It’s the start of something

BIG

Trail U Volunteers
Will Rebuild and
Restore Trail Network
on Bear Mountain

Plans are approved, the first trainings are scheduled, and work will be getting underway this spring at the Trail Conference’s new Trail University at Bear Mountain State Park. (See page 9 for the schedule of outdoor training sessions.)

Already, some 100 individuals have indicated an interest in the Bear Mountain trails project, says Trails Director Larry Wheelock. But hundreds more will be required over the next five years that it is expected to take to complete the ambitious program of trail building, rehabilitation, and ecological restoration on one of the most frequently hiked mountains in the country.

The project’s goals are to improve the quality of the outdoor experience on Bear Mountain for visitors of varied expertise, and to recruit and train trails volunteers who may then become involved in trail work elsewhere in the New York/New Jersey region. “We are getting more and more requests for assistance in building and maintaining public foot-paths than ever before,” says Executive Director Ed Goodell. “One of our goals at Bear Mountain is to increase the number of trained trail volunteers who then will work with existing trail crews and help keep our region’s trails open and properly maintained for public enjoyment.”

The project at Bear Mountain is distinctive among Trail Conference projects, not only in its scope, but in the mix of trails that will be worked on. The Major Welch and Appalachian Trails, on the north and south faces of the mountain respectively, will be worked on. The Major Welch and Appalachian Trails, on the north and south faces of the mountain respectively, will be built to typical moderate-use hiking trails we have to our visitors.” And Carolyn Canfield, excursions co-chair, remarks, “There is so much to see and do in the area, the committee has to pick out what we hope are the excursions that will interest people the most. This way non-hiking spouses can enjoy the event.”

At present, we need volunteers to serve on the youth program, marketing, finance, hospitality, workshop, and entertainment committees and to help plan those parts of the conference. We encourage our member clubs to consider helping in one of these areas, staffing the committee with club members or offering to supply volunteers.

Company’s Coming:

ATC Biennial Conference
in Our Region in ’07;
Planning Underway

By Jane Daniels, Ramapo ’07 Conference Chair

The New York/New Jersey Trail Conference will be hosting the biennial meeting of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy July 13-20, 2007, at Ramapo College in Mahwah, NJ. This seven-day event gives hikers from all over an opportunity to take relevant workshops, go on excursions, attend concerts, talk with fellow hikers, and, of course, to hike. The conference location rotates among the hiking clubs that maintain the Appalachian Trail. The NY/NJ Trail Conference last hosted it in 1983, in New Paltz, NY.

Hosting clubs recognize that the meeting is an opportunity to show off their region, including “their” sections of the AT, other local hiking trails, and local recreational opportunities. Over the past 18 months, I have slowly assembled a steering committee comprising chairs of committees that will plan hikes, excursions (to historical, environmental, and cultural sites in both New York and New Jersey), workshops (for example, we have no qualms about inviting our guests to learn new skills by helping out on the Bear Mountain project, which will be well underway at the time), a youth program in conjunction with the Weis Ecology Center (to prepare our next generation of trail builders and to allow parents time to enjoy their vacation), and entertainment (evenings will not be just for sitting), as well as to take care of “housekeeping” duties such as marketing, registration, food, housing, and signs.

The theme of the ’07 conference is Always a Step Ahead, which reflects the attitude of both the ATC and NY/NJ Trail Conference. (Both groups have been forerunners in the work of protecting and maintaining hiking trails.) Taking that theme to heart, both the hikes and excursion chairs already have formed committees, which are meeting to develop those portions of the conference. A website, www.Ramapo2007.org, is up and running and a brochure is available.

The ATC Biennial Conference typically attracts 1,000 guests. We would like to attract people who have never before come to one of the conferences. Pete Koshberger, hikes chair for the event, notes, “We’re assembling a great program of varied hikes for people of every level and ability. It’s going to be fun to show off the wonderful scenery we have to our visitors.” And Carolyn Canfield, excursions co-chair, remarks, “There is so much to see and do in the area, the committee has to pick out what we hope are the excursions that will interest people the most. This way non-hiking spouses can enjoy the event.”

At present, we need volunteers to serve on the youth program, marketing, finance, hospitality, workshop, and entertainment committees and to help plan those parts of the conference. We encourage our member clubs to consider helping in one of these areas, staffing the committee with club members or offering to supply volunteers.

continued on page 7

3.5 Miles of Rail Trail
Secured in Mamakating

In the final days of December 2005, the Trail Conference concluded a long and complicated purchase of more than 140 acres in Mamakating, NY (Sullivan County), from Lafarge North America, Inc. The acquisition protects a key section of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail, which uses the abandoned rail bed on the property. Funds for the purchase were provided by capital campaign gifts to the TC Land Acquisition and Stewardship Fund.

The land abuts the Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest and contains 3.5 miles of a scenic rail trail that runs through the heart of the forest. This old abandoned rail bed starts near the junction of Route 209 and Ferguson Road north of Wurtsboro. It con-

continued on page 7

VOLUME XXXIII, NUMBER 2  ISSN 0749-1352  PERMIT 9770-100
Playing Favorites
Playing favorites is something we are taught not to do. But when it comes to hiking trails, well, that is an entirely different story. I admit that I play favorites among hiking destinations, and I thought that I would share three of them with you.

I am a bit partial to views and even more inclined to like ones that go to or have views of water. Trails that offer views of the Hudson River is where I really play favorites, and without a doubt my all time favorite is the Camp Smith Trail. The views along the trail change with the seasons. I have seen the view from Anthony’s Nose in all seasons and all times of day, even at night. Hiking with others along the Camp Smith Trail makes that hike all the more enjoyable. It’s why I choose to lead a hike there each September for the Hudson Valley Ramble. The views never fail to impress, and I love to see people’s reactions when we finally arrive on the top of Anthony’s Nose. Having lunch there before resuming hiking is a wonderful way to relax.

Another favorite place is Rockwood Hall, just north of the Tappan Zee Bridge. The unmarked carriage roads in this former Rockefeller estate circle the property and offer views across the Hudson River to the Palisades. It is small enough that you, a friend, and a picnic lunch can hide in the shade of a tree away from the other visitors. Yet it is large enough that you can visit it many times and find still other interesting spots. The exotic species of trees, wide paths, and sweeping views make it an enchanting way to spend the day.

