Estelle Anderson: NJ Parks Volunteer of the Year

Trail Conference member Estelle Anderson (at left, below) received the Volunteer of the Year Award in September from the NJ-DEP Department of Parks. Estelle, of West Milford, NJ, was given the award in recognition of her work as an Assistant Supervisor in Norvin Green State Forest.

She has cultivated excellent relationships with our state trail partners, and with the law enforcement and public works departments of the surrounding communities. She has set up and worked with community service programs such as Ramapo College’s Community Service Center and Passaic County’s SLAP program. *Estelle is a devoted advocate for the preservation of this natural environment and loves every bird, animal, and plant in Norvin Green State Forest,* comment- ed Robert Jonas, Area Supervisor for the Trail Conference.

New Long-Distance Hiking Loop Dedicated in Orange County

The NY-NJ Trail Conference joined with members of the Hudson Valley Conservancy Corps of the Student Conservation Association (SCA) in September to dedicate a new long-distance hiking route in the Wallkill Valley region.

The project was led by Mike Knutson, an intern with the SCA on assignment with Scenic Hudson in Poughkeepsie. Originally from Corning, NY, Mike moved to our area in December 2005 for his SCA assignment. “I thought it was flat,” Mike says of his preconceptions. “I didn’t realize that New York had long-distance hiking trails.”

In looking for a service project, Mike decided to focus on a project that would raise people’s awareness of the natural beauty and outdoor recreation possibilities in Orange County.

The result is the Wallkill Valley Loop, a 117-mile-long route that follows sections of the Appalachian Trail, the Shawangunk Ridge Trail, the Long Path, and the Highlands Trail to make a circuit of the valley. It connects points such as Schunemunk Mountain, Greenwood Lake, the Shawangunk Mountains, and the Highland Lakes.

The route, Mike notes, involves no new trails or blazes, but links existing trails into a coherent package. He adds that the route also highlights the fact that a good portion of the LP section in the county is a road walk, and that throughout, there are limited opportunities to camp and park cars. These facts, he hopes will raise awareness of the need to protect the open space and provide basic amenities that support such trails.

Trail Conference Protects 200 Acres of Long Path North Corridor

In late August, the Trail Conference closed on the acquisition of 205 acres along the Long Path just north of the Catskill Preserve. This property, which was owned by the Good Tidings Bible Conference, was subdivided off of a larger parcel to provide a buffer to the Long Path as it moves from the Catskills north toward the Mohawk River and ultimately the Adirondacks.

The Trail Conference identifies this portion of the Long Path as the “Ginseng Ridge Assemblage”; the goal in this area, which extends north of Route 23, is to protect a four-mile trail segment of the LP with a mix of New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC), New York City Dept. of Environmental Protection, and Durham Valley Land Trust lands in the towns of Durham and Windham in Greene County.
Changing Times Requires a New Kind of Board of Directors

Each year at our Annual Meeting (this year held October 21) a slate of candidates is elected to the Trail Conference board of directors. All boards, no matter the size of the organization or the board, or whether the board focuses on fundraising or is deeply involved with running programs, have responsibilities for the fiscal and strategic oversight of the organization and for ensuring that the organization is meeting its mission.

The Trail Conference board is no different. Yet over the years, as our organization has grown and taken on new responsibilities, our board has changed. Ten years ago, the board would decide such details as where the Annual Meeting would be held, how many copies would be printed of a book, and if it was okay to relocate a trail. Today the board delegates all of those questions to committees. Instead, we discuss whether the Trail Conference should undertake a capital campaign, we approve land purchases, and we set goals for the organization. The board maintains a bird’s-eye view of the organization, rather than a worm’s view, while continuing to pay close attention to fiscal details. Trail Conference board members have always been asked to take on responsibilities in addition to their board duties. Some function as trails chairs, others chair committees or serve on several committees. Successful boards have members who work, provide wisdom, or bring wealth. The Trail Conference goes one step further and looks for people who provide two out of the three. As in the past, today’s board members are hikers. As recently as five years ago, we paid little attention to recruiting board members with specific skills, instead focusing on the geographic distribution of our board members. Now, to accomplish tasks of larger magnitude, it is necessary to have a mix of skill sets. Since the capital campaign, all board members are asked to make a donation annually, an amount that each decides is appropriate.

People come onto the board through a nomination process which begins when the president selects a nominating committee of five people. These individuals have a great deal of responsibility and influence over the direction the Trail Conference will take. They are responsible for finding people who can accomplish the goals the board has set. As we embark on our new fiscal year with our newly composed board of directors (see the complete list in the masthead at left), we can all be proud of the achievements and ambitions of previous boards and their confidence and skill in overseeing the organization. Board members give enormous amounts of their time, energy, knowledge, and financial resources to the Trail Conference and to the hiking community. For all of us, I say to them, Thank you.

— Jane Daniels, Chair, Board of Directors

Why No Maps of SRC and LP?

I’m curious as to why the Trail Conference doesn’t publish maps for the Shawangunk Ridge Trail and the Long Path. I own and use the maps for the Catskills, Shawangunks, and Harriman, all of which contain parts of the LP. I also own the Long Path Guide, which is fine for what it is, but which has inadequate maps. I would love to have one good map of the entire Path, with just the corridor and important connector trails around it. We all know that the Long Path is still flawed and incomplete. I do believe though that a good map of the whole thing might encourage use and draw attention to efforts to improve, extend, and protect the LP. I urge my fellow members and the Trail Conference as a whole to at least consider this.

— Matt Carorno New Paltz, NY

Daniel Chazin, Publications Committee chair, responds: The short answer is lack of resources. The production of a new map set requires significant efforts on the part of both volunteers and staff. We try to focus our efforts on maps that have the greatest demand. Currently, for example, we are working on producing a completely new digital edition of our North Jersey Trails map set. To obtain the necessary data, a core of dedicated volunteers hiked the various trails shown on the maps, collected trail data with a GPS receiver. Then, under the leadership of John Mack, project manager, our cartographer, Allison Werberg, created the map over a period of nearly a year. It has been estimated that almost 2,000 hours of volunteer and staff time has gone into the production of this map set, which should be available in November or December. The publications committee has many projects on its calendar, several of which are on hold owing to a lack of volunteers. We welcome new volunteers and offer training and support. Contact me at dchazin@earthlink.net or call the Trail Conference office, 201-512-9348.

Please Interpret Trail Blazes

I enjoy the Trail Walker almost as much as I enjoy hiking the trails. Could you do me a favor? I still do not understand the rules which govern the system of blazes which critics believe though that a good map of the entire Path should be available in November or December. The publications committee has many projects on its calendar, several of which are on hold owing to a lack of volunteers. We welcome new volunteers and offer training and support. Contact me at dchazin@earthlink.net or call the Trail Conference office, 201-512-9348.

