The ground trembled, but it was the huff-saw the large black bear lurking about 10 feet away and staring back at me. I struggled... 

Improvements are needed for hikers both along the road and on the trails to promote safety.

We began with a site visit on a busy July Sunday, and experienced first-hand the perils of the road walk. At the base of the falls we watched many people hike beyond the end-of-trail sign, some slipping and falling on the eroded slope. We saw people swimming in the tiers of pools, where the rocks are very slippery and a fall would cause very bad injuries if not death.

Trail Conference Recommendations for Protecting Kaaterskill Falls and the Public

The Trail Conference is recommending a comprehensive and collaborative approach to managing public access at Kaaterskill Falls, with the goal being to increase safety and access while protecting and improving this unique and popular natural resource in the Catskill Park.

Solutions will require the cooperation of the Town of Hunter, the DEC, Dept. of Transportation, nearby landowners, non-profit organizations like the Trail Conference, and local businesses. The Trail Conference supports:

• The creation of a weekend shuttle service to reduce parking pressure in the clove.
• Improvements to pedestrian safety along Route 23A.
• Improvements to the current Kaaterskill Falls Trail and the development of a new trail that connects the existing Escarpment Trail and the Kaaterskill Falls Trail in a safe and efficient manner.
• The completion of the Kaaterskill Rail Trail (KRT) at the top of the falls with the construction of a bridge over Lake Creek, which would provide a safe crossing for visitors above the falls. The KRT connects the surrounding hiking and biking trails.
• The deployment by the Trail Conference and the Cathcart Conservation Corps of a combination of paid and volunteer trail and resource stewards in the area to educate visitors, help protect natural resources, and help ensure the safety of hikers and visitors. Paid stewards require identifying funding sources.
• Improvements to pedestrian safety along Route 23A.
• Improvements to the current Kaaterskill Falls Trail and the development of a new trail that connects the existing Escarpment Trail and the Kaaterskill Falls Trail in a safe and efficient manner.

The Trail Conference does not support the development of a new trail that would bring visitors to the upper level of Kaaterskill Falls, nor does it support the development of a short, steep connector trail between the top of the falls and the end of the existing Kaaterskill Falls Trail.

—Jeff Senterman, senior program coordinator

Protect Your Trails: Report ATV Activity

“We made a trail for you,” hollered the ATV rider from his mount. He and two companions had bulldozed their four-wheelers up a steep slope, through dense blueberries nearly to a viewpoint in the Fishkill Ridge Conservation Area (owned and managed by Scenic Hudson) in Dutchess County. They had, in fact, been following a Trail Conference maintained footpath up from an area riddled with old woods roads and off-road vehicle paths (East Hudson Trails Map #102). In the conservation area, as in the neighboring Hudson Highlands State Park, the use of off-road vehicles is illegal. Hiking solo, I held my tongue, turned my back on the trio, and continued, a bit uneasily, on my way.

continued on page 2

Mugged by a Bear

The ground trembled, but it was the huff-saw the large black bear lurking about 10 feet away and staring back at me.

Looking through the screen of my tent, I saw the large black bear lurking about 10 feet away and staring back at me. I struggled... 

continued on page 8

Kaaterskill Falls Deserves Safe Access

Two deaths this season, both the result of falls from water-slicked rocks. Unsafe trailhead access, with pedestrians and vehicles competing for pavement on a winding, narrow road. Social paths on the mountainside that result in widespread erosion, degrading both the mountain and the experience for hikers.

These are just some of the problems that affect the popular Kaaterskill Falls, an iconic natural feature of the Catskill Park and the Hudson River School of art. This summer, the Trail Conference joined New York State Senator Cecilia Tkacyk, local officials, and representatives of the Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to begin a search for solutions that will enhance visitors’ experience and safeguard this treasured natural asset.

People for Trails

Daniel Yu

Staten Island, NY

Komodo Dragon: Daniel’s bestowed nickname at the Bear Mountain project.

Why? Daniel appreciates the art of building cribwalks much as a Komodo Dragon approaches its prey; patiently, tenaciously, powerfully, and skillfully.

Plumber of the Internet: Daniel’s nickname for himself in his professional, weekday life.

Why? “I upgrade the infrastructure and make it work faster; I handle the stuff you don’t see to make all the possibilities of iPhones and computers seem seamless.” Ironically, Daniel does not own much hi-tech gear himself.

It was while hiking—he started just last year—that Daniel learned of the Trail Conference on some trail markers. He attended an info meeting on East Hudson Trails Project hike in March and has been hooked on the project, coming out every weekend, ever since. “I was interested in making a wild place accessible. Every day you learn something new, either on your own or by others doing it.”

