

Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

Winter 2018



Inside...

- * *Delaware County Hike Series Rerun*
- * *A Lot of New End-to-Enders*
- * *Register Visits From Here and There*

WINTER 2018



FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS

Volume 57 Number 4

Finger Lakes Trail Service Center
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Mission Statement

The mission of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference is to build, protect, enhance, and promote a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever!

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COVER: The trail goes through dark hemlock forests above Mitchellsville gorge below, on Map M12 near Hammondsport, but it breaks out of the dark woods occasionally to tiptoe along the mossy edge above the gorge. All this beauty is on private property, so we are especially grateful for the permissions here. Photo taken by Jacqui Wensich

THIS PAGE: Letchworth gorge from the same vantage point we printed a few years back. Background by Mark Valites, Inset by Carrie Williams.

President's Message

Pat Monahan



Looking back over the past few months, this goes down in my record book as the soggiest weather that I have ever seen. The Tioga River in Steuben County has been just too dangerous to venture out for a quiet paddle. At one point while kayaking, I noticed the water line behind the Tioga Hammond dam near the N.Y./Penna. border was nearly 12 feet above my head sometime this summer or fall. The Genesee River has been the highest that I have seen in many years. It made me appreciate the beauty of the Letchworth Trail as I listened to the roar and watched the rushing river create a double rainbow at the Middle Falls near the Glen Iris Inn.


I would like to report to you about some Board activity since I last wrote. The Board accepted Patti Lavell's resignation as Treasurer and also appointed Willa Powell as our new Treasurer. Many of you know Willa as an avid hiker. She has a background in finance and is a current member of the school board of the Rochester City School District. Thank you for volunteering to be our treasurer.

Also, over the last few Board meetings, the Board has wrestled with how best to move forward as an organization. We have relied on a long-range planning document to help guide us for many years. It served us well but is no longer sufficient for a growing organization. We need a strategic plan that will guide all of our decisions. It will help determine how to fund our operating expenses, utilize human resources and determine the activities that help us stay true to our mission. The Board contracted with the Center for Professional Development at Canisius College for an outside consultant to lead this effort. The process involves electronic surveys with Board members and our partner groups (hiking clubs and state agencies) as well as personal interviews to identify the important issues in front of the FLT. This stage of gathering information will be well under way as you read this. I anticipate giving you a full report at the annual meeting on June 9, 2019, during our spring conference located at the University of Pittsburgh at their Bradford campus.

Every year the Board of Managers holds a weekend retreat to review and discuss issues that do not fit into our regular Board meetings throughout the year. The retreat will be held on November 16-18, 2018, at Letchworth State Park Conference Center, a few weeks after I have written this article. Some of the topics for discussion will include the 2019 budget review/approval, a midterm report from Jennifer Patrick,

Canisius College consultant, regarding the strategic planning progress, strategies to increase trail easements and potential bylaw changes to be considered at the annual meeting in June. I will give you a full report in the Spring magazine.

Finally, our annual appeal letter to support the FLT has arrived at your door. We count on your financial support to keep the FLT as New York's premier footpath. I can't imagine New York without the FLT. More important, it is about your personal story on the FLT. It makes a difference. I have shared some of mine through this column over the years. I hope you will find a way to share your story. Your donation helps to keep the FLT a nationally recognized recreational asset and a personal treasure for you. I encourage each of you to donate to our annual appeal this year.

It is time to get out the long underwear, the ear muffs and the handwarmers for a great day outdoors. Find the FLT this winter and, **"Go take a hike!!"** 

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

<i>Youth (under 17)</i>	\$15	<i>Sustaining:</i>	
<i>Student (under 24)</i>	\$15	<i>Pathfinder (Bronze)</i>	\$100
<i>Limited Income</i>	\$30	<i>Trail Blazer (Silver)</i>	\$250
<i>Adult</i>	\$40	<i>Trail Builder (Gold)</i>	\$251-\$500
<i>Family</i>	\$60	<i>Trail Guide (Diamond)</i>	\$501-\$1000
<i>Youth Organization</i>	\$30	<i>Trail Patron (Platinum)</i>	over \$1000
<i>Lifetime (Individual)</i>	\$600	<i>Lifetime (Family)</i>	\$900
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<i>Bronze</i>	\$100	<i>Diamond</i>	\$1000
<i>Silver</i>	\$250	<i>Platinum</i>	\$2500
<i>Gold</i>	\$500		

Durfee Hill New Trail, and Intermittent Alley Cat

David Priester

First a little background. This project geographically is south of Danby Village along Rt. 96B. In past years the FLT route approached 96B from the west, crossed, entered a gas line right of way, climbed up Durfee Hill Road and then turned south on an old woods road and ended up on Heisey Road. At some point the FLTC lost permission to cross a piece of land near the corner of Durfee Hill Road and the woods road which doesn't seem to have a name. This required the FLT route to be moved to road walk down 96B and then up Heisey Hill Road. This is not a particularly pleasant experience.

About a year ago the DEC folks proposed the idea of building a trail through a piece of Danby State Forest which straddles Durfee Hill Road for the first $\frac{3}{4}$ mile or so going east from 96B. Dan Little, the DEC forester, and I scouted the area last fall and then a group of the CTC and FLTC trail team along with Dan again flagged a route through the forest property, across Durfee Hill Road, through additional state land and then crossing some private property owned by Cotton-Hanlon Lumber company which we had permission to cross.

This route passes through various growth areas from open field to dense honeysuckle thickets and mostly through open woods with some beautiful large trees of various species, mostly hardwoods.

Late in the summer an "Alley Cat Light" crew assembled and cleared the path up the hill, across Durfee Hill Road, and to the top of the hill through to the woods road. This construction included building a ladder up the south bank at Durfee Hill Road. On subsequent weekends smaller crews gathered to complete the side hill benching and hardening of the new trail route. As the project stands there is a small amount of blazing yet to be done on the new section and the blazing along the old woods road route will have to be refreshed. There is a hunting lease on the Cotton-Hanlon Lumber property so we cannot complete the opening of the new route until the hunting season is over. But weather permitting the new route for the main FLT will be opened in late December. The road walk route will be re-blazed as a hunting season bypass route and as an access to parking along Durfee Hill Road.

There were a lot of parties involved in this project. The project management was handled by the summer CTC team, Lucy Gagliardo, Roger Hopkins and Max Heitner. The on-site construction manager was Matt Branneman. In addition David Priester, the CTC trails Chair and RTC and the DEC Region 7 forestry team helped design and coordinate the project. Frequent helpers included Charlie Strohmman, Dave Burnett, Nigel Dysen-Hudson, Anna Keeton, Roger Hopkins, and Peter Collinge. Our special thanks to the DEC and Cotton-Hanlon Lumber for making this very attractive trail possible. 🍁



Anna Keeton

Matt Branneman and Peter Collinge in the foreground start side-hill benching to enable mortal feet to walk across the slope.



Charlie Strohmman

Matt working at the top of the sixteen-foot ladder required to get hikers up the steep road embankment above Durfee Hill Road.

Executive Director Report

Quinn Wright

I reported several months ago that the FLTC needs more members in order for its annual operating income and expense to become balanced. That situation has not improved. We still need new members or donors to close the gap. I encourage all of us to become promoters of the FLTC. We can increase members/donors through several approaches: advertising by wearing FLTC gear, promoting the FLTC at FLTC sponsored events, promoting the FLTC at other outdoor activity related events, advocating for the FLTC at other events or functions. With that in mind, there are several things that I encourage you to do.

First, if you own FLT clothing, wear it regularly and often; not a day goes by that I am not wearing a hat, a tee, a shirt, a pullover, a fleece, a jacket, or more than one item at the same time. Unobtrusive advertising such as that really does help. Please wear your gear; if you don't have some please consider going to our store which is managed by PSP Unlimited by using the following link: http://www.pspunlimited.com/category_s/200.htm. The selection is far broader than was ever before offered; if you don't see what you want, just ask or make a suggestion. We have moved to this third party store concept because we no longer need to invest in inventory and have dead product just sit around the office.

Second, the FLTC Board of Managers has decided to create an annual event, Finger Lakes Trail Days, in partnership with Steuben County's Tourism Department. The committee of Deb Nero, Dave Newlun, and Anna Keeton is hard at work planning the event for July 26 – 28, 2019 at the Steuben County Fairgrounds in Bath. There will be music, trail related activities and presentations, camping and food for many people. We will be promoting the event within a 100 mile travel radius. The event is planned to be very attractive to our members as well as non-members not only from a cost perspective, but also from the kinds of activities from which one can choose.

In order to carry off this event successfully we will need many of you to volunteer to assist in a wide range of areas for a few hours of your time while you are at the event. Please use the following link to volunteer your time and you will be contacted to determine the best days and times for you and the event: www.fingerlakestrail.org/volunteer.

Third, the FLTC is a participant in the International Trails Symposium that is being held at the Syracuse Oncenter on April 28 – May 1, 2019. This is a great opportunity for the FLTC to promote the Finger Lakes Trail to the outdoor recreation community and multiple public officials from around the country and the world. Mike Schlicht is assembling two work crews to build the two styles of lean-tos currently constructed by the FLTC that will be used at the event and then re-erected on the trail later in the year. In addition to those crews, the FLTC will need volunteers to staff our FLTC information booth. Please contact the office to volunteer by sending a message to Info@fingerlakestrail.org. In addition, the Symposium needs many volunteers for the four

www.FingerLakesTrail.org

day event. Most of the volunteers are asked for a 4 hour shift on any day. This is an expensive event to attend; however, any volunteer can attend the balance of his/her time on the day of the volunteer effort for no charge. To volunteer for the Symposium use the following link: <https://www.americantrails.org/symposium/volunteer-at-its-2019>



Reed Wright

Fourth, at any FLTC event such as the County Hike Series, the Spring Conference, the Fall Conference or any of the "Named" hikes, we should be promoting the FLT and the FLTC to people outside of our very limited FLTC hiking community. Please contact the FLTC Publicity Committee to promote those events at publicity@fingerlakestrail.org.

Fifth, if you have an idea on how to promote the FLTC and the FLT to a new audience of users, please contact me at qwright@fingerlakestrail.org. I would love to hear from you and to help you help the FLTC.

Sixth, if you do nothing else beyond what you already do for the FLTC, please find at least **ONE** new dues or donating member. Since membership costs only \$40, that is less than two cups of coffee per month bought at Tim Horton's or Dunkin Donut! You can do this and I implore you to do this.

We cannot do too much to promote the FLTC and your help is greatly needed even it is just the passive effort of wearing FLTC gear. I look forward to hearing from many of you. 🍁

Contact: Quinn Wright
qwright@fingerlakestrail.org
716-826-1939

Thank You

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for the Finger Lakes Trail and the North Country National
Scenic Trail

Ron Abraham End-to-End #451, #113 Branch Trails



Jacqui Wensich

Ever cheerful Ron

that the county hike series are an ideal way to cover the trail. So it didn't take long to decide to continue with Cattaraugus County in 2008. (Gee – maybe I will be an end-to-end someday... even if it's just one county a year!)

Unfortunately I had to skip the Delaware County series in 2009, but I promised myself that I'd catch it the next time, which worked out well, because Ulster and Delaware Counties were separate series this time around. In the meantime, I resumed hiking the FLT with the 2010 series in Chenango County and each year up through 2014 in Steuben County.

