

Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

Summer 2015



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- * *Farewell Ed Sidote, Mr. FLT*
- * *Fall Rendezvous*
- * *Grimes Glen Naples Loop Trail*

SUMMER 2015

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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FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS

Volume 54 Number 2

Finger Lakes Trail Service Center
6111 Visitor Center Road
Mt. Morris, NY 14510
(585) 658-9320

Editor

Irene Szabo
6939 Creek Road,
Mt. Morris, NY 14510.
Phone (585) 658-4321
treeweenie@aol.com

Graphic Design

Jennifer Hopper

End-to-End Update

Jacqui Wensich

Walking through Time

Irene Szabo, Tim Wilbur

A Naturalist's View

Randy Weidner

A Walk on the Wordy Side

Marla Perkins

FLT Archives

Georgeanne Vyverberg

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Send address changes to :
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THIS PAGE: Another view of Grimes Glen Gorge.
Photo by Vinnie Collins

COVER: These are the waterfalls within the Grimes Glen Gorge, the centerpiece of the new purple trail through Naples. Just this once, purple was permitted on our cover!
Photo by Vinnie Collins.

President's Message

Pat Monahan

There are many times in my role as president that I have the pleasure to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of others who have supported the Finger Lakes Trail. Here is another opportunity to do so, but unfortunately it is veiled in sadness. I must report to you that Ed Sidote passed away on April 9, 2015. Known as "Mr. FLT," Ed will stay with us well past his time here. He was an FLT icon known

to strike up a conversation with a stranger, often about hiking, and walk away as a friend for life. Ed was never shy about talking up his passion for the FLT in person, on the phone or by email. He always had the best in mind for the trail and all who have been associated with it. He was an inspiration. His closing salutation in messages was always "Happy Hiking" and now it is our forever wish for him – Happy Hiking, Ed!

In Norwich, Land of Bullthistles, we held our annual meeting and Spring Weekend. Many thanks to the Bullthistle Hiking Club for hosting the event. I'd also like to recognize our outgoing Board members Scott Brooks, Donna Coon, Roger Hopkins, Terry Meacham and Laurie Ondrejka. On behalf of the membership I want to thank each of you for your willingness to volunteer your leadership skills to shepherd our organization. I also welcome the new Board members in the Class of 2018. They include returning Board members Scott Brook, Terry Meacham and Laurie Ondrejka and Bob Kremens and David Priester. The membership also received



The Sidote bench with snow.

a very positive report about our finances. We remain fiscally healthy based on good decisions to support our important mission, "to build, maintain, protect, enhance and promote a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever!"

Like the above mentioned Board members, volunteers are an essential part of the FLT. Volunteers stuff envelopes at the

office, cook food for Alleycat work crews, build lean-tos, maintain the trail, negotiate trail easements with landowners, create maps, edit magazines, provide guidance to manage growth in our investments, serve as ambassadors at various events, lead hikes, and more. Do you have a talent to share? We currently have a need in the areas of social media, website support, mapping and trail maintainers on the Crystal Hills Trail in Steuben County. How can you help? Not sure? Call the Office at 585/658-9320 or send a message to FLTinfo@FingerLakeTrail.org.

Lastly, as a membership driven non-profit organization, the FLT relies on membership and donations to support our mission. I appreciate your membership. I encourage you to take a hike with someone you know on the FLT. Enjoy the beauty of being outdoors on the trail. Let them experience *New York's Premier Footpath*. Invite them to become a member. You can even borrow my line. First, ask them to join the FLT and then tell them "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 yahoogroups.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), Jack VanDerzee (vanderze@ithaca.edu) and Roger Hopkins (roger@naturalhighs.net)

To join the group, send a blank note to fingerlakestrail-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and follow the instructions for subscribing. If you have any problems or questions, contact one of the co-moderators.

Grimes Glen - Naples Loop Trail Open

Dave Newman

After the Finger Lakes Land Trust negotiated protection of Grimes Glen from a private owner, Ontario County acquired ownership of the popular Glen just a block off beautiful “downtown” Naples and received a grant to improve the park, add signage, and specifically to designate a route to connect this newest Ontario County Park to the Finger Lakes Trail. Discussions were already underway last fall with Hazlitt Winery, who allowed the FLT to reroute our Bristol Hills Branch trail north out of Naples onto their property, when Betsy Landre of the Ontario County Planning Department was working with Dick Hubbard. She asked what route to designate as the connection to Grimes Glen, and proposed that it pass by the Hazlitt tasting room.

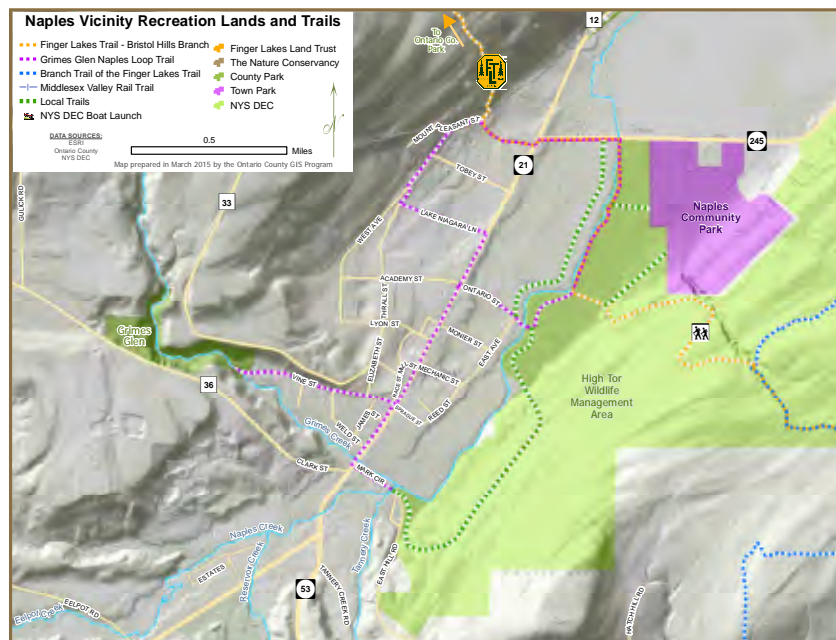
The plan morphed from there, as FLT’s Bristol Hills Branch Coordinator Donna Noteware, Executive Director Dick Hubbard, Vice President of Trail Preservation David Newman, Hazlitt’s Operations Manager Steve Cromwell, and Naples Town Supervisor John Cowley met and subsequently developed a plan for a loop trail connecting to the existing FLT in two places as shown on the map. *FLT News* editor Irene Szabo suggested we use grape color purple blazes, to match Naples’ fire hydrant theme color. The FLT Board enthusiastically blessed the addition to our trail system and this new purple loop will show on the next revision of our B1 map.



Bystander

Scott Magee (Race Director, Twisted Branches UltraMarathon), Betsy Landre, Ontario County Planning Dept., Donna Noteware, Bristol Hills Branch Coordinator, Peter Newman, son of Dave, and Dave Newman, VP of Trail Preservation.

Betsy Landre took care of the permissions, which required Ontario County, the Town of Naples, the Village of Naples, NYS Department of Transportation (as part of the trail runs along State roads), NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (as part of the trail is in High Tor Wildlife Management Area), and NYSEG (who gave us permission to put markers on their utility poles). Ontario County recognized that many of the users might not be normal FLT “hikers”, but might be tourist visitors to Naples unused to following regular trail blazes. To maximize the publicity effect, and make the trail more obvious, Ontario County’s grant provided 500 trail disc markers and the entire loop was “blazed” by trail discs, not paint blazes, with a few purple arrows at the key turns and intersections. The local trail, on the east side of Naples Creek south of Ontario Street, is not formally part of the Grimes Glen - Naples Loop, but will be shown on our maps, as are other “local trails,” and offers an additional interesting route.



When you have a chance, go check out this new loop. Pick a nice day and once you get to Grimes Glen, slip on your creek shoes and follow upstream in the creek bed to the waterfalls. There are several places along Main Street to stop for food, and the “Tap

Room” at the Naples Hotel will serve you a cold one in a bar-room that looks like it came straight out of the late 1800s. Hazlitt Winery invites you to park in their ample visitor lot and at the end of your hike, stop in for a wine tasting. They even have public toilets that hikers are welcome to use; this loop literally goes right past the well marked door that is directly accessible from the street. You won’t have trouble finding the trail: there is a purple FLT disc on every second utility pole down Main Street, inviting casual visitors to “check it out” and including our www.FingerLakesTrail.org link hundreds of times around the loop. 🍁



Betsy Landre

WHAT LIVES IN GRIMES GLEN?

June 20, Nature Walk at Grimes Glen at the end of Vine Street in the Village of Naples

The Finger Lakes Land Trust is sponsoring hikes, paddles, birding forays, work projects, and nature programs at thirteen different land trust sites, all on June 20th. flt.org/HIKEapalooza

Try out our new purple blazed trail on your own AND enjoy a program with Ontario County Soil and Water District's educator Edith Davey, who will look under rocks and explore the creek with us, starting at 10:00 a.m. Learn about the geological history of the glen, and what the aquatic invertebrate inhabitants of the creek indicate about the water quality. Great for kids and adults alike. Be sure to wear shoes you don't mind getting wet, and bring water and snacks.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Ms. Szabo,

Thank you for publishing my submission “Now it can be told: 33 years of the Triennial Finger Lakes Trail Relay” in the Spring *FLT News*. I was suitably chastised by the FLTC for my lack of responsibility. I would like to clarify a few points.

First, there was never an entry fee, so no money was made, only spent by participants themselves on their petrol and wear-and-tear.

Second, and related to the first, this was a participation event, not much different from a Sunday run where runners communicate and decide to go out for a nice trail run “on any given Sunday.” No more than eight people were on any section of trail, very similar to what you might get with a small group of friends.

Third, we supposed that if anyone would be sued it would be the people who set up the participation, namely me and my brothers. The idea that the FLTC could be sued could be applied to any activity at all on the trail — an individual hiker wrenching a knee in a hidden chuckhole, for example. So indeed it “never occurred to me” because it seems so far-fetched.

The chastisement raises the question of permissions. I don’t see how our activity — participation on own responsibility — is different from many examples I know of organized

groups enjoying the trail. For example I know first hand of a church group who recently took a winter hike (advertised in the church bulletin, recruiting participants) on the FLT from South Rd. to Shindagin Hollow Lean-to, through DEC land (Shindagin Hollow State Forest), with about 15 participants. I am sure they had no insurance and got no permission from DEC. Does the FLTC expect such a group to do so? Another example is a birdwatcher’s club that organizes a hike on a section of the FLT. Anyway I am out the business now, but I thought people might enjoy the history of an event that has certainly built awareness of and support for the FLT in the Ithaca area.

Best,
David Rossiter

David, while your ongoing relay was indeed small in impact, we didn’t dare use your article without some cautions, lest others, who envision much grander running events, think they can just do whatever they want.

And don’t ever think farcical lawsuits are so far-fetched: the FLTC has to spend thousands of dollars a year just in case.

Editor

Bragg and Sydelko Trail Property Donation

Dave Newman

Tom Sydelko and his sister Nancy Bragg have donated their 9.8 acre Schuyler County property along the Cayuta Lake Outlet to the Finger Lakes Trail. Their parents, George and Alta Sydelko, purchased this 3500 foot long and narrow property that runs through the Cayuta Gulf just west of Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management Area in 1955 at a tax sale; Tom and Nancy inherited it in 1994.

FLT volunteer Kurt Seitz arranged to reroute the trail through this property in 1999, with assistance from the Cornell University Student Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers, who designed and built the bridge shown in the photograph out of rot-resistant untreated black locust wood.

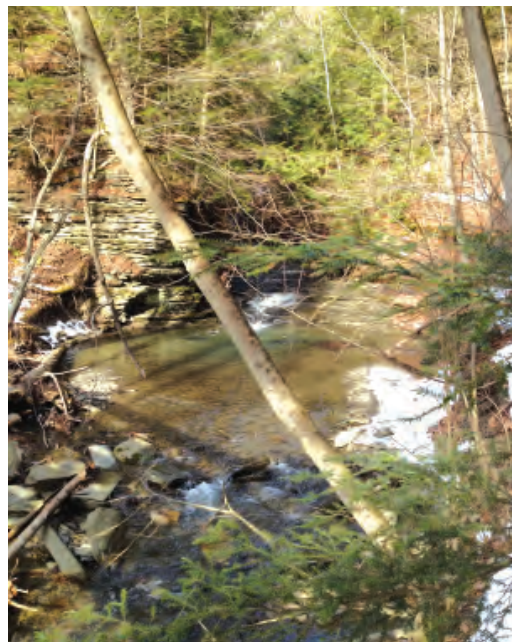
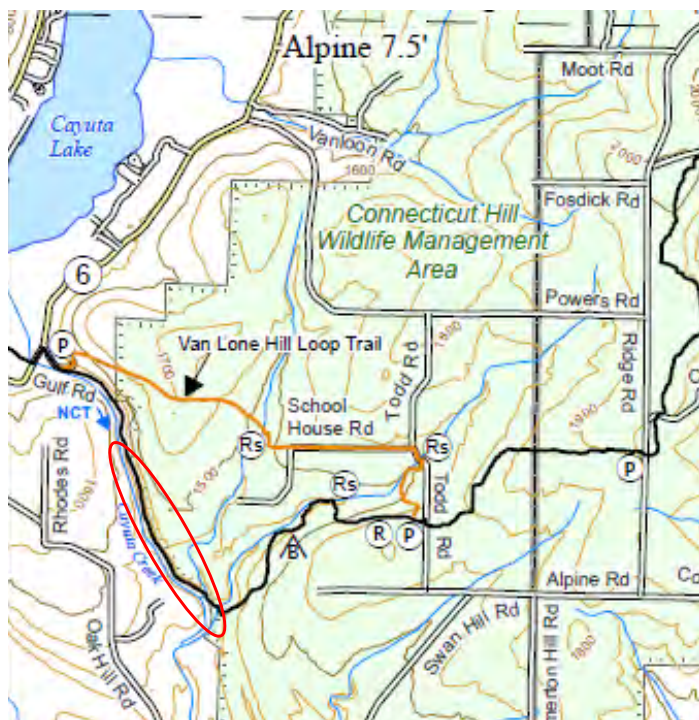
You can make a nice loop hike to check out this part of the trail by starting at FLT Map M16 between Watkins Glen and Ithaca, at the Gulf Road parking area, and taking the Van Lone Hill Loop Trail eastward to its intersection with the FLT, where you would turn west to return to the valley floor and the beautiful hike upstream along the Cayuta Creek back to your starting point. Trail along the creek is beautiful at any time of year, a nice level lane, but in early spring the wildflowers are a treasure.

Our thanks go to the Sydelko family for the foresight to steward this property for all these years and for donating it to FLT where it joins our six other donated properties and 86 Trail Access Easements as one more beautiful section of the trail that is protected... Forever! 🍁



Tom Sydelko

This is the bridge built by Cornell students out of black locust over fifteen years ago. Where the trail turns uphill into Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management Area, this bridge takes us over a side stream.



Tom Sydelko

The lovely creekside trail now protected by the Bragg and Sydelko donation.

Executive Director's Report

Dick Hubbard

Things Are Looking Good!

Not a lot of our members have the opportunity to visit the FLT Office/Visitor Center – and that's fine. We communicate with you through this magazine, online and often by telephone while trying to offer the service that you need and expect. Our part-time staff utilizes office space that is provided by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under the terms of a lease that allows occupancy without monetary consideration from the FLT other than some utilities and maintenance.

The office is a two-story frame house that previously served as residence for the Mt. Morris Dam facility superintendent. Originally set up fifteen years ago, the work space and demands on staff have changed over the years. So, during the past several months, we embarked on an internal office re-arrangement that allows for better utilization and equipment sharing, easier communication, and brings the office team together on one floor. Thanks to the volunteer help of member Paul Hoffman of Dansville, our entire network and telephone wiring were completely re-worked utilizing modular wall connections at locations where workstations and printers are placed. The upgrade included replacing older phone interface technology resulting in enhanced data throughput.

Naturally, after years of use the office was in need of some sprucing up, so the Board of Managers supported a Financial Committee recommendation to fund new paint, wallpaper removal and carpet and floor cleaning. At the time of this writing we are just beginning to contract for services but have moved into the new configuration, a layout that is seemingly more spacious and efficient. We look forward to a cleaner, brighter, more productive environment with hopes that you might stop in to visit. You can hike on the Letchworth Branch Trail just out our door and enjoy free daily tours of the Mt. Morris Dam that USACE offers at 2:00 PM during the summer season. 🍁



Dick Hubbard

Paul Hoffman shows Jennifer Hopper, Office Manager, the wiring and switches that he installed at the FLT office. Paul re-wired all of the phone and network wiring and installed new phone network interface and network switching devices.

Contact: Dick Hubbard
Hubbard.RDH@gmail.com
716/604-8380

Join the North Country Trail Association

A Special Deal for FLTC Members!