Goals: “I learned that Daniel learned from his mount. He and two companions had bulldozed their four-wheelers up a steep slope, through dense blueberries nearly to a viewpoint in the Fishkill Ridge Conservation Area (owned and managed by Scenic Hudson) in Dutchess County. They had, in fact, been following a Trail Conference maintained footpath up from an area riddled with old woods roads and off-road vehicle paths (East Hudson Trails Map #102). In the conservation area, as in the neighboring Hudson Highlands State Park, the use of off-road vehicles is illegal. Hiking solo, I held my tongue, turned my back on the trio, and continued, a bit uneasily, on my way.

continued on page 2

ATVs in Harriman State Park.

Join the Conference and Be a Trail Volunteer

The Trail Conference is seeking volunteers to help make the Kaaterskill Falls area more accessible to hikers and visitors. There are many projects that need your help. Whether you live in New York or the surrounding areas, we need your help. Please visit our website for more information.

The view from the very highest end of the Kaaterskill Falls Trail.

The view from the very highest end of the Kaaterskill Falls Trail.
New Jersey Voters: New Legislation Could Affect Your Parks

On November 4, you will have the opportunity to vote on Question 2, a measure that, if approved, would dedicate a percentage of existing corporate business tax revenues on a long-term basis to relieve funding for land and water protection efforts. The Trail Conference has supported dedicated funding for Green Acres through the New Jersey Keep It Green coalition, as of the deadline for this issue of Trail Walker, we were reviewing the final measure adopted by the legislature to ensure that its passage would maintain already established funding for our parks. Please watch your email and our website for more about this issue in the weeks ahead.

New York State:
In Harriman State Park

The 1779 Trail bridge over the outlet of Turkey Hill Lake is reopened thanks to the work of Trail Conference volunteers. Construction of the bridge, washed away by Hurricane Irene, had not yet been replaced and attempting to cross the stream, at least when water is high, is inadvisable due to the swift current and proximity to the cascade. The Trail Conference is coordinating with the park to replace this bridge; completion date is TBD.

Kakiat Trail Bridge over Stony Brook:

This bridge was destroyed during Hurricane Irene and has not yet been replaced. Crossing the stream without a bridge is very difficult (even under low water conditions) and is not advised. The park seeks to relocate this crossing to a more suitable location, with the higher span and some Clause irrigation to reduce the likelihood of future washouts, but it has not yet identified such a location.

A 0.5-mile relocation of the Appalachian Trail on West Mountain is expected to be completed and open later this fall.

The Bare Rock Shelter is reopened after repairs made by park staff.

Catskill Park

In May, the DEC and regional nonprofits celebrated the acquisition of a 590-acre collection of parcels that puts the 3600-foot Balsam Mountain wholly in the Forest Preserve.

New Palmer Hill Trail opens in Andes, Delaware County:

The trail opened in July and the first three miles between the Catskill Mountain Club and the New York City Dep. of Environmental Protection (DEP). After a brief ceremony featuring remarks by Andes Town Supervisor Marty Donnelly, NYC DEP Recreation and Property Manager Charlie Laing, and CMPC Richard Roberts, attendees headed off for a hike. The Palmer Hill Trail consists of three segments that can be hiked in four distinct combinations, allowing hikers the options of short and easy hikes, moderately strenuous and longer hikes.

Each takes you through beautiful wildflower meadows that offer wide open views and of the bucolic scenery that Delaware County epitomizes. Along the way are old foundations, a lovely stream and age old trees. In season, there will be blackberries and apples galore for the hungry hiker. And in winter the cross country skiing will be a dream come true.

Don’t confront ATVers yourself. Instead, alert the local Park Police and be prepared to offer as many details as possible about the illegal activity.

Laws and regulations—such as New York State’s ban on the use of ATVs in State Parks—are frequently broken and rarely enforced. In New Jersey, hard-earned legislation that imposed registration, licensing, and strong penalties for illegal ORV use has been effectively ignored since it was adopted in 2010. A deadline that the state identify three sites for ATV parks within three years was missed, and the strong threats and penalties that accompanied it have been removed as a consequence. Just one ATV park has been built, in Cape May County in 2013; no additional sites have been identified.

Cats to operating budgets for parks in both states in recent years reduces the likelihood of successful enforcement measures. In December, the New Jersey General Assembly passed legislation that, if approved, would dedicate a percentage of existing corporate business tax revenues on a long-term basis to relieve funding for land and water protection efforts. The Trail Conference has supported dedicated funding for Green Acres through the New Jersey Keep It Green coalition, as of the deadline for this issue of Trail Walker, we were reviewing the final measure adopted by the legislature to ensure that its passage would maintain already established funding for our parks. Please watch your email and our website for more about this issue in the weeks ahead.

Trails remain a great value given the economic times we face. Andes residents are located near the site of the proposed ATV area in Andes. They have already contacted the local ADK chapter about the proposal and are waiting for the DEC to respond. Residents are concerned about the noise and impact of the proposed ATV area on their quality of life.

The DEC has responded that they are considering a location in Andes for a new ATV park. This location is near the Catskill Park boundary and is not currently protected from disturbance by a 20 year-old forest.

In New York State Parks, in our region, call the Park Police at 845-786-2781 immediately if you spot powered ATVs or motorcycles within a park a trail or in the parking lots of a park.

