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Trail Conference Fights
Parks Closure Plan in NJ

As this issue was going to press, Trail Conference volunteers and staff were mobilizing to prevent closure of parks in New Jersey. On March 31, the state’s Division of Parks and Forestry released recommendations for extensive park closures in order to comply with Governor Corzine’s fiscal year 2009 budget. DEP recommended full elimination of services and closure at the following areas: High Point State Park, Jersey Jump State Forest, Worthington State Forest, Monmouth Battlefield State Park, Stephen’s State Park (administered under NJ Historic Preservation Act), and Round Valley Recreation Area. D&R Canal State Park (including reduced interpretive services and closure of Bulk Island Recreation Area) and Washington Crossing State Park (40 percent reduction in interpretive staff – resulting in reduced hours of operation at Clark House, Johnson Ferry House and the museum).

Volunteers Open
New Trails (and Other Trail News)

Two New Trails in the Shawangunks
The Shawangunk Ridge Trail and Long Path South crews recently finished two new trails. Many thanks to Eric and Sue Menn, Andy Garrison, Malcolm Spence, Gely Franke, Ryo Kiyon, John Moran, Mike Knutson, Linda and John Siwarski, Paul Labounty, and the participants in the Fall 2007 Trail Maintenance 101 workshop at Sam’s Point, who helped to make these trails a reality.

Misissink Trail Extended
One of the new trails is a nearly 2-mile extension of the Misissink Trail (MT) that opened in the spring of 2007 in the town of Deerpark, near the outskirts of Port Jervis. The MT (red blazes) now runs nearly four miles from an intersection with the Lenape Ridge Trail near the junction of Old Ashland Road and County Route 32C in the Town of Ashland to within a stone’s throw of the Shawangunk Mountains. The trail starts at the loop road at Sam’s Point trailhead, and is 2.7 miles long.

South Gully Trail Opens
The other new trail in the Shawangunks is the South Gully Trail, which runs from Sam’s Point Preserve in Cragsmoor down 1,400 feet to Route 52. It is blazed with aqua blazes that signify the Long Path, since it will be part of a future removal of the LP. The elevation at the Sam’s Point trailhead is 2,000 feet, at Route 52, it is 600 feet.

The trail follows a mostly linear course through South Gully, a beautiful ravine on the west flank of the Shawangunk Mountains. The trail starts at the loop road in Sam’s Point Preserve, and is 2.7 miles long.

Windham Long Path Section Temporarily Closed
Recently, a timber harvest was begun in the Ashland-Pineapple State Forest near County Route 32C in the Town of Windham. This harvest will require the temporary closure of a short section of the Long Path and a nearby parking area. The section of the LP that is closed will be temporarily relocated a short distance to the north. The relocated trail is marked with orange flagging. An alternate parking area is available a short distance down a truck trail from the closed parking area. A written notice and map showing the locations of the relocated trail and alternate parking are posted on site.

A re-route of the Hewitt-Butler Trail
The North Jersey Weekday Trail Crew, after several previous work trips, got out on page 4 continued on page 4

Call for Trail GPSers!!
If you hike with a GPS unit, or are willing to learn how to use one, you can help us continue to create great trail maps. Dedicated volunteers have collected the majority of the GPS data used to create the trails on our current maps. The Publications Committee is working on a number of major mapping projects, including a brand new digitally produced editions of our popular Kittatinny Trails and Catskill Trails map sets, as well as a new addition to our North Jersey Trails map set covering northern Morris County parks. We need your help collecting GPS tracks of the trails and woods roads in the following areas: Catskill Forest Preserve, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, High Point State Park, Stokes State Forest, Worthington State Forest, Farny State Park and surrounding areas, Pyramid Mountain, Mahlon Dickerson WMA, Wildcat Ridge WMA, Other parks in northern Morris County and southern Sussex County.