I started on the branch trails in 2010, when FLTC offered a Letchworth Branch series during the Spring Weekend at Alfred. In 2011 and 2012, I completed the Conservation Trail with the Foothills Trail Club's 50th Anniversary hike series. Also did a couple of short hikes on the Bristol Hills Branch during the FLT 50th Anniversary weekend at Keuka College.

In 2016, Willa Powell organized a group to hike the Crystal Hills Trail, and I took the opportunity to complete it with them.

Up until this year, I hadn't hiked any more of the Bristol Hills Branch, but I learned that the Springwater Trails group (www.springwatertrails.org) had begun a hike series there. I joined them about halfway through, and did the rest of the trail on a few solo hikes. (By the way, if you live in the western Finger Lakes area, this is an active group, with a hike somewhere almost every Sunday, and some great socials and pot luck dinners afterward. I highly recommend these folks!)

With my main trail end-to-end in sight, and just the Interloken and Onondaga branches remaining, I really got motivated to complete my branch trail end-to-end this year as well. I finished

Back in 2007 when I registered for the Allegany County hike series, I never imagined that I'd become an "End-to-End" one day! Until then (except maybe one hike through Little Rock City and Camp Seneca), about all I'd seen of the FLT was on the State Forests that I manage for the DEC in Allegany County, and I was mainly just curious to see what the rest of the trail in my home county looked like. Needless to say, it didn't end there!

With the shuttle buses, SAG stops and groups of different hiking speeds to choose from (as well as getting to know some great people!), I realized

the Interloken Trail in two hikes in July and August, when I was in that area for meetings anyway.

The Onondaga Trail took me a couple of overnight trips in late August and early September, taking advantage of those cool days that were so few and far between... So I managed to finish the branch trails just a week ahead of the main trail!

Being an avid cyclist as well as a hiker, most of my solo hikes involve an uphill hike, followed by an easy downhill bike ride back to my truck, which works great, as long as you remember the key to your bike lock! (Why do I mention this? I was about four miles into my longest Onondaga Trail hike, when I realized I'd left the key in my truck. Sooo, after a 13-1/2 mile hike, I got to enjoy a 9-1/2 mile road walk too! Luckily I had plenty of daylight left, but barely enough water! And yeah – blisters! Ever see a marathon runner who collapses just after crossing the finish line? That's exactly how I felt when I finally made it to the truck!) Since much of the main FLT as well as the branch trails go through State Forests, I've enjoyed seeing what my counterparts in the other DEC regions were doing (and knowing that any managerial headaches were someone else's). It was also an opportunity to share some aspects of forest management with my fellow hikers, and point out some less-common trees along the way, like cucumbertree, American mountain-ash, native red pine or that elusive American chestnut.

I can't finish here without giving a huge "Thank You!" to all the organizers, group leaders, sweeps and SAG folks who've made all these hike series possible and do such a great job! You are very much appreciated!

So what's next for me? I've always been intrigued by the Bruce Trail in Canada, which starts just across the border from the Conservation Trail and goes all the way to the Bruce Peninsula on Georgian Bay. Just about as long as the main FLT! So we'll see.. But I'll probably see you in Chenango County next year, too! 🍁

Ron teaching other hikers stuff along the way. With a coring tool always handy, he could share pithy observations with others, like the tree's



Jacqui Wensich

age. By demonstrating that this bent and leaning tree was merely 70 years old, he could debunk the frequent theory that it was bent as a youngster to mark an Indian trail. It's a definite treat to be on a hike with Ron along.

End-to-End Update

Jacqui Wensich, End-to-End Coordinator

Branch Trails:

#112 Mark Valites, Hamburg (runner)
#113 Ron Abraham (#451), Belfast
#114 Melissa Cohen, Honeoye
#115 Donna Flood, Clarence
#116 Lois Justice (#290) Tonawanda
#117 Larry Telle (#301,400) 3rd BT (#61,82)
#118 Jeff Patterson (#308,419) 3rd BT (#62,83)

Main Trail:

#445 Sean Moore (continuous), Clay
#446 Lydia LePinnet, Citrus Springs, Florida
#447 Donna Dinse, Fairport
#448 Lynn Anderson, Ithaca
#449 Gail Tremblay, Van Etten
#450 Jennifer Wilson (3rd #145, #298), Cortland
#451 Ron Abraham, Belfast
#452 Chris Van Veghten, Buffalo

Updates:

Oscar M. Pachasa of Freeville and hiking partner Silas Hoffstaetter of Ithaca were able to hike 140 miles of the main trail before obligations intruded. They plan to finish next summer. Emily Flagg is currently hiking the main trail during the weekends at a fast pace. She plans to continue through the winter. Scott Geiger has less than 100 miles to finish his main trail E2E, but I hope not finishing his excellent hiking blogs. Jacqui Wensich #178: after adding up my hikes over the years and completing the last two County Hike Series, I decided to finish my second end to end main trail hike this coming year. Several new hiking friends have joined me. Currently I am at 72.7% completion.

Comments:

Gail Tremblay, Ron Abraham and Chris Van Veghten all completed their main trail hikes via the county hike series. Eight series are needed to complete the trail.

FLT Terminus:

There will be an alternative Eastern terminus on M34 for the main FLT. **No one** will be required to use the new terminus unless they wish to do so, on top of Slide Mt. at this time. If you have hiked M33 before December 31, 2019, you do not have to hike the new M34. The new terminus **will be** required for those hiking M33 after December 31st, 2019. After this date you must complete M34 to qualify for your main trail end to end award. Email me if you have concerns. The Slide Mt. trail is beautiful, challenging and interesting. You will also learn more about John Burroughs and the history of this area on this hike.

End to End Badges:

2018 End to End Badges will be mailed to your home before December 15th. (I will email a notice exactly when I mail them out.)

Bob Muller #5 provided funding for the main trail badges with Susan Yee #33, BT#13, recently augmenting the fund. The first eleven badges (1988-1992) were presented at the Fall Campout



▲ End-to-end awards being handed out at the final county hike series picnic.

Bystander

September 12, 1992.
Per Irene Szabo 1992
FLT News

2018 Totals:

11 Branch Trail E2ERS (including a first-time runner for most of the branch trails and the first time the BT hikers outnumbered the main

trail hikers) A special congratulations goes out to Larry Telle and Jeff Patterson for their third BT end to end!!

8 Main Trail E2ERS (lowest recent total since 2014 (9) including one thru hiker and one 3rd timer). Generally, the total of main trail hikers is between 15 and 20. The hot, humid weather might have been a factor, but the biggest factor was the 30 finishers in 2016 which "cleared out" many main trail hikers from the aspiring category.

Car Spotter News:

Long time car spotter, Finger Lakes Trail maintainer and original Bullthistle Club member, Claire Ders has died of cancer at the age of 68. She used to manage a B&B utilized by many hikers. She will be missed. Joe Viera #62, M13-15 will no longer be a car spotter as well as Phil Dankert #79, M16-20. Ed Sidote recruited both early on and were my car spotters in 2004.

TIPS for aspiring end-to-enders: 1. Review the End-to-End Hiking section on the FLT website. 2. Join the FLT Discussion Group (often find more spotters, specific location hints.) 3. Purchase new MAPS (remember FLT members receive a 20% discount for all purchases). Waypoints are also available. 4. Check trail conditions online frequently. 5. If you are not already a member, join the FLTC. Membership supports this wonderful trail. 6. Let me know about when you plan to complete the main/branch trails to receive the correct number. 7. Email captioned photos in full resolution as you hike and keep trail notes, so you can write your E2E article.

HIKERS-PLEASE ASK FOR THE MOST RECENT CAR SPOTTER LIST TO AVOID PROBLEMS. (Just like our maps, things change). Let me know if phone numbers/emails are incorrect or no longer working. Do not ask spotters to take long trips. Ask other spotters according to the maps listed on the car spotter list. IF you need a longer ride, join the yahoo group to see if someone is willing, if you do not have a friend or family member available.

Email: jwensich@rochester.rr.com to apply or use the form directly from the website. This includes the Branch Trails. Thanks to all car spotters!!🍁

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

Summary of Delaware County Hike Series

Donna Coon

With the steep climbs of the 2017 Ulster County behind them, County Hike series hikers started the 2018 Delaware County Series on a pleasant Saturday in April slowly ascending to hiking through a few inches of snow. No problem, unless the first group of fast moving hikers misses a turn and subsequent hiking groups follow their footprints. Thankfully, diligent leaders soon realized their misdirection and retraced their steps, turning other followers back, except for the last group that astutely remained on the correct path and avoided the lure of the footprints. Hikers were soon treated to crossing a covered bridge and enjoying the SAG wagon by the West Branch of the Delaware River. A walk through Downsville and on down the road then up and down some more hills led to hikers smiling as they approached their cars reveling in the fact that they had just hiked almost 13 miles.

May's hike was a day in the rain. Again the hike started with a steep ascent, but it was mostly downhill after that. The rain did not let up nor did the hikers. Nine and a half more miles were completed.

June provided hikers with a pleasantly warm day, a great turnout and a relatively easy hike with lovely views along the Cannonsville Reservoir.

July took hikers back to starting with a steep ascent which led to the Rock Rift Fire Tower.

It was another long rewarding hike of ups and downs. Thankfully the temperature did not get unbearably hot. The higher elevations yielded a pleasant cooling breeze.

Then there was the August hike. I would like to preface with the fact that there are some hikes that one never forgets, hikes that are used as a reference point anytime a similar situation is encountered. For example I will never forget the May 2014 Steuben County Hike, otherwise known as the "boot sucking mud hike." Fast forward to August 2018 and now we have the memorable "rapid high water stream crossings hike." Frequent heavy rains in August followed by a torrential downpour that let loose before hikers reached the top of their first steep climb turned rock hopping streams into formidable rushing water. An arduous hike was endured with group resolve and

strengthened bonds.

In the mid-90s during our first series of county hikes, there was a Mother's Day weekend hike during steady rains and dropping temperatures into the 40s. Streams ran so high that we had to form human chains to cross them, in order to keep lighter people upright, and nobody stopped to eat because we were all soaked and too cold, so we took nibbles as we slogged along. A critical

road was washed out that weekend, affecting the route 75% of the hikers would take to the next hike, but this was before the internet! We just hoped everybody could get to our meeting spot after they followed detour signs. Editor



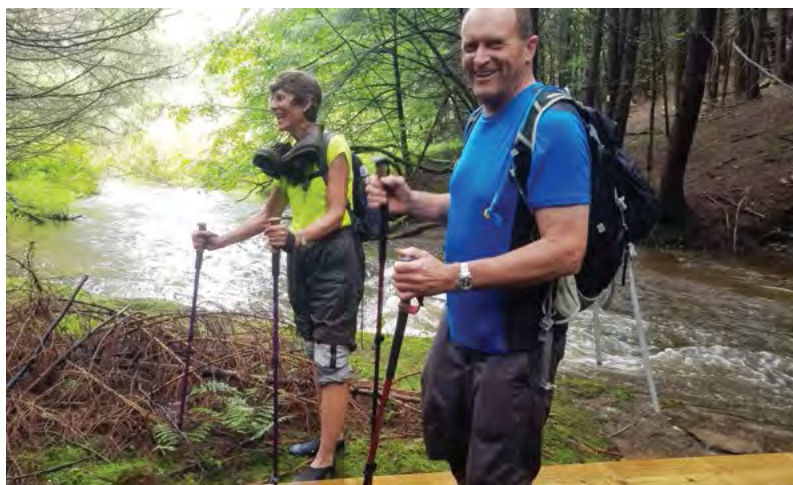
Jacqui Wensich

That's not a stream, but the trail!