To highlight the ongoing problem that trails face, the Trail Conference has supported the NYS Keep It Green coalition; as of mid-September, they have made a report to police. From the Trail Conference website, hover on the Our Work menu, then “letter to TW editor”; or send it to Trail Walker Letters, NY-NJ Trail Conference, 156 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430.

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There are times when our preferred tools of getting the question on the November 4 ballot, and are now working to assure that the measure will maintain support for our parks.

In New York, large casino resorts threaten the peace and natural resources of two of our most treasured—and hard-won—state parks: Harriman and Sterling Forest. The Trail Conference has actively opposed approval of these two proposals by the New York State Gaming Commission. If the commission gives either a green light, we will continue our fight at the local level.

Our advocacy efforts to preserve the historic natural aspect of the Palisades ridge were rewarded with a win in July when the Englewood Cliffs Council unanimously voted to restore the traditional zoning that limits building height to 35 feet. LG Elec-

No, I don’t have the technical skills that are necessary for building a résumé of sorts for job applications. I’m really crew-chief-in training. I volunteer to work in parks. I started going to workshops, getting in deeper, building a résumé of sorts for what I want to do for the next 20 years, which is work in parks.

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Weekdays: I sit at a desk in front of a computer doing data analysis for a reinsur- ance company. I have a 22-year-old son who attended Ramapo College and I liked him at the Reservoir. Recently, I was inspired by the book Walking the Distance. I’d like to do a long distance hike—maybe 100-200 miles. When my son is finished with college (next year), I’m going.

Get out with a trail crew. Find them at nynjtc.org/content/trail-crews.

Casinos Update:
Two mega casino resorts proposed for Orange County, in the thick of state park land and projected by their proponents to attract a combined 17 million visitors annually, are of great concern to the Trail Conference, and we are opposing them.

• Sterling Forest Resort, which would be built on a 238-acre private holding at the heart of Sterling Forest State Park in the Town of Tuxedo, adjacent to the Doris Duke Wildlife Sanctuary, where we hold a conservation easement; and

There are times when our preferred tools of rock bars, hoppers, hammers, and clippers are of no help at all in taking care of trails. When the problem is inappropriate develop-

From the Executive Director

Volunteers as new crew chief, Hudson Nosseks (formerly West Hudson North Crew); instigator of the West Hudson Cliffs, a new road maintenance crew.

Minnewaska grabbed me. I first visited six years ago on a group hike, and I knew I had to be closer. Three years ago I moved from South Jersey to Wallkill, near the park. I totally embedded myself in Minnewaska, doing lots of solo hikes. I let it become part of me. I felt I needed to protect that and give back what it had given me. I volunteered to maintain part of the Scenic Trail between Castle Point and Margaret Cliffs.

Wow, I like swinging a sledge hammer! The first time I went out with a crew was at Sterling Forest last year with the Palisades Crew, with the AmeriCorps kids. They were great. I started going to workshops, getting in deeper, building a résumé of sorts for what I want to do for the next 20 years, which is work in parks.

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The 2014 Ralph’s Peak Hikers’ Cabin Club (RPH) Work Weekend Was a Huge Success!

In terms of number of participants and projects accomplished on the Appalachian Trail, this was our most successful work weekend in nearly 10 years!

On average, 30 people per day, including 10 thru-hikers who were passing through, worked on various projects:

- The vandalized post and mileage sign at the RPH Shelter were replaced.
- Several lengths of rotted treadway hanger were repaired near the shelter.
- To complete the renovation started in 1995, new siding was installed under the shed area of the shelter. Additionally, the entire shed area and one picnic table were painted with a redwood stain.
- The Seth Lyon Memorial Bridge painting project was completed.
- The Gerry Messerich Memorial Flower Garden on the RPH grounds was cleared up and weeded.
- A total of 10 water bars north and south of RPH were cleaned out.
- The trail directly south of the bridge was cleared of overgrowth.
- A new bulletin board was installed inside the cabin, replacing one that was burned by vandals 10 years ago.
- Seventeen large rock steps (roughly 200-300 pounds each) were installed on the Stormville Mountain stop project. This project is 90 percent completed and will continue into 2015.
- Maintenance on the outhouse at RPH, including some painting and lime treatment, was done.
- The door of the outhouse at Morgan Stewart shelter was replaced.

We are very thankful for ongoing generous support from ALDHA, B-Dry Waterproofing, Chelsea Forest Products, Richard Carroll, and Thall Industries. We continue to use equipment generously donated by L.L. Bean in 2012. We also appreciate the local businesses who assisted us with food: Stormville Pizza and Frankie’s Supperette of Hopewell Junction. —RPHC

**To add your organization to the list, contact Dennis Watson, watson@nyntjc.org.**
Wake Up, Rip! Join the New CCC
Under a contract with New York Dep't of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the Trail Conference is developing and managing the Catskill Conservation Corps, a program that trains and supervises volunteers to perform various tasks related to natural resource stewardship in the Catskills. The contract totals approximately $75,000 for two years, funded through the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), with an option to extend the agreement for an additional three years. DEC will identify specific needs and the Trail Conference will recruit, train, and supervise volunteers working on specific projects across multiple DEC divisions and at various sites in the Catskills. Projects may include trail construction and maintenance, fish sampling, invasive species control, research and monitoring of state lands, and a broad range of other activities. A website and Twitter accounts for the program are set up. Visit catskillconservationcorps.org to learn more.

