

Spring, 2013

April Fools' Issue



TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from Trail Quality's Travelin' Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

Untangle Your Boots And...Work!

Special Points to Ponder:

- Can you name four *newly required* safety practices or procedures?
- When and where will this spring's Trail Council meeting be held?
- Like to teach? The Travelin' Training Team is still looking for new team members. Please contact Lynda at ljrassoc@roadrunner.com It's fun!

Trail Council Meeting

Topics on the agenda of the upcoming Trail Council meeting include: the revised FLTC Safety Manual, new safety procedures/requirements, and "Operational Leadership Safety Training"; landowner liability protection, use of anti-trespassing laws, and posting property; status of AANR agreements; signing (routed signs, "trailhead" signing at roads, signs to help landowners, etc); and emergency and law enforcement contacts.

The meeting is scheduled for APRIL 6, 2013, from 10-3, at the First Congregational-United Church of Christ, 58 North Main St. (NY 332) in Canandaigua.

Y'all come...& bring your lunch!

Warning: This issue contains *some* stories that are written *as if* they are true. Although the stories themselves are not true, *some* of the information in them is. The questions raised by these jokes, fabrications, hoaxes and satirical stories are (sometimes) important; the points made are (usually) valid; and the standards and policies mentioned are (occasionally) legitimate. **See if you can sort the wheat from the chaff**, please allow yourself to laugh, or at least chuckle, once or twice; and please forgive everything that's in questionable taste.

Caution: Old Vehicles on the Trail

CLICK ME!
(No foolin)



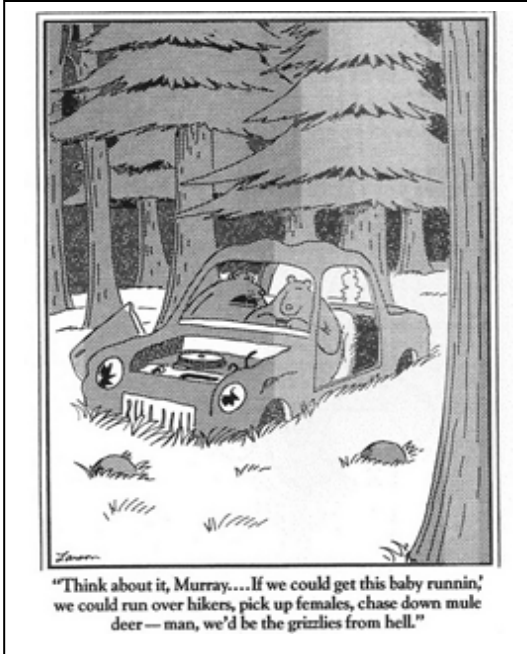
A unique father-and-son team of black bears recently completed their training as automotive mechanics by taking the automotive technician program at the BOCES center in Allegany County. While on a field excursion with their classmates into the woods of Klipnocky and Bully Hill State Forests, the pair pointed out several old abandoned trucks and cars that they hope to repair and restore, ostensibly to sell to collectors; but their instructor later found a copy of a Gary Larson cartoon drawing, neatly laminated, posted on a tree in the ravine next to one of the vehicles (see p. 2). The instructor told this TTN reporter that he understood that cubs stay with their mothers and while he realized it was odd for father and son bears to be together, he thought the two were just like most other black bears -- basically wary of humans and mostly interested in where their next meal would come from -- but he did realize they were displaying an unusual entrepreneurial spirit. Classmates seconded the opinion of their instructor and said that they detected no hostility or animosity toward humans, only an intense interest in the bologna sandwiches that other students brought to the lunch room.

When told about the two, VP for Trail Maintenance, Steve Catherman, said he hoped to convince them to haul out the rest of the trash, including the old stoves, mattress springs, and washing machines often found next to vehicles in many backwoods gullies. A psychiatrist who studied the situation suggests that the black bears may be suffering from "grizzly envy," but wildlife experts who analyzed the drawing think that the bears were simply expressing a wicked-bad sense of humor that had gone unrecognized in black bears till now. Whatever..., hikers and trail maintainers are warned to watch out for dilapidated but fast moving vehicles on the trail. Also, since the population of black bears is growing and expanding, backpackers and crews should consider securing their food in bear bags or canisters; and everyone is reminded to keep food and food odors out of shelters and tents. FYI, the FLTC Trail Mgt. Team has approved a scout project to install cables or other devices for hanging food out of harm's way at lean-to's in select state forests, as long the NYS DEC grants permission.

continued on p. 2

Caution: Vehicles on the Trail *continued from p. 1*

The drawing below was found posted next to a 1940's-ish car left in an old trash dump in a ravine in Allegany County. As the black bear population has moved northwards, there has been an increase in sightings on the FLT.



