

Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

Spring 2023



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- * ***A Tribute to Irene Szabo***
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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 for the enjoyment and health of residents and visitors. Forever!



Irene Szabo

Finger Lakes Trail News

Volume 62 Issue Number 1

Finger Lakes Trail Service Center
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About the Cover:

North End of the Letchworth Branch Trail.
Photo By Irene Szabo.



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President's Message

Pat Monahan



Where I live, winter never really kicked in. Yes, we had a few cold days and a couple of snowstorms, but overall, it seemed like a mild winter. I will date myself by saying this, but when I was a kid they closed school when there were feet and inches of snow falling to the ground. It is not like that anymore for reasons that I don't fully understand. As my body gets older, I like the cold and snow in lesser amounts, especially if I must shovel it off the sidewalk.

It seems like in the last few months we have had a number of changes in personnel, including both volunteers and staff. I would like to let you know that Christy Post, Director of Marketing and Communications, and Michaela Aney, Director of Trail Development, have left our staff to pursue other opportunities. Many thanks to both for their contributions to the FLT. I also want to thank Irene Szabo, FLT Magazine Editor and Regional Trail Coordinator, for her service as a volunteer. These are only two of the many volunteer positions that Irene has held for the FLT over the decades. She deserves some time off and will be missed. (We know where you are!!!)

I would like to welcome Tim Holahan as Vice President of Membership and Marketing. He has been a member of the Board of Managers and now serves the Board as an officer. John Schmitt is also joining the Board as Vice President of Trail Maintenance. This is his first experience on the FLT Board. I also want to welcome Nicole Pane as the FLT Magazine Editor. The Spring edition is her first with the FLT.

We also have numerous other volunteer opportunities that are open for you to consider:

- Board of Managers Member—must have leadership skills.
- Finance Committee—requires knowledge of general accounting and budgets.
- Investment Committee—calls for an understanding of financial wealth management.
- Mapping—requires a grasp of GPS related topics.
- IT—involves understanding any aspect of IT, from our website to our database.
- County Hike series—hike leaders, sag wagon helper, assorted other tasks.
- Assorted assignments—as they occur.

The vacancies in our staff and upper-level volunteer leadership have given us an opportunity to pause and do a deep dive into our leadership model. The needs



Peg Fuller

and wants of our members and customers require that we do our best. We have done well over the past 60 years as a not-for-profit organization. We will identify what is working and what is not in order to make the necessary improvements, and to be even better. I hope you will join us in this endeavor. We can't do it without you. If you would like to volunteer for any of the opportunities above or have some questions about how you might be able to volunteer, please contact us at fltinfo@fingerlakestrail.org or call the office at (585) 658-9320.

“Go take a hike!!” 🍁

SUPPORT THE NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL AND GET A FREE MEMBERSHIP

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 *North Star* 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.

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

You can also join online at: northcountrytrail.org

The NCTA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and all donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the law. **Thank You for Your Support.**

Name(s) of New Member(s) _____

Address Line 1 _____

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City/State/Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

Please Choose a Chapter Affiliation if You Wish (Check One)

☐ Chapter Name _____

☐ Assign Me to My Closest Chapter

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☐ Make Me Paperless! Send Correspondence and Magazine to Email Address

Comments _____

A Tribute to Irene Szabo

Deb Nero



As you may know, Irene Szabo recently retired as Regional Trail Coordinator of the Letchworth Branch and as Editor of the FLT News. What you may not know is the extent of Irene's involvement with the FLTC over the last nearly 40 years and the impact that she has had on the organization. From becoming an end-to-end to being President for eleven years to winning multiple service awards, Irene has spent immeasurable hours supporting and championing the Finger Lakes Trail. Read on to learn about her time on the trail and working with the FLTC, and to read anecdotes from those who know her and have worked with her. We've also shared photos of Irene through the years: she is a hiker, hike leader, trail maintainer, board member, editor, writer, dog lover, and train buff. It's safe to say that the Finger Lakes Trail would not be what it is today without the above-and-beyond contributions of Irene.

Irene Szabo's FLTC Timeline:

1984 - Irene Szabo discovered the FLT while walking near Swain and became a member of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference.

1987 - Howard Beye asked Irene "to maintain a neglected piece of the Bristol Hills Branch." Irene started with the southernmost 7 miles on map M3; Irene also helped plan and build 8 miles of trail through Birdseye Hollow State Forest.

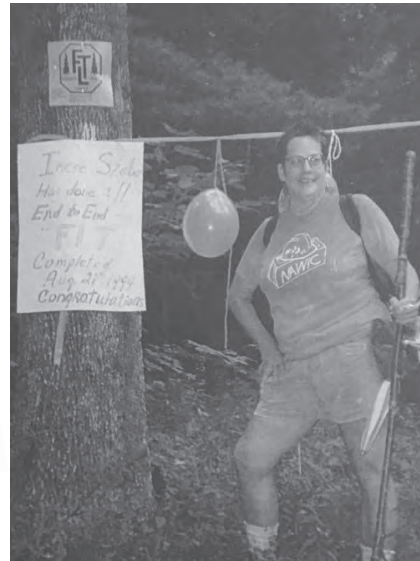
1989 – 1992 - Member of the Board of Managers.

1990 - Became a life member of the FLTC bought land in the Hammondsport area in order to build trail to close a gap.

1991 - 1994 - President of the FLTC Board of Managers, the second woman to hold this position.

1991 - Became the FLTC representative on the newly formed steering committee for the Genesee Valley Greenway.

1992 - Closing of last gap on the main FLT on the 30th anniversary of the FLT. ▼



FLT News 1994 Vol 33 #4

1994 - Irene worked with Finger Lakes Land Trust to create the template for a trail easement on her property outside of Hammondsport. This was the first trail easement on the FLT.

1994 - Completed her hike of the main FLT as End to Ender #30! She was the 7th woman to complete the FLT. ◀

1995 - Became a member of the North Country Trail Association.

1999 - Awarded the FLTC Wally Wood Distinguished Service Award.

2000 - 2006 - President of the FLTC Board of Managers, the encore performance. ◀



John Andersson

▲Board President Irene with her favorite beverage close at hand, FLTC Spring Meeting, 2001

2001 - 2006 - Member of North Country Trail Association (NCTA) Board of Directors. ▶

▶Irene on the cover of The North Star



North Star 2003 vol XXII #1 front cover, Provided by the NCTA



FLT News 2012 Vol 51 #1

2003 - Became Contributing Editor of NCTA *The North Star* magazine.

By the end of 2003 Irene was maintainer for 20.7 miles of trail on maps B3, M4 and M12! She was also the Trail Section Coordinator (Regional Trail Coordinator) for the Genesee East section of the FLT (currently M7 – M11).

2004 - Awarded the NCTA Distinguished Service Award. ▼



Aaron Phipps

2004 - Became Associate Editor of the NCTA *North Star* magazine.

2005 - Awarded the Clar-Willis Award to Joe Dabes ▼



Jim Connors

There's that vest in color!!

2006 - Irene handed the FLTC President of the Board of Managers role to David Marsh in a fun-filled spoof on Alice in Wonderland – Irene as the Queen of Hearts. ►



Jacqui Wensich

2006 - Awarded Clar-Willis Award. ▼



Jacqui Wensich

2006 - 2009 - FLTC Board member.

2006 - 2007 - Interim Executive Director of NCTA.

2007- Became a charter member of the FLTC Forever Society.

2007 - 2021 - Editor of NCTA *The North Star* magazine.

2008 - Awarded American Hiking Society's Advocate Award at AHS National Symposium in Arkansas.

2010 - Awarded NCTA Communicator Award for her work editing and writing for the NCTA *North Star* and for promoting the NCTA in the FLT News.

2012 - Awarded the NCTA Lifetime Achievement Award. ▼



Mick Hawkins

2012 - 2023 - Editor of the FLT News.

2012 - Irene celebrates the opening of the new office at 6111 Visitor Center Rd in Mt. Morris. ▼



Lois Judd

2013 - Awarded the FLTC Howard Beye Lifetime Achievement Award.

2014/2015 - Becomes Regional Trail Coordinator (RTC) of the Letchworth Branch Trail, taking over from Ron Navik.

2023 - Retires as RTC of Letchworth Branch Trail; retires as editor of FLT News.

Tremendous thanks to:

Nicole Pane, the new editor of the FLT News, for saying yes to the whole idea and then taking the raw material and making it look amazing;

Jennifer Epps, the graphic designer of the FLT News, for finding all those photos from 2013 through present;

And Jo Taylor, editor of the FLT News from 2003 – 2012, for finding all the photos from that period.

Any errors or omissions are mine. Deb Nero.

More Contributions:

*On the steering committee for the Genesee Valley Greenway, a 90 mile trail from Rochester to Hinsdale in the Genesee River valley. 1.2 miles of this trail is concurrent with the FLT on map M6.

*A member and occasional officer of the North Country Trail Association, Irene has promoted the NCT. Currently the FLTC hosts 422 miles of the North Country National Scenic Trail, from the Pennsylvania state line to the north end of the Onondaga Branch Trail.

*Participated in the American Hiking Society's Hike the Hill in Washington, DC advocating for hiking trails in the US Congress.

*Established the annual fall retreat for the FLTC Board of Managers. ►

*Represented hiking groups on the NYS Trails Council.



John Andersson

Irene engineering the FLTC Board retreat, Jan 2004

*Between 1989 and the present Irene has written more than 200 credited articles for the FLT News. She wrote many more uncredited short pieces, notes and reminders during that same time.



Irene Szabo

Lake David at dawn on Bristol Hills Map B3 near Hammond-sport.

"TRAIL WORK IS MY FAVORITE THING." IRENE SZABO

Some of Irene's animal friends



Diesel Anne

FLT News 1996 vol 35 #1



Sharing a drink with a thirsty Mennonite buggy horse tethered at the Seneca Mills Falls access on the Outlet Trail outside Penn Yan, NY

FLT News 2003 vol 42 #4



Sandy and Pearl Szabo

Jacqui Wensich

Excerpt from an article by Werner Veit, editor of NCTA North Star Magazine, written in honor of Irene becoming the contributing editor of The North Star, 2003, vol XXII no 3:

Writers addressing The North Star, like Ernie Clute from the Rock Chapter, tend to be an amiable lot ... Ernie, like the rest of his flock ... writes a sweet and complimentary letter thanking the magazine for helping him recall his pleasant hiking memories.

It's something else to hear from Irene Szabo, the Finger Lakes Trail Conference President you often read about on this page...and for good reason. Irene never backed away from an opinion she knew she should hold or failed to wing a zinger this way when I had it coming because of a particularly dumb boner in The North Star.

Just when you're in danger of wallowing in treacle of goodwill, along comes an icy pail of water dumped unceremoniously over your inflated head. But there is one large redeeming factor in her onslaught, a quality that makes her a rare bird... she does more than just carp, she's no backseat driver... She also presents a solution, bless her.

From John Andersson, FLTC lifetime member, FLT End to Ender #101 (1999), #430 (2017):

Thanks to Irene

Irene stood out from the other FLTC heroes when I began my term on the Finger Lakes Trail Conference's Board of Managers of in the 1990's. Her clear eyes and mastery of words made me swoon. She minces no words and does not suffer fools lightly; I was on the wrong end of a terse comment when I failed to show up at my first meeting. I doubt I ever missed another.

Her vocabulary and phrasing impress me still and as hard as I try to inject as much enthusiasm and imagery into my writing as she, I fail. If she indeed retires from editing

and writing, I will miss those crisp descriptions of her impressions of people and places she describes with such success.