If you hike in any of these parks and would like to help with our GPS efforts, contact volunteers@nynjtc.org. If you would like to help support our region’s superb network of hiking trails in some other way, check out the opportunities on page 6 (Volunteer Classifieds) or online at www.nynjtc.org; click on Volunteer.
Wanted: More ‘Noise’ about the Trail Conference

The member-Get-A-Member (MGM) 2008 program ends May 31! Don’t let all the amazing prizes slip away. It’s not difficult to find family, friends, neighbors or co-workers who might be interested in joining the Trail Conference. By getting them to purchase a membership (or giving out gift memberships) you increase your chances of winning any of the amazing prizes listed below. Some ways to increase the number of new members you sign up, is to:

• Bring a copy of your Trail Walker to work. Share it with colleagues and hand them the MGM form to fill out.
• Go on a hike with friends and use a Trail Conference map and/or book. Show them how helpful these materials are and get them to sign new members up today!

The MGM Campaign is ending soon, so send in your MGM Campaign forms today!

Let Your Friends and Family Help You Win Great Prizes!

Grande Prize: Camping Equipment Package from Campmor

Second Place Prize: One-night, mid-week stay in a Jr. suite and dinner for two at the Phoenix Restaurant at the Emerson Resort and Spa

Third Prize: Lunch and hiking passes for two at the Mohon Mountain House

For each new member you recruit, you will have one entry into our drawing for various outdoor goods donated by our retail partners. Items you might win through the raffle are:

• Danna Executive Travel Pack Fishing Pole and Reel from Matt’s Sporting Goods, Hasbrouck, NJ
•拷贝 of this form are acceptable.
• $50 gift certificate to Hudson Valley Outfitters in Cold Spring, NY
• Wooden Walking Stick from Blue Ridge Mountain Sports, Madison, NJ
• $20 gift certificate to Dover Sports Online in Dover, NJ
• Overnight camping package from Ray’s Sport Shop in North Plainfield, NJ

The more new members you recruit, the better your chances are at winning any of these great prizes! For more information and forms, visit www.nynjtc.org/mgm.
National Trails Day Events:

**June 7**

**American Hiking Society**

**Enjoy a hike**
Union County Hiking Clubs Plans Event at Watchung Reservation, NJ
UCHC plans a day of guided nature walks and/or trail projects at Watchung Reservation. See www.unioncounty.org/parks/nationaltrailsdiday.html for details.
Meet at 10am – 12:15pm at Watchung Reservation, continental breakfast included. Call 908-527-4231 to register.

**Hike South Mountain Reservation, Millburn, NJ, with Union County Hiking Club**
Union County Hiking Club plans a moderate hike for intermediate hikers; 2-3 hours, with several hills, on the yellow trail through a pine forest. Meet at 10am at Tulip Springs parking, Brookside Ave. Leader: Mimi Solomon, 739-379-3190.

**Metro Crew Bridge-building in Alley Pond Park, Queens**
June 6, 7 & 8 (Fri. Sat. & Sun.)
Alley Park, Eagle Scout Projects. Meet 9am at the upper parking lot, across from the Sanitation Department, off Winchester Blvd. Join the crew and Eagle Scouts in building two bridges (17’ and 30’ long). Leader: Joe Cindoff, 718-614-2209 or joeghiker@aol.com

**Try-A-Trail Crew Day**
with the West Jersey Crew
Douglas Trail, Worthington State Forest
We will continue our work building water management structures (water bars and check dams) on the Douglas Trail in Worthington State Forest.
Leaders: Monica and David Day, 752-937-9908 or 908-307-5049 (cell) or westjerseycrew@trailstobuild.org

**Long Path North Trail Maintenance**
Join the LP North Hiking Club on a trail maintenance outing on LP section 26.
Day is moderate hike; meet at 10am, out by 2pm. Call 733-644-3592 or go to www.adirondacktrail.org and register.

**Hike Ringwood/Skylawns, NJ with Woodland Trail Walkers**
Moderate 7 miles, meet at 10am at Ringwood Manor; call to confirm.
Leader: Ernest Wagner, 739-694-3194.

**Hike the Sussex Branch Trail in the Kittatinnies with Adventures for Women**

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**From the Executive Director**

Every Day is Trails Day: Making Wild Outdoors More Accessible

A recent study by Drs. Oliver Pergams and Patricia Zastick in the October 2007 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science has highlighted again what the authors called “a fundamental and pervasive shift away from nature-based recreation.”