Why No Maps of SRC and LP?

1. A single blaze (left) indicates “continue straight ahead.”

2. Double blaze (one above another): When the top mark is to the right of the bottom one, a left turn in the trail is indicated; when the top mark is to the left of the bottom one, the trail turns right; when they are directly in line, this indicates continuing turns, junctions, or areas requiring hiker alertness.

3. Triple blaze: Marks a trailhead. When the point of the pyramid is on top, this indicates the start of a trail; when the point is at the bottom, this marks the end of a trail.

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, NJ 07430

NEW HIKING LOOP

continued from page 1

Field in the Village of Greenwood Lake, where they greeted well-wishers and distributed information about the loop.

For more information on the Wallkill Valley Loop, including detailed directions, go to: www.nynjtc.org/trails/newtrails/wvl.html.

Mike Knutson, the SCA intern who came up with the idea for the long-distance Wallkill Valley Loop.
Clubs Are Us

Recently, while trying to update our Trail Conference statistics, we confronted a problem that we are happy to have—how to fit the names of our 103 dues-paying, organizational members on our letterhead.

About 60 percent of Trail Conference organizational members are traditional hiking clubs; the rest are a diverse array of nature centers, preserves, advocacy groups large and small, and even a few municipal agencies. (See annotated list at www.nynjtc.org/clubs.html.)

Our region’s hiking community comes together in the Trail Conference, which counts 100+ member organizations.

In my five years with the Trail Conference, we have been able to increase the number of member organizations from 77 to more than 100, but I am quite sure that we have not been able to increase their involvement in Trail Conference activities by a comparable measure. To reverse that trend is a worthy challenge for the next five years. I see three areas where the Trail Conference and our member organizations could strengthen our partnership in achieving our shared goals.

1. Getting people outdoors: A variety of economic and lifestyle trends are making it less likely for the average family and especially kids to go hiking on a regular basis. The outdoor activities and education programs of our member organizations are probably the most important ways to counter such trends. Our new Community Trails Program (see Bill O’Hearn’s column, page 5) will make trails more visible and accessible. We can also help bring your club’s activities to the attention of more people by listing selected outings in Trail Walker (Hiker’s Almanac), and publicizing your group’s contributions to trail work.

2. Trail Construction and monitoring: The original reason that clubs came together to create the Trail Conference was to develop a system of marked trails. This work continues today, with the Trail Conference working with open space managers throughout our region to plan trail routes and reroutes, keep existing trails open and accessible, and recruit and train the volunteers needed to maintain a network of nearly 1700 miles of trails. We have increased our training opportunities (new members, under the heading of Trail University, see page 5) and invite our member organizations to connect their members—including families—to our workshops and gain new volunteers for themselves and for trails.

3. Advocacy: It is fair to say that many of our clubs and their individual members have been at the forefront of every major advocacy effort the Trail Conference has been involved in. From protecting open space for trails to lobbying government officials for adequate funding for parks facilities and protection, the Trail Conference and its member clubs can focus a broad-based constituency on important trails issues. (We calculate the combined membership of member organizations at 150,000 individuals in our region, a very significant interest group.) The Trail Conference is the hiking clearinghouse in our region, where vital information is shared. We seek to strengthen this vital partnership by providing leadership on key conservation issues.

The great promise of the Trail Conference is that we can accomplish more together than we can separately. Our collective influence—on getting people outside, informing and promoting action on political fronts related to trails and open space, and doing the hands-on volunteer work of building and maintaining trails—testifies to the breadth, depth, and engagement of the hiking community.

I invite you to share your thoughts with me about how we can build and strengthen our traditional partnerships.

Volunteer Profile

Ruth Rosenthal

Ruth Rosenthal’s concern for the well-being of our natural world has been an important factor throughout her life. She trained and worked as a botanist and field biologist, and then became a teacher.

Upon her retirement several years ago, Ruth was able to devote more time to the causes that she holds dear. She has volunteered for the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Open Space Institute, the Trust for Public Land, Environmental Defense, Transportation Alternatives, and—last, but certainly not least—the Trail Conference.

Ruth has volunteered with the Trail Conference in many capacities. Her first assignment was as an Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitor in Dutchess County, and she continues to serve in this position. More recently, she has become active with the Publications Committee. Ruth helped produce a brochure on the East Hudson Highlands, and she currently is the Project Manager for George Petry’s new book, Hiking the Jersey Highlands, which is scheduled to be published by the Trail Conference within the next few months. “It’s a wonderful Highlands reference and guide,” Ruth explains, “and I’m sure it will prove to be much appreciated.”

With an apartment in New York City and a home in Putnam County, Ruth divides her life between the two places. Her weekend hiking is mostly on the east side of the Hudson, but she also favors hikes in the Shawangunks. Further afield, she’s hiked with her husband, Michael, in California, Colorado, Nevada, and Utah—and even in Iceland. Sadly, her cherished canine hiking companion, Mickey, recently passed away. But she and her husband are resuming their hikes, exploring trails that are new to them, including, in October of this year, trails in Provence, France.

Ruth is especially pleased that the Trail Conference, in recent years, has embarked upon a program of acquiring land to preserve existing hiking trails and create new ones. As she explains: “There is an enormous need for dedicated citizens, recognizing the fragile ecology of the natural world, to advocate for land preservation and for changes in the earth-destructive habits of our national culture.”

Ruth’s volunteer efforts on behalf of the Trail Conference are a source of much satisfaction. As she puts it: “Being a part of the Trail Conference, and working with its dedicated members, volunteers, and staff is a great pleasure.” Ruth has made valuable contributions to the Trail Conference over the years, and we hope that she will continue to do so for many years in the future.

New Scenes and Walks in the Northern Shawangunks

The Publications Committee is pleased to announce the publication of a third edition of Jack Fagan’s book, Scenes and Walks in the Northern Shawangunks. The book combines an incisive description of the foot trails and carriage roads of the area with more than 100 magnificent illustrations by the author. The text highlights the unusual rock formations and other interesting features of the Mohonk Preserve, Minnewaska State Park Preserve, and Sam’s Point Preserve, and the accompanying illustrations demonstrate the extraordinary beauty of this special area. The book is a must for anyone wishing to explore the scenic delights of the Shawangunks.

This third edition includes trail changes and descriptions of new trails on lands in the Shawangunks recently acquired by the State of New York, and the cover incorporates a new color illustration by the author. The book retails for $13.99, with Trail Conference members entitled to a 25% discount. To order your copy, go to the Hikers’ Marketplace on page 12.