BOO+ Miles and Counting
Our Invasives Strike Force made fabulous progress this summer, topping 800 cumulative miles of trails surveyed since 2011 for 14 common invasive plants, finishing two large parks—Wanaque/State Park (NJ) and Bear Mountain State Park (NY)—and several small parks including Mahlon Dickerson (Morris County, NJ) and Chenicote Mountain Park (Rockland County, NY). ISF Coordinator Linda Rohloder regularly updates the mileage thermometer on our website, nynjtc.org/invasives. Visit and track the team’s accomplishments as data comes in.

Meeting the Public at Breakneck
Four Trail Conference trail stewards, outfitted by Mountain Tops in Beacon, kicked off the summer hiking season by welcoming and assisting 2,163 hikers over the three-day Memorial Day holiday weekend. Over the first five weekends of the season, the stewards counted almost 10,000 hikers accessing the trailhead on Route 9D, more than half of them met and received information, water, and maps from the stewards; a dozen hikers, injured or lost on the mountain, were assisted by the stewards. Our hiker outreach program at Breakneck got a nice assist—and additional recognition—thanks to volunteer director/videographer Krysti Sabin, who worked with us to produce a video from Breakneck Ridge, a great video that you can view on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/nynjtc.

Getting Out with the Corps
Seventeen AmeriCorps members underwent extensive training and have been deployed at work sites in New York and New Jersey this summer. The sites include Sterling Forest and Fahelpunkt State Park as well as the Appalachian Trail on Bear Mountain. With more than 8,300 hours served between AmeriCorps members and volunteers on their crews, great progress was made in just the first two months of their six-month season. In that time, three trail crews built and repaired over 1,000 linear feet of sustainable trail and the Invasives Strike Force crew was joined by more than 70 volunteers for 12 invasive removal work trips at 8 different parks.

The Invasives Strike Force AmeriCorps crew at Westchester Wilderness Walk
Good News Alert on Palisades
On August 13, the Trail Conference in cooperation with the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, Estes Park on Route 11, which restores the traditional zoning to an existing office, passed a variance, and similar variances are possible in the future. However, the council’s action may strengthen the trail’s ability to challenge the legality of LG’s variance, now pending in appeals court, and shows that the people can affect the actions of government when they care. The 4-0 vote by the council, which the mayor did not veto, also cancels the planned public referendum on the issue in November. Efforts to persuade LG to reduce the height of its planned building will continue unabated.

A Photographer Gives and Gets Trail Magic
Photographer Heather Palecek spent two weeks making magic on the AT this summer.

A young man who is hiking the Appalachian Trail near Bell’s Palsy, which he got hiking the Appalachian Trail is her left turn.

Some of these are of the people you meet in Tales of the Trail on the Corridor of States. This summer we had an Trail thru-hiker portraits by photographer Heather Palecek (pictured here) of Manning, NJ. Palecek debuted the photos at an exhibit at the Love Life Tattoo Studio in Warwick, NY, this past summer. The exhibit was the featured event in this year’s edition of the annual Warwick Appalachian Trail Community Day, organized by the Town of Warwick Appalachian Trail Community Committee and the NY/NJ Trail Conference. Each year, the Warwick AT Community Committee sponsors activities such as hikes, informational programs, and trail maintenance work trips for local residents. Many local artists and musicians find inspiration hiking the AT, and this year’s event brought art to the forefront of the annual event.

Scrambles. He describes thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail as, “A bunch of four-day camping trips spanning many months.”

People for Trails
Kevin Stamey Cortlandt Manor, NY

Nine Lives: Kevin, an AmeriCorps member of the Taconic Trail Crew this summer, is reinventing himself after 28 years of information technology work at a global financial services company in New York City. He retired last May as a project manager for global IT infrastructure projects. That followed his first career as a Juilliard-trained musician; he played trombone.

Path to trails: “I started hiking and was looking for maps. That led me to the Trail Conference website and the mother lode. I clicked on the Volunteer button and got drawn into Trail Crew. I volunteered last year at Bear Mountain. It intrigued me—it involved the high-profile AT, visited by thousands of people—I thought it was to be part of that was rewarding. I could share what I was doing with family and friends and they all ‘got it.”

