Trail Conference Opens New Trails in the Shawangunks

Seven miles of new trails in the southern Shawangunks, constructed and blazed by Trail Conference volunteers on land acquired for preservation by the Trail Conference, are now open for hiking. The new trail routes are divided between two Ridge areas in Orange County: a five-mile loop that connects the City of Port Jervis to the “bony and scenic Lenape Ridge” (as described by TC board and crew member Malcolm Spector), and a two-mile loop in the Town of Mount Hope that links the Shawangunk Ridge Trail to an old (now closed) fire tower.

The longer loop—comprising the new Lenape Ridge and Minisink Trails—is accessible by car (see description on page 12). The two-mile loop in Mount Hope is accessible only from the Shawangunk Ridge Trail.

Jakob Franke leads the Long Path/Shawangunk Ridge Trail crew, which built the new trails and plans additional trail-building in the area this spring. (The Lenape Ridge Trail is to be extended two miles this year.) He describes both trails as “great views.” The trails are generally wooded, with some rock ledges, and offer opportunities for easy-to-moderate level hiking. The Ravine Trail in the Mount Hope section follows along a small stream. These new trails are part of an ambitious Trail Conference plan to protect the 95-mile long Shawangunk Ridge Trail corridor and link it to communities and other protected open spaces.

The Trail Conference is negotiating with the state for permission to extend the Lenape Ridge Trail through Huckleberry State Forest and a connection with the Shawangunk Ridge Trail. The Trail Conference is also working to transfer the lands it owns along the Ridge in Orange County to the state for addition to Huckleberry State Forest.

Detailed maps of the new hiking areas are not available. For more information about the new trails, please read the Favorite Hike feature on page 12.

Thanks to the following volunteers for their work on building the new trails: Judith Adams, Ken Flemer, Gely and Jakob Franke, Doug Furman, Andy Garrison, Toby Godick, Gary Haagland, Ryo Kiyan, Mike Knutson, Nikolay Kraschuk, Paul “Patagonius” Labounty, Eric and Sue Meyer, John Moran, and Malcolm Spector.

Five miles of new trail are phase one in a project that will link Port Jervis with the SRT.

Member-Get-A-Member Campaign Ends May 31

You received the email. You read the letter. You photocopied your personalized new membership referral form. But have you asked anyone to join? If not, it is time to turn your hiking friends on to the Trail Conference!

The Member-Get-A-Member campaign is off to a great start. Many of our members have gone out and asked their friends to join the Trail Conference family with great success. We are predicting a close race for the three grand prizes to be awarded at the annual meeting in June. The campaign will come to a close on May 31, 2007, so make sure you don’t miss your chance at winning the moun-

Thank you to our sponsors:
Minnewaska Lodge, Emerson Resort and Spa, Blue Ridge Mountain Sports, Dover Sports Center, EMS, Jagger’s Camp and Trail, Rock and Snow, Tent and Trails

TC Publishes New Guide to Hiking the Jersey Highlands

George Petty’s exciting new book, Hiking the Jersey Highlands, will be available about the middle of May, just in time for your spring hiking in the Highlands! Under the leadership of Ruth Rosenthal, project manager, the Trail Conference Publications Committee has produced this informative 450-page guidebook to 35 hikes in the Jersey Highlands, organized by length and difficulty, with maps and detailed descriptions to guide your hiking experience. Each hike is accompanied by a full-page map, as well as pictures illustrating the terrain and habitats covered by the hike. The book also includes a 30-page detailed description of the New Jersey section of the Highlands Trail itself—89.3 blazed miles, running from Big Beech Mountain to Black Brook Road. Another added bonus is a 16-page color insert with photographs of more than 100 wildflowers. This will assist even novices in identifying the flora that may be seen along the hikes. The hike descriptions indicate where and when these wildflowers (as well as birds, other wildlife, and interesting geologic formations) may be encountered. The book also includes sections on the history, geology, habitats, wildlife, and flora of the Highlands.

Our thanks to the many members of the Trail Conference community, including the Publications Committee, trail supervisors, maintainers, office staff, and parks people who have contributed to making this publication possible.

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There are interesting new concepts in business/economics that the Trail Conference may be wise to consider. One is described in the book *The Long Tail* by Chris Anderson. A related aspect of the topic is the idea of a book, magazine, or other publication随着时间的流逝，其对任何感兴趣字段的选择，以及对特定受众的贡献。

To summarize Anderson’s message: Commerce, particularly e-commerce, is no longer so heavily driven by “hits” like the top best-sellers and the 80/20 rule (80% of your business comes from 20% of your products). Instead, a significant part of the total business is in the “long tail” of niche products. Amazon and iTunes are examples where an incredible choice of products—from best-sellers to niche items—is available to anyone via e-commerce. Physical book stores do not have the ability to carry the vast array of book titles that are available online. But electronic ordering (and in some cases, electronic distribution) means that even a niche book can have the same availability as a best-seller. Trail Conference publications are examples of niche market products. Ours is a small publishing account, offering books and maps of interest primarily to a special interest group within a defined region. Large book or outdoors stores want to minimize the number of accounts they have to deal with. Thus they do business with distributors, who, more often than not, are national companies with no interest in regional products. Furthermore, the stores have limited shelf space and a regional product might not fit in with what they are carrying. Our mission is to ensure that “long tail” of the publishing business. With these constraints, and the fact that so many people order books via the internet, we must work to ensure that our products are visible online. One component that drives sales in the “long tail” is the use of recommendations and reviews. For example, on Amazon.com, people can submit a review of a book or a list of books on a topic. Others can comment on those reviews. All reviewers and commentators should weigh the positive economic contributions that the Front Conference has drive the economic engine. The donated reviews on Amazon.com drive sales. Both Anderson and I would not support this type of donation the “gift economy.”

The Trail Conference may not be able to compete with major publishers for shelf space for our books, but we can make sure our niche products are visible online in the long tail. Visibility is driven by search engines and by the reviews and recommendations that draw attention to our products. So become part of the gift economy and become an online reviewer! If you have questions or would like to let us know you are helping, please contact me at boardchair@nynjtc.org.

– Jane Daniels, Chair, Board of Directors

Board Chair Jane Daniels presented the Paul Leikin Extra Mile Award to Ann and the William Hoeferlin Award to John. (The Leikin Award is made to those volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to a 3.5 year project such as a book, map, or advocacy project. The Hoeferlin Award recognizes Trail Conference volunteers who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.)

Ann Grob volunteered for trails, but not necessarily for long trails, yet had pick-axe and shovel. She was a regular helper in the TC office, both in Mahwah and, earlier, in New York City (to which she commuted from her home in Morristown). For years Ann served as a “volunteer” volunteer administrator. She was invaluable in organizing files and equipment when the Trail Conference moved from New York to New Jersey. She planned and supervised the preparation, servicing, and cleanup of several Annual Meetings and other special events. Ann organized abilities and dedication will be sorely missed.

John Grob was a Trail Conference trail steward for decades. Unfortunately for our region and the hiking community, in late April they moved permanently from Morristown, NJ, to Florida. Rather than wait until the Annual Meeting in October to acknowledge with awards the Grob’s outstanding contributions, the Trail Conference Board of Directors voted to honor them before they headed south.