It is worth noting that among the activities studied—park visitations, hunting and fishing, camping, and hiking—backpacking—only hiking/backpacking has not been declining over the past two decades after steady increases in all activities for decades since they began to be measured.

Elsewhere, the authors have hypothesized that a general decline in nature-based recreation is likely due to videophilia—“the new human tendency to focus on sedentary activities involving electronic media.” (See www.videophilia.org.)

While I have some questions about the underlying data sources of this research, my own experience at the Trail Conference and as a parent both support the larger premise that people, especially children, are becoming less likely to venture into the wild outdoors.

The significance of this trend, and the troubling part, is the growing body of evidence that direct experience of wild nature, preferably at a young age, results in more environmentally responsible behavior. If you believe, as I do, that we have entered an era in which humans must learn to live within the ecological constraints of our planet, it is very important to have as many people as possible working to lighten humanity’s ecological footprint and solve environmental problems of our making.

This is why I believe non-motorized access to nature is so important—it connects us with something essential in our heritage as hunter-gatherers and it sharpens the awareness we need to find our way forward into a new age of humans as environmental stewards.

Trail Conference volunteers provide the most simple and ancient form of nature-based recreation—hiking. They provide the pathways for people to connect with wild nature directly. They produce the maps, guidebooks, and websites to help people find their way and know something about their local environment. They write letters to elected officials and spend long nights giving testimony to planning boards to protect and preserve our trail lands and other open spaces.

The rest of the country celebrates National Trails Day on the first Saturday in June. For Trail Conference members, every day is Trails Day. And every trail is an opportunity to connect others to nature and renew one’s own connection with nature.

Ed Goodell, goodell@nynjtc.org

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**You are invited**

Get a Historical Perspective on Hudson Valley Landscape

Club Delegates and All Members Are Invited

**When:** June 12, 2008

**Where:** Ross Dock, Fort Lee, N.J.

Social hour will begin at 6:30pm with business meeting and guest speaker Jim Johnson to follow starting at 7pm.

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**National Trails Day Events:**

**June 7**

**Take part in a Trail Project**
Final Clean-up and Celebration at LaFarge Property!
For details go online at www.nynytc.org, click on Projects and follow LaFarge links, or contact Brenda Holzinger at holzinger@nynytc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 25

**AT Project in Dutchess County**
Ollee Simpson of the Dutchess-Putnam AT Project in Dutchess County or contact Brenda Holzinger at holzinger@nynytc.org, 201-512-9348, ext. 25

**Bear Mountain Trails Project**
Celebrate the day by working at Bear Mountain. Contact Matt Townsend at matttownsend@nynytc.org for details.

**West Hudson South Crew Project**
Project to be determined. Contact Brian Buchbinder for details: 708-320-6062 or buxbenn@grandreservoir.com

**Hiking trails in our region cover the same ground as did American and British armies during the Revolutionary War. Get a historical perspective on the Hudson River Valley hosted many key figures, battles, and political events throughout the eight year sof war. The Hudson River Valley hosted many key figures, battles, and political events throughout the eight years of war.**

**Meeting Site at Ross Dock**

**Hiking trails in our region cover the same ground as did American and British armies during the Revolutionary War. Get a historical perspective on the Hudson Valley’s landscape from Colonel James M. Johnson, U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D. when he speaks to our annual June meeting.**

As the center of the colonies at the time of the American Revolution, the Hudson River Valley hosted many key figures, battles, and political events throughout the eight years of war. The Sons of Liberty, the leaders of the Revolution, were as active in New York as they were in Massachusetts; they printed broadsides, encouraged boycotts, rallied, rioted, and dumped British tea into the New York Harbor even as Patriot housewives throughout the Valley threw their own “tea parties” at the expense of merchants and Loyalist neighbors, who supported King George III. The social fabric was ripped apart in the civil war between the Loyalists and Whigs, now called the Patriotic. Come and learn about the importance of the Hudson Valley in the fight for liberty.

Driving directions and other details are available online at http://nynytc.org/events/meetings.html

NEW YORK

Target a 20-mile stretch on the ridge paralleling Route 209 from the state Park Preserve in New York. The southern Gunks project helped fund a clean-up of a 140-acre parcel on the ridge (LaFarge) to prepare it for transfer to state DEC.