Surprising Second Wind

On September 16, 2012, long-time FLTC member Warren ("Trail Dawg") Johnson reported the astonishing – and inspiring – story of the "death" and subsequent "resurrection" of his good friend, Brenda Bunn, to whose great coffee he attributes many successful days of hiking and trail maintenance. While Ms. Bunn was not a trail maintainer herself, her work behind-the-scenes got Warren up, out and hiking on many a day. With his permission, here is an abbreviated, slightly edited version of the notice about saving his friend's life that Warren sent out to the FLTC e-group:

"I had thoughts of going on Don's hike this morning but a friend of mine died. Yes, my good friend Brenda, Brenda Bunn, the coffee maker. She had apparently produced her last pot of coffee. She had some sort of a stroke when we moved from South New Berlin to Norwich, but CPR (Coffee Pot Resuscitation) brought her back to life again.

"To get my mind off this tragic loss I headed for the Lyon Brook State Land.... Covered about 3 miles but didn't find the old barn & silo foundations. I'll do some research and return once again. Feeling sour about the loss of Brenda Bunn, I stopped...and purchased something to sweeten me up -- a 2 pound jar of Kutik's orange blossom honey and a small jar of creamed honey.

Surprising Second Wind *continued at right*

Surprising Second Wind *continued*

"When I got home I figured that I would have to bury my good friend Brenda; but I'll be damned, her eyes were shining brightly, and her coffee was hot.

"We passed by a 'Shock Camp' during last Thursday's [Bull-thistle] FLEET Group hike. This had given me an idea – to use an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) on Ms. Bunn. I attached the AED, yelled CLEAR and nailed ol' Brenda with a shockable rhythm. It didn't seem to work, so I left for my hike figuring Brenda was gone for good. Much to my surprise, AED's must have a delayed reaction on coffee makers, not an immediate response to the shockable rhythm."

We congratulate Warren on saving Brenda Bunn's life. Warren's story certainly illustrates the importance of knowing how to use an AED, although it's not likely to be helpful out on the trail.... Knowing how to perform CPR *manually*, however, may be really important, when hiking or working with others.

As emphasized in the recently revised FLTC *Safety Handbook*, all persons who lead hikes or work teams or crews need to be familiar with basic first aid practices and CPR procedures and carry basic first aid materials with them.

No-Joke Revised Safety Guidelines for Working on the FLT

The recently revised FLTC *Safety Handbook* includes the following information for volunteers felling trees, removing hung-up or downed trees from the trail, and building switchbacks:

Before felling a tree: Only 2 "swampers" (helpers) per sawyer; helpers *must* wear hard hats; swampers (as well as sawyers) must indicate they have read the FLTC *Safety Handbook*, especially the section on felling trees and the related hazard analysis; sawyers and swampers should review the hazards on site and identify escape paths together; other crew members should be more than a tree length away.

Before removing downed trees: Sawyers and helpers should discuss and prepare for likely hazards at the site, e.g., branches whipping and limbs pinching when relieved of stress, trunks shifting or rolling when cut. Note that these same hazards should be discussed when using hand saws.

Before benching-in trail (switchbacks) across a really steep hillside: Workers should identify debris that is likely to slide downhill and remove it when that section is reached; workers must wear hard hats when working below one another; workers should review the relevant hazard analysis in the *Safety Handbook*.

Before work every day, the crew leader should hold a "tail gate" meeting to preview the plans for the day, answer questions, go over the tools being used, review especially relevant safety practices, and assure that everyone has read the FLTC *Safety Handbook*.

Plz Review Proposed New Maintenance Standards

VP for Trail Maintenance, Steve Catherman, has proposed that, starting this season, the FLT's tread should be groomed much as a snowmobile trail is groomed, i.e., to a silky smooth surface. The width of our trail tread – 18" – will not change, however.