In March, at a small dinner event, Board Chair Jane Daniels presented the Paul Leikin Extra Mile Award to Ann and the William Hoeferlin Award to John. (The Leikin Award is made to those volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to a 3.5 year project such as a book, map, or advocacy project. The Hoeferlin Award recognizes Trail Conference volunteers who have demonstrated exemplary service to trail maintenance, management, and/or trail land protection.)

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There is something deliciously renewing about spring hiking. The upris- ing into the unfurling leaves of the forest feels like it is moving straight through the silent and severely beautiful, snow-covered woodlands of a few months ago. For the enthusiasts among us, spring is just another season in the hiking life, part of the merry-go-round of opportunities to explore the out-of-doors. But I imagine there are many others who, due to time, personal responsibilities, and other con- straints, may let this season pass without sampling its pleasures.

For those of you in this latter category, I must be a scold. Get outside and do it now! If you are reading this, you are most likely a member/supporter of the Trail Conference’s efforts to provide high quality hiking opportunities for all to enjoy. But if you are not enjoying those opportunities yourself, well, plan your next hike and do it now!

If your schedule is like mine, you need to get out your calendar and set aside a date certain for a hike (and don’t forget an alternate bad weather date, too). Check out the organized hikes that our member organizations offer. The sampling of hikes offered to the public in the Hikers’ Almanac is just the tip of the iceberg. Our 100+ member organizations (listed at www.nynjtc.org/clubs.html) do a superb job of programming outdoor excursions to satisfy every taste.

Bring a friend hiking. We need more people to appreciate the new open space that has been acquired with public funds. More people need to vicerously enjoy our public open space if we are to continue to add to the inventory and manage it wisely. Avoid hikers are strong advocates for quali- ty-of-life issues. (And, while we are talking about hiking with friends, don’t forget to sign friends up as Trail Conference mem- bers through our Member-Get-A-Member program and qualify for prizes. See page 1 for details.)

With a spring hike(s) firmly in your calendar, you should be in a self-congratulatory mood. Perhaps you are also in the mood to be of service, to contribute to the hiking community. If so, then do we have some deals for you!

Please check our website for Trail Crew schedules (Click on Trail Crews/Work Trips in the navigation bar on the left of the home page). Work trips involve hands-on learning from experienced crew members, Trail University workshops at Bear Mountain (and elsewhere) provide more formal training, but hands-on learn- ing from experienced instructors is still the key. If you are interested in working with rocks, large and small, this is a good place to go. (See www.nynjtc.org/workshops.)

And rocks and trails aren't your thing, learn how to identify and monitor invasive species in our Volunteer Invasive Plant Survey (see page 7).

Almost every day during April, May, and most of June, there is a workshop and/or a work trip being offered somewhere in the region. This is wonderful way to learn some new skills, make the acquaintance of fun and dedicated people, and gain a much deeper appreciation for the care needed to build and maintain quality hiking trails.

I guarantee that a day in field will both provide you with a more profound connec- tion to nature and, through the trails you create, help to connect other people to nature. Whether it is through recreational hiking or active service, don’t let this season pass without enjoying the out-of-doors experience that your Trail Conference membership supports. See you there!

– Ed Goodell, goodell@nynjtc.org

Let’s not be too busy to enjoy the fruits of our labors. Get out and enjoy a hike—now!
A short new trail at Idlewild Park Preserve in Queens takes walkers to a salt marsh and opportunities to enjoy an abundance of wildlife, particularly migratory birds. At the invitation of park administrator Barbara Brown, more than 30 volunteers, including the Trail Conference's Metro Trail Crew, cut a quarter-mile long, eight-foot wide swath through tall grass to the marsh and another path around a pond on the site.

The marsh trail provides access for the public, particularly for young students who frequent the park on field trips and take water and soil samples. It must be maintained at eight-foot wide so that guardians can see all changes while hiking or on the trail. The crew has also been asked to help build a bridge in the park, a National Park Service Rivers and Trails project that is scheduled to get underway this year.

Idlewild Park Preserve is a Forever Wild Management Area of the New York City Parks Department. It comprises 187 level acres just north of JFK Airport. The Environmental Action Coalition at Adelphi University currently maintains the new marsh trail.

For more information about the interested organizations, go to http://nycgovparks.org.
New to Trail Work? Join the West Jersey Crew on their Try-a-Trail-Crew workdays!

On May 5, May 19, and June 2, the West Jersey Crew welcomes any one who is interested in trail crew work to come see what it is all about! These are regularly scheduled work days where we invite newcomers to the trail for training. No experience is required; training, tools and fun are provided! Check the Crew Schedule for details. For more information and to register, contact Dave and Monica Day at westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.com.

C & A Thanks...

The Conservation & Advocacy staff would like to recognize and thank these individuals:

- Ed Gallo, President of Omnicare Inc., for donating a much needed map hanger for all our maps.
- Chris Connolly, Trail Conference Board Member and Counsel, for patiently wading through all our archived files and identifying the important documents.
- Our New Jersey and New York advocacy committee volunteers for attending public hearings, writing letters, and making phone calls to support us in our advocacy work.

May - June 2007

Unleashed

Teaching Practical Skills to Trails Volunteers at Locations Throughout the NY-NJ Area

Unless otherwise noted, requests by contacting: Heidi Adami, Volunteer Coordinator, at 201-512-9348 ext. 26, adami@nyntc.org.

May 13 (Sunday)
TU 186 Stone Step Construction @ Bear Mountain
Using natural and cut stone, participants in this workshop will build a stone staircase using a cut-and-rough-nack-back method. This workshop is designed for all skill levels. Register by May 7. No fee.

June 2 (Saturday, National Trails Day)
TU 187 Trail Maintenance101 @ Porto Jervis
This one-day training session teaches maintenance techniques, trail standards, and what problems to expect on the trail and how to deal with them. If you are interested in becoming a maintainer or enhancing your maintenance skills, this is the perfect workshop for you. No previous experience is necessary and beginners are welcome. Students will spend the morning in a classroom environment and then head out into woods for a hands-on exercise. No fee.

June 3 (Sunday)
TU 188 Turnpikes / Causeway Construction @ Bear Mountain
In this workshop participants will learn how to build raised earthen roadways as a means to create dry and durable trails across wet areas. Turnpikes (a.k.a. Causeways or Rock boxes) are an alternative to stepping stones, punchboards, and boardwalks and, as participants in this workshop will find out, they are relatively easy to build. This is a perfect workshop for first-time trail workers. Register by May 28. No fee.

Trail Crew Schedules

May - June 2007

For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nyntc.org and click on “Trail crews/Woof trips.”

“TBD” = To Be Determined

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

NEW JERSEY WEEKEND CREW
Leader: Sandy Panz, 732-489-5109
Tackle a variety of projects ranging from trail repair to bridge building in northern New Jersey. Trips start at 9:30am; call for location and details during the week before the scheduled trip day. To be included, email name, phone number and email address to Sandy Panz, s面板ubom@adelphia.net.