Jacqui Wensich

A soaked Monahan during the August hike.



Jacqui Wensich

Some hikers were smart enough to bring stream-wading shoes for this challenging hike, while others just had to walk in soaked boots.



That difficult wet August hike.

September's hike was a joyful hike with many anticipating finishing the series and a few excitedly anticipating completing their end to end hike of the entire Finger Lakes Trail. The day ended with a picnic celebration at Oquaga Creek State Park. Not everyone joins the hike series intending to complete the series.

For many it is for the love of hiking and the camaraderie, though it should be noted that 76 people completed the series of over 63 miles on the FLT in Delaware County. Five completed their End to End hike of the FLT during the series.



Janet Meyer Bernecky

▲ *One charming covered bridge over a branch of the Delaware River.*

▼ *Yes, snow on the first hike, but it was a nice day.*

► *A lovely day for a hike through a wide meadow.*



Janet Meyer Bernecky



Jacqui Wensich

Old and new county hike patches.

Three of the five completed their End to End entirely through the County Hike Series.

Participating in a Cross County Hike Series is group hiking at its best. A treasured camaraderie develops that can turn difficult hikes into an adventure and hiking goals and dreams into a reality. 🍁



Janet Meyer Bernecky

Tales From a Trail Register

Ms. Register (Mary Zuk-Domanski)

I'm not just an old register box, I belong to Mary who is the maintainer of my section of trail on FLT map M3/CT3 in far western N.Y. My section even has a special dedication to Evert (Ev) Hittle. Ev and his wife Ethyl were founding members of the Foothills Trail Club.

My section is really three trails in one. This part was originally the Conservation Trail. After several years I was connected to and became part of the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT). My third and final designation is the North Country Trail (NCT). That happened when the National Park Service decided to make a hiking trail across the northern tier of the United States. In fact it is believed that Ev was instrumental in building my section.

Mary didn't place me on the trees until April 10, 2006. Hers was the first entry in my register, wishing everyone wonderful hiking adventures. The sun was shining and spring seemed to have finally arrived. Birds were vying for mates and the promise of woodland flowers was evident.

Mary had this section of trail long before she placed me on the tree. I know all about what happened before I got here; you see we have a telepathic communication thing going on. The former maintainer had not been out to work on this section for several years. People were constantly losing their way as the blazes were old and seemed to go in different directions. So the first order of business was to clear trail and re-blaze. Basic maintenance went on for several years with the occasional blow down being taken care of.

When I was installed things got really interesting, because now Mary could see who went by and could read their comments. It was great fun to read what people wrote.

The first entry by a hiker was on April 18, 2006, John Smith (all names have been changed to protect the innocent or otherwise) who was going to Ellicottville. He complimented me, "Very nice box — nicest I've seen." I just had to gloat.

My second was the next day. How exciting is that?!!!! I was signed by Moochie and Spinster. They got a little lost, but found their way writing, "This register box is wonderful. Thank you FLTC and Foothills Trail Club." Gosh! These compliments would go to my head if I had a head.



Marilyn Beckley

You see Mary's friend carved a hummingbird on my door. 2006 has been quite awhile ago so you can imagine that the carving is a bit worn now.

I won't tell you about all the entries, just a few. On June 9, 2006, Santa and Gnome from Naples, N.Y., came through. "Thank you! For all your hard work at trail maintenance." I really think they meant all you wonderful maintainers and not just Mary. On the same day from Syracuse ADK-ON and Bullthistle Hikers wrote, "Thanks to the stewards, wonderful job and this should be the standard for them all." I just about burst my door open with pride when they shut it.

New technology hit the trail and maps ramped up on information. I can't tell you how many times someone came by using GPS.

Beautiful weather days are mentioned and I could just feel the hikers' happiness. It's funny though, on the miserable stormy days the hikers are still happy. That must be something about having bragging rights I heard someone mention, or is it the fact that no matter what the weather, it's just plain fun to be out hiking.

Then there were the folks out scouting to lead future hikes. Many end-to-enders came by. Oh, and then there are the large group sponsored hikes. Those were really fun as I got to count all folks going by.

One day Mary had come up to check on things. I had fallen off the tree. It had been very windy. The power company had also been out and they were chopping trees down left and right. Mary came back the next day and re-hung me. A chain saw detail came and made things right again. A week later two people wrote, "Heading east, wet, cold day. But loving every minute."

This all happened in the first year I was hung.

The following spring I saw my first Scout troop come through. There were 14 members and 3 Eagle scouts. That was exciting. So much company for the first days of spring.

On May 6, 2007, a hiker wrote "finishing the FLT today to be #224." What an honor to have a finisher on my section. Once again I thought my door would burst open with pride.

Not long after my heart (I think I need to borrow the Tin Man's heart, because I don't really have a heart) sank. One of the

landowners told Mary the trail needed to be moved. Mary with two of the landowners came up with a solution for an acceptable route. It now went up and down a deep ravine with a water crossing.

Over the years that ravine had a lot of work done. It was very steep and not easy to walk (crawl) through. First there was some sidehilling, then some 4x4 stairs and eventually a real staircase was put in. Just a few years ago a bridge was put in to cross the intermittent stream. Mary found an orange blaze in the ravine. What a revelation. This meant that original trail from the late 1960s went right through that very ravine. Mary left that orange blaze as an historical reference. The FLT is blazed white so when someone came along, who will remain nameless, (we know who you are) and painted it white, Mary was livid. She always likes to tell others where she found other orange blazes on the first three maps of the CT/FLT/NCT.

One of Mary's favorite entries is from someone who was backpacking. It had been raining for several days. This poor fellow was soaking wet.. He wrote to me that he was going over to the shelter on Roszyk Hill Rd. He was going to build the biggest fire and dry out his socks. It was nice to know that someone was using that shelter as it had been a National Trails Day project.

Some hikers have a sense of humor and some have written about life experiences.

- first time back after graduating college
- even paddling uphill in rain today on the FLT is a grand place to be
- will ride bike back to the car. Amazing how three hours in the woods will relax the mind and body.
- Three hot chicks on a hot day hiking to Poverty Hill Rd.
- Should finish my 10th E2E this Friday, Aug 24. Guess who!
- Brought camera — lots of things to photograph on this section.
- ...Our honeymoon FLT trip continuous.

I still have a lot pages left, but someone left me out in the rain. I have been replaced. The last that I know is that Mary is working on another re-route. That will be a story for the next register to tell. I hope she and all the hikers are as happy out there as I was. 🍁

WANTED:

Chairperson of Publicity Committee

After many years of the Finger Lakes Trail being a mostly unknown asset of New York State and a very flat membership base, the task of managing the Finger Lakes Trail system has become very complex and difficult. The Trail must be promoted far more effectively and that can be accomplished only through publicity. We need someone with the skills of writing and advertising to lead a group of people to write press releases touting the benefits of the FLT, promoting participation in our hiking events, and promoting our outreach efforts. This person will work closely with the VP of Membership and Marketing and the managers of the various programs that are offered by the FLTC. We also need people to become a part of this committee.

Volunteer to Quinn Wright at qwright@fingerlakestrail.org or 716/826-1939.

WEST RIVER SHORELINE TRAIL

Story and Photos by Donna Flood

The ribbon cutting for the West River Shoreline Trail, which goes along the Niagara River eight miles from Beaver Island State Park to Buckhorn State Park, was held Tuesday, October 22. Members of the State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the N.Y. Power Authority, Congressman Brian Higgins, Assemblyman Angel Morinello, and Grand Island Supervisor, Nathan McMurray, were there.

Nathan McMurray spoke at the dedication and stated that the funding refurbished overlooks over the Niagara River and provides year round access to the shoreline while closing a significant gap in the Niagara River Greenway Shoreline Trail. This section is part of the Conservation Trail Map CT12. Funding for the project was provided by a \$1.6 million federal grant as well as \$900,000 from the Power Authority through the Niagara River Greenway Commission.

The trail is a greener alternative that continues the progress opening up access to the western N.Y. waterfront. This is a great recreation feature that adds to the quality of life for Grand Island residents and beyond.

Nathan McMurray, Supervisor for the Town of Grand Island, with Claudia Lawler, president of Foothills Trail Club, and Shari Senefelder are pictured below.



Trail Topics: Trail Management Notes

By Vice President of Trail Management...if we had one

May I make one more impassioned plea for someone to volunteer for this job? It really isn't overwhelming anymore, since so many of the jobs have been farmed out to others. Scott Brooks summarizes the trail census reports from all maintainers each year, Steve Catherman tends our relations with agency people from State Parks and the DEC, Lynda Rummel has added statewide training to her job jar along with administering the Trail Conditions Site online, and running several annual trail meetings, and Dave Tuttle keeps the statewide list of trail maintainers updated. So the primary need for a VP of Trail Management is to stay aware of the whole maintenance system, make sure new caretakers are in place everywhere, a job usually handled by Regional Trail Coordinators, write this quarterly column, and attend board meetings. It is NOT a hard job any more! Please contact Quinn Wright and make his day: qwright@fingerlakestrail.org Editor

Your friends and volunteers who tend the trail went to two regional meetings on Saturdays in early November for their biennial trail maintainer meetings, this year in the central and eastern areas, in Virgil one week and Bainbridge the next. Turnout was good, and it was especially gratifying in Virgil to have several fairly new maintainers attend with good questions. While we want club trail chairs to attend, we also passionately want NEW people there because they will, of course, have questions! Lynda Rummel organizes the agenda and handles a lot of the topics, with topical assistance from Mike Schlicht, Director of Crews and Construction, and old maintainer Irene Szabo. Irene remembers how long it took her to figure out the right way to handle lots of tasks, before we had useful training meetings, so these sessions attempt to steepen the learning curve.

News from along the trail:

Brand new sponsor Bill Rogers had just finished tidying his new section of the trail south of Whiskey Bridge on Map M6 along the Genesee River when he broke his hip. He thinks he'll be fine, but the trials never end, do they? The Cobb property, owned by the FLTC on Map M4 east of Ellicottville, finally has good news to report. Kristi Nomm and Pete Marcov have taken over that piece of trail. One session of working with them convinced this prior sponsor there that the place is in good hands, since they are younger than many of us and energetic.

However, there is sad news about the previous sponsor on the Cobb property, Chris Files, who was rather suddenly attacked by cancer two years ago. He underwent a lot of treatment, but succumbed this past season, just before he was scheduled to retire. Not fair, of course. His wife actually THANKED

the Finger Lakes Trail for giving Chris so much fun during his couple years of working on the trail, and of course we thank him, too.

Tom Bryden, Trail Chair for Chenango County's Bullthistle Hiking Club, shared this report. Long time trail and lean-to maintainers, Art and Sharron Sandberg, have decided to give up their maintenance position. A tragic accident which caused paralysis to their daughter and Art's health problems have made this necessary. They travel regularly to the Pittsburgh area to help their daughter and just don't have the time and energy to maintain Pharsalia Woods as they have for years. We'll miss their high quality work, but are pleased they'll continue to be active hikers and club members. Pete Stapleton and Colleen Townsend, our other "energizer couple," will take on this section and lean-to care, I'm sure with a continuing touch of TLC from Art and Sharron. M-23, Stewart Rd. to TT#9, including Pharsalia Woods Lean-to and the Sidote Bench, will be added to the Stapleton/Townsend huge list of trail care sections. A likely lean-to name change will soon be announced. I'm sure you can imagine what it will be.