Conference, PIPC Honor Harriman Trails Author
William (Bill) J. Myles, 92 years old, is a frequent, if unseen, companion for many hikers in our region. He is the author of the “Harriman bible”—Harriman Trails: Guide and History—a guidebook that has familiarized countless hikers with the marked and unmarked trails of this popular park. Earlier this year Bill was honored by the Trail Conference and by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) for this important contribution to the hiking community.

Editor’s Note:
In reference to your article “Overnight on the Shawangunk Ridge” (Jan/Feb TW, p. 10): In the last paragraph, about camping, the technique mentioned for building a “leave no trace” campfire is outdated; it was last used about five years ago. We are going to produce a DVD in the near future showing the Leave No Trace updated skills on building a low impact campfire.

Send Us Your Thoughts
The Trail Walker welcomes letters to the editor. Send them via email to tw@nynjtc.org or mail to:
Trail Walker Editor
NY/NJ Trail Conference
156 Ramapo Valley Road
Mahwah, N.J. 07430

FROM THE CHAIR
A third place I love is the bike path that goes north from Upper Nyack. Expect to see lots of people along the path as it winds its way along the edge of the Hudson River at the base of the Palisades. Hearing and seeing the water rip rap on the shore is relaxing even in winter. On hot summer days, the wind from over the water is cool and refreshing.

The reasons that make a destination a favorite vary. For some it is the view, for others it is a particular experience. But whatever the reason, sharing your favorite hike can make it more special. Consider sharing yours by writing an article for the Trail Walker about a favorite place that you like to hike. Turn to page 10 to learn about a favorite hike from another TC member.

—Jane Daniels, Chair, Board of Directors

letters
New LNT Fire Guidelines
In reference to your article “Overnight on the Shawangunk Ridge” (Jan/Feb TW, p. 10): In the last paragraph, about camping, the technique mentioned for building a “leave no trace” campfire is outdated; it was last used about five years ago. We are going to produce a DVD in the near future showing the Leave No Trace updated skills on building a low impact campfire.

Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.

Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.

Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mounded fires.

For fires small only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.

Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

More to Thank
October 15 was indeed a successful and fun day in Byram Township (“Byram Highlands Charity Hike,” Jan/Feb TW, p. 6). I recruited and oriented the hike leaders (most had never been on that trail). In addition to 20 Trail Conference volunteers, 18 Byram residents led hikes. These 38 were supplemented by members of the hiking club that leases the property. All these leaders should get a big round of applause. —Bob Moss, Bloomfield, NJ

Playing Favorites
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Conservation Investing: Another Path to Trail Lands Protection

The Trail Conference decided to build a land acquisition program only when it became clear that, unless we acted decisively, many long distance greenways would otherwise succumb to encroaching development. To the degree we have been successful, it has been due to the financial support of people who wanted to be part of protecting the landscape for future generations.

As a result of this support, we have been involved in transferring approximately 1,600 acres, we own another 1,600 acres, and control the options and contracts on another 1,000.

Cash donations to the revolving Land Acquisition and Stewardship Fund remain the best way to support our acquisition program. But two recent TC protection successes—our first land purchase in New Jersey made possible by a loan from a TC member (see Jan/Feb TW) and the seller-financed deal in the Shawangunks on which we just made our final payment (see p. 7)—illustrate other financing strategies that help protect land. The conservation investments made by these two lenders were low cost, low risk ways for them to play a pivotal role in protecting a property.

A crucial factor in deciding whether or not the Trail Conference can protect a parcel of land is whether we have cash to buy and hold it until a public entity is prepared to buy it from us. As a way of stretching our funds, we often use loans. Normally we first ask for seller financing. If the seller is unable or unwilling to provide this, we may then go to a nonprofit or individual interested in putting their available funds to work conserving land.

Working with conservation lenders can take several forms. A private lender may be willing to make a direct loan to the Trail Conference, with the loan money secured by the land. The Trail Conference pays interest on the loan, and the lender gets repaid several years later or when the land is sold to the state.

We have arranged loans of $200,000 and $300,000 in this manner. In one case, an individual loaned funds from a self-directed IRA account at a discounted rate. In the other case, a foundation loaned funds at below market rates because what is known as a program-related investment. In both cases, the entities preserved their capital assets and achieved their conservation objectives.

Another approach we may take is to combine several private lenders who could lend smaller amounts of money individually, but work as a pool of loans for a particular property. Each lender would make a loan for a portion of the total amount. The loans might be of different amounts and even different lengths of time. All the loans would be secured by the same property. This approach would enable participation by individuals whose resources are more limited.

A final way for private individuals to help the Trail Conference acquire land is to serve as “guarantees.” In this scenario, the Trail Conference would borrow from a lender that requires a guarantee of liquid assets (rather than land). The money of the guarantor stays in their own account, but remains liquid and is used to “guarantee” the amount that the Trail Conference has in the deal.

In addition to outright donations, we are hopeful that more foundations and individuals will want to work with us on conservation investments. These arrangements would allow us to stretch our precious cash further, to do more deals to protect more land and build more trails for all to enjoy. Call or email me if you might be interested in this approach.

— Ed Goodell, goodell@nynjtc.org
Early Spring 2006

For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nyjnic.org and click on “Trail Crew/Work trips.”

TB D = To Be Determined

For all trips bring work gloves, water, lunch, insect repellent. In some cases, tools are provided. Contact leaders in advance for meeting times and places. Volunteers must become members of the Conference to participate in these projects. A one-time “guest” participation is allowed, so bring your friends.

WEST HUDSON SOUTH CREW

Leaders
Chris Ezzo (Crew Chief): 516-431-1148, musicbynumbers59@yahoo.com
Brian Buchbinder: 718-218-7563, brian@grandrenovation.com
Claudia Ganz: 212-633-1324, dganzi@earthlink.net
Robert Marshall: 914-737-4792, rmarshall@webtv.net

April 27 (Thursday)
Brooks Lake, Harriman/Bear Mt. State Park
Leader: Bob Marshall

April 29 (Saturday)
Brooks Lake, Harriman/Bear Mt. State Park
Leader: Chris Ezzo

May 6 (Saturday)
Brooks Lake, Harriman/Beart Mt. State Park
Leader: Claudia Ganz

May 11 (Thursday)
Menominee Trail, Harriman/Beart Mt. State Park
Leader: Bob Marshall

May 13 (Saturday)
Brooks Lake, Harriman/Beart Mt. State Park
Leader: Brian Buchbinder

WEST HUDSON NORTH CREW

Leaders
Denise Vitate (Crew Chief): 845-738-2126
Denise Vitale (Crew Chief): 845-452-7238
webberd1@yahoo.com

Weekdays, TBD
Leader: Walt Daniels
Projects vary; see work areas below.

