and in the North Country Trail Association’s *North Star*, you see her name on many photo credits, including two covers for each one, no small accomplishment.

Many of our Alley Cat crews have been able to count on good meals she has planned, shopped for, and cooked, a great relief after exhausting work all day outside. She planned, organized, and brought to fruition our 50th anniversary celebration at Keuka College last year as chair of the event, and was instrumental in planning the Sidote 90th Birthday Bash fall weekend five years ago.

Operating under some unknown inspiration, she began scanning and archiving every old picture related to the FLT that she could get her hands on, and has organized them well enough that a simple request for something pertinent to some current project is almost instantly fulfilled. She also is constantly taking pictures of a great variety of current events ... meetings, group hikes, trail work crews, new constructions, special events... so quality pictures of a great variety of types are also instantly available upon request. She has supplied many a picture to the *FLT News* editor when nobody else had thought to send any, and again, seems to have them organized well enough that she can quickly find just what is needed.

Outreach is high on her list of goals, so you’ll see her staffing several of our regular outdoor show displays, and she has created several PowerPoint programs from her collections of pictures. She has willingly driven all over the state to present programs to groups ranging from children to seniors. In her role as End-to-End Coordinator she makes attractive certificates for those who finish the trail, and maintains the Car Spotter List.

Jacqui Wensich contributes to our organization’s well-being in ways plentiful and various, and always willingly. Such steady generosity inspired the Recognitions Committee to honor her with the highest FLTC annual award, the Wallace D. Wood Award for Distinguished Service, named for the founder of the trail. 🍁

Recognitions Committee: Mary Zuk Domanski, George Zacharek, Steph Spittal, Irene Szabo



Pat Monahan, President of the Board, presents Jacqui with her Wally Wood Award hiking stick during the spring weekend at Alfred University.

Larry Telle

Names Along the Trail

Map M2 includes Bucktooth State Forest, and the East and West Branch Bucktooth Run Roads along their eponymous creeks or runs, just northwest of Salamanca and Allegany State Park. Whence such funny names? This was found in *The Diamond*, magazine of the Erie Lackawanna Historical Society, Vol. 27, No. 3, 2013:

“At the time of completion of the New York & Erie {RR} in April 1851...the general area that is now present-day Salamanca was then known as Great Valley. On Nov. 19, 1854, when a portion of the town of Little Valley, several miles to the west, was cut off, a separate town was formed and first bore the name of Bucktooth, which was about a mile west of where Salamanca is located today. A small wooden station was erected there. On April 17, 1862, the name was changed to Salamanca, so named by Atlantic & Great Western {RR} President James McHenry, after Senor Jose de Salamanca, a duke and Spanish nobleman. Senor Salamanca visited the area in 1862 on an inspection trip over the A&GW; he was financial advisor to Queen Isabella, who helped finance the A&GW.

Bucktooth (Salamanca after 1862) was of little importance to the Erie {RR} until connection with the A&GW was made in 1862 and trains began to roll into Meadville, Pa., from Salamanca.

The name Bucktooth derives from a midget Indian, only four feet tall, who was said to have only one tooth, which showed prominently when he talked. In 1879, Bucktooth’s skeleton was accidentally unearthed by his grandsons, who identified it by his bones measuring only four feet and ... only one tooth in his skull.

The location of what was to become present-day Salamanca was at that time called Hemlock Crossing, or Hemlock Mills, or simply Hemlock. In 1866 the small wooden station that had been erected at the site of the station called Salamanca (Bucktooth) was relocated east about a mile and put down at what was then known as Hemlock Crossing, but keeping the name Salamanca.” 🍁

Executive Director's Report

Dick Hubbard

PICK YOUR PARTNER AND DO SI DO

Our Conference is, indeed, a conglomeration of different partnerships, each formed and developed for a variety of reasons, but for the general benefit and well being of our trail.

For over fifty years we have been fortunate to form many voluntary associations, each true to the concept of partnership where we are able to share and combine resources. Together our money, labor, skills and dedication allow us to grow and become stronger.

Acting as agents in the best interest of many, we formed partnerships with several New York State agencies, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and the state Trails Council. Nationally, with the North Country Trail Association we collaborate as host to the North Country National Scenic Trail and partner with the National Park Service. We work together with the U.S. Forest Service in the Finger Lakes National Forest and form other partnerships with federal, state and regional agencies through grants and contracts to fund projects for trail improvement. Even our landlord relationship with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is a partnership whereby we help make the Mt. Morris Dam area an interesting, educational and recreational destination for visitors of all ages in return for low-cost office space.

We have critical partnerships with landowners who allow us to use their property and all of the Trail Maintainers who dedicate hours of volunteer time to keep our footpath in good shape, some of them represented by organized hiking clubs across the state who not only provide trail workers, but act as hike and outing leaders. We have a small army of dedicated individuals out on the trail as part of



One of our federal partners, Steve Winslow, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Superintendent for the Mt. Morris Dam and Recreation Area, discusses an upcoming project with Dick. The Letchworth Branch Trail crosses Corps property as it makes its way to Portageville (Maps L1 and L2), passing next to our office, leased from the Corps at the dam site.

Photo by Juliana Smith

our Alley Cat construction projects, sharing time and talent in yet another collaborative team of partners.

While talking about partnerships, it would be unforgivable to forget the individuals who volunteer to serve on the Board of Managers, a very effective partnership. Each Board Member provides time and talent to uphold our mission and guard the general welfare of the Conference. Together through planning, staffing, and financial guidance the well-being of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference is protected.

But our most important partnership is with you, our members! You are the foundation of our organization, our strength, wisdom, our eyes and ears. Without you, we have no reason to exist, nor could we exist. The vast outdoor enterprise that is the Finger Lakes Trail is a community of people who are in partnership together to build, protect, and promote a footpath across New York State. Best yet, we get to use it and enjoy it!

Thank you for partnering with us to help carry out our mission. Your membership, financial support and volunteer hours are crucial, and allow us to do the "Do Si Do!" Without you, it could not happen. 🍁



Dick Hubbard

Over the summer we were able to partner with the Livingston County Summer Youth Work Program to have their mobile unit at the office for three days. The workers cleaned up the front garden, pressure washed and stained the deck, painted all of the shutters and washed some windows. The program assists qualified not-for-profit organizations in the local area.

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Confessions of an Alley Cat Cook

Article and Photos by Jacqui Wensich unless otherwise noted

If an army travels on its stomach, so do trail crews. Previously in *North Star*, the magazine of the North Country Trail, we have enjoyed articles by John Forslin and Bill Menke about the culinary delights offered to the deserving and starved crews out there in Michigan and Wisconsin, Bill's steaks and John's epicurean specialties, but food remains the unsung highlight on many other crew projects, too.

The Finger Lakes Trail has used separate crews for special projects for years now. They do up to four week-long projects per year, all over upstate NY, ranging from building new trail to building facilities like bridges and shelters. My first experience with any Alley Cat (the FLT goes from "Allegany" to "Catskills;" hence, Alley Cat) was September 2005 in Allegany State Park with legendary Alley-Catters Howard Beye and Ron Navik, who had been using vacations to work on these for years.



Donna Flood's apple pies at Hickory Hollow campground.

In previous years Howard had planned menus and bought all the food, then expected tired workers to cook their own meal! Mark and Susan Hittle had organized this 2005 project with Sue

supervising the food preparation while I was on the work crew. Except for breakfast, Sue prepared food at home and brought it in. She had an assignment list for jobs like washing, setting the table, cleaning up that everyone was expected to perform. The setting was relatively

primitive but we did have refrigeration. We also used the campfire and Coleman stove to warm up food, make breakfast and heat water.

