

Finger Lakes Trail NEWS

Fall 2007



www.fingerlakestrail.org

Inside...

- ◆ Taming Big Daddy: Major Trail Improvement Project in the Holland Ravines
- ◆ Promoting the FLT

...and much more!

President's Message

Regeneration — Succession — Continuation

I have been hiking some trails in Pennsylvania the past few years, most recently the Susquehannock Trail through the state forest of the same name. It is a well-maintained trail through some very attractive mountain forests with a history of extensive and intensive logging. Nature quite successfully recovered from man's heavy intrusion and the forest nicely regenerated. In many areas of the Susquehannock State Forest, one is impressed by the miles and miles of continuous ferns surrounding large trees, cherry, beech, oak, etc., appearing as if planted as a lawn or ground cover.

This beautiful green "carpet" covering the forest floor is really a sign of a forest facing an uncertain future. The under-story needed for the next generation of forest has been destroyed by the oversized deer herd. Once again, the future of the forest is threatened and extreme measures are being taken to allow the forest to regenerate.

All species are faced with a natural process of propagation to assure the continuation and strengthening of the species. For many it consumes a significant portion of their existence. Organizations that are wise consider their sources of strength and plan to assure the future availability of these resources. Regeneration, succession, is important to human organizations. The FLTC Board has determined that protection of the FLT "Forever" is a critical need and I have reported to you in my recent President's Messages of steps we have taken to concentrate on preserving the trail corridor.

However, if the trail is to be there "Forever", there is a resource that is critical to its existence and that is people. People who have a very deep interest in the natural environment! The kind of people who want to hike, maintain hiking trails, observe wildlife, and generally preserve the natural environment, are necessary for the continuation of this trail.

Viewing that beautiful forest with a questionable future made me think about the continuation of the FLTC. Will today's youth value the natural world highly enough to seek experiences there throughout their lives, thus providing the resources to assure our regeneration? Many of us have heard the term "nature deficit disorder", a condition identified and explored in the book "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder", by Richard Louv. I certainly recommend the book to everyone, as it analyzes the causes of a phenomenon we are now observing in our youth. While it explores possible remedies, the situation described is very unsettling. Will the adults of tomorrow be enthusiastic about preserving our natural environment? Will they seek nature as a source of renewal and enjoyment? Will they enjoy hiking and maintaining hiking trails?



David S. Marsh

Mr. Louv emphasizes how children are not being exposed to nature through play at early ages as was the case in past generations. Activities, organized and managed by adults, have been substituted for free play. Many families now live where natural play areas either do not exist or, if they do, play is often restricted. He refers to the "third frontier" where children now accept scientific creations and artificial intelligence as the norm. They are plugged in to an electronic world, not the natural world. He wonders what messages adults are sending to children about nature. "Parents, educators, other adults, institutions—the culture itself—may say one thing to children about nature's gifts, but so many of our actions and messages—especially the ones we can not hear ourselves deliver—are different. And children hear very well."

Mr. Louv reports in his book that "The childhood link between outdoor activity and physical health is clear. The Center for

Disease Control (CDC) reports that the number of overweight adult Americans increased over 60% between 1991 and 2000. According to CDC data, the U.S. population of overweight children between ages two and five increased by almost 36 percent from 1989 to 1999. ... In the United States, children ages six to eleven spend about thirty hours a week looking at TV or a computer monitor ... the obesity epidemic has coincided with the greatest increase in organized sports for children in history ... The physical and emotional exercise that children enjoy when they play in nature is more varied and less time-bound than organized sports ... Surely children need a quality attachment to the land not only for their own health, but in order to feel compelled to protect nature as adults—not only as common sense conservationists, but as citizens and voters."

Will the most vital resource of all, people who use, maintain, and value hiking trails, be available to the FLTC? Will the youth of today, in spite of their lack of exposure to nature, change in their adult life? Is the future of our "forest" uncertain? If the answer is questionable and the problem is pervasive in our culture, is there anything that the FLTC should be, or even could be, doing to help assure it has the resources for continuation? Scouting organizations have always provided youth with exposure to the natural world and many FLTC volunteers have previously participated in scouting programs. But, are these programs large enough to provide the resources we will need? I think not. A review of the recently established FLTC goals and the revised organization structure will indicate

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Are you a Finger Lakes Trail groupie?

The FLTC has an email group (e-group) open to anyone interested. This service can be used to discuss hiking issues, inquire about trail conditions or find hiking partners. Go to the FLTC website (www.fingerlakestrail.org) to sign up.



FINGER LAKES TRAIL NEWS

Published for Members and Friends of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.

Mission Statement

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

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Fall 2007

Where's Jaws? County hike series coordinator Pat Monahan has come up with something new in this year's series. Starting with "Where's Waldo?" (a ceramic snake), Pat has had the hikers look for a critter along the path and deposit a penny in the cup so that those finding it can be counted. Or you can add a dollar for the FLTC. They haven't all been as obvious as Jaws. (More photos from the county hikes on pages 24, 25.)

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Jackson "Jet" Thomas

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Annette Brzezicki

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Cover: This is a photo of Annette Brzezicki, President of the Foothills Trail Club, putting the final blow to a stake along the edge of brand new trail built during the Alley Cat week in Holland. Landowners Jim and Elaine Pawlak allowed us to relocate the trail up-ravine to a much better place to cross the ravine. The photo was taken by Lynda Rummel, project coordinator. See Lynda's article "Taming Big Daddy" on page 3 and Irene Szabo's article about Lynda's receiving the NCTA's 2007 Trail Builder of the Year award on page 9.

Thank you to those who volunteered to work at our display at the NYS Fair. We were there representing the hiking community. This is an important opportunity to get the word out and to partner with our friends at DEC in a public awareness effort. This year's volunteers included several people who had not worked at the Fair before. We appreciate your stepping forward. I'd like to also thank those who traveled to Ramapo College in New Jersey in July to help us staff an FLT display at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's bi-annual meeting. In September, we'll be having an FLT display at the Parks and Trails NY statewide Community Trails Conference in Rochester.

I'd like to give you a quick membership update. We have just gone through the "renewal season." Our membership year goes from April 1 through March 31 of each year. I am pleased to report that our membership has grown. I don't have statistics from before 2002 at my fingertips, but to the best of my knowledge, we are at an all time high for August with approximately 1160 members. Our



From the Desk of the Executive Director

.....
Gene Bavis

membership was 1178 on 12/31/06. It is likely that we will gain about 50 or 60 new members during the remainder of 2007, and hopefully some of the 135 who have not renewed their memberships will do so. By year's end we should have over 1200 members. **YOU can help.** As you know, the FLTC is a volunteer organization, and furthermore, most of the funding is from dues and contributions. Please talk to your hiking friends and **encourage them to join the FLTC.** Word of mouth is the best recruiting tool we have. We'd be happy to send you brochures.

I am looking forward to Ed Sidote's Birthday Party at the Fall Campout in Bath, NY. I hope YOU will be there to celebrate with us. I'd like to thank those who have already joined the "FLT Forever Society." I will not name

them at this time because they will be listed in the next issue of the *FLT News*, and I'm sure we'll have photographs of the "induction" ceremony. For more details about the Forever Society, please see the summer issue of the *FLT News*, or contact me.

In October, you will be given another opportunity to help support the work of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. Each year, we have our Annual Appeal. We only ask you to consider a gift to the support of our wonderful trail twice a year (at membership renewal time in March and in October), unlike many organizations that contact you MUCH more frequently. We hope that those who can afford to do so will continue to show the generous support you have in the past. Any time you have questions about finances or anything else, please don't hesitate to contact me or one of the Officers or Board Members.

Gene Bavis, Executive Director
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Our website is:
www.fingerlakestrail.org

President's Message ...

(Continued from inside front cover)

that we intend to attract more people to the FLT and increase our membership. In that regard, Jay Zitter, our Vice President of Membership and Marketing is applying new and different techniques to better understand our potential market, including all age levels, and better communicate the existence and attractiveness of the FLT. If you have any suggestions on this subject please share them with me or with Jay.

I am pleased to report that your FLTC Board of Managers is making steady progress toward all of its goals. We continue to benefit from exceptional volunteer efforts, some of which are documented in this issue. It is my hope that this volunteer resource will remain vital and abundant in the many years

ahead. I look forward to seeing many of you at our Fall Campout on October 5 through 7 when we will enjoy the company of many fellow hikers and trail supporters. We will also celebrate the 90th birthday of Mr. Ed Sidote, a gentleman who for many years has provided us with a wonderful example of dedication and support for the FLT.

Meanwhile, nature's regeneration is underway as we move into the beautiful autumn season. The magnificent colors, crisp clear air, and ultimately the smell of freshly fallen leaves in the forest will remind us that our trail traverses one of the finest areas in the entire United States. I have always felt this is the best season of all to hike and be in the forest. Please take time to enjoy our trail this fall, bring a young person along, and remember, the trail ends only in your mind. □

Found on the Trail

Digital camera on map M-4.
 Contact Heidi Hendrick,
hhendrick@rochester.rr.com,
 585/482-3134

FLTC OFFICE HOURS: We are normally open Mondays and Thursdays, 9:30 to 3:30, but there are frequent exceptions, so call ahead if you want to be sure.
 585/658-9320

Moving?

Instructions for notifying the FLTC of address changes appear at the bottom of the masthead on page 1 of every issue of the *FLT News*.

Taming Big Daddy and His Relatives

by Lynda Rummel, FLTC Trail Management Committee

The topographic map of southern Erie County shows the Conservation Trail crossing twenty-six ravines in the six miles between Vermont Street and Carpenter Hill Road atop Vermont Hill (northeast of Holland, map CT-6). Until recently, this branch trail in the FLT System simply went up, over, and down these ravines, much as it had when the trail was inaugurated some 45 years ago: switchbacks were rare, and when they did exist, the legs had grades of 35-45%. (The standard for acceptable grade today is 10-15%.) Because of the steep grades, primitive steps that the Boy Scouts had put in a decade and a half ago were long gone, the trail's outer edges had eroded away, and the inner edges were rounded and filled with slough. Descending the remaining track was often like sliding down a tightrope—the path was breathtakingly steep, wide enough for only one foot at a time, and treacherously slick from hillside springs, mud, and wet leaves. However, thanks to the efforts of July's Alley Cat trail building crew, trail across three of the most difficult ravines has been relocated and/or rebuilt to modern standards, and trail in a fourth ravine, relocated by the June 9th Western NY Trail Building Workshop participants, is ready to be finished by the Foothills Trail Club.

While driving up to Holland (the eleventh time since November, 2006) listening to the fifth CD of *The Good Husband of Zebra Drive* on my car's CD player, my mind wandered inexcusably and suddenly the thought that I had been trying to keep at bay slammed into my consciousness with a jolt of certainty: I just knew I would not be able to persuade an adjacent landowner to let us relocate the trail about 600 yards up a particularly nasty ravine to a beautiful new—and level—crossing. Nevertheless, I paid the



Bob Collins

Big Daddy Ravine

landowner a fifth and final visit; and sure enough, the answer was "No." Since it was about two weeks before the Alley Cat crew was scheduled to arrive, I just had to accept the fact that I'd run out of time, and we now had to figure out how to rebuild the trail down and up the ravine called "Big Daddy," or "Granddaddy," the worst of the "Holland Ravines."

Fortunately, Mike Schlicht, a relatively new member of Foothills whose trail building skills I had learned about just a few months earlier, answered my urgent call for help and agreed to meet me at Big Daddy, to go over possibilities. Even better, Mike agreed

to be the other team leader when we had to break the crew up to work on different sides, tasks, or even different ravines.

A few days later, Mike and I walked every inch of the corridor where the trail was permitted to cross Big Daddy and came up with a plan for redoing the existing trail using a combination of steps and new switchback legs. We then estimated the number of steps it would take and amount of ACQ pressure-treated wood this might require. (We briefly considered using ravine rocks for steps, but quickly realized how back-breaking it would be to try to carry big rocks to the top reaches of the ravines and how difficult, if not impossible, it would be to then make those rock steps secure.) I ran the ideas past Howard Beye, for whom I was standing in on this project, and he approved, but he reminded us that, of course, we wouldn't know what it would take till we started digging into the ravine's sides—and oh how right he was!

We opted to use rebar (reinforcing bar) to anchor the wood, in order to have something that would really bite in and hold for a long time on such serious slopes. After many phone calls, I finally found out that there were only two places on the east coast where rebar could be double-hot-dipped galvanized. The good news was that one of the two places was Buffalo. (See, there is something good about being a rust belt city!) The bad news was that it would take at least a week.

The night before the crew's work week was to start, we were all crossing our fingers that the galvanized rebar and the wood would be delivered the next morning so we could start on time. In

(Continued on page 4)



Bob Collins



Right: photo by Lynda Rummel

Big Daddy ...

(Continued from page 3)

the meantime, we had arranged with Bob and Nancy Clark, on whose land the trail travels just before it gets to the Big Daddy ravine, to have the lumber and rebar unloaded at their driveway. When our parade of cars arrived at the Clark's driveway the next morning, Nancy Clark was waiting for us, ready to direct each car to a convenient parking spot; Bob Clark was waiting to transport the materials and a generator he loaned us; and, halleluiah!, the lumber and rebar were there, waiting to be loaded into Bob's Ranger.