Now you can join the North Country Trail Association for just \$23 per year! You'll get a subscription to North Star magazine, and the satisfaction of helping develop the North Country National Scenic Trail. To join, send this coupon to:

NCTA, 229 E. Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 or call 866-Hike-NCT

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Ruth and Dan's Excellent Adventures

Ruth Dorrough

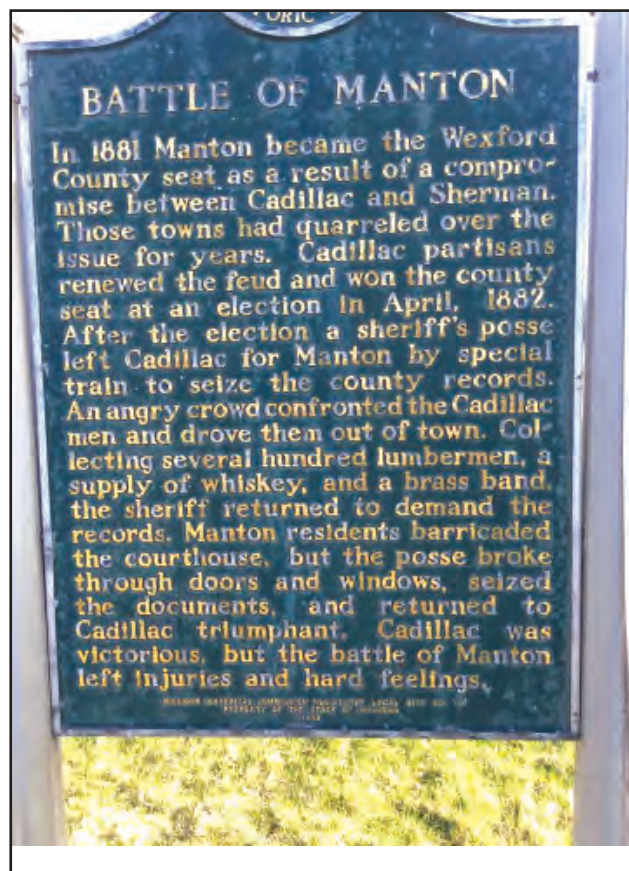
Ruth and Dan Dorrough, FLT end-to-enders and Canandaigua residents, got severely bitten by the long distance hiking bug, so have been knocking off miles on the North Country National Scenic Trail for the last two years ever since she retired. First they tried out a few of the annual conferences which gave them tastes of the trail in other states, then they finished Pennsylvania, and eventually they became serious enough that they spend most of the mild half of the year hiking in other states now.

They do day hikes as much as possible, but will backpack when necessary, like over the remote Kekekabic Trail near the Canadian border with Minnesota, so by staying at local campgrounds they are soaking up the local flavor of each area they walk through, surely a big part of their adventures. This report from Ruth came during their late April hikes in the north end of the lower mitten of Michigan, where the town of Manton is. {editor}

I love the road trip aspect of this adventure almost as much as the hiking. We have been camping in Manton. It is cold enough that we have been taking some meals at the Merry Inn where, from listening to the locals, everyone not only knows your name, they know your mother and grandmother's name and can tell you many anecdotes about them as well as your second and third cousins while all sit at a long table, a real community.

We learned from a sign in town that in the 1800's there was a "battle" between Manton and Cadillac regarding which was to be the county seat. According to the plaque the sheriff from Cadillac rounded up a posse of lumber men, plenty of whiskey, and a brass band and stormed into Manton successfully taking away all the important government papers. We learned from talking to folks around here that the bitterness extended well into recent times. A fellow said that growing up, if he wanted a little excitement, he and his buddies would simply go to Cadillac on a Friday night and there would be a good old brawl going in no time.

We forgot, of all things, to bring towels. The campground has mercifully hot showers in a heated bathroom. No store in town except a hardware and drugstore that had been in business continually for 150 years. So we went to the secondhand store. We heard uproarious laughter as we entered. A woman announced, "We're blowing up reindeers!" We waited for the explosion. Looking around we saw emerging from the clothing racks a giant inflatable reindeer lawn ornament that someone had donated. We managed to get two towels (Dan's has telletubbies on it!), a Lands End turtle neck, a long sleeve Woolrich shirt, and brand new reading glasses and case for a grand total of \$6.24. Not to mention the priceless laughter we joined in on. 🍀



Dan Dorrough

Ironically, Manton was our first return to civilization on January 1st, 2000, after Joan Young of Michigan and I emerged from sleeping in a snow igloo along the North Country Trail a little north of there. It was crazy Joan's idea to spend Y2K on the trail; she invited two dozen of her friends but one notices that I was the only other person to participate. We were thrilled when we returned from our trek to see that electricity still worked, newspapers were published, and water ran through pipes, despite the dire predictions that civilization would suffer a collapse from computers trying to change the century on their calendars. {Editor}



Send **address changes** to
Finger Lakes Trail Conference
6111 Visitor Center Rd.
Mt. Morris, NY 14510
or FLTinfo@FingerLakesTrail.org

A Walk on the Wordy Side

Marla Perkins

In the previous issue, I noted what it was like to hike or walk or stroll with the Hobongan of Indonesia, on surfaces that are slimy because in the rain forest, it rains, and when nothing is ever really dry, slime covers almost everything. The Hobongan are experts at ambulating on slime and carry their babies and whatever else needs to be carried without, apparently, a second thought for their safety. Walking on slime is normal, not an experience to be thought about and discussed. I would have liked to discuss the experience, however, because I am not accustomed to ambulating on slime—mud sometimes, ice sometimes, slime sometimes during creek-crossings, but none of these is my typical hiking environment, and because I have extensive hiking experience, I have done some thinking about how to be relatively safe on what I consider unpredictable surfaces.

But this is my assumption: slime, ice, and mud are unpredictable. The Hobongan assume slime; there is nothing certain but death and slime. I would like to talk about walking on slime but the Hobongan think that questions about walking on slime are inane or ridiculous.

How do people decide what to discuss and what is discussable, and what is not? There are a couple of major principles. The first principle is that people talk about what is informative in some way. There are many ways to be informative, but two of the main ones are information about social or interpersonal interactions, or information relative to the content of the message.

Different languages, cultures, and individuals balance and prioritize the uses of these different types of content to different extents. For example, if a culture/language/person prioritizes the social and interpersonal aspects of information over content, questions will elicit answers, even if the answers are incorrect, because it's more important to let someone know that the interpersonal connection is in place and working well than to provide accurate content in answer to a question. People will make up answers to make sure that everyone knows that they are happy to talk and work with the person asking the question. When I have asked the Hobongan about walking on slime, they believe the question is ridiculous and do not address the content of my questions, but they usually like me, so they try to interact about something. In their culture, anything new and different is hilarious (rather than frightening—what a culture!), and my questions usually result in an extended discussion of what it takes for anyone to be as uninformed as I obviously am to be asking such questions, and everyone has a good laugh while walking along and while I'm falling over, which is even more fun.

Of course, if a culture/language/person prioritizes content over social or interpersonal connection, or has a different notion of what it takes to have and maintain an interpersonal connection, the made-up answer will be taken to be a lie, which is generally taken to be offensive by content-prioritizing people and does not maintain the relationship or provide the needed information. People who prioritize the social and interpersonal connections are also people who chatter, whether or not they have anything to say that would be considered content. The Hobongan assume that walking on slime is what people do, and they see nothing informative in talking about it. There is no reason to address my questions about walking on slime because there is nothing informative about doing so.

The next principle relates to the first: people tend not to talk about what is not informative. For example, when people ask me about hiking on the Finger Lakes Trail, I tend not to be very helpful. The trail runs through what I consider to be my native environment, and hiking is a normal activity. When people ask, I try to be helpful—I don't just ignore them—but I don't know how to help them, in most cases, and because I'm from a content-prioritized culture, I don't want to make up information or start a comedy routine on silly questions. Instead, I refer them to the website to buy maps and tell them to have fun. The Hobongan do not tell me how to walk on slime; it is up to me to watch where they put their feet and try to follow them exactly and figure out the patterns in how footing is chosen, a complex set of tasks that could be simplified if someone could or would tell me what the basic principles are. Topics that are not considered topics are difficult for many people even to think about; try it on the next extended car commute.

These principles can be used at different levels, as well. Social restrictions require that we avoid using obscenities in polite society and avoid racial slurs; those are relatively transparent social taboos because we are directly taught about them. Would you explain the process of breathing the next time an opportunity to mingle arises? Given the individuality of breathing, it might be an interesting experiment. Social constraints would suggest that this is not the sort of thing we need or want to know about a person, however. Individual constraints also apply: some people go hiking to have undisturbed talks with friends while some people hike to enjoy thinking their own thoughts.

As always, questions and comments are welcomed and might be used for future columns. Please note the change in address: marla.perkins@dartmouth.edu. 

2015 Cross-County Series - All Points Lead to the Genesee River

Martin Ruszaj, 2015 County Hike Series Coordinator

The dates are set and hike plot confirmed, with all points leading to the Genesee River. The Cross County Series began April 18th in Allegany County near the Steuben County border. FLTC President Pat Monahan was on hand acknowledging all the volunteers who are required to make our group successful. I can personally confirm that after graduating from hike participant to the 2015 coordinator. Many hours are required with many individuals adding their expertise and experience. For this I am thankful.

We eagerly exited the buses as 121 of us hit the trail. We headed west from the Pennsylvania Hill parking area and walked the road for the first mile. As we climbed our first hill, clothing layers were coming off. With the sun rising, from the horizon temperatures climbed from 40 at bus pickup to a 2 pm high of 65. This was quite a contrast to mid-March when we were considering pushing back this hike date due to concern about lingering snow pack. Even the April 1st pre-hike had us slopping through slushy snow in all off road areas of the trail except for the valleys.

Road walk quickly gave way to the lands of Bully Hill State Forest. These lands are the product of re-forestation projects of the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps or CCC. This depression relief program aided local employment by building roads and reclaiming abandoned / unused farm land. Bully Hill consists of 3513 acres of pine and spruce woods where we enjoy the work of the CCC today. One of the many nice sections of this route is when the trail parallels creek as we gently climb upstream with the waterway. The hillside opposite the creek ends abruptly as the creek bed efficiently drained the snow melt giving way to picturesque waterfalls. We reached our top elevation of 2200' at about the 6-mile mark near the sag wagon. All hikers were welcomed by our hosts Teresa Blenis, Larry Newman and Gloria and Dave Potzler. The pace quickened as we took in nourishment with the remaining hike a steady descent as we met back up with our vehicles on Bush Road (M9 Access 4).

As we look forward, Bully Hill was the first of many forests the 2015 Cross County Series crosses. May's hike takes us through Klipnocky and Slader Creek State Forests. We then descend to the Canaseraga valley home of Swain Ski Resort. Here we will have some of our most challenging hikes of the series with an ascent of 700 feet as the FLT briefly enters the southwest corner of Rattlesnake Hill Wildlife Management

Area before returning to the valley. In July we will end at the Genesee River where the trail meets the southern terminus of the Letchworth Branch, at Whiskey Bridge. The next two hikes will go west to east and we will complete our series again at the Genesee River.

Some interesting facts and history of the Genesee River Valley area:

Like much of the state, the Genesee River was reshaped during the last glacial retreat about 12,000 years ago. During the retreat a moraine was formed in Portageville just east of where current Route 436 crosses. This debris field forced the river westerly around the land mass and by the forces of erosion cut the Letchworth gorge forming its picturesque waterfalls. At a length of 158 miles, the Genesee is the only river in New York that crosses the entire north-south length of the state. The name Genesee is derived from the Iroquois: Zon-esche-o, which meant "beautiful valley." Certain tribes pronounced it «Gen-nese», and the name has stuck ever since.



Donna Ruszaj

A wide spread of generations enjoyed the first county hike.

The 1836 the Genesee Valley Canal was begun, which would connect the Erie Canal to the Allegany River through the Genesee Valley. This project met with financial problems and endless difficulties with the terrain. It was finally completed in 1862 but by then many railways had been established which opened many new transportation routes. The canal towpath was sold in 1878 to the Genesee Valley Canal Railroad. Many



Marty Ruszaj

Two views of the same creek, one during the April 1st pre-hike and another during our April 18th group hike.



Marty Ruszaj

remnants of the canal are still visible, and our trail walks nearly a mile along the canal immediately after crossing to the west side of the river.

The Mount Morris Dam at the north end of Letchworth State Parks serves as an important flood control measure for the Genesee valley. In June of 1972 it prevented extensive damage to the north. Hurricane Agnes stalled over Pennsylvania and New York producing massive rainfall. The river was turned into a monster resulting in severe damage. The original steel trussed Whiskey Bridge had to be rebuilt and now serves our FLT route.

If you have any questions, please contact the hike coordinator, Marty Ruszaj, at msruszaj@gmail.com.

See you on the trail! 🍁

Ed Sidote: 1917 - 2015 ♦ An Appreciation

He was, at the same time, an incredible pain and an absolute saint. Ed was kind of like the monomaniacal Captain Ahab in *Moby Dick*, in that he was so obsessed with the Finger Lakes Trail and hiking that he didn't have a real good perspective on other things. In other words, he had blinders on, sometimes bored in so ferociously on the topic that he practically scared people off, but in the long run, his effect was wonderful for the promotion of our trail.

No, he didn't found the trail. A few people have assumed that recently, but he didn't even discover its existence in Chenango County until about ten years after the trail was founded in 1962. But once he discovered it, he was on fire! I didn't get to know him until 1989, when he was already President of the FLT Board of Managers. At that point, he and his hiking partner, Rufus Perkins, were working on doing segments of the trail, now far from their Chenango County homes, by day hikes with two cars.

He and Rufus stayed at my house a couple nights, and what a pair of bulldozers! Ed preferred to sleep in his truck, but he also got up at 5 AM, came in the house, and banged around the kitchen looking for orange juice. Rufus got up soon after, and grabbed some merely decorative cups off hooks before I could stop him, cups that hadn't been washed in years, and poured coffee into them. Ewww.

Ed and Rufus became end-to-enders #3 and 4, or as they would argue, 3 and 3a; they were not a congenial pair at all times! After that, Ed was seized with a fever to encourage long-distance hikers to "do" our FLT, especially once all the maps were published and the last gap closed by our 30th anniversary in 1992. He provided promotional programs

in his Chenango County area for years, provided an end-to-end column to the *FLT News* until recent years, and sent big packets of information to any prospective long hiker who told him of their intentions.

He spent long weekends driving to the last few gaps in the main trail, in order to work on them in the earliest 90's, always sleeping in his Suburban. He was a big part of the crew of wonderful older trail builders who built the next-to-last gap in Birdseye Hollow near Bath. Cross-county hikes were his invention, which he originally did via car-shuttling; they were such a good idea that they soon morphed into big organized events utilizing busses. He also inadvertently started the Forever Society by donating \$1250 to the trail instead of accepting any presents on his 90th birthday.

I was so proud of him for getting on the internet, something I held up to my own mother who refused to try it. But as Ed said in a biographical article a few years back, everybody should learn to type. It kept him out of battle in World War II. He was always typically full of advice, especially for hikers, and kept trying valiantly to attend regional trail maintainers' meetings, even long after he couldn't hear well enough, even with various amplification devices he'd bought.

He was thrilled that a big chunk of our trail was going to carry the North Country National Scenic Trail and always promoted it feverishly. He liked the idea of their chapters who adopted sections of the route and tended trail there, so he tried to engender "chapters" along the FLT where there weren't already trail-adopting clubs. While that idea never matured, he did start the Bullthistle Hiking Club in the Norwich area, his home town, and as we've recently seen, they are a successful ten-year-old club who has accomplished good things.

Ed made a living at several things, working in the offices of a few construction companies and offering accounting services through his own company. Always lived alone in the same house he grew up in, which is why I asked Warren Johnsen to take this picture of his garage a couple years ago, knowing it would fit someday in our magazine. Yep, the sign still says "Eddie Sidote" just like it did when he was a boy there. He was also an old-fashioned gentleman, since when I was working on my own end-to-end back in the early 90's, he insisted I stay at his house several nights when I was walking his county with his transportation assistance, but invented excuses why he had to go stay at his aunt's house those same nights. He wouldn't compromise my delicate reputation by sleeping in the same house. Ahhhhh.....



Warren Johnsen

Ed Sidote was a very special character, and contributed so immensely to our formative years that few will appreciate him sufficiently. Of course, at the same time he drove us nuts when he spent money on promotional materials that nobody had authorized, but that was the price of receiving his enthusiasm and adoration. He engendered enough devotion among local hikers that people were always looking in on him in the last years and taking him places, like to meals! The boy never learned to cook a thing, which made it tough on him once he turned in his car keys and license a few years back. But friends and Bullthistlers kept him cared for, even unto his 97th year.

Great job, Ed, lasting so well and so long. He walked daily until this last year. 🍁

Irene Szabo



John Nesbitt

2010 dedication of the Sidote bench, with Ed present and his cousin sharing the bench with him. The signpost held behind him by members of the Bullthistle Club is out on the trail, welcoming hikers to "his" County's part of the FLT.

First Encounters

My first encounter with Ed Sidote was in late 1974, when I furnished a new apartment with pieces he was selling from his family's "camp." In the late 70's I discovered the Finger Lakes Trail at Bowman Lake State Park, and soon bought a membership for me and a couple hiking friends.

Ed was surprised to find on an FLT membership list the names of three new members living in the Norwich vicinity. He telephoned each of us to further pique interest in the trail system. A few years later, he persuaded Dave and me to become trail stewards on adjoining sections of FLT in Chenango County. At that time these trail sections were maintained under the auspices of the Triple Cities Hiking Club (TCHC), but are now the responsibility of the Bullthistle Hiking Club. I still maintain the trail section that Ed assigned to me over a quarter of a century ago.

First Cross-County Hike Series and "the Foot Race"

To promote the FLT, Ed conceived the Chenango Cross-County Hike Series. In 1991 Ed obtained hike leaders (Don Windsor, Dave Conner, John Nesbitt), and set up logistics, using car shuttles in the early years instead of busses. This successful endeavor was the first of many cross-county FLT hike series that followed. In subsequent years as other cross-county series were organized across New York, Dave Conner and I joined the hikes. Eventually we decided to become FLT end-to-enders. At that time, the awarded pins that contained a hiker's end-to-end finishing number had been purchased and donated by an individual. Only 50 pins had been purchased and there were no plans for additional purchases. Ed repeatedly telephoned Dave and me to keep track of our progress on our goal of end-to-

end completion and to encourage us to speed up our efforts. He emphasized that other hikers were in close contention for the last of the pins. Dave and I expedited our hiking of the remaining portions of the FLT and finished as #48 and #49, respectively. At a later point in time, Ed confessed that he had been telephoning and prodding all of the contenders for the last of 50 award pins, essentially setting up a cross-state "foot race." Now, of course, additional donations have continued the end-to-enders pins.