From Stephen Catherman, FLTC lifetime member, trail maintainer, VP of Trail Maintenance 2010-2016:

Shortly after joining the FLTC in 1987, I recall meeting several prominent Trail people at a work party in Birdseye Hollow Park to help complete the final gap in our trail system. I believe that this was my first introduction to Irene, as well as the likes of Howard Beye, Ed Sidote, and Bob Muller among others. I was impressed with the group and humbled to be in their company. Some 7 or 8 years later, as a new Sponsor of half of Bob's trail on M12, I met Irene again at a Trail Council session in Canandaigua. Now she was my boss, my Regional Trail Coordinator, and she had her hooks in me. From the start, she "gently" critiqued my work, pointing out areas that I could improve on - signs, blazes, growth, grades, etc. At first it bugged me that she was bugging me, but I knew she was regularly right and that I was learning from the best, one of the most fastidious maintainers the Trail has ever seen.

Irene began as my mentor, and over the years, we developed a friendship and mutual respect. She was always there for me when I needed help or advice, and through my position with Steuben County, I was able to assist her and the FLTC in return. She was there to support me and my boss Vince when one of our Public Works Committee members suggested that the County shouldn't be wasting their time or money on trails in our Parks. She was there to help me layout a new Park trail in Birdseye Hollow SF and slog around the pond (and marsh) in an attempt to flag a perimeter trail around it. And when Ron Navik retired, she was there to accept the RTC position for the Letchworth Branch Trail & do a training session for a group of new

maintainers attempting to fill part of the ensuing void on Maps 8 & 9.

I've thoroughly enjoyed working with you Irene and admired your skills as an editor, trainer & trail maintainer. I wish you all the best.

in learning about the forest management we were doing. Thanks to Irene for many, MANY, hours of work on the FLT over the years.

From Mary & Bill Coffin, FLTC lifetime members, past NCTA Board members, trail builders extraordinaire:

I have known Irene Szabo through the many hats she has worn for FLTC and often concurrently with NCTA. I first met Irene when she was President of FLTC and ADK-ON helped to close the main trail gap in central New York on M20 with proper pomp and circumstance. No there was no music, just a bunch of people patting each other on the back for finally completing this section. As we started to build new trail and relays according to NPS and NCTA sustainable standards, Irene and her two dogs hosted a benching workshop on her trail with Bill Menke, then NPS NCTA

From Gretchen Cicora, DEC region 8 Senior Forester, retired:

Any time I walked trail with her on State Forest she had a dog, or two, with her. A couple I specifically remember is the golden retriever that didn't know the word "drop" for dropping the stick it wanted you to throw, but if you pointed to the ground, down the stick went! Another was a smaller one (terrier maybe?) that did at least 10X the miles we did in it's looping around and back and forth as we traveled along. She was also always very interested

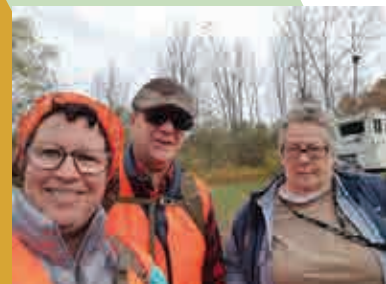
Irene and the FLT - hiker, trail builder, trail maintainer, hike leader, trail angel, etc.



On the Abbott Loop, map M17



Irene (E2E #30) and (Bob Muller E2E #5) greeting End to Enders Susan Yee (E2E #33) and Phyllis Youngmans (E2E #32)



Irene as a trail angel



Irene hiking at Spring Weekend, 2001



The back-to hike leader



Irene using a measuring wheel



Irene blazing the FLT



A piece of one of the hand annotated 'blue maps' from 1986 – notes about possible trail routes, etc.

Trail Manager. We learned about the 10% grade, how to bench without slope etc. Irene's dogs were as curious as we were to properly dig in the soil. Irene always has a canine partner or two.

Irene not only was FLTC President for a long tenure but also on the Awards Committee, FLTC Board of Managers Member, Trail Steward, Trail Landowner, Regional Trail Coordinator, *Finger Lakes Trail News* Editor, and misc. volunteer jobs behind the scenes, especially when she lived close to HQ in Mt Morris.

Recently Irene was editor for both the *North Star* and *Finger Lakes Trail News*. She has authored many articles in both magazines and is most willing to include volunteer generated articles, a characteristic of both magazines. What few know is Irene is a pretty good artist, but you may have guessed that from her excellent photography. I know from personal experience that Irene has a good eye for editing and proofreading which I always appreciate.

When Irene is not involved in trail stuff or walking her dog, she is quite a railroad buff who collects railroad history, artifacts, and photos. I believe she was even permitted to drive an old engine. In her volunteer retirement Irene will have more time to chase railroads and historic trains, engines, and cabooses.

From Joe Dabes, FLTC lifetime member, FLT End to Ender #2, #8 (1992), #113 (2000), #131 (2001), #167 (2003), #198 (2005), #235 (2007), #270 (2009), #300 (2010), #343 (2012):

As race director of the Finger Lakes Runners Club's Virgil Mountain Madness 21.1-mile Trail Race in the '90s I asked Irene to be the welcomer and starter of the race. She gave an eloquent and not too long speech about the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. The runners appreciated her brevity!

When John A-X Morris and I were working on E2E's in the western part of the state we were invited by Irene to join her in Ellicottville for food and drink. I seem to recall this was at the Ellicottville Brewery. I had one of our two golden retrievers with me, and Irene had one or both of hers. Our goldens met and I always felt a bond with Irene because of our mutual love of goldens. I recall having a very pleasant time with Irene and John there. I much appreciated Irene inviting us to join her there!

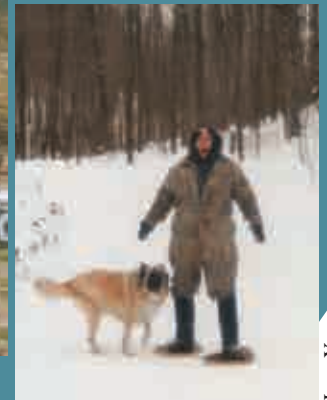
From Fran Gotsik, FLTC member, past chair of the Steering Committee for the Genesee Valley Greenway, past Executive Director of Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway:

I met Irene in 1991 when she represented the FLTC on the newly formed steering committee for the Genesee Valley Greenway. I was grateful for her presence, not only because of her knowledge of trails that helped make this new idea of a greenway seem less strange, but also the respect for her that I could detect throughout the room. When she later told me how hiking and trail work had

Irene's other trails



On the Florida Trail



On the NCT with Gummy

transformed her from a sedentary smoker, I was further impressed by this remarkable person.

Some memories include the thrill of riding in the cab with Irene expertly driving a real big train engine; clearing Greenway Lock #2 unaware of the poison ivy soon to come; Irene's love and devotion to her dogs; and her vast knowledge of trains. Her account of a ride in a private passenger car hooked to an Amtrak train is an illustration of the very eloquent, creative, and expressive way of writing and speaking that is uniquely Irene.

I will always be grateful for Irene's generous and indefatigable support and commitment to the Friends of the Greenway, FLTC, and North Country Trail. Who else could be a board member, maintain so many miles of FLTC and Greenway, and also serve as editor for three publications for so long? Only my treasured friend Irene.

From Kate Lemon, NCTA Marketing and Communications Coordinator, coordinator of the NCTA *North Star* magazine:

Irene and I began working together in 2018, when I joined the North Country Trail Association staff and was thus tasked with coordinating production of our *North Star* membership magazine. Irene was Editor at the time. I was immediately amused by her frank nature. This made working alongside her pretty straightforward, which I appreciated. Her love for this Trail Community was obvious - she pushed hard because she cared deeply for representing the North Country Trail and its people in the best way possible. We would argue via email about dangling modifiers and Oxford commas, state abbreviations and photo captions. In the end, we always seemed to find common ground and produce a quality *North Star* issue. I appreciate the guidance she provided me, and that she continues to serve on our Editorial Advisory Committee. I very much value her continued presence.

From David Marsh, FLTC lifetime member, past President Board of Managers 2006 – 2009, FLT End to Ender #161 (2003):

Some of My Memories of Irene,

I was day hiking end-to-end on the main FLT (between 2001 and 2003) 'and its branches when I began to pay more attention to the writings and contributions reported in the (typed paper duplicated in those days) *FLT News*. Irene wrote many articles about the trail in the News and also occasionally articles about her interest in trains, particularly those railroads with a historical presence near the trail. It appeared she was almost as excited about seeing trains pass by as doing trail work on the FLT. As I became more familiar with the FLTC, I learned of Irene's endless energy for trail maintenance and managing the FLTC. The FLTC organization became more intriguing to me, and my curiosity eventually got the best of me. I asked if I could attend an FLTC Board meeting to learn more about how this organization operated. While I had promised myself after retirement there would be no more Board positions in my future, Irene soon convinced me to join the FLTC Board as the VP of Finance to develop a manual of FLTC financial policies and practices. I don't think anybody else but Irene could have pulled that off. Somehow, after a couple of years, I totally lost control and became President, succeeding Irene in 2006. On the occasion, in my "President's Message," I referred to a statement made by Thomas Jefferson regarding comments made about his "replacing" Benjamin Franklin as Minister of France: "...one does not replace Franklin, one can only succeed him." And so it was with Irene.

I told Irene she was my favorite leader because she led by example. She loved trail work, maintaining sections of the Main Trail and the Bristol Branch, insisted on strict discipline in trail building and maintenance (such as the rule that a blaze must be painted carefully measuring precisely 1" by 6" using a 2" brush), and, the *FLT News* must be written with perfect grammar, always ably assisted by Jo Taylor. Irene and Howard Beye (Irene often referred to him as "Howdy"), the VP of Trails, were an established and experienced team that assured the FLT was there to stay. Wally Wood, a founder, would be so very happy. When Howard suddenly passed away, leaving the Conference with a huge void, Irene could not emotionally attend his memorial service and I delivered the eulogy. Irene's often firm personality has a sensitive, emotional side. It is important for us all to feel we have a purpose in life, and I believe the FLTC gave that to Irene, and, in return, Irene gave the FLTC many years of dedicated service. The FLTC has indeed been fortunate.

From Pat Monahan, FLTC member, FLT End to Ender #259 (2008), President of the Board of Managers 2009 – present, RTC Crystal Hills Branch Trail, trail maintainer:

Irene is a notable character in the FLT story. I've been around for about 15 years in the organization, many of those years as FLTC Board president. Irene could always provide an opinion about any topic in front of the Board. Her experiences were wide and deep over her many years with the

Irene and trains



Arlene Emocenti

In a locomotive



Tim Wilbur

In another big train!

FLT. I could always count on the historical perspective, and probably more, for any question that I asked. Irene is writing a new chapter for her life story. I am convinced that the FLT will remain part of it. I know I will still have questions for her to answer.

From John A-X. Morris, FLTC lifetime member, FLT End to Ender #163 (2003), #193 (2005), #234 (2007), #303 (2011):

My favorite memory of Irene was the introduction she gave me at the North Country Trail's annual conference in Cazenovia for my slide presentation. It was wonderfully humorous and complimentary and all I could think was, "God, I hope I live up to this!"

And after 10 years, 40 articles, and 1000 hours of work she was one of the few people who thanked me for my efforts. She is like that: always making people feel that who they are and what they have done matters.

From Deb Nero, FLTC lifetime member, FLT End to Ender #346 (2012), #386 (2015), #443 (2017), #498 (2021), Interim Executive Director 2021 – present:

Irene - thank you from the bottom of my heart! You truly love the Finger Lakes Trail and you have done a great job of supporting and encouraging the people who have made and are making the Finger Lakes Trail Conference what it is today and what it will become in the future.

From Dave Newman, FLTC member, FLT End to Ender #506 (2021), Vice President for Trail Preservation 2014 – present, trail maintainer:

I don't think that many of our maintainers rake the trail but Irene did! On her map B3 section south of Bean Station Road and around the Huckleberry Bog she wanted a clear tread, no leaves, no little sticks. So, she literally raked it! Me, if I see a branch that is already bent low and just about ready to hit me in the face and is certain to do so if there is any snow on it, I cut it. And I don't just take a little snip, under the theory that it's just going to grow heavier and droop lower by next year, I remove it. I went with Irene a few years ago on her trail and she had a conniption when I did that to a hardwood species. She wanted the least intrusive snip, even if it meant having to come back again later in the season and snip again.

