

December 2011



Tie Up Your Laces
And...Work!

TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from the Trail Quality Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

Trail Census Form Goes Online (Almost)

by Steve Catherman, Vice President for Trail Maintenance

Points to ponder:

- Geeez, which forms this year, and how do I submit them?
- Why shouldn't I apply for the job of Executive Director? I retired early, could use a part-time job, and love the FLT!
- What small hand tools do I really need when I work on the trail?

News Items

 The **Trail Management Council** will hold its third annual meeting on **APRIL 21, 2012, from 10-3, at** the First Congregational-United Church of Christ, 58 North Main St. (NY 332) in Canandaigua. This event replaces the annual meeting of Howard Beye's Trail Management Committee that used to be held in February. Key topics will include checking property boundaries against tax map information; posting trail management signs and building trail in ways that increase awareness of the trail as a foot-path; and talking points for when attending land management meetings.

 You can now find a pdf of the '09 **FLTC Field Maintenance Manual** by going to www.fingerlakestrail.org → Members → Trail Workers. (Thank you, Roger Hopkins!) The manual includes maintenance hints, standards, expectations, and instructions; and it should answer many of your questions. You will *not* want to carry the expanded manual in your pack; but you *will* want to read it. Gene Bavis will email you a pdf if you can't access it on the website (email him at genebavis@me.com).

The Trail Census forms that we've come to know and love will soon be available on the FLTC website for on-line reporting. This year, we are reaching out to all our volunteers, not just our trail maintainers, to report the hours they've spent contributing to the Finger Lakes Trail System. Those of you who wear more than one hat for the FLTC (e.g. Regional Trail Coordinator and Trail Sponsor) will be asked to submit a form for each FLTC position. Please note that those of you working on FLT-related matters under the auspices of a club should continue to report your hours to your club, which will then report its aggregated hours to the FLTC. Also, please do not report: the hours you worked on, or the hours worked by others on your section of trail for, an FLTC-organized work party, such as an Alley Cat Crew, as they will be submitted separately by our Director of Crews and Construction, Quinn Wright, or the project manager. The on-line form will still include a comments section for you to describe your work accomplished during the year and/or to propose projects for future years, including any assistance you may need. This is also your opportunity to request mileage and permanent facilities funds for your trail work.

The following is an excerpt from the new form: "This form is to be used by: (1) Organizational Sponsors (clubs, troops, organized groups) who sponsor a designated section of the Finger Lakes Trail and to whom individual maintainers or stewards report their hours; and by (2) Individual Sponsors who maintain a section of trail that is not sponsored by an organization; and by (3) FLTC Volunteers including Board members, VPs, Directors, RTCs, mappers, publication authors, editors and others. Sponsors use this form to summarize your work and travel related to your section of trail over the past year. FLTC Volunteers use this form to summarize your work and travel related to the Finger Lakes Trail System over the past year. Please complete and submit this form to the FLTC Office by January 15th."

The form has been significantly revised to bring us in line with what our partners, the North Country Trail Association, the NYS Departments of Environmental Conservation, and the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation require us to report. The new form will feature three fields of entry for volunteer hours: (1) Trail Maintenance/Construction Hours, (2) Administrative Hours (Planning, Meetings, Training, Writing, Editing, Accounting, etc.), and (3) Interpretive Hours (Outreach, Promotion, Education, Leading Hikes, etc.). All travel hours, and public and private land hours should now be included in one or more of these 3 categories.

We are also developing a spreadsheet to capture the number of hours reported above that can be attributed to specific public lands (e.g. State Forests). This spreadsheet will be similar to page 2 of the old form except that these public land entries need only reflect total hours, not a breakdown between categories (thank you New York State!).

Creating this on-line Census form has been a challenge and is still a work in progress. **Please look for further instructions on submitting your volunteer hours in an email from me later this month.** Finally, for those of you without computer or internet access, a hard copy of the new form will be mailed to you before the end of the year.

Thank you!
Steve

To find out *why* we must report our hours, please go to p. 4.

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Tools You Can Use – Multi-Tools

It's time to ask for that special holiday gift that you've been wanting for a while now; and this year, we hear, it's a relatively small, multi-function hand tool that (depending on its size) you can carry on your belt, slip into a pocket, or stuff into your pack.