April 8 (Saturday)
Camp Smith Trail, Westchester
Leader: Patrick McGlinn
Waterbar construction. Meet: 9 am at Peeksill train station.

April 29 (Saturday)
Wilkinson Memorial Trail, Sugarloaf Mtn., Hudson Highlands State Park
Leader: Josie Gray
Waterbar construction. Meet: 9 am at Cold Spring train station.

May 6 (Saturday),
Killawan Preserve, Westchester
Leader: Michael Bongar
Trail relocation. Meet: 9 am at Croton train station.

WEST HUDSON TRAIL CREW

Leaders
David and Monica Day
732-937-9099, Cell: 908-307-5049
Email: westhudsontrail@ewebuild.com

All trips begin at 9 am. There is usually a walk to the work site, so please be there on time. Call or email leaders for meeting details and other questions. Heavy rain in the morning will cancel; if in doubt, call leaders between 6:00 and 6:30 that morning.

April 13 (Saturday)
Dunnfield Creek Trail, Worthington State Forest
We will resume construction of the new section of trail to route around the area washed out by Hurricane Ivan.

April 25 (Saturday)
Dunnfield Creek Trail, Worthington State Forest
We will continue work on the route around the washout.

NJ HIGHLANDS TRAIL CREW

Leader: Glenn Olskasak
973-283-0306, glenn@njny.com

First Sunday of each month
Trips start at 10am. Call, email, or check NY/NJ TC website calendar for directions and details of work trip.

NORTH JERSEY WEEKEND CREW

Leader: Sandy Pan
732-469-5109

NORTH JERSEY HIGHLANDS TRAIL CREW

Leader: Malcolm Spector
914-245-0360, mb.Suppress@compuserve.com

April 29 (Saturday)
Rain date, April 30
Shawangunk Ridge Trail
Rehabilitating a section of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail in Mount Hope, NY (Otsolu). Meeting place is where the Guymard Tunnple crosses the railroad tracks, at 10 am.

May 13 (Saturday) and May 14 (Sunday)
Blue Trail at Sam’s Point
Leader: Malcolm Spector
Help clear and reopen the Blue Trail at Sam’s Point. Meet at the Sam’s Point Visitors Center in Cramgo, NY, at 9:30 am. Bring work gloves, beverage and lunch, crackers and/or loppers if you have them.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL WORK WEEKEND IN DUTCHESS COUNTY

Leaders
Jane Delisei, 845-677-9909
Ollie Simpson, 845-206-8379

April 29-30 (Saturday, Sunday)
Help on the AT in Dutchess County, between County Route 20 and the Connecticut state line. Mid-Hudson ADK plans various projects, including brush clearing and erosion control. Pre-registration requested for one or two days; can stay overnight at Wiley Shelter. Contact either leader for info and to register. This is a good chance to use your new skills learned at Maintenance 101.

WEST JERSEY TRAIL CREW

Leaders
Glenn Olskasak
973-283-0306, glenn@njny.com

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In about three months, turn right on Smalley Carriageway, taking it all the way to Stony Kill Carriageway; turn right toward Lake Awosting. Near Lake Awosting turn left on the black-blazed Peters Kill Carriageway, which crosses the Long Path. The entire detour is close to 10 miles and should not be attempted without a proper map (NY/NJ TC Shawangunk Trails map 104).

Palisades Interstate Park
Alpine Approach Road Closed
Due to a significant rockslide in mid-December, Alpine Approach Road from Park Headquarters to the Alpine Boat Basin and Picnic Area is closed until repairs can be made. Until repairs are completed, there is no vehicle access to the Alpine Boat Basin and Picnic Area. For foot access, hikers can park at Park Headquarters and hike down the Closter Dock Trail to the Shore Trail. Notice will be placed on the PIPPC home page, www.njpalisades.org, when the road has been reopened.

continued on page 8
A Record Year for NJ Green Acres
New Jersey’s Green Acres Program preserved 38,000 acres during 2005, marking the program’s most successful year since its inception in 1961. In the Highlands, the Green Acres Program acquired more than 15,600 acres for permanent protection. Since 1961, the Green Acres Program, together with public and private partners, has acquired and protected more than 597,000 acres of open space. New Jersey has more than 1.3 million acres of protected open space, including restored and improved municipal, county, and nonprofit park systems.

Pataki Wants 20% More For Environmental Protection
New York Governor Pataki’s 2006-07 Executive Budget will include a 20 percent increase for New York’s Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), which would raise total funding for the program from $150 to $180 million—more than seven times the level in 1994 and the highest level in state history. The EPF supports projects to protect open space, reduce pollution, create and expand state and municipal parks, and preserve farmland. Legislation has also been introduced by Senator Carl Marcellino and Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli, chairmen of their house’s Environmental Conservation committees, to increase the fund to $225 million for the 2007-08 fiscal year and $300 million the year after. Since Pataki took office in 1995, New York has invested $386 million to acquire and preserve more than 92,000 acres. In addition, 22 new state parks have been opened, providing greater public access and opportunities for recreational activities.

Highlands Trail Section
Protected in West Milford
The State of New Jersey has finally taken title to West Milford’s so-called redevelopment zone, 400 acres east of Echo Lake. With the Highlands Trail crossing from east to west, the Trail Conference teamed up with other conservation organizations to wage a multi-year effort opposing a proposed golf course and hotel complex. The land is now part of Norvin Green State Forest.

Silas Condict Park to Quadruple in Size
An $11 million deal to preserve 2,752 acres in Kinnelon will quadruple the size of Silas Condict Park, allowing for the creation of a major trail for hikers and equestrians from Silas Condict along Route 23 to Newark’s watershed, and eventually to the county’s Cranmeur facility in Rockaway Township and as far as Tourne County Park and Jonathan’s Woods in Boonton Township and Denville.