Want to really get a lecture, instead of flicking a small stick to the side of the trail with your hiking poles, just step solidly on it and snap it in two! Come on, admit it, you've done that too. But I bet you didn't do it a second time when Irene was around, as she probably jumped all over you the first time. She wanted it off the trail, not just made into little pieces crunched into the trail.

Irene is amazing. In her precise approach to maintaining her section of the trail, in her precise editing of *FLT News*, in her well thought out presentations to the annual Trail Maintainer Workshops and in so many more things that she has done for the trail over the years. Thank you, Irene.

From Jo Taylor, FLTC member, FLT End to Ender #184 (2004), editor of *FLT News* 2002 - 2012, Mapping Team Coordinator 2021 – present, trail maintainer:

Irene may not know it, but she was instrumental in my introduction to the FLT. In 1996, I was looking for hiking opportunities online and stumbled on a mention of the FLT county hike series, but the series, with Irene as the coordinator, was already well underway at that point. I looked for it the next spring and soon received Irene's hike plot for the 1997 Cattaraugus series printed on deep pumpkin-orange paper. So began my history with the FLT. In 2002 I timidly raised my hand to take on the editorship of the *FLT News*. Irene, then President of the FLTC, took me under her wing. I can fairly attribute a lot of my success as News editor to her. She proposed articles and wrote many herself, advocated for an expanded and slicker magazine, and was an eagle-eyed proofreader. When she took over from me as editor after 10 years, we switched roles; I became the proofreader, and we continued our friendly sparing over grammar and punctuation. ("There is/are a number of culverts...")

Irene is definitely of the "warts and all" school when it comes to writing obituaries. In her heartfelt and personal obituary of Howard Beye in the 2008 Winter News her original submission led off with describing his appearance and concluded "He was, simply, an electrical engineer." I was uncomfortable with poking fun at his appearance,

Irene through time



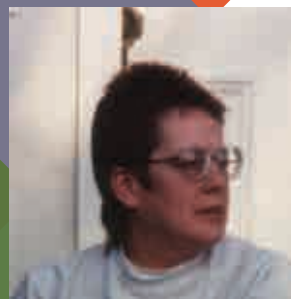
In her 1965 Cadillac convertible from late 80's

Beth Bloom



In the mid 90's

FLT News 2006 vol 45 #1



A nice headshot

FLT News 2004 vol 43 #2



Note The Vest with all the patches!

FLT News 2003 vol 42 #1



Looking down a (new, unused) loo

Tom Witt



Examining historic measuring wheels

Georgeanne Vyverberg

even affectionately, and with stereotyping engineers. Irene's response, "This is making me feel like I should write my own host of faults and failings for future use, because then that Final Article won't be mawkish, at the very least. I would start out with 'Does Not Work Well with Others' (having a grumpy day on other fronts, too; pay me no nevermind)." I haven't read the anecdotes others have submitted for this tribute, but I'll bet they prove that IRENE does not need to worry about a mawkish final article. It would not fit her at all.

From Quinn Wright, FLTC lifetime member, FLT End to Ender #245 (2008), Director of Crews and Construction 2011 - 2012, Treasurer 2012 - 2015, Executive Director 2015 - 2021:

Irascible Irene

I have many fond memories of Irene in spite of our having crossed swords in the past. Her heart and concern for the FLTC is enormous and when I reflect on our mutual encounters, I never recall any disagreement. Rather, I recall humorous, or caring, or respectful incidents such as those below:

NYS Trail Council

Irene had decided that she no longer wanted to be a part of the New York State Trails Council and I was nominated to be her replacement. She was responsible for attending her last meeting and nominating me as her replacement. It is a five hour drive to Albany and it was too much to cram a round trip and a five hour meeting into one day. So, she suggested that we share a motel room in order to save the FLTC some money. I hesitated and she said, "Don't worry, I won't rape you."

ND Corps of Engineers

When I was hiking across North Dakota two years ago, one of the people who spotted me was an engineer who worked for the Army Corps of Engineers, and he fondly remembered Irene as being a wonderful person with an amazing sense of humor and "one who loved trains!" He asked me to please say "hello."

Mount Morris

One day on a hot July day when I was done with my ED duties in the office, I decided to do an in and out walk of the Letchworth Trail of about eight miles. I foolishly brought no water (I rarely take it for a short walk). I was really drained when I was close to the Dam entrance. Pleasantly surprised I encountered Irene, and she recognized my condition. She calmly reached into her backpack and pulled out a cold Guinness and said "I think you could use this."

"Ensure" vs "Insure"

Irene and I both have English degrees and are equally confident in our writing skills. I submitted my article for the News, and she corrected my use of the word "ensure" by changing it to "insure." We had a lengthy discussion and since she was insistent that I was in error I suggested that she check the meaning in the dictionary. As irascible as she can be, Irene had no trouble calling me and letting me know that she was in error.

From Peter Wybron, FLTC member, Treasurer 1998 - 2011, RTC of Genesee East region:

I was first introduced to Irene back in April 1995 by Howard Beye. I had sent Howard a request to become a trail maintainer and he in turn sent my request to, the then, Trail Coordinator, Irene Szabo. Irene assigned me a 5.9 mile section of trail between Laine Rd and Burleson Rd on Map M-10. In November of that year, I received a typed, three-page, detailed report (on orange paper) from Irene after she had hiked my section of trail. The report started out, and I quote "Dear Pete, and here I am, in typical timely fashion, getting right back to you with your sponsor application. Derrrr." She then went on to detail things that she liked and things that needed improvements, like signs, blazes, creek, and fence crossings, just to name a few. Over the years Irene has been a great teacher, starting with that 1995 report and continuing with many trail maintenance workshops and trips to the field. Thank you, Irene.

From Joan Young, FLTC lifetime member, FLT End to Ender #370 (2014), 2x End to Ender of NCT:

I first met Irene via telephone when I was interviewing her for a former North Country Trail column featuring volunteers called "Heart and Sole." She said that she was drawn to follow "any little opening in the woods that might be a trail." I knew right then we were going to be friends! That summer, at the 2001 Butler, Pennsylvania NCTA Conference, we actually met. Astonishingly, we discovered we had both been at Senior Girl Scout Roundups, although not the same one (1962 and 1965). We each still knew our Roundup ID number by heart. She loves trees. I love herbaceous plants. We were both crazy about our dogs. Oh, and we were and are huge fans of the Finger Lakes Trail. She has become a close friend. As editor, we'll miss her tight rein on commas and split infinitives. Thank you, Irene! 🍁

"I do know I want to keep doing trail work as long as possible, since that has settled out as my very favorite thing about volunteering for the Finger Lakes Trail, right next to writing railroad articles, and I do still have a long list of projects I want to catch up with, both on the trail and along other strands, too. I'm criminally behind with rewriting "my" trail guide-books, I want to work on the trail easement projects a lot more, I want to get some of those roadwalks into the woods, and I want to get more deeply into trail worker training." Irene Szabo, FLT News vol 45 #2 Summer 2006 upon stepping down as President of the Board of Managers, take 2.

60K FLT60 at 60

Karen Ellsworth



I have a hard time ignoring challenges, and since the FLTC started first with the FLT50 challenge and then the FLT60 challenge, I have had a hard time passing these by. These challenges have been my inspiration to push myself further than I thought was possible. During Covid, I began to trail run with advice and encouragement from my trail-running son. The FLT50 challenge pushed me to do the 50 miles for 6 months, and I found that I needed to trail run these miles in order to have the time to complete them. I was hoping to try the 50K in one-day challenge the following year and thought that was a real stretch for a relative beginner trail runner - I should really say 'jogger'! But I thought that with some more training, I could probably do 50K in one day, even if most of it was spent hiking. I was looking forward to 2022.

So, when the FLT50 challenge turned into the FLT60 challenge, I was quite disappointed. The extra 10K seemed just too far out of reach. But as spring became summer and fall was nearing, I was still thinking about this 60K (37 mile) in one-day challenge. Over the summer of 2022, I didn't have a chance to trail run or do much of any long-distance running for that matter because I was now training for track & field events for Senior Games and was busy with track meets. But I could not get the idea out of my head. Another factor was that I was turning 60 in October, in the same year that the FLT was turning 60. I would never again have the chance to try the FLT60 60K challenge at 60!! This was it - now or never!

I started to make some plans and waited for the weather to cooperate. Sunday, October 23rd turned out to be a perfect fall day for a walkabout and I decided that this was my only chance to try the FLT60 60K in one day challenge! Here I go!

I parked my car at the Berry Hill Tower lot (M24) and loaded it with extra water, lunch, a headlamp, hiking poles, and a battery charger for my cell phone. I started about 7:30 am after sunup on a cloudy morning. I wore a running vest with a 2-liter bladder for water, and an orange vest for safety. I carried several energy gel packs that runners use and an extra handheld water bottle. I headed south, jogging as much as I could on the downhill and level grades, heading to Stone Quarry Road, about 11.6 miles south. After reaching Stone Quarry, I turned around and headed back to Berry Hill. As my knees grew strained, I changed my gait to a power walk gait that I found kept me on a decent pace but was easier on my body. The gait is hard to maintain on rough ground, so I mostly had a fast hike at this point. After reaching Stone Quarry, I turned around and headed back to Berry Hill.

Around mile 20, I started to become quite tired and had to slow my pace to a hike. I also realized at this point that I wouldn't make the 37 miles before dark. Fortunately, I had some alternative plans in case my pace was too slow to finish before sunset.

After a long lunch break back at my car, and a refill of my water, I did an out and back from Berry Hill to Preston and then another from Berry Hill to where the trail crosses Tower Road. At this point, it was getting too dark to be comfortable walking in the woods. The trail follows the road to the Tower so I could stay on the road.

My husband Steve drove up to check on me earlier in the day and I had him measure the distance from CR10 down Tower Hill to where the trail enters the woods. With this number and knowing how far I had come using GAIA GPS on my phone, I could calculate how many lengths of this piece of road I needed to walk to complete my 60K. The last almost 9 miles were done on the road section of Tower Hill. It was not the most exciting way to do 9 miles but this was the safest way to do it. Speaking of safety, in addition to wearing orange, carrying a cell phone with a charger, and having appropriate food and water, I also made sure that my intended path was known and had my husband check up on me. I wrote my name and time in the trail registers in case that could help track down my location if all else failed. I made sure that the last several miles put me near roads in case I needed help. I planned alternatives in case of darkness, which included doing loops near the end that allowed flexibility in plans should darkness, exhaustion, injury, or unexpected problems occur.

With only 9 miles left, I was too close to finishing to want to stop, despite the darkness. At this point, I found the hiking poles quite useful and along with the headlamp, I trekked up and back through the dark on the road. As I neared the end, Steve joined me for a couple of miles and provided some moral support (while I'm sure he was quietly questioning why anyone would do a 60K!!). It was around 9 pm when I finished and headed home for a nice long hot shower.

Despite some tiredness, I recovered quickly and wasn't very sore. I think my legs felt much worse the first time I tried a triple jump! If I had to do this again, I would definitely train for several months and do it during the summer when there is more daylight rather than finishing in the dark. It would also have been nice to do the complete 60K without a long road stretch. I didn't want to miss the opportunity of this challenge and felt that if I didn't try it on this one last fall weekend when the weather was good, I wouldn't have another chance this year. I'm glad I did this in the end, but I would not recommend doing a 60K without training!

Total miles: 37.36

Time 13 hours 25 minutes (including break time)

Pace 2.77 miles/hour 🍁

Executive Director Report

Deb Nero



UPCOMING EVENTS

By the time you receive the Spring 2023 issue of the FLT News some of these events may have occurred.