Second Saturday of each month thereafter

NEW JERSEY WEEKEND CREW
Leader: John Moran, johnmoran@earthlink.net
This crew will cover the NJ Ramapo, Ringwood S. P., Northwest NJ, and NJ Palisades, among other areas. Its purpose is to respond quickly to immediate needs, rather than to schedule definite events far in advance. If you are interested in being on call for this work, contact John Moran by email.

WEST JERSEY TRAIL CREW
Leader: Monica Day
Phone: 732-937-9098 Cell: 908-307-5049
Email: westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.com
Website: www.trailstobuild.com
All tools, materials and training will be provided.

All events begin at 8am. There is usually a walk to the work site, so please be there on time. Call or email leaders for meeting place details and other questions. Rain cancels – if in doubt, call leaders between 6 and 6:30 that morning.

May 5 (Saturday)
Warren Trail, Jenny Jump State Park
Try a Trail Crew Day!
We will be working on constructing the reinforced side-hill tread for the trail at its junction Jenny Jump Mountain near Rt. 611.
Meeting place: Scenic overlook on Highway 611

May 19 (Saturday)
Warren Trail, Jenny Jump State Park
Try a Trail Crew Day!
We will continue work constructing a reinforced side-hill tread for the trail as it descends Jenny Jump Mountain near Rt. 611.
Meeting place: Scenic overlook on Highway 611

June 2 (Saturday)
Warren Trail, Jenny Jump State Park
Try a Trail Crew Day!
We will continue work constructing the new side-hill tread for the trail as it descends Jenny Jump Mountain near Rt. 611.
Meeting place: Scenic overlook on Highway 611

June 9 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain
Leader: Claudia Ganz

June 14 (Thursday)
Major Welch Trail, Bear Mountain State Park Leader: Bob Marshall

June 16 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain Leader: Chris Ezro

June 23 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain Leader: Brian Buchbinder

WEST HUDSON SOUTH CREW
Leaders: Chris Ezro (Crew Chief); 516-431-1148, musiciannumbers@bklyn.nycap.com
Brian Buchbinder: 201-219-7563, buchbinder@redovision.com
Claudia Ganz: 212-639-1204, claganz@earthlink.net
Robert Marshall: 914-727-4792, rmarshall@verizon.net

May 10 (Thursday)
Pipe Meadow Extension, Bear Mountain State Park Leader: Marshall

May 12 (Saturday)
Pipe Meadow Extension, Bear Mountain State Park Leader: Monica Day

May 19 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain Leader: Chris Ezro

June 9 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain Leader: Claudia Ganz

June 14 (Thursday)
Major Welch Trail, Bear Mountain State Park Leader: Bob Marshall

June 16 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain Leader: Chris Ezro

June 23 (Saturday)
Appalachian Trail, West Mountain Leader: Brian Buchbinder

NEW JERSEY APPALACHIAN TRAIL FIELD CREW
Leader: Gene Giordano, trailwork@appalachiantrail-nj.org
Email Gene Giordano if you would like to be placed on email notification list.

Second Saturday of each month through November
Work begins at 9am and is finished by 4pm. Covers the entire NJ section of the AT, blue-blazed side trails, and shelters. Supplements work by individual maintainers as requested and for special work projects. Workers bring gloves, lunch, and water; all tools, equipment and training provided.

Bear Mountain Trails Project
Contact: Heidi Adami, adami@njtc.org, or 201-512-9348, ext. 26

Every Friday through Tuesday
In addition to the work trips below, crews are active Fridays through Tuesdays. Individuals as well as organized groups are welcome, regardless of experience level. To get involved, register online or contact the Trail Conference Office at 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

May 12 (Saturday)
Women’s Worktrip, Beginner Level

May 13 (Sunday)
Women’s Worktrip, Intermediate Level

June 17 (Sunday)
Family Day (easy project) Join your Dad on the trail on Father’s Day! "Family Day" is open to all, with work specifically geared to the next generation.

Among this season’s projects: replacing this bridge on the Stilliman Trail in Storm King State Park.

May 2 (Saturday)
Stilliman Trail Bridge, Storm King State Park Bring in materials, set decking and rails. Meet: 9:30, Mountain Road parking lot
June 16 (Sunday)
Stilliman Trail Bridge, Storm King State Park Build side-trestle for stairs. Meet: 9:30, Mountain Road parking lot
June 23 & 24 (Saturday, Sunday)
Stilliman Trail Bridge, Storm King State Park Build side-trestle for stairs. Meet: 9:30, Mountain Road parking lot

EAST HUDSON CREW
If you are coming by train, let the train leader know so we will meet there.

Leaders: Michael Bompere, 914-788-0616, michaelbompere@optonline.net
Josie Gray, 845-831-5766, jospi@vortex.net
Alan King, 914-793-9643, alking@msn.com

May 12 (Sunday)
Hudson Highlands State Park Leader: Joe Gindoff

June 2 (Saturday)
Hudson Highlands State Park Leader: Alan King

NEW JERSEY APPALACHIAN TRAIL FIELD CREW
Leader: Gene Giordano, trailwork@appalachiantrail-nj.org
Email Gene Giordano if you would like to be placed on email notification list.

Second Saturday of each month through November
Work begins at 9am and is finished by 4pm. Covers the entire NJ section of the AT, blue-blazed side trails, and shelters. Supplements work by individual maintainers as requested and for special work projects. Workers bring gloves, lunch, and water; all tools, equipment and training provided.

May 19 (Saturday)
Stilliman Trail Bridge, Storm King State Park Cut wood for bridge and stairs. Meet: 9:30, Mountain Road parking lot
If you are interested in volunteering with the TC and do not see an opportunity that suits you, contact Heidi Adami, either by email, volunteer@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 their assigned 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. Contact: Heidi Adami, volunteer@nynjtc.org, or 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitor
Looking to get off the beaten path? 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, logging, ATVs, etc.; assisting Corridor Manager in handling problems discovered, and meeting trail neighbors and easement holders annually. Contact: Heidi Adami, volunteer@nynjtc.org, or 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

Can You Spare a Few Hours a Week?
Join the fun at our Mahwah 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 sales, we need your help. The Trail Conference prides itself on front desk to help answer phones, assist with some flexibility. Contact: Brenda Holzinger, holzinger@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 11.

Appalachian Trail Natural Heritage Monitors
Every summer and fall, Trail Conference volunteers head out to selected sites along the AT to monitor rare, threatened, or endangered plant species. Similar to trail maintainers, the AT natural heritage moni tors visit the sites assigned to them at least twice per year. We are seeking new volunteers to participate in this project! Interested persons should contact Heidi Adami, volunteer@nynjtc.org, or 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

Event Planner
Are you a good host/hostess? Do you enjoy bringing people together for festive food, and fun? If so, the Trail Conference needs your planning expertise to assist in the coordination of recognition events and Delegate meetings. As an event planner you will help locate and secure the venue, organize the catering, and coordinate activities such as hikes. Contact: Joshua Howard at josh@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 13.

Outreach Representatives Needed!
Outreach representatives are needed to attend health fairs, work at information tables, and share information about the Trail Conference to the public. If you are interested in bringing new people to the Trail Conference and informing the public of our work, please contact Katy Duter at kduter@nynjtc.org.