First Phase of Adirondack Land Deal Completed
The first phase of a plan to turn more than a quarter million acres of private Adirondack forest land over to the state has been completed, permanently protecting and opening up to 41,000 acres to the public. The New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation will pay $5.5 million from the Environmental Protection Fund, the first of three phases that will preserve 257,000 acres of International Paper Company land from development and open it to public recreation. The remaining two phases are under contract and expected to close in 2006. The agreement is the state’s largest conservation project.

NJ Legislature Fails to Act on $75 Million Park Funding Bill
Attempts to provide $75 million in capital improvements for New Jersey’s park system have hit a brick wall. Wrapped in with stem cell research funding, the legislation wasn’t acted on during the lame duck session. Capital park funding has been an annual issue, with funds woefully short. Back in 1998 the Trail Conference produced a report, “Our Parks in Crisis,” and formed a partnership/coalition, “Pride in Our Parks.” We will continue to press for funding during the next legislative session and urge Governor Corzine to make this a priority.
Volunteer Classifieds: Get Involved!

Become an active part of the Trail Conference family. If you are interested in volunteering with the TC, contact the designated person or Operations Director. For more information, visit www.glengray.org.

The kind of volunteers who keep the Trail Conference going.

But on Tuesdays, the two are often found in a less strenuous setting: the Trail Conference office. They sit at a big table, fold brochures, assemble map sets, and chat amiably with staff and other volunteers. The great thing about folding and stuffing envelopes, they agree, is that they can enjoy conversation as they do the work.

Volunteer Profile

The Stalwart Duo

Caroline Lavanhar and Mona Reynolds look like the all-around outdoor athletes they are. They favor bicycling (“last summer we followed the Danube, eight days on a bike”); hiking (Mona’s favorite hike is on Schunnemunk Mountain; Caroline favors the Sterling Ridge Trail); and skiing. (Mona, an experienced alpinist, prefers downhill; Caroline enjoys cross-country.)

They volunteer as trail maintainers, taking care of the Loop Trail around Sterling Lake, near their homes. When interviewed in January, both were about to leave for ski trips out west. They planned to link up in Colorado.

“The kind of volunteers who keep the Trail Conference going.”

Co-ed Teen Group Formed for Fun and Trail Service – New Members Invited!

Hike ‘n Serve Venture Crew #100, sponsored by the Friends of Glen Gray and with technical support from the Trail Conference, is a youth scout division open to young men and women aged 14-20 who have completed the eighth grade. The group, to date composed of dynamic teenagers from Essex, Bergen, and Rockland Counties, pursues outdoor adventure, trail maintenance training, service, and fun. An Adirondack canoe trek is planned for summer 2006.

Volunteers Caroline Lavanhar and Mona Reynolds at work in the TC office.

To join or for more information, contact Maureen Edelson at (973) 632-4895 or visit www.glengray.org.

New Staff at TC

Development Director:
Maureen Edelson

Maureen (Mo) Edelson brings a background in business, fundraising, and volunteer organizations to the Trail Conference. Most recently, she managed the northwest Bergen County area for the Boy Scouts of America, Northern NJ Council. During her tenure with BSA, she formed Hike ‘n Serve Venture Crew #100, a co-ed group of teens focused on trail maintenance and fun (see above). She developed her husband’s business, Montclair Physical Therapy; and was a securities analyst for Smith Barney. She is married to Todd Edelson and has two sons: Ken, a senior at Montclair High School, and Ian, a freshman at Emory University. Maureen is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, a Chartered Financial Analyst, a Rotarian (Ridgewood), administrator for two Scout units, and enjoys hiking and reading.

Cartographer/GIS Technician:
Allison Smith

Allison Smith of Northvale, NJ, has a graduate degree in museum and field studies from the University of Colorado-Boulder, an undergraduate degree in zoology and biological aspects of conservation from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and is near completion of a certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) from UW-Madison. She has worked at The Field Museum in Chicago and the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Her interests include travel, birds, fossils, scientific illustration, and, “of course,” hiking. Allison takes over from Eric Yadlovski, who was the first person to staff this position for the Trail Conference and who is now doing similar work for the Meadowlands Commission in New Jersey.

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Volunteer Recruitment Specialist

The Trail Conference is a volunteer powered organization. The ability to recruit and place volunteers in positions of need is essential to the organization’s ability to survive. Recruitment Specialists will work with the staff and other volunteers to increase the number of volunteers that are active with the Trail Conference.

Committee Assistants
Each Trail Conference committee is seeking an individual to serve as committee administrator. Responsibilities include overseeing the taking of minutes, coordinating meeting time and location, distributing meeting minutes and agendas, and coordinating the collection of volunteer hours and recognition. Contact Jane Daniels by email, jdhiker@optonline.net, or call the office (201) 512-9348 for more information.

Trail and Hiking Information Experts
The Trail Conference strives to offer the public and our members the highest level of customer service. To do so, we need your help. We seek volunteers both to come to our office to answer phones or to answer hiking related questions from their own home. If you are willing to answer questions from home, let us know what areas you would be willing to field questions about; we can email you the caller’s contact information and question. Interested volunteers do not need to be all-knowing about hiking in our area, just knowledgeable about hiking in the next generation of outdoors people and maintainers. The crew’s girls and guys have said that meeting new people and having new adventures are some of their reasons for joining.

The group’s recent winter camping trip was just the type of adventure the crew members wanted. The challenging, stormy weekend featured a hike of the Old Guard Trail (Camp Glen Gray) led by member Andy Petersen, and offered the young adults instruction in fire-building, first aid, and GPS navigation.

Adult leaders were Bill Badinelli of West Nyack and Judy Murphy of Glen Ridge, both Trail Conference members. Gary Ferwerda of the Boy Scouts of America – Northern NJ Council provided GPS instruction.

Volunteers Caroline Lavanhar and Maena Reynolds at work in the TC office.
Tracking The Wild Invasives

Like to hike but trail building not your thing? Want to learn new skills, identification and how to use a Global Positioning System (GPS)? This volunteer opportunity is for you!