To slightly relieve the work load of Pete and Colleen, we have new maintainers for one of the sections they had cared for. On Map M-24, from the entrance/offices of Bowman Lake State Park to Preston Rd. (2.1 mi.), David and Sarah Francis of Norwich will be the new maintainers. 🍁

THANKS TO OUR TRAIL LANDOWNERS

Please accept the appreciation of the Board of Managers of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference and hundreds of hikers for your continuing permission to route the path through your property. Even if your trail's caretaker didn't say so directly yet this year, know that we all are grateful for the privilege of enjoying your back woods, streams, and fields. On behalf of all hikers and FLTC members, we acknowledge that, without your generosity, we would simply never have a continuous trail across upstate New York.

If you would like a copy of our trail map in your property's neighborhood, please ask the FLTC Service Center: info@fingerlakestrail.org or 585/658-9320.

Also, the trail is CLOSED on private land on the first Monday in February, just to reassure you that we do not establish a permanent right-of-way on your land by walking there every single day of the year.

Trail Topics: Map Updates

Greg Farnham, Director of Mapping

Maps updated since the last issue include M06, M07, M09 (twice), M10, M12, M14, M16, M18, M19, M26, M27, M28, M29, B3 (twice), CT7, CT8 (twice), L1, and L2. The reasons for changes may be found on the Trail Conditions page.

In 2012 I volunteered to begin helping the FLTC. I had been enjoying the FLT for years. Intrigued by some of the articles I found in the Finger Lakes Trail News quarterly magazine, I joined as a life member. Later on I decided that I could do something to help secure the trail that I enjoyed, and keep getting the magazine with the wonderfully written articles about railroad days gone by and witty, humorous lectures on relevant science.

Shortly after being elected to the BOM in 2012, I volunteered to take over the mapping function. I had long been a gadget guy and enjoyed hiking with my GPS device, so the need for someone to take over keeping the maps up to date was a perfect match. My enjoyment of working to ensure that our maps accurately reflect the trail as it is blazed on the ground continues, even four years after moving to the Arizona desert. Although I don't get to hike the trail, other volunteers send me their field data electronically and with Jo Taylor's help and counsel, I get to experience the trail vicariously while feeling like I am making a contribution.

The feedback I do get is manifested in the compliments we get about our maps, and the lack of complaints or errors in them. This enriches the volunteer experience I am having, because I feel like the time I spend is worthwhile. I've recently been studying Lao Tsu's Tao Te Ching, where I read "through selfless action fulfillment is attained." I was looking there for an authoritative and unambiguous list of central New York road names, but found this instead. I began wondering, if I attain fulfillment through keeping maps up to date, then I've attained something, and the action is not selfless. This conundrum sort of reminded me of Zeno's paradox, developed about the same time as the Tao.

Seriously, I began to feel very grateful that I had stumbled on this volunteer opportunity that gives me a great sense of achievement. I offer this thought for your consideration. When you volunteer to help with something that you consider a worthwhile venture, you are subject to attaining fulfillment. You may spend a lot of time accomplishing nothing, but if you are doing something you enjoy, like spending time on the trail, it can lead to opportunities to help some-

one else. In my case, I began with no intention of accomplishing anything other than helping with the maps. And yet fulfillment occurs each time we publish a better map that reflects the actual blazing on the ground.

So if you enjoy the trail, or the *Finger Lakes Trail News*, try volunteering to help out in some way. It can be anything you enjoy. Working on any of the many projects helps keep the FLTC viable. You can sign up to sponsor your favorite section of the trail, or to call your elected representatives to advocate for the needs of the trail, or to call other members and remind them to renew, or to approach landowners about giving an ease-



Kellie A. Roman

Greg hiking on South Mountain, Phoenix

ment to the FLTC so we don't lose the trail, to help stuff envelopes for mailings, or staff tables at the State Fair, or even hike with a GPS device and email the data to us. (Stuffing and staffing are always in high demand.) You don't have to do this "forever." Even if you end up helping for only the next 50 years or so, you will have done something wonderful for others. You can't help but feel fulfilled by that! 🍁



Lao Tsu's Tao Te Ching, 2200 years old

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Trail Topics: "Little Postcards from the Woods"

Lynda Rummel, VP for Trail Quality

One of the many things that got Elizabeth Wild excited about giving the FLTC a Trail Access Easement across their property atop Gannett Hill (on the west side of Canandaigua Lake) was knowing that the Passport rubbing station would be there permanently, as well. When Liz and her husband, Bob, were the trail maintainers for the segment of the Bristol Hills Branch (BHB) that begins in Ontario County Park and runs south to County Route 33 (FLTC Map B1), Liz would marvel at how many trail users signed in the register book tucked inside the Passport mailbox. She was even more amazed at the messages they left. A few years back, she carefully wrote down about a quarter of the messages in the book, leaving out those that were brief or repetitious and saving those that seemed to "capture the essence of how much people get out of their experiences on the trail." She typed up those messages and sent them to me. The messages cover 2 ½ years on the trail segment between the Jump-Off (Look Out) in Ontario County Park down Gannett Hill to CR 33 below.

At the time, this was an exceptionally important thing for Liz to do. We were confronted with mountain bike riders taking over the BHB within Ontario County Park, from where they both entered and exited the Wild's property, as well as the University of Rochester's observatory grounds and the private lands south of the park's boundary. The messages left in the register box showed how important it was to hikers to have just foot-travelers on the trail. We believe these messages helped make the case to the park administration and the Genesee Regional Off-road Cyclists that mountain bike riders just don't *need* to ride the ~1 mile-long segment of foot trail that's within the park on top of the ~16 miles of trail on which mountain bikes are permitted. As a result, while mountain bike trails crisscross the FLT and trail blazing and signage still need to be improved, for the most part mountain bikers do not ride the lengths in between crossings. In addition, to help assure that bikers do not ride on the private lands, we built narrow dodge-ways that prevent bike riders from passing through, so now, only foot-travelers can get to the FLTC's Beaver Pond Lean-to. (The Beaver Pond Lean-to is surrounded by private lands; so, if you go, be sure it's not during the Hunting Closure period of Oct. 1 – Dec. 9.)

This particular segment of the BHB and its Passport hike is extremely popular with residents and visitors alike. In the early fall, BHB Regional Trail Coordinator, Donna Noteware, and I hiked the trail through Ontario County Park, to see how things were going. At the register box within the park, with its register book in hand, Donna stopped at one of the most recent entries and read it aloud to me: "Bike broke. Had to hike. Got to see the tree tops!" We burst out laughing. What a wonderful, succinct summary of why we hike, snowshoe or cross-country ski when we go into the woods, and why we want a skinny back-country trail that's dedicated to foot travel only. Gosh, it's how you get to see and hear what's around you! Look up, listen for, and see birds, as well as tree tops. Look down for animal tracks and observe the day's dirt recording of the travels of Father Fox, Sir Squirrel, Old

Man Opposum, and Ms. Mouse, unobliterated by tire ruts! It's not surprising that so often, the FLT feels like a precious sanctuary, in the midst of the machinery and hectic busyness of modern life. For many of the register comments that Liz sent to me, please see below. The messages will make you smile.

Entries from a Wegmans Passport Register Book -- Two and a Half Years on the Gannett Hill Segment

Captured by Elizabeth Wild

Editor's Note: The Central Wegman's Passport Booklet has just been updated and reprinted! The Western, Central, and Eastern Passport booklets will soon be available at participating Wegmans stores (go to the customer service desk to get a copy) and at other locations, such as Chambers of Commerce, where possible.

"Happy Thanksgiving! A beautiful day to give thanks. And no hunters!....We need snow! Coming back w/snowshoes in December....So quiet and peaceful. No fracking here. Just tics (sic) and deer. Much better....Leaves crunching underfoot, trees creaking in the wind, noisy woodpecker pecking the tree. Namastee....T & H. Locals livin' the life....T & B [in heart] celebrating an awesome 10 years of marriage!Quiet, wonderful solitude – working off the holiday treats....Nowhere else skiable but here! And it's great!....28 degrees. Trace of snow. FLT – not too shabby....Coming from Fairbanks, Alaska. This is a great trail system and very different flora and fauna from what I am used to. It's great to see trail systems available to the public like this. Keep up the good work....Beautiful trail. Can't wait to come back this summer and see the difference....Life doesn't get any better....It's dark. We're going in to check the new lean-to....Checked out the lean-to. Waited out the storm there. Well done. Beautiful day. "Holy Crap!" It's cold and snowy. Great times!....Hiked from Naples. My feet hurt. I'm not



Lynda Rummel

Liz Wild in front of the amazing vegetable garden she and her husband, Bob planted annually, atop Gannett Hill.

made for this....Am I too late for the mastodons? I thought there would be mastodons. Both of us did. Well, the sun still works anyway. We haven't screwed that up yet....Enjoying the quiet and foggy backdrop to the woods. Great day for photography....

Spring morning. 32 temp will warm to 50. Father and son sharing a morning enjoyable hike....Our baby is 7 months on her first Finger Lakes Trail hike....Please keep this park. It's the best....I love America....Two young people in love doing what they love best. Spending time together and hiking through the wilderness alone....Trying to run the trail. Boy am I out of shape! Great place. Drink it in!...Hiked in memory of a dear friend EO today. Beautiful, crisp day, full of sunshine and peace. RIP, E....We are so lucky to have a peaceful, glorious park and trail. Feelin' blessed!...Park all to myself! Happy Spring!...M, B, and P hiking on a beautiful spring day. We love Wegmans! Perfect!...Hiking FLT on a Geocaching trek. Went to dam site and back. Beauty of a day....Soon Colorado bound. Wanted to see Upstate one last time....Where's the Olive Bar?...Love Wegmans Passport Program to incentivize healthy lifestyle....Awesome – we had a lot of fun and got tire....Towhee, hermit thrush, red-eyed vireo, ovenbird, robin....Hot and deerflies out. Otherwise all good....12 young nature writers en route to the Gell Center from Gannett Hill....'Twas so wonderful yesterday, decided to walk again today. What a wonderful trail!...Our 40th anniversary hike!...God Bless America! Hiking this trail since 1981....Sunrise was a song of praise. This is a great trail. I'm from Penfield.... *Ambulamus hodie ut oriamur cras. Dominus Vobiscum*.... Visit for the east coast – lovely walk in the woods! Thank you for keeping it beautiful....Grape fest and pie and hike in the woods! Wonderful!...54 degrees drizzle. Thanks for the HELPFUL BLAZES, FLT!...I love the Finger Lakes Trail....Cool, cloudy, windy....Day off school. Had to hike. Great job on the lean-to. No storm....Nice black dog last seen on his way toward the Beaver Pond....Skipping school! Great day! YAHOOOOO!!!!.... Just out looking for Santa. No luck so far, but it is a great day. Fun for a hike – stress relief....This is my fourth time here in the last two weeks. But couldn't sign in for lack of a pen. Happy Trails, Everybody!...3 ft of snow. Running out of food....First