1. Trails Days

The Events Committee is planning two Trails Day events in the spring of 2023. These events will showcase the FLT and our landowners and trail maintainers. Both days will include guided hikes and a chance to meet up with others who are enthusiastic about hiking and the Finger Lakes Trail.

The first Trails Day will be held on May 13 in McDonough, NY (map M24). The lead organizer is Peg Fuller.

The second Trails Day will be held on June 10 in Ellicottville, NY (map M3) in Liberty Square, near the center of the village. Irene Szabo will present awards to 3 local landowners and trail maintainers/sponsors. The lead organizers are Ann Bayley and Deb Nero.

2. Schuyler County Hike series

The 2023 Schuyler County Hike series will consist of 5 hikes across Schuyler County on Saturdays May 20, June 17, July 15, August 19, and September 16. Registration for hiking all segments of this popular series of hikes with the main group of hikers will open in early April and be open on the FLTC website through early May. Registration for individual hikes and for the independent hiking option will remain open into June.

We thank the Famous Brands store in Watkins Glen for signing up as the first ever sponsor of the County Hike series!

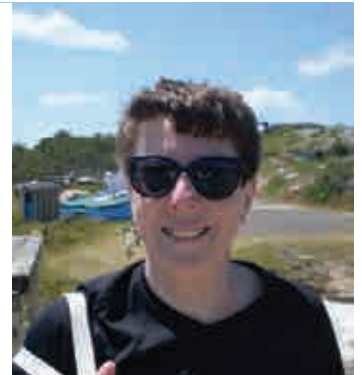
We had a total of 125 people complete the Tompkins County Hike series last year. Congratulations to everyone who completed all six hikes and received their certificate and patch, and we hope to have even more hikers complete the series in 2023!

3. Fall Weekend

The 2023 Fall Weekend Celebration will be held September 15 – 17 at the recently opened Seneca Lake Event Center at Clute Park on the southern end of Seneca Lake in Watkins Glen – right on the Finger Lakes Trail! The event will start with registration on Friday mid-day. This will be followed by hikes in the afternoon, a happy hour including a cash bar and barbeque dinner catered by Bleachers Restaurant. The evening music entertainment will be provided by Jason Payton - Fall Weekend 2022 attendees will remember his very enjoyable performance. On Saturday there will be hikes, the Annual Member Meeting in the afternoon, happy hour, dinner catered by Bleachers, and the Awards Ceremony. Sunday will have more morning hikes followed by departure. Accommodation will be on your own. A list of available hotels, motels, and campgrounds will be made available on the FLTC website shortly, and registration for the Fall Weekend Celebration will be available by mid-summer.

4. North Country Trail Association Celebration

The Finger Lakes Trail hosts 422 miles of the North Country National Scenic Trail in New York State, and the 2023 NCTA Celebration will be held in September 27 – October 1 at Forest Lake Camp in Chestertown, NY in the Adirondacks. The planning committee is hard at work arranging workshops, keynote speakers, hikes, and evening entertainment. This is a fun event attended by people involved in the entire North Country Trail - North Dakota, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Vermont.



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5. And the pre-Celebration in Ithaca

If you can't attend the Celebration in the Adirondacks, please join us for the pre-Celebration in Ithaca area and help NCTA visitors from out-of-state discover the wonderful hiking and general beauty of the Finger Lakes Trail System. This free event will be held on Sunday, September 24 and will be based in Ithaca. There will be a few guided hikes, a barbeque dinner, and information on self-guided things to do and see - waterfalls, wineries, museums, State Parks, more hiking, biking, kayaking, and enjoying the scenery of the Finger Lakes. If you would like to sign up to attend pre-Celebration (or better yet, volunteer to help) please email Deb Nero at deb.nero@fingerlakestrail.org.

GOINGS

In the few months since the last issue of the FLT News both **Christy Post**, the Director of Marketing and Communications, and **Michaela Aney**, the Director of Trail Development, have left the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. Please help me extend our deepest thanks and appreciation for all their work, enthusiasm, and dedication on behalf of the FLTC, particularly during the challenging times of the pandemic. Both Christy and Michaela added so much to the organization – new ideas, new ways of thinking, new projects, and new and improved programs. An *ad hoc* organization group has been working hard the last few months to figure out how to fill the gaps created by these departures - see below for more information on this.

A huge thank-you to **Irene Szabo** for editing the FLT News for the last 10 years! She has stepped down from (in my outsider's view) this seemingly thankless task that involves herding cats to get all the contributors to submit their articles for each issue. Please see the detailed Irene tribute elsewhere in this issue of the FLT News.

AND COMINGS

Please join me in extending warm welcomes to several new faces.

1. Nicole Pane, our new editor of the FLT News! She takes over from Irene Szabo with the Spring 2023 issue. You can reach Nicole at fltnews@fingerlakestrail.org to suggest stories, to make contributions, or to help in other ways.

2. Hillary Creedon, has volunteered to answer emails sent to the volunteer@fingerlakestrail.org email. She responds to every email, asks for a pertinent array of information, and passes the name on to the appropriate person. In most cases that is the Regional Trail Coordinator of the area where a prospective volunteer has asked to do trail or other work for the FLTC.

3. John Schmitt, a long-time hiker, member of the FLTC, and regular volunteer for Alley Cat projects has volunteered to be the next Vice President of Trail Maintenance. He was officially appointed at the Board of Managers meeting on March 11. Please reach John at john.schmitt@fingerlakestrail.org.

4. Morgan Lampman, the new Marketing and Communication Specialist. She joined the FLTC on March 8. She will fill some of the gap created by the departure of the Director of Marketing and Communications. Morgan will be working remotely from North Carolina and will be sending almost of the FLTC communications on all platforms. Please reach Morgan at morgan.lampman@fingerlakestrail.org.

PROJECTS

Spring Appeal

The fundraising and donor development group continues to work on preparing a Spring Appeal around the theme of the return of the hiking season. Please give generously when you receive our spring request - your contribution will support hiking activities and trail projects and keep the almost 1,000 miles of trails in good shape now and in the future.

This group is also working on developing a plan for putting fundraising on a more organized footing, in particular to increase support through planned giving and encouraging support of larger gifts to support the Trails.

Ad hoc Organization Group

In the last 3 months the *ad hoc* organization group developed the job description for the Marketing and Communications Specialist, posted the job description, reviewed applications, interviewed the top 3 candidates, and successfully hired the top candidate. Thanks to this group for their very focused work on this project!

The *ad hoc* organization group has also created a job description for a seasonal Trail Specialist to carry out some of the important on-trail duties for the upcoming season left vacant by Michaela Aney's departure.

The *ad hoc* organization group has also been re-examining the organization of the FLTC, focusing on succession planning, increasing membership, and recruiting and welcoming new volunteers. Later the group will update the Guide to Responsibilities and assist the Board in preparing a proper job description for the Executive Director. The Interim Executive

Director is a temporary position, and I will be stepping down from the position at the end of 2023.

Report on the Database Project

The database project evolved from the FLTC's struggles with the performance of the off-the-shelf software, and in 2019 the Board decided to contract with a computer programmer to build a custom program, which also proved to be a challenging project. In 2022 the database development group paused new developments to allow fine-tuning and debugging of the first part of the project. That has been largely completed, and new functions are now being added.

The result is that the FLTC has an amazing database of information about the Trail and the membership that will support the FLTC now and in the future. We give tremendous thanks to Chase Gregory and the oversight committee for their hard work and perseverance. 🍁

Contact: Deb Nero

fltcexecdir@fingerlakestrail.org

In Honor of
Pat Monahan's B-Day
from
Eleanor Nasser

Donna Noteware
from
Lorraine Manelis

David Priester
from
Dr. David Arkin

Harold Britol's 90th B-Day
from
Susan Rivito

Cati Coneannon
from
Thomas Matthews

Jo & RWW Taylor
from
Owen Taylor



Miles With Mark

Mark Valites, a trail runner and FLTC Trail Maintainer



The 2023 trail running race season on the FLT system has already kicked off! Details on races of distances between 3.3 and 100 miles can be found in the table below, but don't wait too long to sign up - registration for a couple is already full. We are lucky to have such a large number of miles along the FLT system; nearly half the races taking place on it offer ultra-marathon distances (> 26.2 miles)!

There have been a couple of small changes of note to some of the races this year:

- Runners registering for events they've run previously may notice that several have changed race directors but remain in the same location and offer the same distances. Have no worries though: all these races have shifted to experienced race directors.
- The *Finger Lakes Running Club* has changed the date and returned to the former location for the Two Hollows Monster Marathon and Half Marathon.
- The *Great Hill Ultra* joins *Twisted Branch* as another 100K that takes place on the FLT system. The course includes parts of B1/B2 & some adjoining, non-FLT trails.

- *Reluctant Runner Racing* is offering a unique new event this year titled the "Madness Elimination Trail" (M.E.T.) race. The race website indicates that teams must be comprised of 1 female and 1 male and shares the following about the race format:

Round 1: All 64 teams start together at 7 am and run 2 laps of a 4-mile marked course. The 24 teams with the fastest combined times after 2 laps will advance to Round 2.

Round 2: At about 9:30 (flexible based on finish times), the remaining 24 teams will start. These teams will complete 2 laps of a 3-mile marked course. The 12 teams with the fastest combined times will advance to the final round.

Final Round: Around 11 am, the final 12 teams will start. These teams will run 2 laps of the same 3-mile marked course. The team that finishes with the fastest combined time of the final 2 laps will be crowned the 2023 M.E.T. Champions!

Race	FLT Map	Distances Offered	Website	2023 Date
Frozen Branch	B3, M12	50K	https://www.twistedbranchtrail.com	2/19
Muddy Sneaker	B1	20K	https://www.roadsarepoison.com	4/22
Sehguhunda	L1, L2	Marathon/Relay	https://yellowjacketracing.com	5/20
Thom B Trail Runs	M19	8.5M/17M/Full Marathon	https://fingerlakesrunners.org	5/20
Highland Forest 1-2-3 Trail Run	O2	10M/20M/30M	https://www.syracusechargers.org	5/27
Madness Elimination Trail	O2	(Up to) 20M	https://reluctantrunnerracing.com	5/28
Ontario Summit Trail Races	B1	Half/Full Marathon	https://www.roadsarepoison.com	June. Exact date TBA.
Cayuga Trails 50	M16	50K/50M	https://www.rednewtracing.com	6/3
Lucifer's Crossing	M16	3.3M/6.6M/Half Marathon	https://www.rednewtracing.com/	6/4
Finger Lake 50s	I1	25K/50K/50M	https://fingerlakesrunners.org	6/24
Great Hill Ultra	B1/B2	100K	https://www.ironwoodadventure-works.com/	7/8
Forest Frolic	M19	7K/15K	https://fingerlakesrunners.org	7/8
Many on the Genny	L1, L2	40M	https://manyonthegenny.com	7/22
Twisted Branch	B1, B2, B3, M12	100K	https://www.twistedbranchtrail.com	8/23
Dam Good	L1	14M	https://www.roadsarepoison.com	August. Exact date TBA.
Two Hollows Monster Marathon and Half Marathon	M19	Half/Full Marathon	https://fingerlakesrunners.org	9/3
Virgil Crest Ultras	M19	50K/50M/100K/100M	https://www.happilyrunning.com	9/9
Morgan Hill Meat Grinder	O1	Half/Full Marathon, 50K, 50M	https://www.reluctantrunnerracing.com	9/30
Danby Down and Dirty	M17	10K/20K	https://fingerlakesrunners.org	10/14

Runners training for these events are reminded to practice Leave No Trace principles and remain mindful of trail conditions. Muddy spring trails make for a great reason to log some miles on road sections of the FLT.