Later Years

Ed always enjoyed engaging fellow hikers and friends in conversation, so Dave Conner and I often drove him to spring and fall dinners sponsored by the TCHC. Of course, he enjoyed eating the meals, too! In April of 2010, Ed was inducted into the New York State Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame. It was the first time that someone other than a hunter or fisherman was inducted into this Hall of Fame. In November of that year, a stone bench was dedicated to Ed, "Mr. FLT," in recognition of his contributions and dedication to the Finger Lakes Trail System.

My last encounter with Ed was on the day of the most recent FLTC "Ed Sidote Hike" (August 2, 2014) which started at the beginning of the section of FLT that I maintain. In closing, Ed was a truly inspiring individual. His legacy will live on through the trail system that he passionately dedicated his time and energy to build and maintain, as well as the hundreds of hikers and prospective hikers of all ages that he directly and indirectly encountered and encouraged. 🍁

John Nesbitt

I will forever hear Ed's voice calling me on the phone. He started off with "Marie," but it always sounded like "Muh-reeeee!" And every time he phoned, I would smile: I knew he was going to talk me into doing something I had never thought of and probably would not have done, had he not asked me. For, in the end, there was NOTHING I wouldn't do for that man. And he knew it, capitalized on it unapologetically. He talked me into being on the Board of Managers of the FLT decades ago, being in charge of two Cross-County Hike Series, volunteering at many Winter Living Festivals at the DEC Rogers Center, helping him start the Bullthistle Hiking Club, staying on forever as his vice-president, interpreter, and/or secretary. He talked me into typing, printing, or copying endless things, driving him to Ithaca or Binghamton for other club dinners, helping him learn how to manage the computer, and just agreeing with him (it was easiest).

But he truly sold me on his dreams and his visions for life, hiking, and the FLT. He also taught me always to be decently dressed in my own home, and to bring a robe into the shower, because I never knew when he was going to come over and walk right into my house and yell Muhreeeee! I will also never forget the days he walked into my house with a bouquet of flowers for Mothers Day and told me what a great mother I was to my children, or dropped off handwritten cards of appreciation with gift certificates for groceries. 🍁

Marie Inglee, Webmaster, Bullthistle Hiking Club



Betty Constable

Gifts in memory of Ed Sidote

from

Gene & Liz Bavis
Dawn Bennett
Max & Teresa Blenis
Bob & Sue Bliven
Larry & Susan Blumberg
Jon & Kathy Bowen

Rich Breslin
Bullthistle Hiking Club
Roy & Laurie Dando
Downsville Motel - Al Carpenter
Kathy Eisele

Paul & Theresa Gaeta
Frances & Kathleen Hailey
Dick Hubbard
Dianne Caezza Lotyczewski
Kim & Terry Meacham

The Mirabito Family
George Probst
Virginia Schuelke
Horst & Sigi Schwinge
Susan Yee

The first Woman Thru-Hiker on the Finger Lakes Trail

Jacqui Wensich, End-to-End Coordinator

Mary Ann Nissley #39

After scanning Mary Ann's photo album, given to me by Ed Sidote, I decided to try to contact her, the first woman thru hiker on the FLT. While other women had already finished the whole trail doing shorter hikes spread over time, Mary Ann was the first to walk it continuously from one end to the other. Using Google I located her Allentown Hiking Club; they were delighted to ask her to reply to me and to see some of her photos from the 1995 FLT.

Now in her early eighties, Mary Ann always mentions Ed Sidote who assisted her on the FLT. She currently hikes with her great grandchildren and grandchildren, passing forward her love of hiking. She bemoaned the fact that she can no longer do a twenty-two mile day pace. Now she does "only" eight in the mountains. Besides the Allentown Club she is active in The Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association.

From her end-to-end article in our FLT News:

"On April 17, 1995, I left George Probst's van to begin a long journey of 550 miles. It was a trip filled with many trail angels and much trail magic...The wild flowers were indescribable as I hiked through the spring. There were bloodroot, violets, spring beauties, trilliums, anemones, and flowers of every color.

My hike was not all euphoric. I lost my gas tank (cooking) and had to eat cold food for eleven days during the coldest part of my hike...I was lonely. However, the trail magic prevailed to overcome any difficulty....Ed Sidote, who started me on this adventure and with his enthusiasm for the trail and followed my progress across the state...Can you ever thank such Trail Angels?... (Marilyn Weidman, the Browns, the Hagers, Gary Klee, Buddy Rover, Laura McGuire, the Abbotts, the guides written by Irene Szabo and Cayuga Trails Club and Tony Preuss...) When I finished on May 25, 1995, at the Denning Lean-to, I became the 39th person to finish the trail and the first woman to backpack it continuously. I felt proud and humble...



Cliff Abbott (left) and Ed Sidote (right) present Mary Ann with her end-to-end patch in 1995.

Doris Abbott

Am I ready to do it again? What fun!"

Trails completed:

"Here is a list of trails I have completed. Horse Shoe Trail, Long trail, Ozark Highlands Trail, Ozark Trail in Missouri, John Muir Trail, Mich. Shore to Shore Trail, Susquehannock Trail System, Black Forest Trail, Long Path in N.Y., Isle Royale, River to River Trail, Katy Trail, Greenbrier river Trail, Foothills

Trail, Tuscarora Trail, Thunder Swamp Trail, Superior Hiking Trail, Allegheny Trail, North Bend Trail, Northville-Placid Trail, Laurel Highlands Trail, Loyalsock Trail, Great Allegheny Passage, Youghiogheny River Trail, C & O Canal, The East Coast Trail in Newfoundland, Bruce Trail in Canada, Little Miami Scenic Trail, Ouachita Trail and the Midstate Trail. I am working on the Mountains to Sea Trail this year and last year. It wasn't finished all the way when I did the mountain part but now I can finish it. Of course, I did the Finger Lakes Trail and the Branch Trails and the A.T. twice. Now I'm getting excited to get out on the trail. Snow, snow, go away."

The Adventures of Mary Ann on the MidState Trail (runs north-south in Pennsylvania), taken from the Allentown Hiking Club website. By Mary Ann Nissley

In June, 2011, I headed back to the MidState Trail again to hike the section from Lower Trail near Water Street to Ravensburg State Park, about 98 miles. Janet couldn't go with me this time, and, as you remember, my grandson won't because of the brambles that left him scratched and bleeding on his last trip, so I'll go it alone. That's nothing new for me. I parked my car at Lower Trail, an 11-mile section of rail trail where I hiked and ended in 2010, and got on my way up Tussy Mountain. It was steep, but marked well.

When I got close to Ravensburg State Park, a man was sitting in his car, trying to use his cell phone. I asked him if he could get service, and he said no. Rats! How am I going to call the man for a ride back to my car? The man in his car offered



Ed Sidote

Mary Ann at Campbell Brook Road in the Catskills, 1995

to drive me, and I said it was over 60 miles, but he didn't care. Wow! He knew a lot of the people in the countryside, knew the road well, and took me right back to my car. He was only on that woods road because there was a back-up on the main road, so he was taking this short cut. Some short cut for him! Some luck for me! 🍁

It was a pleasure to speak with the intrepid Mary Ann. She is an inspiration to us of all ages. Her extended family continues to be supportive and proud of her efforts. Ed Sidote was pleased that we were in contact.



Mary Ann now, taken by her daughter Faith Crowley.

FLT MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 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 FLT website).....	\$100		

Gifts in memory of

Verne Rockcastle

from

Finger Lakes Runners Club

Ted Markham

from

Tom Babcock

Gary Klee

from

Dave and Carol Burnett

George Zacharek

from

Paul & Theresa Gaeta

April 18, Spring Hike

Terry McConnell

Starting at the FLT trailhead on Dublin Rd., Map M22 south of DeRuyter at the border between Madison and Chenango Counties, I wanted to hike one of my favorite sections of trail in order to welcome Spring properly. This roughly seven mile stretch of the FLT main trail breaks naturally into three segments, bounded by road crossings on Mariposa, Bamberger, and Ratville Roads. While there is nothing spectacular about it, the segment sports a great variety of terrain, including deep, dark, spruce woods, open hillside beech forests, steep-sided scenic glens, open meadows, a wooden bridge, and a sheet of water called the Silver Spring, which when glimpsed shimmering through leafless woods at this time of year almost seems to hang suspended in the air.

Another reason I come here often is that the very ample parking area at the trailhead is one of the few in this area that can be relied upon to be plowed and accessible in winter. From the parking area, it is about a quarter mile road-walk to the trail through a swampy lowland at the headwaters of the stream that flows through the broad valley between Randall Hill and Lincklaen State Forest, eventually joining the Otselic River near Pitcher. On this morning, even at the relatively late hour of 10:30, the sun was just beginning to reach the bottom of the deep, steep-sided valley. Some shreds of mist hung suspended in air filled with the sounds of swamp frogs. There must have been at least two species, as their chorus was two part – a shrill soprano continuo that sounded like a alternator belt in need of tightening, and a popping, bubbling bass-line that suggested a gaggle of hens fighting over the remains of a mouse.

I encountered frequent patches of snow, enough to follow easily the tread of a hiker who had passed through a day or two before me. Nowhere was the snow deep enough to be an impediment, except near the beginning. The woods just off Dublin Road where the trail picks up is of dense evergreens, very flat, and ill drained. You can expect it to be damp in the driest season, and at this time of year it is a 4 inch deep pond of half-melted snow. Mercifully brief, this section gives way to a steep and relentless climb up the side of Crumb Hill. By the time you reach the Mariposa road crossing, you are either nicely warmed up, or ready to call it a day.

From Mariposa, the trail drops down into a glen with a sturdy wooden bridge, no doubt one constructed by an Alley-Cat crew in some distant season. It is still in excellent condition, but has become greenish with the kind of moss that can make wooden surfaces incredibly slick when wet. In just under a mile the trail emerges onto Bamberger road, just south of a still un-melted berm of snow left by the town snow plow at the point where the road becomes seasonal. In the other direction there is a single dwelling, one of the most appealing and secluded seasonal homes I have seen anywhere. Whitewashed, and immaculately kept, it has a green tin roof and a large deck that extends along and above the shore of a large silent pond. I have often fantasized myself in my retirement, sitting out on that deck on a warm summer evening, waving to the occasional hiker who passes on the FLT near the edge of my property. “Look me up if you ever want to sell,” I always say to myself.

A small purling brook empties into the NE corner of the pond, and the FLT climbs along a low grade within a few feet of its edge for a time, then turns into a winding shoulder-width swath cut through an

evergreen understory that I call “the gauntlet.” From there it skirts the edge of some farmer’s back forty along an old skid road, before reaching a sign announcing the beginning of the Link Trail. The FLT turns due south here, while the Link Trail goes north, eventually reaching its terminus in Canastota where it joins the Erie Canal towpath.

Some ten miles north of this spot on the main FLT is the end of the Onondaga trail where it reaches the Link Trail in Tioughnioga WMA. From that point northward the Link Trail doubles as the NCT for most of its length. There once was a wooden sign at the Link Trail junction that informed the hiker that he or she had two choices: follow the yellow blazes of the Link trail north to Canastota, or continue to follow the white blazes of the FLT as far as the Catskills and eventually the Long Path. The sign appeared to have succumbed to the rigors of our recent harsh winter.

The last trail section of the hike crosses a succession of 3 gullies before reaching Ratville Rd. There is a very serious blowdown between the first and second gully that forces the hiker to go around in a wide arc. A sawyer will be needed to clean that one out. The Silver Spring, the little sheet of water I mentioned above, lies about midway between the first and second gully. I found it still completely covered by a thick layer of ice. Indeed, it seemed there were two layers; you could peer down through holes in the top layer and see a deeper layer some inches below.

Ratville Road is a steep seasonal dirt road that pointlessly connects Ridge Road to Mariposa Road. My normal hike turns west here and follows Ratville Road. When I reach Mariposa Road in peak mid-summer shape, I often turn south, adding another 7 miles to my hike, returning through Lincklaen Forest on Murray Road - a beautiful dirt road through dense forest that is as good as any trail. Today, as I sat on the culvert on Ratville Road having a snack, it seemed clear that my lack of fitness called for a return to the car by the shortest possible route. That would be about 5 miles on another very scenic road named Lincklaen Center Road. The day had turned out quite windy and I watched the shadows of the small puffy cumulus clouds race across the fields past where I sat. I recalled the games we played as children when we alternately sought or tried to avoid the cloud shadows. Some days, we’d race across the open fields behind our neighborhood trying to intercept them, feeling somehow privileged to be in that fleeting dark spot. Other days, we pretended that being caught in them meant certain death, and our hearts would sink at the sudden darkening of the distant hedgerow, and the deceptively slow progress of the shadow as it detached itself from the tree line and came rushing towards us across the field, knowing that no matter how hard we ran on a perpendicular course we would never be able to escape in time.

Arriving back at my car, I reflected that nothing particularly special had happened on this hike; and yet, I was alive, I was well, and I had spent another perfect spring day on the Finger Lakes Trail. Now that IS special. 🍁

The Botanical Hiker to Forage the Finger Lakes Trail

Heather Houskeeper

Beginning this June, I will be thru-hiking the main Finger Lakes Trail from the Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania to its eastern terminus in the Catskill Preserve. I also hope to include the six branch trails as well, for a total distance of over 800 miles.

I chose this trail first because I am a hiker and have long felt a connection to this region, born and raised in northeastern Pennsylvania, and as an adult, having lived for several years in the tiny town of Port Jervis, New York. Moreover, as an herbalist and author, I will be embarking upon this journey with a different sort of purpose from most hikers'. I will chronicle the edible and medicinal plants I encounter along the trail, and where permissible, harvest these plants incorporating them into my back-country meals and back-country first-aid medicines. Upon completion, I will compile my findings into a backpacker's guide outlining the practical plants that can be found along the FLT, complete with recipes to get the backpacker started. I am hoping that the FLT may serve as a classroom for those wishing to deepen their knowledge of the region's edible and medicinal plants, so that they may identify and utilize these plants in their own backyards or wild spaces.

Some may ask the question, why forage? For the hiker, the reasons are plentiful. You can lighten your load and eat more healthily on the trail. Before the existence of our cultivated varieties, many of the wild plants were our common vegetables, such Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*), a relative to the carrot, and Goosefoot (*Chenopodium album*), a relative to spinach. These wild plants are oftentimes more nutritious than those in the grocery because they haven't had to endure days spent in transport or on the shelf. These plants are the traditional



My friend Chuck Johnston took the trail signage photo on the Mountain-to-Sea Trail on the way to Clingman's Dome.

medicines of our ancestors and of Native American people. If you take a look at the scientific names of some of our most common weeds, many of them bear the species name *officinalis* or *officinale* which indicates that they were stocked in the apothecaries of the past. Our most common plants offer the best medicines for trail first-aid in swelling, bug bites, poison ivy, or indigestion. Lastly, but certainly not least, for those who have a deep love for nature, it is yet another way to interact with our environment and deepen our connection.

It was my 2008 thru-hike on the Appalachian Trail that heightened my interest in our useful wild plants. I never imagined how much I would crave real food, some food besides granola bars, Ramen noodles, and peanut butter. I also learned the hard way, just how heavy real food is and how poorly it keeps in a backpack on a hot

summer's day in New England. I was amazed by how few long-distance hikers connected with their landscape rather than just speedily hiking over it, me included. It was as if we were separate from our natural environment despite our living in it for six months straight. None of us knew that we were passing a virtual produce aisle of fresh foods that could be easily combined with our typical backpacking staples we were already carrying to make delicious meals and snacks. Yet we'd wonder about it sometimes.

In 2011 on my next thru-hike, this one along the Mountains to Sea Trail, traveling 1000 miles across the state of North Carolina, my experience was vastly different. I foraged alongside the trail and nearby woods, harvesting only what I needed for a particular meal or medicine. I dined on such delicacies as angel hair pasta topped with individually packaged pads of butter (compliments of a diner in town),

Wood Nettle and Wild Onion, or pita with hard cheddar cheese, Violet leaves, and Bluets with a spread of Toothwort-mayo (mayo packet courtesy of a nearby gas station). I made spit-and-chew poultices of Common Plantain for bugbites, and Yarrow Oil infusions for inflammation.

I had attended Herbal Medicine School upon completing the Appalachian Trail, receiving a certification in herbal medicine, plant identification and taxonomy, and dove into extensive study at home and in the field. I had set out with the purpose of blending the all-too-often disparate worlds of the long-distance hiker and the naturalist. I chronicled, studied, and experimented with the edible and medicinal plants I encountered along the MST. And in the spring of 2014 my book, [A Guide to the Edible and Medicinal Plants of the Mountains to Sea Trail](#), was published.

Since then I have thru-hiked the MST for a second time, not only to chow down but to conduct a thru-hiking book tour. How to do that deserves a guide all its own. I now offer guided

plant walks, classes in plant identification and preparing wild edible meals and medicines, and give talks at various natural foods gatherings and trail gatherings such as the Mother Earth News Fair and Trail Days.

Now it's time to explore further the natural landscape of my first home, my roots, and I cannot wait. If you have a group that would like to learn more about my journey and the plants of the trail I will be available during my trek to give talks. Also, if you live along the trail and would like to join me in some miles of my trek, it'd be a pleasure to introduce you to some of the plants along the way. As I did on my other treks, I'll be carrying a device so that I can post regularly on my blog, www.TheBotanicalHiker.blogspot.com, so please do follow along. You can also find me on Facebook as The Botanical Hiker. I look forward to meeting you on the trail and seeing just what plants call the Finger Lakes home! 🍁



Answer to the Spring "Name That Map!" Quiz

*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*

Previous Picture:



Jacqui Wensich

Map M10 John Elia, Max Blenis and Jacqui Wensich take a "selfie" at a sharp turn on a dirt road on the FLT, member Pam Schu's driveway just northeast of Hornell.

