

Spring, 2014

April Fools' Issue



Untangle Your Boots And...Work!

Special Points to Ponder:

- When and where will this spring's Trail Council meeting be held? You're welcome to attend!
- Which Alley-Cat projects will you be working on?
- Like to teach? The Travelin' Training Team is still looking for new team members. It's fun and very helpful to the trail. Please contact Lynda at ljrassoc@roadrunner.com
- What's PPE? (No, it's not that!)

No Jokin' ! Notice!

Trail Council Meeting

Topics on the agenda of the upcoming Trail Council meeting include: issues raised at the Fall Trail Management meetings; new systems for reporting and posting trail conditions notices on the web and maps; status of Volunteer Stewardship Agreements (replacing AANRs); rigging training; evaluating facilities. The meeting is scheduled for APRIL 5, 2014, 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!

TRAIL TENDERS' NEWS

A publication from Trail Quality's Travelin' Training Team

Finger Lakes Trail Conference

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, this issue especially, please forgive everything that's in questionable taste.

(Some of This is Really True!)

FLTC Hires New Chainsaw Co-Trainer

In an effort to increase the number of new recruits for its chainsaw certification classes, the FLTC has asked a new chainsaw training instructor to work alongside long-time expert trainer, Bill Lindloff. The new trainer looks very much like the woman pictured on the magazine cover below, and in fact, may be the same person. She comes with excellent credentials. FLTC has two reasons for hiring her: (1) to free up some of Bill's time during the training sessions, and (2), to possibly tempt new individuals to take the places of long-serving sawyers who are aging out. Bill, a thoroughly engaging guy in his own right, has helped train a couple of female sawyers, but we need some help convincing more women to take up the sport. "Gabrielle" should be just the person for the job. We suspect she will also convince a few more young men to get certified, as well.



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Female Hikers Most Evolved Women...

A new study released by the Sports Equality Institute has compiled evidence that shows that female hikers are the most evolved of all women. Using a supercomputer, the study's author, Dr. Maya Achinbak, analyzed the content of 3,000,000 research papers from the fields of sports medicine, sports and recreation management, and outdoor recreation, and concluded that female hikers enjoy life more, live longer, have a heightened appreciation of beauty and nature, stay active and healthy longer, have fewer concussions, integrate information better, and more importantly, think more clearly than women in any other sport. Most importantly and surprisingly, the study also found that mommies who were hikers seem to pass these attributes on to their off-spring! Given the benefits that hiking clearly has for society, then, it's not clear why hikers are sometimes the Rodney Dangerfields of the sports world, except that, unlike fans of other sports, hikers tend not to toot their own horns. It is also not clear whether this is a good situation for women, since the evolutionary process seems to have just moved the load from the belly to the back, as shown in the following sketch that accompanied the article.



Note that the study did not compare male hikers to other male sports enthusiasts. So, it's only speculation that the next image on the right that depicts the next giant leap in the evolution of hiking will be of a male hiker carrying the couple's huge backpack while the female strides ahead.

New Chainsaw Co-Trainer, *continued from p. 1*

Between jokes about the Texas Chainsaw Massacre and missing body parts due to failing to wear all proper PPE, is there a middle ground in the quest to make the job of trail maintainer sexy? Yes! It's called publicizing the fact that maintainers can openly engage in one of their most significant "guilty pleasures" by becoming certified sawyers and clearing trees off the trail! According to *Outside Magazine* (October, 2004 issue), the 3rd most frequent "guilty pleasure" mentioned by their AXE-treme readers (and the one that made the magazine cover) is chopping down a tree. We would think that using a loud and powerful chainsaw to take out a hung-up tree would rank even more highly among the magazine's readership.

Gabrielle may have clout as the Goddess of Temptation, but she has yet to agree to wear all the required Proper Protection Equipment (PPE) that chainsaw operators must wear when working anywhere on the FLT, and, we won't hire her until she agrees to do so. Along with having current certifications in Basic First Aid and Adult CPR, she must wear UL-approved protective long pants (or chaps), and acceptable hardhat, eye protection, and hearing protection. (We recommend the integrated hardhat that includes a face mask and ear muffs; we will provide UL-approved chaps, if needed.) **More info at right.**

New Recognition for Our Landowners No Joke! WE NEED YOUR NOMINATIONS!