The Trail Conference and Rutgers University are looking for 60 hikers who are interested in learning how to use a GPS device and helping to identify common invasive species in state park lands. In return, these volunteers will be offered extensive training in plant identification and the proper use and care of GPS devices.

USDA funding supports this Trail Conference, Rutgers project.

This is the beginning of a three-year project supported by the US Dept. of Agriculture, which aims to better understand the spread of invasive plants in forested parklands that have a high conservation value and high levels of public use. There is very little information about this in our region, which makes it difficult for park managers to determine the magnitude of the problem or how to manage it.

ADVOCACY & CONSERVATION continued from page 5

NJ Reps Support US Conservation Tax Plan

All 13 members of the New Jersey delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives have signed onto Rep. Saxton’s Conservation Tax Incentives letter. Rep. Saxton’s staff worked with the NJ/NY Trail Conference to draft a NJ Delegation Letter to House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Thomas and Ranking Member Charles Rangel. The Senate had passed new tax incentives for conservation in the Tax Relief Act of 2005. The bill provides for extending the carry-forward period for tax deductions from 5 to 15 years and raising the cap on conservation deductions from 30 percent of a donor’s income to 50 percent, and to 100 percent for farmers and ranchers. This is a big improvement since late January, when the Joint Committee on Taxation recommended the elimination of most tax deductions for conservation donations. If realized, this would have dealt state and private land conservation efforts a serious blow. Whether or not these incentives actually make the cut and become law remains to be seen.

Farewell to NJ DEP Commissioner Brad Campbell

NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection Commissioner Brad Campbell, a strong proponent of Highlands preservation, has been replaced by Governor Jon Corzine’s nominee, Lisa Jackson. Commissioner Campbell was very accessible, and worked with the Trail Conference on issues ranging from ATVs to Camp Todd and Sterling Forest. We thank the commissioner for his good work, and wish him well.

In a novel approach for scientific analysis, the field data will be collected by volunteer “citizen scientists” drawn from the membership of the Trail Conference and member clubs. Also, an explicit part of the research is to test whether hikers can collect accurate data regarding invasive plants. We’re betting that Trail Conference volunteers will indeed prove this to be true!

The training portion of this project begins in May, so sign up soon to ensure your place. You can register online at www.nynjtc.org/science or speak with Catherine at the office, (201) 512-9348, ext. 10. If you don’t make it into this year’s group, you will be first in line for the 2007 season.

The actual field work will occur during the months of June and July when teams of two will be asked to hike a two-mile trail segment while recording the invasive species and documenting the location with the GPS device. Plant identification training will be provided in collaboration with the Brooklyn Botanic Garden using their MetroFlora Database. Volunteers will be trained in the survey protocol, which basically consists of walking slowly along the trail, scanning the woods and noting the presence, identity, and density of any invasive species seen.

TC LAND BUYS continued from page 1

continues south nearly to the old train station off County Route 171 above Main Street in Wurtsboro. The property is also adjacent to the county’s Drift Canal Park east of the Wurtsboro Airport.

Years ago, the northern end of the land was used as a sand and gravel quarry, and there are still remnants of some of the old cement footings and walls. The property has since reverted to a more natural environment.

The Shawangunk Ridge Trail follows this now protected rail trail.

This acquisition has long been a priority for the Trail Conference and for the state Dept. of Environmental Conservation. The Conference continues to pursue contacts with the additional rail bed owners north and south of this property and hopes eventually to include these properties into the trail as well.

This newly protected land is open to the public for hiking, bird-watching, and picnicking. No motorized vehicles are allowed. If you have any questions about the property, please contact Richard Benning at (201) 512-9348, ext. 24.

Learn how to track invasive plants that are changing our parklands.

Not a bad day in the woods!

The survey sites will be located in Harriman State Park and Ramapo State Forest. The research is being conducted in cooperation with Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) and New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection. The principal investigators are: Rebecca Jordan, Rutgers Assistant Professor of Environmental Education and Citizen Science; Joan Ehrenfeld, Rutgers professor, invasive expert, long-time Trail Conference member and contributor; and Edwin McGowan, PIPC science director and formerly of the Trail Conference.

If you are interested in participating this year or next, let us know at www.nynjtc.org/science or (201) 512-9348, ext. 10.

Final Payment on 135 Acres in Greenville

Also in December, the Trail Conference, with the assistance of the Golden Family Foundation, paid off the mortgage on another key parcel on the Shawangunk Ridge—the 135-acre Lindblom property near the New Jersey border.

The Trail Conference had purchased this impressive parcel in 2005 with a seller-held mortgage that required a large lump sum payment in December 2005. The Golden Family Foundation gave the Trail Conference a low interest loan that made the consummation of this purchase possible. This acquisition safeguards the off-road route of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail in this area and adds significant buffer land to the trail as well. The property is located south and east of I-84 and offers impressive views south to High Point State Park in New Jersey and west across the Neversink River valley. It has road frontage on both I-84 (no parking allowed) and Old Mountain Road.

The Trail Conference is working with the town of Greenville to add a small parking area and SRT access point on land adjacent to Old Mountain Road.

The Trail Conference now owns more than 900 contiguous acres of the ridge in the towns of Greenville and Deeppark in Orange County. These lands were protected as part of our continuing effort to secure a public use trail corridor from Sam’s Point in the north to High Point, NJ. If you have the means and interest to help the Trail Conference finance acquisitions such as these, please contact Edward Goodell. For more information, see his column on page 3.

START OF SOMETHING BIG continued from page 1

trail standards. An accessible trail on the summit will be built to accommodate persons with disabilities. The trails on the popular east side of the mountain and near the summit will respond to what might be expected in national parks with high visitation rates. They will be built to accommodate heavy use, with some imported surface and consistently dimensioned rock steps. Overall, this is a project that offers an exciting array of trail construction and design methods to be employed and learned by experienced trail crew members and new volunteers alike.

Participants are being recruited from local communities, youth groups, trail building organizations, outdoor recreation- al clubs, municipal agencies, colleges and high schools, local and regional businesses, and individuals from the project’s partner agencies (National Park Service, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Palisades Interstate Park Commission, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation). Workshops will be taught by professional trail contractors, experienced volunteers, and Trail Conference staff, and the summit will provide a comprehensive understanding of the disciplines and skills studied.