AmeriCorps? Yes, most members are younger, but, Kevin says, “Don’t let demographics influence what you want to do. If we’re lucky to have had a long career, we’ve got to do something that is more fun. I can’t think of another opportunity like this. It’s a fantastic program, and it gave me the opportunity for this reinvention.” He is putting last year’s training and his lifetime of experience to work as crew chief. His crewmates, “Someone says a task is ‘hard’ and they say, ’Challenge accepted!’ They’re ready to do anything. It’s fun to be with enthusiastic people like that.”

Sculpting beauty: “The trail is not just functional, it’s beautiful. It’s not just bringing people into a place that is beautiful; the trail is beautiful in itself. It’s like sculpture. We’re carving this out of the earth.”

Reinvent yourself with us. Click Volunteer at nynjtc.org.

Enjoy Trails?
Please make a Donation to the Trail Conference.
Go to nynjtc.org/donatenow
Reopening a Popular Ravine
Thanks to an incredibly productive one-day visit by the West Jersey Crew, the popular Tillman Ravine at Stokes State Forest, closed to the public since Hurricane Sandy, reopened this summer. Crew Chiefs Monica and David Day report that their crew built a stone staircase up a very steep embankment created when a huge tree was blown over, redefined several trail sections with sidehill work; cut up two huge blowdowns that blocked a bridge and used a highline to lift the tree pieces out of the streambed; rebuilt the bridge’s footings on a temporary basis and hoisted it back into a new alignment; and freed another bridge from a massive blowdown. The crew invites volunteers to join them on a likely return visit this fall.

Where Have All the Flowers Gone?
Native wildflowers along a stretch of the Long Path at High Tor once again have space to grow after visits by our Invasives Strike Force this summer. The crew, including five AmeriCorps members, surveyed and removed Japanese barberry, multi-flora rose, phragmites, Norway maple, garlic mustard, and—at the particular request of park officials—black swallowwort (a root crown of which is pictured) from sections of the trail.

First Comes the Trail
In August volunteers with the Catskill Trail Crew at the site of the future Catskill Interpretive Center, across a stream, and up a slope to a viewpoint feature a replica of a fire tower.

No Hunting Hike
The Palisades Trail Crew, consisting of four AmeriCorps members, completed the Doris Duke Trail loop, and began work on the 28 in Mount Tremper. The trail will lead hikers to the center, across a stream, and up a slope to a viewpoint feature a replica of a fire tower.

Managing Erosion
A severely eroded portion of the Appalachian Trail on the western slope of West Mountain in Harriman State Park, above Beechy Bottom Road, prompted a trail relocation project this year by our Long Distance Trails Crew. The length of the relocation is 0.5 mile, about 0.2 mile longer than the section it is replacing, and incorporates a switchback, stone walls to support the trail (called crib wall), and stone steps. The crew expects to complete the project this fall and invites new participants.

From Beach to Viewpoint
The new Taconics Crew completed relocating and enhancing the 0.3-mile Appalachian Access Trail that has its trailhead at Fahnestock State Park’s Canopus Lake beach. The improved trail, built to sustain high use, will lead summer AT hikers to the concession stand and new visitor center at Canopus Beach, and beach-goers and hikers to the AT, including to a great viewpoint over Canopus Lake. More than 70 volunteers, including 30 from the World Missionary Society Church of God, some pictured above, worked alongside four AmeriCorps members on the project. The trail will become part of a new loop hike when a new trail on the nearby ridge is completed.

Keeping Your Feet Dry
The Hudson-Northwester Trail Crew (formed from the West Jersey Crew) and the Glen Trail at Minnewaska State Park Preserve are continuing the tread in wet areas with “turnpiking.” The trail will continue into next year. The crew welcomes new participants.

Hugging the Water
The Reservoir Trail in Ramapo Valley County Reservation has been an ongoing project throughout the summer, executed completely through a series of Trail University classes that helped develop our new Ramapo Trail Crew. The trail is a 0.8-mile near-loop that stays close to the margin of the beautiful MacMillan Reservoir and crosses a dramatic rock slope. Volunteers were brought together from Ramapo College, our larger local volunteer base, and brand-new volunteers who saw the action and decided to get involved. The project also has turned out new maintainers for Northeast Jersey, North Jersey, Central North Jersey, and West Jersey.
Check the crew trip calendar at nynjtc.org/view/trail-crew-outings

JOIN PEOPLE FOR TRAILS ON ONE OF MANY EXCITING PROJECTS THIS SEASON

Crew began constructing a Interpretive Center along Rt. 9W. AmeriCorps members and crew leaders and visitors from the Appalachian Trail Conference helped, and the second section of the West Hudson North crew (led by the West Hudson North crew) is addressing slick bedrock and wet areas on the beautiful Mossy Trail. The crew is building bog bridges across the most hazardous sections of this stream-side trail, raising rock steps to create safer short descents in places. The project started in the spring and continues new and existing volunteers on a project whose location is hard to beat.