The stretch is the only unprotected section of a continuous greenway from the Hudson River to the Pompton River or want to be involved in securing an uninterrupted Shawangunk Ridge Trail in this area and we are excited that the Land Trust Alliance is in support from state DEC.

The project for a green corridor on the Hudson River to the Pompton River or want to be involved in securing an uninterrupted Shawangunk Ridge Trail in this area and we are excited that the Land Trust Alliance is in support from state DEC.

NEW JERSEY

Towns and the Southern Shawangunk Ridge. Trail Walker readers could be forgiven for thinking that these two areas are secure and it is time for the Trail Conference to move its focus on to other areas. Unfortunately, that is not the case. We are in a race to conserve the last few critical tracts before we hit "build-out," at the point at which all the vacant land in an area is either protected for open space or developed as residential or commercial buildings.

In the Ramapo Mountains and watered-shield ridge on the New York-New Jersey border, we have of course made great progress in saving 20,000 acres in Sterling Forest State Park and some significant tracts in the Tome Valley. In fact, as we stated in the recent testimony against the Pieno Lakes/Bypin Hill Reservoirs proposed development in the Town of Ramapo, we are only five or six properties away from tying together Sterling (to the west), Harriman (east) and Ringwood State Park and Ramapo Valley County Reservation (south) in a fantastic greenway from the Hudson River to the Pompton River that would be easily accessible from Routes 287 and 37.

The challenge here is that projects like Bypin Hill Estates, Lorando, and Tiana Reserve are priced to move forward. Perhaps a greater concern is the recent designation of the "Route 287 Corridor in Rockland and Westchester Counties" as a designated "conservation area" by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, another example of a regional planning cell that our future course will come down to local decisions by local planning boards. Our job is to educate the public, build support from state and regional agencies to save these last key properties.

The Shawangunk Ridge, about 35 miles to the northwest, is a much larger project area, but here, too, our years of hard work and progress are in danger if the shortcut if the Shawangunk Ridge Trail (SRT) is cut off by new development. The northern portion of the ridge, which is protected within the Catskills, is well protected by the Mohonk Preserve, Mohonk Mountain House land, and the Wallkill Reserve (which now includes the area known as the Awosting Reserve), but the south is a story of juggling parkland and long stretches of privately owned open space.

Once again, transportation planning will play a major role in what gets developed here, as we wait to see the plans for widening Route 17 and adding exits as it is changed to federal Interstate 86. At stake are possible breaks in a 256-mile corridor along the Shawangunk-Kittatinny Ridge that runs from Rosendale, New York, to the Pennsylvania-Maryland border.

The key targeted area for us is a 20-mile stretch from Route 17 north to Route 84 in the south, east of Route 20. It includes the towns of Greenwich, New Hope, and Dingmans, the Delaware, and Mamakating in Sullivan County. The Trail Conference has outlined a plan to secure protection of the lands and farmland in this area. We are excited that the Land Trust Alliance is in support from state DEC. That grant is so that we can develop the information base, maps, volunteer expertise, and other tools that we need to succeed (see story below).

If you are interested in helping to protect a green corridor on the Hudson River to the Pompton River or want to be involved in securing an uninterrupted Shawangunk Ridge Trail, contact me at ohearn@nynjtc.org.

The land Trust Alliance in April announced a grant to the Trail Conference to help fund the development of a landowner information database, maps, outreach efforts, and other tools needed to successfully complete our trail lands protection campaign on the southern Shawangunk ridge. A previous grant from LTA helped fund a clean-up of a 140-acre parcel on the ridge (LaFarge) to prepare it for transfer to state DEC.

Our goal is an uninterrupted 36-mile Shawangunk Ridge Trail between High Point State Park in New Jersey and Minnewaska State Park Preserve in New York. The southern Gunks project targets a 20-mile stretch on the ridge paralleling Route 209 from Route 17 in the north to the New Jersey border. The corridor connects the southern Gunks project to the Catskills, is well protected by the Mohonk Preserve, Mohonk Mountain House land, and the Wallkill Reserve (which now includes the area known as the Awosting Reserve), but the south is a story of juggling parkland and long stretches of privately owned open space.