The goal of the new program is to get all the "little natural junk" off the trail and leave the surface free of twigs, rocks, roots, and scabble, and especially the loose sticks and pebbles that cause hikers, especially us older ones, to slip, slide, and fall. Sorry to say, we will not be able to use a mechanical snowmobile trail groomer. In comparison to a snowmobile trail, the FLT is much skinnier and the surface is dirt, not snow, so different tools will be required. "We have chainsaws to cut out the downed tree tops and limbs," Steve says, "and brush hogs to reduce saplings to stubble; but clearly we need people trained in the art of flicking sticks off the tread with their hiking sticks or hand held weed whackers, or using 'shop vacs' and hefty vacuum cleaners, if we're ever going to achieve this goal."

This initiative also addresses our need to enlarge the pool of trail maintainers and attract new helpers. For this new work of "smoothing the path," the target audience is retired folks living alongside the trail. Preferably, these individuals will own lengthy extension cords and have handy electrical outlets nearby, or have appropriate gas powered equipment. In the cartoon below, one such volunteer (comically drawn by Gary Larson) is depicted working on the trail:



As the caption suggests, training to make new maintainers comfortable near ominous woods and sinister ravens may be required.

Before implementing this new standard, the FLTC would like feedback from YOU !! on the following questions: Do you: (1) want to convert our rugged back country footpath to a smoothed trail, (2) think we can find enough individuals willing to do the work, (3) believe it's a good use of the FLTC's limited funds, and (4) think Mother Nature likes the proposal? Please email your views to Steve at stevec@roadrunner.com before April 1st.

Hard Work But Lots of Fun (Seriously) – Sign Up for 2013 “Alley Cat” Projects!

The projects are listed in date sequence and some may be done in phases. **For additional information about accommodations or working just a part of the week, contact the project manager or mattbranneman@gmail.com.**

Alley-Cat 1 Project Manager: **Rick Roberts**. 9 more miles will be relocated off road near the Cannonsville Reservoir (map M 27/28) west of Walton. This is planned as a two-year project: In the first phase, tentatively scheduled for **June 3rd to 7th**, the trail will be moved from the road to an abandoned rail bed where downed trees and undergrowth need to be cleared away. Three small foot bridges will be installed over creeks and drainages. (The second part of the reroute will consist of cutting new trail and is planned for 2014.) For more info, please contact Rick at 607-746-9694 or hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com.

Alley-Cat 2 Project Manager: **Paul Warrender** The Chestnut Lean-to in Danby State Forest (M 17) will be replaced. An access trail to the site will be cut in April by the Cayuga Trails Club and the dismantling of the existing shelter will take place in May, also headed up by CTC. Check their website for dates if you would like to help out with these tasks. The replacement will be built **June 15 to June 21**. Contact Paul at rif167@yahoo.com for more info.

Alley-Cat 3 Project Manager: **Paul Warrender**. The old bridge over Shindagan Creek (Shindagan Hollow SF, map M 18) will be demolished and replaced, **August 8 to August 11**. The footings and sills for the bridge on both sides have been damaged by flooding and erosion. A new bridge will be built on the newly repaired footings. For info, contact Paul at rif167@yahoo.com.

Alley-Cat 4 Project Manager: **Tom Bryden**. The DEC has already cut and milled the logs which are waiting to be delivered to the site for a new lean-to in New Michigan State Forest on Map M23. Lodging and food prep and dining will be at the YMCA Camp. This project will take place from **September 20th to 25th**. Contact Tom at [snbdodger@yahoo.com](mailto:snbododger@yahoo.com) for more info.

Serious Chainsaw Certification Training

Only certified sawyers may use chainsaws on trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System. Classes have been scheduled for April 20 & 21 and May 18 & 19 with instructor Bill Lindloff and will be held, once again, in Birdseye Hollow SF (M 12/13). Lodging provided at the Scout House in Hammondsport; participants responsible for own food. Participants **must** sign up ahead of time with Marty Howden, FLTC TQ Chainsaw Training Coordinator. Contact Marty at howser51@yahoo.com. Class size is limited and by the time you read this, both classes are likely to be full; *if so*, please contact the Finger Lakes National Forest or your local Co-operative Extension for other training opportunities. Participants must also be current in Basic First Aid and CPR and provide their own PPE. **If you need UL-approved chaps, contact Marty ASAP (check for the UL label on existing chaps first)**. Please note that sawyer certification training does not train sawyer helpers (swampers) or replace the need for sawyers to discuss work and safety plans with their swamper(s) ahead of time. Helpers should review the FLTC *Safety Handbook* before working in the woods. 3