Views over the Hudson

The ongoing relocation of the Appalachian Trail on Bear Mountain continues this year with some very technical work including a lot of building on bedrock and moving materials long distances. This relocation will offer beautiful views of the Hudson River and eliminates three road crossings. As of mid-August, 148 individuals had volunteered a total of 5,665 hours quarrying, splitting, flying, and building almost 350 feet of five-foot wide tread. By the time winter rolls around, more than 500 feet of new trail will have been completed in 2014.

Moving South

In northeastern Dutchess County, volunteers are extending the 15.7-mile long South Taconic Trail an additional 6 miles to the south. The project includes building 4.5 miles of new trail and adding new blazes to existing trail sections. It will result in a new access to the spectacular ridge at Budd Pond State Park. The crew cleared a grand total of 1.25 miles of trail on its first four monthly trips, much of it through thick blueberry patches. Trails Chair and Crew Chief Andrew Seirup says, “Not too shabby!”

Spearheaded by a small and very dedicated group of Ramapo College students, the Ramapo Trail Crew welcomes any and all trail volunteers to join them in the field.

Nature Place summer camp youth enjoyed a workout at the Bear Mountain Trails Project.

A group of incoming Ramapo College freshmen were led in the field this September by a quartet of experienced Trail Conference student volunteers.

Boy Scouts from Brooklyn lent their hands building trail in the Doris Duke Wildlife Sanctuary at Sterling Forest State Park with the Palisades Crew.

Ten volunteers (including the photographer) turned out for the inaugural trail clipping outing, at Minnewaska, of the West Hudson North Clippers, a roving maintenance crew.

Groundwork Hudson Green Team volunteered at Bear Mountain this summer.
Bears are more of a problem at public campgrounds and in suburban neighborhoods than they are deep in the woods. I was surprised at what had happened because on the trail, bears had always been a novelty, not a threat.

My pack had been leaning against the head end of my small one-man tent, which, without the rain tarp, is essentially a novelty, not a threat.

I was always hoping to see bears. New Jersey is known for having more bears than anywhere else on the East Coast, but I had not seen any when I passed through in 2011. I saw just one the following summer, a small one on Labor Day. The final day of my first ridgerunner summer I saw 20 or so in the woods near campsites and hoping to rummage through the trash.

The bear— and my backpack— were gone. It was a clearly aggressive bear that would cause. I had no ID, no money, no transportation, no way to get someone to report the theft. I could not remember if I had taken a photo of the bear— and my backpack— and reported it. My empty backpack was outside, less than a foot away from my head. There was a smell, a shuffling sound, and a bang as the tent shook. Rattled, I screamed and looked outside the tent, but the bear—and my backpack— were gone.

Oh my Lord, I thought, heart pounding. My watch said 3am.

Unsure what to do next, I grabbed my headlamp and crawled cautiously into the night. The lamp was only mildly effective in the mist, but I walked a ways in the direction I thought the bear had gone. Nothing. I had been mugged and robbed by a bear. I am guessing that the bear weighed about 300 pounds and was an adult, probably a male, though I have no idea why I assumed that.

Wandering aimlessly through the mist, a harsh reality hit. My wallet and truck keys were in my pack, and that meant my driver’s license, social security card, debit and credit cards and other stuff were gone. My brains went into overdrive at the major mess that would cause. I had no ID, no money, no transportation, no way to get someone to cut another key; it was Sunday and the bank was closed. I had no phone, no South Carolina driver’s license in New Jersey! Where do I start?

I called home to tell my tent and struggled with those questions while also trying to be optimistic that I would find my stuff the next morning. I had carried that Osprey backpack on my 2011 thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail and for three seasons as a ridgerunner in New Jersey. My keys, wallet and the rest of my stuff could be replaced, but I sure would hate to lose that pack. It carried my gear, years of sweat and grime, and tons of memories.

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I crawled back into my tent and struggled with “This was a clearly aggressive bear that had upped its game from simply rummaging the woods near campgrounds and hoping to rummage through the trash.”
Members of our Invasives Strike Force donned hazard gear to help remove populations in the Hudson Valley.

It doesn’t have thorns but it can hurt you. The sap from this plant can cause a burning sensation, purple blotches on the stem, and scarring. It can even result in blindness if the sap gets in your eyes. The Giant Hogweed, Heracleum mantegazzianum, is an invasive species that grows up to 14 feet tall, has giant flat-topped, purple-tipped white flower heads, a large flat stem, and a noxious weed. A long-lived perennial, it can grow up to 14 feet tall; its giant flat-topped flower heads are distracting. Some beetle species, like the Asian Longhorned Beetle, Anoplophora glabripennis, are highly destructive to trees, cultivated crops, or human environments. But the leaves of giant hogweed are large with jagged edges and the stem is green with purple blotches and white hairs.

This year the Trail Conference’s Invasives Strike Force AmeriCorps crew had the opportunity to learn how to deal with this dangerous plant. They received training from the New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation’s (DEC) Giant Hogweed Response Team. Members of the team donned Tyvek suits, rubber boots, goggles, and safety glasses for their day in the field. Wielding shovels, they dug up small plants, ones that had reached only about four feet in height. These plants were small because the Giant Hogweed Team had already been treating these spots in previous years. We went to witness the success of their efforts at a couple of locations we visited; three years after the state team treated the spots, not one giant hogweed plant was found. Those spots can now be marked off the list.