$25,000 Grant to TC Will Fund Family Trails Study

A $25,000 grant to the Trail Conference from the federal Recreational Trails Program of the Federal Highway Administration was announced in October.

The money will be used to implement a pilot program to conduct a comprehensive inventory of existing and undeveloped trails at Farny State Park, centered on Split Rock Reservoir.

The study area is roughly bordered by the Berkshire Valley road on the west, I-80 on the south, Kinnelon Road on the east and Route 23 on the north. This area has approximately 30 miles of maintained trails and may have up to 20 additional miles of proposed and unmaintained trails. There are no up-to-date trail maps of this regional area.

This award will support the development of a new set of state and county trail maps, now scheduled for completion in 2007. It will also provide the New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, as well as the Division of Fish and Wildlife, with valuable information about the facilities under their management and assist all of us in raising funds to improve access and management of these public lands.

The grant is intended to cover the cost of:

• Two global position system data collection units
• Required accessories and interfacing software
• Various data management software
• Staff time needed to complete and manage the program for one year.

The first stages of this program will begin with data collection by the staff and volunteers as soon as possible. This will take approximately 30 days of field work spread over approximately nine months. These nine months for the data collection process may be necessary in order to make optimum use of leaf-off conditions in the fall, winter, and spring. This data will be downlinked using various data management software and will then be sorted and managed through Geographic Information Systems.

From the Executive Director

Ruth Rosenthal with her longtime hiking companion, Mickey.

Ruth Goodell

goodell@nynjtc.org

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By Daniel Chazin

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Trail Crew Schedules

November – December 2006
For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nynytc.org and click on “Trail crew/Work trips.”

TBD = 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.

METRO CREW
Leaders: Joe Gindoff, 914-760-3568, joeski@iast.com
Lizbeth Gonzalez, 646-319-5159
Tools and gloves will be furnished, feel free to bring your own. Mass transit and carpooling are possible. Check website for possible additional dates.

Dec. 2, 3 (Saturday, Sunday)
Ikewild Park, Queens
Leader: Joe Gindoff
Meet at Springﬁeld Park, Park House, 147th Ave. and Springﬁeld Blvd., Queens. We will build new trails to and around the marshes.

NJ HIGHLANDS CREW
Leader: Glenn Oleksiak, 973-283-0306, glenna@nj.com
First Sunday of each month
Trips start at 10 am. Call, email, or check NY-NJ TC website calendar for directions and details of work trip.

NORTH JERSEY WEEKEND CREW
Leader: Sandy Parr, 732-469-5109
Second Sunday of each month
Trips start at 9:30 am; call for location and details during the week before the scheduled trip day. Tackle a variety of projects ranging from trail repair to bridge building in northern New Jersey.

NORTH JERSEY WEEKDAY CREW
Leader: John Moran, johnmoran@earthlink.net
This crew will cover the NJ Ramapos, Ringwood S. P., Norvin Green S. F., and NJ Palisades area. Its purpose is to respond quickly to immediate needs, rather than to schedule deﬁnite events far in advance. If you’re interested in being on call for this work, contact John Moran by email.

WEST JERSEY CREW
Leaders: Monica and David Day
732-937-9098 cell: 908-307-5949
westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.com
Nov. 4 (Saturday)
Dunﬁeld Creek Trail, Worthington State Forest.
Final touches on the rock steps of the relocation.
Nov. 18 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, Worthington State Forest.
Install additional drainage and erosion controls.

EAST HUDSON CREW
Leaders:
Walt Daniels, 914-245-1250
Michael Bongar, 914-788-0616
Jessie Gray, 845-631-5786
Marylind Massony, 914-967-6774
Patrick McGloin, 831-223-2164

If you are coming by train, be sure to let the leader know so that we wait for the train.

Weekdays
Leader: Walt Daniels
Meet: 9 am, TBD
Work varies

WEST HUDSON NORTH CREW
Leaders:
Denise Vitale, Crew Chief:
845-728-2126, WHNTrails@aol.com
Dave Webber: 845-452-7238, 631-223-2164

Nov. 4 (Saturday)
Storm King State Park
Leader: Denise Vitale
TBD: Meet: 9:30 am; place TBD

Nov. 2, Dec. 3 (Saturday, Sunday)
Trailhead Jessup/Highlands/Sweet Clover Trails,
Schunnemunk State Park
Leader: Denise Vitale
Build rock steps and crib wall in slope above the seasonal drainage. Meet: 9:30 am; place TBD

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, sganz@earthlink.net
Robert Marshall: 914-737-4792, marshall@webtv.net
Monica Day: 732-937-9098

Nov. 4 (Saturday)
TBD
Leader: Chris Ezzo

Nov. 9 (Thursday)
TBD
Leader: Bob Marshall

Nov. 11 (Saturday)
Bare Rock Trail
Leader: Monica Day

Nov. 18 (Saturday)
Major Welch Trail, Bear Mountain S.P.
Leader: Bob Marshall

Nov. 18 (Saturday)
Major Welch Trail, Bear Mountain S.P.
Leader: Chris Ezzo

BEAR MOUNTAIN TRAILS PROJECT
Project Manager: Eddie Walsh
Registration required; contact adami@nynytc.org or 203-512-9348, ext. 26

Fridays through Tuesdays in November
Work opportunities include stone crib wall construction, stone step construction, stone splitting, spreading crushed stone for trail surfacing, and material moving with highlines (rigging).

Sundays in November
(No trip Nov. 26)
Trail closure (obilitation) and ecological restoration project.

Nov. 11 (Saturday)
Womens Work Trip
Leader: Denise Vitale and SCA Leaders

Nov. 25 (Saturday)
College Day
Leader: Dan Haasner

The Case of the Moldering Privy

Human waste happens, even in the woods. Dealing with it safely and in an environmentally sound manner is of ongoing concern to trail managers and hikers. In September, volunteers with the Dutchess-Putnam AT Management Committee built a new style of composting privy at the Morgan Stewart Memorial shelter in Dutchess. Called a moldering privy, the design was developed through research by the Green Mountain Club (GMC) in conjunction with the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC), the National Park Service Appalachian Trail Park Office (ATPO), and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (VT FPR).

Cited benefits of the moldering privy include:
• Requires less labor and exposes maintainers to less risk of infection than bin composting systems;
• Much less polluting than pit toilets;
• Eliminates the need to dig pits;
• Can serve a higher volume of users than pit toilet;
• Is relatively inexpensive.
Committee member Ollie Simpson of Wappingers Falls, NY, managed the project and was joined by seven volunteers for the half-day work effort, which involved clearing and levelng the ground (no pits to dig), building a wooden crib, moving the existing privy structure to the top of the crib, and finishing at the top. “Everyone pitched in to do whatever needed to be done at that time—shoveling, hammering, sawing, stapling,” Ollie reports. By noon, we were done! The existing structure with steps was in place on the new crib and the old pit covered. We enjoyed lunch and conversation at the shelter before leaving. If anyone needs a moldering privy, you know whom to contact.