The Tamarack Shelter Alley Cat Project at the Lions' Camp Badger in June 2010 was my first full cooking assignment. I planned with a menu spreadsheet, shopping lists, checked and double checked, and a small notebook for ideas and recipes. I tried to think of this as cooking for Thanksgiving without all the side dishes and only one dessert!

Camp Badger has a professional kitchen (twelve burner gas stove, large grill, industrial dishwasher and walk-in freezer and refrigerator with lots of large cooking pans). I admit I was a little intimidated at first. The caretaker Dave was very helpful including lighting the stove and showing me how to use the dishwasher.

The final ingredient was Laurie Dando whom I call the "queen of chopping" from our days organizing food for the yearly Board of Managers' Retreat weekend. No one is more pleasant to work with than Laurie. We had a large number of workers and guests but Laurie and I survived. She has since cooked for several Alley Cats with her husband Roy as project manager.

Dave Drum invited us to his beautiful home on Keuka Lake for the first dinner for the Hickory Hill Shelter Project in September 2011. Hickory Hill Family Campground also has a professional kitchen which we used for the balance of meals. Randy Lehman (NCTA Outstanding Landowner in 2011) owns the campground and the land where the trail was going to pass the new shelter a half-mile away, so his staff could not have been more helpful. They even invited us to their regular Saturday chicken dinner so I had the night off. Donna Flood also helped for a few days. Besides prep work, she made the most delicious apple pies. Donna made one for the staff to thank them for all of their help. On the last night,



Matt Branneman goofs over a fry pan full of a 20-egg Mexican omelet.

we got a big kick out of our crew's delight in making their own ice cream sundaes.

By my third Alley Cat, I was pretty confident and organized. I prepared roasted potatoes, onions, yams for dinner then used the leftovers for home fries...stuff like that really helps. I also tried to limit the amount of lunch meat by having suitable leftovers for lunch. I purchased re-usable containers and asked the crew to put their names of each piece to use throughout the project. This saved paper and protected the food.

I did two Alley Cats in 2012 finally earning my coveted two-project green hat. At the Alley Cat Catskills 2 the camp at the far eastern end of our trail was pretty basic. We had a canopy outside by the fireplace where we ate most meals, but there was a stove, sink and fridge and some hot water. I cooked chicken, hot, beans and roasted potatoes on the grill and brought in BBQ pork and pasta sauce that I made earlier at home. I would have to re-think my menu if I had to cook exclusively on that fireplace!

The McCarthy Hill Shelter project in July 2012 was a delight. Pat, Mary Ellen and son Isaac Monahan opened up their home for us only a short commute away so I invaded the kitchen.



Jacqui serves BBQ Pork to Matt at Lions Camp

Mary Ellen helped me clean up, serve, set the table and did some prep work. We ate in the dining room or on the patio. Nice!! In 2013, I have completed two Alley Cats with one more to go. Rick and Rosemary Roberts

opened their beautiful rustic Catskills palace for the crew. Rosemary loves to bake so she prepared several desserts and assisted me as needed. We also did some shopping together. I took Scout their happy beagle with me everywhere. He ate all the dog biscuit crumbs out of my van. By now I know what the crew members really like: a favorite breakfast is omelets ... ham, cheese, spinach, mushroom ... home fries with roasted potatoes, onions and yams, English muffins, pancakes, homemade jam and cantaloupe. Dinner favorites include BBQ pork with mashed potatoes, cole slaw, broccoli, baked chicken thighs, homemade spinach lasagna served with grilled Italian sausages and a fresh salad. I can my own tomatoes so the sauce makes the dish. For dessert I make an ice cream cake, or some type of fresh cobbler or apple crisp and sometimes home-made ice cream if I have the time.

Just one week later, another Alley Cat was scheduled in the middle of the state. I really had no intention of doing three AC's but when I saw that Camp Badger's wonderful facility was being used again I did not hesitate. So I did not unpack

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my boxed basics (spices, baking items, oils...), just restocked and off I went. Robin Peck, wife of project manager Paul Warrender, proved to be a *sous-chef extraordinaire* who also loves to chop. She actually sliced quarts of fresh strawberries for shortcake. (I would have just clipped and mashed them.) We

were able to shop locally and purchase fresh eggs: what a treat. After assisting me, Robin plans to "chef" Alley Cat 3 in August. She will be great.

My last Alley Cat this year will be for the Bullthistle Hiking Club in the eastern third of the FLT in September at a YMCA camp. Obviously, I really love to cook. My husband enjoys my cooking but he is very strict about fats, carbs and desserts, so cooking for a hungry, appreciative crew who wants to load up on calories is very enjoyable and fulfilling for me.

I still prepare a tentative menu and keep a small notebook with things to do, recipes to try, ingredients to purchase, including when a food item takes too much time or is not really loved by the crew. Example: trying not to use lunchmeat, I roasted a black angus round roast. Tasted fine but I could not slice it thinly enough so it was really chewy. Thanks to Marcus Coppola for eating it anyway. I am looking for a used slicer. I also tend to make too much food at times but I would HATE to run out of food. 🍁



Laurie Dando makes meatballs for a hungry crew at Camp Badger.

Our sincere thanks for gifts

In Memory of:

Jean Pitt

from

Bill & Mary Coffin

Tom Spicer

Annemarie Groth-Junker

Dan Hemming

from

Lakeland Rovers Outing Club

Georgiana Binder End-to-End #354

Although I started with the hike series in Steuben Co. back on 4/22/06, I wasn't serious and went only when there wasn't a conflict. I didn't get serious until I was traveling all the way to the Catskills. At that time I also started to pick up some of the hikes I missed in the western counties. If it hadn't been for the organizers of the hike series, I never would have even started the hikes.

For years, I had hiked with my kids when they were growing up but I had never tried to keep a record of where we went. We would often stop at a trail marker and just go. I grew up at the eastern edge of the Adirondacks, and the Little Ausable River ran through our farm so I had hiked most of my life.

As it got harder for me to keep up with a group or do the distance, I had to split up the hikes and do them in two days. Often I'd hike from the last sag wagon to the end on Friday, and then from the beginning to that sag on Saturday. When I still couldn't keep up with a group, I started having my husband Gene drop me off early on Saturdays. I finally finished my last hike on map M-1 in Allegany State Park on 6/25/13 at 11:30 AM. Gene and my daughter Laura hiked with me on most of the hikes this year, so that I could finish.

I can't say that I have a favorite area of the trail since I like everything nature has to offer from insects (the non-biting kind) to great vistas and everything in between. Some of the best sights were the many waterfalls, a deer that stood about ten feet away ignoring me and nursing her fawn, a bear with two cubs eating blackberries (they were about 150' away and took off when they heard me coming), and of course the mushrooms. Two baby goats followed me when I crossed Robbins Road north of Bath on Map M-12 (I took them back three times before someone came home).

My last hike turned out to be a beautiful 6.4 miles. My husband Gene, daughter Laura, and I went slowly and took about five hours. We enjoyed ourselves along the way looking

at mushrooms, ferns and lichens, stopping for a leisurely lunch. We started very early because of the heat.

Note from Jacqui Wensich: I like hiking with Georgia because she is a walking encyclopedia about mushrooms and many other subjects including wildlife and flowers. Georgia always says that she "knows a little bit about everything but not a lot about anything." Before retiring, she worked on the

Asian Longhorn Beetle Eradication Project (affects maple trees among others) for NYS Agriculture & Marketing. She also has volunteered for many Alley Cat projects over the years as well as four American Hiking Trail jobs. 🍁



Georgia working on the Tamarack Shelter during yet another Alley Cat.



Georgia almost finished with the stone-paved "patio" in front of the Getter Hill shelter during an Alley Cat.

Join the North Country Trail Association

A Special Deal for FLTC Members!