More than 1,000 giant hogweed populations have been recorded throughout New York State but only about a dozen of those are in the Lower Hudson Valley area. Just a handful of locations have been recorded in New Jersey. Early detection and treatment can keep this dangerous plant in check.

If you think you find giant hogweed, do not touch it. Take photos and compare your plant to giant hogweed and other look-alikes using the DEC at ghogweedid DEC.ny.gov or call the Giant Hogweed Hotline: 1-845-266-1111. Provide photos, detailed directions to the plant infestation, and estimate the number of plants. In New Jersey, reports can be sent to the NJ Invasive Species Strike Team http://njiss.org/observation.htm.

Removing young hogweed plants from among a patch of native milkweeds. Working in pairs, one crew member helped ensure that the other did not accidentally touch the plant.
Amber Ray of Sloatsburg, NY, has begun work as a co-communications manager, a position she will share with current communications manager Georgie Wert. Amber will take full responsibility for the job in early 2015, following maternal leave. Amber is a writer and editor with experience in both print and digital media. Most recently, she was web editor at Entrepreneur Weekly. Before that she worked as deputy editor at evJangle. For nearly a decade, Amber held editorial positions at Metro, a daily print and digital newspaper, starting as an editorial assistant in Philadelphia, then rising through the ranks from staff writer to features editor and finally managing editor in New York City. She has joined the staff as assistant program coordinator for the Catskills. In this year-round, part-time position, Heather will help support our Catskills volunteer leaders and trail crews in the region, as well as our new partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation, Conservation Corps. Heather is an active member of both the Catskill 3500 Club and Catskill Mountain Club. She is an avid hiker, currently working on hiking all trails in the Catskills to be the first to earn the Catskill Mountains Club’s new All Catskills Trails Patch. Heather brings extensive experience working with volunteers and a professional background that will help her work with the diverse groups and individuals of the Catskills.

Heather Rolland of Sloatsburg, NY, has joined the staff as assistant program coordinator for the Catskills. In this year-round, part-time position, Heather will share her responsibilities with current communications manager Georgie Wert. Amber will take full responsibility for the job in early 2015, following maternal leave. Amber is a writer and editor with experience in both print and digital media. Most recently, she was web editor at Entrepreneur Weekly. Before that she worked as deputy editor at evJangle. For nearly a decade, Amber held editorial positions at Metro, a daily print and digital newspaper, starting as an editorial assistant in Philadelphia, then rising through the ranks from staff writer to features editor and finally managing editor in New York City. She has joined the staff as assistant program coordinator for the Catskills. In this year-round, part-time position, Heather will help support our Catskills volunteer leaders and trail crews in the region, as well as our new partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation, Conservation Corps. Heather is an active member of both the Catskill 3500 Club and Catskill Mountain Club. She is an avid hiker, currently working on hiking all trails in the Catskills to be the first to earn the Catskill Mountains Club’s new All Catskills Trails Patch. Heather brings extensive experience working with volunteers and a professional background that will help her work with the diverse groups and individuals of the Catskills.

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May 27, 2014 - August 20, 2014


TRAIL NEWS

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The red-blazed Catskill Loop Trail in Fabriestock State Park is now a true loop contained entirely on the west side of Dennysown Road. The section of the blue-blazed 5 Lakes Trail west of Dennysown Road has been designated as the Catskill Loop Trail, and volunteers have constructed a short new trail section on the west side of the road to link the north and south arms of the Catskill Loop. A short stretch of the Catskill Loop Trail on the east side of Dennysown Road that previously ended at the Appalachian Trail is eliminated. The changes are incorporated on the new edition of the East Hudson Trails map set.

High Point State Park

The side trail from the Appalachian Trail to the Rutherford Shelter has been relocated off of slick slab rock and onto a safer route through woods.
First aid for plantar fasciitis includes several components.

- **Ice**: Apply ice to the heel for 10-15 minutes at a time, several times a day.
- **Medication**: Non-prescription pain relievers may help.
- **Rest**: Avoid activities that cause pain.
- **Shoes and orthotics**: Supportive shoes and orthotics can provide relief.
- **Physical Therapy**: A physical therapist can help with exercises.
- **Custom Orthotics**: A visit to a podiatrist may be necessary.

Other Treatments

If the above conservative measures are not effective, your podiatrist may recommend any number of additional treatments. Standard treatments include applying an athletic taping to the foot to help support the plantar ligament, and, in some cases, administering one or two cortisone injections. The doctor will evaluate your foot type and shoes to determine if you will benefit from an arch support. In some cases, a pre-molded arch support will be sufficient; these are sold in many sport shops. In other cases, a molded arch support or custom foot orthotic may be necessary.