time in Finger Lakes. It is snowing, still a lot of snow on the trail. No tourists around. We're the only ones on the trail. How nice! Be well, people....Spending our 9th anniversary on the trail. Nice sunny day....Woodpeckers hard at work....M's birthday (70) ouch!...Yay for random mailboxes!...Council of Reformed Charities representing California, Colorado, Michigan, and N.Y. Blessing!...A group from London, Ontario. We are all happy to be here. Keep the trail going. We are also members of the Bruce Trail. Come and pay us a visit....So many nice strangers on this trail....Great morning for a trail run. Thanks to all soldiers current & past for their sacrifices....[outline of leaf]...Happy Father's Day! The sun emerged after a rainy day....Off the road and into the woods....Starting the branch trails of the FLT. Our 21st anniversary tomorrow. Great way to kick off the celebration weekend!...Troop 30 hiked the FLT for 5 miles. Go Troop 30!... We are hungry and thirsty....Great specimens of chicken-of-the-woods and black trumpet mushrooms. Fun hike!...Somewhat like the lovely trails in East Tennessee. Great time....Amazing hike with amazing boyfriend....Beautiful and getting mature (forest, that is)....Just what I needed....Out exploring on a solo hike. Can't believe how amazing the colors are!...A birthday walk, kickin' leaves, 34 years and this will never get old!...First time on the trail and I'll be back!...Beaver dam freshly repaired, lots of beaver tracks in the snow – neat!...Very nice people on the trail. No wind – so quiet and calm....It's been 23 years and it is the place where very little has changed besides the mailbox!... Ten mile run. . Thank you for grooming the path....Loving the freedom and peace in nature. Such a free and giving special place....Great hike, good incentive, Wegmans! Get more people off their butts....Another fifteen miler! Love it here....Best trail around....Can't wait to spend another weekend at the awesome lean-to near Beaver Pond. Amazing trail!"🍁

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MARTY HOWDEN GETS NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL AWARD

Every chapter, affiliate, and partner of the North Country Trail Association is enabled to hand out one award each year, to one of their own who sure deserves it, but didn't get a national award. Our Recognitions Committee was unanimous in choosing to honor Marty Howden this year, for his many years of service in several areas. A retired state park manager, Marty is now our Regional Trail Coordinator covering the Main Trail from the Genesee River west to the junction with the Conservation Trail, a long section covered entirely by individual sponsors, with no big clubs. So Marty approves any map changes, and works to fill sponsor openings and train new caretakers.

Marty also administers all of our chain sawyer training program, and is trained to give crews safety programs before they go to work.



Irene Szabo

Trail Topics: Alley Cat Proposals and a Volunteer Vacation

Mike Schlicht, Director of Crews & Construction

It will be a busy year on the trail for the 2019 Alley Cat season. Alley Cats (Allegany to the Catskills) are our special projects for which volunteers gather for up to a week to work on special trail needs, whether carving switchbacks or building facilities. There were more proposals than could be accommodated for next year and several projects are already on the list for 2020. The following are the list of projects sent to the board for approval.

The Little Rock City and Bucks Brook lean-tos are part of the International Trail Symposium that takes place next April in Syracuse. The bases of both lean-tos and the frame of the modified post and beam will be built in Virgil to serve as our display at the Symposium. This will be a "mini" Alley Cat which would not be possible without the generous assistance of Mike Tenkate, who will be hosting the builds in early April 2019.

M3: Little Rock City Lean-to

The project manager is Dave Potzler and a site for the lean-to has already been approved by the DEC. The lean-to will honor Wally Wood and Mable James, two trail pioneers who made the FLTC trail system possible.

M22: Bucks Brook Lean-To

The lean-to was just approved by the DEC to be built in Bucks Brook State Forest.

M1: Allegany State Park Lean-to Deconstruction and Roof Replacement

There are two very old lean-tos in Allegany State Park that predate the three lean-tos currently used for overnight hikers. These two have been on our radar for removal for several years and previous plans were to encourage an Eagle Scout candidate to work with the Allegany State Park personnel, the FLTC and other potential parties to facilitate their removal. While we had some interest by Eagle Scout candidates in this project, the time has come to get the job done. Allegany State Park personnel are in favor of their removal. The roof of the Stoney Brook lean-to between roads ASP1 and ASP3 will also be replaced during the Alley Cat.

M12: Bridge Reconstruction

The bridge near the Pleasant Valley Trail head (Urbana) built in 2001 will be rebuilt using the existing telephone poles, but new decking and rails will be installed. I met with trail steward Bob Plaskov and landowner Scott Kolodziejczak in September and both are very enthusiastic about completing these repairs and have volunteered to perform the work. Volunteers will still be needed to assist Bob and Scott. The old wood will be saved and used to create water bars on the blue Letchworth access trails off River Road.

M13: South Bradford State Forest Switchbacks

This South Bradford Alley Cat was postponed in 2018 but will involve a series of switchbacks to be built between Dennis and Monterey Roads.

M18: Coddington Road Trail Reroutes

The scope of this year's Durfee Hill Alley Cat was more than

could be accommodated with the time available for it and another section of trail nearby needs some hard work building switchbacks off Coddington Road. The DEC approved the trail that will be used as a hunting season bypass. This past September, Dave Priester, Dave Newman, Roger Hopkins and I walked the upper part of the hill from Coddington road to map out and flag the route for switchbacks. The lower part of the hill was obscured by tree crowns from recent logging that made a route assessment difficult but switchbacks will also be created there to alleviate a steep logging hill climb from the road.

O1: Trail Improvement project and Hemlock Lean-to Repairs

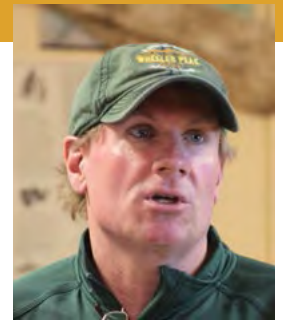
Much of the work for this Alley Cat will consist of trail improvement activities such as benching and drainage work along with the installation of about 50 ft. of puncheon to allow safe passage over water prone trail. The roof of the Hemlock lean-to will also be replaced with new rafters and a metal roof.

What is a volunteer vacation?

So what is a volunteer vacation? There are several organizations like the American Hiking Society (AHS) and the Sierra Club that offer service trips assisting organizations with recruitment of volunteers to facilitate work on hiking trails around the country. One of the Alley Cat proposals I received was to have a crew clear the 90 miles of main trail in the Catskills. Instead of delaying this activity to 2020, I proposed to the board that we host a volunteer vacation and recruit volunteers to come to the Catskills and assist FLTC personnel in the removal of downed trees and the work of trail widening. The AHS has just approved our proposal, so the volunteer vacation will take place May 19th-25th. Over the years I have participated in 8-10 AHS trips and always enjoyed them. Volunteers will be camping at the Little Pond and/or Oquaga campgrounds. A decision will be made in early spring to see if one or both campgrounds will be necessary once the trail has been assessed for the sections most in need of attention.

While this is not an official Alley Cat, I will need volunteers to assist with various activities to make this a successful endeavor. In the AHS application, I specified that the nearest airport for pickup would be Binghamton where we have more members who may be willing to pick up folks and drive them to the campground. In addition, I will need to borrow coolers for food and a cooking stove, pots and pans for the crew to make their meals for the week. Finally, I'll need several certified sawyers each day to help cut up fallen trees for volunteers to remove. I will be serving as the crew leader for the volunteers, purchasing food for the crew, assisting in menus and being the on-site FLTC representative for the week. 🍁

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Irene Szabo

Trail Topics: Trail Preservation Report

David Newman

In the last *FLT News* we reported that the trail eastbound from the junction of Heisey Road and Eastman Hill Road (Tompkins County, Map M18) was now part of Danby State Forest. Continuing east from that parcel, the Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT) has borrowed funds from us and purchased a parcel connecting down to Coddington Road. We've come to agreement with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on the preferred route for a trail down this parcel and are finalizing the necessary easement map and language for the easement that FLLT will grant to FLTC, after which DEC will purchase the property from FLLT and add it to Danby State Forest. Target date: before the State budget year ends March 31.

What's with the down? The challenge is that any way you study the map, there is a 500 foot drop from Eastman Hill down to Coddington Road, over a distance of 1000 feet "as the crow flies." With the help of Dan Little at DEC, we identified a route for the trail following nicely graded and well drained logging roads about half way down... and then, it becomes a 60 degree slope! Steeper than your basement stairs but not quite as steep as the pull down ladder to the attic. Mike Schlicht, Director of Crews and Construction, David Priester and Roger Hopkins from the local Cayuga Trails Club and I scaled the hill this fall, GPS unit and flagging tape in hand, to lay out where an Alley Cat 2019 project will build the necessary sidecut trail, with a couple sections of wooden steps.

Just to the east a couple miles is the White Church Road property that we've also reported on. This is the property we, FLTC, purchased, subdivided, sold off the buildings, and are holding 61 acres for NYSDEC to purchase and add to Shindagin Hollow State

Forest. NYSDEC has completed the appraisal of the property and made us a preliminary offer to purchase it. We have accepted that offer and now we await NYSDEC's "formal" legal documents. In the meantime, Cayuga Trails Club has rerouted the trail to a preferred location on the property, after DEC review, and when we do finally "close" the deal with DEC, we will formally retain an easement right to the trail. Tentatively this sale should also close by March 31.

As you can see, protecting the trail by purchasing key links is complicated, slow, and ties up our limited Trail Preservation funds. It is much more straightforward when one of our landowners is in a position to grant us an easement, as over 100 have already done. We'd love to have that discussion with any other landowners who are interested. 🍁



Michael "Bodhi" Rogers

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New FLT Members

Joe Andrews	Liverpool
Jim Armstrong	Penfield
Colin Bailey	Scio
Colleen Clarke	Bergen
Stuart Clees	Hamburg
Lou Clemente	Ontario
Ross Creagan	Ithaca
Jason Cronin	Honeoye Falls
Makoto Endo	Ithaca
Peter Erickson	Rochester
Robin Fox	Warwick
David Fry	Albany
Amanda & Tracey Gumtow	Beaver Dams
Pete Hagmire	Henrietta
Yusuf Harper	Norwich
Jim Klinedinst	Etters, Pennsylvania

George Krueger
Matthew Maloney
Barbara Pickering
Tom Prisloe
Randi Quackenbush
Francis Rees
Tracy Rericha
Dan Seiflein
Dan Spencer
David Tanner
John Underhill
Harmke Van Dijk
Lindsey Viltrakis
Thomas Whalen
Thomas Whipple
Colleen Wolpert
Davis Woodruff

Scopio Center
Bradford
Elmira
Trumansburg
Trumansburg
Hudson
W Henrietta
E Otto
Canandaigua
Cortland
Rochester
Ithaca
Jenkitown, Pennsylvania
E Haven, Connecticut
Brockport
Apalachin
Manlius

Volunteer at International Trails Symposium 2019!

At the On Center in Syracuse on April 27 – May 1, 2019

Calling all volunteers! If you can help a little or a lot, we have lots of opportunities for volunteers.