Those who correctly identified the spot:

Pam Schu Warren Johnsen Teresa Blenis

New Picture:

By Scott Geiger, an aspiring end-to-end hiker



Trail Topics: New Trail Sponsors

Steve Catherman, Vice President of Trail Maintenance

New Trail Sponsors

Maria Costanzo and **Gary McCheyne** from Ithaca are the new sponsors of 3.7 miles of trail on Map M18 beginning at Harford Slaterville Road and winding through Hammond Hill State Forest to State Route 38 on the eastern edge of Tompkins County. Maria and Gary are replacing long time maintainers Claudia Smith and Charles Melin and Don McCrimmon and family.

Jeff DeMeritt from Coopers Plains is the new sponsor of the first 2.4 miles of the Crystal Hills Trail (CHT) on Map CH1 from the Moss Hill lean-to, at the intersection with the main FLT, through South Bradford State Forest into a section of private land south of Bailey Road in Steuben County. The FLT/CHT trail junction represents the northern terminus of the Great Eastern Trail that follows the CHT south to the Pennsylvania line and continues on to Alabama.

Picking up where Jeff DeMeritt's section ends, **Jeff James** from Savona has accepted responsibility for maintaining the next 2.4 miles of the CHT through Meads Creek State Forest to Meads Creek Road northwest of Painted Post. Along with now being a *steward* of the trail, Jeff is also the *Steward* of Elks Lodge 1547 in Bath and is the fourth staff member there, along with Mark Musso, Toby Beers and Taylor Crowe, to become an FLT sponsor. Must be something in the beer?

Also new on the CHT, **John Read** from Corning is now sponsoring nearly 5 miles of trail on Map CH1 from the gas line crossing on West Hill Road to Canada Road in the Town of Erwin. Kinsella Park is located at this trailhead and features parking, toilets, picnic tables, grills, a pavilion and a car top boat launch.

Larry Telle and friends from the ADK-Genesee Valley Chapter have been helping in several places along the trail for the last year, and now **Larry** and **Mike Goodwin** have officially adopted 9.2 miles of map B3 on the Bristol Hills Trail, from Bean Station Road to CR 13, including the Huckleberry Bog Nature Trail Loop. Irene Szabo, who has toiled away in this neighborhood since 1987, says she now works for THEM.

Trail Available to Adopt

Despite signing up the three new sponsors above to maintain almost 10 miles of the Crystal Hills Trail on Map CH1, Regional Trail Coordinator **Pat Monahan** is still seeking sponsors for another 10 miles of new trail on Map CH2 from Kinsella Park through Erwin State Wildlife Management Area to Mose Road.

The next 5 miles of trail on Map CH2, including 2 short spur trails, from Mose Road to Maple Street in the Village of Addison are also available to adopt. All trail on this map is located within Steuben County.

Contact **Pat** at **607/936-8312** or **pmonahan@stny.rr.com** for more information on these opportunities.

On Map B1 there are 5.8 miles of trail available for adoption from Access 3 on Clement Rd. to Access 5 on SR 245, through West Hill Nature Preserve and the Village of Naples in Ontario County. Contact **Donna Noteware**, Bristol Hills Regional Coordinator, at **noteware@empacc.net** or **607/868-4614**.

Town of Urbana Trailhead

Plans for a proposed trailhead at the Town of Urbana's municipal building are taking shape. Dave Oliver, the Town Assessor and President of *Friends of Hammondsport Area Trails and Parks*, envisioned a green space adjacent to the parking lot in front of the Town Hall for hikers on the Finger Lakes Trail. Dave was also the Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 18 in Hammondsport for many years, maintaining trail for us on Map M12 between Access 6 and 7. The trailhead will be located just north of Access 6 near the base of our popular Passport Hike along the rim of Mitchellsville Gorge, about two miles south of Hammondsport in Steuben County.

The plans for the trailhead include a forty foot diameter circular patio of stone pavers, three 6' steel benches, a rugged timber frame kiosk with a roof and two-sided message center, and landscaping including several shade trees, low evergreen ground cover and some perennial plantings. The message center will have one side dedicated to the FLT/North Country National Scenic Trail that will feature trail maps, and informational and promotional materials for both organizations. The other side of the message center will be for the Town of Urbana and Village of Hammondsport to highlight their local parks and trail system that will eventually connect the trailhead to three Town parks on the shores of Keuka Lake.



Tammy Catherman

The location of the trailhead on one leg of the 3-way intersection of a Town Road, County Route 88 and State Route 54 in the heart of Finger Lakes wine country will provide great visibility and exposure for the FLT. It will offer essential, safe off-road parking, and drinking water and rest rooms in the Town Hall during normal business hours, and is situated within sight of the Pleasant Valley Inn and Restaurant, the Vinehurst Inn and Suites and a convenience store.



Artist Bev Falvey's watercolor rendering of the "Trailhead"

Partial funding for the project has been secured from a variety of sources including a North Country Trail Association Field Grant and a generous anonymous matching grant. Donations have since been received to match this grant and the *Friends* are hopeful of beginning construction of the trailhead this

spring with an eye towards a completion date prior to the Ultra Marathon event on the FLT from Naples to Hammondsport in August. This will be the first of a series of trail projects that will eventually connect the waterfront parks in the Village with the Curtiss Museum, the Finger Lakes Boating Museum and the local wineries in Pleasant Valley.

For more information about the Urbana Trailhead Project and the *Friends*, visit their website at: www.Friends of Hammondsport Area Trails and Parks.

Contact: Steve Catherman
stevec@roadrunner.com
607/569-3453

Trail Preservation Report

David Newman, Vice President of Trail Preservation

Since the last *FLT News* went to press, landowners have been very supportive in helping FLTC permanently protect the trail corridor.

Steve Catherman helped obtain an easement from the First United Methodist Church, Hammondsport, for their property which is the first parcel west of where the June Bug Trail intersects the FLT on map M12.

Alex and Michele Gonzalez, owners of three parcels on map M19 in Cortland County that are further detailed on FLT's "International Loop" Map, gave three easements on the Spanish Loop Trail. If this sounds familiar, it may be because Alex had an article on the Spanish Loop Trail on page 19 of the Winter 2014 *FLT News*.

Daniel and Paula Williams gave an easement for their property on map M25, off Williams Road in the town of Smithville, Chenango County. You'll find more about this easement in the article on page 29.

Nancy Bragg and Thomas Sydelko donated their property on map M16 in Schuyler County's Town of Catharine, the

first parcel the trail crosses after leaving Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management area going westward. You'll find more details in the article on page 6.

If you are a landowner interested in helping protect the Finger Lakes Trail - Forever, please contact me for information on easements or donations. We take care of the details so that other than signing the paperwork, the process doesn't take a lot of time for our donors. 🍁



Bystander

Contact: David Newman
danewman@rochester.rr.com
585/415-3668

Trail Topics: A Footpath

Lynda Rummel, Vice President of Trail Quality

This summer, I will be able to park in handicapped parking spaces...legally. I've avoided getting a total knee replacement by first having arthroscopic meniscus surgery, but too many years of heavy packs and rough portages finally simply caught up with me. So, it will be a summer of recovery instead of building raised beds and planting tomatoes or building puncheon and dodge-ways. I will aim to be back out on the trail by mid-June, if only to touch my toes down out of the car at a level trailhead. And it will be with hiking poles, those wonderful wands that have given me several more years of hiking when my legs couldn't do it alone. In the meantime, I'll be doing administrative work, returning to a project I started last year, when I skimmed through the FLTC archives looking for when we first used the word "footpath" and searching for what it meant back in the dark ages when the FLT was started. If you've been reading the *FLT News* lately, the reason for my research is obvious; we're worried about mountain bikes and various sorts of motorized bikes tearing along, tearing up, and terrorizing particularly the older, the less firm, and the younger hikers who often use our skinny back country kind of trail.

One would think that the meaning of "footpath" was and is obvious; i.e., a trail intended for foot travel. Ahhh, but that's not all that "footpath" meant or means. Here's a definition from 1966, just about the time when Wally Wood's dream was becoming a real possibility. The FLTC had just been organized, the Conservation Trail had 10 miles built in the Holland area by the Foothills Trail Club, and the north end of the Bristol Hills Branch had been built. At that time, "footpath" was already used in our mission statement. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary 2nd Edition defined foot path as "a narrow path for pedestrian use only," so that's what we were building some 50 years ago.

The FLTC's mission statement repeats our task: "to build, protect, enhance, and promote a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever!" Fortunately the meaning of "footpath" and our mission statement are consistent with the concept of a primitive, back country hiking trail, as spelled out by the North Country Trail Association. The standards for a back country hiking trail put numbers to the word "narrow;" i.e., tread some 12-18" wide in a corridor 36-48" wide. One way to protect our trail is to build it sustainably, which means to construct the trail so it will be damaged as little as possible by the elements, particularly water, and thereby last longer. Another is to preserve it with a Trail Easement that gives the trail the right to be on a particular private parcel forever. Except where the slope of a hillside requires us to bench in the trail or the land is low and soft so we need to build up a causeway, we build on the land pretty much as it is, without removing any but the most egregious rocks and roots. All this is as consistent as we can be with a "leave no trace" ethic and still have a trail that can be followed.

Note the most precious part of the definition of "footpath," a narrow trail for pedestrian use only. "Footpath" means a single-use trail, for foot travel only, which clearly distinguishes it from other kinds of trails. It's not a single-use equestrian

trail or a single track bike trail that's asserted to be multiple use because mountain bike riders "let" hikers use it (a genuine multiple use trail is 10' wide and hardened). It's just a skinny dirt path for hiking, trail jogging or running, snow-shoeing, xc skiing...or speed-walking, tramping (as they say in New Zealand and used to say around here), rambling, ambling, sauntering, strolling, striding, and trudging – from fast to slow, the perfect pace for thinking and mulling things over, talking seriously with family or friends, checking out the plants and identifying species, looking for harmful insects on trees, birdwatching, listening for bird songs or the cough of a hidden deer, studying tracks to see what other species have been passing through, looking for shed antlers, watching unafraid fisher or fox kits play, hunting for a geocache, and yes, even really hunting, but only on public lands where it's permitted.

Is there any leeway in the word "pedestrian" into which other kinds of users could drive a wedge? From the Latin word for the foot, as an adjective "pedestrian" means "going on foot; walking; [or] performed on foot." As a noun, it means "one who walks or journeys on foot." There's also the meaning of "undistinguished" or "ordinary," which I understand applies to my writing style, but all the rest of the "isms and izes" all refer to traveling on foot, too, so when the trail system was first started, there was simply no thought of "pedestrian" including anything other or more than foot travel.

So nothing's changed and there's just no doubt that the trails in the FLT System were intended for foot travel only and are to be kept that way. When Wally Wood proposed the trail system in 1961-62, he had just come off the Appalachian Trail and wanted to build the same sort of long-distance hiking trail across New York State. He envisioned a main trunk trail to the south of the Finger Lakes, and then branch trails like the Conservation Trail and Bristol Hills Branch, so hikers could walk from Buffalo or Ontario County Park to Maine or Georgia. 🍁



Rolf Zerges

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

Chain Sawyer Class of April 25-26, Taught by Bill Lindloff

Lynda Rummel



Front row, L to R: Paul Warrender, Taylor Crowe, Don Feola, Mary Guldenschuh, Bill Lindloff (instructor), Nigel Dysen-Hudson, Wayne Smith. Back row, L to R: Stephen Marshall, Carl Guldenschuh, Dave Potzler, Tyler Dufault, Marc Potzler. Not pictured: Trail Quality's Marty Howden and Lynda Rummel. Newbie Taylor Crowe took home a Game of Logging tee-shirt for having the best score overall.



Dave Potzler models his very expensive but useful chain saw pack by McKenzie. Yes, even experienced sawyers must take the course every three years to maintain their certification.



Bill coaching Mary Guldenschuh.



Mary Guldenschuh starting up her saw.

Photos by Lynda Rummel



Bill showing how to sharpen the blade.

Trail Topics: Mapping

Greg Farnham, Vice President of Mapping

The following maps changed in February 2015 for editorial corrections; neither the GPS files nor the trail on these maps changed. The revision dates for these maps did NOT change:

M12 - removed wording at mile 5.2 on back regarding bridge over ravine

M13 - corrected mile point 22.2 to be 23.0 on back

M19 - added Purvis Rd label to front of map

O1 - added label identifying Onondaga County Forest on map front

The following changes were published due to trail and hunting closure changes. The revision dates were changed to 2/15 and the GPS files were also updated:

M22 - removal of the hunting closure between mile points 10.7 and 11.0.

The M22 hunting closure removal on M22 required that the hunting closure also be removed from the GPS file for M21, but the PDF file did not require revision.

CH1 - a new route added to remove a large portion of the road walk. In addition the identification of Lynn Morse Dr. was corrected.

The CH1 road identification correction on CH1 was also necessary on map CH2. The PDF file for CH2 was updated, but the revision date was not changed. The CH2 GPS file was NOT updated.

Main trail maps M4, M5, M6, M10, M11, M12, M13, M18, M19, M26, M28, M29, M30, M31, M32, M33, branch trail maps B2, CH1, CH2, CH3, I1, and loop maps QCML, MFHL updates were published on March 18 for sponsor updates only, with no changes to the trails. Map B3 was also published for sponsor changes, **and**, the Fiona Loop was removed from the map due to loss of landowner permission.

On April 2, M07 was updated to reflect connection with Letchworth Branch at mile 0.4 of M7. The M7 trail did not change, so only the PDF file was updated. The Rev Date was updated to 4/15.

M19 was updated to remove the Gatherings from the map front, as it is out of business, and the map reflects the major Hoxie Gorge re-route on M20. The M19 trail did not change, so only the PDF file was updated. The Rev Date was updated to 4/15.

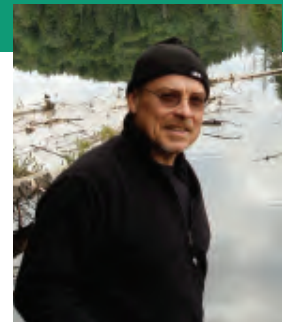
M20 was updated to incorporate the major Hoxie Gorge re-route. The Rev Date was updated to 4/15.

L1 was updated to reflect completion of bridge replacement over Swanson Road. The L1 trail did not change, so only the PDF file was updated. Rev Date was not changed.

L2 was updated to reflect Park closure of trail from Access K to L and resulting road walk bypass. Both PDF and GPX files updated. The Rev Date was updated to 4/15.

April 20, M5 was updated to correct some ancient remarks and notations that are no longer correct. It was updated to 4/15.

A study of our GPS data was completed showing the data in the table below. Only 2 of our 11 Loop maps include unique tracks that are not in the main or branch map data. The data include all tracks, hunting and high water bypasses, and spur tracks. The data do NOT include tracks that do not “belong” to the FLTC. 🍁



Greg Farnham

Contact: Greg Farnham
FLTCmapping@outlook.com

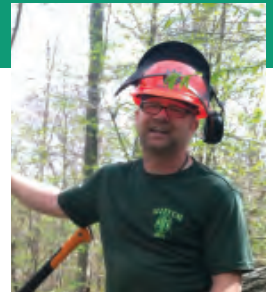
2/25/15	Maps	Tracks	Length	W-E Ascent	W-E Descent	Max Elev	Min Elev
Main	33	239	584.9	90427	92520	3651	458
Branch	20	109	303.7	35758	36580	2259	325
Loop	11	5	11.2				
Total	64	353	899.8			3651	325

Trail Topics: Alley Cats

Matt Branneman, Vice President of Crews & Construction

The upcoming building season is starting to take shape. A traditional log shelter will be constructed on the Bock property in Tompkins County on Map M17. This will take place June 24 through June 28. We will be staying at Pine Creek Campground conveniently located a few miles from the site. There will also be a post and beam style shelter built this year on M12 near Hammondsport as the Robert Muller Memorial Lean-to which Susan Yee has made possible. Rob Hughes will be making the mortise and tenon framework to be installed on a typical lean-to foundation. This project is scheduled for August 5 to August 9. There will also be a trail re-route that will take more of the FLT off the road on Map M23 in Chenango County. The dates

for this are not set but will be in September. If you are considering volunteering this year check our website often for information and updates. 🍁



Contact: Matt Branneman
607/220-7812
mattbranneman@gmail.com

Finance Report

Charlie Schutt, Vice President of Finance

Hello FLTC members. I feel that it is important that the books and the financial position of the FLTC remain transparent to its management, members, and benefactors. We have been very fortunate to continue to have remarkable growth and financial stability over this past year.

As some of you may know, 15 years ago the sum of all assets of the FLTC were roughly around \$160,000. This consisted of cash in the bank, small investments, and a few pieces of land. I can proudly say that from March 31, 2014 to March 31, 2015 our assets grew 5.5% from \$917,206 to \$967,855. The FLTC also has a current ratio (liquidity ratio) of 155. For those who may not know what this ratio means, it is the ability of an entity to repay its debt with its assets. By rule of thumb, a current ratio of one or higher is a good to have; our ratio clearly exceeds that industry standard because of our assets in real estate and investments and the fact that the FLTC has no debt.

The FLTC assets come primarily from two sources. First is our investment portfolio which is managed by Karpus Investment Management. Generous donations from our members either through the annual campaign or through a few wills have been conservatively managed and grown because of the efforts of the FLTC Investment Committee and Karpus Investment Management. Our investment fund currently sits at \$701,704. Our investment strategy is geared to continue to perform for long-term growth and stability. Our investment fund strategy is in line with our purchasing strategy as well as our liquid cash balance. Second, the FLTC owns six parcels of land that have been given to the FLTC. In the past year, the FLTC received another gift of property that is valued at

\$44,500. We now currently own six parcels of land with a total value of \$178,712. The Board of Managers has begun to develop a strategy to identify “key” parcels of land that are most vulnerable for protection of our route. First, we want to secure permanent easements. There are other options that may not involve spending some of our assets, but we need to be prepared, if necessary, to purchase property in order to maintain the integrity of the FLT trail system.