NEW JERSEY

Route 106 Closed in Harriman S.P.
Route 106 between Little Long Pond and Kanawauke Lake is closed until at least the end of summer. Signs point to a bridge closing on the route as the reason. Roadway: trail access parking areas are open, but access to the west (Route 17/17A) side of the park. (A park official told the TC that hikers can walk on the damaged area of the road, however.) From Seven Lakes Drive, the Kanawauke parking area is available, but the pulloffs for the Ramapo-Dunderberg crossing, the Victory Trailhead, and the Water and Ice Pond Road lot are not; they can be accessed only from Route 17.

Millford-Montague Walkway Closed
Hikers should take into account that they will be unable to cross the Delaware River between New Jersey and Pennsylvania by way of the Millford-Montague Toll Bridge’s pedestrian walkway. The toll bridge between New Jersey and Pennsylvania by way of the Millford-Montague Toll Bridge’s pedestrian walkway.

Belleayre Resort Update
As this issue went to press, planning was in progress for an analysis of the impact the proposed resort development would have on views from trails and summits in nearby areas of the Catskill Forest Preserve. Trail Conference volunteers planned to participate by hiking trails and taking photos and GPS coordinates during a balloon test required by NYS DEC as part of the environmental impact study. (Areas from which the balloon could be spotted would be visually impacted by the planned development.)

Meanwhile, in late February the DEC released specifications for new ski trails it intends to build as part of the project. The documents indicate a reduction from nine miles of new ski swaths, as originally planned, to six, with three miles of trails on the east side of the mountain no longer on the drawing board. Keep up with news about Belleayre on the Trail Conference website; follow the links from Advocacy at www.nynjtc.org.

NEW JERSEY

NJ ATV Damage Inventory & Photo Contest
ATV legislation is still cooking but on the back burner in New Jersey as this issue was to press. The Trail Conference is taking advantage of the time to beef up our case for ATV regulation. This effort includes compiling documentation of environmentally detrimental damage to state parks, trails, and open spaces through photos and your reports. Keep those pictures coming! Take your camera when you are out hiking or biking. TV’s or ATV’s or signs that have caused, take pictures and email them with details (where, when) to holland@nynjtc.org. GPS coordinates of damage are much appreciated also, but are not required.
May—June Workshops

For the latest schedules and additional details, go to nynjtc.org and click on “Trail crews/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 “guest” participation is allowed, so bring your friends.

May 3 & 4 (Saturday & Sunday)
Start time is 9am
#335: Basic Stone Cribbing (May 3)
#336: Basic Stone Cribbing (May 4)
Coordinator: Matt Townsend
Coordinator: Matt Townsend
Contact: 201-512-9348 or email volunteers@nynjtc.org.
Contact: 201-512-9348 or email volunteers@nynjtc.org.

May 17 & 18 (Saturday & Sunday)
Location: TBD
TBD
Leader: Matt Townsend
townsend@nynjtc.org
Leader: Matt Townsend
townsend@nynjtc.org
Location: Bear Mountain State Park
TBD
Leader: Bear Mountain State Park
TBD
Leader: Bear Mountain State Park

June 12 (Tuesday)
Leader: Chris Esco
TBD
Leader: Chris Esco
TBD
Leader: Chris Esco

May 30 (Saturday)
Tackle a variety of projects ranging from trail repair to bridge building in northern New Jersey.
May 31, June 1
Central Mountainkeeper staff focus is on creating a website that eventually will grow into an information portal and virtual community for the entire Catskill area. The fledgling website is located at http://trailskeeper.wordpress.com. Please check back often for content updates and new functionality. The educational outreach program will begin in early 2009 and the summer internship program will be in place for summer 2009. If you are interested in working as a volunteer project manager for this program or in any other capacity, please contact Brenda Hubinger via email (BHubinger@nynjtc.org) or telephone (201-512-9348, ext. 25).