Attn Trail maintainers: Please identify and nominate a landowner who could be profiled and thanked in an upcoming issue of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*. All you need to do is send a brief bit about the landowner to the editor, Irene Szabo, at treeweenie@aol.com. Be sure to ask your landowner if it's okay first, and then include the approximate location of the land-owner's parcel(s) and the reasons why your landowner is so great. The landowner need not have donated a trail easement, but "just" may have helped the trail in many other ways. Your landowner's business, interesting hobby, or special charitable work or passion can be emphasized. Try to include a high-resolution photo of the land or the landowner(s).

We have included landowner profiles in the *FLTNews* occasionally in the past. The FLTC Board of Managers has decided to raise this effort to the level of an on-going program, so that we give more consistent recognition to our generous landowners and more of them can be recognized.

Chainsaw Certification Training (Mostly True) *(continued from column at left)*

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 State Forest (M 12/13). Classes are open to newbies as well as to sawyers seeking to be recertified. Bill will have a few extra saws.

Spoiler Alert!!! If "Gabrielle" consents to wear proper Personal Protective Equipment, she may be assisting Bill in these classes (see column at left for details).

Lodging space is provided at the roomy Scout House in Hammondsport (inflatable foam mattresses available but bring your own sleeping bag -- & cot, if you have one). Participants are responsible for their own meals..

Participants must sign up ahead of time with Marty Howden, FLTC Trail Quality Chainsaw Training Coordinator, at howser51@yahoo.com. Participants must be current in Basic First Aid and CPR and should provide their own PPE. **If you need UL-approved chaps, contact Marty ASAP (check for the UL label on existing chaps first).**

In exchange for free training, housing, and UL-approved chaps, sawyers must promise to work outside their home areas if asked and if available. Everyone should note that sawyers must discuss work and safety plans with their "swamper(s)" (helpers) ahead of time. Sawyers and helpers must review the *FLTC Safety Handbook* before working in the woods, and swampers must wear hard hats and eye and ear protection.

If classes are full by the time you read this, contact the Finger Lakes National Forest, your county extension office, or the North Country Trail Association for other possibilities.

Seriously Simplified Points for Talking with Landowners (No Joke!)

In NYS, there are legal ways of protecting landowners from any increased liability and for keeping unwanted persons off their lands. Here's a quick summary of the basics:

1. NY State's General Obligations Law (GOL) and its anti-trespassing laws work together to allow the trail to cross private lands without increasing the landowner's liability while simultaneously protecting the landowner from intrusion by unwanted visitors.
2. The GOL explicitly allows landowners to let hikers cross their lands without increasing their liability, as long as
 - The landowner does not charge hikers a fee
 - The landowner does not create a hazard with the intent to harm
 The landowner need not even inspect the trail for hazards!
3. Landowners may be concerned that once the trail is opened, people other than hikers – like hunters, mountain bike riders, or “disreputables” -- may use the trail to get on their lands. The anti-trespassing laws help prevent this from happening.
4. 2 types of anti-trespassing laws are in place: the penal law and the environmental conservation law. Both can be used to protect private lands:
 - Penal law allows imposing a fine of \leq \$250 for each instance of trespassing
 - Environmental conservation law allows the imposition of a fine *and loss of the trespasser's hunting license for a year*
5. Landowners are permitted to allow certain *kinds of users* (e.g., hikers) while not allowing others (e.g., hunters).
6. Landowners are also permitted to identify *specific individuals* whom they will not allow on their property, prohibiting them from going onto the trail and/or the rest of their land
7. At the same time, landowners retain the right to hunt their own lands and allow others to hunt their lands if they want
8. The FLTC will provide NO TRESPASSING signs that say that hiking is allowed but other activities, e.g., hunting, are prohibited. Landowners should use these in conjunction with other No Trespassing signs
9. The FLTC will help build stiles over fences, dodge-ways, or other nonhazardous barriers and will post trail management signs at entry points to deter entry
10. Local law enforcement (state, county and DEC) will work with landowners to catch trespassers and enforce the laws
 - I. The GOL protects other kinds of activities in addition to hiking, so landowners may allow other kinds of users, such as hunters, gleaners, etc., on their lands, also, *if they choose to do so*.
 - II. The FLTC will close the trail for the first two weeks of big game season at the landowner's request.
 - II. The landowner should contact county law enforcement to confirm the steps that need to be followed to ensure enforcement of the anti-trespassing laws

Hard Work But Lots of Fun (Seriously) – Sign Up for 2014 “Alley Cat” Projects!