Now you can join the North Country Trail Association for just \$23 per year! You'll get a subscription to North Star magazine, and the satisfaction of helping develop the North Country National Scenic Trail. To join, send this coupon to: NCTA, 229 E. Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 or call 866-Hike-NCT

Name(s):	
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<input type="checkbox"/> I'm enclosing a check for \$23 payable to NCTA	
<input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my credit card (MasterCard, Visa or AmEx only)	
Card #:	Exp. Date:
Name as it appears on card:	
Signature:	



Final hike in Allegany State Park.

Laura VanKoeveing

Jacqui Wensich

Jacqui Wensich

Trail Medicine

Bob Michiel

Fifteen years ago Howard Beye suggested I write the first article of this column. This article is my final submission as editor and occasional contributor to Trail Medicine. The column has dealt with the heart in relation to hiking, and a major theme of the article was cardiac benefits of hiking and aerobic exercise. I conclude this series by stressing a theme reflected in multiple Trail Medicine articles, that hiking has universal physical and psychological and mental benefits.

My work the past fifteen years has been a joy, albeit a time consuming one. It has allowed me to meld two major passions in my life, hiking and medicine. I personally find the most enjoyable and satisfying setting for exercise to be the outdoors, in nature. New York State offers beautiful habitat and trail systems, including the Finger Lakes Trail, North Country Trail and trails in the Adirondacks. We also enjoy the Finger Lakes Trails Conference, which not only maintains the Finger Lakes Trail, but also produces this wonderful magazine. I feel pride in having been part of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*, and seeing its evolution.

I structured the Trail Medicine articles to address four basic areas. First, there has been discussion about the numerous and diverse benefits of aerobic activity, both to mind and body. Aerobic activity helps to sharpen the mind, just as do mental exercises. It is beneficial for those with Alzheimer's. It is a potent antidepressant. Cholesterol and lipids, blood sugar and diabetes, blood pressure, and bone density are positively impacted by exercise. There are benefits in regard to cancer, obesity, hyperlipidemia, heart disease, and peripheral arterial disease. Second, there has been discussion of the impact of exercise in those of us with preexisting conditions such as heart disease,

diabetes, hypertension, arthritis, and pregnancy. Exercise is universally beneficial, but logistical adaptations and precautions need to be taken by those of us with various conditions.

Third, there has been discussion of technique, such as walking form, diet, balance, skincare, hydration, and use of walking poles.

Last, topics dealing with activity related problems have been considered, ranging from plantar fasciitis to common injuries to insect stings to water borne illnesses and to Lyme disease and tick borne illnesses.

The credit for the Trail Medicine articles goes to the many fine authors and experts from various walks of life who have generously donated time and effort to share their expertise. I am personally grateful to our authors and I hope that they have derived satisfaction from their contributions and the subsequent benefits to our readership. I have certainly benefited during my tenure as Trail Medicine editor. I have enjoyed my interactions with the authors as well as the editors of the *FLT News*. I have learned from all.

I sincerely hope that Howard was satisfied with the results of his suggestion.

Happy hiking. 🍁

We will miss these contributions and are thankful for the long series. Tom Reimers, Jo Taylor, previous editors, and I appreciate the many articles from Bob's medical sources. If any doctor or other medical professional is interested in continuing something similar, you know where to find me!

Irene Szabo, editor treeweenie@aol.com

Answer to the Summer "Name That Map!" Quiz



No one identified the National Park Service sign for the North Country Trail attached to the trailhead kiosk on the Cobb property, Map M4 just east of Ellicottville, Cattaraugus County.

New name that map ▶

Photo by Thad Lunceford 7/13 while on one of his main trail backpacking hikes. This old boiler has been photographed many times, but can you remember on which map you walked by it?

Check out Thad's interesting blog:
<http://kimo342.com/>

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

Jacqui at jwensich@rochester.rr.com



FLT NAMED HIKE EVENT

Saturday, Oct. 19, 2013

Erv Markert Fall Hike

Title of Hike:

Highland Forest/FLT/Onondaga Trail/North Country Trail Map O2

Leader:

Karen Goodman,
KGoodman@stny.rr.com or (607) 648-3005

Hike Description:

Located south and east of Syracuse on NY Rte 80 in Fabius, NY, Highland Forest is an Onondaga County park renowned for its exquisite network of x-country ski trails. With the North Country Trail passing through the center of the park, we'll hike along this section of trail and combine it with other park trails to create a loop hike of approx 10 miles. Shorter loops will be made available for those who wish.

Admission to the park is \$1 per person (payable at the park office); there is no admission charge for those under 21. Please visit the Highland Forest website at <http://onondagacountyparks.com/highland-forest/> for more information about this park.

Meet:

Park office entrance (Skyline Lodge) at 10 am. Those in the Binghamton area can carpool with the Triple Cities Hiking Club by meeting at 8:30 am behind Denny's on Upper Front St (US 11), north of Binghamton.

Directions to Highland Forest:

Take I-81 Exit 14 (Tully / NY Rte 80) and go east on NY Rte 80 for approximately 11 miles before turning right at the sign for Highland Forest. At the top of the hill, the entry road will curve to the left and into the parking lot for the Park office (Skyline Lodge).

Please pay your \$1 admission fee at the office; the desk is just inside the door to Skyline Lodge. We'll gather outside of Skyline Lodge (assuming good weather) or inside Skyline Lodge if inclement.

Howard Beye Winter Hike will be January 11th, 2014, led by Cate Concannon somewhere in western NY. Details in our next issue.
catrina616@gmail.com



SIDOTE HIKE RECAP

Three dozen hikers from across the region, many of them members of either the Bullthistle or Triple Cities Hiking Club, joined together for the "Summer Ed Sidote Hike" on July 27, 2013 in Chenango County. The hike was held on FLT Map M23 in the Pharsalia Wildlife Mgm't Area, and was one of the FLT's four annual "Named Hikes" (one is held each season of the year).

The hike's namesake, 95 year old Ed Sidote, was at the trailhead to greet the hikers, many by name, and to offer his thanks for everyone's participation !

The three dozen or so hikers split into a larger group for the 10 mile long loop hike, while a smaller group did a shorter, 4 mile long loop hike. Warren Johnsen from the Bullthistle Hiking Club coordinated the day's hikes, leading the longer one while Bruce and Donna Coon, also from Bullthistle, led the shorter one.

Those on the longer hike were treated to snacks from a sag-wagon about mid-way through the hike, with a trail lunch grabbed at the Rufus Perkins Lean-to shortly after passing by a brown-colored snake that only those in the rear of the line had noticed.

You may view photos from the hike at <https://picasaweb.google.com/triplecitieshikingclub> (select the album dated 2013--07-27)

Larry Blumberg
FLT "Named Hikes" coordinator
LBlumberg@stny.rr.com



Susan Thomas

Dot Rice

▲ Indian pipes, a July phenomenon found on the dark forest floor. It produces no chlorophyll, but is parasitic on surrounding trees' roots, using their photosynthesis taking place high above.

◀ An old lane now deep inside a state forest on the Sidote Hike.

The Lifetime Achievement Award Goes To Irene Szabo

By Jacqui Wensich

The Board of Managers presents the Howard Beye Lifetime Achievement Award to anyone of their choice, reserving this occasional honor for that rare person who has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time, effort, talent, and hard work over many years to the fortunes of the Finger Lakes Trail.

I give you that rare person, Irene Szabo.

In 1984, while walking to recover from knee surgery, Irene and her dogs discovered the FLT near Swain. She joined the conference in 1985 and became the 30th End-to-Enders (1994).

She has been involved with the FLTC ever since, including the maintenance of 13 miles of trail currently (down from a one-time high of 22). She was President for two separate eras totalling eleven years, and represented hiking on the statewide Trails Council for almost fifteen years.