The year ending 12/31/2014 also proved to be a profitable year from an income-expenses standpoint. The FLTC posted net income of \$15,756 from activities for 2014. There are a few factors that contributed to the net income number. First, incomes from program proceeds and merchandise sales increased by over \$11,000 from 2013 to 2014. We were also able to reduce our expenses by over \$29,000. Also contributing to net income were proceeds from the sale of investments from the Karpus account.

However, one should not be lured into the comfortable feeling that the FLTC has plenty of money. It bears repeating that the Board of Managers has religiously saved monies for the express purpose of supporting future requirements to “promote” and to “protect” the FLTC by identifying and acquiring key parcels of land. If the FLTC is required to become more aggressive in those initiatives, much more money will be necessary.

It is my great pleasure to be able to report to you that the FLTC is in a strong financial position. All of the members of the finance and investment committees and I are committed to ensure the continued financial growth and stability of the FLTC and the objective of the Conference. 🍁

A Naturalist's View

Story and Photos by D. Randy Weidner

As you hike the Finger Lakes Trail this summer, you will pass through many different habitats. There are open fields, ponds, flowing waterways, but primarily, the trail leads through woods. Among the various fauna you may encounter are butterflies. If asked to go find a butterfly, your first impulse would likely be to find a flowery field, rather than to look around in the woods. Butterflies and sun-washed meadows are a natural association. In their adult stage, butterflies do visit flowers to feed on nectar. But remember, for many of these lepidopterans, the adult stage is fairly brief. The adult butterfly's function, in the big scheme of things, is to find a mate, breed, and then if it's a female, find an appropriate place to lay its eggs. For any butterfly species, the proper place for ovipositing is on a genetically determined, and often rather specific, family, genus, or species of plant. It is only on those plants, located by the female butterfly through chemical sensing, that the eggs will hatch into caterpillars. This larval stage will then ingest its optimal food, grow, and eventually metamorphose, completing its life cycle. If that food plant is in a field, the butterflies will be there. But if the specific food source is a tree or woodland plant, the butterflies will be in the woods. Forests and forest edges also provide shelter for the butterflies which are preyed upon by many birds. For these reasons, the woodland hiker should not be surprised to encounter a number of butterfly species. Let us consider a few.

One common, large, and strikingly attractive butterfly is the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio glaucus*). The preferred habitat of this butterfly is deciduous woodlands, woodland



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

edges, and wooded waterways. Because it is a large and active flier, you may encounter this bright butterfly almost anywhere. On windy days they are easily blown out of the woods and into fields or developed neighborhoods. They are inordinately fond of feeding on aromatic lilies which also draws many to backyards. In New York State, there is often an early flight of Eastern Tiger Swallowtails in May, but the time of major emergence is usually in July. As the name implies, most are yellow with black tiger stripes across their wings. During the major flight, and more so further south, a significant proportion of females exhibit a black color

variation. Caterpillars develop on Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). Being big and attractive, these butterflies often bear the evidence of bird attacks, as seen in the loss of the right "swallowtail" in the photograph.

Another typical woodland butterfly is the Eastern Comma (*Polytonia comma*). Distinctive for its irregularly scalloped, orange wings, this butterfly has the interesting habit of over-wintering as an adult. That is why you could see one as early as a very warm day in April, but the main flight is late June and July. Caterpillars depend on elms (*Ulmus* sp.) or nettles as their food source. Eastern Commas seem to be less common since



Eastern Comma



Gray Comma



Gray Comma, wings up

Dutch elm disease killed many native trees. Along New York's Finger Lakes Trail, where the rich deciduous woods have some northern forest elements, you may also encounter the decidedly rarer Gray Comma (*Polygonia progne*), which is very similar to, but often darker than the Eastern Comma. Both Commas gained that appellation from the distinctive "comma" mark on the underwings, noticeable at rest with wings held up over the back.

As previously mentioned, woodland edges are good habitats for some butterflies. The first of this group is the Red

Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*). These fast flying beauties sometimes make an impressive arrival to our area. Some years, thousands of them fly north in mid-April, having emerged a couple weeks earlier in the South. Our main locally born flight is in late June to July, and there may be another peak



Red Admiral

occurrence in September and October as new butterflies gather and migrate south. Their caterpillars develop on nettles and many adults are fond of woodland edges near moist meadows. All butterflies have clubbed antennae, easily seen on the photo of the Red Admiral at rest.

The butterfly with the quick, jerky flight and very dark appearance, flitting ahead of you on the trail, often proves to be a Common Wood Nymph (*Cercyonis pegala*). At home as well in brushy fields where their caterpillars grow up on grasses, adults favor dappled paths in the woods. Stalk them carefully for a closer look at this dark, medium-sized butterfly.



Common Wood Nymph



Common Wood Nymphs mating

When at rest, with its wings up, you should notice its dramatic eye spots. Lepidopterists debate the function of these spots, with most favoring the idea that the spots mimic the eyes of some other creature, thus giving potential predators some pause. If you see what at first appears to be a large awkwardly flying specimen, follow it and you may catch a pair mating as in one of the attached photographs.

General categories of butterflies are often defined by color or anatomical features. Thus there are "whites," "azures," "coppers," "swallowtails," "brushfoots," and "hairstreaks." A decidedly rare butterfly of thickets, woodland openings, and brushy edges is the Striped Hairstreak (*Satyrium liparops*). Their peak emergence is in early July and their host plants are cherries (*Prunus* sp) and blueberries (*Vaccinium* sp.). The anatomical feature for which they are named, the hairstreak, is that thin strip of tissue projecting from the lower hind wing.



Striped Hairstreak

There are several other butterflies you could encounter hiking through the woods on the Trail. Adjacent fields and wet areas reveal a whole different set of butterflies. A handy field guide for identification is *Butterflies through Binoculars - The East* by Jeffrey Glassberg. With a pair of close focusing binoculars, if you carefully approach butterflies at rest, you will be amazed by the fascinating patterns and colors on their wings. Or while hiking, you can simply delight in the sudden flash of colorful wings, a "flutter-by" butterfly. 🍁

Our Annual Awards Go To Hopkins and Roberts

As we do every year at the spring weekend, it was a treat to honor two volunteers who have given so much to our trail. **Roger Hopkins** was honored with the Wally Wood Award, named for the guy who first thought of the trail across upstate New York. In case you don't know it (and that goes for many of Roger's contributions) Roger has been our webmaster for several years now, which is a way bigger job than it was in the beginning. As the website becomes bigger and more complex, Roger spends untold hours fixing and creating parts of the site for us, always trying to keep it up to date.

If you look at the registration for our fall weekend on the website, where we include as an alternative an online registration through PayPal, you can't imagine Roger's sacrifice to get that done timely. He was on vacation in Colorado when that was first needed in early spring, so his first response was that he couldn't possibly do that until May. Nevertheless, he spent a few DAYS working on that sticky project, while on vacation, and got it online for us by early April.

Roger's other quiet contributions include time serving on the Board of Managers, several years as President of the Cayuga Trails Club, and a huge commitment to bring the Bock-Harvey Preserve project to fruition. That one required several years of patient, creative work as an utterly new model for land preservation was invented for the parties involved ... the land's families, the Finger Lakes Land Trust, the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, and the law ... so it's hard to imagine such a complex project happening without Roger's guidance and work on it for several years.



Irene Szabo

Roger Hopkins

The other award presented this spring was the Clar-Willis Award for trail work, and that one understandably went to **Rick Roberts** for his heroic efforts to improve our trail route through the eastern Catskills, getting us off roads and into the woods. While some of his success must be attributed to the 180 degree policy change from the N.Y. City Water Authority about hiking on their reservoir properties a few years ago, any new trail permissions still must be generated by SOMEBODY who has the gumption and ambition to do that work! Any of our annoying road walks must wait for that right person, and the Catskills have benefitted hugely from Rick's hard work.

Not only has he obtained both private and public permissions, he has scouted the routes for these new trail segments, built them with Alley Cat crews, hosted the crews in his home, and obtained new sponsors to tend most of the new trail, all when he's not maintaining some of that trail himself. So it's no surprise the FLT Recognitions Committee eagerly recommended Rick for this honor. 🍁



Jeff Oliveri

Rick Roberts on the May 2nd Wally Wood hike up to Rock Rift Fire Tower, one of the new trails he fathered.

Williams Easement

Dave Newman

Daniel and Paula Williams have granted a Trail Access Easement to the portion of the trail on their property in the Town of Smithville, Chenango County, which runs eastward from Williams Road on FLT Map M25. By granting this easement the trail may now pass through this beautiful section forever even if the property is sold or subdivided.

Many years ago Dan's parents, Harry and Barbara Williams, allowed the trail on their land by verbal "handshake" agreement, as is the case with the majority of the private parcels the trail crosses. When Daniel and Paula became the owners they happily continued to allow the trail to cross their land. Meanwhile, in 1999, the owner of the parcel to the east, Martha Hohl Place of Oxford, NY, granted the FLTC a Trail Access Easement extending from the border of the Williams' property east to State Route 12. This was one of the first times a private landowner donated an easement to help protect the FLT forever.

With the 1999 permanent easement in place that allows the trail to proceed from Route 12 to the border of the Williams property it was deemed a high priority to protect the remaining section of trail to Williams Road. An easement from Daniel and Paula Williams would insure that the section from Rt 12 all the way to Williams Road would remain open to hikers of the trail.

Ed Sidote, who was the key contact with Harry and Barbara Williams back in 1999, really encouraged Roy Dando to talk to Dan and Paula. Sometimes, the key is, just ask! Roy volunteered to talk to the landowners about the easement, with perhaps a bit of trepidation as it was the first time he had made such a request. The Williams family, it turns out, readily agreed to grant the easement to this southern part of their property.

The Williams were happy to donate the easement, and provided the signed paperwork in late January, 2015. Be sure to see the photos of the smiling couple and another showing the start of the path across their property.

Gifts in memory of

Dan Williams

from

Bullthistle Hiking Club

Roy & Laurie Dando

Dave Newman

Horst & Sigi Schwinge

The FLTC Board Of Managers accepted the easement at their meeting in Mount Morris on March 14th. Thanks to Dan and Paula this beautiful 2 mile section of the FLT that meanders through the gorge close to Bowman Creek is



An entrance to the Williams property on the trail.

Roy Dando



Daniel and Paula Williams

Roy Dando

preserved forever for the public to enjoy.

Shortly after granting the easement Dan Williams passed away unexpectedly. His wife Paula said she was glad the easement was signed while Dan was alive and that the family is at peace knowing Dan is with the Lord. The FLTC is deeply saddened by his death. 🍁

RENDEZVOUS!
THE FINGER LAKES TRAIL HOSTS A GATHERING OF
NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL FRIENDS
DURING OUR FALL WEEKEND

10-13 September 2015 at
Hope Lake Lodge at Greek Peak ski resort,
on NY 392, south of Cortland N.Y.,
four miles west of U.S. route 11

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, 9 Sept.

Rooms available for those with early Thursday activities.

Registration available in the Adirondack room, 8 PM

Thursday, 10 Sept.

6:30 – 8:00 Breakfast buffet, free to those in Lodge; \$13.15 otherwise.

9:00 – 6:00 Registration open, Adirondack Room.

8:00 NCTA Board of Directors meeting, Charles Baker Room.

9:30 – 11:30 Make your own lunch in lobby with proper tickets.

10:00 Hikes begin. See hike and tour schedule.

11:00 Workshop – Cross cut saw training. Meet in lobby. When a cross cut saw is well tuned, it literally cuts through wood like a knife through butter. Bucking and climbing are quiet, rhythmic, in tune with the woods, and almost effortless. Learn how to use and maintain a cross cut saw for trail work from Ed O'Shea, an experienced woodsman who has been teaching members of the ADK Mtn. Club's Onondaga Chapter for several years now. Workshop includes hands-on field work. Bring lunch.

1:00 Workshop – Map and GIS Practicum. NCTA's Matt Rowbotham, in the Hospitality Suite. "We rely on volunteers to give us reliable trail data for mapping the NCT. In this workshop we will walk through the NCTA's new training materials on GPS'ing the North Country Trail. We will cover GPS units and our preferred data collection methods at NCTA. This will emphasize the aspects of our GPS work that go beyond normal navigation uses of GPS and merely tracking the trail route. You should walk away from this session with a strong understanding of how to use a GPS receiver to help collect and update the NCTA's map information."

5:00 Cash bar in Acropolis, across the road at base of ski slope.

6:00 Italian Buffet, dinner and program in Acropolis.

7:00 Evening program: The Route of the North Country Trail through the Adirondacks, Mary Coffin.

Friday, 10 Sept.

6:30-8:00 Breakfast Buffet, free to those in Lodge, \$13.15 otherwise.

7:30 Registration continues in Adirondack Room.

7:30 – 8:30 Make your own lunch in lobby with tickets.

9:00 Depart for Ithaca area hike and tour schedule in front of Lodge

6:00 Cash bar in Acropolis across the road, at base of ski slope

6:30 Dinner, roast beef and turkey breast buffet

7:30 Program: NPS awards, followed by presentation on growing phenomenon of mural art along Erie Canal communities, Gene Bavis.

Saturday, 12 Sept.

6:30-8:00 Breakfast Buffet, free to those in Lodge, \$13.15 otherwise.

7:30-8:30 Make your lunch in lobby with proper tickets.

8:30 Busses begin to depart for Watkins Glen hikes.

6:00 Cash bar at Acropolis.

7:00 Dinner, same place, chicken cordon bleu or roast pork loin

8:00 NCTA awards, followed by presentation by Vermont hosts of projected new NCT trail there.

Sunday, 13 Sept.

7:00-8:00 Breakfast Buffet

7:30 – 8:30 Make your lunch in lobby.

9:00 Hikes start to depart. Turn in room keys and empty rooms by 11:00.

9:00 Finger Lakes Trail Board of Managers meeting in Adirondack Room.

9:00-12:30 American Heart Association “Heartsaver” course. Successful completion meets the FLTC CPR requirement for sawyers. Includes adult, child, infant CPR, obstructed airway, and AED. *No written test. Limited to 20 people; sawyers given priority.* \$5.00 fee which is reimbursable for sawyers. Instructed by Mary Jane Uttech. Charles Baker Room.

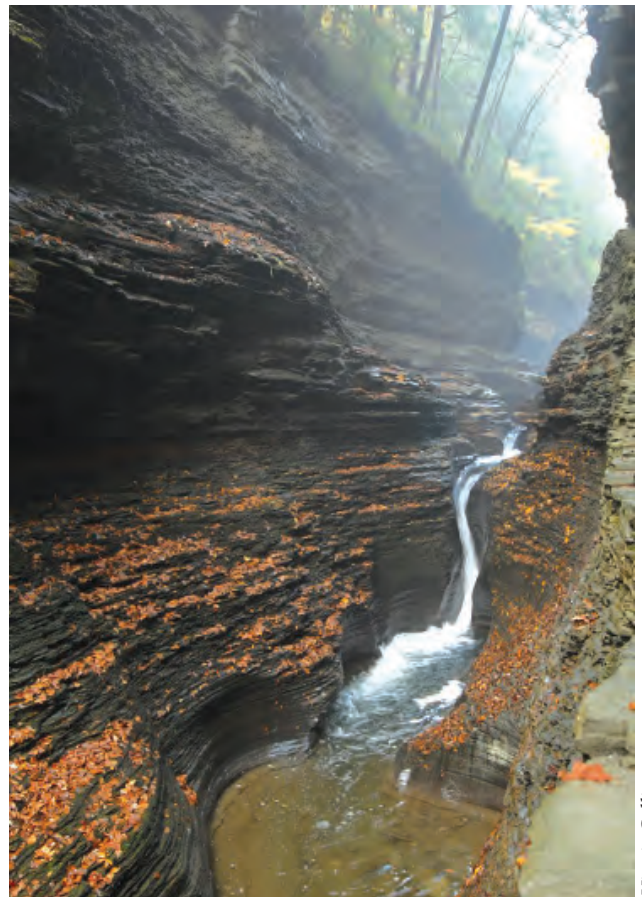
10:00-12:00 Workshop: Optimum Location Review, a process for intelligently siting new trail route.

“NPS staff will walk you through the process to create defensible criteria AND defensible decisions to determine the best route for your Trail. This workshop will prove that planning can be FUN!! (There will be coffee and donuts).”
Hospitality Suite



Mike Ogden

Tinker Falls



Vinnie Collins

Watkins Glen Gorge

DAILY HIKE AND TOURS

Departures from front of Lodge Unless Otherwise Noted

All pertinent maps will be available at registration to weekend registrants, free versions of our Finger Lakes Trail Maps, but not printed on Rite-in-the-Rain paper like normal.

Thursday, 10 Sept.

10:00 **Shackham East to Shackham Loop (Map O1)** Strenuous 7.2 miles, some of the area's best scenery, Tinker Falls, Jones Hill, and Spruce Pond. This hike includes steep climbs and descents through Morgan Hill State Forest and Labrador Hollow Unique Area with a most spectacular vista from Jones Hill (1964 feet). Max. elevation change 650 ft. Carpool with Mike Ogden.

10:00 **Rainbow hike** led by Alex Gonzalez. 9.4 miles on intertwining loops of five different blaze colors, close to Lodge. Foxfire Lean-to, streams, varied but stunning forests, all on **Map M19**; moderate.

10:00 **Taylor Valley State Forest** - 5.1 moderate miles, **Map M21** fairly level forest walk at high elevation, all state forest except short patch on one of our first easements on private land, then gradual big descent into valley; stream crossing on huge boulders to end at primitive campground. Optional 2.6 more miles for gluttons only: steep uphill with good switchbacks then level and descending again. Jon Bowen

12:00 **Ski Lift Views** - Virgil Mountain loop that includes one of the highest points on the trail @ 2132 ft., one view looking down on our Lodge. (**Map M19**) Some strenuous, 4.8 mi, max. elev. change is 532 feet. Larry Blumberg

1:00 **Next Door State Forests**: West River Rd. to Carson Rd. (**Maps M19** and **M20**) - moderate, 5.4 miles. A pleasant hike in the woods with gentle ups and downs, passing Woodchuck Hollow Lean-to, from Tioughnioga River Valley up and down again to our Lodge's ski slope valley. Horst and Sigi Schwinge

2:00 **Lithuanian and Irish Loops**, including Brennan Bypass and Kathleen's Boreen, 3.5 miles, led by Michele Gonzalez. Includes an outstanding spruce forest. Nearby loops, so short drive. Moderate.