And so the hardest work week of my life began. Several aspects of this week on the Holland Ravines made it especially challenging. First, there wasn't just one site; there were three. Secondly, the ravines were geographically separated, and each had a different access route that had to be worked out with the landowners and explained to the crew. Third, within each ravine, there were always several different projects that needed to be done, and some could not be done until others were finished, so task priorities had to be established. Fourth, as we worked on certain parts of each side slope, work overhead would have to stop; and as we worked our way up a section, especially when building steps, only one or two folks at a time could fit on the trail and be working there. Sometimes this meant that a few

workers had to wait patiently for their next job; sometimes this meant that several could leave for the next ravine, but only as long as they didn't take any still-necessary tools with them! And fifth, every day we had some workers who had not been with us the day before, who needed to be briefed and assigned to a team.

Big Daddy's crossing is on land owned by Clifford and Norma Bogucki. The terrain is terribly rugged; however, the rejection by the adjacent landowner made us, once again, applaud the generosity of landowners like the Boguckis. The entire crew worked on Big Daddy for two days. On the north side of the ravine, we relocated the drainage away from the creek's badly

undercut bank, armored that bank, and side-hilled out new trail away from that bank. On the south side, we put in four new switchback legs. Then half the crew, under Mike Schlicht's outstanding leadership, stayed there for another day and a half and put in five steps, wood-cribbed the trail on the down-slope side of a big tree, and rock-cribbed one switchback leg on the south side of the ravine. On the north side, Mike's team chopped their way through solid shale in order to put in 30 steps and two rock-cribbed turning platforms.

Clifford Bogucki rode out on his tractor to inspect the work and said the steps were just plain amazing. Without Mike

(Continued on page 5)



Annette Brzezicki

Landowners Bob and Nancy Clark

Big Daddy ...

(Continued from page 4)

Schlicht's brains and past experience on ten American Hiking Society crews, Mark Hittle's chain rock-carrier, my chainsaw (which we had to use to cut the lengths of wood), a bunch of tools I had kept around since my boat building days, Bob Clark's assistance, and the whole crew's steadfast determination, indefatigable spirit, sustained energy, and willingness to wallow in the mud like pigs, we'd probably still be down in the bottom of the gorge.

While Mike's team worked on in Big Daddy, the rest of the crew went to a second nasty ravine about five miles further south. While I moaned and groaned and creaked, other team members scampered over the slopes, putting to use the skills that they had learned at the June 9th trail building workshop or that they had acquired in their professional lives or on previous Alley Cat crews. On the north side of this ravine, we benched in three new switchback legs and put in rustic steps and cribbing using the wood from two hemlocks that I felled and which we peeled and flattened on one side. (Although we had the owner's permission, we were careful to take only trees that were already damaged in some way.) On the south side of the ravine, we built one new long switchback leg and two short "zipper" legs, and felled and peeled a small spruce in preparation for making some steps in case we ran out of pressure-treated wood.

When Mike and his team arrived, they began the really tricky part of the work in this second ravine—building, placing, and securing a ladder of steps against a side slope that was slick with water and mud from hillside springs. [See photo on previous page] Mike's team built a very solid rock base against the bottom of the slope for the ladder to sit atop, muscled the ladder into place, and secured it to the bank with galvanized pipe. (We'd run out of galvanized rebar by then.) They also



Bristol Branch Work Crew

Peter Bushnell, trail sponsor, on right with chain saw. From left, Adam Flowerday and Aidan Bushnell (grandsons of Pete), Bruce Hanat

From the mailbox

Hello,

I was out on the FLT last weekend with 2 others, Nelson and Stewart Drake. We were out for a short trip on the Bristol Branch of the FLT (Map B1), just a "downhill" hike from the Jump-off point to West Hollow Road with an overnight at the bivouac area.

At the bivouac we met up with the trail stewards who had just completed construction of a new bridge over the creek at the campsite. They're pictured in the attached file with the tools of their trade. We'd love to see these fellas in the newsletter!

We had a nice time this weekend - a great break in the weather and an excellent trail added to the experience.

Randy Dumas. Rochester
8/9/2007

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Notes from the FLT Archives: The Bristol Hills Branch near Naples, NY

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Georgeanne Vyverberg

The Bristol Hills Branch leaves Hi Tor and traverses the Italy Hill State Forest and goes through some private land. In April 1962 Mr. & Mrs. Carlson of Rushville gave the Conference permission to build a shelter using materials from their land through which they welcomed the new trail. This shelter has been affectionately called The Outback Inn.

I know many people who have stayed there and it has served as the first overnight backpack site for a number of youngsters new to the backpacking experience.

From the very beginning both Boy and Girl Scouts and their leaders did much of the trail blazing and clearing and often in inclement weather. On one such trip Girl Scout Troop 394 from Rochester accompanied by GVHC and FLT members laid out and cleared two miles of trail and blazed an additional two miles in the High Tor area on a cold November day in 1962. Then there was the time that a group of Girl Scouts had diligently flagged new trail but were followed by some boys who thought it great fun to take the flags down again making it necessary to do it all over again. Forest fires and boggy areas also were noted to be problems. These girls from the Seven Lakes Council built nearly 15 miles of trail.

Another Naples resident Heinz Altman, who grew up in Germany and was an avid hiker since his youth, was

involved with Camp Cutler in the Cleveland Hill area. For many years he was the sponsor of the trail that goes through Cleveland Hill. Heinz made some 21 original maps for the FLT and served as its second Vice President from 1973-1974. Heinz and his wife Dottie still make their home in Naples not far from the trail.

There is some really interesting cultural and natural history along the section comprising map B-1 of the BHB—names like Nelly's Crotch, Frosttown, Hickory Bottom and a village called Pansy in Hunt's Hollow. Interested? I will write about some of these places next time and then perhaps when you wander the Bristol Hills Branch you'll see more than trees and chipmunks.

P.S. Many of you know what a fan I am of Mabel James who got the Conservation Trail started. She was known as a fast hiker and recently I met someone who is well known in the world of mushrooming. I went on a mushroom foray which was led by Ernest Both of the Buffalo Natural History Museum. He is internationally famous for his knowledge of bolete mushrooms. Since Mabel was long associated with the museum, I asked Ernest if he knew her. A wry smile appeared on his face and he said "Oh yes...I have the dubious distinction of being able to out hike her" "She was quite the lady," he said.

Also I am looking for information on Florence Pier, whose many ink drawings graced the early issues of the *FLT News*. □

State Employees' Federated Appeal

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference is listed among eligible recipients for your payroll deduction donations through the State Employees' Federated Appeal, or SEFA. We are listed as #96-0901 under "Unaffiliated Agencies" and will be grateful for your contributions made this way.

Over 30 years ago I became a member of the FLTC when I "discovered" the Bristol Hills Branch. I moved to Naples soon thereafter and have hiked all of it and some sections many times. This branch trail was approved and became the third "spur" of the Main FLT in June 1962. At the home of Ann Potter, who was Senior Girl Scout Leader in Penn Yan, Wally Wood, Ed Willis and Korby Wade of the Genesee Valley Hiking Club met with John Coleman, representative of the Otetiana Council of Boy Scouts, Mona Rynearson of the Seven Lakes Girl Scouts, Mr. Paul Higgins, forester, and the Ontario County Historian Sheldon Fisher. Together they traced out a route that began at Gannett Hill and ended near Bath, where it would join up with the Main FLT. This distance of 53 miles would link state forests as well as private land and was an ambitious project. Much of the trail as we see it today is the original plan with some major exceptions. One of those exceptions was that it originally came into the south end of Naples through Grimes Glen, famous as the site where the 400 million year old fossil of a Devonian tree was discovered. In 1973 Tony Long, a prominent Naples resident, donated 315 acres of land which became known as the West Hill Preserve to the Nature Conservancy. Some time after this donation the trail was re-routed through this preserve and into the north end of Naples and up into High Tor. Around this same time Jan Chadwick of Naples donated to the FLT its first land which has been used as a bivouac site ever since. David Marsh wrote about this parcel of land and Jan Chadwick in a recent issue of the news. [A "Good Deed" Leads to Memories Shared, Fall 2006]

A New Verb for the FLTC

by Jay Zitter, Vice President Membership & Marketing

A retired English teacher still finds excitement in grammatical discoveries. The verbs in the Mission Statement of the FLTC are “build, protect, and enhance”. Our trail could not exist without the dedicated *maintainers* who volunteer thousands of hours to build and preserve hundreds of miles of trail, the *leaders* who give untold hours as officers and Board members at the state or local level, and the *organizers* who keep the Mount Morris office running smoothly. However, another talented and dedicated group of volunteers that is increasing in size has added a fourth action verb to that list, and it is “promote”. It’s time to showcase our *presenters, exhibitors, and distributors*.

PRESENTERS

Jacqui Wensich of Pittsford, a Board member since 2004, has given dozens of PowerPoint presentations about the Finger Lakes Trail to audiences across the state, from Rotary Clubs to senior citizens groups to affiliated and unaffiliated trail and hiking clubs. Not only does Jacqui travel and present widely, but she creates the PowerPoint slides herself. An avid photographer, Jacqui has organized and selected her own photos, those of other photographers across the state, and photos from almost 50 years of archives which she has scanned in to her computer. Jacqui is indefatigable in her enthusiasm for the FLT and generous with her time, resources, and talents.

Larry Blumberg of Johnson City is a strong advocate for the trail, especially with his University of Scouting presentations in the Southern Tier. Recently he has developed trail seminars for use at businesses that sell hiking gear. Word has spread quickly about the irresistible effect Larry has on his audiences to get out there and hike. Larry calls himself a “marketeer” since he also works persistently to develop retail outlets for FLT maps in the Southern Tier.

Irene Szabo of Mount Morris, past president of the FLTC, has given a multitude of always stimulating presentations about the FLTC over the years. Matter of fact, I first met Irene when she was the featured speaker at an annual meeting of the Cayuga Trails Club. Her promotion of the trail has even taken her to Washington DC. However, Irene is always looking for new and clever places to promote the trail. One of those was when she gave a presentation to the entire staff at the Hammondsport Visitor Center. Just recently, she participated in a small “fam tour”, marketing lingo for a familiarization tour, in which she accompanied tourism directors from Livingston and Wyoming Counties to trailheads and trail routes in both counties, giving them fat folders of our promotional materials put together by Gene Bavis. What a great marketing model!

EXHIBITORS

George “the Missionary” Zacharek of Baldwinsville has been a trail advocate for decades. A spry and playful octogenarian, it was George who first had the idea of exhibiting at the State Fair. He followed through on that idea and every year since has helped to set up and staff the lean-to at the State Fair. George is an accomplished videographer. He shares widely the videos he has created of many FLT events. George spreads the word through letters to the governor, activities with the Volksmarchers, high school and middle school students, his barbershop, and hikers along the trail, since George is still a devoted hiker. George serves on both the FLT Board of Managers and the ADK-Onondaga Board.

Ed “the Grand Old Man” Sidote of Norwich, whose 90th birthday we will be celebrating at the Fall Outing, maintains a strong physical presence at just about every event you can imagine in the eastern counties—county fairs, pancake breakfasts, Oxford Sportsman’s Club, nursing homes, wellness

fairs to name a few—and has maintained static exhibits at libraries and the Norwich YMCA. Ideas for promotional activities continue to flow from his fertile brain.

Lyn Jacobs of Canandaigua, an avid, well-traveled, and articulate hiker, impetuously mounted her own exhibit this May at the grand opening of the Montezuma Audubon Center in Savannah, NY. From her experience, she has developed tips for first-time and solo exhibitors. The first tip is not to go solo!

Tim Wilbur of Shortsville is an inventive fellow with great ideas for improving exhibits and handouts. A perennial volunteer at the annual ADK Expo at Mendon Ponds, Tim exhibited at the Bicycle Rally on the Catharine Valley Trail in Montour Falls in May. Tim dreamed up a creative handout aimed at the youngsters and families who were expected there. Tim has also been Gene Bavis’s right hand man for displays at Boy Scout events, most recently in June for the Finger Lakes Council Program Kick Off in Geneva.

In July of this year, nine FLT volunteers made the trek to the biennial meeting of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy held at Ramapo College in Mahwah, New Jersey, to staff an exhibit table for four days. **Jolene Sims**, a New Jersey member who originally read about us in an article in *Catskill Country* magazine (an article Ed Sidote had urged me to submit), lives only a few miles from the college and was there every day. Executive Director **Gene Bavis** of Walworth, **Gene and Georgina Binder** of Wayland, **Linda and Barry Cruttenden** of Rochester, **Sheila Ferrari** of Rochester, and **Bill Fair and Jay Zitter** of Virgil rounded out the contingent.

DISTRIBUTORS

Early in 2005, we developed a network of County Marketing Representatives (“county reps” for short) to blanket the 14 counties through which the main trail runs, the six additional counties of the branch trails, and a couple of other nearby counties with FLT literature. The county reps canvas their counties for suitable places to leave FLT

A New Verb ...

(Continued from page 7)

marketing brochures and stock the brochures at least twice a year. These folks work diligently but quietly in their home counties, and you seldom hear of them, for their task is not flashy. Without their dedication, our efforts to promote the trail would be greatly diminished. We recognize **Heidi Bellenger** of Rochester, **Larry Blumberg**, **Steve Catherman** of Bath, **Phil Dankert** of Ithaca, **Kos Diveris** of Syracuse, **Sheila Ferrari**, **Paul and Vicky Gaeta** of Cuba, **Lyn Jacobs**, **Erica LaBuz** of Oneonta, **Carl and Nancy Luger** of Alfred, **Pat Monahan** of Corning, **Ed Sidote**, **Georgeanne Vyverberg** of Naples, **Jim Walter** of Morrisville, **George Zacharek**, and **Jay Zitter** of Virgil.