She established a yearly retreat to allow the board members time to develop positive working relationships and work on projects. She has spent countless hours traveling, meeting, advocating, calling, arranging, writing and lecturing about the Finger Lakes Trail and hiking in general. She participated in the "Hike the Hill" event in Washington, DC, where representatives of hiking organizations blitz visit various senators and representatives promoting hiking and trail building, on behalf of Congressional funding for the North Country National Scenic Trail. Irene is an active member of the FLTC's Trail Management Council. She is on the TTT (Traveling Training Team) traveling across NYS to teach trail building, maintenance and safety. She has written and edited guidebooks about the FLT.

She is a car spotter. Irene assisted #3 Ed Sidote and #4 Rufus Perkins in their E2E hike, organized the county hike series for years, and helped to establish the Mt. Morris Office. She is currently editor of the *FLT News* and chairs the recognition committee. She even purchased property to preserve the trail as well as gaining easements and establishing friendships with landowners like the Cobb family on M4. Irene, Stephanie Spittal, and Bob Muller built the famous Huckleberry Bog loop trail on map B3 north of Hammondsport, which she continues to maintain. Anyone who has walked her trails knows what pristine condition they are always in. (Read her fun but useful article about how to paint the perfect blaze, *Blazing 101*, available on the North Country Trail website)

Irene won the Wally Wood Distinguished Service Award in 1999 and the Clar-Willis significant trail worker award in 2006. She is a prolific writer. You are fortunate if you have Irene Szabo as a hike leader. She is well-informed about local and trail history, wildlife and plants. Irene established a system of patches for trail workers to recognize years of service.

www.fi.gerlakestrail.org

Irene has also been a tireless advocate for the North Country National Scenic trail. She served as interim Executive Director of the NCTA at an especially critical time and is currently the editor of that organization's magazine, *North Star*. Irene received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the NCTA in 2012, much to her surprise.

Not too many folks are as obsessed with railroads as Irene. She can tell you where all the tracks were and whose trains ran on them, from the mid- 1800's till the present. Along with Tim Wilbur, she writes a periodic column about train history that intersects with the trail for the *FLT News*. And scary thought: she is learning to run some of the engines at the Rochester and Genesee Valley Railroad Museum.

Irene says there are two things she is most proud of, other than her trail care standards:



Irene at the throttle in the railroad museum's center-cab diesel.

Photo by Tim Wilbur

I would say that one of my major contributions for this "lifetime" has been the concept of trail easements. In the early 90's, the board was afraid of undertaking such a thing, so I asked the Finger Lakes Land Trust to invent the document for us AND hold the first few while the board got used to the idea. That was a huge change for our young organization, and then, as I'd hoped, the board grew into the task of holding easements themselves.

*Another thing I'm pleased with is my longterm effort to raise consciousness of the North Country Trail among our members. Howard tried, but he was no salesman, so I started trying, mostly through articles in the *FLT News*, to make our readers more aware of the whole trail and our significant part in it.*

She was presented with this best possible recognition during the spring weekend in June. I gave her a little "suitcase" covered with trail stickers, and filled with small trail tools AND a few railroad treasures, like a lantern from my father and timetables from Pat Monahan's father. 🍁

Trail Topics: Rail-to-Trail Projects in the Town of Urbana

Steve Catherman, Vice President of Trail Maintenance

The Town of Urbana and their Parks Committee and the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) are pursuing federal funding to convert a section of an abandoned rail line to a non-motorized multi-use trail between the Village of Hammondsport and the Glenn H. Curtiss Aviation Museum. The IDA's application for Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) funds includes converting one half mile of the old Bath and Hammondsport rail line to an eight foot wide accessible stone dust trail along the banks of Cold Brook, a world class trout fishing stream and the southern inlet to Keuka Lake.

Phase 1 of the proposed project would begin at a trailhead on Main Street (State Route 54A) in the Village, where a cross walk would be established, and include the rehabilitation of an existing railroad bridge to a pedestrian bridge, and the development of a public fishing access site on Cold Brook at the terminus of the new trail section. Phase 2 of the project would turn south from the converted trail and cross Cold Brook on a new bridge, then traverse wetlands for a third of a mile on new boardwalk, and end at a trailhead and parking area at the Curtiss Museum. An additional mile of the existing rail line could be converted to trail under future Phase 3, involving work to two more railroad bridges and the creation of a trailhead at the Pleasant Valley Wine Company's Visitor Center along County Route 88.

According to the requirements for TEP applications, proposed projects must fit into at least one of five categories of eligible activities. This project actually scores very well in three of these categories: creation of off-road non-motorized trails, connection to tourist/visitor centers, and conversion of rails-to-trails. The candidate projects must also relate to surface transportation. Again, this project meets the criteria with a recognizable origin and destination, enhancement of aesthetic, cultural and historic aspects of the travel experience, and its proximity to a highway and pedestrian/bicycle corridor (State Route 54 in front of the Museum is being considered for New York State Bike Route 54 status). And finally, a desirable project allows for maximum unrestricted public use and access. This project fits that bill as well.

Applications were due in August with selection decisions made and

awards announced in October. If this project is accepted for TEP funding, Phase 1 construction could begin in 2014 and be completed by 2015. Upon completion of both Phases 1 and 2, this project would create a direct link from the Village of Hammondsport to the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT)/North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) via the June Bug Trail, an existing FLT spur trail that connects the main trail to the Curtiss Museum. When Phase 3 is funded and implemented and the rail trail is extended to Pleasant Valley Winery, it would be within a mile of the FLT trailhead on County Route 88 at the base of Mitchellsville Gorge, a heavily traveled section of the FLT and one of our featured Passport Hikes.

This proposal is a win-win situation for the community, the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC) and the North Country Trail Association (NCTA). In addition to the new opportunities and access to services and comfort options the proposed trail links would provide for long distance hikers on the FLT and the NCNST, new recreational experiences for residents and tourists in the Village and Town would be created as well. The project would have a positive impact on the local businesses and economies while providing increased recognition for the FLT/NCNST. It would also further the Town's long range plan to connect the FLT to its system of Keuka Lakeshore Parks: Depot, Curtiss and Champlin Beach, and enhance the Village's chances of a successful nomination as an NCTA Trail Town, a "community through which the trail passes that supports hikers, promotes the trail, and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated." 🍁



Tammy Catherman

Contact: Steve Catherman
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607-569-3453



Trail Topics: Mapping Report

Greg Farnham, Mapping Curmudgeon

The following Regional Trail Coordinator (RTC) approved map updates were published to the office and to the web:

M15 - updated minor reroute within Watkins Glen, showing the formerly blue blazed route passing LaFayette Park and the FLT Monument as the now white blazed main trail.

M14 - update needed to show the M15 reroute.

QCML - update needed to show the M15 reroute.

O1 - Hunting Closure date changes by landowner.

M28 - major re-route adding 4.7 miles of trail, moving trail onto recently created Alley Cat route off road, described elsewhere in this issue.

M20 - loss of landowner permission requiring additional road walk was incorporated into permanent map.

M29 & M30 - update with additional information, front and back, but no change in the route of the trail.

B2 - an additional parking waypoint was added to GPX file, but the PDF map was not revised because the parking

waypoint was already on the PDF map.

The interactive maps were updated. The GPS files for maps M15, M20, M28, M29, O1 and B2 were updated.

Several requested Tax Maps and Easement Maps were produced and delivered to the requestor.

Work is beginning on a proposal to add Town Boundaries to our maps. This will be reviewed by the RTCs and VPs prior to making a recommendation to the Board for approval.