Conservation & Advocacy
Map Organizer
We seek a creative and organized volunteer to organize our map collection. We have a newly donated hanging-map holder and at least 50 maps that need to be labeled, organized, and hung. Many of these maps are ones created by the Trail Conference that we use regularly in the course of our conservation and advocacy work. We need help putting them into a user friendly organizational format! This is a one-time project with an estimated completion time of about 25 hours. Contact: Brenda Holzinger, holzinger@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 25.

Conservation & Advocacy
Paralegal/Legal Administrator
We seek a volunteer with some legal background who could assist CA&A staff with administrative support in the office. Specifically, we have real property tax work and other tasks associated with land acquisition and stewardship, but there are also many other tasks that occur regularly. Ideally, we would like a volunteer who is able to work independently and commit to a regular weekly or biweekly time slot with some flexibility. Contact: Brenda Holzinger, holzinger@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 25.

Conservation & Advocacy
Stewardship Organizer
We seek a volunteer or intern to create and organize “field binders” for properties owned by the Trail Council. This position will require organizing some existing files, extracting the important information for the field binder, and visiting the properties as part of our general stewardship activities. This is a great summer project that will allow you to hike Trail Conference properties along the Shawangunk Ridge Trail and the Long Path. Contact: Brenda Holzinger, holzinger@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 25.

Conservation & Advocacy
Archivist
We seek a volunteer or intern to index our archives. We have approximately 25 boxes of archived files that need to be indexed. Some boxes need to be better organized, but some boxes are ready to be indexed. This is a one-time project with an estimated completion time of about 25 hours. Contact: Brenda Holzinger, holzinger@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 25.

Front Desk Volunteer
The Trail Conference prides itself on being a resource for hikers in our area. We provide information and support in so many ways, including by phone call and the availability to walk in to our Mahwah office and talk with people about hiking. To ensure we can provide these services we need your help. The Trail Conference is seeking “trail smart” people to work at our front desk to help answer phones, assist walk-in customers and volunteers with other office duties. We specifically need folks on Mondays and late afternoons most week days.

ADK Mid-Hudson
April 21, 2007 offered some tough choices for members of the Adirondack Mountain Club, Mid-Hudson Chapter (ADK-MH). There was a hike on the AT in Duchess County to Nuclear Lake, or trail work on the AT at Bear Mountain in Rockland; there was a paddle on the Wallkill River in Ulster County or a clean-up of a park on the Hudson River in Orange County; there was a weekend backpack in Pennsylvania or one in a series of bridge-building days scheduled for the RPT Shelter on the AT in Hopewell Junction. Admittedly, the ADK-MH’s Earth Day agenda was busier than usual. Still, Lalita Malik, the club’s current president, notes that typically two outings are scheduled each weekend, with another offered on one weekend during the spring, a core of volunteers lead outings for teenagers in a program developed by the club and now administered by the local Cornell Cooperative Extension Duchess County 4-H Youth Development Program.
This year the club celebrated its 60th anniversary. Its membership, based primarily in Duchess, Ulster, and Columbia Counties, is growing and numbers about 700, with another 260 associate members (ADK members in other chapters who pay an additional small fee to get the Mid-Hudson chapter’s quarterly newsletter). Outings focus on hikes, paddles, backpacks, and trail work. There are monthly meetings when education mixes with socialization. There is a young members group. And there is an active conservation committee.
ADK-MH provides the volunteers who maintain mountain trails in Orange County. Duchess County and an adjoining section in Connecticut. They are helping to build new trails in a new park owned by the Scenic Hudson overlooking the Hudson River in Ulster County. They are supporting the Bear Mountain Trails Project by scheduling club work trips to the site. Ms. Malik is proud of the club’s level of activity. “We are not only enjoying the outdoors, but also teaching others. We could use people to help us with our projects. Some box need to be better organized, but some boxes are ready to be indexed. This is a one-time project with an estimated completion time of about 25 hours. Contact: Larry Wheelock, wheelock@nynjtc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 16.

Volunteer Classifieds: Get Involved!
Want to contribute to the fun and learning at the Trail Conference? Volunteer opportunities are available for all ages and interests. To volunteer, visit www.nynjtc.org/volunteer or contact Liz at bleiweiss@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 16.
Butterflies along the Trail
By David Moskowitz

A late spring or summer walk along the Appalachian Trail offers a wonderful opportunity to observe butterflies. Finding butterflies really pretty early in the year, you get to know a little about their basic behaviors and train yourself to be observant.

First, know that butterflies prefer sunny, warm and calm days, so clouds, rain, or wind will diminish your chances of finding them. Although some butterflies may be obvious as they fly around, others will be inconspicuous as they perch quietly on the trail or in nearby vegetation. Many butterflies are cryptically colored or camouflaged, designed to blend in seamlessly with the environment to avoid predators. Some butterflies are large and fly quickly in the tree canopy, and others are small and fly weakly through low grasses.

The greater the variety of habitats that you visit, the greater the variety of species of butterflies you are likely to find. A trail such as the Appalachian Trail may cross from upland woods to forested wetlands, to streams and meadows, barnen rooks, and heaver swamps in a relatively short stretch. Each habitat offers the chance to see different butterflies.

There are seasonal considerations to butterflies watching as well. Warm days in early spring are the realm of butterflies like the Mourning Cloak, the Comma, the Question Mark, and the Spring Azure. The first three spend the winter as adults, waiting for a warm spring day to emerge from the shelter of piece of bark or rotten log or tree hollow. The Spring Azure winters as a chrysalis. Among the compounds found in the blood of some butterflies are glycerol and sorbitol, which act as natural antifreezes, allowing the insects to hibernate through the cold winter months. As the days get warmer, and spring progresses into summer, more and more butterflies are on the wing, and finding 20 species or more on a day hike would not be a surprise at all.

It is also time to see butterflies on the trail for one of North America’s newest described species, the Appalachian Tiger Swallowtail. Although suspected for some time as being a unique species, this butterfly was only recently separated from the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail based on technical characteristics and DNA analysis. It is now thought to be the more common of the two tiger swallowtails in early spring and can be distinguished from the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail by its much larger size. At present, it is thought to be more common in the southern Appalachians, but its northern limits are not yet known, providing a wonderful opportunity for everyone to aid science through careful observations about the locations and times it is seen.

The two butterflies are unmistakable – they are bright yellow, with black stripes, and are nearly as large as a hand.

A trail hike may also offer a glimpse into two common butterfly behaviors: hill top ping and puddling. Hill-topping describes the tendency of many butterflies to ascend slopes and gather on high points on the landscape, like hikers seeking great views. In the case of butterflies, hill topping is thought to ease their hunger for nectar.

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In recent years, butterfly watching has been enhanced by inexpensive close - focusing binoculars and wonderful photo - graph - based field guides. These have largely replaced the traditional tools of nets and killing jars. I guarantee, that once you start looking for butterflies and begin to notice how common they are along these trails, “flying flowers” and “winged jewels” will add a wonderful dimension to your hike.