Volunteer Opportunities:

The following is an overview of volunteer opportunities available. View a more detailed list of descriptions and dates/times of volunteer needs. Use this link for more detail and to volunteer: <https://www.americantrails.org/symposium/volunteer-at-its-2019>

- Auctioneer (Trails Rock Party)
- Auctions
- AV Helper
- Bag Stuffer
- Emerging Leaders Driver/Tour Guide
- Exhibit Hall Setup/Breakdown
- Floaters
- Mobile Workshops
- Registration Assistant
- Room Hosts
- Symposium Breakdown
- Ticket Takers
- Trails Rock Party

Benefits:

1. Free T-Shirt with Symposium logo and “Trail Boss” written on back.
2. Free attendee bag with lots of goodies and trail swag!
3. Free ticket to the Trails Rock Party at the Museum of Science and Technology (includes meal, no-host bar, live band, and live auction) (Monday, April 28, 2019 from 7pm-11pm)
4. Free attendance to concurrent sessions (on day(s) volunteered).
5. Free admission to the exhibit hall to see latest technologies and advancements in trails.
6. Complimentary volunteer refreshment/snack area.
7. Learn about trails around the country and make new friends!

SUPPORT THE NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL AND GET A FREE MEMBERSHIP	
<p>For first time supporters of the North Country Trail we have a special program. Make a gift of \$20 or more to the North Country Trail Association and you will automatically receive full member benefits for one year. Benefits include a subscription to the full color <i>North Star</i> magazine, discounts in the NCTA Trail Shop, email updates about special events on the trail in your area and more. You can also join a local NCTA chapter if you wish and receive updates about their activities.</p>  <p>To make your donation, please complete this form and send it with a check for \$20 or more to: North Country Trail Association 229 East Main Street Lowell, MI 49331</p> <p>You can also join online at: northcountrytrail.org</p>	<p>Name(s) of New Member(s) _____</p> <p>Address Line 1 _____</p> <p>Address Line 2 _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p>Phone (____) _____ Email _____</p> <p>Please Choose a Chapter Affiliation if You Wish (Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chapter Name _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assign Me to My Closest Chapter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member-at-Large (Not Affiliated with a Chapter)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Make Me Paperless! Send Correspondence and Magazine to Email Address</p> <p>Comments _____</p>

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Boy Scouts on the Finger Lakes Trail

Bryce Kolpien, Troop Historian

Photos by Cynthia Rosplock, Scoutmaster

On Sunday, April 15th, a group of six Boy Scouts from Troop 61 and three adults met at the trailhead on West Hill outside Corning. They then drove to a section of the Finger Lakes Trail to work for five hours on improving the quality of the trail. The age of the scouts ranged from 11 to 15 years old. They used tools to help redefine the path which included cutting the grass and branches that were near the path that could possibly affect hikers on the trail. The crew removed many logs from the path and even took care of a bridge that was unsafe for hikers. The logs that the small bridge was made out of were very slippery and were starting to rot. They removed the logs and put them on the side of the trail. The scouts were doing this hard work in the cold and rain, so it was not easily completed. The group from Troop 61 did "a good deed" by greatly improving a hiking trail within the Finger Lakes Region. Hikers can now easily and safely walk the trail section thanks to their efforts. Troop 61 maintains part of the trail on the Crystal Hills Branch Trail, map CH1.

To prepare for the maintenance, Pat Monahan, President of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, visited a troop meeting on March 28th. He talked about and demonstrated the tools that the troop would use and talked about the overall trail system.

On a separate occasion, Troop 61 held a backpacking trip on June 23rd on the Finger Lakes Trail. The members going on the trip were split into two groups, based on prior experience. The less experienced crew hiked five miles the first day and one the following day. An eleven-year-old scout shares his experience, "I got the packing list from my mom and was excited to pack my own bag." The troop members attending the trip gathered early in the morning at Grace United Methodist Church where the troop holds its weekly meeting. The youngest scout needed help packing his bag to replace the items appropriately to reduce chance of injury while hiking. A scout remembers at the beginning of the hike, "We were told to walk through a cornfield and follow the trail. As we hiked, we saw many good places to possibly camp, pointing them out as we passed. I saw many squirrels and a dead mouse along the way."

There were two adults and three scouts within this section of the troop on the backpacking trip. "We had peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with gummies and that was about a mile and a half into the hike," a scout remembers. After hiking an additional mile and a half after lunch, the less experienced crew reunited with the other half of the crew. Together, they hiked to the campsite around the Moss Hill lean-to and set up camp for the night. Some scouts decided to set up hammocks while other set up tents. Dinner was cooked on a camping stove and they had different freeze-dried meals. After dinner the crew played frisbee, played music, and worked on advancement requirements until having a campfire after the sunset. The eleven-year-old remembers a story told during the evening campfire called "the diamond doorknob."



▲ Pat Monahan showing troop members trail work tools they can use during maintenance.



◀ Campout at Moss Hill lean-to.

The eleven-year-old scout said he started his next day with a bag of gummies. The crew took down camp after waking up and prepared to hike the final mile out to the vehicles. The eleven-year-old scout exclaimed, "I learned that a scout is always hungry, and that I should pack more food for the next trip!" The scout remarked that he would gladly attend a hike on the Finger Lakes Trail again. 🍁

A Naturalist's View

Story and Pictures by D. Randy Weidner

Approaching another cold and dark season, hikers of the Finger Lakes Trail can decide to venture out only during favorable conditions, or gear up and go out into whatever Old Man Winter throws at them. This is not a luxury afforded the creatures of the natural world. They need to devise protective strategies to survive these inclement conditions. Animals have adapted behaviors such as retreating to dens, hibernating, or drastically altering their activities to survive. Most plants, lacking the mobility of animals, hunker in place by going dormant, or exist as seeds until conditions improve. A few hardy ones, like conifers and some mosses, soldier through. Most fungi, protected in their subterranean or woody habitats, probably slow their metabolism due to restricted resources, and do not fruit. But one group of fungi, the lichens, among the toughest organisms in all the natural world, are mostly there, unchanged in winter, waiting to be seen and appreciated.

Before going further, some might object to my referring to lichens as fungi. Almost everyone has learned that lichens are classical symbionts, two distinct organisms, a fungus and an alga, living



Bioluminescent Dust Lichen (Lepraria incana), a crustose lichen on bark, glows white in UV light.



Concentric Boulder Lichen, (Porpidia crustulata), a crustose lichen on rock.

together in a mutually beneficial arrangement, neither able to exist alone. This mutualism is based on the ability of the fungal partner to provide a physical place for the alga to live, protected from dehydration and environmental extremes, as well as to absorb essential nutrients from the substrate on which it grows, nutrients which the fungus shares with the alga. The alga provides the energy for itself and the fungus in the form of sugars derived from photosynthesis. All this is accurate, as far as it goes, but recent DNA analysis of some lichens surprisingly revealed a third organism, a separate fungus, living with the other two partners. Most lichens' main fungal partners are Ascomycetes, a major phylum in the Kingdom Fungi, but this other fungus was a Basidiomycete, a member of an entirely different fungal phylum! What role these different fungi play in the mutualism is not clear, but anatomically, the ascomycete typically surrounds the alga, while the basidiomycete is on the lichen surface. How widespread this arrangement is

among lichens is yet to be determined. This third partner might also explain why biologists have been unsuccessful at trying to construct a lichen artificially out of only previously identified ascomycete and algal components.

When lichens' fungal and algal partners are separated and weighed, the typical result is that a lichen is 95% fungus. This has led some mycologists to suspect that the lichen organism is basically a fungus. Most of these fungi are from 13 of the 43 major groups (orders) of Ascomycetes. But these lichen-associated fungi (mycobionts) are special. Mycobionts just might be fungi that have taken up farming algae for their own benefit, much like termite colonies farm fungi. Those favoring that view insist the fungus controls the alga to such an extent that it could completely consume the algal partner under the right conditions. Furthermore, the reproductive structures of lichens are the same structures as those of their fungal partner alone. Fungal reproduction involves formation and release of spores, which need to fall on a suitable substrate, meet and unite, a situation made more problematic by virtue of several mating types, not just simply being male and female. Then to produce a lichen, this mating would need to encounter and incorporate the proper alga, a seemingly impossible likelihood. But lichens also, and possibly exclusively, reproduce vegetatively, by forming fragile structures containing both the alga and the fungi, which are easily broken off and carried to favorable substrates by the elements or by animals. So this whole classifying problem is difficult. Perhaps the best claim to lichens as fungi is that they are mostly studied by mycologists.

The algae referred to above are more properly termed photobionts, the partner that performs photosynthesis. There are many known photobionts including representatives of 25 genera of green algae, a few golden algae, one brown alga, and 12 genera of blue-green algae, this last group more properly referred to as Cyanobacteria. Cyanobacteria are ancient organisms, responsible for transforming

Earth's atmosphere into an oxygen-rich mixture. Lichens may well have been essential for life to colonize land. The earliest lichen fossils date to the Ediacaran, 570 million years ago. The earliest land plants, appearing 70 - 170 million years later, had no roots for absorbing nor any vascular structures for transporting surface nutrients, and likely relied on fungal partners for a function much like that provided by fungi of modern lichens. If such arrangements existed, there surely were true lichens as well. One of the lichens' essential ecosystem roles is eroding rocky surfaces with their unique, harsh, organic acids, freeing essential nutrients like calcium, nitrogen and especially phosphorus. So making the claim that lichens are among the toughest of living things has long and serious support.

Modern lichens inhabit a variety of substrates including solid rock, soil, bark, wood, dead vegetation, leaves, man-made structures, and even animals. There are over 14,000 lichen species identified world-wide, and likely many more to be discovered. While you are hiking the Finger Lakes Trail, most lichens encountered will be on rocks, soil, logs, and the bark of trees. Growth forms are often separated into crustose (fine, granular forms with indistinct structures even when viewed through a hand lens), foliose (bearing a broad, flat, leaf-like structure, the thallus, often decorated along the edges and surface by tiny appendages best appreciated by a hand lens), squamulose (a form intermediate between crustose and foliose, appearing as larger granules or plaques), and fruticose (with upright growing or downward hanging thalli). Lichens display a wide variety of colors. Crustose lichens in particular may be brilliant red, yellow, or orange. Other lichens are black, brown, pink, gray, or some shade of green. Often the greenest ones harbor a green alga, while those that are greenish-gray have a cyanobacterial photobiont. Some lichens are biofluorescent under UV light. And finally, certain lichens can be very susceptible to air pollution, and thus are bio-indicators of healthy environments.

If you wish to go beyond the simple appreciation of their unique forms and actually attach an accurate name to the lichens you see, be prepared to put in significant time and effort. You need to note the substrate, the growth form, and the characteristics of



British Soldiers (Cladonia cristatella), the red-topped fruticose lichen growing on soil with moss, and in the foreground, Ladder Lichen (Cladonia cervicornis ssp. verticillata), looking like a tiny, tiered dessert tray.

those tiny appendages on the thalli. As with most biological fields, there is a whole vocabulary of technical diagnostic terms to learn for describing lichen anatomical structures. For lichens you might encounter along the Finger Lakes Trail, the best reference is *Lichens of North America* by Brodo, Sharnoff, and Sharnoff. Not by any stretch a field guide, this 800-page book measures 11 ¼ by 9 ¾ inches and is 2 ¼ inches thick, weighing almost 9 lbs. On the bright side, studying lichens is a natural history pursuit you can pursue all year long, so Happy Winter Hiking and keep an eye out for those lichens. You'll be likin' what you find! 🍁



Probably Smooth Axil-bristle Lichen (*Myelocroa galbina*), a foliose lichen on bark. There are many similar bark lichens.