But first, think about the purposes for which you will want to use a multi-tool when you're in the woods, so you can ask for the right one. Do you need to tighten small lock nuts on machine screws stuck through Carsonite posts or loosen bigger nuts on bolts? Do you need scissors rather than pliers, or do you need both? Do you need needlenose or regular pliers, or both? A wrench? What kind and size of screwdriver heads? Secondly, before you buy, remember that many tasks require you to use tools in both hands at the same time, so you may have to carry a few small hand tools along with your multi-tool anyway. Heretical thought at this time of year, but you might be better off with just a small bag of tools, a small headlamp, and no multi-tool at all! But anyway....

One of the earliest multifunctional tools was the **Swiss Army Knife** (SAK), a Stone Age version of which is shown below.



Danook shows off his Swiss Army Rock.
Complete with bow, a perfect holiday gift.

Since Danook, the Swiss Army Rock has been expanded into a multi-tool "knife" by a number of manufacturers, the most well-known of which are Wenger and Victorinox, which claim to produce "the genuine" and "the original" SAK, respectively.

Victorinox Swiss Army CyberTool Lite. Based on the CyberTool 34, this model adds a white LED flashlight and magnifying glass, useful for small work or dim light. Also featured: Bit Wrench, Bit Case, 5mm Hex Socket, 4mm Hex Socket, #8 Torx Bit, #10 Torx Bit, #15 Torx Bit, #2 Phillips Head, 4mm Hex Bit, 4mm Flat Head, #0 Pozidrive Bit, #1 Pozidrive Bit, Ball Point Pen, DIP Switch Setter (Use Pen), Pliers, Scissors, plus the usual SAK tools -- Can Opener, Small Screw driver (3mm), Large Screw-

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driver (6mm), Bottle Opener, Wire Stripper, Reamer, Sewing Eye, Cork-screw, Large Blade, Small Blade, Wire Cutter, and Wire Crimper. 3.5" 3.5" long (closed). ?? oz. \$113.39 at www.swissknifeshop.com. **At left.**



By comparison, the **Wenger Swiss Army Tool Chest Plus, lower left**, has only the common Phillips and regular screwdrivers; however, these *may* be all you need! In addition, it does include a very nice tool called a *Universal Wrench*, plus *adjustable* regular pliers. Also scissors, saws for wood *and* metal, the usual SAK tools (see above), and a fish scaler, a hook disgorging, and a compass -- so we won't starve or get lost while working on our well-blazed trail. \$119.95 from swissknifeshop.com.

Breakage problems are rare (after all, they are Swiss), but it can be difficult to put enough muscle behind the tools on a Swiss Army Knife to get the job done. **Leatherman brand multi-tools**, on the other hand, provide improved grip and torque; but do be careful where the components are made and be sure the steel is high quality (customer reviews note that blades break). Like Swiss Army Knives, Leatherman products range from the very lightweight, straightforward, and inexpensive to the hefty, complex and pricey. Go to www.rei.com → Camp & Hike → Gadgets & Electronics → Camp Tools to find a large inventory of multi-tools that you can compare. At Recreational Equipment Inc. (REI) stores on the West Coast, we looked at Leatherman "skeletools" (\$65-90, cool looking, lighter weight; but bony frames were not very comfortable or easy to clean); then the Kick, the Sidekick, and the Blast (good weight at roughly 5-7 oz., good price at \$30-55; but not many tools for trail work); plus the Surge (\$95, and at 12 oz., just too heavy for us).

We finally settled on the **Leatherman New Wave Multi-Tool, below right**, as a "best buy" that is reasonably priced, includes tools useful in many situations, and yet isn't overweight. The only "con" we found for the New Wave is the smooth handle can become slippery when wet.

The New Wave includes: Both needlenose and regular pliers, plus wire strippers, wire cutters and hard-wire cutters, clip-point knife, serrated knife, saw, diamond-covered file for wood and metal, 8" ruler, can/bottle opener (no cork screw), large and small bit drivers, a Phillips #1 and #2 double-end bit, and an extra-small Phillips and flat-tip eye-glass screwdriver double-end bit. Top rated tool. To expand your New Wave's capabilities, buy a set of 21 double-ended bits, **at right.**



New Wave Multi-Tool: 8.5 oz., ~\$85.
Bit Kit: 3.7 oz., ~\$18.