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Recommended Reading:

Butterflies through Binoculars: The East A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Eastern North America by Jeff Galssberg

Bionoculars101.com Choosing Binoculars for Butterfly Watching www.bionoculars101.com
a young hiker enjoys a reflective moment at Silvermine Lake in Bear Mountain State Park.

Birthing at Jamaica Bay, New York. Leader: George Pitcher, 732-253-9042. This is an easy 1.5-mile birthing walk along the west pond of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. You have now found pure snow, spruce, tangles, trees, twigs, and snow. Bring lunch and water.

Tuesday, May 17

Lake Skanatati, Harriman State Park, New York. Leader: Dave Hogenauer, 973-794-4757. Meet at 9am at Lake Skanatati parking lot. 8 miles of moderately fast pace; for experienced hikers, over Peak Singing Mtns., then around up our Black Rock Mt. and return to the trailhead. Bring lunch and water.

Saturday, May 19

Johns Hopkins, Tenafly Nature Center, Tenafly, New Jersey. Leader: Terry Stimson, 973-968-5572. Meet at 9am at Tenafly Nature Center parking lot, 2 miles of moderately fast pace; for experienced hikers.

A hike, suitable for most all.

The activities listed are sponsored by members of the NJ Youth Trail Club. All activities are welcome subject to club regulations and rules of the Trail. You are responsible for your own safety. Hiking near streams is discouraged. Bring food, water and warm clothing. Full refund will be given if the hike is cancelled due to inclement weather or the right and responsibility to cancel any activity whenever it becomes impossible to cancel the hike or is not adequately equipped. Easy, moderate, or strenuous hikes are routine calls for hikes.

More than 90 clubs belong to the NJ Youth Trail Club, and many of its affiliate groups sponsor hikes not listed in the Heartland. For a description of club hikes, contact your nearest NJ Youth Trail Club office or those with a Y in the specialty code for your Y Trail Club.

Club Codes

Lakeland, New Jersey.


Delaware Water Gap, Long Pond. Leader: Erik Spier, 973-968-3203. Meet at 9am at Long Pond Trailhead, 5 miles of moderately fast pace; for experienced hikers, through forest and up over Blue Mountain. Bring lunch and water.

Wednesday, May 23

South Mountain Reservation, Millburn, New Jersey. Leader: Frank Bullock, 973-968-5495. Meet at 9am at visitor center parking lot. 8 miles at moderately fast pace; for experienced hikers, explore some rocky areas.

A hiker enjoys a reflective moment at Silvermine Lake in Bear Mountain State Park.

Birthing at Jamaica Bay, New York. Leader: George Pitcher, 732-253-9042. This is an easy 1.5-mile birthing walk along the west pond of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. You have now found pure snow, spruce, tangles, trees, twigs, and snow. Bring lunch and water.

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Club Codes

Lakeland, New Jersey.

Hikers’ Marketplace

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

Please order by clicking price

Retail

Member

F/P Total

Official Conference Maps

Catkill Trails (2005) & see combo

$14.95 $11.21 +$3.00

East Hudson Trails (2006)

$10.95 $8.21 +$1.20

Harriman-Bear Mountain Map series (2005) & see combo

$15.95 $11.96 +$3.00

Hudson Palisades Trails (2005)

$8.95 $6.71 +$1.20

Kittaliany Trails (2005) & see combo

$12.95 $9.71 +$3.00

NEW! North Jersey Trails (2007)

$9.95 $7.46 +$1.20

Shawangunk Trails (2005) & see combo

$12.95 $9.71 +$3.00

South Taconic Trails (2006)

$4.95 $3.71 +$0.80

Sterling Forest Trails (2005)

$7.95 $5.95 +$1.00

West Hudson Trails (2005)

$8.95 $6.71 +$1.20

Books

NEW! Hiking the Jersey Highlands (2007)

$22.95 $17.21 +$3.00

New York Walk Book (2006) & see combo

$22.95 $17.21 +$3.00

New Jersey Walk Book (2004) & see combo

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00


$11.95 $8.96 +$2.50

Day Walker (2002)

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00

Harriman Trails Guide (1999) & see combo

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00

Hiking Long Island (2003)

$19.95 $14.96 +$5.00


$8.95 $6.71 +$2.50

Kittaliany Trails (2004) & see combo

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00


$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00

NEW! Scenic Routes & Walks in the Northern Shawangunks (2006) & see combo

$13.95 $10.60 +$3.00

Health Hikes for seniors (1994)

$5.95 $4.66 +$1.20


$12.95 $9.71 +$3.00

Nature Walks in New Jersey (2002) & see combo

$15.95 $11.96 +$3.00


$19.95 $14.96 +$5.00

ADK Catskill Trails (2005) & see combo

$19.95 $14.96 +$5.00

ADK Catskill Day Hikes for All Seasons (2002)

$12.95 $9.71 +$3.00

Catskills: A Ranger’s Guide to the High Peaks

$14.95 $11.21 +$3.00


$14.95 $11.21 +$3.00


$14.95 $11.21 +$3.00

Southwestern Catskills (2000)

$14.95 $11.21 +$3.00

Moore Take a Hike NYC (2006)

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00


$13.95 $10.45 +$3.50

50 Hikes in the Lowland Catskill Valley (2006)

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00

50 Hikes in New Jersey (2006)

$16.95 $12.71 +$4.00

Best Hikes w/ Children in New Jersey (2005)

$15.95 $11.96 +$3.00

Best Hikes w/ Children in the Catskills & Hudson River Valley (2002)

$14.95 $11.21 +$3.00

Hudson to Delaware: The Great Valley (2004)

$75.00 $56.25 +$18.75

Combos-Packs

Catskill (5-map set & AKC book)

$30.35 $22.69 +$7.00

Harriman (2-map set & book)

$23.40 $17.55 +$5.85

NY & N.J Walk Books

$38.60 $29.05 +$9.55

ADK Catskill (3-map series & Scenic & Walks book)

$27.80 $20.85 +$6.95

Kittaliany (4-map set & book)

$24.95 $19.46 +$5.49

The Personal Touch

Note Cards: TC Collection

Long-sleeve Denim Shirt: Circle: S M L XL

Polo Shirt (Forest Green): Circle: S M L XL

Hammap NEW! Bandanna

$6.95 $5.21 +$1.85

Conference Logo Patch

$2.95 $2.25 postpaid

$2.75 $2.25 postpaid

Conference Logo Decal

$1.25 $1.00 postpaid

Subtotal

Postage/handling from above

New Jersey residents add 7% tax

TOTAL ENCLOSED $
New Charitable Giving Opportunity Available in 2007 Only!

There is a new and exciting method for members to support the Trail Conference, made possible by the Pension Protection Act of 2006. The Pension Protection Act permits individuals age 70½ and older to make charitable gifts up to $100,000 directly from a traditional or Roth IRA to a qualified 501(c)(3) organization, such as the Trail Conference. Not only will such a gift not generate taxable federal income, but the gift does not incur estate tax liability, and it may satisfy some or all of your annual required minimum distribution. There is only one catch—the gift must be made before the end of 2007.