For folks who are interested in checking out the events but not running them: non-runners are openly welcomed at these events. Races can always use help from volunteers in the form of trail work prior, serving food/water at aid stations, course marking/cleanup, pre-race packet pickup, runner timing/etc. - there's never a shortage of different types of tasks and varying levels of commitment for everyone. Volunteering is a great way to not just help runners, but also meet other FLTC members, as the FLTC frequently helps out with these races. These events are a great place to share your love of the FLT. Reach out to the volunteer coordinator or race director listed on a race's website for more details. Just seeing a runner physically and mentally beat down from a long race or complete such a large undertaking can be quite powerful, and an act as simple as handing a runner a pretzel mid-race may very well help them cross the finish line - volunteers can make a big difference!



Mark Valites

Julie Jordan (foreground) & Mailyn Washington Carignan on Canada Hill Rd (CT04), early on during Julie's Fastest Known Time (FKT) run from end to end of the Conservation Trail of 6 days 16 hours 27 minutes.



I intend to run at least one of the longer races and tend to end up running or volunteering at others. If you see me, stop and ask for a beautiful 'Run the FLT' sticker. 🍁

NCTA Celebration

Kate Lemon, North Country Trail Association



You're invited to a celebration of the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) and all those who care for it and are interested in getting involved with the trails community. The North Country Trail Association (NCTA) coordinates this annual event, Celebration, that this year will take place September 27 through October 1 in Chestertown, New York - a wonderful access point to both the Adirondack and Green Mountains. The NCNST offers a multitude of hiking experiences across its 700-mile segment in New York and 40-mile segment in Vermont. The NCTA Central New York Chapter and multiple Affiliate organizations - including the Finger Lakes Trail Conference - build, maintain, protect, and promote this National Scenic Trail in these two states. A wide variety of activities will be offered to Celebration participants, including many guided hiking opportunities, skills workshops, engaging presentations, and much more. Learn more, connect with the NCTA, and register at northcountrytrail.org/celebration. 🍁



Mary Coffin

A Naturalist's View

D. Randy Weidner



Spring at last, when hopefully you spend more time traversing our Finger Lakes Trail. Warmer temperatures and vegetation emerging from winter dormancy make experiences along the trail more inviting. Ephemeral spring wildflowers will be blooming. Phenological monitoring reveals that with climate change, many plants are breaking buds and flowering earlier than in the past. Understory herbaceous plants are proving to be even more accelerated than trees and shrubs.

Hopefully, the pollinators those spring flowers depend on will be arriving in sync with these blooms. While a few spring woodland flowers are pollinated by flies and beetles, many depend on the presence of native bees. One of the earliest emerging, and most important of these pollinator bees, is the teddy bear of the group, the bumblebee (*Bombus* sp.). This big, lumbering bee is one of the least aggressive of its tribe, content to visit flowers and move on, not bothering people. Bumblebees do have the ability to deliver repeated painful stings, but you have to be seriously bothering them to get stung.

The first bumblebees of the season you see are all females and future queens. They were mated in the fall and spent the winter hibernating in a sheltered spot. Their first order of business is to find a place to establish a colony, often in a deserted mouse nest or some other cozy spot, which they tidy up. Then it is off to find flowers, gathering nectar and pollen to take back to the nest.



Anne Keddy

Common Eastern Bumblebee

Bumblebee nests are wax cells, several of which she fills with regurgitated nectar. Pollen is deposited around these wax pots as well. When the supply is judged to be adequate, she lays her fertilized eggs and begins incubation. As spring temperatures may periodically drop to dangerous lows, the bumblebee hovers, shivers, and generates heat to keep her eggs warm enough. The newly hatched larvae are fed on nectar and pollen, growing, and eventually pupating in a silken cocoon. After adult workers emerge, the queen finally rests. A bumblebee hive rarely exceeds fifty individuals.

Despite all having the same parentage, bumblebees vary in size, depending on the quality of the food they were fed. The smaller workers usually remain at the hive, building and repairing wax cells and feeding more larvae. The larger workers leave the hive and forage for pollen and nectar. Their bigger eyes with

larger lenses allow them to forage in the dimmer light of predawn, a time of less competition with other bees. The big eyes also facilitate finding smaller flowers at a greater distance. Their larger antennae, the site of their olfactory organs, help them detect distant floral odors as well.



Anne Keddy

Perplexing Bumblebee

Unlike honey bees, whose many more workers use waggle dances to direct their sisters to food sources, foraging worker bumblebees work alone. Some repeatedly return to one or two flowers; others wander randomly their whole lives. Watch a bumblebee move through the forest and they rarely fly a bee-line to anywhere. The adaptive advantage for the colony is that some workers tap reliable food sources, but if those flowers are lost the wanderers should come back with something else. Bumblebees are known to travel over a mile from their hives while foraging.

Bumblebees have been tested in their abilities to learn flower colors. Interestingly, some colonies were up to five times faster at learning color differentiation than others. This is surprising in that one might think these fast learners would outcompete the slow learners. On closer observation, one researcher found that the fast learners were active fewer days of their short lifespan, perhaps extracting a greater energy drain in learning so quickly. So among bumblebees, there seems to be room for both hares and tortoises.

Many other bees are difficult to watch for very long as they forage, but slow-moving bumblebees offer unique opportunities. If you see one along the trail, take a brief break from your hike and



Anne Keddy

Tri-colored Bumblebee

follow the bumblebee for a while. You might be surprised to notice these largest of bees will visit small and sometimes tiny flowers. It has been discovered that some bee parasites are more readily passed to bees that visit big blooms. Bumblebees seem particularly prone to burrowing into tubular flowers. At some of the smaller blossoms, the bumblebee may suddenly vibrate

forcefully, an act referred to as “buzz pollination.” A successful foraging bumblebee is easy to notice, with large full corbiculae (pollen baskets) on her back legs, and more pollen clinging all over her hairy body.

Bumblebees utilize vision, including seeing in the ultraviolet spectrum, olfaction (smell), and one other sense to find their food. Those hairs covering their bodies serve as electrical sensing organs. As the insect flies through the air, they become positively charged, perhaps from the friction of dust and other air particles. Flowers and their parts, including attached grains of pollen, are negatively charged. As the bumblebee flies over the forest floor, she detects these floral pillars with her electric sensing and, as she gets close, pollen grains are attracted to her negatively charged body, sticking tightly to those body hairs.

There are possibly eight or more species of bumblebee you could encounter along the Finger Lakes Trail. You would need a bee guide and a close look to differentiate them, which is done by noting which segments are black, yellow, or rusty brown. Sadly, many are in trouble. One study reported an alarming 23% decline in bumblebee populations in the United States between 2008 and 2013. Four North American species are in serious decline; one is thought to be extinct. The Rusty-patched Bumblebee from the upper Midwest became the first bee to make the official U.S. Endangered Species list. It is believed that both climate change and drought-induced flower reductions are having a negative impact on bumblebee populations.

So, on your spring hikes pay attention to the wildflowers and their guests. Pause a while to watch these creatures at their work. These gentle giants among bees will do you no harm. Bend low and listen to the enchanting hum of that fuzzy black and yellow creature the old English called ‘dumbledore’, as she magically pulls pollen from little flowers. Wizardry to be sure! 🍁



Anne Keddy

Two-spotted Bumblebee

In Memory of Pam Schu

Donna Andrews
Jordan Blades
Marjorie Boone
Peggy Broderick
Sylvia Bryant
Valerie Burch
Diane Cassel
Jim Ciancaglini
Gene & Judy Clancy
Shawn Cox
David & Debra Crosby
Allison Feenaughty
Lisa Galatio
Gayle Gebhard
Elizabeth Gulacsy
Kathleen Hall (Gym Logic)
Christopher & Mary Hogan
Russell Holsopple
Loyal Order Of Moose
Robert & Marian McAllister
Jeanne McAnany
Tim & Barbara McCarthy
Patsy McCormick
Peter Mead
James & Julie Moore

John & Susan Murawski
Pam & Bill Myler
Dennis & Lynda O'Brien
Philip & Pauline Patti
Thomas Pelych
Mary Pieklo
Rosemarie Pieklo
Frederick Potter
Ryne & Celeste Raffaele
Marc & Carolyn Rawady
Timothy Reed
Jeff Ryan (Ryan Agencies)
Terry & Lisa Sanford
Eric & Beth Shults
Denise Smith
Jeanine Smith
Triple Crown Management Group
Peter Wall (St James Hospital Board
of Directors)
Calvin Weaver
Elizabeth Wheeler
Ronald Wilkins
Kathy Woughter
Stephanie Wright



David Priester

Texas Hollow, March 2023

Annual Report of Donors and Members

We are deeply grateful to the many individuals, families, businesses, clubs, and foundations who support the Finger Lakes Trail Conference through donations and membership dues. Your contributions provide critical funding for trail work and construction projects, for our trail maps and member communications, and for the small staff who work to promote and enhance the FLTC. Your gifts help to strengthen our growing trail community, and to strengthen the trail itself.

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Ways to Give

Annual Fund

Unrestricted gifts to the Annual Fund provide necessary flexible funding for the organization. Gifts to the Annual Fund support all aspects of the FLTC's operations—trail work, group hikes, training for volunteers, special programs and communications. When you make a gift to the Annual Fund, you are supporting the work we are doing right now to fulfill our mission to build, protect, enhance and promote the Finger Lakes Trail.

Gifts to Restricted Funds

The Finger Lakes Trail has several restricted funds that support specific needs within the organization. The **Sidote Stewardship Fund** is restricted for the use of trail protection and preservation projects; the **Endowment Fund** ensures the long-term viability of the organization, with earnings used for general operating costs; the **Lean-To Fund** helps us meet our goal of having a lean-to every 10-15 miles along the trail; and the **Capital Equipment Fund** is used for large equipment purchases. You can make a gift to a restricted fund using the enclosed envelope or by visiting our website.

Gifts of Stock and Planned Gifts

For information about making a gift of stock or including the Finger Lakes Trail Conference in your estate planning, please contact Christy Post: cpost@fingerlakestrail.org.

Membership

Your membership with the Finger Lakes Trail Conference is powerful way to support the organization. Membership demonstrates your commitment to protecting and enhancing the trail, helping to ensure it remains accessible and available for future generations. We offer Membership at many levels, including Individual and Family (\$40/\$60), and Sustaining Memberships: Trail Blazer (\$100), Trail Builder (\$250), Trail Guide (\$500) and Trail Patron (\$1,000). You can join or renew your membership online anytime, or make a one-time gift of \$600 for an Individual or \$900 for a Family Lifetime Membership.

FLT MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____
Address _____
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County _____ Phone (____) _____
Email _____

Make check payable to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference
Mail to 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14510 along with this form.
Annual dues (Membership year runs from April 1 to March 31. Dues paid after Dec. 31 will be applied to the next membership year.)

Pathfinder Memberships:

Youth (under 17)	\$15
Student (under 24)	\$15
Limited Income	\$30
Adult	\$40
Family	\$60
Youth Organization	\$30

Sustaining Memberships:

Trail Blazer	\$100-\$249
Trail Builder	\$250-\$499
Trail Guide	\$500-\$999
Trail Patron	\$1000 +
Lifetime (Individual)	\$600
Lifetime (Family)	\$900

Lifetime Members

Lifetime memberships demonstrate strong support for the Finger Lakes Trail, and we extend special thanks to the individuals and families who have made this commitment. Lifetime members have made a one-time gift of \$600 for individuals or \$900 for families.