Photo by George Zacharek

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

As you have read this article, perhaps you have had a little internal conversation with yourself. "Oh, I could do that...or that!" Do you have a community event where you could set up a booth? Do you belong to a group that needs a program? Is there a spot where you could set up a static display such as in a library? If you have an idea of how you could be a promoter in your corner of the world, we have some marketing tools that might help you.

Our primary marketing tool, distributed all over the state and used at all exhibits, is the *Tie Up Your Laces* brochure. The small, succinct, but powerful *yellow card* that is left in trail registers is also used in this way. There are now five regional *teaser maps* available for Ellicottville, Hammondsport, Watkins Glen, Naples/Canandaigua, and just this summer, Ithaca. The 8.5x14 inch *map index* and order form, in color, is a valuable tool that shows where the trail is and what

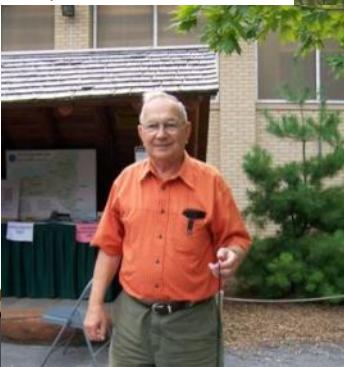
maps are needed to hike in which areas.

For presenters, Jacqui Wensich is developing a PowerPoint presentation on CD suitable for use in talks to community groups, aimed at the uninitiated audience. With the CD will come a list of equipment needed and a list of talking points. The FLTC recently purchased a DLP projector for use with PowerPoint shows and other presentations. Stay tuned for more news about this in 2008.

Also new on the scene this winter will be a beautiful poster in two different sizes, suitable for framing, showing the location of the Finger Lakes Trail surrounded by stunning photos of it.

Please contact Jay Zitter at jmz11@htva.net if you are thinking about presenting a program about the FLT in your community or hosting an exhibit at a local event. We can help you get set up with ideas and materials to spread the word about our wonderful but relatively unknown trail. □

Jacqui Wensich



Jay Zitter

Jay Zitter



Promoters (clockwise from bottom left): Gene Bavis and Sheila Ferrari, Jacqui Wensich, George Zacharek at the State Fair, Tim Wilbur at the Bicycle Rally in Montour Falls, Lyn Jacob's exhibit in Savannah.





Irene Szabo

Lynda's North Country Trail award is a hefty Pulaski with inscription burned into the handle. That embroidered fleece vest she is wearing is for 1000 hours of volunteer service, but she has also received her 1500 hour fleece shirt, too!

Lynda Rummel Named "Trail Builder of the Year" by North Country Trail Association

by Irene Szabo

Annually at the NCTA conference, this time in Bemidji, Minnesota, special volunteers are honored with awards supplied by our federal partner, the

National Park Service. While often "Trail Builder of the Year" goes to a member of a chapter or affiliate of the North Country Trail Association that is still building new trail toward that

far-off 4600-mile goal, Lynda Rummel has undertaken so many trail IMPROVEMENTS in our Finger Lakes Trail part of the NCT that she was thus honored for 2007.

Even though she does pitch in to grub about on such improvement projects herself, her special contribution is acting as the catalyst who finally gets a long-identified bad spot in the trail route off the endless Problem List and onto the admired and often-visited list. For instance, for years we have all hated the climb up busy Knight Settlement Road on map M-11 north of Bath, and walked it only if we had a strong urge to color in that whole map. Finally, however, after decades when the rest of just whined and wished, Lynda actually strung together enough permissions to move most of that long road walk into woods and hedgerows. [FLT News, Fall 2006, "More than Haff Fuller"] Then, you'll notice, she even writes an article about said project so the rest of us might learn from her experiences.

And she has been at it for a while now, too: re-read "Improving Old Trail," her

(Continued on page 10)

Another Wonderful Landowner



Bob Padak and Copper

Georgeanne Vvyberberg assisted me this past June in trail work on my little stretch of the Conservation Trail (CT-8 just south of Darien Lake State Park in Genesee County). As we were loading my van, an ATV drove up behind us on Getman Road. The smiling gentleman introduced himself as the landowner, Bob Padak and his dog, Copper. Mr. Padak inherited the land from his father in 2002. He told us that his Dad loved the trail being through his land and enjoyed talking with hikers.

Mr. Padak reads the *FLT News* and recognized Georgeanne's name as our Activist. He was glad to meet someone from the FLTC Board of Managers. We asked him if he had any concerns. He said no, but he does request that nails are not used on any of his trees.

Mr. Padak told us that he adopted his boxer from the local humane society. Copper was rescued from the Katrina disaster.

— Jacqui Wensich

Trail Builder Award ...

(Continued from page 9)

article in the Winter 2006 issue, about a host of modest projects which provided just the right touch to make merely adequate trail really nice to walk. Bravely she has even undertaken writing (successful!) grant applications in order to pay for trail crews to rebuild difficult steep segments in Schuyler County state forests.

Best of all, Lynda works tirelessly to teach other volunteers the niceties of making welcoming trail. For the past several years she has attended most of the regional trail steward meetings in order to teach skills and encourage volunteers, giving up many an October

weekend, and this year she and Mary Coffin provided trail-building and maintenance workshops in the western part of the state. Following that, she planned the trail route and work projects for a complicated batch of improved trail in the previously exhausting "Holland ravines" portion of the Conservation Trail, then worked side by side with gangs of volunteers from Foothills Trail Club to create a beautiful improvement. Thus it is probably her gift of sharing both practical knowledge and enthusiasm with other trail workers that we cherish the most.

Meanwhile, in case you forgot, she received our Wallace Wood Distinguished Service Award in 2006, and because she also works tirelessly on

behalf of the Keuka Outlet Trail (everything from grant writing to scrubbing the outhouses), was recognized by the Yates County Federation of Conservation Clubs as 2007 Conservationist of the Year, much of that for trying to accommodate hikers, bikers, AND hunters in the Keuka Outlet gorge.

Her North Country Trail award is a hefty Pulaski with inscription burned into the handle. That embroidered fleece vest she is wearing is for 1000 hours of volunteer service, but she has also received her 1500 hour fleece shirt, too! □

Editor: Don't miss Lynda's article on the Holland ravines project in this issue.



Nighttime Hiking Florida Style

If you've never hiked at night with an LED headlamp, you probably have no idea how many spiders there are in a forest. It's like walking into a Warner Brothers cartoon scene: the one where there is a darkened room, and the only thing you see are dozens of pairs of white eyes staring back at you. We investigated the closest set of eyes, and a found a big wolf spider. Apparently the compound eyes of a spider glow like neon in reaction to LED light. The rest of the eyes we just tried to ignore or avoid!

—Janette Davison

Reprinted from the Florida Trail Association's *Footprint* with permission. Thanks go to Irene Szabo for bringing it to our attention.

Annual Erv Markert Hike

October 13, 2007 (Saturday)

- ◆ **Location:** Abbott Loop Trail, Danby State Forest, Tompkins County. Finger Lakes Trail Map M-17
- ◆ **Meeting Place:** Danby Park and Ride lot on the corner of NY Route 96B & Gunderman Rd; six miles south of Ithaca
- ◆ **Meeting Time:** 10:00 a.m.

This year's Annual Erv Markert Hike will be on the Abbott Loop featuring a climb to Thatcher's Pinnacles with beautiful vistas of Inlet Valley, West Danby and the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve. Created by long-time Cayuga Trails Club members Doris and Cliff Abbott, the trail is 8.4 miles long and includes 1.7 miles of the main Finger Lakes Trail (FLT). Fairly rugged climbs and descents will be hard to avoid on this hike which will be done at a moderate pace.

The Danby Park and Ride is on the west side of Route 96B just south of Gunderman Road. Those commuting from the southwest can meet at the north trail crossing on Michigan Hollow Road. Please allow time for the main group from Danby to arrive. Participants are advised to bring plenty of fluids, lunch and snacks, and clothing appropriate for the weather. For more information contact hike leaders Jim or Sigrid Connors at (607) 898-4163 or jconnors@twcnry.rr.com.

Ervin Markert served as the FLT Trail Committee Chair for nearly twenty years. During that time he also served on several state and national committees and organizations involved with trails and hiking. He interfaced extremely well with many public employees in the state and federal governments that were involved with trails. This annual hike serves to honor his significant contribution to the FLT.

Wildflowers along the Trail, #19: Persistence and Change

RWW Taylor

Those of us who have grown up in urban and semi-urban surroundings know that the environments we inhabited in our younger years have changed. Weedy vacant lots and open fields filled each year with multicolored blooms that we once knew have vanished, victims of growing city and suburban populations and the expanding expectations regarding personal space and convenient access to services that we call urban sprawl. A plentiful variety of interesting wildflowers can certainly still be found in our cities, stubbornly blooming away in odd corners here and there, especially in the less-manicured neighborhoods—but that is not the story for now.

Getting away from the cities, out onto the trails that wind so enticingly through woods and pastures and over the far hills, immediately reminds us that our state still consists mostly of open land, and a quick glance at any time from early spring to late fall provides reassurance that the wildflowers still bloom across our fields in their uncountable millions.

But are these wildflowers the ones that would have been seen in the same location in decades past? The scenes that we enjoy today are of course not the ones that would have greeted early settlers in our region. Just as in the cities, time has brought growth and change—fields of corn and other crops, orchards and vineyards, and stretches of well-fenced and well-grazed pastureland take the place of what once long ago must have been wooded reaches. New superhighways cut across the old country roads; service plazas have been built to meet the needs of the traveler, and here and there adjacent to sleepy small towns stand fresh tracts of houses and newly-built schools. Such changes have had a dramatic impact on the nature of the plants that grow unasked along the roadsides, in the ditches, and wherever they can find a corner to flourish for a while. Species needing an undisturbed habitat to

prosper, in particular, are no longer likely to be found in the dynamic settings that have replaced their old quiet haunts. Instead, masses of quick-growing newcomers take their place, and we are treated with such roadside sights as solid, glowing vistas of densely growing dandelions or mustard.

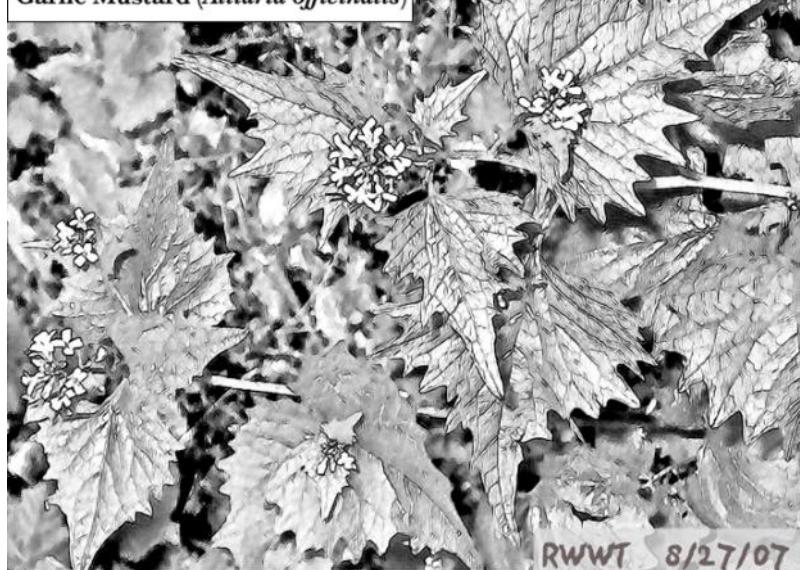
But change is not all in one direction. Rural life in generations past often pushed ambitiously into corners that eventually came to be recognized as untenable to farm, and it is not uncommon nowadays in the back country to run across a crumbling, vine-covered outbuilding or a decrepit stone wall that no longer usefully separates anything. Nowadays parks, preserves, and established acreages of state game lands create new quiet environments in which plants that do not comfortably tolerate bother can establish a reasonable foothold.

But we cannot look forward to a simple return to the local plant populations of yesteryear for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the arrival on the scene of new aggressive botanical species eager to move right in and take over vast stretches of habitat for themselves. Many of these interlopers will be well-known to the frequent

hiker—purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria officinalis*), periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) and black swallowwort (*Cynanchum nigrum*) are notable examples. All of these plant species can be found growing and blooming in choking profusion along our trailsides at various times of the year, to the exclusion of other species that used to be found at that location. We do not know yet what bargain may eventually be struck between the hunger of these species (and possibly others that may yet arrive on our doorstep) for habitat and the natural controls that act to keep our vastly diverse natural world in general balance through long periods of time.

Our generation also faces a new uncertainty that was never anticipated—the specter of climate change in coming decades due to human activity on a global scale. Significant changes in annual temperature ranges and patterns of precipitation that may be experienced during the present century would necessarily affect the intertwined animal, plant and insect populations that make up our natural environment in ways that cannot be predicted. The extent of change we might expect is unknown, but there will in any case be much for the interested observer to keep an eye on—come what may, there will be wildflowers to be watched for and enjoyed. □

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria officinalis*)



Don Windsor wrote this tribute to End-to-End Coordinator Ed Sidote in honor of his 90th birthday on September 13. Ed's concern for "his" end-to-enders is legendary.