Smooth Rock Tripe (Umbilicaria mammulata), a large foliose lichen on rock, with other crustose lichens.

Catskill "Lark in the Park" / Rock Rift Fire Tower Hike

Story and Photos by Larry Blumberg

The Catskill "Lark in the Park" is an annual celebration of the Catskill Mountain region of New York and all of the recreational opportunities it offers. The celebration is a collaborative effort among the Catskill Mountain Club, the NY/NJ Trail Conference, the NY DEC, and a few other such organizations.

On an overcast, foggy Saturday, October 6, the Finger Lakes Trail Conference participated in the celebration by sponsoring a hiking event, a seven-mile long Rock Rift Fire Tower loop hike on FLT Map M28, in Delaware County, near the Cannonsville Reservoir.

This hike offers something for everyone, from a steep climb of around 1000 feet up to the Fire Tower to an extended walk with spectacular hillside views along the reservoir's shoreline. The loop is made by starting at the FLT crossing of NY Rte 10 at the NY Rte 268 bridge and heading west on the FLT to climb up to the tower. After descending down the other side of the mountain, the FLT meets a blue-blazed spur trail which returns you back to the start of the hike.

At the present time, the Fire Tower is unfortunately closed for climbing, and since it is "in the trees" there are no views available from the base of it. But the steel structure looks to be in good condition; we hope the stairs will soon be rebuilt and the tower re-opened! Per the Catskill Mountain Club's website, it was built in 1934 by the CCC and in service until 1987. 🍁



▲ A highway sign marking a trail crossing.



▲ Justine Hudock of the Triple Cities Hiking Club approaches an arrow along the trail.

► A red eft, a frequent inhabitant of the forest floor in the fall.



◄ A DEP disk. The DEP is the N.Y. City agency that manages the Catskill reservoirs for the City water supply, and the forested lands around them.



A view from the edge of the reservoir.



Rock Rift Tower from below.

Bridge Rescue

Story and Photos by Larry Blumberg

Due to one or more of the severe rainstorms experienced this summer and fall, a wooden bridge over Newton Brook on FLT Map M26 west of Bainbridge, N. Y., was washed off its foundation. Fortunately it had been cabled to a nearby tree so it was found not far away from its home. So, on a chilly October day, with the stream once again swollen following yet another overnight rainfall, several folks from the Triple Cities Hiking Club “rescued” the bridge and placed it back on its foundation.

And then finished their hike soaking wet!



Regina Losinger

Regina Losinger

An Unusual Pair of Wonderful Donors

Irene Szabo

Roger and Whitney Bagnall are two longtime members who live in New York City, which is part of the reason I noticed their names several decades ago when I saw their annual generosity on our donor lists. Even better, in recent years they have sent donations to the Finger Lakes Trail often more like \$10,000 at a time! By now, Quinn Wright, Dave Newman, and I have talked to them, trying to understand their geographically unusual generosity. Please be inspired yourselves by their thinking.

She is originally from Rochester, they have spent time on our Lake Ontario, and they have a country house near Sidney in Delaware County, so they do have an upstate point of view. They've walked a little bit on the FLT around Norwich and Downsville, especially when Ed Sidote was car spotting for people, but most of their walking is in England and France, with their wonderful public right-of-way customs, a notion very

FLT is one of the trails with more private land than most, so they're rooting for us...

foreign to Americans. When the Sidote fund was announced, with the purpose of protecting the trail, they were most excited. Roger said, "The FLTC is our best opportunity to support walking in a part of the state that we're much attached to."

So their impetus to donate is for the longterm future of walking trails in upstate N.Y. and the environment, because they believe that most hikers are also environmentalists. We feel very fortunate that they have chosen us for their several donations.

They are both newly retired, she from the law library at Columbia, and he from teaching ancient languages and history at NYU and Columbia. Both of them continue personal projects of research and history. Ironically most of their walking is in N.Y. City! However, even when they are doing long distances in, say, England, they do day hikes only. In an email with Dave Newman, Roger once said, "I detest camping!" The older I get, the more I agree with him, so this gave me a big smile.

Roger and Whitney, we thank you! 🍁

WANTED: Vice President of Trail Maintenance

After many years Steve Catherman has stepped down from this critical position. We are still looking for his replacement three years later. The major elements of the job have been distributed to four other people, so the time necessary to perform the responsibilities is much less than when Steve held the job. This position is quite likely the most critical within the FLTC organization and it is extremely important that someone step up to fill the job. There are four Board of Manager meetings, March, May, June, and September that occur around the State; in addition, there is a weekend Board of Managers' retreat in November that culminates with the fifth Board meeting on Sunday morning. Below are the position expectations.

1. Supervises all trail segment adoptions by sponsors, ensuring 100% coverage of the trail, including administration through Regional Trail Coordinators. Assures appropriate and adequate response to trail conditions by following up with Regional Coordinators first and providing assistance to them as needed.
2. Oversees the person responsible for relationships with public agencies and partners.

3. Assures that trail management Regional Coordinators, directors and Vice Presidents are informed about trail changes.
4. Oversees the person who is responsible for keeping the FLTC Service Center up to date with trail sponsor and landowner changes
5. Oversees the person responsible for collecting and reporting all FLTC volunteer hours
6. Coordinates efforts to move trail off roads.
7. Provides quarterly information for the FLT News trail article as appropriate.
8. Recommends to the Board members eligible for Class I membership on the basis of trail sponsorship.
9. Coordinates funding needs with Director of Crews and Construction.
10. Participates as a member of the Trail Management Team.
11. Attends Board meetings as a voting member.

Volunteer to Quinn Wright at qwright@fingerlakestrail.org or 716/826-1939.

Spring Weekend Teaser - Bradford, Pennsylvania

Claudia Lawler

The Spring Weekend for 2019 will be on June 7, 8, and 9 at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, Pennsylvania, hosted by the Foothills Trail Club. The campus offers a unique opportunity for hikers will be close to Allegheny State Park (Map M1) Finger Lakes Trail in New York and the North Country Trail in Penna., as well as a variety of new hiking experiences such as Allegheny National Forest, and the Marilla Springs Trail system in and around campus.

We will be hiking the Tracy Ridge Loop, the Johnny Cake Trail, the Morrison Loop, Jakes Rocks, the Rim Trail, Marilla Reservoir, White Pine Trail and other trails in the Allegheny Forest and near the Allegheny Reservoir. A bonus for us is that the mountain laurel is in bloom in the spring. Long and short hikes are planned in the mature forests as well as a bike hike around Allegheny State Park. Kayak and canoe treks are in planning stages.

Bradford has a long history in the oil industry; the oil can was invented in Bradford and an oil museum is nearby. Also the Zippo museum and the Kinzua Skywalk are close for afternoon exploration after hikes. There is also the Main St. Mercantile with 70 vendors under one roof for those interested in shopping.

The campus accommodations are suites for four people with a small kitchen between two bedrooms with bathrooms. Linens are provided. We will dine on campus and evening events will include a speaker, campfire, and games in the student union. RV accommodations are available on campus with electricity but no water. There will be access to showers and bathrooms nearby. Also nearby are hotels, a bed & breakfast and RV campgrounds. Alcohol consumption is not allowed in the student dining facilities but is allowed in the dorms.

Save the dates now. Full registration and program materials will be in our next issue, expected in your hands mid-March. 🍁



Chris Zachary

Woods and creek are on the Minister Creek Trail.

www.FingerLakesTrail.org



Chris Zachary

This area is Little Rock City on steroids.



University of Pittsburgh, Bradford Campus

▼ *The McDowell Community Trail that passes behind campus and goes along the Tunungwant Creek.*

► *The bronze mascot, a panther.*



University of Pittsburgh, Bradford Campus

SIGN UP FOR NEXT COUNTY HIKE

Each year the FLT leads a series of hikes along the Finger Lakes Trail named after the county you are mainly hiking through. Each series continues where the previous series ended. In eight years all of the Main FLT is covered.

Join us in 2019 for the Chenango Cross County Hike Series. Hike seventy five miles on the Finger Lakes Trail enjoying rolling hills, and serene forests with stone fences.

Hikes will be the third Saturday of the month starting in April and ending in September. The dates are April 20th, May 18th, June 15th, July 20th, August 17th, and September 21.

Registration and more detailed information for the 2019 County Hike Series will be on line **AFTER FEBRUARY 1st** at FingerLakesTrail.org under the heading "What's Happening" hiking programs/ cross county hike series. There will also be an announcement in the next issue of this magazine, but you won't receive that until mid-March

CHAINSAW TRAINING

Mandatory training for chain sawyers working anywhere on the FLT will be offered next May over two weekends, May 4-5 or May 18-19. Lodging will be available in the Hammondsport Scout House, and training work will be in the Birdseye Hollow State Forest, southeast of Hammondsport. For details or to sign up, contact coordinator Marty Howden, howser51@yahoo.com or 585/567-8589 home, 585/330-1872 cell.

BOWMAN LAKE STATE PARK HIKE

Story and Photos by Larry Blumberg

On a wet and rainy October day, the Triple Cities Hiking Club hiked the various trails at Bowman Lake State Park on FLT Map M24 (Chenango County), including the blue-blazed Kapok Ski Trail. Ready to face the elements, Kathy Kellogg, Karen Goodman, and Susan Blumberg exhibit their finest raingear. One of the FLT Passport hikes is found on this section of trail, and old stone walls and foundations are found here as well, like in many of New York's state forests.



VOLUNTEER POSITION: 2020 CORTLAND COUNTY HIKE SERIES COORDINATOR

The County Hike Series Coordinator works with a small team making sure every aspect of the series runs smoothly, providing an opportunity for over 100 hikers to complete a section of the trail (usually a County) hiking once a month April - September. This includes a celebration after the last hike where those completing the series receive a patch.

Organizational and interpersonal skills a must. Knowledge of the Finger Lakes Trail in Cortland County very helpful. Not familiar with the County Hike Series program? That's O.K. since we are offering free registration to the 2019 Chenango County Hike series for the person who commits to the 2020 Cortland County Coordinator Position. This will provide an opportunity to learn more about the County Hike Series.

For more information or if you are interested please contact Donna Coon at coledonnarn@yahoo.com

Not quite ready to be coordinator but want to be a part of the 2020 team? Please contact Donna Coon at coledonnarn@yahoo.com or Larry Blumberg at lblumberg@stny.rr.com for further information. We are looking especially for a person who is very familiar with the trail in Cortland County, someone who has experience working with the DEC, anyone who is willing to set up the busses, someone to be in charge of the SAG wagon, and someone to run the County Hike Series Google Group.

THE NEW BRESLIN BRIDGE

Tom Bryden

The newly dubbed “Breslin Bridge” was the most recent work project of the Chenango County area Bullthistle Hiking Club. Located just west of Tower Rd. on Map M24, it replaces a sagging, unsafe structure. Thanks go to the efforts of a dozen- plus Bullthistlers, and a friendly non-member volunteer. We built the new 10 foot structure, a 10 foot walkway to the bridge, and three eight foot puncheons, with approximately 50 volunteer hours in physical work. Special thanks to Pete Stapleton and Colleen Townsend for help in planning and prep work. BHC members Dave and Sarah Francis kindly hosted a cook-out for workers after the first half-day session. A second two hour session a few days later finished up the bridge and surfaced the puncheons with shingles to fight slippery wood. Larry Chesebro and Mike Fuller also cut three trees on the section to help maintain Rich Breslin’s pristine section.