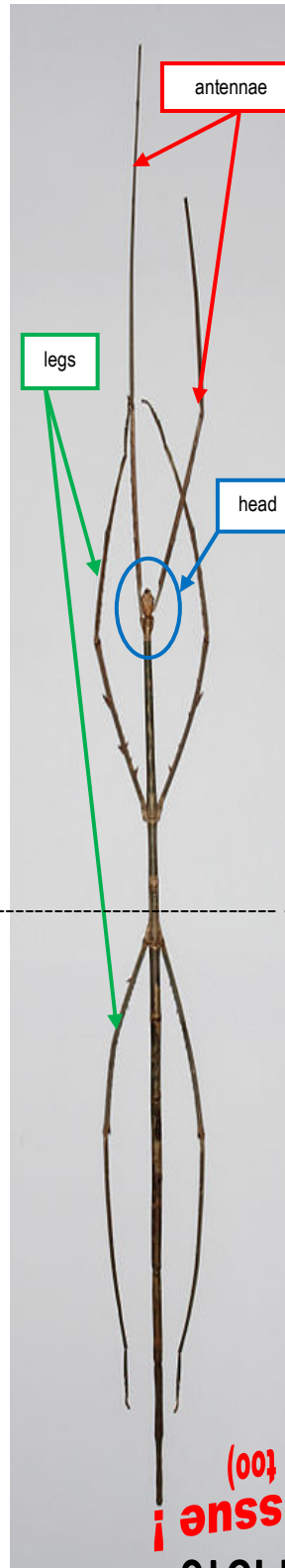
New Walking Stick Recommended for Trail Maintainers

There's a new item for the trail maintainer's tool kit, to help implement the new emphasis on meticulously "smoothed surface" trails (see story on p. 1). The new item, a specially bred giant walking stick, does quadruple duty as hiking partner, mini portable vacuum cleaner, hiking pole, and pole twig trimmer. The walking stick rides companionably on a shoulder, then drops to the trail to gobble up the leaves and sticks it spies before climbing back up its hiking companion's leg to its shoulder perch. This supersized insect, based on a rare species called "Chan's megastick," has been genetically modified to have its core body filled with long, stiff cellulose fibers so it can serve as a hiking pole, too. And when prosthetic pinchers are added to the tail, the walking stick becomes a pole trimmer! When using the elongated walking sticks vertically as hiking poles, special care must be taken to keep the legs and antennae folded downward against the body and parallel with the trail and the insulated snood that comes (free) with the stick snugged over the head. With this fantastic new "multi-tool," no need for a leash, mutt mitt, *continued at right...*

Please send questions, comments, complaints, corrections, suggestions, new info or tips about trail building or maintaining, plus lottery tickets, to any member of the "Traveling Training Team": Editor/writer -- Lynda "Juvenile Detention Hall Didn't Help" Rummel (lirassoc@roadrunner.com); team members: Bill Coffin (wmscoffin@twcny.rr.com); Mary Coffin (mcoffin1@twcny.rr.com) and Irene Szabo (Treeweenie@aol.com).

New Walking Stick, continued

or trail broom, either! Glands, leg spines, and reproductive organs have been removed, so the only downside is that the length of any particular walking stick cannot be adjusted once it is fully grown.



At Left: Dubbed the "Big McStick," individual supersized bodies measure 36" to 52" long. For comparison, unmodified Chan's megasticks measure only 22" long, and the Northern Walkingstick that we usually find in our New York forests is about 3 1/2" long. As an herbivore, this Brobdignagian creature poses no threat to humans and happily feeds itself while working. Keep this in mind as you gear up for your first trail maintenance trip this season, sometime in May. (Be sure to see the handy one-page guide to routine trail maintenance in the December, 2012, issue of the TTN for a schedule and list of tasks to be done.) Only from the FLTC, at FLTinfo@fingerlakestrail.org, and only \$19.84. Pincher accessory sold separately. **Product information:** Because this is a genetically-modified, patented insect produced by a commercial biotech laboratory, it may be sold as a pet. Otherwise, only the Northern Walkingstick may be kept by individuals. **4**

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Finger Lakes Trail Conference
6111 Visitor Center Road
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6th April Fools' Issue!
(includes some serious stuff, too)