**Take these measures to treat and prevent heel-spurs or plantar fasciitis.**

**Emerging Treatments**

Newer treatments not yet widely accepted include non-invasive extra corporeal shock wave therapy, radiation directed at the heel, injection of platelet-derived plasma into the heel, and inserting either a radio wave emitting probe or freezing-cold probe into the fascia. Releasing the fascia by cutting it is a last resort and often results in a lower arch height. Early intervention and conservative measures are still the most recommended treatment for this common, painful condition.

**Howard E. Friedman, DPM**, is an avid hiker, a pediatrician in Suffern, NY, and a frequent contributor to Trail Walker. Find many of his articles on our website at nynjtc.org/news/health-news.

**Heel Pain: Tips for Hikers**

By Howard E. Friedman, DPM

Heel pain is one of the most common foot complaints. Referred to variously as “heel spur” or “plantar fasciitis,” this malady is an inflammation at the junction of an important foot ligament, the fascia, to the large heel bone, or calcaneus. With early intervention, the amount of time needed to heal can be shortened.

What Is It?

In fasciitis, the ligament sustains a micro tear at the point where it attaches to the heel bone. This creates an inflammatory process resulting in some local swelling around the ligament and likely irritation of adjacent nerves, causing pain. If not treated early the condition deteriorates and can become chronic, resistant to healing.

What Else Could It Be?

Other conditions that mimic fasciitis include a bone bruise of the undersurface of the heel bone or a stress fracture of the calcaneus. A bone cyst or tumor of the heel will be similarly painful. With the exception of the bone bruise, the other conditions are uncommon.

Early Treatment

Hikers can shorten their recuperation by beginning treatment promptly. A sharp pain in the heel with the first step in the morning or during the day is a common finding. Sometimes the pain will ease after a period of walking but worsens with extended walking or standing. The pain also aches after sitting and resting. Any redness or noticeable swelling around the heel area is usually not associated with plantar fasciitis and should be investigated.

**Heel bone with heel spur (red arrow)**

Hikers can take additional measures.

- **Reduce the weight of your backpack if possible.** The less weight you carry the better. This also includes losing extra body weight.
- **Shoet your stride while walking to reduce impact on your heel.**
- **Use two hiking poles to further off load the pressure underfoot.**
- **Ice the painful area down after hiking.**

In general, however, one should not hike or exercise if the heel is still painful.

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Howard E. Friedman, DPM, is an avid hiker, a pediatrician in Suffern, NY, and a frequent contributor to Trail Walker. Find many of his articles on our website at nynjtc.org/news/health-news.
Perhaps you’ve eaten off of one of his dinner plates. Or maybe you’ve relented in a chair of his design. Russel Wright was a prolific and popular industrial designer in the 20th century, credited with inspiring Americans to adopt informality as a lifestyle. He applied his sensibility—labeled American Modern beyond housewares to architecture and landscape, including his home and four miles of trails that he laid out across 75 acres at his estate, Manitoga, in Garrison, NY, in the east Hudson Highlands. The estate is a National Historic Landmark.

The trails at Manitoga are open to the public and in April of this year, the Trail Conference adopted them. They offer opportunities for moderate loop hikes of varying distances on the west-facing slopes as well as access to extended hiking on the Osborn Loop Trail and Appalachian Trail in the adjacent Hudson Highlands State Park. In summer there are puppet shows of trail maps at one of trail maps at one.

Russel Wright applied his American Modern aesthetic to the trails at Manitoga.

Curry Pond, back to the Osborn Loop trail. Turn right on the yellow connecting trail back to Lost Pond, then left and downhill, to complete the white-blazed route back to your starting point. On your way down, watch for a yellow-blazed side trail to the left, which you can follow to a viewpoint over the Hudson River.

Find a detailed description by Daniel Chazin of this 4.6-mile figure-8 hike on our website at nynytc.org/hike/manitoga.

Hikers are welcome daily, during day-light hours. Admission: suggested contribution of $5.00 per person, Manitoga members, free. The house and studio may be viewed on tickertape tours.

Enjoy a picnic while hiking, carry-in-carry-out. Pets are welcome if kept on a leash. Please note that visitors not on a tickertape tour may view the house and studio from the view spot at the base of the Quarry Pond but are asked not to enter the Quarry Pond path, reserved for guided tours.

Manitoga volunteers were among those who participated in an Intro to Trail Maintenance workshop at the site, and plans are in the works for a new Hudson Highlands Trail Crew that will assist with trail projects at Manitoga and the trail network to which it connects. New volunteers are invited. Watch our website and E-Walkner newsletter for details.

Find more information about Manitoga on their website: russelwrightcenter.org.

Support Trails, Parks and Open Space in the New York-New Jersey region by joining the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference.

The Trail Conference maintains more than 2,000 miles of trails, advocates for parks, protects open space, and provides volunteer service opportunities in the great outdoors.

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Find links to all these and more at nynytc.org.

Curry Pond is a grassy wetland.

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