Regional Trail Coordinators, West to East
Note New RTC's in Bold Blue below!!!

Genesee West (M1-M6, CT1-CT12)
Marty Howden
howser51@yahoo.com (585) 567-8589 H
(585) 330-1872 C

Genesee East (M7-M11, L1 & L2)
Ron Navik
ron.navik@frontiernet.net (585) 377-1812

Watkins Glen-West (M12-M14, I1 FLNF)
Lynda Rummel
ljrassoc@roadrunner.com (315) 536-9484 H
(315) 694 1244 C Jan thru Mar only

Watkins Glen-East (M15-M19, QCMT, MFHLT)
Joe Dabes
kabjnd@msn.com (607) 844-3872
(607) 793-1911 C

Chenango-West (M20-M22 NY26, O1 & O2)
Anthony Rodriguez
boricua1037@verizon.net (315) 446-3586

Chenango-East (M22 NY26-M26 Bainbridge)
Ed Sidote
ejsidote@frontiernet.net (607) 334-3872

Catskill-West (M26 Bainbridge-M27)
Don Sutherland
dsutherlandny@aim.com (607) 754-9573

Catskill-Central (M28-M30 NY206)
Rick Roberts
hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com (607) 746-9694

Catskill East (M30 NY206-M33)
Rick Roberts
Hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com (607) 746-9694

Bristol Hills Branch (B1-B3)
Tom and Donna Noteware
noteware@empacc.net (607) 868-4616

Crystal Hills Branch (C1-C3)
Pat Monahan
pmonahan@stny.rr.com (607) 936-8312

Many, many thanks to retiring RTC's Irene Szabo, Mike Gebhard, and Kevin Millar.

THANK YOU, Trail Workers!

You reported working 14,561 hours out on the trail in 2010, plus 6,134 related administrative hours. When combined and then multiplied by the 2010 NPS/NCTA hourly labor rate, that's worth... \$431,491! Not to mention the 4,146 hours you paid for, traveling to and from trailheads. Very impressive!

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The Leatherman Bit Kit includes: Hex 1.5mm, 2mm, 2.5mm, 3mm, 4mm, 5mm, 6mm; Hex 1/4 in., 7/32 in., 3/16 in., 5/32 in., 9/64 in., 1/8 in., 7/64 in., 3/32 in., 5/64 in., 1/16 in., 1/20 in.; Robertson #1, #2, #3; Pozi #1, #2, #3; Torx #10, #15, #20, #25, #27, #30; Phillips #0, #1, #2, #3; flat screwdriver 1/8 in., 3/32 in., 5/32 in., 3/16 in., 7/32 in., 1/4 in.; and Phillips and flat eyeglass screwdrivers.

The Bit Kit also works with the Charge AL Multi-Tool (~\$115, 8.4 oz.) and the Charge Titanium TTI Multi-Tool (~\$130, 8.2 oz.), Leatherman's high end multi-tools. The Charge AL has a rough handle to reduce slipperiness, but some users did not like it. The Charge Titanium TTI has slightly better steel parts than the New Wave but saves only 0.3 oz. in weight -- at a cost of an additional \$45!

Another popular brand name is Gerber, known for knives and specialized (e.g., combat, linesman) multi-tools. While at REI, we inspected the mid-priced (\$40-75) FLiK, Strata, Bear Grylls Ultimate, and Crucial Multitool/Evo Knife Combo (which features a separate knife), but did not find them especially well suited for a range of trail work tasks. So at another store, we checked out the **Gerber Pro-Scout Multi-Plier 600**, which includes needlenose pliers, wire cutter, wire crimper, serrated knife, RemGrit saw with universal saw coupler, Fiskars scissors, cross point screw-driver, small and medium flat blade screwdrivers, can opener, bottle opener, file, and ruler, and a small (8-bit plus bit holder) bit kit. Described as the "Cadillac" of the 600 series, the Pro-Scout Multi-Plier 600 weighs 9 oz. and sells for ~\$62. Other standard hex bits should work with this multi-tool, as should an adapter for 1/4-inch socket heads; but check this out before purchase. *This multi-tool can be opened with just one hand and compares favorably with the Leatherman New Wave yet costs \$41 less when the 42-bit kit is included in the New Wave's price!* If you don't want the capability to use bits, the Gerber Multi-Plier 600 has blunt nose pliers, Tungsten carbide insert cutters, and serrated and fine edge knives (but no bit kit). 9 oz. ~\$58.