There are also four **self-guided nearby loop trails** that can be followed with maps available at registration, so medium and short hikes on more of the Gonzalez loops can be taken any time.

Friday, 11 Sept.

9:00 **Gulf Rd. to Connecticut Hill, Map M16**: over 500 feet elevation gain but gradual, 7.5 miles through state forest and wildlife management area. Moderate. All Ithaca area hikes on Friday will involve car shuttles.

9:00 **Robert Treman State Park**, approx. 5 miles, easy or downhill past Lucifer waterfall among others. A spectacular patch of rocky scenery! **Map M16**.

9:00 **Special Preserve Walk, M16**: Visit our new Bock-Harvey Preserve with easy trails through old growth forests, with forester to help us appreciate this special place, and new shelter. Also visit nearby Rieman Woods, another property we own. Total a few easy miles. Paul Warrender



Watkins Glen Gorge

Vinnie Collins

9:00 **State Forests and Two Shelters, M17**: 7.6 miles of relatively level state forests, downhill steeply at the very end. Two newly rebuilt shelters, lots of gorgeous woods, Bald Hill Rd. to highway 96B.

9:00 **Abbott Loop, M17**: almost 8.5 miles, moderate with a few steep patches, a wonderful gift built by Cliff and Doris Abbot 25 years ago to take in one fabulous view over a nature preserve far below and lots of fascinating forest and plant life.

11:00 **M18 Short Sampler**: 3.2 miles through Shindagin Hollow State Forest, featuring moderate walk, a hemlock-shrouded lean-to above a charming stream, Braley Hill to South Rds.

9:00 **Ithaca Area Waterfalls Tour**: almost no walking, appropriate even for wheelchairs, visit a half-dozen of the region's most beautiful waterfalls, Salmon River, Ithaca Falls on Cornell campus, Frontenac Falls, Taughannock, Buttermilk, and Lucifer Falls. Dick Lightcap

Saturday, 12 Sept.

8:30 Busses depart front of Lodge for 1.5 hour drive to Watkins Glen area. The **Watkins Glen Area** hike offerings on maps M14 and M15 are as follows:

Map M14 Longest Watkins Glen: start at Sugar Hill Fire Tower and follow main FLT (and NCT) eastward through state forests and into west end of Watkins Glen State Park along the stream that forms the dramatic gorge ahead. Stream crossings, gorgeous streamside trail under dark woods, go under high railroad trestle over gorge, then at bottom follow amazing stone bridges and rock shelf trails built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Depression. Bus pickup at bottom. 10.4 miles generally level or downhill, hundreds of rock steps.

Shorter gorge hikes, all aiming for same destination at bottom: Bus will drop off hikers at Access 3 for **5.8 mile version** or Access 4 for **2.7 mile hike** down the final spectacular rock cliffs and waterfalls.

Map M15, Schuyler County Highlands: two hikes splitting east and west from bus drop off at Access 12 on Steam Mill Rd. near summit of area east of Watkins Glen.

Eastbound follows high open fields with great views eastward, includes Rogers Hill Lean-to, and descends on lane through woods (all courtesy of a great private landowner) to bottom land near Cayuta Lake's valley. End at bus pick-up spot on CR 6, Access 15, 4.2 miles. Because bus won't be back this soon, we recommend an out-and-back hike eastward continuing down a lovely level stream-side wooded trail for as long as you want, or, for the intrepid faster walker, take the 5.8 mile Van Lone Loop shown on **Map M16**, only if you can be back for bus pickup by 4:30 latest!

Westbound trail drops steeply through state forest down to Texas Hollow pond, one steep climb up then passes through tiny village of Bennettsburg then climbs into New York's only National Forest, named for the Finger Lakes, where we'll pass a Lean-to then descend through an old grape field to our bus pick-up at Access 5, where there are great views across Seneca Lake.

9:00 – **Sapsucker Woods Tour** – Visit Ithaca's mecca for those who enjoy birds, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology preserve and visitor center. Outdoor walks and bird-watching plus accessible indoor center with interactive displays, art gallery, and wonderful observation areas overlooking bird garden and pond. Car travel.

9:30 – **Hoxie Gorge Hike** - east of our Lodge on **Map M20**, Hoxie Gorge Rd. to West River Rd. moderate

to strenuous, 11.8 miles, 5.7 of it road walk, mostly on shady dirt road, with slower and shorter 6 mile offering, all in forest. We will cross and follow several creeks (some on bridges) and see small waterfalls while descending to road where we have spotted cars for those who do not want to do the road walk. Horst and Sigi Schwing, car shuttles.

9:30 – **Land Trust and Cornell Natural Areas:** short easy hikes on properties of the FingerLakes Land Trust and Cornell, pleasant places, many near water. Total of about four miles, fairly level and slow-paced. Dick Lightcap, travel by cars.



Buttermilk Falls

Tom Reimers



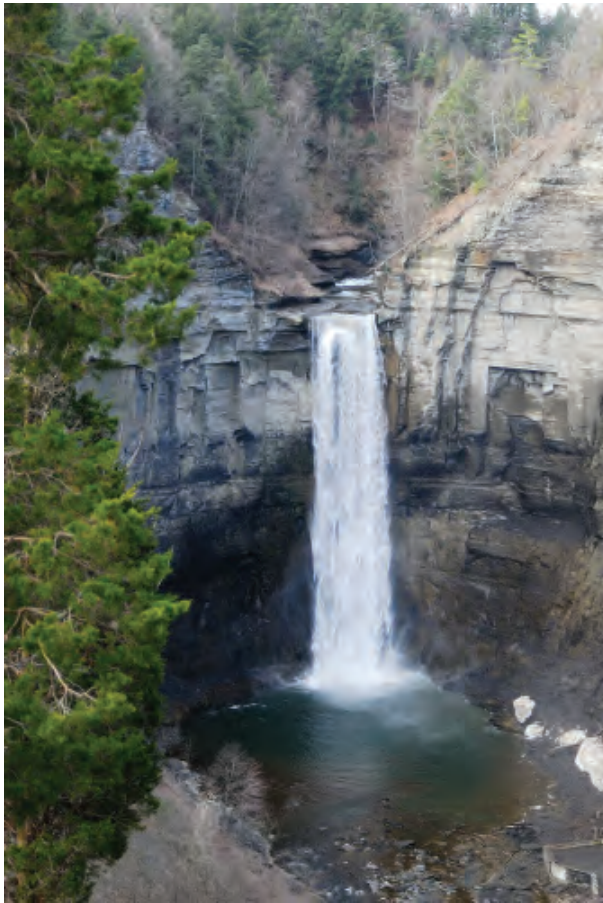
Buttermilk Creek

Tom Reimers



Watkins Glen Falls

Vinnie Collins



Vinnie Collins

Taughannock Falls

Sunday, 13 Sept.

10:00 – **Jim Schug Rail Trail** – easy out and back plus short detour on proposed side trail, 5.3 miles, scenic lake and wetlands, beaver activity. Alex and Michele Gonzalez **Local Self-Guided Loops** – don't forget locally available loop hikes; maps at registration tables, but don't wait until Sunday AM to pick one up!

Balance of hike offerings are east and north of our Lodge, all via car shuttles.

9:30 – **Hoxie Gorge to Underwood Hill Rd. (M20) –** 4.6 miles, moderate, forest with old wagon road bridge at waterfall, then mixture of high open fields and woods edge trail, with two spots of great views.

9:30 - **Chenango-Solon Pond Rd. to Stoney Brook Rd. (M 21)** strenuous 7.1 miles. Climb Potter Hill (1980 ft.), cross a meadow and pass old foundation as we enter the woods of Cuyler Hill State Forest. Cross several brooks and dirt roads, ascend Randall Hill (2080 ft.) and arrive at Stoneybrook Road with its spectacular 270 degree view toward DeRuyter Lake. Max elevation change 610ft northbound. Jerry Smith

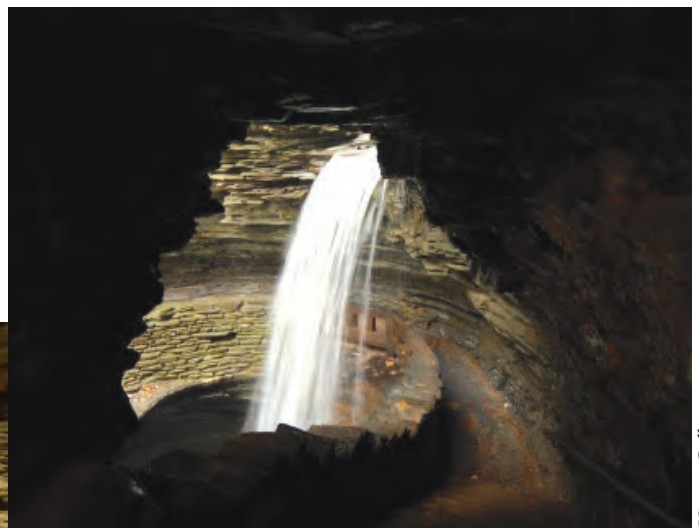
9:30 – **Southbound version of above, Stoney Brook to Potter Hill Cemetery Rd. (M21) -)** moderate, 5.4 miles south past the Randall Brune Memorial Bench through Cuyler Hill State Forest over Randall Hill (2080 ft.) and through Wiltsey Glen. Max elevation change 270 ft. Stoney Brook Rd. is junction of main FLT trail and Onondaga Trail, where the North Country Trail veers northward toward the Adirondack Mountains. Jon Bowen

9:30 – **Fellows Hill Loop (Map O1 of Onondaga Trail)** - moderate, 3.5 miles. Explore Fellows Hill (2019 ft.), one of the highpoints in Onondaga County, Spruce Pond, varied hardwood and conifer forests and the new loop trail in Morgan Hill State Forest. Max elevation change 350 ft. Pat and Peg Whaley



Vinnie Collins

Watkins Glen



Vinnie Collins

Watkins Glen

For those who would like to see our interactive maps online, which include elevation profiles, go to <http://www.fltconference.org/trail/go-hiking/interactive-map-segmented/>

LODGING

Our event will be centered at Hope Lake Lodge, across from Greek Peak ski slopes, south of Cortland, N.Y., on NY route 392. Five floors of luxury rooms, some with balconies, rise above a tall open timber and rock lobby, with scenic views in all directions over ski slopes, rolling farms, and state forests, with our trail to both south and east of the Lodge. The Lodge is a full resort, too, with spa and indoor waterpark (\$20 extra) and adventures like ziplines, mountain coasters, and Euro Bungie available at the base of the ski slopes.

www.greekpeakmtnresort.com

Buffet breakfast will be available for Lodge guests in the same building, along with a make-your-own lunch bar in the lobby, while dinners will be across the valley at the Acropolis, quarter-mile round trip. Shuttles to dinner available if you ask.

The majority of suites sleep up to four, with two queen beds and one bathroom. Only some have a full kitchen also, so register fast to ensure you get a kitchen if you need one. There are also a few larger suites

Irene and Jen at the FLT office, 585-658-9320, all weekdays except Wednesday. We'll be glad to help! Irene anytime at 585-658-4321 or treeweenie@aol.com

Alternative lodging possibilities:

Country Hills Campground near Marathon, a half-dozen miles south of the Lodge. Call FAST for reservations since they fill up fast for September. www.countryhillscampground.com 607-849-3300 or toll free 877-271-9480.



Irene Szabo



Irene Szabo

Cortland motels, off Interstate 81 exit 11 for Cortland at NY 13:
 Hampton Inn 607-622-0007
 Quality Inn 607-756-5622
 Ramada Inn 607-756-4431
 Comfort Inn 607-753-7221

with a third bed for up to two more people, some of them in a separate room, some with an additional bath. See the website to look at floor plans; the Northwoods Suite shown is the closest to our standard four-person basic room. And if you get turned around on your floor, all animals in the carpet are aiming for the elevators! <http://hopelakelodge.com/accommodations/>

Four person rooms (two queen beds, one bathroom, with or without kitchen) cost \$161.25 per night, breakfast included. Rooms able to sleep up to six cost \$200.35 per night. Do not register with Lodge: their advertised rate includes NO breakfast, and later adds sales tax and a processing fee that the FLT is NOT charging you, so please register only through us. If you need help finding enough roommates, please contact

www.FingerLakesTrail.org

Thatcher's Pinnacles from the Abbott Loop



Tom Reimers

RENDEZVOUS! REGISTRATION

(this is the mail in form; please use the online registration form to pay with PayPal or credit card.)

Name: (one per registration) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Staying at Hope Lake Lodge? Rooming with: _____

Which party is paying for the suite? If you, add to your costs. Room fee @ \$161.25 or
\$200.35 PER NIGHT \$ _____

Staying which nights? _____

Do you need a suite with a full kitchen? _____

Or, need roommates? Special considerations? Let me know. Irene at treeweenie@aol.com

Meals: Staying at Lodge, breakfast is FREE. Others pay \$13.15 times # of breakfasts..... \$ _____

Make-your-own lunch in lobby @ \$8.10 times # of lunches..... \$ _____

Thursday dinner: Italian buffet with chicken cacciatore and eggplant parmesan @ \$31.15 \$ _____

Friday dinner: Roast beef w/mushroom or turkey breast w/cranberry buffet @ \$30.00 \$ _____

Saturday dinner: Chicken cordon bleu and roast pork loin buffet @ \$30.00 \$ _____

In all cases, vegetarian choices are available for those who check here: (_____)

Will you need the Lodge shuttle to get to dinners? 1/4 mile round trip. No charge. (_____)

REGISTRATION FEE:

\$25.00 members of either FLT or NCTA, \$30.00 non-members, children under 12 free \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Emergency Contact: Name: _____ Phone: _____

Checks payable to Finger Lakes Trail, mailed to same, 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14510, with this form, both pages. Any question: call or email Irene at treeweenie@aol.com, or 585-658-4321

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 6 AUGUST

Hike and tour registrations: check your choices!

Thursday: T1: Schackham Loop ____ T2: Rainbow hike ____ T3: Taylor Valley ____
T4: Ski Lift Views ____ T5: Next Door State Forests ____ T6: Lithuanian and Irish Loops ____

Friday: F1: Gulf Rd. to Connecticut Hill ____ F2: Robert Treman Park ____ F3: Special Preserves ____
F4: State Forests and Two Shelters ____ F5: Abbott Loop ____ F6: M18 Short Sampler ____
F7: Ithaca Area Waterfalls ____

Saturday: S1: W. Glen - 10.4 M ____ S2: W. Glen - 5.8 Miles ____ S3: W. Glen - 2.7 Miles ____
S4: M15 Eastbound ____ S5: M15 Westbound ____ S6: Hoxie Gorge Hike ____
S7: Land Trust etc. ____ S8: Sapsucker Woods Tour ____

Sunday: U1: Jim Schug Rail Trail ____ U2: Hoxie Gorge to Underwood Hill ____
U3: Cheningo-Solon Pond ____ U4: Stoney Brook Rd. South ____ U5: Fellows Hill Loop ____

Workshops:

Thursday: W1: GPS Session ____ W2: Cross cut saw ____
Sunday: W3: CPR ____ (*Pay \$5.00 fee at session*) W4: Optimal Location Review ____

PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING:

Those persons enjoying the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT) and/or activities sponsored by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC) or any clubs conducting activities on behalf of, or in support of the FLTC, accept full personal responsibility for their own well being, or, for the well being of a minor when acting in the capacity of parent or guardian. Further, users of the FLT accept and understand that hiking is a rigorous activity often conducted in rugged outdoor conditions subject to variations in weather and terrain conditions which may involve the risk of injury or death, and that we are fully responsible for own safety and selecting activities that are consistent with our physical capabilities.

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

North Country Trail Thru Hikers on Our Trail

Dick Hubbard

If you were an experienced long-distance hiker in search of a LONG trail, you'd certainly find the 4600 mile North Country Trail (NCT) a viable option. That's what Christine Herpfer thought when her hiking partner Rick Carbonell wanted to head west to the Pacific Coast Trail. Wishing to stay closer to her familiar New England homeland, Christine (aka "Buttons") suggested they hike the NCT, together with Molly, their rescued beagle/cattle dog full of energy.



Dick Hubbard

Rick and Christine repacking their gear in western New York, while Molly is obviously utterly relaxed about the whole thing. Among the novelties on their trip are their sleeping equipment, a single weatherproof hammock big enough for all three of them, and Christine's footwear. Yes, she plans to go thousands of miles in those sandals.

The NCT seemed fine to Rick (aka "Bearwalker") as well because he found a challenge while doing research: only four others had thru-hiked the NCT east-to-west. He suggested they start even further east in Vermont, the potential new eastern terminus should currently proposed legislation get support in the U.S. Congress.

Both previous end-to-enders on the Appalachian Trail, they met while hiking Vermont's 270+ mile Long Trail. It was after this accomplishment that they assessed their next hiking target. So after a year of planning and while snow still covered the ground in March, the three embarked on their westward journey.

I met them in Hornell near the western Steuben County border in early May, where they had already completed over 500 miles of the hike. They were happy to see the warmer spring weather and beautiful views that the FLT had afforded them. Both had very much enjoyed and, in fact, raved about the shelters they had visited in recent days. But this day found them re-energized from an overnight at the Hornell Econo-Lodge, an FLT landowner/business who hosts the trail behind and along the property's driveway.

Talking about their hike, they related their early experience with snowfall and heavy snowpack that took a severe toll on both their proposed route through the Adirondack Park and their itinerary. Snow was so deep they couldn't even follow trail markings and kept losing their way, so they had to walk a lot of road miles. They were now a solid three weeks behind schedule, one that Rick had detailed and published in a printed journal that Buttons carried. Interestingly, they were not concerned by the inevitable December finish in North Dakota. As experienced winter weather hikers they understood that they simply had to endure some extra days out in the cold.