Trail Conditions notices were posted as requested by RTCs. In addition, all map updates were posted to Trail Conditions showing the revision date of the new maps. Previous Trail Conditions postings regarding items that have been incorporated into the current map revision have been archived. 🍁

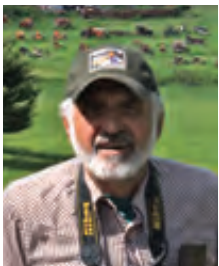
Contact: Greg Farnham
greg.farnham@me.com



Greg Farnham

New Yorkers Win Big at NCTA Annual Awards

Evening programs during the annual North Country Trail Association Conference at Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania, included awards for volunteers from both the National Park Service and the NCTA. **Dave Potzler**, Trail Chair of western upstate's Foothills Trail Club, received his embroidered NPS shirt for 400 cumulative hours of volunteer service, while **Tony Rodriguez**, longtime trail chair of the ADK-Onondaga Chapter, was awarded



Mary Coffin

NCTA's Trail Maintainer of the Year for his years of dedication to keeping that group's long miles of trail in good shape. His quiet way of keeping trail workers inspired and on track was noted in nomination letters, as was his own frequent work on problem spots. ADK-ON is very

proud of Tony for this big job, and is tickled that he finally received this award!

Larry Blumberg received an NCTA "Sweep" Award for doing so many useful things in the background with little public acknowledgement. Readers of this magazine know that he organizes the quarterly Named Hikes, besides which he has led many Triple Cities Club hikes to the far ends of our main trail to help



Susan Blumberg

others share his goal of going end-to-end. Larry is also very active with Boy Scouts, and has encouraged many troops to get out for overnight hikes on the FLT.

The highest annual recognition from NCTA is the Lifetime Achievement Award, which was bestowed this year on our own **Mary Coffin**, perennial uber-volunteer from the ADK-Onondaga chapter and an officer on the NCTA Board. As this article is being prepared, she is in the wilderness of northernmost Minnesota, leading an NCTA Extended Outing along the trail in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, one of her many contributions. She has been instrumental in creating the extension of the Onondaga Trail to meet up with the CNY portion of the North Country Trail heading for the Adirondacks, and in plotting the eventual route through the latter. She has been a trail maintainer on the FLT for at least thirty years, works on many pivotal committees, and has been instrumental in organizing several FLT weekends.



Mick Hawkins

Congratulations to our NY members who received these deserved awards. All of our FLTC members are encouraged to present future nominations to the NCTA Awards Committee, before the end of April 2014. For information, contact committee member Irene Szabo at treeweenie@aol.com. 🍁

Trail Topics: 2013 Alley Cats

Matt Branneman, Vice President of Crews & Construction

This year we had a really productive, fun, and safe construction season. By the time this is published the new shelter in New Michigan State Forest on Map M23 will be complete which concludes the construction season. Thanks to all the volunteers who made these projects happen.

Alley-Cat 1 The first Alley-Cat was re-routing the trail onto DEP (NY City water authority) land around Cannonsville Reservoir. Rick Roberts led the crew in cutting new trail to take nearly nine miles off the road on Map M28 in the Catskills. Three bridges were constructed over creeks and drainages. Part of the re-routed trail runs along the reservoir while the other part rises up from the reservoir on an old railbed to great views of the valley. Luckily, we found the "lost" crew members who didn't know they were lost. They were exactly where they were supposed to be, just working later than the rest of the crew.

Alley-Cat 2 The Chestnut Lean-to in Danby State Forest on Map M17 south of Ithaca was demolished by the Cayuga Trails Club to make way for the brand new shelter. Paul Warrender was the project manager, making sure everything was set up and ready to go for the crew. We had several new faces on the crew, as well as lean-to veterans. It was a good mix of volunteers who helped the project come off without any hiccups.

Alley-Cat 3 In Shindagin Hollow State Forest on Map M18 demolition and building a new bridge took place the same work week. Thanks to Al, the 84 Lumber delivery driver, who moved the two giant beams we built on the road with his fork truck. This made the task of placing each beam across the creek so much easier since he placed them a little past half-way across the total span. Hoisting them into place went smoothly.

Alley-Cat 4 By the time the *FLT News* is delivered there should be a new lean-to in New Michigan State Forest on Map 23 in Chenango County with Tom Bryden leading as project manager. The DEC had already cut and milled the logs that are waiting to be delivered to the site. Tom has reserved the YMCA Camp for lodging, food prep, and dining. This project will take place from September 20th to September 25th. 🍁

Contact: Matt Branneman
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Building a New Bridge in Shindagin Hollow



Photos by Ron Navik

Bob Moses

Trail Topics: Trail Standards (Again)

Lynda Rummel, Vice President of Trail Quality

A lot of thought lies behind the standards that apply to the trails in the FLT System. All our trail standards were adopted for good reason, but in some cases, the reasons are just not instantly apparent. Consider two standards that are sometimes questioned -- the tread-width standard of only 18", and the requirement that all our new wilderness privies be handicapped accessible, regardless of where they are located. Why are these reasonable and how do they benefit the FLT System?

First, the width of the *tread* for our footpath is set at 18", because it is intended, designed, and built to be a skinny, single-use, back-country trail for hiking and backpacking only. It is set in rural/roaded natural or regrown semi-primitive environment and is built pretty much on the ground as it is. Our mission is to build and protect a continuous foot path. We believe there is a place for the single-use footpath and that not every trail needs to be multiple-use. The North Country National Scenic Trail is not intended to be a multiple-use trail, nor is the Finger Lakes Trail, on which it runs, designed to be, and the 18" width tread helps keep it that way. Wider trail invites abuse; we do not have the time, money or person-power to widen, smooth and harden the trail, and we do not believe that we should do so even if we could, because as much as we possibly can, we want to provide a hiking environment that is close to nature and a sustainable trail that lies lightly on the land.

Secondly, new privies must be handicapped accessible if built on public land because our public land managers stipulate that *all permanent structures* must be handicapped accessible. We are happy to comply and to build accessible toilets on private land, too, *even though* it may seem silly at first thought since the rustic ~18"-wide footpath leading to the facility (usually a lean-to) is not (and cannot be) built to handicapped-accessible standards (widened and smoothed). We support this privy "standard" for a couple of reasons: (1) it

is only right that if a handicapped person should make his/her way to the facility, the facility should be accessible to him/her; and (2) we can afford, in terms of both the labor and the materials, to put in handicapped-accessible privies, as long as we are allowed to start with what's called a chum or wilderness toilet; that is, just a lidded box that sits over a pit – no walls, no roof. A bare-bones version of a wilderness privy is 90% cheaper than a walled, roofed outhouse, and much easier to construct, and the accessibility modifications that we must make (railings on the back and one side, and level ground around the toilet) are simple, affordable, and appreciated by all users anyway -- so, why not! 🍁



This pre-made fiberglass wilderness toilet was installed near the rebuilt Outback Inn (Map B2, Bristol Hills Branch east of Naples) by Scout Troop 37, fall, 2011. The Scouts made the privy accessible by adding railings on two sides with privacy fencing, and burying the supporting 4x4's.

Contact: Lynda Rummel
ljrassoc@roadrunner.com
315-536-9484
315-679-2906 (Jan. - Mar.)

Rolf Zerges

Ron Navik Receives First Gerry Benedict Award

The new **Gerry Benedict Award** honors Alley Cat participants who have demonstrated special dedication over the years by repeatedly working on week-long projects across the trail system, whether doing trail reconstruction, building new structures such as shelters or bridges, or supporting those projects by planning, material preparation, or housing and feeding crews. Gerry Benedict was a dedicated Alley Cat volunteer who lost his life in an accident while volunteering for one such project on May 11, 2012, in the Catskills.