You may choose to make an unrestricted gift from your Traditional IRA, you may designate your gift for a specific program, such as land acquisition or trail building. Of course, like any other contribution, it will be tax-deductible and increase the memory of a special person, or it can commemorate a special event.

Here’s how it works:

1. Open a new bank account at Commerce Bank.
2. Make the required minimum distribution from your IRA to Commerce Bank.
3. Commerce Bank will transfer the gift to the Trail Conference.
4. Your account will be linked to the Trail Conference, and you will begin receiving annual cash donations.

Like most nonprofit organizations, the Trail Conference is dependent on the generosity of its members. Although we derive significant income from our membership dues and financial sales of our publications, these sources cover only a small portion of our expenses. We rely on voluntary contributions from our valued members—like you—to balance our budget.

Remember, you have only until the end of 2007 to take advantage of this special opportunity! Take advantage of the 2006 Pension Protection Act and make a substantial contribution to the Trail Conference. Of course, to better understand the financial consequences of such a gift, you should first contact your financial advisor, attorney, and/or accountant.

For more information, contact Joshua Howard, director of membership and development at josh@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 13.
GEAR CHECK

As an occasional series that will review gear appropriate for hiking.

Mountainsmith’s Dog Tippin’ Kit
Reviewed by Josh Howard and Koda

According to the folks at Mountainsmith, the Dog Tippin’ Kit “contains all of the necessities to take your hound backpacking with you.” They should have clarified that statement by indicating that it would be a First Class trip for your pooch. I’ve done a lot of hiking with my dog Koda. Including a thru-hike of the AT, we’ve hiked more than 3,000 miles together! Until she had the Dog Tippin’ kit, she was roughing it in the backcountry.

I’ve always followed the golden rule of hiking; everyone carries their own gear. After having Koda try several different saddle bags I bought from pet stores, and losing two or three pairs along the way from poor fits, I came across the Mountainsmith Dog Tippin’ kit. Its pack, which comes in three sizes, was adjustable to fit my 60-pound Shepherd/Ridgeback, Greyhound, Labrador mutt. The fleece-lined chest harness prevents painful rubbing and the large saddle bags swallowed up her food, bowl, and some of my extra gear. The saddle bags are durable and can take a beating. After six weeks of hiking, and over 1,000 miles, they were still in great shape.

Before we got the kit, Koda would take a few hours trying to find her bed for the night. She would often end up sleeping in a bed of leaves or sneaking onto the corner of my mattress pad when I was off getting water. On a recent trip to the Catskills, when the temperature dropped into the teens, Koda stayed warm by curling up on her fleece-lined dog bed next to my sleeping bag (not on it!).

The rest of the pieces that come with the kit performed equally well. The food and water bowls are durable, and the drawstring on the food bowl is great to keep Ziplocs of food from rolling around the large pockets on the saddlebags.

In short, the Mountainsmith Dog Tippin’ kit is a great all-inclusive pack-supply to man’s best friend and hiking partner with the gear needed to comfortably bag our favorite peaks.

Rating: 5 paws out of 5

BOOK REVIEW

Saving Sterling Forest
The Epic Struggle to Preserve New York’s Highlands

As much as I eagerly awaited my review copy of Saving Sterling Forest, I approached reading and writing a review of this book with some anxiety as well. Having played a small role in the preservation of the forest as Highland Co-Chair of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, I was concerned that the author might have to gloss over certain aspects of this long and dramatic battle in order to fit the story into 174 pages of text.

I’m pleased to say that I needn’t have worried. Ann Botshon, who was a veteran New York activist and Coordinator for the Wallkill River Task Force, takes us from the area’s colonial-era iron mining days right up to 2004 and the mergers to preserve the last 575 acres in Sterling Forge, known as the “hole in the doughnut.” Sadly, Ann passed away in September of 2004 and did not get to see the purchase of that land, but she has left us this story, finished just months before her death, as her legacy.

Beginning with the Sterling Forest Corporation’s 1971 proposal to construct a city of 80,000 people in the middle of 20,000 forested acres on the New York-New Jersey border, this is a political and land use case study that involves all levels of government in two states, key land use issues (sprawl, the ratables chase, home rule, regional planning, grassroots organizing, watershed protection, state environmental regulations, the value of contiguous forest, endangered species), and a full cast of memorable characters: Governors Pataki, Cuomo, Florio, and Whitman; Lou Heimbach and Robert Thomson of the Corporation; Senators Bill Bradley and Frank Lautenberg, and Representatives Maurice Hinchey, Ben Gilman, Peter Kostmayer, Bob Torricelli, and Lange Rouskema, not to mention the dozens of dedicated environmentalists involved.

Trail Conference readers will recognize our former executive director, JoAnn Dolan, and her husband, Paul, as two stalwarts who helped organize the grassroots opposition in the very beginning and are still active on Sterling Forest issues today. Ann hits all the high and low notes along the way, including:

• 1988-94: Passaic County, NJ, condemns 2,100 acres in New Jersey.
• October 1989: Peter Kostmayer holds hearings in Turned, NY.
• 1993: Public-Private Partnership group of environmental groups and PIPCs forms.
• 1995: 700 residents and experts attended four hearings in Turned, Warwick, and Monroe to comment on the 5,000-page Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS).
• 1995-96: House and Senate Republicans try to sink the Sterling Forest legislation by tying it to several land swaps in Oklahoma, Utah, and Alaska, but Senator Bradley fights them off.
• March 1996: Newt Gingrich (yes, shut Newt Gingrich) travels to the Wareup and 46-salvation Reservoirs in Ringwood and West Millford to announce his support for the federal funding of Sterling Forest.
• October 1996: Senator Bradley signs the bill for $17.5 million out of the total purchase price of $55 million as “his last deal and his last vote on his last day in the Senate.”

Ms. Botshon also doesn’t shy away from some of the controversial issues that surfaced during this long battle; for example, the in-fighting between some of the New Jersey groups over spending resources on a New York property, or the environmental community’s frustration over the partial acquisition of the forest in 1998.

Most of all, she has captured the spirit and the details of this 30-year campaign to save 21,000 acres of open space. I recommend it as a book you will want to buy, read, and keep as a source of inspiration when local land issues look bleak.

By Ann Botshon
State University of New York Press, 2007
Reviewed by William P. O’Hearn

Newt Gingrich travels to the...
Two new trails in the southern Shawangunks (see page 1) add seven miles of trekking options for hikers. Particularly exciting is the fact that a new five-mile loop just east of Port Jervis is accessible not only by car, but also via Metro North to Port Jervis and a connecting 1.5 to 2-mile walk along the Delaware River Heritage Trail in the city. (Read about the Mount Hope Shawangunk Ridge Trail side loop on page 4.)

Lenape Ridge & Minisink Trails

This new five-mile loop lies east of the Neversink River, between Interstate 84 to the south and the Metro-North Railroad line to Port Jervis to the north on land previously acquired by the Trail Conference. The new trail, which is to be extended by another two miles this year, provides a link between the City of Port Jervis and Hackleberry State Forest. It is hoped that eventually the trail will connect with the Shawangunk Ridge Trail (SRT) north of Limekiln Road.