BEAR MOUNTAIN TRAILS PROJECT
Project Manager: Matt Townsend
townsend@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348
For info and to register: volunteers@nynjtc.org, or call 201-512-9348, ext. 17

May 8 (Sunday)
Pepotopung Gorge Trail
Leader: Rob Marshall
May 8 (Sunday)
Chinquapin Trail
Leader: Rob Marshall
May 8 (Sunday)
Pepotopung Gorge Trail
Leader: Rob Marshall
May 8 (Sunday)
Chinquapin Trail
Leader: Rob Marshall

Bear Conference Kicks Off Catskill Trailkeeper Program
The Catskill Trailkeeper Program is an exciting new education and stewardship project the Trail Conference is inaugurating in partnership with Catskill Mountainkeeper.

The Catskill Trailkeeper Program will focus on grassroots-based education and advocacy initiatives as a new conservation stewardship resource to complement programs already in place to protect the Catskill region. In addition, the program will educate visitors and residents of the region about the Appalachian Trail and myriad other outdoor recreation resources available in the greater Catskills, as well as about the fragility of this region and its importance to the outdoors health of New York State.

Ultimately, the Catskill Trailkeeper Program will achieve its goals with an internet information resource center that will include interactive capabilities, a summer intern program that will train college students and place them on popular trails and summits for hands-on outreach, and an educational program for K-12 schools and youth groups throughout the greater Catskills. The Trailkeeper summer outreach internships are inspired by the Appalachian Trail Riderunner and ADK Summit Steward programs. During its first year, TC and Mountainkeeper staff focus is on creating a website that eventually will grow into an information portal and virtual community for the entire Catskill area. The fledgling website is located at http://trailskeeper.wordpress.com. Please check back often for content updates and new functionality. The educational outreach program will begin in early 2009 and the summer internship program will be in place for summer 2009. If you are interested in working as a volunteer project manager for this program or in any other capacity, please contact Brenda Hubinger via email (BHubinger@nynjtc.org) or telephone (201-512-9348, ext. 25).
VBA Programmer Needed for New Marketing Project
We are seeking someone who can reliably output our publications and sales and could use assistance programming Microsoft Map Point to meet our needs. We have Microsoft Access, Excel, Word and Map Point. Contact volunteer@nynjtc.org for more information.

Event Planner
Help make the ONE Fest event successful for our Trail Conference and Wilderness Project. Assist with promoting the event to affiliates to help attract exhibitors and attendees. If you have good communica-

Tool Quartemaster
The Trail Conference is looking for a con-

Bear Mountain Camp & Tool Quartemaster
If you are tool savvy and have general handy-man skills, you are a great can-

Catskill Trailkeeper Project Manager
The Trail Conference seeks a project man-
gement position. Work in partnership with Catskill Mountainkeeper to develop this stewardship and education program for trails in Catskills. (See page 5 for program details.) Contact Brenda Holzinger, holzinger@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 25.

Maintainer Openings in NJ and NY
Apply now for maintainer openings on the Warren Trail in Warren County and in Stokes State Forest in Sussex County, both in New Jersey. There also openings in the Metro region (New York City, including Staten Island). Contact volunteer@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 26.

Contact volunteer@nynjtc.org or 201-512-9348, ext. 26, to state your interest or get more information about these or other volunteer opportunities.

Catherine Kelleher, Bear Mountain Volunteer Coordinator

Three Crew Members Reflect on Building Something for the Ages

As I walked the trail at the end of the day, I felt a personal relationship with indi-

Three Crew Members Reflect on Building Something for the Ages

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Hike Logistics for Small Bipeds (i.e. Kids)
By Marek Stycos

A drumbeat of research news indicates young people avoid physical activity, especially in the outdoors. Niko Stycos doesn’t fit that stereotype. Here, his Dad reports on the techniques he used to bequeath to Niko and his friends the pleasures of hiking.

The Age: What’s the right age to start hiking?
My son, Niko, was hiking on day three, strapped to my chest in a Baby Bjorn. Rapidly we moved into a Kelty backpack carry, and at age five, you can easily see he’s grown and will carry half the time. At 3½, you’re on your own—the backpack won’t fit you anymore.” This was accepted like all things, at that age—parents are omniscient, so it must be so.