By Matt Branneman

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**. The second portion of trail re-route near Cannonville Reservoir that was started last spring will take 3.5 miles of trail off the road. Again Rick will be letting us use his house for this project. **May 24 to May 28**. FLTC maps M 27/28, west of Walton. For more info, please contact Rick at 607-746-9694 or hikerrick_2000@yahoo.com.

Alley-Cat 2 Project Manager **Paul Warrender** will lead another bridge re-build in Danby State Forest (M 17), from **July 23 to July 27**. We will be staying at Camp Badger again during the project. This project may use rigging. Contact Paul at rif167@yahoo.com for more info.

Alley-Cat 3 Project Manager: **Mike TenKate**. Mike will lead a trail re-route in Hoxie Gorge State Forest (FLTC map M 20), just east of I-81, adding over 5 miles of new trail. **August 4 to August 8**. Email Mike at mike_tenkate@yahoo.com for more info.

Alley-Cat 4 Project Manager: **Marty Howden**. A ~ 1-mile re-route in Rock City/McCarty Hill State Forests (M 3/CT 3) will separate the NCNST/FLT from mountain biking trails and restore 4 miles of continuous hiking-only trail through the area. This project may use rigging. **September 6 to 10**. For more info, contact Marty at howser51@yahoo.com.

Caller Says Planner Asserts New Federal Accessibility Guidelines Mandate Concrete Trails

True story! On January 9, 2014, Lynda and Irene were each sitting at their respective computers listening to a webinar hosted by American Trails that featured Janet Zeller, National Accessibility Program Manager, U.S. Forest Service, and heard another participant say that a planner with whom she had to work had told her that the new guidelines, put in place in November 2013, required pedestrian paths to be surfaced with concrete. Now one reason for having the webinar was to counter the many myths that have terrified footpath builders for years. Zeller explained that the planner was wrong and there are actually several ways to harden a trail surface to make it accessible. But *the real point*, she said, is that hiking trails *must* be made accessible *only when* a number of conditions are in place, including: the trail must be on public land; the segment must be new or significantly altered; the segment must connect directly to a trail head or complying trail; making it accessible must be do-able, practical, and affordable; and accessibility should not alter the fundamental nature of the trail. As before, all new *permanent* facilities must be accessible, even though the trail leading up to the bridge, lean-to, or privy may not be. And as before, the roofless, wall-less privy is okay, but note that the NYS DEC requires railings on two sides. **The upshot: Nothing new for us!** Contact Lynda or Irene for details.

Real Tools for Trail Maintenance

DR Mowers handle vegetation more substantial than grass, such as the scrub that overgrows old farm fields. John and Sarah Sellers' back pasture, which provides a critical corridor for the trail to run from Sugar Hill State Forest to Sugar Hill Rd. (M 13) by the landmark tree called the Yorski Oak, is a classic example of the kind of terrain on which a DR Mower excels. The pasture grew wild for several years and clumps of multi-flora roses sprang up everywhere, making the trail tread into a gauntlet of overhanging spikes. Two seasons ago, Paul Hoffman used his gas-powered hedge trimmer to cut back the multi-flora roses before attacking the stalks and mulching them to pieces with the DR Mower. This half-day's work kept the stretch open and usable for two years. Now that the section has new and reliable maintainers, the pasture will be given "the DR treatment" again this coming season.

A DR Mower is very well balanced so can be used pretty easily by persons of all sizes. A DR Mower can be trailered or transported in the back of a pick-up truck or modified van, using removable ramps. Contact the FLTC office for a DR Mower (and possible "wrangler" like Paul) near you.

The FLTC also stores a variety of hand tools and equipment in the garage next to the office at the Mt. Morris dam site. Ask for a list of tools and make arrangements in advance before borrowing any. Trail signs, disks, Carsonite posts, and decals are also kept at the office.



Above: Paul Hoffman shows Deb Borer how to use the hefty DR Mower, at the Trail Mgt meeting in Springville, Nov.9, 2013. Deb and her husband, Joe, co-maintain a stretch of the FLT/ NCNST and both are certified sawyers. Paul, also a certified sawyer, works on the Genesee Valley Greenway and hauls a DR Mower in his van.

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

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(Includes Some Serious Stuff, too)