Ed Sidote has been my role model ever since I first met him back around 1984. Soon thereafter he had me hiking. His persuasion did not stop there. Before long he had me registered as a trail steward on Neff Hill in the Town of Bainbridge, a responsibility I upheld for ten years.

In 1991 Ed, the artful organizer, convinced Dave Connor, John Nesbitt, and me to join with him in offering a series of hikes on the FLT across Chenango County. We covered this 72 mile trek in seven hikes, one a month. On the June 8 hike, 81 hikers showed up and we were pleasantly overwhelmed. I obtained a Procter & Gamble grant and we bought patches to award to those who completed the cross county hikes. Thanks to Ed's leadership, we were the first county to do this.

While I do not participate in the FLTC the way Ed does, I try to emulate his enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment in those other organizations in which I am active. The safest way to belong to any group is to keep quiet and not make suggestions. For if you speak up and express your opinions, you will be saddled with all sorts of tasks and be elected to serve as an officer. But this is Ed's formula for health and longevity, constantly innovating, stirring things up, and getting things done. I sure wish I had his talent for getting more people involved.

Ed is a splendid example of how being an indefatigable human dynamo can enhance senior citizenship. He always has a clear vision of where he wants to go and where he wants his colleagues to go. He was the third end-to-end, finishing on September 29, 1990. At last count, there are now at least 224. I have to wonder how many there would be were it not for Ed's encouragement and assistance.

The first time I realized how widespread Ed's fame is, was at an annual

Ed Sidote: My Role Model

by Donald A. Windsor



Donald A. Windsor

meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs. A birder asked me where I lived and I replied "Norwich in Chenango County". He immediately replied, "Oh yeah, Sidote country".

Ed's amazing dedication to the FLT can still be seen along Stewart Road in the Town of Pharsalia. An old house trailer stands as a monument among a fleet of abandoned cars. Ed often lived in that trailer so that he could be close to his beloved trails. He could jump out of bed, grab his tools, and manicure his trails. One day when he was in his early 80s, I was birding along Stewart Road and encountered Ed jostling a large lawn mower, trying to extricate it from his station wagon. Yes, he would mow the grass on his trails. I used to kid him by asking whether he was maintaining a hiking trail or grooming a golf course.

Ed has a reputation for enjoying food. He is known to have traveled enormous distances for pancake breakfasts. I even heard that sometimes he will partake of two in the same morning. If you ever want him to attend some function, tell him about the refreshments being served.

And talk about talking, Ed likes to talk —about the FLT. I bet that if he were suddenly awakened in the middle of the night, he would spontaneously launch into a spiel about the FLT. If I were on

the Board of the FLTC, I would appoint Ed as Roving Ambassador at Large. But never mind, he already is. I do not think anyone ever appointed him to that position, he just took it. This is another reason that Ed is my role model; when something has to be done, he does it. Ed is Mister Proactive himself.

Aside from all Ed's accomplishments with the FLTC, from my perspective his greatest achievement was starting the FLT-Bullthistle Hiking Club here in Norwich. Our current membership is 152. We Bullthistlers offer hikes for every type of hiker, from frustratingly short and agonizingly slow hikes to never-endingly long and fatiguingly fast hikes. We even do night hikes, snowshoe hikes, and ski hikes. We are now doing railroad hikes.

Ed is also a poster boy for the health benefits of walking. The whole community is aware of our Bullthistle Club and its 90-year old leader. Ed is still walking at least three miles a day, some of which is up steep hills. Ed has become a role model for our entire community. While most of our senior citizens may be too ensconced in their couches to join Ed, they certainly have to admire him, and someday, maybe, some of them will actually get up and go with him. Meanwhile, Ed Sidote keeps on hiking. And we hikers keep looking up to him. □



Walking Through Time in New York: #18 in a series

Genesee Valley Canal & RR

by Irene Szabo

The third of the north-south canals our trail visits was born at the same time as the other two, Chenango and Chemung, shortly after the new Erie Canal demonstrated immediately its value. The Genesee Valley Canal aimed to render the path of the Genesee River useful for navigation in order to connect Rochester on the busy Erie with remote river villages in Livingston and Allegany Counties, south to Belfast, then it cut southwest along Black Creek through Cuba and toward Olean, to provide a water connection to the Allegheny River, itself a conduit to Pittsburgh, the Ohio River, and eventually the Mississippi. No sense in dreaming small in the 1830's.

The problem with this canal was that it had to climb to an elevation of 1488 feet, highest of any canal in the world, from the Erie Canal level at Rochester, making it an incredible case of engineering hubris. The bold Genesee Valley carried boats from 508 feet at Rochester, generally following the river to Mt. Morris, where an aqueduct carried the canal across the Genesee, now almost 600 feet above sea level. However, the river here came through the deep canyon that is now Letchworth State Park, where the water drops over three dramatic falls at the park's south end from 1095 feet! So the canal was built to swing around the canyon and falls, but still required 49 locks to climb 11 miles from the flat valley south of Mt Morris, through the Keshequa Creek valley, westward past Nunda, through a deep cut, finally to reach the 1115 foot level that enabled it to travel in a ditch carved out of cliffside rock high above the tumbling river.

Finally the canal and its mule-powered boats were beside the river again, along a placid stretch just above the first and highest waterfall, and that is now a beautiful portion of our Letchworth

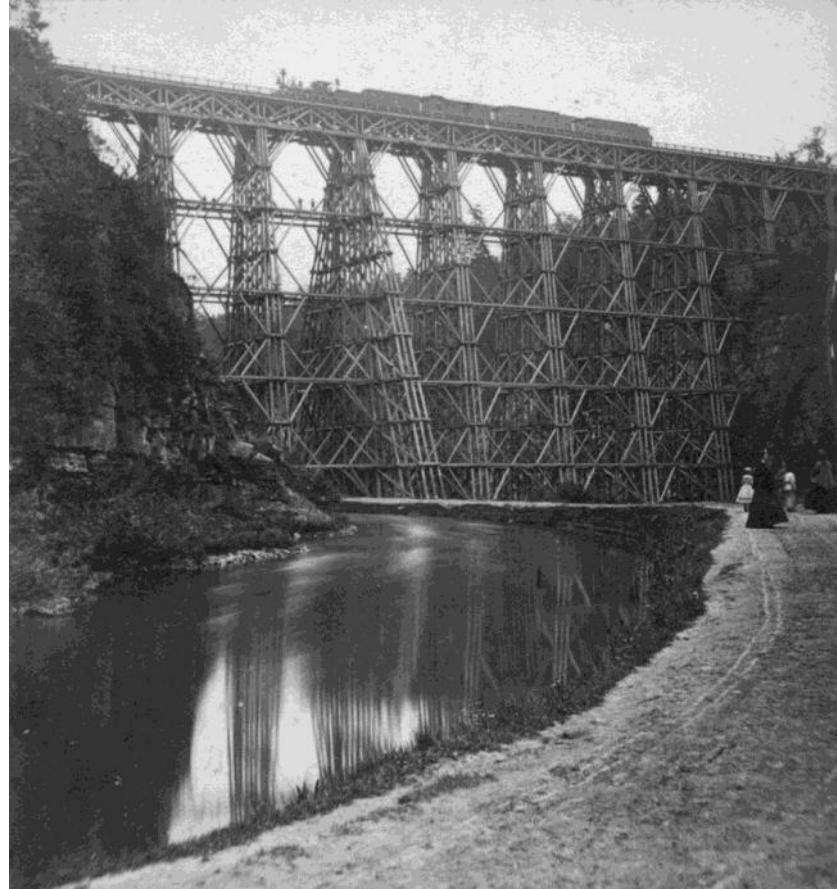


Photo from www.letchworthparkhistory.com

The early wooden bridge across the Genesee in the Letchworth Gorge, circa 1870. The water is the Genesee Valley Canal. Notice the "hikers" in long dresses on the towpath where our trail is today.

Branch Trail near the south end of the Park. The Branch leaves its skinny path through woods to walk this level built-up towpath (and later railbed), and in its southernmost mile walks high above the river on the hard-won cliff-side portion, then goes under steel "High Bridge" that carries active railroad across the gorge, just after the Upper Falls where river level returns nearly to canalside. There is even a great view of the Middle Falls that most park visitors never see, available only from this trail, and winter under High Bridge is especially spectacular when mist freezes a heavy crust on every twig of the surrounding forest. Several herd paths take hikers down to the nearest concrete bridge abutment, a great place

from which to watch the river disappear over the lip of the falls.

Here we are walking on the bed of the Pennsylvania Railroad, the soil black with cinders from years of coal-fired steam locomotives. After the canal failed and was abandoned by state edict in 1878 along with the rest of the dreamer-canals, railroads snatched up the linear property and built lines along the towpaths, give or take a few straightened out canal curves. The mighty PRR held this canal route rail line the longest, connecting Rochester with points in Pennsylvania, but it was closed in the 1960's. It is shocking to think of trains in the park that recently

(Continued on page 30)

Call for Nominations

So many people give so much of themselves to keep this hiking trail open to the public; let us remember to honor them. Who in your club is an unsung hero? Whom do you always count on when something needs fixing, or doing, or arranging? What landowner or other non-hiker has contributed to our trail's continued existence? Do not let them remain unsung.

Nominations are requested for the following awards every year; please send them to

John Andersson, chair of the Recognitions Committee, jandersson@twcny.rr.com, 1 Woodland Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850, and copy Gene Bavis, Executive Director: FLTC, 6111 Visitor Center Road, Mt Morris, NY 14510, gbavis@rochester.rr.com. Nominations, especially for the Wally Wood, are requested before the end of December.

The Wallace D. Wood Distinguished Service Award is the highest annual honor given by the FLTC to a volunteer who has contributed extraordinary quality and quantity to the ongoing health of the trail system and its organization. Pairs of people who have worked miracles together have also received this award.

The Ervin Markert Distinguished Contribution Award goes to an individual, group, or organization in the public or private sector who has made a significant contribution toward the improvement of hiking trails in New York. This could be a trail landowner, a donor, or someone working for an agency such as the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, for instance, who has been especially effective and generous.

The Clar-Willis Distinguished Trail Volunteer Award is presented to an individual (or pair) who has made a significant contribution over a period of time as a trail worker within the FLT System. The recipient(s) may be a member of the FLTC or of one of our trail-sponsoring organizations.

Eva Hager 1914 – 2007

Eva Hager of Masonville, a long time member of the FLTC, passed away in May. A lengthy obituary in the Tri-Town News includes this paragraph about her interest in hiking:

“One of Eva’s very special interests, one that she took up later in life when most others were slowing down, was hiking. She was a member of the Tri-Town Hikers, a group of primarily senior citizens. Her friend Marge Lafayette, who led the group, introduced her to the sport. She started out walking five miles and worked up to eight to ten miles. Eva enjoyed the fresh air, the adventure and the chance to be in the woods. She was especially fascinated by the old foundations, stonewalls and stone piles discovered on their outings. Eva could identify many wild plants and was knowledgeable about the medicinal properties of them. She led wild food hikes for various groups and demonstrated preparing those foods for lunch.”

Our sincere thanks for gifts in memory of:

Eva Hager

from

Samuel & Elma Costello, Nineveh

Lenore Crandall, Bainbridge

S. Elizabeth Griffin, Culver City, CA

Paul & Ann Hager, McLean, VA

David & Janet LaFayette, Guilford

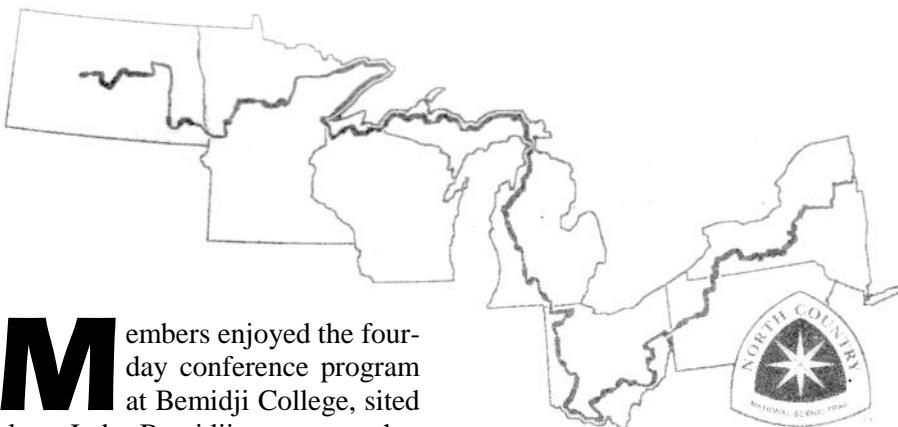
Sidney Public Library Staff, Sidney

Edward J. Sidote, Norwich

Linnea & Cary Wilson, Unadilla

9998 To Go (Lakes, not...)

Bemidji, Minnesota, hosted 2007 North Country Trail Association annual meeting



Members enjoyed the four-day conference program at Bemidji College, sited along Lake Bemidji, a campus that nicely mixes in Native American sculptures and themes with the standard brick building fare. Turn a corner, and you're as likely to bump into an iron bison as you are an iPod. Hikers visited ever-growing trail segments in nearby state and national forests, while others took a break from walking and spent a long day in canoes, paddling the slender headwaters of the Mississippi River, gathering wild rice, listening to loons. One hike first took a paddle-boat ride across Cass Lake to Star Island, which is big enough and well-forested enough for a good eight-mile loop which also visited the little lake on the island itself.

Obviously, in the Land of 10,000 Lakes, many of our activities involved water.