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Dianne & Olin Anderson	Bill Fair	Colleen Liggett	David Sadler
John M. & Luanne Andersson	F Gregory Farnham	Richard Lightcap	Betty Schaeffer
Kevin Armstrong	Beverly Feindt	Edwin Lindskoog	Annette Schaff
Marcy Austin	Kenny Fellers	Barbara Lobb	Mary Schmelzer
Barbara Bailey	Merwyn & Frances Fenner	Michael TenKate & Caroline Madeline	John G. & Margaret Ann Schmitt
Michael Baker	Sheila Ferrari	Ernest & Heide Mahlke	Paul Schnipelsky
Joseph Baldino	John & Patricia Fey	Patricia Mangarelli	John Schroeder
Juanita Ball	Adam & Janet Finley	Peter Marks	Joan Schumaker
Bill Bancroft	Dolores Finley	David & Linda Marsh	David Schwartz
Mark Banker	Donna Flood	Kenneth & Donna Mathis	David Seese
Herbert Barber	Norman Foley	Michele McCall	Wanda Shirk
Gene & Liz Bavis	Virginia Ford	Pamela McCarrick	Mark Sleeper
Donald Beattie	Rich & Sue Freeman	Mary McKinley	Carol O. Smith
Lyman Beecher	Paul L. & Theresa V Gaeta	Charles McLellan	Timothy Snedeker
Joe & Diane Bell	James Gagnon	Chris McLellan	Mark Spezzano
Dawn Bennett	Sharon L. & William A. Galbraith	David McNitt	Stephanie Spittal
Judith & Jeffrey Bennett	Lewis & Kathleen Gersh	Kim & Terry Meacham	Eugene Staiger
Thomas Berryman	Teresa Giarrosso	Robert Meiler	Phillip Stanton
Georgiana & Eugene Binder	Gladys Gifford	Gail Merian	David Sundean
Susan Black	Mark Goldfield	Ralph & Joan Merzbach	Robert Suss
Joanna Bock	Paul & Kathy Good	Phillip & Tamira Metzger	Irene Szabo
Jon & Kathy Bowen	Jennifer A. Grant	Robert and Janet Michiel	Patti Taggart
Kevin Breiner	David Grotke	April Miller	Illya Tarasenko
Joe Dabes & Kathy Brennan	Chris & Colleen Gyr	John A-X. & Carol Morris	Michael TenKate
Lori Brewer	Herbert Haake	Steve M. Morris	Constance Thomas
Jeffrey Brisky	Helen & Chris Haller	Clyde Morrison	David Thurber
John & Margo Brown	Richard Harrington	August Mueller	Timothy Timbrook
Gary Bustos	Thomas Hawkins	Joshua Naylor	Theresa Tonozzi
Frederick Carranti	Lane & Edith Hemaspaandra	Donald Nelson	Carole Tota
Stephen & Tammy Catherman	Ruth Herzog	Debra Nero	Harold Stapleton & Colleen Townsend
Jack Chaney	David Hiebeler	David Newlun	John Townsend
John Joseph Cobb	Mark & Susan Hittle	Susan Newman	William Trondsen
William S. & Mary Coffin	Jane Schryver & Paul Hoffman	Glenn Nixon	JEK Revocable Trust,
Margaret Coleman	William J & Nancy J Holland	Donna Noteware	Care of Amy & David VanGellow
Susan Collier	Don Holman	Jill O'Hara	Kathryn Tsoukatos
Sigrid & James Connors	William C. & Mary Jane Holmes	Melanie Okoniewski	Jerry Valdez
Jeffrey G. & Betty Lou Constable	Roger & Ruth Hopkins	Wade Oliver	Jack VanDerzee
David & Adele Cook	Chris Hotchkiss	Wilfred D. & Maria E. Oliver	Joseph A. & Lucille Vieira
Louise Cook	Frank Hughto-Delzer	Patrick O'Mara	Janis von Borstel
John Cooley	Theodore Hullar	Mark O'Neil	Margaret & David Waterman
Maria Cooper	Edna Hyer	Mary Margaret Ong	James P. & Holly S. Watson
John C. & Nancy P. Crowley	Catharine Ackerson & Susan Illes	John Orsini	William Weikert
Carolyn Crump	Robert Jeuck	Dan O'Shea	Scott Weitzel
Charles Culp	Bradley Jones	Nancy Papish	Jacqui Wensich
Mike Cunningham	Linda & Bradley Jones	Linda Parlato	Jennifer Wilson & Joe Wertyschyn
Steven & Beth Czajkowski	Milton Jones	Ernie Patrikis	Timothy & Nancey Wilbur
Joe Dabes	Lois Judd	Henry & Leigh Peck	Carrie Williams
Sue DeGeorge	Penelope Wickham & Tom Kather	Pamela Peterman	Jennifer Wilson
Jeff DeMeritt	Michael ""Bodhi"" Rogers & Anna Keeton	Rhonda Peterson	John R. & Judy Wint
Jane DeRensis	Aaron Keller	Don & Willa Powell	Quinn & Jewell Wright
Anthony & Marilyn Destefano	Colleen Liggett & John Kerr	Paul R. & Dolly Raymond	Nancy Yates
James DeWan	Jim & Sara Kersting	Margaret & Ken Reek	Susan Yee
Mary Zuk Domanski	Mark Kerxhalli	Thomas Reimers	Ann Young
Joseph Donovan	Harold Kyle Family	Mark J. Reist	Dan Young
Alexander Dorman	Jean Kirsch	Paul Richards	Joan Young
Caralea Dougherty	Steve Shaum & Nancy Kleinrock	Thomas Rienholtz	Cynthia Zacharek
Mike & Jan Douglass	Robert Kremens	Rev. David & Patricia Robinson	Dan Zwick
David, Nancy & J.T. Drum	Ray Kuzia	John Robortella	
Mark Dye	John Lang	Laurie Root	
Nigel Dyson-Hudson	Scott Lauffer	Fred Rose	
Thomas & Clarice Dziekonski	Mary Leary	David Rossiter	
Jeffrey Ehlinger	Mark Leberth	Chris Rubeck	
Marjorie Elder	Jeremy Lefort	Rolf Zerges & Lynda Rummel	
Herb Engman	Kalista Lehrer	Larry Ryan	
Charlene Ette	Jennifer Woltjen & Larry Lepak	Theo Rynders	

*Look for the
Sidote Forever Society List
in our Summer 2023 issue.*

End-to-End Update

Jacqui Wensich, End-to-End Coordinator



Main:

#532 Sarah Stackhouse, Point Bluff
#533 Barbara Bailey, Penn Yan

Branch:

#135 Tom Markel (#486), Hornell
#136 Gail Mortimer (#512), Wyoming

Updates:

Louis Hicks AKA "Louie Louie" plans to hike the main trail. New member Sarric Costa is beginning the branch trails this may.

Comments:

Tom and Gail are the first of 2023 to complete the branch trails. NO ONE finished them in 2022!

Including Sarah and Barb, eighteen hikers have completed the main trail to date in 2022. I was able to present Sarah and Barb with their E2E certification materials. Sarah made an excellent celebration lunch of carrot soup (dug from her garden), homemade bread, and dessert bread. It is so special to present patches to hiking partners.

Car Spotters:

This winter I will contact all the car spotters to edit the list. Please let me know if you cannot contact a spotter.

We need more car spotters for the Branch Trails and **M1-5, M27-34**. Please consider signing on as a car spotter. Just email at jwensich@rochester.rr.com for the application. You are a vital part of hiking our trails.

TIPS for aspiring end-to-enders: 1. Review the End-to-End Hiking section on the FLT website. 2. Join the FLT egroup, hiking@fingerlakestrail.org (often find more spotters and 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 approximately when you plan to complete the main/branch trails to receive the correct number. 7. Email captioned photos in high resolution as you hike and keep trail notes, so you can write your end-to-end article. 8. Car spotters "spot" for designated areas. It is not a shuttle. Longer rides must be arranged on your own.

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 discussion group to see if someone is willing, if you do not have a friend or family member available. 🍁

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



Charlie Stackhouse

Jacqui delivered Barb and Sarah's end-to-end certification. Sarah made a delicious luncheon celebration.

Join the FLT Googlegroup E-Mail List

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference's e-mail list is a discussion group hosted by Googlegroups.com. Its purpose is to allow the subscribers (approximately 850 people) to communicate information to each other pertaining to FLT hikes and other FLT activities, and to also allow subscribers to post general hiking-camping-backpacking and/or FLT-related questions that can be answered by any of the other participants.

The co-moderators who oversee the use of this electronic mailing list and offer help with questions are: Larry Blumberg (lblumberg@stny.rr.com) and Scott Geiger, (scott.geiger@gmail.com).

To join the group, send a note to lblumberg@stny.rr.com requesting that you be added to the FLT HIKING Googlegroup. If you have any problems or questions, contact one of the co-moderators.

End-to-End Report

Barbara Bailey and Sarah Stackhouse



How We Got Started: We first heard about the Finger Lakes Trail when we started hiking with Tom and Donna Noteware on the FLT back in 2007 and 2008, 4-5 miles on Tuesday mornings in Spring and Fall on the Bristol Hills Branch, and also the Main Trail between Maps 11 and 15.

County Hike Series: To explore a little farther afield, we signed up for the Delaware County Hike Series in Spring of 2018. Little did we know what lay ahead! We had a steep learning curve. The challenges we encountered during that hike series gave us the confidence to continue not only with the County Hike Series but also to start to work on completing the End-to-End hike of the main FLT. After our first hike in April, we almost bailed out, thinking this was far more rigorous than we were prepared for - up and over two mountains in what turned out to be over 15 miles due to missing a turn which added an additional 3 miles to the advertised 12.3 hike. That was in addition to being the first real hike of the season after a long winter of relative inactivity. Thanks to our very encouraging hike leader Gary Brouse, who kept assuring us that this hike was by far the longest and most challenging of the entire Delaware Co. Hike Series, and our very patient and encouraging sweeps Dan and Diane Bradshaw, we did finally finish the hike around 5 PM. We spent the next 3 weeks walking longer distances and up and down hills, which helped a lot. We were better prepared for the second DE County hike, which also had a long, steep, uphill climb, but it was 40 degrees and pouring rain the entire day. The third DE County hike was also an adventure. Having poured rain, the night before and continuing to rain the next morning, the creeks were high, and crossings were interesting. Had we not been hiking with a group of experienced hikers; we probably would have turned back and returned another day when water levels were lower. The water at the first crossing was fast, turbid, and knee-deep. We were glad we had hiking poles. Thankfully a sturdy man in our group stood at the far bank to give us a hand up onto the bank. One girl lost her footing just as she was reaching for his hand and in, she went. In one motion, he reached down, grabbed her by the collar, and set her on the bank. At another crossing where there was a bridge, the creek was over the bank and a big spruce tree was hung up under one end of the bridge. We crossed that bridge as quickly as possible before it was carried downstream. There was so much runoff that day that even on top of the ridge, hiking the trail was like walking up a brook. Thankfully, the last three hikes of the series were much tamer, with much nicer weather, and easier terrain. We were inspired by our fellow hikers ranging in age from 6 to 80, several of whom had overcome various physical challenges and were still hiking, a testament to the power of persistence.

We also signed up for the 2018 Spring Hike Weekend that year, hiking the eastern half of Tompkins County over the three days. It was a great opportunity to meet other hikers from whom we always learned something useful. After that weekend, we decided

we would start working on hiking the FLT end-to-end by doing section day hikes. Jacqui Wensich was a huge help to us in this endeavor, sharing her wealth of knowledge of hiking the trail, her list of car spotters, lots of good suggestions on where to stay and where to eat, and inviting us to join her as she worked on her second E2E.

In December 2018 Sarah broke her femur, which slowed us down a bit in 2019. By May she was back to hiking, but we hiked most of the Chenango County Hike Series as half hikes, hiking the second half of the hike on Friday and the first half with the County Hike group on Saturday. Jacqui hiked many of these with us. One highlight of 2019 was the day we were hiking near Bowman Lake State Park. Although it was a hot day, the trail was in beautiful condition and a delight to hike, thanks to the Bull Thistle Hiking Club which maintains that section. Just after crossing one of their beautiful bridges, we met a couple coming in the opposite direction who looked familiar - our sweeps from our first Delaware County hike! They were surprised to see us on the trail. We told them who we were and how their patience and kindness encouraged us to not give up hiking. We ended that day's hike with a revitalizing swim at Bowman Lake State Park. While relaxing on the deck of the concession building, two ladies from nearby Norwich highly recommended the fish fry that the park puts on every Friday evening, so we stuck around for that and were not disappointed.