Ron Navik was a logical choice for this new award, since he has been using whole weeks of vacation to attend these projects for decades now, since the very beginning of the Alley Cat program. Whether the work was being performed along his Genesee Valley Hiking Club trail miles on maps L1 & 2, or M7 through 9 between the Genesee River and Hornell, Ron has worked at least one week each season. This year

he joined the project to rebuild the bridge at Shindagin Hollow south of Ithaca, and we've seen him in the "far west," too. Many a bridge, shelter, or outhouse has benefitted from his steady dedication.

Ron received the Wally Wood Award during our 40th anniversary weekend in 2002, but the Recognitions Committee was happy to honor his special longtime contributions to the Alley Cats with this new award at the spring meeting in Alfred. 🍁



Ron Navik with his wife Barb, with yellow blaze paint for the Letchworth Branch Trail. Oh, yes, he also spends full weeks doing routine trail maintenance, too, usually with Barb.

Car Spotters Needed

Help other hikers and sign up to be a car spotter

A new carspotter, in center, is Charlene Revette of Paradise Hill Road near DeRuyter on Map M22. She gladly spotted Scott Brooks and Doug Cunningham on Memorial Day so they could hike back to one car. She became a spotter only because Ed Sidote suggested it to her. She now hikes the trail, too.

Contact Jacqui Wensich at jwensich@rochester.rr.com or 585/385-2265 to join this band of angels.



Bruce Revette

A Series on MONEY

Introduction

Hi there! I am Jarret Lobb, VP Finance for the FLTC. My family and I moved to the Rochester area in 1988 when I took a job as CFO of Monro Muffler Brake. Howard Beye was one of the first persons whom I got to know when we worked together on fundraising for the Boy Scouts' "Friends of Scouting" campaign. Howard also helped me facilitate a hike with maps of the Bristol Hills Branch from George Fraley's place to Italy Valley Hill (past the spot where Howard's bench is today). Our boys loved the hike, backpacking and camping out for two nights. In 2006 Howard and Dave Marsh recruited me as a member of the Board of Managers and as VP Finance so I have had the honor and pleasure of serving since then. I am a life member and an E2E wannabe.



VP Finance Jarret Lobb at an overlook in Letchworth State Park

In 2005 the FLTC had its first review by external auditors, a big step in our history but a necessary one as our budget grew with our mission. Since joining the BOM I have observed the growth in program, activities and the steady flow of easements to protect our trail's right of way. I recently reviewed the annual numbers from 2005 through now and would like to share that information with our readers so I am working on a series of articles to do that. I believe that four would tell much about our finances and a good way to break that down is (1) Where our money comes from, (2) Where our money goes, (3) What is left after we pay the bills (and live within our means), and (4) How we invest our assets. I expect to publish one article per issue starting with the winter issue. If you have thoughts or questions I would love to hear them.

Jarret Lobb 585/383-1938 fltboard@lobbonline.com

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Name _____
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 County _____ Phone (_____) _____
 Email _____

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

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	\$30	Contributing:	
Family	\$40	Pathfinder.....	\$50
Student (full-time; give permanent address) ..	\$15	Trailblazer.....	\$75
Youth organization	\$15	Guide	\$100
Adult organization	\$50	Life (individual).....	\$400
Business/Commercial		Life (family).....	\$600
(includes a listing on the FLTC website).....	\$100		

PASSAGES

Mrs Jean Pitt, one of our enthusiastic landowners and easement donors, passed away 7/19/13. She was very proud to host the FLT and North Country National Scenic Trail. She was very attached to the land as she had many fond memories from rambling there in her youth and even asked to have her ashes spread on the trail.

Her easement on Map O2 southeast of Syracuse is very significant as it allows hikers to access Highland Forest from the DeRuyter Dam Rd. She was a dear, sweet lady with lots of interesting stories and a pleasure to talk to.

Her family will host a celebration of her life this fall.

Spring Outing, 2014 May 30-June 1 Cazenovia, Central NY

Hosted by the Onondaga Chapter, ADK

We hope you plan to attend this unique joint weekend combining the Adirondack Mountain Club and Finger Lakes Trail Conference. Come meet like-minded people from the across the Northeast and Canada.

A full schedule of hiking, biking and paddling trips will be available. Hiking will include parts of the Finger Lakes Trail, Onondaga Trail, North Country National Scenic Trail, State Forests and Unique Areas, County Forests and other area parks.

Lodging will be at Cazenovia College near beautiful Cazenovia Lake. One night of lodging plus 3 meals at the college will be under \$50 per night. The Friday program will feature a guest speaker and the Saturday program will be an entertaining music performance, both free to registrants. More information will be posted shortly, so check back. Ken Kaufman, Chair, kenkaufmanpe@gmail.com, 315 685-5990. For details and latest info, please go to www.adk-fltc-spring-outing-2014.org.



Mary Coffi

Tinker Falls in winter. One of the hikes on the Onondaga Trail will pass by here in warmer times.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2014 WALLY WOOD AWARD

The Finger Lakes Trail accords its highest honor to one person or pair of people who have contributed to the trail as a whole well above the norm for a long period of time, whether as trail workers, administrative volunteers, hike leaders, event organizers, advocacy volunteers, or outreach specialists, and that award is named for our founder, Wallace Wood. The FLT Recognitions Committee (Mary Zuk Domanski, Steph Spittal, Ron Navik, and Chair Irene Szabo) solicit members' nominations as soon as possible in order that we might bestow this award at the spring weekend. Send written nominations with explanation for your choice to Irene Szabo, treeweenie@aol.com, 6939 Creek Rd., Mt. Morris NY 14510. Deadline 31 December 2013.

www.fi_gerlakestrail.org

Update on 2013 Hiking 101

The 2013 Hiking 101 is off to a great start after a year's hiatus from this part of the state. There are 27 participants, both FLT newcomers as well as several old timers. This year we decided to tackle an entire map and chose B3, the end of the Bristol Hills Branch near Prattsburgh in Steuben County. Our first hike, on Fathers Day in June, was a little over four miles and prepared us all for the terrain in this section of the state. One of our younger members expertly co-piloted our group over hemlock-covered hills and dales where we met trail caretaker Irene for an enlightening discussion on forest management as we walked through portions of her trail clear-cut thirteen years ago.

For our July hike, we were joined by President Pat Monahan and enjoyed a bright sunny lunch on the banks of Lake David. We have managed to sneak through our third hike with another beautiful sunny day as we wound our way through the hills of Prattsburgh to the Bud Valley Campground.

Kim Meacham



Kim Meacham

Second Hiking 101 hike at Lake David on map B3.

HUNTING SEASONS 2013

Check the map for sections of trail closed during this season. Blaze orange during all hikes after October 1st would be the safe choice.

Bow and fall turkey	Oct 1 - Nov 16 plus Dec 10-18
Gun	Nov 17 - Dec 9 and don't forget that some counties now allow rifles in addition to shotguns
Muzzleloader	Oct 13-19 plus Dec 10-18
Coyote	Oct 1 - March 31
Small mammals	Oct 25 - Feb 15

Walking Through Time #30: Hiking with Ghosts in the Catskills

Irene Szabo

For our first fifty years, those who wanted to walk the entire FLT had to endure a few whole days' worth of rural road walk, primarily because the Water Authority for New York City forbade entry to their extensive forested lands surrounding vast reservoirs created by flooding valleys. Armed guards patrolled against trespass until recently. Now their policies have changed, surprising since 9/11, but they



Irene Szabo

Old sign forbidding entry into water authority property, which has been sampled around the edges by the ubiquitous porcupines that make a dog's life precarious around here.

have permitted significant mileage of foot trails on their properties. Ambitious Rick Roberts has taken advantage of this change in policy to organize several new trail-building projects, including this June's Alley Cat.