Mud Pond Trail to Reopen

Thanks to Private Landowner and NY State

Anyone who has enjoyed the dramatic sight of Verkeerder Kill Falls, on the route of the Long Path between Sam’s Point Preserve and Mud Pond in Minnewaska State Park Preserve, owes a debt of thanks to private landowners Theresa and Les Concors. The couple owns the land that includes the falls and the area below and just east of it, and graciously permit hikers access via crucial sections of trail that connect the Verkeerder Kill Falls Trail to the High Point Trail. It is also a critical link in the Long Path.

It is expected that this section will once again reconnect with the trail that extended to Mud Pond. Closed for years, that land, known as the Awosting Reserve, was purchased by the state of New York and became part of Minnewaska State Park Preserve in March 2006. In his ﬁrst week on the job, the new Preserve Manager, Marc Talluno, announced that the trail linking Mud Pond to the falls could be officially reopened as soon as it can be refurbished and relazed. Stay tuned.

Theresa and Les Concors are representative of those special individuals who go out of their way to accommodate and welcome hikers on their private land. Please acknowledge their gift by respecting their property as you enjoy the sights and pleasures it offers.

MUD POND TRAIL TO REOPEN

PHOTOS: RAY WINCHCOMBE EDWARD GOODELL

A view of Mud Pond from the long-closed trail in Minnewaska State Park Preserve that is due to be reopened.
The Trail Conference’s Trail University—our program of classes and hands-on training in trail building and maintenance skills—continues into November at the Bear Mountain Trails Project. To register for a workshop, contact Heidi Adami at adami@nynjtc.org or call 201-512-9348, ext. 26. Directions, meeting places, and times will be given upon registration.

Stone Pinning Workshop #92
Nov. 4 (Saturday)
Site: New Appalachian Trail Route, Bear Mountain, NY
Instructor: Eddie Walsh
Registration fee: $10 (TC Membership Required)

Stone Cribbing Apprenticeship Level II # 91
Nov. 4, 5, 6 (Saturday – Monday)
Site: New Appalachian Trail Route, Bear Mountain, NY
Instructor: Eddie Walsh
Registration fee: $10 (TC Membership Required)

New Project Seeks to Return Trails to Natural State
This fall, the Trail Conference begins a new era of trail stewardship at Bear Mountain and in our region. For the first time, we are systematically restoring abandoned and unofficial trails to a natural state. We will be using traditional techniques such as moving duff (decomposing leaf litter) and downed logs and branches, as well as more expansive ones such as transplanting living plants from areas where new trail is being constructed to the impacted bootleg trails. Our goal is to erase signs of human presence and give nature her best chance to rebound and take back the mountain as quickly as possible. Weekly trail restoration trips are scheduled nearly every Sunday in November. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Heidi Adami (adami@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 26) for more information and to get involved.

Norvin Green Projects Lead Scout to Eagle Status
Erich Basler of Boy Scout Troop 7, Ridgewood, NJ, came to the Trail Conference in November 2004 seeking a project for his Eagle Scout candidacy. His choice was a reroute of the Hewitt-Butler and Mine Trails as they ascended Wyanokie High Point. This section of trail was badly eroded and covered over, providing excellent exposures that became covered with ice in winter. He started his project in March 2005, working with a crew of fellow scouts and friends and cousins almost every weekend. After much clipping, cutting, raking, and blazing, they were able to complete and open this new section in the fall of that year. He then offered to build a trail information kiosk at the newly created trailhead, the entrance to Norvin Green’s most popular trails. Supervisors Robert Jonas and Estelle Anderson later added a patio to the kiosk and paved it with bricks collected over the years by past North Jersey Trails Chair Dick Warner. The kiosk has been christened the R. N. Warner Trail Kiosk in his honor. Erich was awarded Eagle status in June of this year, and Jonas and Anderson proudly received “ Mentor” pins at his celebration. Congratulations and thanks to all who participated.

Helping hands raise the roof on an information kiosk at Norvin Green.

Robert Jonas, Scout Erich Basler, and Estelle Anderson celebrate a job well done.

Norvin Green Projects
Eddie Walsh

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Registration fee: $10 (TC Membership Required)

New Project Seeks to Return Trails to Natural State
This fall, the Trail Conference begins a new era of trail stewardship at Bear Mountain and in our region. For the first time, we are systematically restoring abandoned and unofficial trails to a natural state. We will be using traditional techniques such as moving duff (decomposing leaf litter) and downed logs and branches, as well as more expansive ones such as transplanting living plants from areas where new trail is being constructed to the impacted bootleg trails. Our goal is to erase signs of human presence and give nature her best chance to rebound and take back the mountain as quickly as possible. Weekly trail restoration trips are scheduled nearly every Sunday in November. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Heidi Adami (adami@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 26) for more information and to get involved.

Advocacy & Conservation News Notes

Advocacy Director: Bill O'Hearn

The Community Trail Connections Program, A new role for the Trail Conference
“It’s not enough to buy open space – you must change the way people feel about the land.”

—Ed Boyer, US Forest Service

The Trail Conference recently completed a brainstorming about a theme that would tie together the Trail Conference’s three main trail functions of access, conservation, and advocacy when we hit on the concept of a “community trail connections” program. The idea: provide the connections between our existing network of backwoods trails to potential hikers in urban, suburban, and rural residential settings. In other words, link our trails to schools, libraries, museums, ball fields, and other places where people gather.

Advocacy & Conservation News Notes

Developer Scales Down Belleayre Plan
In late August, the developer of the proposed Belleayre Resort at Catskill Park, Crossroads Ventures, met with federal, state, and local agencies to discuss moving forward with a scaled-down version of its proposed resort project. The project has faced strong opposition from governmental agencies, environmental groups—including the NY-NJ Trail Conference and Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK)—and concerned citizens.

The developer has proposed downsizing the eastern portion of its original plan by eliminating an 18-hole golf course, reducing the hotel from 150 to 120 rooms, and cutting 88 of the original 183 townhouse units. The eastern portion of the project has received the most criticism due to its location on the steeply sloped Belleayre Ridge in the heart of the Catskill High Peaks and the New York City watershed.