The first workshops will be offered in March if ground conditions permit, and will range from basic Rock Work for the novice trail builder to Advanced Rigging, Pinning Structures in Bedrock Ledges, Dry-stone Cribbing, and Using Geo-tex tiles for the more experienced. Instruction will include hands-on workshops and apprenticeships in which the student-to-instructor ratio is kept low in order to optimize the transfer of skills. A comprehensive course catalogue, complete with course descriptions, prerequisite experience, and recommended curricula will be designed to encourage the ongoing and safe participation of volunteers in the project.

As the project progresses, restoration of the closed sections of trail will commence and additional training in current standards of ecological restoration of damaged recreational areas will be offered. Trailside interpretation will be used to build trails and interpret the AT, and open space protection will also be developed.

Trail U at Bear Mountain will gladly accommodate individuals who want to volunteer for only a day of trail work.

Scheduled work days are listed on the project’s website and are available through the course catalog and schedule pages of our office.

If you are interested in participating or know of other individuals or groups who may want to, contact the Trail Conference office (see below) for more information. This is the opportunity of a lifetime to be involved in an awesome trail project. Come join us and learn a great deal about whether they are innovative trail specific techniques or revived ancient crafts.

For a complete project schedule, visit www.nynjtc.org/BearMountainTrails, or contact eddiewalshi@nynjtc.org, (201) 512-9348.
New Life Members

Sam Gellens
John and Karen Magerlein
Charles C. Nunn
Catherine A. St. Jean
Jennifer Wheary and Paul Walker

A Life Membership in the Trail Conference is a wonderful gift to yourself or a loved one, and to the Trail Conference. An individual life membership is just $500; a joint life membership (two adults at the same address) is $750. The next time you renew, please consider becoming a Trail Conference "life."
To register for any of the workshops below, or for more information, contact edwardwalsh@nynjtc.org, call (201) 512-9348, ext. 22 or register online. All workshops will take place on a section of the new AT route. Directions, meeting places, and times will be given upon registration.

Project Overview and Orientation March 25 (Saturday)
Join us for an on-site review of the project and a walk-through of the new trail route. There may be light trail work opportunities in the afternoon. Meet in front of Bear Mountain Administration Building, near the great lawn.

Basic Rock Work Training March 26 (Sunday)
Topics covered include: mechanical advantage, simple tools for moving large rocks, safety considerations, proper body mechanics, and methods of reducing natural resource impacts.

Stone Splitting and Shaping Workshop
April 8 and 9 (Saturday and Sunday)
Topics covered: improved use of tools to split and dress (chips) stone to desired dimensions, portable generators, electric hammer, hand tools, and the single jack hammer. Emphasis will be on safety; cutting, splitting, hand chisel, stone saws, hand points, tracers, and timing hammers. Participants are urged to attend both days.
Registration deadline: April 5

Stone Cribbing Apprentice Level I
April 14 and 15 (Friday and Saturday)
This workshop will cover the basics of building dry stone retaining walls to support a road way and retain a hillside. Class size will be kept very small to ensure optimal education.
Registration deadline: April 12

Stone Step Construction
April 16 (Sunday)
This workshop will focus on rock step construction, incorporating rigging skills, stone shaping, and basic mechanical advantage and leverage, to set rock steps.
Registration deadline: April 13

Stone Cribbing Apprentice Level II
April 28 and 30* (Friday and Sunday)
See above

Stone Cribbing Apprentice Level II
May 5 and 7 (Friday and Sunday)
Same as above, but roller walls may be constructed (up to 3) and some pinning into bedrock may also be incorporated to anchor the retaining walls.

Looking into the future
May 13 and 14 Rigging Workshop
May 26, 27, 28, 29 Cribbing Apprentice-

*These workshops are sponsored in part by funds from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and National Park Service Appalachian Trail Office.

Rigging for Trail Work*
April 1 and 2 (Saturday and Sunday)
Instructors: Lester Kenway (Bangor, Maine) with Eddie Walsh (NY/NJ TC)
Topics covered include: safety issues: equipment selection, care, and applications; calculating for safety and efficiency; mechanical advantage for pulling; and overhead zip and high-linies. There will be plenty of opportunity for hands-on practice on Sunday, plus a win-cleaning clinic in the afternoon. Preference in registration will be given to participants attending both days.

Larry Wheelock, Trails Director, NY/NJ TC Trail Conference. Wheelock worked his way up the trail ranks, coordinating wilderness projects for the Appalachian Trail Conference region, and eventually into his current position with the Trail Conference.

Chris Ezzo, West Hudson Trail Crew Chief. Ezzo started trail work as a volunteer for the West Hudson Trail Crew, and then took on crew chief. Ezzo is in charge of a group that grows into one exciting project after another, including being major players in the Popolopen Creek Bridge project and staying on top of the daunting task of repairing trails in Harriman/Bear Mtn. State Park.

DISCLAIMER: booklet space constraints do not permit an exhaustive listing; for more information contact edwardwalsh@nynjtc.org, call (201) 512-9348, ext. 22 or register online. All workshops will take place on a section of the new AT route. Directions, meeting places, and times will be given upon registration.

For a complete list of all our volunteers, please visit our website, or contact us at edwardwalsh@nynjtc.org, call (201) 512-9348, ext. 22 or register online. All workshops will take place on a section of the new AT route. Directions, meeting places, and times will be given upon registration.

Learn how to fly rocks at Trail U.

Bear Mountain Trail University (as of February 2006)
Lester Kenway, Trail Services, LLC. Kenway's trail stewardship experience dates back three decades. He began as a trail crew leader in Maine and rose to chief of the West Hudson Trail Crew, with the West Hudson Trail Conference region, and eventually to chief of the West Hudson Crew and has been an active member of the West Hudson Trail Crew for more than 20 years. Since 1993 he has worked extensively on trail projects with the Adirondack Mountain Club, Appalachian Mountain Club, Green Mountain Club, Maine Appalachian Mountain Club, and on the AT in the Smokies. He supervised the Twin Bridges, Including West Hudson Trail Crews. Wheelock worked his way up the trail ranks, coordinating wilderness projects for the Appalachian Trail Conference region, and eventually into his current position with the Trail Conference.