The hike: From Minisink Ave./Old Greenville Turnpike, the LRT follows an old woods road for a short distance before turning right, into the woods. In another 0.2 mile, there is junction with the red-blazed Minisink Trail. The MT parallels the LRT, and reconnects with it in just over 2 miles. It can be your return route to make this a loop hike.

Take the white-blazed LRT on your right. Soon you climb a moderate slope to a ridge that provides great views of the Shawangunks (and I-84) to the east, with High Point Monument in New Jersey clearly visible to the south. The trail follows the ridge for the next two miles. Steep slabs of slate-like rock along the way are popular areas for fossil hunting. You will look down on Heinlein Pond and continue until close to a power line, where the LRT and MT relink to complete their circuit.

Turn left on the Minisink Trail and return. The trail traverses a lower ridge that affords great views west of the Neversink and Delaware River Valley. Once in a while, the trail dips down close to the road.

Access by trail: From the Port Jervis train station or elsewhere in the city, find the Delaware River Heritage Trail (www.minisink.org/trail.html) and follow it 1.5 – 2.0 miles out to Route 6 and the bridge over the Neversink River. Near a 3-D ARTHUR historic sign on the west bank of the river, look for three white blazes on a telephone pole indicating the start point for the Lenape Ridge Trail (LRT). Follow the trail across the bridge, looking for the turnout east (left) onto Minisink Ave.; the trail follows this road for about half a mile.

Access by car: From Route 6, just southeast of the Neversink River crossing, turn east onto Minisink Ave. (which is renamed Old Greenville Turnpike once it reaches the Town of Deepport). Drive about 0.5 mile and spot the white-blazed trail turning north into the woods; drive another 0.1 mile to find a small parking area at the corner of Old Greenville Turnpike and Limekiln Road.

The view from the new Minisink Trail near Port Jervis.

We Need Your Great Photos

Trail Walker is expanding our image library with high resolution photos of hikers and families in action as well as full-length volunteer portraits with tools. Be creative and search for interesting locations in our region. If your image is used in the Trail Walker, you will receive a photo credit. Send files (minimum of 1800x1200 pixels) in jpg format to tw@nynjtc.org. Include “Trail Walker Image Library” in the subject line. You may be asked to sign a photographer/model release form and Trail Walker retains usage rights to any submitted images. We look forward to seeing your submissions!
We at the Trail Conference couldn’t agree more with the above statement by John Muir, a famously prodigious hiker and nature preservationsist. Since 1920, our members have been building and protecting the trail lands and trails that connect people—nerve-shaken and otherwise—to nature for respite and inspiration.

A review of this Annual Report for FY 2006 reveals the breadth of our challenges in securing those connections in the 21st century as well as the scope of our successes:

- New York and New Jersey trail lands protected despite intense development pressures;
- The passionate dedication of volunteers in the face of ever greater competition for their time and energy;
- The continued financial support of our members and communities in spite of competing demands.

In FY 2006, the generous contributions of our supporters to the Connecting People With Nature campaign, which ended with calendar year 2005, were put to work. As our campaign promised, we acquired land to protect trail corridors, embarked on a massive trail rebuilding project at Bear Mountain, ramped up our volunteer training and recruiting efforts by launching Trail University, and pushed forward on our project of upgrading our maps and books using GIS (Geographic Information System) tools.

Details about the past year’s accomplishments are inside. We hope you will stop a moment with us to savor the view. Because, as we all know, our work continues.

Jane Daniels
Chair, Board of Directors
Edward K. Goodell
Executive Director

1,348 Trail Conference volunteers contributed a total of 51,921 hours valued at $769,251!

Value based on information from U.S. Department of Labor statistics. Contributed hours include travel time; $ value is determined by work hours.

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<td>$ 769,251</td>
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Contributed Services

Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountain is going home; that wildness is necessity; that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life.”
Trails
1,666 Miles of Trails and Counting

The network of trails maintained by the Trail Conference grew to 1,666 in FY2006. Keeping them open and well maintained were 690 individual trail maintainers and 10 trail crews, working under 14 regional management committees. These dedicated volunteers tackle projects big and small, requiring a mix of novice and advanced skills. Between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006, trail accomplishments included the following:

Major Projects
On the Long Path - Shawangunk Ridge Trail
• relocated 2.5 miles of the Long Path off roads in section 27 in Schoharie County;
• reopened the old route (across the Awoosting Reserve) of the Long Path connecting Mud Pond in Minnewaska S. P. to Velreoder Kill Falls when the Reserve was acquired by New York State and added to Minnewaska State Park Preserve;
• opened a route between High Point at Sam's Point Preserve and the Smiley Carriageway in Minnewaska S. P. Known as the Old Blue Trail, the section may become part of the Long Path;
• began work on a new trail, known as the Lenape Ridge Trail, connecting Port Jervis to the Shawangunk Ridge.

On the Appalachian Trail
• replaced nearly 1,000 feet of board puncheon and rebuilt approximately 100 feet of bridging across a tributary of the Wawayanda Creek in Vernon, NJ;
• built the first moldering privy ever constructed by a Trail Conference crew. It is at the Morgan Stewart Shelter on the Dutchess County section;
• successfully urged the NJ DOT to replace the Dunnfield Creek crossing just north of the parking area with a fully ADA-compliant bridge;
• inaugurated the Bear Mountain Trails Project. During year one of this planned seven-year project, more than 180 volunteers contributed over 6,000 hours of service towards the reconstruction of the AT on the east and south sides of Bear Mountain.

On the Warren Trail
• built 3.1 miles of the new Warren Trail in Warren County, NJ.

Expanding the Trail Network
The Trail Conference increased its responsibilities by adopting the following trails for maintenance:
• in Minnewaska S. P., the Peters Kill Loop, Yellow and Bull Wheel Trails;
• trails in the Frannie Reese Preserve at the west end of the Mid-Hudson Bridge;
• in the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in Westchester County;
• the Pelton Pond Nature Trail circling Pelton Pond in Fahnestock State Park;
• trails in Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx;
• trails in Oscawana Park in the Town of Cortlandt;
• the seven-mile trail system at the Tenafly Nature Center/Lost Brook Preserve, NJ;
• the Pierson Ridge Trail in Ringwood S. P.;
• two miles of relocated Stonetown Circular Trail in the Wyanokies.

Trail Skills Development
The Trail Conference offers novice to advanced level training in trail building and maintenance.
• Trail University debuted. The Trail Conference’s traditional trail workshops and field training opportunities are now organized into a comprehensive education program. Trail U courses include everything from Trail Maintenance 101 to Chainsaw Safety to GPS/GIS use. Instructors are experienced trail volunteers and professionals; instruction takes place in the field and in classrooms throughout the NY-NJ region.
• Trail U seeks to train new trail volunteers and develop the skills of existing volunteers.
• In its first year, Trail U offered 30 specialized workshops at Bear Mountain, from basic trail construction to advanced stone working skills. Maintenance 101 classes at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation and Port Jervis both enlisted new maintainers for these areas. A Chainsaw Safety class was presented at Fahnestock State Park. In addition, ongoing training was offered during scheduled work trips by our 10 trail crews.