In early August 2006, State Comptroller Alan Hevesi and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Region 2 office publicly criticized the proposed Belleayre Resort Project. You can read Hevesi’s full report at www.osc.state.ny.us/reports/economic/belleayre.pdf. For more information on the Trail Conference and ADK’s testimony on this project, visit http://www.adk.org/issues/BelleayreResort.aspx

NJ $5 for Open Space Acquisitions
In August, New Jersey Governor Corzine signed legislation earmarking $5 million for open space preservation in the state. Of the total, $20 million is destined to purchase land in the Highlands region, with other money funding urban park acquisitions in Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Camden, and Union counties. The money comes from the Garden State Preservation Trust, approved by voters in August, New Jersey Governor Corzine signed legislation earmarking $5 million for open space preservation in the state. Of the total, $20 million is destined to purchase land in the Highlands region, with other money funding urban park acquisitions in Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Camden, and Union counties. The money comes from the Garden State Preservation Trust, approved by voters in 1998, set to run through 2029, and funded by revenue from sales and user taxes.

NYS Land Buy Protects LP Near Albany
In August, Governor Pataki announced an agreement for the acquisition of 188 scenic acres to expand John Boyd Thacher State Park in Albany County. The acquisition will provide for the extension of trails, notably the Long Path, a hiking trail that begins near the George Washington Bridge in New Jersey: The additional acreage will increase the size of Thacher Park to 2,155 acres.

The state is purchasing the land from the Open Space Institute (OSI). According to the governor’s office, the parcel is adjacent to the northern border of Thacher State Park and fronts the Helderberg Escarpment with views to the north and east. The parcel includes High Point, which is reported to be the highest elevation along the escarpment. The Trail Conference-ADK Partnership successfully lobbied for the land acquisition funds from the Environmental Protection Fund that made this purchase possible.

continued on page 7
Volunteer Classifieds: Get Involved!

Are you looking for new challenges and opportunities to get involved with Trail Conference activities? Please review the TC Volunteer Classifieds for exciting and interesting ways for members to become involved with the Conference’s efforts. Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization. Become an active part of our family and get more involved. If you are interested in volunteering with the TC and do not see an opportunity that suits you, contact Heidi K. Adami, either by email volunteers@nynjtc.org or phone, 201-512-9348, ext. 26, and she will find a way to get you involved.

Trail Maintainers
We are looking for individuals, couples, and families who are willing to adopt a section of trail. Maintainers are expected to visit the adopted section a minimum of twice a year, keeping it passable by cutting back brush, ensuring it is well marked and free of trash, and submitting semi-annual reports of their work. We have openings on several of our Trail Committees:
- Catskills Forest Preserve
- Metro Trails: Alley Pond and Staten Island
- East Hudson: Westchester
- Central Jersey: Pequannock Watershed, Garret/High Mountain, Parson’s Mountain, and the Farny Highlands.
- Northwest New Jersey
- The Long Path and Shawangunk Ridge

Contact Heidi either at volunteers@nynjtc.org or phone, 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

Corridor Monitor
Needed in Orange/Rockland
Looking to get off the beaten path? The Orange/Rockland AT Committee needs your help. Monitors are needed to patrol and watch the Appalachian Trail Corridor to protect against misuse and illegal activities. Responsibilities include: walking the corridor boundaries two to four times per year, verifying boundary markers along the corridor boundary, reporting evidence of trespassing and misuse, such as dumping, illegal ATVs, etc., assisting the Corridor Manager in handling problems discovered, and meeting trail neighbors and easement holders annually.

Space is limited, sign up now by contacting Heidi at volunteers@nynjtc.org or phone, 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

Corridor Monitors and Shelter Maintainers
Needed in Dutchess/Putnam
There are several openings in Dutchess and Putnam Counties for AT boundary monitors and shelter maintainers. Monitors are needed to patrol and watch the Appalachian Trail Corridor to protect against misuse and illegal activities. Responsibilities include: walking the corridor boundaries two to four times per year, verifying boundary markers along the corridor boundary, reporting evidence of trespassing and misuse, such as dumping, illegal ATVs, etc., assisting the Corridor Manager in handling problems discovered, and meeting trail neighbors and easement holders annually. Shelter maintainers are needed to keep the shelters in excellent shape by visiting them frequently (twice a month in heavy usage times). Responsibilities include: trim vegetation around shelter, inspect water supply, keep shelter free from litter and graffiti, inspect privy or other sanitation provisions, and check signs. The maintainer also submits semiannual shelter maintenance reports and reports problems and shelter misuse to the supervisor and requests help. To sign up in Dutchess/Putnam, contact Jim Haggert at jthaggert@optonline.net or phone 845-462-2893.

Can You Spare Two Hours a Week?
Join the fun and come to our Malwah office and assist with the packing of map and book orders, shipping membership cards, and processing membership renewals. Keep the Trail Conference’s Orders and Fulfillment Department on track by lending us a hand. With a boom in memberships and book orders, major repairs from the supervisor. To meet this public need, we seek reliable individuals to answer our phones, assist with book orders, and do some light data-entry and order fulfillment. Interested persons do not need to be all-knowing about hiking in the area, but must be eager to help the public and willing to commit to regular hours and follow up with the correct answer.

Meet the Interns

Carol Petricevic joins the Trail Conference from July through December as an intern with the Student Conservation Association (an AmeriCorps program). Carol is supporting the Bear Mountain Trails Project in the office by assisting with volunteer recruitment and in the field with work trip and workshop coordination. Carol taught science in inner city schools for the last four years in Chicago and Cleveland. She left the teaching field to pursue a year of environmental work before starting graduate study in ecology next fall. Carol originally hails from the flatlands of Cleveland; her New York-New Jersey sojourn marks her first experience living outside of the Great Lakes watersheds.

Dan Hauser started volunteering with the Trail Conference several years ago on the Twin Fords project. This year he stepped up his involvement by becoming a Rockland County AmeriCorps intern, working with the Trail Conference primarily on the Bear Mountain Trails Project. He is currently a senior at Clarkson University studying electrical engineering. He has lived and hiked in the New York metropolitan area most of his life.

The NY-NJ Trail Conference seeks individuals for internships

Trail Conference interns may gain skills in trail building, managing volunteers, and administration of projects large and small. A great skills and resume builder!

Meet the Interns

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Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

Trail Walker is a bi-monthly paper published by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, 156 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430. The editor and managing editor is Georgette Weit, at the same address. The annual subscription price is $15; contact person is Josh Erdnieker; telephone number is 201-512-9348. The tax status of the organization has not changed during the preceding 12 months. As of the filing date of October 1, 2006, the average number of copies of each issue during the preceding 12 months was 9,900; the actual number of copies of the single issue published nearest to the filing date was 9,400. The paper has a total paid and/or requested circulation of 8,000 (including average) and 8,012 (actual, most recent issue). The average free distribution for the 12 months preceding the filing date was 1,000 (average) and 1,000 (actual, most recent issue). The total average distribution was 9,900; the actual distribution of the single issue published nearest to the filing date was 9,012.