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Donald B. Barksdale, Treasurer.

COMPANY’S COMING

for a particular function. Later we will put out a call for people to help during the conference such as people to staff the registration and hospitality tables. Although it is 13 months before the conference, it is not too early to think of getting the trails ready for those 1,000 people. We know there is no way to avoid it, but fixing up blazes takes time, and we would like every blaze on the AT to be freshened up. All trails that will be used for hikes need the same treatment.

For an opportunity to learn more about your fellow hikers and have fun in the process, consider helping when company comes to our region in July 2007. If anyone has questions, please contact us at edwardwalsh@nynjtc.org, call (201) 512-9348, ext. 22 or register online. All workshops will take place on a section of the new AT route. Directions, meeting places, and times will be given upon registration.

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**FAVORITE HIKE**

**By Peter Beck**

_**Coventry Pond Trail,** Delaware Water Gap_

You’ll enjoy a variety of natural and historical features on this easy short walk from the Millbrook Village Visitor Center. The route parallels VanCampens Brook, passes old stone walls, old roads, overgrown fields, varied flora, oak, saps, and spruce with the small Coventry Pond at the destination. Visit Millbrook Village, a recreation of a late-19th century rural community before or after your walk.

The beginning of the Coventry Pond Trail parallels VanCampens Brook, which is a clear, fast-running trout stream with several rapids and falls; very photographic. The trail follows the course of a dirt road built in the 1960s as part of the land preparation to build a house by George J. Busch, who also owned the Watergate Recreation Area. A few hundred feet after the gate, another old road heads off to your right; this is the driveway to an old home site and dead ends.

Just as you continue the trail will turn to the right, and on your left you will see an unnamed stream that feeds into VanCampens Brook. When you reach a grassy field, look on your left for a couple of poles in the grass and a herd path. This path will take you to Coventry Pond, which is a birdier delight owing to the surrounding wetlands.

If you walk the embankment to the left you will come to an outlet of the pond that is crossable. Continuing to the bulrushes will get you to a second pond. If you go around the pond to the right you will come to the primary outlet. Below this outlet is a marshy area with bulrushes. This is the source of water for the stream under the log bridge that you crossed in the beginning of the trail. Retrace your steps for your return route.

**Length:** About 2 miles round trip

**Rating:** Easy

**How To Get There:** Take I-80 West in NJ to exit #1, the last exit in NJ. At the exit ramp stop sign, go right onto Old Mine Road for 12 miles to the intersection of Mine Road & Millbrook Road (CR602). Park at the visitor center, which is directly in front of you. Walk up Millbrook Road to cross VanCampens Brook, and go past Garris Mill until you come to a woods road with a gate on your left. The sign identifying this as Coventry Pond Trail is on the right just past the gate.


NY/NJCT #16 (trail and pond not shown)

DWGNRA map - http://data2.itc.nps.gov/parks/dewa/ppMaps/DEWAmap1%22Epdf

Learn about Millbrook village at

www.nps.gov/dewa/lnDepth/SPanning/stoCash.html

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**BOOKNOTES**

_**Losing the Garden:** The Story of a Marriage_

By Laura Waterman Shoemaker & Hoard, 2005

Reviewed by Elizabeth Kelly

Laura and Guy Waterman are well known in the hiking community as coauthors of a number of hiking classics, including _Forest & Crop: A History of Hiking Trail Blazing and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains_ and _Wilderness Ethics_, and were prominent advocates for White Mountain backcountry. Upon opening Laura Waterman’s new memoir, _Losing the Garden_, many readers will be familiar with the events that unfold: Guy Waterman—established jazz pianist, writer, climber, and environmentalist—set out with his wife to live off of their far-tucked Vermont homestead, giving up such conveniences as electricity and running water—in 1971. After nearly three decades of synergistic and interdependent marriage, Guy leaves Laura and their idyllic-seeming world to die in the New Hampshire cold on the summit of Mount Lafayette in the White Mountains.

Through chapters that feel more like long conversations over many cups of coffee, Laura confides in us through progressively revealing anecdotes just how she came to support her husband’s plan to commit suicide. We celebrate Laura’s personal victories—such as falling in love with Guy and with climbing—and admire her tenacity and stability as she sustains a livelihood in extreme conditions on her homestead with a similarly extreme manmade companionship.

Through our growing concern over her own enmeshment with her husband’s decisions and self-destruction, we befriend Laura as she confronts the issues of her childhood, such as her father’s alcoholism, which affected her response to Guy’s ill moods. Laura’s delicate and clear style, laced with compelling, imagery-filled adventures of climbing and homesteading, keeps us engrossed in the unraveling of her marriage and of the heartbreaking suicide of her husband as she struggles to find her own, autonomous perspective.

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**ATV’s continued from page 5**

the Trail Conference. While the proposed priority list has yet to be released, sources tell me ATV legislation didn’t make the cut.

On a positive note, Commissioner Jackson did acknowledge my request, and during an upcoming DEP meeting I’ll make the case for ATV legislation. I’ve also spoken with Director Chanda, who had been unaware of the ATV legislative proposal. He’s well aware of it now, and has promised to find and send the proposal to me for comment.

While the Trail Conference is using every opportunity to advance comprehensive ATV legislation in New Jersey, ultimately we need you, our trail maintainers and hikers to make the case by writing a letter to Governor Corzine and DEP Commissioner Jackson.

Your letter should be personal. If you maintain a section of New Jersey trail, describe its location and damage caused by ATV impacts. Hikers should likewise provide a personal account of how illegal ATV use is affecting the quality of your hiking experience and compromising park resources. Enclose photos of ATVs on the trails and of damaged lands.

Urge the governor and DEP commissioner to keep ATVs out of the parks and protect our trail systems by increased enforcement and through comprehensive ATV legislation that mandates point-of-sale registration, insurance, car-size license plates, education and training, and an ATV operator’s license. Tell our public officials to use a portion of the registration fees to hire additional conservation officers.