Christine and Rick both shared their ongoing top concern for the care of their four-legged companion. While they felt that they could adjust to changing situations, they tried hard to keep Molly on a steady eat and sleep regimen. The weight of the dry dog food was shared; Molly in her dog-pack shared a third as did each owner.

A stop at Wegman's was included as I assisted them in their stops around town. It was very

interesting to see them shop for the upcoming six-day stretch on the trail through Allegany County... Buttons, a vegetarian reading labels, and Bearwalker making selections that provided alternatives tastier to him. Needless to say, weight was always a top consideration when selecting items. The couple typically filters water on the trail, and reported having little difficulty in finding a source. The only sponsor from whom they receive backing is Hennessy Hammock (hennessyhammock.com) who supplied their tent/hammock that is used for lodging. All three sleep in one hammock, a model that incorporates a side-zippered entry and a rain roof. One has to wonder where they will hang their hammock in the treeless portions of North Dakota!

They are certainly enjoying themselves on this trek. Both are very upbeat and interesting people who enjoy sharing stories. When asked what was most difficult about being out on a long-distance hike like this, Rick's answer was insightful. He expressed the mental struggle needed to keep focus on the purpose of being out hiking every day. "The goal is to hike the NCT to the North Dakota end," he said. And that is what I'm sure he will do.

It certainly is a challenge, and the trail is there for all who might wish to take the challenge as well. Your choice: the FLT in one state or the NCT through seven or eight states. Right now, for this couple, the next stop is Ellicottville where they will be hosted at the Ilex Inn (compliments of the Innkeepers), interviewed by local newspapers, greeted by town officials and have an extra day to replenish their packs and souls.

Follow their journey on Facebook; just search for NCT4feet4paws. 🍁

End-to-End Update

Jacqui Wensich, End-to-End Coordinator

Main Trail:

#379 Gary Brouse, Horseheads finished May 6, 2015

Updates:

Joe Cyran of western N.Y. plans to complete the main trail this year. Frank Hughto-Delzer also plans to start the main trail. Experienced hiker Michael Rosenthal of Virginia plans a thru-hike in June. Ex-Boy Scout Travis Sennett plans to hike the FLT system starting this year with his dog Vera. Barb Nussbaum is planning to finish the last maps in the far west.

Author and experienced hiker Heather Houskeeper plans to complete the FLT system this summer, backpacking. From Heather Houskeeper "I will be hiking the FLT with the purpose of researching the edible and medicinal plants I encounter along the way and then compiling this information into a backpacker friendly guide to the edible and medicinal plants of the FLT." www.TheBotanicalHiker.blogspot.com (The link is posted on the FLT Facebook page.)

Comments:

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. Manual for thru hikers is currently being updated. 4. Purchase new MAPS (remember FLT members receive a 20% discount for all purchases). Waypoints are also available. 5. CHECK trail conditions online frequently. 6. If you are not already a member, **join the FLTC**. Membership supports this wonderful trail. 7. LET ME KNOW about when you plan to complete the main/branch trails to receive the correct number. 8. Email captioned photos as you hike and keep trail notes so you can write your E2E article.

Car Spotters:

We have several new car spotters:

1. JoAnn Ratajczak M2-M4 (CT2-CT4). She became the 273rd hiker to complete the main trail in September of 2009. "I could not have finished the trail without the help of several spotters, including several saves by Ed Sidote." Thanks to JoAnn!

2. Landowners Don and Kathy Bossard (of the donated Bossard's cabin fame) M8-9.



Robin Hubbard

A view of the Bossard cabin on Map M9, just west of Hornell. Because the Bossards' cattle use these fields, we are enabled to cross the fence by this ladder-style stile.

Car spotters (or Trail Angels) assist hikers on the Finger Lakes Trail in various ways. Some meet hikers at a pre-arranged spot and drop them off so that the hikers can hike back to their vehicle. Some provide direct help to backpackers such as a tenting spot, a meal, a drop box, laundry, and a place to sleep... The list of car spotters specifies what each person wishes to offer the hiker. The FLT Yahoo group also provides assistance in various degrees.

Car spotting is a great assistance for hikers, so accepting the offered gas money gives hikers a way to thank you back. Hikers, remember to take a photo of your car spotter and send it to me. We love to recognize our spotters.

We ALWAYS need more car spotters, so please email jwensich@rochester.rr.com to apply or use the form directly from the website. This includes the Branch Trails.

(For a complete list of spotters, call or email me below.)

In Memoriam: "Happy Hiking" to Ed Sidote, who developed the trail angel/car spotter list among his many other contributions. 🍁

Contact: Jacqui Wensich
jwensich@rochester.rr.com
585/385-2265

North Country National Scenic Trail Day Plans for NYS

Mary Coffin



Mary Coffin

Try the echo off these cliffs at Long Pond in the Adirondacks on Mary Coffin' hike.

Hikers in New York are busy planning events to celebrate North Country National Scenic Trail Day, Saturday, September 26, 2015.

Hikes are planned at both ends of the co-located Finger Lakes Trail and NCNST in New York. Mike Schlicht will be leading a 10.4 mile hike on the west end through Allegany State Park in New York State to the Penna. state line marked with a picturesque trail marker made for plenty of photo opportunities. Join Mike for a fun and scenic hike without the headaches of a passport, dodging border patrols and declaring your water bottle at the border. FLT Map M1

At the eastern FLT terminus Mary Niemi of Onondaga ADK will lead a 5.3 mile trip on the NCT/FLT Onondaga Trail from Webber Road to Holmes Road and the junction with the CNY NCTA Chapter's section in Madison County, southeast of Syracuse. There are scenic views both from the hill tops and open valleys and a small stream crossing. There will be no state or county crossings on this hike, just a small stream. FLT Map O2.

The Cayuga Trails Club will hold a Three Preserve hike just west of Ithaca; contact roger@naturalhighs.net.

Adirondack Mountain Club's Onondaga and Schenectady Chapters will be offering trips on the Adirondack NCNST route. You can climb Moxham Mountain (5.4 mi RT, ~1000' gain) in the Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest north of North Creek and off Route 28N with Mary MacDonald. Enjoy lunch, fall color and the views from the summit, perhaps into Vermont.

The other Adirondack option is with Mary Coffin who will take you to two very picturesque lakes, but called "ponds." Rock Pond and Long Pond are in Siamese Ponds Wilderness, near Speculator. Join us and try out your echo off the Long Pond cliffs during lunch. Hike 7 miles round trip.

Look also for the CNY Chapter (NCTA) event that is taking shape for a walk on the Black River Canal.

Contact the Marys or Mike as follows: Mary Niemi <maryrw1@twcny.rr.com>, <maryccoffin@gmail.com>, <mmacdonald003@nycap.rr.com> and Mike <pageazi@yahoo.com>. 🍁

North Country National Scenic Trail

Trails Day Celebration - Saturday, September 26, 2015

On the last Saturday of each September, the North Country National Scenic Trail Association holds a "Trail Day Celebration" whereby each of the member clubs sponsors one or more hikes somewhere along their section of the North Country Trail. The NCT runs from North Dakota across the northern United States to Fort Ticonderoga, NY, with plans in place to extend into Vermont.

Hike #1

Hiking with a "new State in Mind" - FLT Map M1, Allegany State Park

How often do you cross a state line on a hike? If you answered...never...well, here is your chance to do so! We'll hike through Allegany State Park in New York State with a "new State in Mind" to the N.Y./Pa. state line marked with a picturesque trail marker made for plenty of photo opportunities. We'll then sign the trail register at the border and proceed into Pennsylvania on our way back to our cars at Pa. 346. Come out and join us for a fun and scenic hike without the headaches of a passport, dodging border patrols and declaring your water bottle at the border.

Meeting time: 8:30 am

Meeting Place: Map M1, Access 1, PA 346, Pennsylvania.

Directions: Make your way to Interstate 86, exit 18, west of Salamanca, N.Y.. Take Rt. 280 south to Pa. 346. As you approach Quaker Lake which is the only body of water on your left, Rt. 280 makes a sharp turn to the right. Make the right hand turn to continue on Rt. 280 and this road will change to PA 346 at the state line. The parking lot at Map 1, Access 1 is about 2-3 miles on the left hand side.

Distance: 10.4 miles. This hike has several short, but steep climbs of 300 feet so please bring plenty of water and good hiking boots.

Hike Leader: Mike Schlicht, pageazi@yahoo.com, 716/316-4388

Gifts in memory of

Phyllis Younghans

from

Gene & Liz Bavis
Linda Koskie

Hike #2

Celebrate NCNST Day - Three Preserve Hike

Meeting Time: 12:00 a.m.

Meeting Place: Event/Trailhead location: Bock-Harvey Forest Preserve, 150 Rockwell Road trailhead, Enfield, N.Y., Map M16

Contact: Roger Hopkins Email: roger@naturalhighs.net
Telephone: 607-257-9778

We will hike on three nature preserves in the Town of Enfield, Tompkins County. The three preserves carry parts of the Finger Lakes Trail/North Country National Scenic Trail and are protected by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference and the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

- Stevenson Nature Preserve of the Finger Lakes Land Trust
- Riemen Woods of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference
- Bock-Harvey Forest Preserve of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference in partnership with the Finger Lakes Land Trust and the Cayuga Trails Club.

This event will be offered with options for 3 to 7 miles in length. Further details on the hike and meeting place and time will be posted soon at Cayugatrailclub.org/events

Hike #3

Rock and Long Ponds, Siamese Ponds Wilderness Adirondack Park - Map: ADK Central Guide pp 124-6, Delorme 37

We will explore the NCNST Adirondack Route north of Speculator, N.Y. The trail passes two typical, picturesque Adirondack lakes with all the ambience one would expect of a National Scenic Trail. Try out your echo on Long Pond cliffs.

Meeting time: 8:30 am

Meeting place: Please call leader for meeting place

Distance: 5-7 miles

Hike Leader: Mary Coffin, maryccoffin@gmail.com, 315/687-3589

Bullthistle Weekend Was A Warm Welcome

Dick Hubbard

Over May 29-31, the Bullthistle Hiking Club hosted the FLT spring weekend in Norwich, among the 72 miles of hiking trail in Chenango County. Hikes were assorted and fine, evening programs were enjoyable, but the really memorable feature that separates this weekend from 51 years of others was the super welcome that Bullthistle put on for us. Friday night's appetizer table in the Elk's Club bar was FABULOUS, with all snacks made by club members. They did not rely on easy staples like cheese and crackers but made a huge assortment of truly inventive and tasty treats; in fact, some people said they wished we could have stayed there for social hour even longer before going in to dinner.

The Elks did a creditable job of providing a buffet dinner both nights, but afterwards the dessert table once again demonstrated that extra Bullthistle commitment to being great hosts. Yes, they made all the desserts, too! That's a big order for over a hundred guests.

Thank you all, and especially chair for the weekend, Donna Coon. We look forward to the next Norwich weekend. 🍁



Welcome New & Returning Members February - April 2015

Jane Arnold	Hammondsport NY
Jennifer Ball	Tonawanda NY
Gail A.Blake & Jennifer Dotson	Ithaca NY
Jennifer Blusk	Syracuse NY
Gordon Bosler	Lancaster PA
Barbara Britting	Lackawanna NY
Joyce Bufano	Pittsford NY
Steve Collins	Endwell NY
Carol Colton & Family	LeRoy NY
Joel Cummings	Ithaca NY
Frank & Catherine Darrow	Spencer NY
Kerri Davis	Elmira NY
Miquel Dejesus	Brooklyn NY
Claire Ders	South Otselic NY
Mark Deuble	Grand Island NY
Roger L. Easton, Jr.	Scottsville NY
Mitchell Ehrenberg	Rochester NY
Deborah Emerson	Geneseo NY
Hoss Firooznia	Rochester NY
Rich & Sue Freeman	Englewood FL
Jordan Frey	Franklin Lakes NJ
Paul Gardner	Rochester NY
Patricia Gatto-Chinery	Castleton NY
Peter Gradoni	Alfred NY
Ralph C. Green	Hamburg NY
Jason Harcum	Cortland NY
Sally Hardenburg	Williamsville NY
Susan Healy	Webster NY
Birdie High, BU Outdoor Pursuits	Binghamton NY
Michael Hoke	Painted Post NY
Kirk House	Bath NY

David & Lydia Kawaler	Clarence NY
Andrew Kingston	Mercer Island WA
Kevin Kumor	West Seneca NY
Glen E. Larson, Troop 7 Eastwood	Syracuse NY
Cheryl Lewis	Buffalo NY
Erik Lucas	Ithaca NY
Daniel & Susan Mangold	Williamsville NY
Deborah & John Mann	Dryden NY
Steve Markel	Hornell NY
Rita M. McCabe	Pine City NY
Robin Mock	Rochester NY
Gina Mushynsky	Baldwinsville NY
William & Caroline Penn	Baldwinsville NY
Kerra Quinn	Dryden NY
Kathleen Rawlings	Lockport NY
Susan & John Rivito	Syracuse NY
Les Rosenbloom	Pulteney NY
Michael Rosenthal	Arlington VT
Theresa Schettine	Wayland NY
Beth Schneider	Gillett PA
Travis Sennett	Rochester NY
Ellie Sherman	Tonawanda NY
Terry & Carolyn Smith	Rochester NY
Katherine Smith	East Amherst NY
Joe & Nancy Sullivan	Kenmore NY
Tina Swanson-Swauger	Lakewood NY
Suzanne Tompkins	Grand Island NY
Robert Whitbeck	Issaquah WA
Gary E. Wilcox	Mayfield NY
William Wolcott	Rochester NY
Micheline Zion	Ithaca NY

Goose Bumps

Warren Johnsen

...another installation in Warren's ongoing episodes with his imaginary playmate...

What a great surprise I encountered while hiking today, a message from the Lady in Black... I discovered this fallen log with a message from the LIB on it. Translated, the message means watch out for "goose bumps" today.



Warren Johnsen



Andrew Szabo

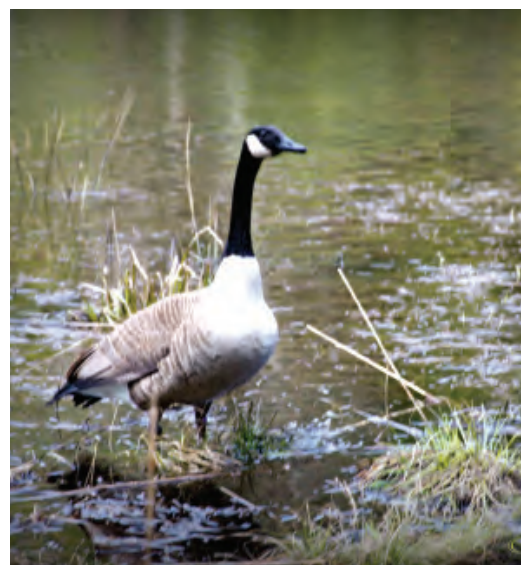


Andrew Szabo

What in the world is she talking about?

Soon enough I discovered what she meant.

I saw a Canada Goose on Jeffrey's Pond, watched it for a while, photographed it, and then decided to find a better vantage point. Eventually it noticed me and slowly began to head towards me as I continued taking pictures. All of a sudden it starting honking loudly and its pace towards me got much quicker. Soon it was almost completely out of the water and in pursuit of me! Apparently the female Canada Goose was in a nearby nest.



Warren Johnsen

I figured it was time to bail out of there and quickly retreated into the safety of some trees. It was then I heard the LIB laughing hysterically at me... I did escape the "goose bumps" and the still laughing LIB joined me for a continuation of the hike.

The scent of her perfume still lingers... 🍁

Trail Dawg

And now perhaps the Lady in Black has taken a trip west to Letchworth State Park, because here she is, surely. We looked around for Warren, but he wasn't there.

Wally Wood Hike Recap

Story by Scott Lauffer and Photos by Jeff O iveri of Triple Cities Hiking Club

26 hikers and 5 dogs converged on May 2 to hike this year's version of the Wally Wood hike in the Catskills. We came from different parts of the state, a few coming from as far away as Olean and one from Clifton Springs. Eleven were from the Triple Cities Hiking Club (TCHC), only one hour away. Led by Laurie Ondrejka and Debra Nero, we covered a new section of the FLT by the Cannonsville Reservoir on M26. We did about a 7 mile loop, including a 2 mile section on a side trail. The highlight was the Rock Rift Fire Tower, which we reached after a steep climb of about 1,000 feet.

Rick Roberts drew our attention to an inscription inscribed in one of the old cement footings that identified the CCC as building the original tower there in 1934. The weather was quite pleasant, with temperatures reaching 70 and plenty of sun. It might have been a bit warm on the ascent. A dip in the reservoir would have felt good after the hike, but that is forbidden in this protected N.Y. City drinking watershed. Spring, although a bit late in arriving, was just starting to reveal herself in this part of the state; we saw some trout lilies, violets and a few violas, yellow flowers in the violet family. We were concerned about ticks, but I didn't hear of any being found. We hope everybody checked thoroughly.

Some of us from TCHC checked out the nearby Rainbow Inn afterward. We had a good time in this pleasant place with a nice view of their pond, and were told to come back in a month when the trees and blossoms would be in full display. Thanks to our hike leaders Laurie and Deb for their organizing and thanks to Rick Roberts for laying out this nice trail and making it possible for us to enjoy it. 🍁



A marvelous rock, bizarre even for the Catskills end of our trail.



Rick Roberts, he who arranged this off-road route and led an Alley Cat crew last year in building the new trail.