This information is reported on U. S. Postal Service Form 3526 and here as required by 39 USC 3685.
Plant Hunters: On the lookout for Invasives in the Woods

This past summer, 59 Trail Conference volunteers collected information about the presence (or lack thereof) of 22 species of invasive plants along 66 miles of trail in parklands in Harriman and Ringwood State Parks. The exercise was the first phase of a three-year study that has the dual aim of tracking the inroads being made by invasive plants in our region and of the feasibility of using citizen-scientists to monitor those inroads. The study is being conducted by the NY-NJ Trail Conference and Rutgers University, and is supported by funding from the US Dept. of Agriculture.

Ms. Gulino of Staten Island was one of the volunteers who patrols trails in Harriman State Park. A hiker with a lively interest in plants, Ms. Gulino says she volunteered hoping to increase her plant knowledge. “And it did,” she says. “It raised my awareness, it’s like an ecosystem, services for humans, it’s been a learning process. She learned that sometimes, pulling them out can make the problem worse because it helps them to spread.”

New recruits for the study will be sought in 2007 and 2008. Contact Heidi Adami at adami@nynjtc.org or phone, 201-512-9348, ext. 26, for information or to sign up.

Volunteer Invasive Plant Surveyors, Class of 2006


By Dr. William Schuster, executive director of Black Rock Forest Consortium

A recent study of “biological corridors” may have implications for how we can manage fragmented natural habitats to preserve native biological diversity. The study documented the importance of corridors, connections that permit relatively complete movement of organisms, between fragmented habitats to enhance plant diversity.

The study showed that, over five years, patches of open habitat surrounded by longleaf pine forests connected by a 25-meter wide corridor contained 20 percent more native plant species than did isolated patches, which lack such species. Increased numbers of pollinating and seed dispersing animals using the corridors may underlie the results. The study is especially noteworthy because, while corridors have been shown to benefit some larger animal species, we think of plants as being sedentary and thus slow to respond to changes.

Fragmenting ecological communities into small, unconnected pieces commonly results from human activities such as development, road construction, and land use conversion. A consequence is often reduced native biological diversity because species with large home ranges and those that need to migrate may not have the resources necessary to survive in fragments. Fragmentation reduces the populations of some organisms, can concentrate prey organisms, making them more easily captured, and can reduce or eliminate gene exchange among neighbor populations. Lowered productivity, altered chemical cycles, and ecosystem services for human may subsequently result.

Eastern forests have been heavily fragmented, but mountain ranges such as the New York-New Jersey Highlands have significant ecological connectivity. Black Rock Forest’s 4,000 acres, for example, are contiguous to about 100,000 acres of additional forest. This contiguous allows the area to retain carnivores, hawks and eagles, mink and otter, and owls and forest interior or songbirds. We know that continuous corridors such as ridges, lowlands, and river and stream valleys enhance biotic movement. It has long been hypothesized that maintaining or re-establishing contiguous corridors between habitat areas should prevent or reverse some negative impacts of fragmentation. But the full effects have seldom been rigorously and experimentally tested.

Concerns, such as the possibility that corridors might spread disease, have been expressed. More studies are needed and many are underway. Nevertheless, available evidence suggests that we may at least enhance the preservation of some vulnerable and rare species by establishing appropriate corridors.

The importance of biological corridor lends support to the concept of preserving habitat connections in the landscape. The Black Rock Forest Consortium, the Trail Conference, and land preservation organizations work individually and together to promote ecological connectivity around our region. The Trail Conference’s land acquisition program focuses primarily on protecting corridors between parks, preserves, and other open areas in areas under threat of development. By preserving hiking corridors through suitable natural terrain, one is also likely helping to maintain the native biological diversity of those areas over time. In the “spoke and wheel” model of trail linkages, preservation or reestablishment of “spokes” helps ensure the ecological health of the “wheels.”

Some have questioned whether foot trails can represent a small-scale form of fragmentation. But research by Jean Rothe in the Black Rock Forest, supported also by the Trail Conference, indicates the effect is not detrimental, at least to songbirds. Such studies have examined impacts on only a few organisms, but foot trails and trail use must be minor impacts compared to the larger organisms that have survived previous disturbance in our forests.

When hiking on a trail in large areas of contiguous habitat, you may well enjoy, consciously or unconsciously, the biological diversity that remains. In navigating or traversing habitat barriers, you may recognize how they might have endangered native populations in the adjacent habitats. And when you travel the habitat corridors, you might want to pause and give thanks to those who preserved them, on behalf of our native organisms and ecological health.

(Damschen et al., 2006, Science 313:1284-1286)

ADVOCACY & CONSERVATION continued from page 5

NJ Updates State Trails Plan

The New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Dept. of Transportation (DOT) are updating the 1996 version of the State Trails Plan. Public meetings on the plan were held in September. Trail User Surveys, which are being used to identify trail use patterns and properties, are being distributed, and it’s important that as many Trail Conference members as possible fill it out and turn it in. It is available at www.njtrailplan.org. At press time, “visioning workshops” were scheduled to take place in October, and may stretch into November. Check the njtrails website for dates and locations. We expect that public hearings will take place early in 2007. For more information, visit www.njtrailplan.org or see the Trail Conference website.

New Coalition to Protect the Ramapo Highlands

Increasingly intense development in the interstate area of the New York/New Jersey Highlands has led to recent formation of the Ramapo Highlands Coalition, an ad-hoc committee of local environmental groups, including the Trail Conference, and concerned citizens, which works to raise awareness and advocate for the protection of the Ramapo Highlands and the Ramapo Watershed. The coalition focuses on protection of the Highlands in the Towns of Ramapo, Tuxedo and Warwick in New York, and the Township of Mahwah and the Borough of Ringwood in New Jersey. Contacts for the coalition are Ray Kane (845-357-0158) and Bob Dreman (845-357-3768).

Plan for Stewart State Forest Released

In June, New York State transferred 1,600 acres in Orange County from the Dept. of Transportation to the Dept. of Environmental Conservation for inclusion in Stewart State Forest. In October, the DEC released the Unit Management Plan for the site, with public hearings set for that month. The UMP calls for prohibiting ATV and snowmobile use, allowing camping by permit only, expanding public use during hunting season, creating a trail network, continuing farm management, and managing woods and fields for wildlife. The June land transfer was the result of an agreement settling a lawsuit against the state brought by the Stewart Park and Reserve Coalition (SPARC), which sought to protect as open space buffer lands around Stewart Airport. (The Trail Conference is a member of SPARC.) Stewart State Forest now comprises approximately 7,000 acres, the second largest open space area in Orange County after Splawny Forest State Park. The UMP is available at www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/publands/ump/reg3/stewart.html.