Evening programs featured an Ojibway story teller, an arctic adventurer who had great comedic timing, awards to honor volunteers and contributors, and the performance of our first North Country Trail Ballad. Troubadour Charlie MacGuire was commissioned to write and perform it for us, and the tune grew on everybody quickly. Before long everybody was singing along with the refrain, and NCTA trail staff Clare Cain

and Bill Menke ended up waltzing to several stanzas. New Executive Director Bruce Matthews even got up and harmonized at the mike.

Count on hearing the ballad again next summer when New York hosts the NCTA meeting, once again at Cazenovia College, August 7-10.

The CNY Chapter of the NCTA, the ADK-Onondaga Chapter, and the Finger Lakes Trail Conference have already begun to plan hikes, arrange programs, and try to sign up a well-known musical duo from the Adirondacks to perform our new ballad. Many new miles of trail have been built in the area since we last hosted the meeting in 2001, so save the date for a special time which will replace our FLTC fall campout in 2008. For instance, if you think John A-X. Morris writes a droll and witty column for the *FLT News* (Natural Connections), wait 'til you see him do a program one evening for us. □

— Irene Szabo

A Special Deal for FLTC Members!

Now you can join the North Country Trail Association for just \$16 per year! You'll get a subscription to North Star magazine, and the satisfaction of helping develop the North Country National Scenic Trail. To join, send this coupon to: NCTA, 229 E. Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 or call 866-Hike-NCT

Name(s):	
Address:	
City, St Zip:	
Phone (optional):	
E-mail (optional):	
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm enclosing a check for \$16 payable to NCTA <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my credit card (MasterCard, VISA or AmEx only) Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Name as it appears on card: _____ Signature: _____	

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Endurance Training on the FLT

by Lynda Rummel, TMC Regional Coordinator

In the summer of 2005, an Alley Cat Crew put in 11 switchback legs on the east side of Goundry (Buck) Hill, replacing a segment of trail that had more vertical drop than the ski slopes at Bristol. In the summer of 2006, the Buffalo Youth Corps and volunteers from the FLTC completely relocated the trail on the west side of Goundry Hill, replacing a steep segment of horse and snowmobile trail with multiple switchback legs with gentle grades. These improvements have brought compliments from everyone—except for two unusual individuals named Max Bliss and Terry Brown, who try to use the Finger Lakes Trail to train for long-distance

endurance races that are staged in the rugged mountains of the west.

It must seem to Terry and Max that we are relentlessly destroying their favorite training spots. Next on our list of segments to improve is the steep hill (grades exceeding 40%) between Dennis Road and Monterey/Sexton Hollow Road, which, of course, is one of Max and Terry's favorite places to train. According to Max, they run up and down this segment of trail over and over again, because the serious grade and the scattered, loose rocks and runoff debris come pretty close to matching the conditions they find when running in the Wasatch and other western mountain ranges. However, for

the rest of us, this is a section that needs serious improvement; and it *will* be rebuilt, as part of a Recreational Trails Program grant that the FLTC received.

The good news for Terry and Max is that they can still run through the state forest on those abandoned sections of the FLT that they love—the sections just won't be maintained.

The good news for us is that Terry and Max each must contribute 10 hours of trail work, in order to participate in the "Wasatch Front 100 Mile Endurance Run"; and, despite our attempts to make improvements that they don't necessarily like, they have chosen to do this on the Finger Lakes Trail. Last year, Max cleared trail around Julie's Crossing (Townsend Creek, above Watkins Glen, M-14) and on the west side of Corbett Hollow (M-13). This year, Max and Terry cleared about five miles of trail from South Bradford east to the Schuyler County boundary (M-13).

Has their training on the Finger Lakes Trail helped? Well, last year, Max finished the 100-mile Wasatch race in 32:30 (relative to a 36 hour time limit for finishing). This was 85th place, out of approximately 250 runners. And as for this year, we'll just have to wait and see whether they do any better. We're cheering for them! □

Max Bliss

Lynda Rummel



Welcome!

New and Returning Members May through July:

Lance & Kathy Alexander	Churchville	Linda Hallock	Kenmore	Will Roden	Apalachin
Wendy Armstrong	Cortland	Betty Hansen	Watkins Glen	Amy Rono	Rochester
Thomas Babcock	Endicott	Alan Herdzik	Lancaster	Mike Schlicht	Snyder
Robert A. Bell & Patricia Shores	Binghamton	Marcia Herrick	Lansing	Christopher Scion	Syracuse
Dick Bower	Binghamton	In Motion Events, April Amodei & Al Hastings	Auburn	Steven Siple & Erika Riker	Brookville, PA
Boy Scout Troop 55	Smithville Flats	Lewis Johnson, MD	Jamesville	Lynn C. Skinner	Hornell
Mary Ann Casciarino	Apalachin	Karen Kemmis, PT, DPT	Syracuse	Daniel Speakman	Endwell
Christopher Cerveny	Cortland	Gerald S. Lazarczyk	Grand Island	Julie Staub	Ithaca
Denise Charpentier	Penfield	Dawn Merritt	Conesus	Donald Sutherland	Endicott
Bob Chavez	East Bloomfield	Ellen Morse	Rochester	Ken Tanner	Canandaigua
Jerry Davis	New Woodstock	Paul M. Murphy	Pittsford	Matthew H. & Nancy Underwood	Rochester
Robert C. Dean	Ithaca	Gina Mushynsky	Baldwinsville	Jack Walker	Bloomfield
Jeff DeMerit	Painted Post	Bernard Naylor	Buffalo	Jonathan Wolfinger	Rochester
Alexander Dutkewych	Pulteney	Joseph A. & Anne L. Petrosky	Sodus	Nate Woody	Waverly
Roger L. Easton, Jr.	Scottsville	Joyce Rikert	Rochester	Ellen G. Young	Webster
Debra Gorman	New Hartford				

What Makes a Great Trail? ... bringing the Great Eastern Trail to New York

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference works hard to have a great trail. Remember what the FLTC Mission Statement says: "The mission of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference is to build, protect, and enhance a continuous footpath across New York State. Forever!"

The Trail Management Committee (TMC) is involved with all three of the main activities of the mission statement, but today let's talk about what is involved in building the trail. The most recent planned expansion of the FLT System, the Great Eastern Trail (GET), will give you some idea of what is involved.

The GET will extend from the Florida/Alabama border to New York's Finger Lakes. Planning and some actual trail construction have been underway for several years, primarily in the southern portions of the trail route, which is west of and parallel to the Appalachian Trail. The Trail Management Committee formed a group of people from the area around Corning, called the NY/PA Connector Trail Committee, to move the new trail to completion in New York State. The New York State portion of the trail, which will be about 30 miles long, is planned to cross the NY/PA border in the area south of Addison, NY. The northern end of the GET in NYS will connect into the FLT somewhere between Savona and Watkins Glen. The committee has been communicating with trail builders in Pennsylvania from the Mid State Trail Association and the Keystone Trail Association. Fortunately for the FLTC, we already had a member, Peter Fleszar, who lives in Pennsylvania and has been a key player with the Pennsylvania expansion northward of the Mid State Trail.

Pat Monahan of Corning is the current Coordinator of the NY/PA Connector Trail Committee, which has representatives from the FLTC, Three Rivers Outing Club, Mid State Trail Association, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Steuben County, and towns and villages in the area of the proposed trail.

The committee members have spent a great deal of time looking over many maps to select the best candidate routes for the trail. Such things as a river and large streams which would need to be crossed, as well as interstate and other major highways, railroads, communities for re-supply and other hiker needs had to be considered, as well as who owns the land. How much public land is suitable for the trail; are there large-tract private landowners, as well as small private parcels, which will need to be included? Is there a possible connection with local community trail systems? Do we know of any large areas where we would not want to put the trail such as swamps or other wetlands, large cultivated areas, hunting preserves, etc?

Trail Topics

**Howard S. Beye,
Chair
Trail Management
Committee**



After the most promising trail routes were determined, the field exploration phase began. Land can be walked to determine what slopes would be present and whether modification can be made to bring the slope down to under ten percent, and to scope out other problems involving

poor ground cover, wet areas and other situations where a trail is hard to build and maintain. Good design will mean a better trail which will be much easier to maintain in the future. In State Forests and Wildlife Management Areas much help and direction can be obtained by working with the agency personnel responsible for managing the resources. On private land the landowner needs to be made aware of our interest in looking over their land for potential trail, and material on the proposed trail needs to be available to assist them in getting the information they need about the project and how they are an important component in the overall success of establishing the trail. Landowners know their land well and can provide very helpful information as to potential routes on their land as well as nearby land. This is the phase the committee is in at the present time with some of the potential routes having been field checked and evaluated.

After the look-around phase, permission is needed for a more precise route, which may in some cases be a 25-foot or wider corridor. At this point detail route flagging within

Leadership and Planning Opportunities!

Trail Coordinator, Genesee West: Trail Management Committee Chair Howard Beye is looking for an individual or couple to coordinate the work of club and individual Trail Sponsors west of the Genesee River. Trail Coordinators are responsible for general oversight of trail conditions in their area, helping clubs and individuals solve problems, working to get Trail Stewards trained by holding workshops as needed, maintaining good conference/maintainer relations with landowners, and serving as a member of the Trail Management Committee.

[Marty Howden, formerly Park Manager at Bowman Lake State Park, has been transferred to Hamlin Beach State Park in the western part of the state and has taken on the FLTC Trail Coordinator position for the Genesee West region.]

Trail Projects Planner: This individual will determine each year's special projects, apply for grants and programs that support costs, and complete follow-up paperwork. The assignment does NOT include actual conduct of those projects, but will involve canvassing stewardship groups for project needs annually.

To learn more about either of these positions, contact Howard at 585/288-7191 or fltc@frontiernet.net

Filled!

the corridor needs to be completed so that the actual path can be established. The final trail route will need approval from both public and private landowners.

Next actual building can begin. The width cleared will be approximately four feet wide by eight foot high with a tread of between 18 and 24 inches wide. We use only hand tools to build the trail, which will have a natural non-hardened surface. To clear the route we may use chainsaws and power brush cutters and trimmers. Bridges, shelters and bivouac sites will be built as needed in accordance with FLTC guidelines. New trail needs to conform to the American with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines.

Blazing the trail route will come next, along with installing trailhead and other standard signage. Trail maps with route descriptions will be developed for the public.

What makes this whole trail building element of our mission statement possible is the excellent interest and commitment of our membership and others from the community. If you are interested in this part of the FLTC mission, please let me know so we can find a place for you to make your contribution to the total effort. With over 800 miles of trail in the FLT System, we have lots of opportunities for you to help.

Trail Supporter Patch

The following was taken from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation website, except for the added phrase in italics.

The DEC has for sale a new Trail Supporter Patch. Patch proceeds will help maintain and enhance non-motorized trails throughout New



York State. All monies raised from the purchase of the patch will be deposited in the Conservation Fund's Outdoor Recreation, Trail Maintenance, and Development Account. The DEC administers more than 3,500 miles of non-motorized trails on State Forests, Wildlife Management Areas, Forest Preserves and Multiple Use Areas.

Funding from the sales of the supporter patch will also provide DEC's valuable partners in the Adopt-A-Natural Resource Stewardship Program, *including the Finger Lakes Trail Conference*, with additional money to reach more trails for maintenance assistance. The Adopt-A-Natural Resource Stewardship Program is a volunteer based program which assists DEC with trail maintenance on DEC administered lands.

The colorful trail patch depicts a winding trail leading from the waters to the mountains, a scene typical of many of New York's trails, and a visible reminder of the state's wonderful legacy of public trails, which connects people to the natural landscape and our environment.

Among those trails that will benefit from the patch are some of New York's finest and most well-known including the Northville-Placid Trail, the main Finger Lakes Trail and the Long Path, among other trails across the state.

The patch can be purchased for a \$5 donation at all outlets where sporting licenses are sold and by calling the DEC at 1-866-933-2257 or using the DEC's website (www.dec.ny.gov).

I encourage all hikers to support hiking trails in New York State by purchasing this patch. □

Still Waiting for Adoption — Can Your Help?

Catskill-Central Region. Individual trail sponsors are needed for the following trail sections:

Map M-28, 29 From NY Route 10 to West Trout Brook Road (8.1 miles of which 6.5 miles are on road)

Map M-29 From West Trout Brook Road to the junction of West and East Trout Brook Roads (3.8 miles)

Map M-30 From parking area on Campbell Brook Road to Campbell Mountain Lean-to (3 miles)

If you are interested in more details or would like to apply for a section, contact Mike Gebhard, area coordinator: 607/693-4118 mvgebhard@hughes.net

Catskill-West Region. An individual trail sponsor is needed for the following trail section:

Map M-27 From NY Route 8 to Dry Brook Road (3.3 miles)

To volunteer or ask questions, contact area coordinator Jim DeWan: 607/775-3001 goshawkbait@aol.com

Finger Lakes National Forest. The FLTC is still looking to find several people who would be interested in becoming trail stewards for small sections of the 11.9-mile Interloken Trail located to the northeast of Watkins Glen. They would work under the Hector Ranger District of the Finger Lakes National Forest and would receive instruction and assistance with tools and other supplies. To learn more about this opportunity contact Chris Zimmer, Finger Lakes National Forest, Ranger District Office 607/546-4470 czimmer@fs.fed.us. If you do take on the job, please let the FLTC Trail Operations Office (585/288-7191, fltc@frontiernet.net) know of your assignment.

Exercise and Cancer

Bernard J. Poiesz, M.D.