◀ *Rock Rift Fire Tower in early May. Who planted these daffodils? The CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) workers who built the tower during the Depression, or a lonesome tower staffer?*

▶ *Erich Hess from Triple Cities Hiking Club clearly won style honors for the day.*



FLT NAMED HIKE EVENT

Saturday, August 1, 2015

Sidote Hike

Hike Leaders:

Bruce and Donna Coon
coledonnarn@yahoo.com or 607/445-4003

Hike Description:

This hike is an 8 mile loop on map M22 in the northwest corner of Chenango County, east of Cortland. For 5 miles we will follow the FLT from the Otselic River to Warner Road. Then we will return via the DEC truck trail. Initially we will climb 500 feet to reach the top of Truman Hill, an elevation of 1,780 feet. The trail then proceeds south through the forest passing the Winston Braxton Bench. The highest elevation we will reach is 1,940 feet. We will also offer a shorter 3 mile hike with fewer hills.

Meeting Location and Time:

9:00 AM at the Otselic River DEC Fishing Access Parking Lot off NY State Route 26 just south of Bucks Brook Road.

Directions to Meeting Location:

The fishing access is well marked. It is on NY State Route 26 approximately 2 miles south of the village of Otselic in the northwest corner of Chenango County, where NY State Route 26 and the FLT cross the Otselic River. It's milepost 18.5 on FLT Map M22.

Carpooling:

From the Norwich area: meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot behind Howard Johnson Motel on NY State Route 12.

From the Binghamton area: please contact Larry Blumberg, LBlumberg@stny.rr.com or 607/797-0912

FLT NAMED HIKE EVENT

Saturday, October 10, 2015

The FLT "Erv Market" Fall Hike

Location:

Hoxie Gorge, Cortland County, FLT Map M20 (Rev 4/15)

Hike Leaders:

Leaders: Sigi and Horst Schwinge
Contact: sigischwinge@aol.com
315/437-6906

Hike Description:

Join us for a hike on one of the most recent and significant FLT relocations. This effort, which was completed in the fall of 2014, moved the trail off busy US 11 in Cortland County and into the heart of Hoxie Gorge State Forest on all new trail featuring numerous creek and gorge crossings with several nice views of waterfalls.

Two hikes will be offered

- a 12 mile faster paced hike from Hoxie Gorge Rd / Cortland College land to the West River Rd trailhead, led by Sigi Schwinge

- a 6 mile slower paced hike from Hoxie Gorge Rd / Cortland College land to Steve Russell Rd; this will be led by Horst Schwinge

Meeting Location and Time:

Meet at 9:15 am at the West River Rd. trailhead. We will depart from there at 9:30 am to shuttle cars over to the starting point on Hoxie Gorge Rd. Enroute we will also drop cars at Steve Russell Rd, the endpoint for the shorter hike.

Directions to the Meeting Location:

Proceed to I-81 Exit 9 (Marathon, NY). From Marathon, take US 11 North and then turn left (West) on NY 392. After crossing the Tioughnioga River, turn right (North) on West River Rd and drive for about four miles to the trailhead.

Thank You

In Ellicottville, Map M3/CT3



Thank You

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LANDMAX

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

Cross-cut Saws

Tony Rodriguez, Trail Chair for Onondaga Chapter, ADK Mountain Club

For the past couple of years the ADK-Onondaga Chapter has used two-person cross-cut saws to cut and clear blowdowns from our hiking trails. We did not officially develop a formal policy or define and establish written operational protocols. That does not mean we proceeded blindly, but we started at a novice level and slowly progressed from there.

The usual initial query regarding the transition is: why? There are several reasons but the principal answer is anecdotal, but factual: if anyone has had to carry, up and down a mountain or difficult lengthy trail a 15 lb., 18" chainsaw, 4 lbs of fuel and bar oil, a 3 lb. helmet, 2 1/2 lb. chaps, several heavy duty wedges, chainsaw tools, and spare bar and chain, then a 5 1/2 lb. two-person saw, including handles and saw guard, would be a welcome substitute.

Other ancillary benefits include no air or noise pollution, less equipment maintenance, no fuel mixing, and certainly considerably safer to use.

For many years our Chapter relied on chainsaws, but one day along came Ed O'Shea with the novel idea that we could accomplish our task in a simpler and equally effective way utilizing his newly acquired cross-cut saw. The beginning proceeded slowly, but with expanded introduction and cooper-

ative participation by our worker groups, which includes several willing ladies, it has become accepted and routine. We do not by any means consider ourselves loggers, but we manage to accomplish what is necessary. We do not fell trees, but only clear what has fallen and obstructs the trail. Safety is our number one concern, so we approach each work detail as a singular event, consider all potential problems, and will not tackle any project we feel is beyond our realm of practical know-how. 🍁



Ed O'Shea at Highland Forest



Ed O'Shea

SOUTH END OF LETCHWORTH TRAIL CLOSED WITHIN PARK

Starting in June, Letchworth State Park roads on the west side of the gorge will be closed off at the south end so that construction can begin on a new railroad bridge to replace the 1875 trestle still in daily use by frequent trains going VERY slowly. However, in late winter there was a brief flurry of work to cut down all the trees in the slender path of the new bridge; that work exposed the steep hillside above our existing Letchworth Trail on the footprint of the old Pennsylvania Railroad and towpath for the Genesee Valley Canal beneath the active railroad trestle. The Park Administration became alarmed that the newly exposed hillside posed a danger of falling rocks for users of our trail below, so they have closed it for the duration of the construction project, until 2018.

This is especially distressing since the public plans by the state Dept. of Transportation and railroad Norfolk Southern have been saying for a half-dozen years that closures of the trail below the new bridge construction would be only intermittent and short.

So you can hike legally southward from access K, just below the Parade Grounds, about one half mile to the overlook of the Middle Falls, but the trail is closed south of there, all the way out to route NY 436. We are not pleased. Affected Trail Sponsor Scott Brooks worries about the condition of the trail if he must leave it untouched for three years!



Scott Brooks

The Park is serious about closing us off from the trail under the old bridge!

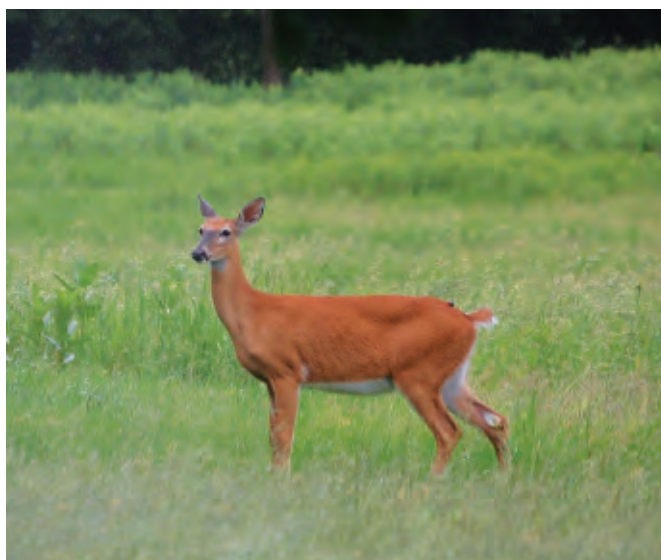
REPORTS OF TRAIL PROBLEMS NEED MORE INFORMATION

Hey, hikers. While it's a huge help to get reports from you about a problem spot, we could do a better job if you gave us more info. If there is a tree down, how big is it? Diameter where it needs to be cut is the big answer, to help maintainers know what equipment and how many helpers to bring in. Help us help you!

PASSAGES

Two longtime members of the Genesee Valley Hiking Club died this winter, both of them previously active as volunteers for the Finger Lakes Trail. **Don Riplinger** had been a regular at trail maintenance, and was active in public relations for the GVHC, hounding the Rochester paper when they forgot to list the weekly hikes.

Helen Brooks died at age 90 after a career as a rare woman lawyer with the Lawyers Co-op Publishing Company. She used to help with many of our "office" tasks when the office was in Dorothy Beye's basement for seventeen years, and was apparently quite a walker. Ontario Pathways volunteer Tony Mittiga used to walk PACTAC (a citizen patrol) with her, and reports that he couldn't keep up!



Jennifer Hopper

Outside our office window...

NEW TRAIL DISPLAY SEEN BY THOUSANDS!



Tom Wenzel

In the entryway to the Mt. Morris Dam Visitor Center, where thousands of visitors pass each year, there is now this major display of the Letchworth Trail, with an inset detail of nearby additional trails. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, host of our office space, asked for a big wall map to help them show inquiring visitors where to pick up the nearby trails, so our own Jen Hopper (left) and the Corps' Juliana Smith spent over six months ironing out the details.

Juliana's sister Carrie voluntarily shared her expertise at graphic design to help create the map details, especially when enlarging the local large scale map, then the FLT paid for having the wall hanging professionally printed on a laminated wall panel. Now the Corps' staff inside the visitor center can easily show people where to go, in both directions, for easy short walks.

ADDITION TO OUR LETCHWORTH TRAIL AT MT. MORRIS DAM

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, utilizing work crews and volunteers from the local BOCES program, has created a new trail as an offshoot from our own Letchworth Trail, near the FLT office. What were farm fields back in 1950 when the Dam was built had been growing back into woods edges and thick bushes, but this ambitious project has cleared some fields and created a wide trail through what had become impassable for other than deer and skunks.

Now visitors to the dam can take a one mile mostly easy walk through old field, young woods and more mature woods which loops back quickly toward the dam (and our office). While our Letchworth Trail is blazed yellow, the new loop adds blue blazes to the loop to take walkers onto the new part.

The Corps had a celebration on Friday, May 29th, for the official opening of their blue loop.



Katie Hopper

A Plea for Wilderness on Our Own FLT

Alex Gonzalez

As a three-time end-to-ender, I can recall seeing changes in the FLT each time I repeated the trail. Lost permissions (alas!), gained permissions, and reroutes accounted for most of these changes, but not all. Perhaps what most affected me personally, however, was the portions of the trail whose route had remained the same but whose woods had been logged. Places that my memory pleasurably recalled having large, mature trees were now singularly unremarkable, looking just like the vast majority of land through which the FLT passes: woods in a constant state of recovery from logging operations.

The last thing I want to do here is offend our many generous, permitting landowners, a group of which I am also a member, with about sixty acres. If they need the money to help pay their exorbitant real-estate taxes, to pay family medical bills, or even to buy a new car, logging their woods is their right and we hikers are sincerely grateful to them for allowing the trail to cross their lands rather than having it follow roads for miles on end. However, on the personal level, I nevertheless cannot help but feel great sadness that these usually magnificent trees are no longer with us.


The fact is, logging is almost always extremely disruptive to trail aesthetics. My wife, Michele, and I maintain nearly twenty miles of FLTC trails, much of it on private lands (map M19). With one notable exception, Sinnott Farm, the many logging operations we have had to endure have been extremely destructive: ugly piles of logging slash near the trail or even on it; carefully constructed and benched trail bed destroyed, whether by logs being dragged downhill across it, skid roads crossing or merging with it, or, in some places, simply complete obliteration; and, finally, the proliferation of briars, wild roses, and honeysuckle, among many other aesthetically undesirable weeds. Almost always, logging is destructive to well-constructed hiking trails. But the damage is not restricted to the physical trail itself. Trail aesthetics are also adversely affected, especially for hikers sensitive to their surroundings; those who hike purely as a means of exercise or socializing are unlikely to notice the huge stumps and vastly increased density of the forest's understory—which brings me to Irene Szabo's recent article about the logging of our FLTC-owned Cobb property.

I consider Irene a longtime friend, so it was difficult for me to find myself disagreeing so radically with her position. Also, I winced when noticing the article's several exclamation points regarding profit and its excitement that "best of all . . . this can be repeated in another ten years or so!" The tone sounds almost giddy, beside which the two protestations of grief seem merely obligatory: the words "alas" and "mourn." In fact, most of the article seems geared toward justifying the logging operation. For instance, there were "no terrible shocks," but that depends upon one's aesthetic threshold; the trophy stump in one photo strikes me as qualifying for a terrible shock. Proponents of "managed woods," a common euphemism for "periodically logged woods," always downplay the negative effects because they find profit more important. True, the Cobb operation is

nowhere near a clearcut, but I had to endure a comparably selective operation east of Havington Hill; the forestry consultant was very nice and I managed to persuade him to save a few marked trees. However, the cutting of just the few selected trees created more of a trail mess than I could possibly have imagined prior to the cutting. Apparently, the logging on the Cobb property has been even more selective, but I'll bet the disruption to the forest is still considerable to anyone who aesthetically values natural-looking woods. The stumps alone will be visible for generations, so it further saddens me that Irene seems so overjoyed at seeing "high value" trees, the eagerly anticipated "future growth possibilities," and the fact that "nearby trees" are already being eyed for their "potential future value." More justification occurs regarding our ash trees, which "would only have died soon;" so instead of the pests killing them, we kill them. This is unfortunately an unnecessarily pessimistic, utilitarian view, since it is far from 100% certain the pests' progress cannot be stopped, especially in light of recent encouraging developments in combating the emerald ash borer.

I'd like to make a plea for our Cobb property to be left alone—forever!, to echo part of our mission statement. So precious little wilderness can be found along the length of the FLT that it depresses me that just as our own woods are recovering from past "management," we go and start it all over again and even look forward to future cuts. True, some might say that with a trail there, the area is no longer "wild," but the fact is that we do have a trail; I'm talking about what we *see* from that trail. The state land master plan defines wilderness as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man." Can't we have even our own few acres aspiring to that status? Writing in the *Adirondack Explorer* (January/February 2015, p.35), Pete Nelson observes the obvious: that "wilderness comprises a tiny fraction of the American landscape . . . [and] is indispensably precious." I wish more of our membership and leadership held this view.

I am not opposed to the neighborly gesture of letting adjacent landowners drag logs along one haul road. But, at the risk of sounding repetitive, I am again saddened to see our trees admired for their value in board feet instead of for their sheer, wild beauty. Interestingly, the same edition of the *FLTC News* has a nice article on Riemen Woods, a parcel whose original donor wanted "to be protected in its natural state." It's been a long time since I last visited Riemen Woods, but the last time I was there, I recall enjoying its beautiful unmanaged appearance. Apparently, the Cayuga Trails Club did not log the parcel, but given what has happened on the Cobb property, I doubt very much that with its current policies the FLTC "will offer better protection for the property in the long run." *{Au contraire, Alex: the Riemen property acquisition rules dictate that we not harvest logs merely for profit. Editor}*

I acknowledge that the FLTC is always needy for money, but there have to be other ways to get it. I look forward to the day when one of our members wins a few hundred million in the lottery and bestows a million or two on the FLTC. Then maybe we can do our part to preserve a little piece of wilderness for future through-hikers to anticipate as they approach the Cobb property. Wouldn't that be nice? 

New Trail Along the Tioughnioga

Mike TenKate

I'm happy to report that you need new maps! This reroute replaces a 6.5 mile road walk with a 5.7 mile road walk, and adds 5.5 miles of new trail. While there is still a substantial road walk, the character of it is vastly improved. Those who have walked the old route will recall that, in addition to the harrowing 3 miles along US 11, the entire route was on paved roads, mostly through populated areas. Now there is less than one mile of paved road to walk on new maps M19 and M20.

Instead, the walk travels along the southern, less developed end of dirt West River Road, which pleasantly rolls along the N.Y. Susquehanna and Western rail line and the Tioughnioga River, then follows the seasonal Steve Russell Road up a gorge under Interstate 81. Even the six-tenths of a mile remaining on US 11 is a scenic section up above the Tioughnioga River with wide shoulders, behind the guiderail, even passing a bald eagle's nest.

The new trail has many elevation changes; it traverses down and back up three gorges before meeting the existing trail at the stone bridge in Hoxie Gorge on SUNY Cortland property. There are two bivouac areas along the route, two ponds, and a section along the headwaters of Hoxie Gorge Creek. It has a mix of different types of forest.

This reroute has been a ten-year work in progress. In the summer of 2004, I was a young, aspiring end-to-ender (before falling in love with my own section of trail), and I hiked the road walk from Hoxie Gorge Road to West River Road, including the 3 miles on US 11. I had my two young daughters along in the stroller, hoping to get some road walks crossed off my list while they were too young to hike. It was a harrowing experience, with narrow shoulders and cars flying by at 65 miles per hour.

I thought there must be a better way. I set to work looking for possible reroutes along the then current route. I spoke with landowners and scouted many possible routes, and while some seemed promising, I was never able to connect them into a route.

Over several years of exploring options, I had very little... OK, nothing ...to show for the effort. Then I realized I was looking in the wrong direction. What if we went south, rather than north around the Tioughnioga River and I-81? We could use the Route 392 bridge instead of the Blodgett Mills bridge. Using this option would require DEC permission to enter state forest off Steve Russell Road, so I went to the local forester to ask if it was possible. My timing was very fortunate; they were just setting up hearings for the new Unit Management Plan (UMP) for the Hoxie Gorge State Forest. The reroute proposal was included in the draft UMP and eventually the final UMP. A huge thank you goes to Tony Rodriguez and Mary and Bill Coffin for their help with public hearings, and to Henry Dedrick from the DEC.

The main construction took place August 4th through the 8th, 2014, by an Alley Cat crew which was such a great pleasure to work with. The crew consisted of MJ and Charles Uttech, Matt Branneman, Duane Pierce, Donn Hewes, Nancy TenKate, Bruce Coon, Tom Babcock, Pete Stapleton, Colleen Stapleton, and my daughters Caroline and Madeline who by this time were 11- and 12-year-olds. We constructed stairs, two short bridges, 60 feet of puncheon, and cleared and blazed 5.5 miles of new trail. Each morning, MJ provided each of us with a bag lunch before we set out on our various tasks. Unlike most crews, these volunteers came from home each day.

One of the little stream bridges being finished by Pete and Colleen Stapleton and Mike's daughter Madeline.



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For anyone who has ever tried to get a good look at the tiny ruby-crowned kinglet, especially of his trademark ruby head spot, the pursuit is mostly futile and frustrating. They flit about high branches, so our most typical view of them is an unflattering approach to their little underside. Tom Reimers scored a great moment, though, and actually caught several good pictures looking down at one!



Tom Reimers