Section Day Hikes: After the broken leg, we decided we should hike the more challenging sections of the FLT while we were still able and before something else happened. We hiked M33 in Ulster County on three beautiful days in September 2019 and knocked off the remainder of Ulster County during beautiful weather in August, September, and October 2020. The Fall foliage in the Catskills was spectacular! We also completed the hilly western end of the FLT in 2020. Barb had hiked the section through



Lisa Lyons



Kim D'Amore

E2E finish at the final county hike.

Allegheny State Park during the 2019 Spring Hike Weekend. Sarah hiked the western half of M1 with the Foothills Trail Club and the eastern half with her husband, Charlie in August 2020. By November 2020 we had completed M2 through M4 past Ellicottville and had the most challenging sections of the FLT under our belt.

We completed the Cortland County and Tompkins County Hike Series in 2021 and 2022, respectively, and chipped away at the mid-section of the FLT as we had time during the Summer and Fall, working our way back closer to home from either end. The terrain became more moderate, and the travel time became less, making day trips easier. We finally finished up in the snow on November 17, 2022, on M13 at Corbett Hollow Rd., two days before the opening day of rifle season.

What We Enjoyed Most: We saw areas of New York State we never would have seen had we not been hiking the entire FLT. We were amazed at the diversity of flora and fauna and geologic features along the trail. Some of the standouts were: the huge, garage-sized rocks at Little Rock City; the profusion of Spring wildflowers growing on a glacial esker near Bath; the beautiful ridges, valleys, and waterfalls of the Finger Lakes; the patchwork of farms, fields, and woods across southern NY; and the stunning expanse of the Catskill Mountains in the Fall. The ride getting to the trailhead often took us on beautiful back roads we would never have traveled if not for driving to hike with friends. Many times, we commented on how lovely our rural NYS landscape is.

We never would have completed our End-to-End hike of the FLT without the help of the following:

the FLTC for establishing and constantly improving the trail; the private landowners who permit the trail to pass through their property; all the volunteer trail maintainers, trail crews and sawyers, mappers, hike organizers and leaders who make hiking the trail a safe and enjoyable experience; car spotters who help out in some pretty remote areas; and most of all a very good friend and fellow hiker who shares the same goal, makes the car shuttle possible, makes hiking fun even in adverse circumstances and helps you keep going to achieve the goal. It was fun! Thank you to all of you who helped us complete our E2E hike of the FLT! 🍁

In Memory of
John Chamberlain

from
Stacey Esslinger

In Memory of
Horst Schwinge

from
Sigi Schwinge

In Memory of
Mark Mason

from
Barbara Peiker

In Memory of
Tim Davis

from
Peggy Davis

In Memory of
Ken Bremer

from
Pamela McCarrick

Trail Topics: Safety on the Trail

Tim Holahan



Safety in outdoor adventures comes as much from mental and emotional skills as from gear, clothing, fitness, or techniques. We are safer when we anchor on 4 Outing Goals.

4 Outing Goals

1. Gain a **Wow** Experience
2. Feel **Challenged**
3. Avoid **Injury**
4. Want to **Return**

Yes, mistakes do happen. How's this for a mistake: in the mid-1600s explorers were looking for the Island of California using a map ultimately traced to a work of fiction written back in the 1500s. Modern maps for the FLT are reliable.



It's our own minds that may become unaware or inattentive. Here is a recent on-trail experience that I'll recount - not by numbering access points, but by numbering my mistakes.

Mistake #1 - Trekking westbound I realize that I see no more white blazes. The blazes haven't gone anywhere – yet I have. My attention went to some local flagging, and I followed a nice tractor trail, missing the FLT's turn to the *right*.

Mistake #2 - As I backtrack, I am unaware that I was continuing on an unmarked tractor trail for too long.

Mistake #3 - When I did arrive at familiar white blazes, I turned to the *right*. I picked up my pace to make up for lost time, despite being in no particular hurry.

Mistake #4 - After cruising along for about a mile, I came to a clearing and overlook that looked familiar. That mile was just as nice to walk eastbound as it was an hour earlier going westbound.

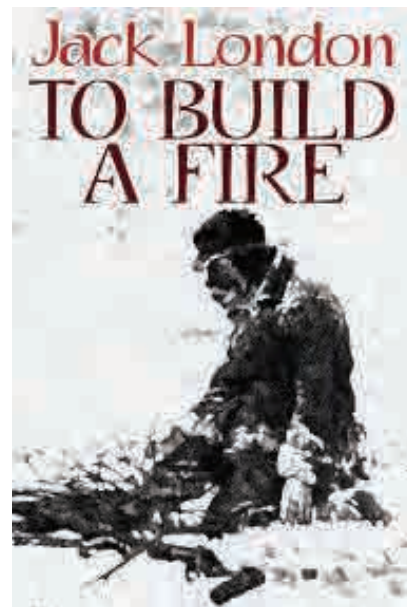
The realization of Mistake #1 should have heightened my awareness to be more careful. It took until Mistake #4 to realize that I was making more mistakes.

The need to raise awareness following Mistake #1 is illustrated very well in the fictional short story set in the Alaskan Yukon, Jack London's "To Build a Fire." The lessons in this story have come to my mind plenty of times when I've been out in challenging circumstances. So that I don't become a spoiler, I'll share a reference via QR code and URL. If you read it - or re-read it - see what you consider to be Mistake #1, and which of the subsequent mistakes could have been avoided.

https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/to-build-a-fire.pdf



From that story and my own experience, here are a few ideas to prepare to deal with a Mistake #1 when - not if - it happens:



- Expect to be humbled. Don't let embarrassment cloud your judgment.
- Become quick to recognize and declare a mistake as a fact - not a judgment.
- S.T.O.P. = Stop, Think, Observe, Plan.
- Become deliberate and focused: walk with a determined pace, handle gear with care, think through your options, anticipate the next 2-3 decisions, and write down your plan.
- Practice making mistakes - really.

Lastly, practicing making and recovering from mistakes can be great fun. Several Orienteering Clubs near the FLT corridor have published their 2023 schedules. Visit one, find a navigation course that will give you just the right challenge, and wander in the woods until you make, recognize, and recover from a few navigation errors.

<https://roc.us.orienteeering.org/>
<https://buffalo-orienteeering.org/>
<http://cnyo.us.orienteeering.org/>
<https://empoclub.org/>

Be careful and be safe! 🍁



*Giving to the Lean-to fund at the request
of Greg & Edith Housel*

In Memory of Kevin Housel

*Jim & Marilyn Carney
Don & Shirley Duxbury
Daniel & Jennifer Foster
Lawrence Gallick
Gerry & Pat Hogan
Greg & Edith Housel
Paul & Mary Leader
Ellie McLees
Dudley Oldham
Sandra Zwick*

2023 FLT Fall Weekend

Deb Nero



Join us for a weekend of all things Finger Lakes Trail! Connect with fellow members, share in our annual Awards Presentation, attend the Annual Members Meeting, and of course GO FOR A COUPLE OF HIKES! The FLTC Fall Weekend Celebration

is September 15th, 16th, and 17th in Watkins Glen to coincide with the Schuyler County Hike series. Join us at Seneca Lake Events Center at Clute Park, 586 East 4th Street in Watkins Glen. Remember to register so you don't miss out on a fun-filled weekend with your old and new hiking friends.

Registration and information on the hikes, meals, and lodging options will be available on the FLTC website (www.fingerlakestrail.org) in July.

Our Fall Weekend Festival isn't just about hiking – though there is plenty of that! – it's about connecting with the FLT and our amazing trail community. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Trail Days Celebration

Deb Nero

Trail Days celebrate landowners and trail sponsors/maintainers. This year we are planning two events in different parts of the state. Please join us for an informal fun day with a couple of hikes, a chance to meet fellow hikers, and to thank landowners and trail maintainers/sponsors. Please see the website for details.

May 13 in McDonough at the Outpost Restaurant (map M24)

June 10 in Ellicottville at Liberty Park in the center of the village (map M3/CT3)

Thank You

Landmax Data Systems, Inc.
5919 E. Henrietta Rd. Rush, NY14543
585/533-9210
www.landmaxdata.com



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

Trail Topics: Map Updates

Jo Taylor, Mapping Coordinator



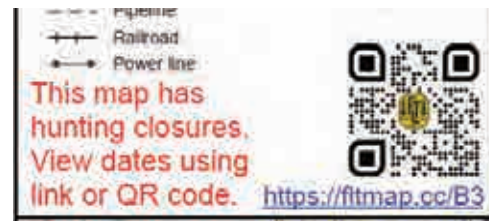
First, let me introduce the newest member of the mapping team – Laura Steves. Laura joined our group toward the end of last year after responding to a “Call for Mapping Volunteers” in the Fall 2023 issue of the *FLT News*. She brings much relevant experience to the team. Laura is an avid hiker and FLT enthusiast. She has done extensive hiking with her family near her home in Western New York and is an FLT Trail Ambassador. She, along with her boyfriend, have been section hiking the Appalachian Trail for the last few years with a total of 130 miles under their belts so far. A long-time high school art teacher in Attica, Laura is nearing completion of a second bachelor’s degree in Geosciences with certification in GIS (graphical information systems) with an eye toward a post-retirement career in that field. Her GIS coursework included experience with ArcGIS, the family of powerful and complex software that we use to produce our PDF maps. How perfect is that!

We put Laura right to work on our latest major initiative, revamping the way we handle hunting closures on our maps. Our plan is to ensure that FLT hikers have accurate and timely information on hunting closures by taking the closure dates *off* the maps. Better to have no information than misleading information. We found it impossible to keep the maps up to date with the frequent changes in closure information. Instead, the maps (both PDF/paper maps and GPX files) will contain links to the FLTC website’s Trail Condition notices for the map in the form of text links and QR codes. By consolidating the information in Trail Conditions, we will also improve consistency.

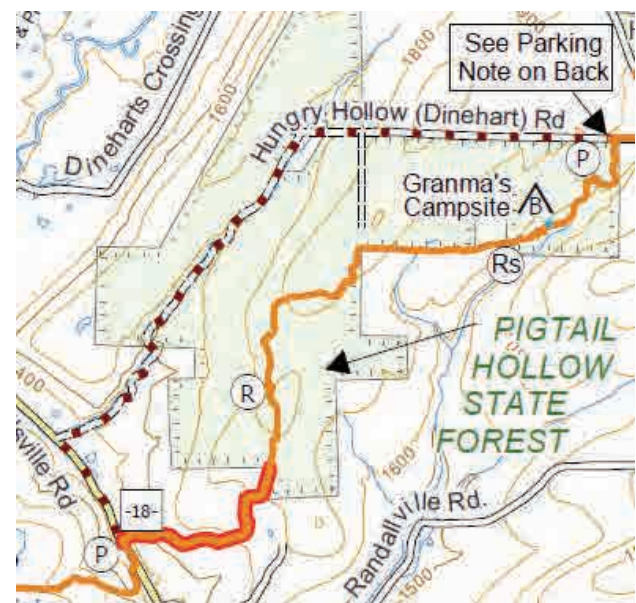
Laura’s very first mapping project was revising map B3, the Bristol Hills Branch map containing the junction between the branch trail and the main east-west FLT by adding a new hunting closure and updating the entire map to the new format. With April Miller coaching her on our process, she carried out the entire job of updating the PDF and GPX maps right through to turning B3 over for publication. I want to publicly thank April for taking on the training task and for documenting the steps of our revised process in detail.

Map B3 illustrates the primary features of the new treatment of hunting closures.

► Front of pdf



Map legend containing text link <https://fltmap.cc/B3> to Trail Conditions for B3 and QR code. Try the QR code.



Hunting closure on orange blazed BHB trail south of Pigtail Hollow State Forest and bypass route



Hunting closures on white-blazed main FLT near junction with BHB



Header at top of PDF back.