The **Columbia River I.D.Works Guppie** caught our eye because of its noticeably different shape, *adjustable 1/2-inch wrench*, and removable magnetic bit holder that includes a LED flashlight. The bit holder comes with small and medium Phillips and regular screwdriver hex bits (so bits can be swapped out for other bits). With a 1/4-inch adapter, should accept 1/4-inch socket heads. Bottle opener, 2-inch knife, carabiner gate; but no pliers, saws or tools for wire. Only 4.1 oz. and ~\$30; but major complaint: *The adjustable wrench may not stay locked in place.* **At right.**



Another option worth mentioning is a **hammer multi-tool**. I've gotten two from Sharper Image, one I like and one I hate. I can't remember the price, but online prices (at other stores) range from \$10-\$20. The hammer multi-tool **on the left** has hefty needlenose pliers that open and close with a lever that fits into the blue handle, a regular blade, a serrated blade with a file and flat screwdriver end, a Phillips screw-



driver and a hammer head with a claw to open bottles and remove nails. The problems are, the handle has very hard edges so is painful to squeeze, and the claw is too thick to push under nail heads. The hammer multi-tool **on the right**, however, has a more comfortable grip (so the blunt pliers can be held closed) and a claw that *can* slide under nail heads. Also, the hammer on the right has a regular blade; a serrated blade with a file and flathead screwdriver; a bottle opener and three small wrenches; and a *hex bit holder and a 9-bit kit*. To use 1/4-inch sockets, just use the hex bit holder and a 1/4-inch adapter.

Moral of this story? **Hold it and try it before you buy it!**

Why We Need to Report Our Hours

If you fill out a grant application to help fund a project on the FLT or speak up at a meeting in support of the trail system, you may well be asked, "How many people use the trail every year?" Of course, many funders and land managers do not realize that this is an impossible question to answer; but if we use a surrogate measure and explain that FLT volunteers report spending 15,000-plus hours each year building and maintaining trail and leading organized trail activities, we think they may be impressed. After all, these are documented work hours put in by volunteers somewhere on our ~980 miles of trail so that they *and everyone else* can enjoy the sport of hiking and the hiking experience.

Why does it matter whether funders or land managers are impressed by the number of our volunteer hours? Because sometimes other users clamor to use our trail, with voices louder than ours; and so we need something that speaks more loudly than just demanding voices -- such as the statistics that result from a lot of work being done on and for a system of hiking trails by volunteers who are *devoted* to traveling on foot.

Lastly, the hours we volunteers spend working on the NCT part of our trail system are used by NPS officials to support their annual requests for funds. Many of those hours went towards building new or replacing old structures. The sour economy means we may not get the level of support we've gotten before; but it's hard to turn down projects for which the labor is really guaranteed, and our track record for completing projects successfully is exceptional...

thanks to you!

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Part-time Position Vacancy

Executive Director, Finger Lakes Trail Conference

Our long-time Exec, Gene Bavis, is retiring after 10 years in this "retirement job." Please consider applying for this job if you, too, retired a bit early and want good work to do, or you're a new college grad who just loves the outdoors, the North Country National Scenic Trail, the Great Eastern Trail, and long-distance hiking, or you just love the Finger Lakes Trail. Background in scouting, forestry, natural science, outdoor recreation, land protection, landscape architecture, or a similar field, or experience with an organization(s) devoted to building and maintaining long distance hiking trails helpful. Good communication skills, interest in fund development, and ability to work with volunteers essential. Supervise a 2-person part-time office staff. Must be flexible and able to travel some, work some evenings and weekends. Is the public face of the FLTC, so must be personable and persuasive. The official notice follows:

~ Search for part time Executive Director ~

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference is seeking an Executive Director. A job description, application and more details are available on the Finger Lakes Trail Conference website:

**www.fingerlakestrail.org
or call 585-658-9320**

**Trail Census Data
& Tools You Can Use!**

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