Ideally, all trail maintainers in New Jersey and hundreds of hikers would send letters. If we are to get ATVs back on the “radar screen,” we need you to be one of those writers. Your letter will definitely make a difference!
A Sampling of Upcoming Hikes Sponsored by Member Clubs

March
Saturday, March 4
UCHC. Watching Trail Maintenance, NJ. Leader: Pre-registered by calling Trailside Nature Center at 908-769-9370. Meet: 9:30 am – noon. Hike giving back to the trails while meeting new people and learning a new skill; no experience needed. Bring a water bottle, trash bag, gloves, and a lunch.

Wednesday, March 8
UCHC. Ridge Hiker, NJ. Leader: Don Weise; call 973-835-2160 to register. Meet: 10 am on Skyline Dr., first lot on left at bottom of I-80. Casual 4-5 miles. Inclement weather date-following Monday.

March 22
UCHC. Tour the Rock Run, South Mountain Reservation, NJ. Leader: Mickey Sengel; call 201-707-7764. Meet: 10 am on Skyline Dr., first lot on left at bottom of I-80. Casual 4-5 miles. Inclement weather date-following Monday.

Monday, April 3
UCHC. Turtle Rock Run, South Mountain Reservation, NJ. Leader: Don Weise; call 973-835-2160 to register. Meet: 10 am at visitor center doors. Easy, about 1 mile.

RWV. Blackhead Mountain (3400′) and possible Black Dome Mountain, Catskills. For more information call (845) 426-8816. Meet: 6:45 am. Inclement weather date-following Monday.

Wednesday, April 5

MCPC. Shawnee Mountain’s North, NJ. Leader: call Morris County Park Commission at 973-635-6629 for further information. Meet: 10 am at Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center, 247 Southern Blvd., Chatham, NJ. Easy 2 hours. Experience the wonders of Morris County parks; for adults. Cost: $2.

Wednesday, April 12
WEC. Women’s Hike, NJ. Leader: Sanctuary director Karla Hoffer; call 908-288-0816 to register. Meet: 9 am at NJ Audubon’s Weis Ecology Center, 150 Snake Den Rd., Newark, NJ. Moderate-paced; out by 11 am. Join the group for some of their favorite scenic spots. Possible postponement to Thursday.

UCHC. Cheesquake State Park, Matawan, NJ. Leader: Lee Fanger, 973-376-3160. Meet: 8 am at Fisherman’s parking lot, Split Rock Rd., Rockaway, NJ. Moderate-paced; out by about 2:30 pm. See great views of Great Swamp from Bearfort Ridge; lots of birds and woodlands. Cost: $6 members, $8 non-member.

Wednesday, April 26
WEC. Sterling Forest North on the AT, NY. Leader: Don Weiser; call 973-835-2160 to register. Meet: 9:30 am at NJ Audubon’s Weis Ecology Center, 150 Snake Den Rd., Newark, NJ. Moderate-paced; out by 11 am. Join the group for some of their favorite scenic spots. Possible postponement to Thursday.

UCHC. Black Rock Forest, Northern Loop, NJ. Leader: Jane Eagles; 973-635-0890. Meet: 9 am at Trailside Nature Center, 260 Southern Blvd., Chatham, NJ. 17 miles. Numerous valleys, views of Schuylkill River and the Catskills. Conditions may require camouflage or snowshoes.

Thursday, April 27
UCHC. UCHC. Allamuchy State Park, NJ. Leader: Jennifer and Donna McAlpin; 973-988-2440. Meet: 10 am at Allamuchy scenic overlook on I-80. About 2 miles; about 2 hours. Nice hike with a beautiful lake.

Thursday, May 4
UCHC. Ramapo State Forest, NJ. Leader: Dave Hagen; 973-769-1475. Meet: 10 am at upper parking lot on Skyline Dr. Moderately strenuous; 8 miles on the Cannonball Trail to the Hemlock Trail. End of April; rock; return on Skyline Trail.

April
Saturday, April 1
UCHC. Watching Trail Maintenance. Leader: pre-registered by calling Trailside Nature Center at 908-769-9370. Meet: 9:30 am – noon. Hike giving back to the trails while meeting new people and learning a new skill; no experience needed. Bring a water bottle, trash bag, gloves, and a lunch.

Tuesday, April 11
WTW. Twin Mountain (3840′). Catskills, NY. For more information call 949-444-7474. Meet: 6 am. Easy, 4.4 miles. 6 hours. Inclement weather date-following Monday.

Tuesday, April 18
UCHC. Furry Hikes! Leader: pre-registered by calling Trailside Nature Center at 908-769-9370. Meet: 9 am – noon. Hike giving back to the trails while meeting new people and learning a new skill; no experience needed. Bring a water bottle, trash bag, gloves, and a lunch.

UCHC. Ramsapo Lake, Oakland, NJ. Leader: Mickey Sengel; 201-707-7764. Meet: 10 am at Skyline Dr., first lot on left at bottom of I-80. Casual 4-5 miles. Inclement weather date-following Monday.
HELMET HIKERS’ MARKETPLACE
YOU CAN ALSO ORDER AT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.NYNJTC.ORG

NY/NJ TC member? □ YES □ NO JOINING NOW □

Please order by circling price:

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NY/NJ TC member? □ YES □ NO JOINING NOW □

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<td>New York Walk Book (2005) &amp; see combo</td>
<td>$22.95</td>
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<td>Health Hints for Hikers (1994)</td>
<td>$5.95</td>
<td>$4.46</td>
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<td>Scenes &amp; Walks in the Northern Shawangunks (1999) (hardcover) &amp; see combo</td>
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NY/NJ TC member? □ YES □ NO JOINING NOW □

Please order by circling price:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combo-Packs</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>P/H</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catskill (5-map set &amp; ADK book)</td>
<td>$30.35</td>
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<td>Harriman (2-map set &amp; book)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NY &amp; NJ Walk Books</td>
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<td>Kittatinny (4-map set &amp; book)</td>
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NY/NJ TC member? □ YES □ NO JOINING NOW □

Please order by circling price:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>The Personal Touch</th>
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<td>Note Cards: TC Collection</td>
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<td>Harriman Map Bandanna</td>
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<td>Conference Logo Patch</td>
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<td>Long Path Logo Patch</td>
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<td>Conference Logo Decal</td>
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NY/NJ TC member? □ YES □ NO JOINING NOW □

Please order by circling price:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postal Handling/Fees</th>
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TOTAL ENCLOSED $______