Dr. Poiesz is Professor of Medicine, Director of the Regional Oncology Center, and Head of the Division of Hematology/Oncology at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse.

I was asked to write an article on the impact of exercise on the development and treatment of cancer. There are approximately 1.7 million new cases of cancer in the United States each year with close to 60% of those cases achieving cure due to primary (e.g., surgery or radiation) and/or systemic (e.g., chemotherapy, hormonal and/or immunotherapy) treatment. The very recent news that deaths due to cancer are on the decline in the United States is certainly cause for optimism and renewed efforts to combat these deadly diseases.

Epidemiologic studies have identified many different etiologic (causal) agents of cancer. Ionizing radiation from the sun and other natural or industrial sources clearly contribute to a substantial number of human malignancies. Certain known carcinogens (e.g., tobacco smoke, benzenes, aniline dyes etc.) and infectious agents (human papilloma virus, Epstein Barr virus, human herpes virus 8, etc.) are major oncogenic agents as well. However, it is currently accepted that dietary intake, obesity and degree of physical activity are independent factors that can contribute to the development of some human malignancies.

Most studies regarding diet and cancer now conclude that the development of obesity and lack of physical activity contribute more to an increased risk for cancer than does an absolute amount or particular source of caloric intake. However, most nutritional recommendations still advocate diets low in red meats and animal fat and high in fiber, vegetables, nuts and fruits. Excess adiposity has been associated with an increased incidence of endometrial, colon, breast, rectal and



prostate cancers, whereas, lack of physical activity independent of obesity is correlated with increases in colon and breast cancer. The protective effect of physical exercise is due to the sum of both occupation and leisure time activities.

The mechanisms behind the benefits of physical activity and lack of adiposity *vis à vis* cancer incidence are complex and not completely understood. However, some themes have emerged. Colon cancer is thought to depend on the exposure time of bowel epithelial cells to carcinogens. Just like high fiber diets, physical activity is known to lessen bowel transit time. Hence, physical activity may decrease the time that carcinogens can affect the bowel.

A second mechanism may be that obesity and low physical activity are independently related to insulin resistance resulting in higher plasma insulin levels. Insulin is a strong growth factor for many epithelial cells. Sustained high insulin levels will drive these cells to divide thereby increasing the chance for mutagenic events. Hence, it is quite possible that one of the protective effects of exercise is reduced insulin levels. This phenomenon is thought to be particularly relevant in colon cancer.

Another biological effect of exercise is changes in prostaglandin (a mammalian hormone-like chemical) synthesis in colonic epithelial cells. Physical activity increases the production of prostaglandin F_{2α} and decreases the

synthesis of prostaglandin E₂. The former molecule will decrease bowel transit time, while the latter has proliferative effects on the bowel epithelium. These protective effects of exercise are similar to those observed with aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug intake.

Recently a very interesting study funded by the National Cancer Institute was reported by Dr. Kristin Campbell and her colleagues at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. Her group studied the effect of vigorous aerobic exercise on the biology of epithelial cells in the sigmoid colon. Participants were randomized to either maintain their usual lifestyle or to engage in one hour of vigorous exercise six days a week. Biopsies were taken of their sigmoid colon at periodic intervals. Their observations showed a statistically significant decrease in precancerous lesions and molecular markers known to be involved in the pathogenesis of cancer and an increase in molecular events that protect against cancer in the men who engaged in vigorous exercise. Interestingly, there was no benefit seen in women, suggesting a gender-based difference.

The protective effects of physical activity in breast cancer are thought to be due to its effects on the onset of menarche and regular ovulation in younger women and the level of obesity in post menopausal women. Early menarche and regular menstrual periods have been associated with higher levels of ovarian estrogen and a higher incidence of breast cancer. Vigorous exercise, particularly earlier in life, delays the onset of menarche and results in irregular and shortened menstrual cycles and less estrogen. In older post-menopausal women a major source of estrogen is from the conversion of androstenedione in fat stores. Maintaining a lean body mass

(Continued on page 23)

through diet and exercise decreases estrogen levels and the risk of developing breast cancer.

The benefits of exercise precede the development of cancer by years. However, it is exercise within the more recent rather than distant past that has the most influence. Hence, a lifelong commitment to exercise is required to reap its cancer preventive effects. Likewise, the protective benefits of exercise correlate with the degree of energy expended over time. The more vigorous the effort, the greater the rewards.

Regular exercise also is deemed to have benefit to those who develop cancer and are undergoing treatment. These benefits can be physical, functional and/or emotional. A diagnosis of cancer can be psychologically devastating. Both a malignant condition and its treatment can lead to fatigue, pain, motor and sensory deficits, muscle and ligament contractures, poor sleep and bowel habits and skin breakdown. Within practical limits, regular and progressive exercise in cancer patients

can mitigate many of the above complications.

Improving one's muscle strength through anaerobic exercise will improve power and facilitate simple movements that protect against falls and allow for the completion of daily tasks. Aerobic conditioning and improved cardiopulmonary capacity will compensate for anemia and decrease fatigue. Exercise is also correlated with the release of natural endogenous endorphins. These chemicals are known to decrease one's perception of pain and increase one's feeling of well being. Regular exercise improves bowel mobility and appetite and normalizes sleep patterns, all critical concerns affecting the quality of life of many cancer patients.

The psychological benefits of exercise to a cancer patient are as important as the physical ones mentioned above. The worry and fear associated with carrying a diagnosis of malignancy can be overwhelming. Exercise and other leisure activities are critical in allowing a patient to simply think about

something else rather than his or her illness. Decreasing stress allows one to marshal one's energy to combat one's illness and promotes self worth. A positive attitude is critical to battling cancer.

There is not necessarily any one or preferred exercise program or leisure activity to recommend to cancer patients. My own bias is that individuals should do what they find most comfortable and interesting. Certainly hiking provides ample physical challenges which can be graded according to length and terrain. Patients can do as much or as little as is possible with minimal equipment or cost. In my opinion, engaging nature has another salutary benefit, as well. I see cancer and death as much a part of life as birth. Observing and understanding nature leads one to understand that our own mortality is part of the natural order of things. Accepting this fact tends to have a calming effect in the face of confronting a possible terminal illness.

□



Mt. Morris Dam and FLTC Office

George Zacharek

Two years ago FLTC board member George Zacharek's children gave him a gift certificate at Christmas to fly a Warbird at Geneseo. George writes, "Finally in July I took the 30 minute flight and I wanted to fly over Letchworth and get pictures of the FLTC office. It was great, we did a couple of barrel rolls and loops. I had a picture when I was 18 years of age in the same model of plane in Lubbock, Texas."

Hiking West: Crossing the Genesee



Clipboard lady Susan Collier



Crossing Sixtown Creek

The 2007 county hike series continues its journey across Allegany, Livingston, and Wyoming counties through the months of July, August, and September. The ravines near Swain proved to be a beauty and a challenge at the same time. The steep downs into the creek bed followed by a steep up proved a test for even the most able hikers in the group. The hike from Dalton to the Whiskey Bridge had some of the most amazing vistas that anyone could ask for. We crossed the Genesee River in July on the Whiskey Bridge in Portageville. As the saying goes, "That was easy." August took the hikers to the Cattaraugus/Allegany County border to begin the longest hike of the series (about 13 miles). We will finish the series in September with a picnic and awards at Letchworth State Park. In contrast to past county hikes, Hiking West: Crossing the Genesee has enjoyed sunny, comfortable days for all of the hikes!! I am not sure how that happened, but it sure has been a treat!!

— Pat Monahan, Series Coordinator



Blue cohosh

Right: Sweet taste of victory after a long hike. Thanks, Pat!

Photos by Jackson "Jet" Thomas





Left: The FLTC at the State Fair

Smokey Bear poses with End-to-End Coordinator Ed Sidote. The lean-to in the background is the FLTC exhibit.

Jacqui Wensich



Right: New Sign at the Eastern End of the Trail

Joe Herron

Many an end-to-ender has reached the eastern end of the FLT and wondered "Is this it?" Ed Sidote made this sign and the forest ranger put it up for him where the Finger Lakes Trail intersects the Long Path that comes up from New York City.

"Talking Trees" Revisited: You may recall Carrie French's popular article "History's Mysteries along the FLT" in the Fall 2006 issue, about trees that were forced by Native Americans to grow in a bent pattern to mark paths, water sources, or boundaries. This year's county hike series has taken us past a number of Carrie's trees and we have been fortunate that Carrie herself has been a sweep for the "medium-slow" group and has pointed out the trees and filled us in on her research.

NYDEC Senior Forester Ron Abraham is a member of Jacqui Wensich's medium-medium group. Her group is also blessed with two "photography nuts", Jacqui and Jackson "Jet" Thomas, who captured these photos of Ron coring one of the

"talking trees" to determine its age, which turned out to be between 90 and 100 years—too young to be an "Indian tree". [Editor: Too late for this issue, I received a very interesting letter from Ron on this topic. Watch for more in the Winter issue.]



Jackson "Jet" Thomas



Jackson "Jet" Thomas



Jackson "Jet" Thomas



Jacqui Wensich

End-to-End Update

**by Edward J. Sidote
FLT End-to-End Coordinator**

End-to-End Hikers

The following hikers completed the FLT main trail this summer:

- #225 David Cook
- #226 Betty Constable
- #227 Jeff Constable
- #228 Beth Dean
- #229 Greg Dean

Future end-to-enders recently added to my list:

Erik Schlimmer
Suzanne El Rayess
Nicholas Fisher
Terry Carter (Joliet, IL)
Will Roden
Tim Anderson (Winchester, VA)
Marilyn Beckley
Dan Speakman

I received progress reports from the following hikers on my end-to-end list:

Roger Ashworth	Mahlon & Sarah Hurst
Marilyn Beckley	Scott Lauffer
Jim & Sigrid Connors	Ken Lewaine
Joe & Kathy Dabes	John A-X. Morris
Suzanne El Rayess	Gina Mushynsky
Nicholas Fisher	Erik Schlimmer
Carrie French	Dan Speakman

As I have received no requests for branch trail patch applications, I assume no one has completed the branches so far this summer. However, I know some of you are hiking the branches. To get your branch trail patch you will need to get the application from me.

Car Spotter Additions

There have been no additions since the last issue. However, we need more car spotters in Cortland County, Delaware County and the western counties. Email me for the Car Spotter Form. You will enjoy assisting End-to-Enders. If you are a car spotter and expect, or need, to be reimbursed for gas do not hesitate to inform hikers when you are contacted. Don't assume they will offer to reimburse you. The car spotter list (revised June 2007) is available from the Service Center, 585/658-9320, or by emailing Gene Bavis at gbavis@rochester.rr.com or from me.

Trail Registers

The main purpose of trail registers is to help locate backpackers (and other hikers) in case they become ill or injured on the trail. Also if there is an emergency in their family, the trail register notebooks are a big help in locating

them. Please be sure to sign all the registers even if they are close together. Also state the direction you are hiking (west to east, or east to west), where you are going if you plan to leave the trail and when you expect to return to the trail. Add any other pertinent information that will help.

Hike Schedules

If you prepare a hike schedule for your backpack hike be sure to send me a copy so I can track your progress across the state. I try to keep track of backpackers because our trail is not heavily hiked like the AT. If you get to a town try to send me an email from a library or motel so I know you are okay. If you are carrying a cell phone you can call me and leave a message on my answering machine. When you get to Chenango County (maps M-23 and M-24), call me and I will try to pick you up and bring you to my home for a hot shower, a Chinese all-you-can-eat buffet, a comfortable bed, a big breakfast and return trip to the trail. There is an outside phone in front of the Bowman Lake State Park Office, and I am just 15 miles away from the park.

Excerpt From a Trail Register Notebook

I've hiked many trails around the east coast. This trail is one of the better trails I've hiked. The changing terrain and scenery is beautiful. Thank You. Tim Funke, 09-14-05

Happy Hiking!

Edward J. Sidote

5 Clinton St., Norwich, 13815-1903

607/334-3872

ejsidote@frontiernet.net

Good News!

Good news, the Country Crème (formerly Penguin) is back in business on Route 8 south of Masonville in Delaware County selling ice cream and burgers and such. They had been closed because the former owner had a stroke, but a cousin has taken over the business. They were very busy yesterday, so hopefully they should get plenty of business. They even have map M-27 posted on their wall inside. They make ice cream with a rare machine that presses the different fresh flavors into the ice cream. It's worth the drive out from wherever you are, or if you just happen to be hiking out that way.

Scott Lauffer

7/9/2007

End-to-End Album

David Cook, End-to-End Hiker #225

My interest in hiking has always been with me, having been born in the family home in Stifflertown, PA (12 houses and one sawmill) in the mountains of western PA. Back then at the age of 8 or 9, with a neighbor boy of the same age, we would take off through the woods. No need to carry water, we just drank from mountain springs bubbling out of the ground. Nothing to fear back then either – we were invincible.

Hiking stayed in my blood after moving to the Rochester area. I would just take off down old railroad tracks, snowmobile trails, or whatever I could find. One day my wife, Adele, said we should go for short hikes together. Jackson Thomas and his wife Shirley, who works with Adele, introduced us to Jacqui Wensich, an FLT end-to-end hiker who showed me photos of her end-to-end hiking on the Finger Lakes Trail. I was so impressed with the beauty along the trail and attention to details on the maps that off to the stores I went to buy packs, boots, poles, and more. We started out on the Letchworth Trail, in and out. Then we joined the Schuyler County hike series, thoroughly enjoyed it, and I was started on my end-to-end. Adele would get up to go to work and I would be packing my truck. She would ask, "Where are you going?" and I would say, "Hiking on the FLT. See you in 3 or 4 days."