- 11.2 Trail skirts large house foundation and old field with barn ramps into pine plantations being managed through harvest to return to native hardwood. Trail register. Leave Pigtail State Forest. **Fall hunting closure here:** fmap.cc/B3
- 13.1 **Access 18** Left (S) on CR13 (Mitchellsville Rd), west shoulder parking, then in 600' cross culvert on right then steady uphill on logging road. Near top as it flattens bear left onto single track leading to Lake David.

Hunting closure indicator on back of map with hyperlink to Trail Conditions.



Interactive map contains a link to Trail Conditions.

For the hunting closure updates, we are prioritizing the maps that need to also be updated for other reasons, but we plan to have all the maps with hunting closures updated ahead of the Fall 2023 hunting season. Over time all FLT maps, including those with no hunting closures, will contain text links and QR codes pointing to Trail Conditions. Trail Condition notices have always been deemed the source of the latest information, but now we are giving hikers an additional nudge to view them.

FLTC Mapping currently consists of a very strong team of volunteers: Roger Hopkins, April Miller, Laura Steves, Mark Valites, me, and ex-officio member Scott Geiger, the FLTC webmaster, all of whom are major contributors. Still, all of us are volunteers with limits on our availability and there is a significant backlog of projects that we'd like to tackle. We are always looking for new team members. See the sidebar "Call for Mapping Volunteers". 🍁

Call for Mapping Volunteers

The FLT mapping team is interested in adding one or more tech-savvy volunteers.

Qualifications:

- A background using maps—online, GPS, apps, hard copy
- Ability to work in close coordination with the full mapping team
- A desire to support and improve the FLT
- Particularly desired technical experience: ArcGIS family of software (PDF maps) or VBA, Excel, HTML, GPX editor (interactive map) in a Windows environment

If interested, email Jo Taylor at jhtaylor@frontiernet.net

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 Projects: New Crews and Construction Coordinators



Mike TenKate, Crews and Construction Coordinator

Hello! I'm Mike TenKate, the newly appointed Crews and Construction Coordinator. I made my first hike on the Finger Lakes Trail 20 years ago, and it was a life-changing experience for me. A week later, I made my second hike on the trail and emailed that the trail needed some attention. In the days that followed, I received a call from Howard Beye that the section was in need of a maintainer, and things flowed from there. I found that I enjoyed working on the trail as much or more than actually hiking it. I still maintain that section and additional trail on M-20 and have been a regular participant in Alley Cat Crews. In my professional life, I will be a retired Firefighter by the time this reaches you, and I operate TenKate Grant Services LLC. I'm married with two girls in college.

The 2023 Schedule is full, however with all the changes in the FLTC and my newness to the position, we are still working out a lot of the details and dates. I will send updates to the email list and make sure they get posted on the FLT website. Here is what we have so far:

- Letchworth Trail Alley Cat (L-2) trail reconstruction. This is an American Hiking Vacation through the American Hiking Society. We will have openings for some local volunteers as well. I will be the project leader. For more information, contact me.
- Dry Brook Bridge Replacement Alley Cat (M-27). Replace or reroute around the existing bridge that is washing away.

The leader will be Don Sutherland. Dates are still pending contact Don (dsutherlandny@aim.com) for more information.

- Route 219 Reroute Alley Cat (M-3). We are hoping to reroute an extremely steep section of trail above route 219 north of Ellicottville. Lots of planning is still needed for this, but I'm very hopeful that we can get this all pulled together. The leaders will be Donna and Marty Ruszaj. Contact Donna or Marty for more information (dmruszaj@buffalo.edu and mrsuszaj@gmail.com).
- Allegany County Lean-to Alley Cat (M-8). We will be constructing a new lean-to to close an existing gap between lean-tos. The leaders will be Peter Wybron and Mike Ogden. Contact Peter for more information (prwybron@rochester.rr.com).
- Bristol Hills Branch replacement bridges (B3). Repair and Replacement of a series of six bridges between Elbois Road and Bean Station Road. I'm still working on planning this one and recruiting project leaders.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions about any of these projects or other concerns. 🍁

Contact: Mike TenKate
Mike_tenkate@yahoo.com
607/543-1803

Trail Topics: New VP of Trail Maintenance



Pat Monahan, John Schmitt, VP of Trail Maintenance

John Schmitt retired from his 45+ year professional career as a process engineer, project engineer, maintenance engineer, project manager, and team leader in 2018. His career included food ingredient-related equipment installation for Dupont; chemical manufacturing facilities upgrades for Arch Chemicals; and a wide variety of chemical manufacturing equipment, safety, and environmental projects for Eastman Kodak. Personnel safety, process safety, and environmental responsibility were a priority on all projects and a specific area of oversight for several years. John was also a crew leader for approximately 20 census takers during the 2010 census.

John is an avid hiker. His major accomplishments include the following. He has end-to-end hiked the Finger Lakes Trail twice and is well on the way to a third time with some sections completed many more times. John has climbed the Adirondack 46 high peaks. He has sectioned hiked the entire Appalachian Trail, Long Path (NYC to Albany), and North Country Trail. During frequent business trips to Madison, Wisconsin, John hiked approximately 300 miles of the Ice Age Trail. Many hundreds of

miles have also been hiked in the western US, Alaska, and Hawaii. Internationally, John has hiked in Switzerland and Iceland, climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro (Tanzania), hiked the Routeburn and Milford Tracks (New Zealand), trekked to the Mt. Everest Base Camp (Nepal), and hiked the Inca Trail (Peru).

John has been a hike leader or sweep on FLTC County series hikes as well as other hikes. He has helped with trail maintenance for over 20 years with the ADK, Genesee Valley Hiking Club, Foot Hills Trail Club, and Finger Lakes Trail Conference.

John has a great interest in the construction and improvement of the Finger Lakes Trail in a safe and timely manner so that it can continue to serve an expanding hiking community. He has a good knowledge of the Finger Lakes Trail, expanding knowledge of trail maintenance/construction techniques, and good organizational skills. John believes that he has the skills, time, and desire to effectively fill the VP of Trail Maintenance position which has been vacant. 🍁

passage as Big Daddy. It took three and a half days to construct and place over thirty steps on the north side of the ravine and another five steps, plus many switchbacks, on the south side of the ravine. Since that initial work on Big Daddy, the ravine has experienced additional Alley Cat actions due to erosion and weathering. Dedicated work parties have managed to maintain and continue to forge this ravine into a manageable hiking passage. In 2022, during a CT6 hike, it was noticed that the landowner was constructing a dirt road at the end of the Humphries Road section. Just before the trail closed due to hunting season, I hiked out on September 30th to discover that the bridge and all the wooden steps were completely gone. Big Daddy had transformed into a flat surface! The new appearance was shocking. Be that as it may, the landowner gives assurance to remain faithful to our hiking and conservation vision. The many acres of beautiful forest will stay open for all to foot navigate, find respite, and enjoy. On January 3, 2023, a group of us journeyed to the trail to examine the changes, place ribbons for future hikes (not sure of the trail delineation at this point), and toast Big Daddy. We reminisced and expressed disappointment in its demise but were also grateful for the many happy memories of trail building and hiking. 🍁

This topographic map depicts the Swain and Garwood regions in North Carolina. The Norfolk Southern Railroad runs diagonally from the upper center towards the lower right. Key roads include Swain Hill Rd, Parker Rd, Johnson Hill Rd, Ames Nichols Rd, and Coombs Rd. The map features contour lines indicating elevations up to 2000 feet. Notable landmarks include Swain P.O. 14884, Isaman Hill (Monegan) Rd, and Bossard's Cabin. The map also shows the Canaseraga River and several local roads like Scoville Rd and Graham Rd. The area is marked with various road numbers (70, 24, 15A, 15B) and a railroad crossing symbol.

FLT County Hike Series

Peg Fuller



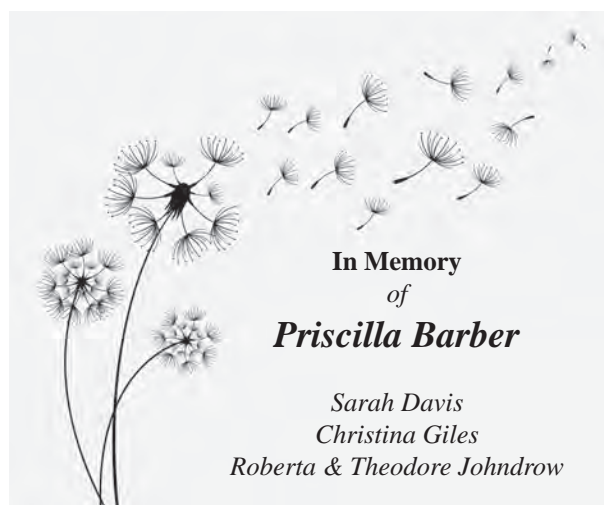
The FLT County Hike Series is a well-established program that brings together hikers of all levels. Some people use the series as a way to complete the trail and become an End-to-Enders; others join the series to learn more about hiking, have a hike leader, make hiking friends,

take advantage of the bus shuttle and SAG wagon, or just go out and enjoy the trail.

This year's County Hike Series is in Schuyler County. The series will consist of 5 hikes across Schuyler County on May 20th, June 17th, July 15th, August 19th, and September 16th. The last hike concludes during the FLTC Fall Weekend being held at Seneca Lake Events Center in Watkins Glen. There are two options for registration in the County Hike Series. You may register for the group hikes, taking advantage of the bus shuttle from the end to the starting point of each hike. The hikers will be divided into groups based on hiking speed and will be led by a hike leader. There is also a SAG Wagon with snacks at a designated point along the hike. The other registration option is as an independent hiker. Registration for the group series closes May 5th. You may register for the independent hike option any time prior to the Fall Weekend celebration (September 15th).

During the county hike series, four of the hikes will be done in dedication to some of the most influential people in the Finger Lakes Trail Conference's history - Wally Wood, Erv Markert, Howard Beye, and Ed Sidote.

For more information visit: www.fingerlakestrail.org or call (585) 658-9320. 🍁



FLT50 2023 Challenge

Peg Fuller



The Finger Lakes Trail Conference's annual challenge is back!

The challenge is **FREE**! All miles completed on trails within the Finger Lakes Trail system in the calendar year 2023 will count – this includes branch trails, miles from your favorite hikes that you do over

and over again, and all miles for out-and-back hikes.


As in years past, we have a BONUS challenge for those of you who spend more time on the trail. Complete 50 miles per month for six months or more and you'll earn a special gift! Anyone who completes 50 miles or 50K (31 miles) in a single day will also receive a special gift (this must be a self-supported effort). Please send a note to flt50@fingerlakestrail.org with verification of your mileage once you've completed the FLT50 and/or the bonus challenge.

Share your stories and photos by tagging @fingerlakestrail and use the hashtags #FLT50 and #fingerlakestrail; we might use them in Footnotes, FLT News, and other promotional materials.

This challenge has been met with great enthusiasm over the last two years and thousands of miles have been hiked. This year your miles must be all on the FLT. This includes the main trail, branch trails, and loop trails that are part of the system. This may sound a little more challenging than in the past when non-FLT miles were allowed, but remember, you can hike your favorite section of the FLT over and over again. All miles hiked on the FLT from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, can be included.

We look forward to your participation and can't wait to hear about your adventures!

For your convenience, we have included a mileage tracker, but mileage will be submitted online again this year. You will need your participant ID # to register your miles. You will receive your ID # when you register. For online registration go to fingerlakestrail.org or for assistance with registration call (585) 658-9320. 🍁



Send **address changes** to:

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



Answers to the Winter2022 “Name That Map!” Quiz

So, you hiked the FLT or parts of it. Let's see how observant you were!
Send your guess to: Jacqui at jwensich@rochester.rr.com

Previous Picture:



▲► Another view and season for name that map.

New Picture:



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*Dawn at Lake David, where the trail follows the mowed far edge of the pond.
Photo By Irene Szabo.*