Until this June, the FLT crossed the abandoned bed of the NY Ontario & Western Railway only on Beers Brook Road headed east at what used to be Beerston on Map M28, where the railbed looks like no more than a driveway into the trees. For a railroad that meandered all over the Catskills on its way from both Scranton and New York City to Lake Ontario, it's been frankly odd that we intersected only here after narrow misses near Bainbridge, Oxford, and Norwich. It's typical of the O&W's nature, however, that Beerston itself was once a busy little community, five miles south of Walton, with trackside businesses like a creamery, charcoal house, acetate company, and a stone dock, yet now features only a NYC water authority police station. 100 people lived there in 1907.



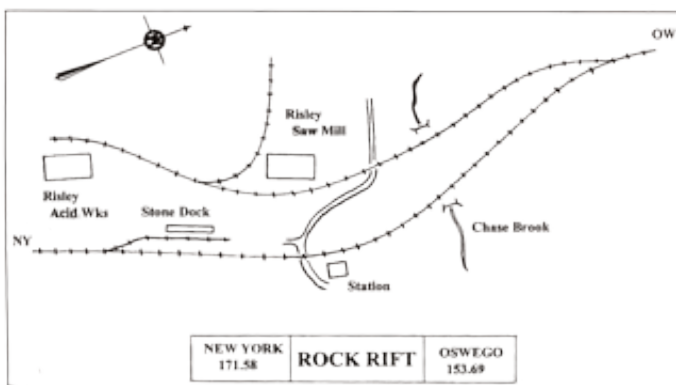
Saw mill and acid works when Rock Rift was a busy place, which was dammed up

in 1966 to create one of several reservoirs for NY City water supply. Rock Rift was one of five settlements, 94 farms, and 941 people drowned or displaced by the huge project, now memorialized only by a small roadside sign: "Former site of Rock Rift." There was little room to move buildings beyond the rising waters since these are narrow valleys surrounded by sudden and steep forested hills. Naturally, therefore, that odd phenomenon, the NY Ontario and Western Railway, chose to build through these twisting river valleys, consistent with its apparent policy to build from nowhere to nothing, only to join the legions of ghosts there now.



Rock Rift Station

My perception of aging abandonments has been informed by more recent closures, like the snowmobile trail on Lackawanna bed between Greigsville and Attica, the Pennsylvania RR route on the Genesee Valley Greenway, and Ontario Pathways' utilization of PRR secondary tracks east and north of Canandaigua. There is no doubt that



Site map of tracks at Rock Rift

these were railroads, even before volunteers cleared them of encroaching vegetation, and even repaired washouts, but they are also generally more recent abandonments, ranging from the late 1960's up through the early 1980's for the Lackawanna at the hands of Conrail. The sorriest abandoned railbed I'd seen before this was a portion of the Lehigh Valley branch between Cortland and Canastota, just south of the latter, where NY's Office of Parks had ignored their own property and permitted ATV traffic to exacerbate erosion along 7 miles of benched hillside railbed above a forested ravine. It's amazing how quickly a hillside railbed

goes rotten without railroad maintenance crews to tend water control through good culverts, even in that relatively recent 1967 abandonment. This is the section of the North Country Trail that the CNY Chapter restored from ruin to useable trail. However, the route of the O&W, the Old Woman, the Old & Weary, seems to have sagged back into the countryside with unaccustomed enthusiasm since abandonment in 1957.

That wasn't so long ago, was it? I was twelve! For instance, a dead-end branch went NE from Walton to Delhi, once a busy milk run that ran in the peaceful valley of the West Branch of the Delaware dotted with farms and a few small towns. A local resident said that tracks once ran right down main street in Hamden, but no vestige remains today. It was hard to discern short snatches of treed embankment passing through farms the whole way, because much of it has been plowed back into fields. Hell, even the Chenango Canal in the valley where Norwich lies is easier to find in remnants than the O&W, and that canal fell into disuse in the 1870's.

Most surprising was the condition of the railbed along a damp forested hillside a few miles south of Walton, above what used to be Rock Rift. Our Alley Cat job was to build trail along the O&W route there. Where we left a climbing two-lane road to join the railbed, the route was almost driveable if you didn't mind your truck wallowing in patches of slobbery black mud. That was a good thing, because not far inland into tall woods there was a major washout we needed to bridge, so the ability to deliver lumber was a boon. There was scant evidence of human settlement in that first stretch other than a few patches of tiger lily or lilac to hint at homesteads, and a little barbed wire. Yet Rock Rift's station had been just north of the washout!

Beyond that, however, the railbed became narrow, with several smaller washouts. In order to route around the first and largest, which would be bridged later that week, we cut a path downhill around the ravine then back up again, several times onto what one person assumed was an old road. The seeming old road petered out again, however, so we climbed back up onto the original bed, now more narrow than ever, and filled with young trees growing up in the scant sunshine, plus a few fallen big yellow birch or maple. We put the trail on a hump at the downhill edge of the railbed, since the bed itself had become more of a rocky trough. A few chunks of coal or big clinkers reminded us that this had been a coal-carrying steam locomotive line in happier times, and there were very occasional discarded ties, but it was hard to imagine whole trains travelling this slender path in the woods. Nary a stone of ballast remained, if there had even been much to begin with on this low budget railroad.

That evening I consulted my *Guide to the New York, Ontario & Western Railway's Southern Division*, a wonderful book produced by the O&W Historical Society which includes site maps of almost every station on the entire road, showing spurs, the station, and nearby industries, source of the old pictures in this article. There it was, Rock Rift at Milepost (MP) 171.58 outbound from New York City, with a switchback siding

www.fingerlakesrail.org

downhill to serve a saw mill and an acid plant! So that seeming road below the main line was really a siding headed for the valley floor.

Acetate and so-called acid plants cooked substances out of wood scrap in retorts designed to capture the distillates for use in other processes. Such concoctions contributed to early film!

The station had been adjacent to the creek which had created the biggest washout that needed our new bridging, and there was a photograph of the station in steam days. A trestle crossed the creek gully, and there wasn't a blade of grass in sight, certainly no nearby trees! Today we saw no sign of the station; perhaps we could have found something during leaf-off seasons. We met a lodge owner who said he used to snowmobile through here years back, before water authority rules, and swore there was lots to see of station remnants but we noticed nothing except trees and understory bushes.

At the far end of that rail and trail segment, several miles away, I also got to see where the FLT joined the railbed after a stiff uphill climb, not far from Apex, MP 167.25, and immediately passes through an impressive 30-40' deep rock cut. The side of the cut where the sun never shines was covered with green moss, and there was some water underfoot. Again, it seemed so narrow for a train to pass through, but hasn't appreciably broken down so this was all the room they created for some pretty big locomotives!

Barely a tenth of a mile long, the rock cut still fills with snow some years, I imagine, but few human witnesses can testify these days. 🍁



Marcus Coppola takes a break from using the exhausting power scythe to clear the railbed. Hard to imagine that shelf he is sitting on carried long trains as recently as 1957.

Photo by Irene Szabo



Jacqui Wensich, cook for this Alley Cat, tries out the raw new trail in the rock cut described below. Photo by Irene Szabo

21 Miles of Missing Road Walk??

Rick Roberts

CHECK OUT THE NEW FLT MAPS 28 & 29.

In the previous issue of the *FLT News*, I described my attempt to relocate the FLT from the tedious road walk around the Cannonsville Reservoir and into the woods, where we all know is where a trail needs to be.