I have so many people and groups to thank for all their help: Ken and Marge Reek spotted and hiked with me in Allegany State Park. Ed Sidote furnished me with all the information I needed and encouragement to keep going. I thank the trail maintainers for all their hard work, land owners for letting us hike across their land, Paul Hoffman who hiked with me for several days, as well as Terry and Kim Meacham (Steuben County hike coordinators) and Jim and Sigrid Connors (Schuyler County hike coordinators). I especially want to

Quinn Wright



Dave Cook (#225) with Adele Cook, left, and patch presenter, Jacqui Wensich

thank Quinn Wright who hiked with me last December. We also completed maps 24-33 the last week of June and first part of July in 11 days!! Out of 562 miles, the only exciting thing, besides the scenery, was seeing the huge black bear on Wild Meadow Road (map 33).

Last, but not least, I want to thank Jacqui Wensich, who got me started on

the FLT and was there at the finish. Jacqui, along with Quinn and Adele, hiked with me my last 16 miles. She presented me with my end-to-end patch and made a celebration cake with roasted almonds on top arranged in the number "225" □



Jacqui Wensich

The new end-to-end hiker was congratulated by everyone as he boarded the bus for the July hike of the county series.

End-to-End Album

Beth and Greg Dean, End-to-End Hikers #228 and #229

Our FLT journey began in May of 2002 in a land they call "Sidote Country" (Chenango County) when we read about and signed up for the Chenango County cross-county series. After completing only a very few of the hikes (22.4 miles out of 72) in the series, we lost touch with the trail until the suggestion of a good friend, Marty Howden, had us joining the FLT Bullthistle Hikers Club in 2005. At our first meeting we met Ed Sidote, referred to as "Mr. Finger Lakes Trail" or the "Energizer Bunny" by some members of the club. His passion for the care and development of the trail was very inspirational. It was at one of the meetings that we first heard the term FLT End-to-Ender (but we were still not inspired enough to attempt it). Then we met two people who would become our trail mentors, Bob & Sue Bliven (#203 & #202). Here were two retired people who could kick our butts on a hike, but encouraged us to keep on hiking. So with the help of Phil & Tammy Metzger (#221 & 220), Bob & Sue Bliven, Dick Corbin (#206), Ed Sidote (#3) and some hiking on our own, we completed 62.5 more miles in the fall of 2005.

The year 2006 found us signing up to complete all of Steuben County in the next cross county series. A big THANK YOU goes out to Kim & Terry Meacham and all of the volunteers for their great planning and dedication to this series. Without them the 60+ miles of Steuben County would not have been so easy. We met lots of great people and had good times hiking with them despite the soggy weather. A vacation to Allegany State Park for seven days in June helped us complete 51 more miles. Several Bullthistle club members met us for a few of our vacation hikes including Carol Smith (#218) and friends, Dick Corbin, and Horst & Sigi Schwinge. We attended and hiked at the FLTC Fall Outing hosted by the Triple Cities Hiking Club. We also hiked with Rich Breslin



Beth (#228) and Greg (#229) Dean receiving their end-to-end patches from Ed Sidote (#3)

(#212), Dick, and Bob & Sue. This was the year that we made the commitment and turned in our end-to-end papers in hopes of some day finishing the entire trail. When 2006 came to a close, we had hiked another 220.55 miles.

At a club meeting in 2007 Ed Sidote made the announcement that he was going to be 90 years old and wanted 25 end-to-enders by the close of 2007. We decided that we would try to finish the rest of the trail (256.65 miles) by the Fall Outing in October for Ed's Birthday Bash. The big push started in April with a cold and windy road walk along route 41 with Bob & Sue along for moral support (now headed for their second end-to-end). We attended and hiked at the FLTC Spring Outing hosted by the Genesee Valley Hiking Club. Another seven-day vacation in June to Watkins Glen State Park (including lots of briars and fallen trees) completed more maps. We also took several weekend trips out west with Jeff & Betty Constable (#227 & #226) to complete maps 3, 4 and 6. We also completed lots and lots of day hiking trips using car spotters or driving two vehicles. Finally, on a beautiful summer day in August, we finished our last 2 miles (after hiking every weekend from April to August) coming down the hill to Butts Rd. on M-26. With mixed emotion we crossed the finish line with several friends and family there to cheer us on.

We would like to thank all of the land owners, the following car spotters, Ray Zinn, Kim & Terry Meacham, Paul Hoffman, Ed Sidote, Pat Monahan, Jeff & Betty Constable, Phil & Tammy Metzger, Carol Smith and Bob & Sue Bliven, all the trail stewards and everyone that hiked or helped us with our end-to-end journey. A special thanks to Ed Sidote for coaching us along the way and to Bob & Sue Bliven for encouraging us to keep on hiking no matter what. You have been our inspiration!!!

On our journey we encountered lots of wildlife including several chipmunks, grey squirrels and deer, one red fox, one porcupine, two barred owls and a family of mice in a trail register box. We saw some of the most beautiful water falls, valleys, gorges, lakes, streams and some of the neatest rock formations. We climbed many hills, and some mountains, with wonderful views (some without because of fog). We gained new knowledge of wildflowers, trees and birds. We got wet, muddy, sweaty and have a few battle scars from the briars we encountered. These are all things that we would not have seen, heard or experienced if we had not decided to become end-to-enders. Thank you to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference for their continued support of the trail.

**GO TAKE A HIKE
(We love this trail!)
Greg and Beth Dean**

The Onondaga Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) sponsored three neighborhood walks on newly constructed sections of hiking trail south of Syracuse. The public was invited to join ADK on short 3-5 mile walks basically in their backyards. The objective is to introduce the “neighbors of the trail” to hiking opportunities and demonstrate how the trail might be a valuable community resource. It is hoped that residents will feel a sense of pride and ownership in the trails. The community hikes are part of our trail protection initiative. Between 12 and 15 participants attended each hike.

The hike schedule was preceded by a PowerPoint presentation at a local library that introduced local people to the Finger Lakes and North Country Trails. The sections of trail featured on the community hikes are part of the FLT/NCT Onondaga Trail extension project. ADK-ON also produced a brochure and map of the newly certified and future trail sections that will become Map O-2 upon completion.

Community Hikes on the FLT in Central New York

Mary Coffin 6/30/07



Mary Coffin

Since 1962, the Adirondack Mountain Club, Onondaga Chapter, has constructed and maintained over 100 miles of FLT and over half is also concurrently North Country National Scenic Trail. □

Mary Coffin serves on the board of directors of the North Country Trail Association and has long been active with the ADK Onondaga Chapter.

Big Daddy ...

(Continued from page 5)

added steps at several other places on both sides of the ravine. They completed their work by early afternoon of the last day.

In the meantime, my team had again gone ahead to work on the third ravine, a couple of miles north of the second ravine. After offering to let us put the trail on one or more of their farm lanes, the gracious landowners, Jim and Elaine Pawlak, had approved a reroute that took the trail up-ravine to a nice crossing area where the side slopes were much less severe. Jim Pawlak also mowed a path for us so we could drive directly to the work site.

The reroute required clearing several hundred feet of new trail on both sides of the ravine, putting in four fairly

short switchback legs with side cribbing on the north side, and side-hilling one short stretch of trail and putting in a few steps at two locations on the south side. By early afternoon of the last day, we had almost finished. We still had to get the materials for a few steps and put these in, but we called it quits and headed back to the Holland Community Center, which had been our central gathering point since Sunday and joined with the other team to celebrate our accomplishments. At six, when I left to head home, I put the last CDs into my car's player and listened to the final chapters of *The Good Husband of Zebra Drive*, feeling very tired and sore, but very much satisfied.

Epilogue: Three days later I returned to Holland to do a little bit more work on the Pawlak ravine. Annette Brzezicki and I cut some small hemlocks (again,

with the landowner's permission) and peeled, topped and cut the trunks into pieces for steps and cribbing along the outside of the side-hilled trail to hold the dirt but allow the water to run off. We put in most of the cribbing but left it to others to put in the steps. We also delivered “thank you” baskets and notes to the Clarks and the Pawlaks (the only landowners who were home at the time). Best of all, and much to our delight, we learned that several folks from the Foothills Trail Club had made it back to the ravines before we did to add some of the finishing touches. □

The Holland Ravines Alley Cat Crew trail builders and the supporting cast are listed on the next page.

Walking through Time ...

(Continued from page 13)

but some of our members must have seen them.

At High Bridge we are walking UNDER the route of the old Erie Railroad from Hornell to Buffalo, still active today as Norfolk Southern. It was from this very bridge, during a Sunday excursion train from Buffalo in the 1850's when the Erie was very new, that William Pryor Letchworth first saw the place he later bought, built a home upon, reforested, and later donated to the state.

History fairly drips from this junction of two railroads, a river, and a canal, all positioned at a famous waterfall. The bridge itself is famous: 250 acres of pine were cut down to build the first version in 1852, which served until a spark from a locomotive's smoke stack burned it down one night in 1875. Considering the date, it is still amazing that the iron replacement was open within nine weeks. That same bridge, 234' high and 800' long, is still basically what much heavier trains use a half-dozen times daily even now, reinforced with modern steel. Nonetheless, if walkers go out to that first concrete abutment, they can see "1875" in one of the iron members. (Pictures in FLT News Winter 2005, WTT #11)

However, between the overlooks toward Middle Falls and the level section beside the Upper Falls, our trail and the old railbed/towpath go through considerable upset. Rather than the rock just downriver where the canal bed was blasted out of the cliff, here is unstable soil, a lot of it wet clay, which continues to slump. The canal had to cross this slide section in a wooden trough, and in the railroad era, a crane was stationed here permanently to pick up derailed cars and fix track. That frequently the rails dropped or waggled, so that it was an eternal battle to keep two rails level and the right distance apart! And our trail reflects that today, where the level pathway is replaced for a short stretch with

Holland Ravines Project Participants

The Holland Ravines Alley Cat Crew trail builders included: Howard Beye, Georgiana Binder, Annette Brzezicki, Deb Brzezicki/Elek, Mike Cheney, Rosemary Cheney, Frank Cipolla, Wilma Cipolla, Bob Collins, Kathy Foote, Helen Fredricks, Richard Gastauer, Mark Hittle, Mike Kennedy, Jacob Kern, Frank Occhiuto, Linda Parlato, Bohdan (Ben) Petryszak, David Potzler, Lynda Rummel, Mike Schlicht, Shari Senefelder, Richard Swank, and Quinn Wright.

Elma Bowen, Deb Brzezicki/Elek, Sally Castren, Rosemarie Cheney, Donna Frantz, Kathy Laynor, Carol Ortolano, Linda Parlato, Richard Schraven, Shari Senefelder, Cheryl Slesinski, Denise Smith, Connie Umland, Georgeanne Vyverberg, Marie Waterrose, Tara Welty, and Jacqui Wensich provided the delicious dinners. Landowner Linda Jeanne Ruckdeschel donated two cases of Gatorade and a case of water. Annette Brzezicki arranged for the crew to use the Holland Community Center and the showers at the Middle School. THANK YOU!

Visit www.fogvg.org to learn more about the Genesee Valley Greenway and see maps, and www.letchworthparkhistory.com, a wonderful collection of old photographs and history notes.

frequently changing bumps and wiggles.

For the railbed portion of our Letchworth Branch, we share the trail with the Genesee Valley Greenway, a trail that has been a-building since 1992, following the route of the old canal from Rochester to Hinsdale, not far from Olean. In a rare burst of good luck for us, Rochester Gas & Electric bought the whole linear right-of-way when the railroad closed. So most of the property was still available when both private and state groups started contemplating a rail-trail around 1990, and by now the trail is open from

Rochester to Mt. Morris, followed by a problematic section in the Keshequa Creek gorge beyond the prison at Sonyea, after which it is gloriously open again from north of Nunda to the Park. Quite a string of locks from the original 49 between Sonyea and Letchworth is still visible west of Nunda along NY 436, in a skinny piece of Park property that includes wonderful interpretive signs explaining historic uses along the canal. This delightful walk goes east from our Letchworth Branch at River Road, and is shown on Map L2.

These locks west of Nunda are made of crudely dressed stone, and were once lined with wood, a cheaper alternative to finished stone blocks that fit together tightly and included the vertical rounded channel for the pivot pole of gates at each end, plus inset pockets for those gates to open into. Only one

(Continued on page 31)

Answers to the Summer "Name that Map!" quiz

The correct answer is M-9, Bishopsville Rd., Allegany County

The only correct response (and the only response!) came from:

Bill Allen, Olean

Says Jacqui, "Bill is the only one to respond even though my county hiking group all saw it!! In fact the entire county hike series group that did this section walked right by the sign." The photo was taken on the May hike.



Bill's response included a friendly note to Jacqui in which he recalled having trail spotted for her and her dog and being rewarded with some nice homemade jam. He actually knows the owners of the moose crossing sign and knows that they vacation in the Adirondacks. Bill (The Reverend Bill Allen) and his wife served the little United Methodist Church just up the road as well as the church in Arkport from 1997 to 2005.

Walking through Time ...