Our esteemed longtime maintainer, Rich Breslin, takes special pride in this section, as he was appointed to it by Ed Sidote, when Ed could no longer physically maintain it himself. A great admirer of “Mr.FLT” Rich has done him a great honor with his trail maintenance for many years. It was a natural choice to name it “Breslin Bridge,” as he now joins his good friend, the famous Warren “Trail Dawg” Johnsen, in having fine new spans honoring them. One slight drawback: Rich has informed us that the recent notoriety will cause him to have to leave the witness protection program. In case of his impending demise we thank him for his work. Socialization at the Balsam Inn followed the work sessions.



Peg Fuller

Breslin Bridge - Pete Stapleton back to photographer, Mike Fuller chain saw, Larry Chesbro hands in pockets, John Nesbitt blue rain parka.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2019 WALLY WOOD AWARD

The Finger Lakes Trail accords its highest honor to one person or pair of people who have contributed to the trail as a whole well above the norm for a long period of time, whether as trail workers, administrative volunteers, hike leaders, event organizers, advocacy volunteers, or outreach specialists, and that award is named for our founder, Wallace Wood. The FLT Recognitions Committee (Mary Zuk Domanski, Steph Spittal, Ron Navik, Donna Coon, Anna Keeton, and Chair Irene Szabo) solicits members’ nominations as soon as possible in order that we might bestow this award at the spring weekend.

Please help us honor a special deserving volunteer. Send written nominations with explanation for your choice to Irene Szabo, treeweenie@aol.com, 7639 Swamp Rd., Bergen 14416. Deadline 31 December 2018.

CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

Dave Newman, VP of Trail Preservation

Want to donate to the FingerLakes Trail Conference, and you’re age 70½ or older? Consider a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). It’s a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian payable to a qualified charity, which counts toward your required minimum distribution (MRD) for the year, up to \$100,000. Donations made using the QCD method are not included in your gross income (thus, they are not subject to State or Federal taxes) and do not count against the limits on deductions for charitable contributions. There can be significant tax saving advantages to you, but the rules are complex. Your IRA custodian can provide more detail; here’s the link to Fidelity: <https://www.fidelity.com/building-savings/learn-about-iras/required-minimum-distributions/qcds>

2019 FALL WEEKEND

Save the date: 2019 fall weekend will be September 20-22, 2019, in Norwich (Chenango County). The Bullthistle Hiking Club will be hosting the weekend (with help from many others).

The venue (Fred's Inn) is known for its fantastic buffet meals. The weekend will also include the grand finale of the county hike series which is also in Chenango County in 2019. There will be a limited number of guest rooms onsite and a discount will be offered to event attendees.

We are asking for volunteers to help lead hikes for the event. Please contact Peg Fuller at 315-653-7345 or peg379@gmail.com if you would like to help. We will have hikes of various lengths.

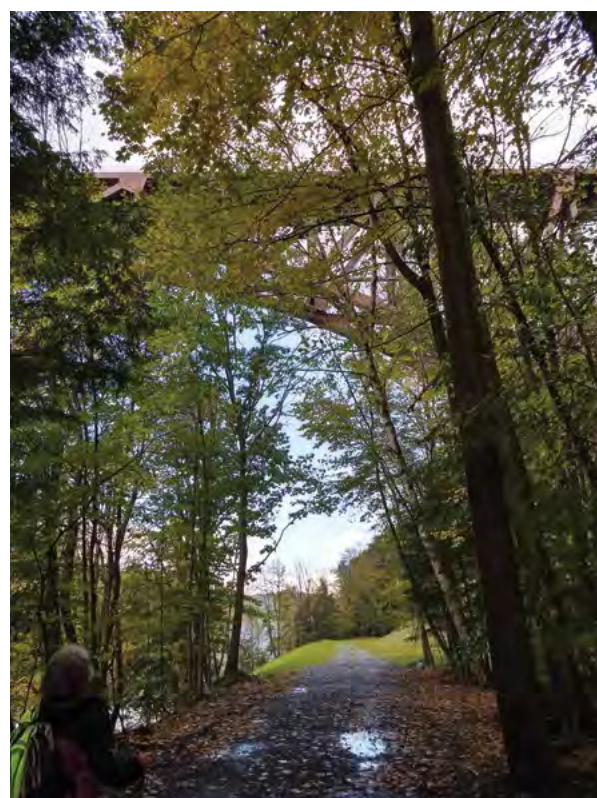
The next issue of the FLT News will have many more exciting details. This is a weekend you don't want to miss!



PASSAGES

Bullthistle Hiking Club Loses Claire Ders

In yet another infuriating irony, very active outdoors person Claire Ders recently died of cancer at 68. A longtime resident of South Otselic in Chenango County, she managed a bed and breakfast for thirteen years, where many hikers stayed over the years. She was a longtime member of the Finger Lakes Trail and the Bullthistle Hiking Club and volunteered on the trail. Contributions are requested to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca 14850.



Jo Taylor

Jo Taylor and Sharon Galbraith walked in October under the new beautiful arch of the railroad bridge over Letchworth gorge, now that our trail is open again.



Anna Keeton

Michael "Bodhi" Rogers and Karen Serbonich show their Nature Valley granola bars on the Letchworth Trail, where they are walking on the old railbed of the Pennsylvania Railroad, next to remnants of the Genesee Valley Canal. Nature Valley donated hundreds of bars to us, so they will be showing up frequently on hikes.



Send **address changes** to:

Finger Lakes Trail Conference
6111 Visitor Center Rd.
Mt. Morris, NY 14510
or FLTinfo@FingerLakesTrail.org

ERV MARKERT HIKE 9/29

It was a perfect hiking day yesterday for the FLT hike hosted by TCHC, to honor Erv Markert, without whom the FLT might not be all it is today. We had nineteen total hikers, 10 in the long hike group led by Tim Sweeney, who did 11.5 miles from Getter Hill to Route 8, and 9 in my group which did 6 miles on an out and back from Getter Hill to a lookout point over farm fields. Really beautiful section of trail with many surprisingly dry sections and some wet but not super muddy, a relief. Cool temperatures and lack of biting bugs made it a Hiking Nirvana, along with great company of course!

During one of our two breaks at the lovely Getter Hill Lean-to, my group learned more about Erv, including how he and others flew in a small plane above New York to scout out the route for the FLT. He was instrumental in his work as Trails Chair for 20 years, in adding several hundred miles to the trail.

Thanks everyone for coming out to honor Erv and enjoy a great hike. Some of us convened at the Masonville General Store afterwards to gaze at their wonderful array of local arts and crafts and enjoy a beverage, in the company of the store proprietor who wanted to hear all about our time in the woods, stating she works all the time and experiences things through others who are visiting! Nice lady.

And BTW, I'm happy to report that volunteers have stepped up to lead the FLT Winter Hike (from Onondaga Chapter of ADK) and Spring Hike (from Foothills club). Thank you!

Kristin Schafer
Member, TCHC and FLTC, and
FLT Named Hikes Coordinator

This report pertains to the longer hike version of the Erv Markert hike.

Ten hikers spent Saturday, September 29th hiking FLT Map M27 from Getter Hill Rd to Rt 8.

Hike specifics:

Weather – Cool and overcast until mid-afternoon at which point the sun started to come out.

Trails – Well maintained, but wet with standing and running water along with a few mud pits which provided the hikers with wet and muddy feet.

Bugs – None!

Lean-tos – Two Lean-tos were visited. These are the Getter Hill lean-to and the Cold Spring lean-to. This last lean-to has a sawdust issue which one hiker suggested could be the result of termites or powder post beetle.

Trail registers – Two, one of which has a door that needs to be oiled.

Beaver dams – One beaver dam was encountered. Since I was leading the group I stopped but within seconds Bruce C. simply stepped around me and then walked across the beaver dam. Thanks Bruce for testing the dam out!

Overall a nice hike although soggy and wet for a good portion of the trail.

Tim Sweeney

FLT NAMED HIKE EVENT

Saturday, January 19, 2019

2019 Howard Beye Winter Hike

FLT Map - Map O1 - ADK Onondaga Chapter

Hike Leaders:

Sigi Schwinge sigischwinge@aol.com (preferred) 315-437-6906

Mike Ogden mogden317@gmail.com, 315-418-0083

Hike Descriptions:

We'll start the hike at Shackham Pond and walk/snowshoe 4.5 miles east to West Keeney/Bardeen Rd. through mixed forest. There are short ups and downs, a few creek crossings, and we finish in a long gentle downhill. The hike requires a shuttle. A boot hike takes about 2.5 hrs., snowshoe longer. Bring food/snacks and water.

Optional for E2E branch trail hikers:

After the hike Sigi and Mike can spot you for a 1.5 mile road walk (paved and plowed) to Highland Forest.

Meeting Time:

9:45 am on Bardeen Rd. at the corner of West Keeney Rd. to shuttle cars and hikers to Shackham Pond. Please be on time so we can arrange the shuttle.

Directions to Meeting Place:

Rt. 81, Tully exit, drive 7-8 miles east on Rt. 80 to Fabius, turn right on Keeney Rd. and drive south about 2 miles. Bardeen is on the left.



Amanda Guntow



Answers to the Summer 2018 “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 Location:



Ken Reek



Janet Myer Bernecky

Answer:

Map M18 Shindagin Shelter, south of Ithaca Photo by Janet Meyers Bernecky

From builder Bob Emerson: “On the latest “Name that Map” feature, I remember well that lean-to Alley Cat project on M18, starting 16 Aug 2004, when we replaced

the Shindagin lean-to. A huge red oak tree had fallen on the old lean-to, so we built a new one near the old site. We couldn't bear to waste all of those nice floor boards from the old lean-to, and worked them into that table behind the new lean-to, mounted on the old stump.”

Ken Reek added this fact: Why is the table behind the lean-to? The original plan was to build the lean-to facing where the table would be, but the crew decided that facing the building toward the creek was more scenic.

New Picture:



Heidi Bellinger

In Howard Beye's 2004 report: The original Shindagin Lean-to was scheduled to be replaced in 2004. This decision was helped along during the winter when a large 24-inch-diameter tree fell across the top. It surprisingly only made the lean-to a little shorter, probably helped by the compression of the rotting bottom layer of logs. Not bad for a shelter built in the early 1960s.

Also, correctly identified the location:

Crew member Bob Kremens
Adam Zawislak
Sarah Stackhouse
Barb Bailey
Eva Capobianco
Scott Brooks

Finger Lakes Trail 2019 Calendar of Events

January 19 Howard Beye Hike: see page 29.
 February 1, 2019 Deadline, *FLT News*
 March 9 Board Meeting, Mt. Morris
 March 18 Trails Advocacy Day, Albany. NYS Trail Legislative Working Group
 April 27 Wally Wood Hike
 April 28 - May 11 International Trails Symposium in Syracuse
 May 1 Deadline, *FLT News*
 May 11 Board Meeting, location TBD
 June 7-9 Spring Weekend, University of Pittsburgh, Bradford, Pa. Campus
 June 9 Board Meeting
 July 26-28 Finger Lakes Trail Days weekend in Bath
 September 22 Fall Weekend, hosted by Bullthistle Hiking Club, in conjunction with final
 Chenango County Hike

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