I am happy to report that with the help of a fantastic Alley Cat crew that mission is now complete. In June, ten Alley Cat volunteers arrived at my house for a five day stay. In those five days we were able to clear a 12 mile path from Dryden Brook Rd. to Beers Brook Rd. on FLT map M28, including building two bridges. This new trail section, which uses the abandoned O & W railroad bed (See a new installment of our series, *Walking Through Time*, about this new trail on the O & W on page 22) as well as the old abandoned NYS Rte 10, is entirely on DEP land and the FLTC is greatly appreciative of their cooperation in helping us achieve this goal. It offers great views of the reservoir and its gentle terrain is ideal for those of us who find the Catskills intimidating.

This new trail section, along with last year's Alley Cat project, eliminates 12 miles of road walk from Beers Brook Rd. to Rte. 10, plus Bob's Brook, Grey Rd., Co. Rte 47 and Co. Rte 27.

Four years of scouting, negotiating, GPSing, flagging, construction and clearing, blazing, reGPSing, signage and mapping are finally done. And to top it off, thru the efforts of Irene Szabo and Larry Blumburg, we now have three new sponsors for the new section.

My next project?? Well, I've always hated the road walk up Houck Mt. Road to Tower Rd. (M28). Not so bad going west or downhill but the hike up, especially on a hot summer day,

is brutal. I had occasion to do just that while hiking on my final GPS trek of this new trail section. Yes, I realize that Houck Mt. is not part of the new section but my dog Scout and I added a few miles and 2 days to that particular hike, ending up in Downsville, which, by the way, is now an FLT trail town, with the FLT running right down Main St. and over the only covered bridge on the FLT. Anyway, this fall, after all the leaves are off, I'll be scouting for a new reroute from Bear Spring WMA to Beers Brook Rd. I've got a few options in mind so keep your fingers crossed; Houck Mt. may become history.

Or, it might be a side trail to the last unrestored fire tower in the Catskills, the Rock Rift fire tower, constructed in 1934 and abandoned in 1985. I've already GPSed the route, have DEP and private landowner permissions and maintaining sponsors. All that remains is for NYS to transfer title of the tower to the Town of Tompkins which I hear is in the works. More on this later.

So you thru hikers and section hikers, get a copy of the new maps! 🍁



Rick and Rosemary's house near Hamden. It's a pity our Alley Cats had to endure such privations in their lodging.



"It's gotta be a record" 24' Kingpost bridge built on the new Cannonsville section in 4 1/2 hours, start to finish, by Dave Potzler, Don Sutherland, Rick Roberts, Paul Hoffman and Bob Moses.



The Roberts' Scout, best beagle and sidekick to Jacqui the cook.



Rick's 4 wheel drive truck dragging lumber toward the Rock Rift tation spot for the new bridge, through slippery mud that would have scared off normal drivers.

Photos by Paul Hoffman

Over 100 Hikers Enjoy Alfred U Spring Weekend

Ron Navik

The 2013 FLTC Spring Weekend at Alfred University on May 31 and June 1-2 featured a variety of hikes and interesting presentations on Friday and Saturday evening. Hikers enjoyed everything from 12 mile strenuous hikes to a 3 mile campus walk and everything in between. They included most of the main trail on maps 7, 8 and 9 and the opportunity to do the complete Letchworth Branch Trail. For those already familiar with the Main Trail, they could hike the Robinson Loops or Stonybrook State Park.

Alfred University hosted most of the hikers in the dorms, although some camped nearby at their private Lake Foster, while some opted for more luxurious digs at the Saxon Inn on campus. The Dining Hall served up a variety of good food for hungry hikers and went beyond expectations in providing take-out boxes for us to save Friday evening's meal for some hikers who were unable to make it back to the Dining hall in time for dinner.

Friday evening, Dave Drum shared his adventure "Trekking in Nepal" and treated us to some beautiful mountain scenery and insight into the Nepalese culture. Saturday evening, Paul Hoffman took us along on his climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa. Paul did this climb as a fund raiser for cancer research and shared his own family's relationship with the deadly disease. The intro to his trip included many interesting glimpses into the local culture in Tanzania, and many beautiful photos of the climb and the mountain itself. But the most amazing part was "flying down the mountain." Paul contracted a local gastric problem on the trip and was able to eat only a little toast and sugar water during most of the climb, sapping his strength and endurance. Partway down, he just couldn't go any further, so the porters strapped him to a one wheeled stretcher and raced him down the mountain over terrain that was hard enough to negotiate on two feet. The trip leader caught it all on video. Wow! Paul recovered and is doing fine now. 🍁

NY State Golden Park Program for those over 62

If you are a New York state resident 62 or older on any week-day (except holidays) you can obtain free vehicle access to state parks and arboretums. Simply present your current valid NYS Driver's License. This policy applies both to Office of Parks and Recreation and DEC facilities.



Ceramics are an important segment of Alfred's educational offerings, so part of the campus walk included this terra cotta building.

Photo by Ron Navik

Article removed at author's request

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Calendar of Events

October 3-6 FLT Fall Campout in the Catskills

October 6..... Board of Managers meeting at Campout

October 19..... Erv Markert Hike (see pg. 14)

Oct 26..... Regional Trail Stewards' Meeting:
Hickory Hill Campground, Bath

Nov 1..... Deadline, FLT News

Nov 9..... Regional Trail Stewards' Meeting:
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Springville

Nov 15-17 Board Retreat, Watson Homestead, Campbell

Jan 11, 2014 Howard Beye Hike, Location To Be Announced

Mar 8..... Board of Managers Meeting, Mt. Morris

May 10 Board of Managers Meeting, Site TBA

May 30 - Jun 1 FLT/ADK Spring Weekend, Cazenovia College

June 1 Board of Managers Meeting, Cazenovia

New & Returning Members

May - July 2013

Deborah Bilinski

David Bliss

Maryann Denhoff

Anita Edgemon

Jeffrey Ehlinger

Env. Science Careers Class

OCM BOCES McEvoy Ed. Ctr.

Kenny Fellers

L.J. Freitag

William Gates

Nicholas Good

Barbara & Larry Greil

Mary E. Hamm

David Hanselman

Jared & Bonnie Harrison

Everett Hunt

Elizabeth Jeffery

David A. Jones

William Lawrence

Richard Maggi

James & Diane Maville

Rick & Sandy Meyers

Barbara J. Montagna

Niagara Frontier Trekkers

Anthony Orsini

James Orsini

Colin Pritchard

Ryan Quinn

Andrea & Jeff Rubin

Albert F. Sakowicz

Robert Schaeffl

Erica Shine

Patti Singer

Christopher Snow

John Townsend

Allen Tulumello

Lisa Van Parys

Rick Wall

Wendy, Jamie & Jacob Wright

Michael, Andrea, Abigail & Isabel Zuber

Interlaken, NY

Amherst, NY

Fabius, NY

Clifton Springs, NY

Orchard Park, NY

Cortland, NY

Ovid, NY

Horseheads, NY

Rochester, NY

Elmira, NY

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Elmira, NY

Castile, NY

Bath, NY

West Valley, NY

Shortsville, NY

Athens, PA

Rochester, NY

Conesus, NY

Rochester, NY

Amherst, NY

Yorkshire, NY

Cuba, NY

Beaver Dams, NY

Rochester, NY

Corning, NY

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On Map M23, just east of East Pharsalia in Chenango County, the trail passes by the Berry Hill Fire Tower. On August 31st, fire tower fans decided to light up the cabins at the tops of seven towers, all in the Catskills except this one. Among them was Balsam Lake, also on our trail. This particular glowing moment at Berry Hill was dedicated to the memory of Fred Lamb, local trail worker who died last year and was the director of ongoing restoration efforts at this particular tower. With DEC permission, a few Bullthistle Club members and other tower enthusiasts climbed Berry Hill and lit it up with three Coleman lanterns for this brief shining moment.

Picture by Andy Avery, and thanks to Warren Johnsen for alerting us to this fine evening.