(Continued from page 30)

example of the finer stonework still exists, north of Scottsville, a mile south of Brook Rd, but reality dictated the cheaper construction further south: the canal galloped to Mt. Morris by 1841 using high masonry standards, but once money ran low, the rest was built in fits and starts using cheaper methods. In fact, navigation was not open for the entire length of the canal to the Allegheny River until 1862. Despite its short life as a complete canal until 1878, and the fact that it always lost money, it did provide invaluable service to interior towns, traffic peaking in 1854 when over 5000 boatloads passed the junction with the Erie Canal.

While the slide area in the gorge was the most expensive stretch to maintain, the worst problem for the Genesee Valley Canal was keeping enough water in the summit portions. Each emptying and filling of a given lock (and there were 106 on the whole 107 mile canal!) used tremendous quantities of water, so naturally the highest portions had too little water. Small ponds were built to supply locks, and in some cases at the highest elevations, major creeks were impounded into lakes: Cuba Lake remains of these, although now its life is purely recreational.

After our Letchworth Branch leaves the towpath/railbed just south of High Bridge in order to walk out to the highway bridge that will take us across the Genesee River into Portageville, the canal used to continue straight to cross the river in a leaky wooden aqueduct on stone pilings. The remaining visible stones carried the successor railroad until forty years ago.

Two blocks through tiny Portageville (which was mostly under water during the infamous Hurricane Agnes of 1972 that was the final blow to many of our railroads) the Branch Trail rejoins the Greenway and railbed/towpath beside a faint depression that once carried

Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway

invites you to a special presentation

From Canal to Rail to Trail: The Evolution of the Genesee Valley Greenway Trail

Free and open to the public

The event starts with a hike on the Greenway at 2:00 p.m., followed by a potluck dinner and an entertaining and informative slide presentation by Allegany County Historian Craig Braack at the FOGVG Annual Meeting.

Space is limited: Please call 585/658-2569 for more information.

Sunday, November 11, 2:00 p.m.

Belfast United Methodist Church, Belfast, NY

Mr Braack was also a featured speaker at the 2007 FLTC Spring Weekend.

loaded boats. Another mile south under a canopy of trees brings us to Whiskey Bridge (itself a replacement after Agnes), which is where the Letchworth Branch meets the main white-blazed FLT, which uses this bridge to cross the river. The main trail westward continues beneath the bridge south on a dirt road, then returns to the towpath/railbed where this road meets NY19A. The next near-mile is now ALSO certified North Country Trail, along with main FLT and Genesee Valley Greenway, after which the FLT/NCT turns east and leaves the GVG. October hikers here have been treated to flocks of migrating wood ducks in nearby crop field puddles.

South of the FLT departure, the GVG exists in bits and pieces for now. One of the most expensive challenges for this trail has been to restore all the bridges over side streams headed for the river that the departing Pennsy removed, alas. This trail is the first-ever triple partnership among the NY Office of Parks, the Dept. of Environmental Conservation, and a private partner, the Friends of the GVG, so progress has been funded slowly by various federal highway grant programs (ISTEA, TEA-21, etc.) which have been necessary to repair culverts, bridges, and washouts.

Nonetheless, many miles are open and bring walkers and bicyclists into increasingly wild places. Once the canal route leaves the Genesee valley and follows Black Creek, the route

often follows swampy woods, with frequent bridges over that winding creek. Imagine my surprise while biking a piece northeast of Cuba at the sight of a duplicate parallel built-up linear lump nearby among the trees! In fact, this was the Erie River Line previously described as a short-cut from near Dalton on Map M7 southwest to meet the Erie line heading west to Chicago.

In a 1991 article in the Erie Lackawanna Historical Society magazine, William Burt told of backpacking 35 miles of the River Line from Cuba to his grandparents' home in Dalton when he was a teenager around 1970. He and his friends not only walked over a fabulous long bridge at Belfast but also unwittingly crossed our trail east of the river, while dodging freight trains. Today our trail crosses only a curious line of silent ballast rock in deep woods.

This is a splendid example of the era of crazed competitive over-building. We can stand now in the middle of a swampy forest, seeming lowland but in fact near the summit of the canal near Cuba, and contemplate the effort it took to build not just the Pennsylvania RR through here, but the Erie, too...neither of which survives. At least we get a dry-footed way to visit the interior of the Black Creek neighborhood, and many of our trails today benefit from these railbeds that once served commerce and travel before roads were of much use. □

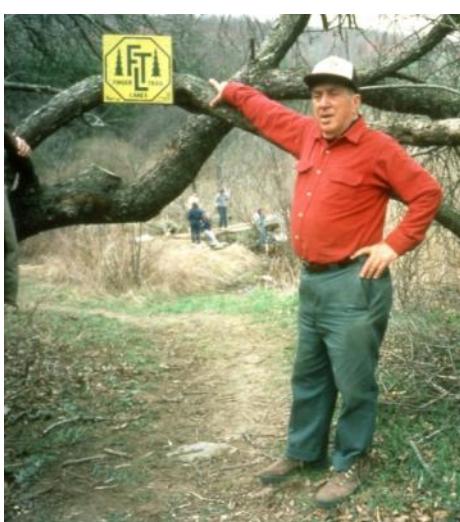


A gift to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference helps to protect and preserve the Trail forever. Gifts may take several forms, such as MEMORIALS, HONORARIUMS, and PLANNED GIVING. Information about how gifts may be designated and/or for a brochure explaining the Planned Gift options may be obtained confidentially by contacting
FLTC, Inc.,
6111 Visitor Center Road Mt. Morris,
New York 14510
(585-658-9320), or
e-mail address
information@fingerlakestrail.org

FLT Regional Club List

These are the clubs that maintain segments of the trail and conduct regular hikes. To reach one of them to volunteer for trail work or to enjoy a walk in your neighborhood, look at these websites.

Affiliate Clubs	Website	Area
ADK Genesee Valley Chapter	http://www.gvc-adk.org	Rochester Area
ADK Mid-Hudson Chapter	http://www.midhudsonadk.org	Eastern NY
ADK Niagara Frontier Chapter	http://www.adk-nfc.org	Buffalo Area
ADK Onondaga Chapter	http://www.adk-on.org	Syracuse Area
Cayuga Trails Club	http://www.cayugatrailsclub.org	Ithaca Area
FLT-Bullthistle Hikers	http://www.bullthistlehiking.org	Chenango County
Foothills Trail Club	http://www.foothillstrailclub.org	Buffalo Area
Genesee Valley Hiking Club	http://www.fingerlakestrail.org/gvhc.htm	Rochester Area
Triple Cities Hiking Club	http://www.tier.net/~tchc	Binghamton Area



Jacqui Wensich

Can you place Diane's Crossing? Send your guess to Jacqui Wensich at jwensich@rochester.rr.com. The answers will appear in the next issue of the News along with the names of those who sent in correct answers. The answers to the Summer quiz can be found on page 30.

From the archives



NAME THAT MAP!
 So, you hiked the FLT or parts of it. Let's see how observant you were!
 Send your guess to:
[New Email Address](mailto:jwensich@rochester.rr.com)

Ed Sidote at the building of Diane's Crossing and the crossing today.

jwensich@rochester.rr.com

FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE

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Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.**Calendar of Events**

October Trail Maintainer Meetings. Contact: Howard Beye 585/288-7191 or fltc@frontiernet.net
Area 2 October 20 Mt Morris, FLTC Office
Area 4 October 27 Cortland, DEC Office

October 5-8 **FLT Fall Campout 2007**, Hickory Hill Campground, Bath.

October 13 FLTC Annual Erv Markert Fall Hike. Abbott Loop Trail, near Ithaca. 8.7 miles. Led by Sigrid (sconnors@twcny.rr.com) and Jim Connors (jconnors@twcny.rr.com). See page 10.

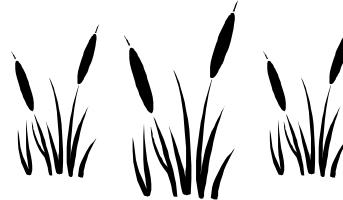
Oct 13-Dec 18 **Big game hunting season** along the FLT. Hikers, be sure you know the latest hunting season trail closures. Also, please take appropriate safety precautions.

November 2 Deadline for submitting material for winter issue of the *Finger Lakes Trail News*. See box on page 1 for instructions.

November 17 FLTC Board Meeting, Geneva

January 18-20, 2008 ...Board/Committee Retreat, Letchworth SP

February 3 Trail Management Committee Meeting, Canandaigua.

**JOIN THE FINGER LAKES TRAIL CONFERENCE**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ County _____

Phone (_____) Email _____

Make your check payable to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference and mail to 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14510 along with this application.

Annual dues (Membership year runs from April 1 to March 1. Dues paid after Dec. 31 will be applied to the next membership year.)

Individual \$25 Contributing: receives enamel pin

Family \$30 designating contributing level

Student (full-time; give permanent address)	\$15	Pathfinder (emerald)	\$45
		Trailblazer (ruby)	\$75
		Guide (diamond)	\$100

Youth organization \$15

Adult organization \$35 Life (individual) \$350 (family) \$500

Business/Commercial (includes a listing on the FLTC website) \$75

Trail Towns: Hammondsport

by Kirk House

When you approach Hammondsport from the west on the Finger Lakes Trail, you come out of Mitchellsville Gorge, cross the old B&H tracks and the Keuka Inlet, go up a little slope and come out of the trees into clear sky and a broad vineyard. Off to the right, you may see hang gliders soaring off the ridge.

Once out of the vineyard you pass the little parking area that Steuben County Public Works put in for hikers. Just ahead to the left is Pleasant Valley Cemetery, gifted to the community back in 1796. Here lie Glenn Curtiss and other pioneer aviators, and with good reason. Past the cemetery is Pleasant Valley Wine Company, oldest winery in the Finger Lakes. Curtiss and his friends made their first flights from the winery grounds 99 years ago.

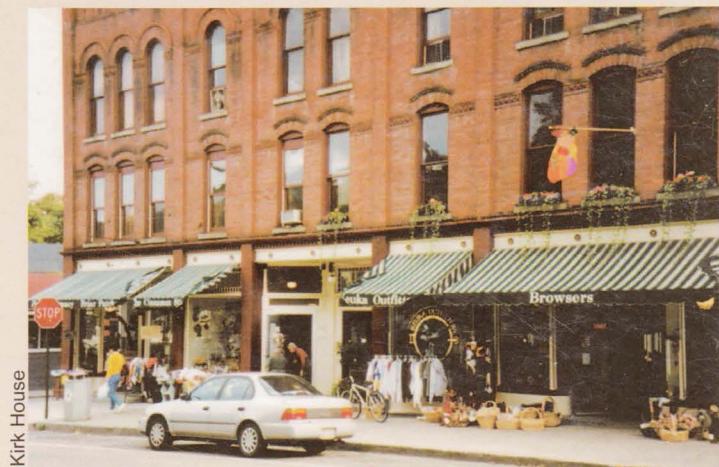
After crossing State Route 54 the trail starts a steep climb, then runs along the ridge to the bivouac. From here the blue-blazed June Bug Trail slides down toward the Curtiss Museum where you can get a fine look at a World War II Curtiss "Commando" C-46 cargo plane. You also get your first glimpse of Hammondsport and Keuka Lake.

Treasure that glimpse as you continue along the ridge, cross unpaved Winding Stair Road, ford a stream, and hike up a disused cart path. From here a short spur to the left brings you to the brink of the ridge. Below lies Keuka Lake, and at its head sits Hammondsport, "the Jewel of the Finger Lakes."

If you hike on out of the woods, you come to fields of tall grass and flocks of bobolinks. Down in the village itself you'll find a motel and half-dozen B&B inns. There are no chains in Hammondsport, except for a Sugar Creek and the Napa Auto Parts. The restaurants are family-owned and idiosyncratic, and so are the hosteries, and so are the wineries. You can eat at the casual Oasis, the historic Park Inn, or the upscale Village Inn... or the Crooked Lake Ice Cream Parlor, the Union Block Café, or Mahoney's Pub. There are public rest rooms at the waterfront Depot Park, at the Chamber of Commerce, the municipal hall, and the brand-new Taylor Library where you can also get internet access. There are Episcopal, Catholic, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches. There's a grocery store, antique stores, art galleries, and a hardware store. You can get gas at the Sugar Creek, or

Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.
6111 Visitor Center Road
Mt. Morris, NY 14510

Address Service Requested



Shops on the Square

just outside the village at Kwik-Fill on Route 54. Davenport Hospital is about four miles back toward Bath, across the trail.

Hammondsport really began to flourish in 1833, when the Crooked Lake Canal joined Keuka Lake to the Erie Canal system. The town was truly a port, shipping produce northward. The train came to town in the 1870s, and the lovely gothic depot is still a treasured part of the waterfront. By the late 1800s the economy largely revolved around vineyards, vintners, and tourism. Visitors came for the wineries, the lake, and the cleft of the Hammondsport Glen.

In 1902 native son Glenn Curtiss started building engines and motorcycles, making his village a magnet for crackpots and visionaries alike. Alexander Graham Bell convinced Curtiss to turn his hand to airplanes, and for ten years Hammondsport was like Seattle, Edwards Air Force Base, and Cape Canaveral rolled into one. But the makeshift plant closed in favor of modern facilities in Buffalo as the Great War ended and Prohibition began. The area economy was devastated.

Repeal and World War II brought restoration, along with the car-borne traveler. The welcome mat is always out in Hammondsport. Drop in and see.

This is the second in a planned series of articles about towns along the Finger Lakes Trail. Scott Lauffer kicked off the series in the Fall 2006 issue with his article on tiny Claryville at the far eastern end of the trail.

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