Other Trail Advances
• The Trail Conference continued developing the extension of the Highlands Trail from the Hudson River to the Connecticut state line. Trail Conference staff and volunteers began seeking necessary agreements for the proposed route from the various land owners, including the NYC Department of Environmental Conservation (watershed lands) and state park agencies.
• The Trail Conference participated in the first stages of analysis and development of a revised New Jersey State Trails Plan.
• The Trail Conference worked with Mike Knutson of the Student Conservation Association to conceptually combine existing sections of the Appalachian Trail, Shawangunk Ridge Trail, Long Path, and Highlands Trail into the 116-mile Wallkill Valley Loop in Orange County. With a combined distance of about 116 miles, this loop draws attention to Orange County, NY, as a hiking destination.
• TC volunteers began identifying a route for the planned 30-mile Iron Belt Trail, which will connect the AT on Wawayanda Mountain to trails in Mahlon Dickerson Reservation.

Our Trail University builds skills while our volunteers build trails.
Conservation & Advocacy

Advocacy

Protecting land and promoting trails through political action.

- The Trail Conference added the new position of Director of Conservation & Advocacy, the first time we have had a staff person dedicated to this important component of our mission.
- We developed a quick-response, electronic Action Network:
  a. 187,506 total Trail Conference messages sent (announcements and alerts)
  b. 6,555 participants sent 23,540 messages to public officials
- For the first time we offered advocacy training—School of Hard Knocks. Grassroots advocates shared best practices and reviewed actual cases.

In New York

- Sterling Forge development stopped. The Trail Conference staff and supporters joined with the Sterling Forest Partnership, U.S. Rep. Maurice Hinchey, and dozens of other activists to oppose development of the last 575 acres in Tunxis, NY. The “hole in the doughnut” closed November 2006 with state’s purchase of the tract.
- Awosting Reserve development stopped. The Trail Conference celebrated, along with other environmental groups, particularly our member club Save the Ridge, the successful broad-based effort to add the 2,518-acre Awosting Reserve to Minnewaska State Park Preserve. The state’s purchase of the land saved it from development.
- Environmental Trust Fund increased from $150 million to $225 million. Working with the Adirondack Mountain Club and many other groups, the Trail Conference helped push Governor Pataki and the legislature to increase the Fund.
- State income tax credit for land protection supported. The Trail Conference, along with many other groups, continued to pursue passage of a state income tax credit for landowners whose land is protected by a conservation easement.

In New Jersey

- Proposed Lothertan development in Ramapo, Orange County, opposed. The Trail Conference hired a scenic impact expert and helped bring forth rattlesnake habitat information from New Jersey and New York in our efforts to oppose the Lothertan project. The proposed development received some local approvals but has not been built.
- ATV legislation was brought forward by Assemblyman Gauci and supported by the Trail Conference, but legislation did not pass this year.
- NJ Highlands Council Regional Master Plan developed. The Regional Master Plan for 860,000 acres in northern New Jersey was developed during 2006 through an extended series of meetings and hearings.
- NJ State Trails Plan in the works. The Trail Conference served on the State Trails Committee, which is developing the new plan through a series of meetings and hearings.

Conservation

Saving and extending trails by saving open space.

In New York

The Trail Conference Land Acquisition Fund worked to protect the following trail lands through acquisition:
- Shawangunk Ridge Trail
  - Cardinale, 250 acres, Deer Park and Greenville, Orange County: purchased
  - Fasone, 90 acres, Sullivan County: assigned to Open Space Institute
- Patterson, 90 acres, Sullivan County: assigned to Open Space Institute
- LaFarge 140 acres, Mamakating, Sullivan County: purchased
- Karvillia land swap, 18 acres, Greenville: in progress
- Jerent, 17 acres, Greenville: in progress

In New Jersey

- Iron Belt Trail
  - Rolling Acres, 95 acres, Sparta, Sussex County: purchased
- Highlands Trail/Patriots’ Path
  - Three properties totaling 74 acres in Washington Township, Morris County: purchased

Trail Support

Protecting and extending trails by offering technical expertise.

Examples: helping to negotiate easements or less formal agreements to allow access across a property; arranging for insurance coverage of a landowner who allows access; working to acquire a key connector piece along a trail corridor.

Trail support has been given to the following projects:
- East of Hudson trails, Putnam County, NY
- Iron Belt Trail, Sussex and Morris County, NJ
- Byram trails (Highlands Trail), Sussex County, NJ
- Long Path North, National Park Service, Saratoga County, NY
- Warwick trails system, Orange County, NY

Publications

Trail Conference maps and guidebooks provide people with the information they need to access and enjoy public open space in our region.

Our state-of-the-art GIS (Geographic Information Systems) resources and capabilities enable us to produce top-quality maps that are both easy to read and contain the most accurate data. In FY 2006, the Trail Conference offered 10 map sets and 11 guidebooks. We moved closer towards our goal of producing all our maps by means of digital technology.

New Books and Editions in the Works during FY 2006
- Scenes and Walks in the Northern Shawangunks by Jack Fagan; new third edition
- Hiking the Jersey Highlands, by George Petry; new book
- Walkable Westchester by Trail Conference Chair Jane Daniels and her husband Walf; new book

Maps
- The Trail Conference published two completely new digitally-produced map sets:
  - Hudson Palisades Trails
  - West Hudson Trails
- We published new editions of the following maps:
  - East Hudson Trails
  - Catskill Trails
  - South Taconic Trails
- Using digital technology, work progressed on a completely new edition of:
  - North Jersey Trails
Treasurer’s Report
Submitted by Mac Higlet, Treasurer

As my first duty following appointment as Treasurer, I am pleased to report on our financial results for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2006.

The preliminary financial statements for the year show revenues of $1,998,540 (or 21%) less than last year, due mostly to reduced Grants and Contributions to the Capital Campaign. You may recall that in 2004 we received a large one-time benefit from the Capital Campaign. Offsetting this decrease we recorded higher volunteer contributions with Contributed Service Revenue of $769,000—$82,000 higher than last year. Total costs of $1,965,000 were just $94,000 or 5% higher than last year, despite incurring significantly higher interest costs related to our land purchases. Net assets at $1,646,000 are flat with last year after impact of the above changes but Total Assets of $4,096,000 and Total Liabilities of $2,450,000 have increased by $1,630,000 and $1,597,000 respectively, due to substantial increases in land acquisition and related mortgages during the year. Progress is always slow in finalizing state agreements for resale of these lands, but as proceeds are received in 2007, related mortgages will be repaid.

Our independent accountants have completed their field work and audit for the fiscal year 2006 and they have issued an unqualified opinion on the statements. These are summarized opposite this report.

A heartfelt thank you to the 976 individuals, foundations, organizations, and corporations that generously supported the Trail Conference’s mission in the 2005–2006 fiscal year. The value of these donations reached $679,000. These generous contributions enabled the Trail Conference to be the region’s leader in training and supporting active volunteers who maintain and protect hiking trails and the lands surrounding them. Club and organizational membership in the Trail Conference grew past this fiscal year to a new high. We ended the year with 102 member organizations, up from 97. We also experienced a slight increase, 3%, in the membership revenue, to $183,000.

Treasurer’s Report

Membership and Development

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