NJ Highlands Master Plan Set for December Release

The New Jersey Highlands Council has announced that it intends to complete a first draft of the Regional Master Plan in late October, and to begin a series of six public hearings around the Highlands area on November 5. The Regional Master Plan will determine land use policies in the Highlands, and Planning Area towns will have the option of “opting-in” to the plan starting in December and during the next 18 months. The Highlands Council held a series of workshops in September and October to help develop the first draft of the plan, covering 18 separate subject areas including water capacity, agricultural protection and stability, scenic values, smart growth, recreation, and threatened and endangered species habitat. The Council also released a series of technical reports that are available on the www.highlands.state.nj.us website.
Museum Preserve Nature Shop

Put Your Holiday Shopping to Work for the Trail Conference

Do you dislike shopping in crowded malls during the holiday season or prefer to make your gift purchases from the quiet sanctuary of your home?

Would you like to shop at more than 100 major online retailers and help the Trail Conference as you click away?

If the answer is yes, then take advantage of the Trail Conference Affiliate Program.

How does it work?

By entering the Trail Conference's Commercial Zone and then connecting to select online retailers through a special link on the Trail Conference's web page, up to 15% of the price of everything you buy benefits the Trail Conference's web page.

How does it work?

From this link, you can choose from more than 1000 brand name retailers. You will have access to a variety of merchants such as LL Bean, Land’s End, Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, Avon, J. Crew, The Gap, as well as home electronics and computer stores, home and bath stores, pet supply retailers, gourmet food shops, and dozens more.

Please pass this link along to everyone you know, especially with the holiday shopping season just around the corner. Your purchases can really help make a difference.

DONORS TO THE ANNUAL FUND

July 21, 2006 to September 27, 2006

IN MEMORIAM

Richard (Dick) Redfield

Long-time Trail Conference member Dick Redfield passed away on August 17, 2006, after a seven-year battle with leukemia. Dick was an avid hiker, and a hard-working contributor to the hiking community in both physical and administrative capacities.

Dick's love of the outdoors was fostered and encouraged by his father, Emanuel (Manny) Redfield, a Conference officer who was also active in the hiking community until his death in 1983. Dick spent countless volunteer hours at the Conference's office in Manhattan, maintained trails, field-checked maps, and developed and blamed the original route of the Wycoake Creek Trail.

He maintained that many trails even though it was a long distance from his home in Westchester County. In 1991 he was awarded the Trail Conference's Certificate of Appreciation for his work.

Dick was previously part of the trail crew that coordinated the several sections of the Appalachian Trail in the Dutchess and Putnam areas, and until his death he continued to work as a trail monitor on the Graymoor section of the AT. He helped revitalize the Briarcliff-Peekskill Trailway for Westchester County; and he worked with the Westchester Trail Association in various capacities over the years since he joined in 1975, as an officer, board member, Conference delegate, membership chair, and trail chair.

WTA member Richard Borg

Park Supporter Malcolm Borg Honored by Friends of Palisades

On June 8, Malcolm Borg was honored by Friends of the Palisades on the occasion of his completion of 31 years of dedicated service as a commissioner of the Palisades Interstate State Park Commission (PIPC). First appointed in 1974 by Governor Brendan Byrne of New Jersey, “Mac” served the Commission with great distinction. During his tenure, PIPC assumed the management of Sterling Forest State Park and a greatly expanded Minnewaska State Park Preserve.

A dinner honoring “Mac” was held on Ross Dock along the Hudson River in Fort Lee, NJ. Former PIPC Executive Director Bob Binnewies flew in from California for the occasion, and the Trail Conference was represented by former TC President H. Neil Zimmerman.

“Mac is and was the institutional memory of the Commission,” Neil said. “He has a flair for guiding folks in the right direction and was a key player in the Sterling Forest and Minnewaska dramas, which were successful in no small part because of his efforts.”
Chinese Mountain Club of New York
The Chinese Mountain Club of New York (CMCNY) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1985 by a group of outdoor enthusiasts who devoted their leisure time to organizing outdoor trips for the local Chinese community. The group joined the Trail Conference as a new trail maintenance group soon after its creation.

Today, CMCNY has more than 190 members, most of them residents of New York City. It sponsors more than 70 activities each year, with members enjoying hiking, biking, camping, climbing, backpacking, rock climbing, roller-blading, canoeing, and more. Most outings take place within New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Day trips are usually within an hour’s drive from New York City, with Harriman State Park a favorite destination. Out-of-area trips to New Hampshire or Vermont are sometimes scheduled, and once every two years or so, members plan an extended trip to such places as Hawaii, Yosemite, or the Grand Canyon. Twice a year CMCNY members head out to the dramatic Shore Trail along the Hudson River in Palisades Interstate Park to do trail maintenance.

On a trip to the Catskills this summer I packed my share of luxuries, including a backpack, camera, self-inflating mattress pad, French press for my coffee, as well as all the usual gear and food I would need for two nights in the woods. The easy-to-pack main compartment swallowed my single-person tent, food, stove, and extra clothes. In the external stretch pockets I stashed a fuel bottle and anwater filter with room to spare for extra supplies. Unlike other lightweight packs, the Atmos is made with a durable 210-denier nylon fabric, which withstands two hours of sweaty back syndrome most hikers experience with a regular backpack. The Atmos is full of useful and well designed features that will enhance your backpacking experience. This is a great, comfortable backpack for weekend adventures or winter day-trips where you need extra room for clothing and external gear straps and daisy chain loops for snowshoes or other gear.

GEAR CHECK
An occasional series that will review gear appropriate for hiking.

Osprey Atmos 35
A lightweight backpack that behaves like a heavyweight
Review by Josie Etsdneider

If you’re not ready to convert to a born-again light pack and cut your toothbrush handle off, then the Osprey Atmos 35 is your saving grace. Weighing in at less than three pounds, the Atmos 35 is sturdy enough to handle up to 50 pounds of gear, yet light enough to help keep costs down.

Osspriy Atmos 35
Atmos 35

Hiking Puts Demands on Your Feet: We Help Your Feet Hike Those Extra Miles
Prevention, Diagnosis & Treatment of Foot Disorders
Board Certified Podiatrist & Foot Surgeon

Dr. Howard E. Friedman
29 North Armoni Road - Suffern, NY
(845) 357-2806
www.yourfootdoc.net

10% Discount on Custom Molded Orthotics and SUPERfeet® to NY/NJ Trail Conference members with proof of membership!
Swartswood State Park Offers Year-Round Trail Pleasures

Come out and enjoy some 10 miles of trails in New Jersey’s 2,270-acre Swartswood State Park, most of which are now being maintained by the Trail Conference. Swartswood is located in the mountains of Sussex County’s Stillwater Township. Its main attraction is 519-acre Swartswood Lake, a glacial lake that reaches depths of over 50 feet. Hikers will enjoy the parks 10 named and marked trails and a variety of ecological and cultural areas.

Within the main day-use area of Swartswood is Emlen’s Path, which travels a bit less than a mile along Swartswood Lake, through hemlock groves, and out to Little Swartswood Lake.

For more solitude, try the Swartswood Natural Area. Here you will find five marked and named trails ranging in length and difficulty from 0.4 miles to 2.8 miles. The area features four rare limestone sinkhole ponds, which in tum support rare species of plants and animals, and upland communities of sugar maple, basswood, oak, hickory, and hemlock. Visitors can observe secondary succession throughout the natural area.

At the southern end of Swartswood Lake, you can hike the 1.2-mile Grist Mill Trail, past an old grist mill, along Pond Brook and Mill Pond, and through a cedar forest. Across from the grist mill is the Slate Ridge Trail, which is still under construction; when completed it will provide seasonal views of Swartswood Lake.

Away from the main parking area is the Spring Brook section. Here you will be able to hike the Willow Crest Trail out to Willow Crest Lake, along Spring Brook, with views of the Kittatinny Mountains. This 2.8-mile trail is also under construction, but is expected to be completed by this fall.

Swartswood State Park is open year round with something to do every season. All trails are also excellent for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Go for a hike and then cool off by paddling Swartswood Lake or swimming at the beach (in season). The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Stokes State Forest, High Point State Park, and Kittatinny Valley State Park are nearby. Camping is available. For updates on trail conditions and for more information, contact the park at 973-383-5230 (www.njparksoandforests.org).

Length: Six miles + one mile extension
Rating: Trails are easy to moderate

How to Get There: From Route 80, take exit 25, Route 206 north to Newton, about 12 miles. From Newton, make a left at the second traffic light (Route 206 and Spring Street) then make a left at the next light onto Route 519. Follow 519 for approximately 1/2 mile, then make a left onto Route 622 at Sussex County College sign. Follow Route 622 for about 4 1/2 miles. Turn left onto Route 619. The park entrance is about 1/2 mile south on Route 619.

Shawn Veggianno is a ranger at Swartswood, TC trail supervisor for High Point State Park, and the Mid-South Overseer for the NJ AT Committee.

BOOKNOTES

50 Hikes in New Jersey
Walks, Hikes and Backpacking Trips from the Kittatinnyns to Cape May
Scofield, Green and Zimmerman, Third Edition,
The Countryman Press, 2006
Reviewed by Maureen Edelson

Stella Green, Bruce Scofield, and Neil Zimmerman, authors of 50 Hikes in New Jersey (3rd edition) are wonderful company. I met them on a Friday, and connected quickly; they are organized and enthusiastic. By Saturday, I was enjoying Stella’s quick and witty turn of a phase, Neil’s rock-solid advice, and Bruce’s heart-to-heart ecological challenges. By Sunday afternoon, they were leading me assuredly on a delightful hike (Hike #9, Governor Mountain).

Since this is a book review, you probably realize our foursome coalesced without actually being face to face—but by reading and using 50 Hikes in New Jersey, I felt tutored and accompanied in a delightfully personal way.

Organized with requisite science, how-tos and what-fors up front, and with a fine quick-reference chart describing attributes of each hike—time, distance, elevations, suitability for kids, availability of camping, views, cross-country skiing, waterfalls, etc.—the introductory tour your toes tingling as the authors coax you with rich adjectives—“fabulous,” “stunning,” etc. These writers don’t pussyfoot around. The inclusion of new pursuits complementary to hiking (geocaching, letterboxing) and social references ( Weird New Jersey) indicates the authors’ open-mindedness and the possibility of reaching varied markets with their book.

Approximately 10 new hikes appear in this third edition, including an instant classic, the Schuber Trail in the Ramapo Mountains (Passaic/Bergen). Recent land acquisitions by the Ramapo Township and subsequent trail redevelopment by Trail Conference volunteers permit sturer hiking of this very varied, conveniently located seven-mile route.

About one-half of the book’s hikes are rated easy or easy to moderate, and nearly one-half are located south of Route 78. Very well prepared maps, captivating photography, and insights into historical and environmental issues round out the book, drawing in even an experienced ( and New York-born) reader of the hiking/trail-guide genre. I rate it a ’BUY’.

Maureen Edelson is a Trail Conference member and volunteer.

HUNTING SEASONS 2006-07
NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY

NEW YORK: Regular and Archery
Southern Zone (includes Hudson Valley and Catskills)
Regular: Nov. 18 – Dec. 10
Archery: Oct. 14 – Nov. 17

Westchester Co. (archery only)
Oct. 14 – Dec. 31
Muzzleloading Dec. 11 – Dec. 19

Suffolk Co. (archery only)
Oct. 1 – Dec. 31

For info about all hunting seasons and regulations in New York State, visit www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmt/wildlife/guide/huntseas.html

TC PROTECTS 200 ACRES continued from page 1

The Trail Conference expresses thanks to Robert Borman, the executive director of the Good Tidings Bible Conference, for his cooperation, and to Bruce O’Mara Hulbert of DEC for his work on the subdivision and survey for this parcel. As always, the Trail Conference also thanks all those members and contributors who have given to the Land Acquisition and Stewardship Fund (LASF) and helped make this and other land protection purchases by the Trail Conference possible.
November

Saturday, November 4

IRC. Sterling Ridge Trail Maintenance. Leader: Jim Costello, 973-239-9714. Meet: 9 am at south end of Sterling Ridge Trail, Rt. 511, Hewitt, NJ. Moderately strenuous. The southern 2.5 miles of this trail needs some special attention. Bring lunch, water, good working gloves, or any tools you might provide. For more information, call 908-789-7239.

UHC. Watchung Trail Maintenance. Leader: Pre-register by calling Trailside at 706-989-3761. Meet: 9:30 am for hikes to discuss and plan projects; 11:30 am for breakfast. Bring a map and your hiking shoes and clothes.

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IRC. Sterling Ridge Trail Maintenance. Leader: Jim Costello, 973-239-9714. Meet: 9 am at south end of Sterling Ridge Trail, Rt. 511, Hewitt, NJ. Moderately strenuous. The southern 2.5 miles of this trail needs some special attention. Bring lunch, water, good working gloves, or any tools you might provide. For more information, call 908-789-7239.

UHC. Watchung Trail Maintenance. Leader: Pre-register by calling Trailside at 706-989-3761. Meet: 9:30 am for hikes to discuss and plan projects; 11:30 am for breakfast. Bring a map and your hiking shoes and clothes.


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