The Selection: Where to go?
Get junior reading maps with you immediately. Explain, “We need to find a ‘P’ for parking at the beginning and the end of our hike.” Then add “Please, we need to go for a loop today,” or “**Em** king killer view!” You get the idea. At age 3 Niko was suggesting sacral routes—perhaps by mutual agreement.

Length vs. Time: How big a hike?
Don’t worry so much about length. Just make sure the first one isn’t a monster that will turn them off permanently. Plan enough time. “Start calculating inconvenience for a child is rubbish.” “I’ll tell you about that later, we’ve got to hurry or we’ll miss the Flinstones reunion!” Let them roll at their own pace, with gentle prodding.

Climate change is already affecting plants and animals throughout the world in many ways. A few examples will illustrate.

- Coral reefs are increasingly experiencing bleaching events, in which the corals turn white and die because temperature stress kills the symbiotic algae that live within the coral organism. As this has been happening at a rapidly accelerating rate over the past 10 years, it is now estimated that up to 50 percent of coral reefs may be on the verge of collapse; coral reefs may largely disappear by mid-century. Numerous species of animals—birds, insects, reptiles, and mammals, among others—have shifted their ranges northward. Wildflowers are flowering earlier and fall is arriving later in many parts of boreal, arctic, and alpine environments. Bird migration and breeding patterns have also changed dramatically in some places; one species, the pied flycatcher, has become nearly extinct in the Netherlands over just the past decade, because of a mismatch between its altered breeding times and the availability of its insect prey.

- Climate change is affecting the Arctic. The projections are sobering. They tell us we should enjoy our diverse forests now, and, obviously, work as hard as we can to prevent the amount of climate change that may be heading our way.

An early photo of Niko Stycos, who has been hiking with his Dad since infancy.

Our region currently supports diverse forest communities. Projections of forest tree distributions based on climate models and assumed continuing high levels of CO₂ emissions show the loss of much of this forest diversity. See http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/atlas/free/ne_foratypes.html.

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May Thursday, May 1
UC HC. Ramapo Reservation (TC map #115), NJ. Leader: Matthew Heckler, 917-912-9533. If you have been searching for a new perspective, make it a must to join us on this amazing 14+ mile hiking and backpacking weekend. First, we hike the Race Brook Trail with numerous waterfalls. Then south along the AT through Cary Cave, rapids, and ledges. Call leader for trip update.

Saturday, May 3
UC W. Waterfall Hike Science/Race Brook, CT. Leader: Alice Dufour (ADF) or Mary Jo Billingsley. From the Kaaterskill Sunrise Campground on the AT in Wawarsing, NY, we hike the Race Brook Trail with numerous waterfalls. Then south along the AT through Cary Cave, rapids, and ledges. Call leader for trip update.

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Regional Trips

**Lancaster-Montgomery Trail Marathon**, Leader: Lawrence Butler. Call 973-644-3592 for details and to register. Meet: 9 am at Parking Lot at Yellow Trailhead, Spring Grove State Park, Millstone Twp., N.J.

**Stokes State Forest Trail Marathon**, Leader: Rick Hower. Meet: 9 am at parking lot at Black Rock Falls, Wantage Twp., N.J.

**Mount Tammany Trail Marathon**, Leader: Michelle Lagana. Meet: 9 am at parking lot at Black Rock Falls, Wantage Twp., N.J.

**Taconic Trail Marathon**, Leader: Karen Ferrante. Meet: 9 am at parking lot at Three Mile Road, Putnam Valley, N.Y. Call 914-842-4337 for details and to register. Meet: 9 am at parking lot at Three Mile Road, Putnam Valley, N.Y.

**Long Trail Marathon**, Leader: Mike Carbone. Meet: 9 am at the Wilderness Center, Great Barrington, Mass. Call 413-238-2595 for details and to register. Meet: 9 am at parking lot at the Wilderness Center, Great Barrington, Mass.

**Appalachian Trail - City Creek to Rt. 84, Leader: call 609-769-5802 or go to www.appalachian.org/mt for details and to register. Meet: 9 am. Shenandoah, Mississippis, out by 4 pm.

**Hoochery Hills Trail Marathon**, Leader: Call 973-644-3592 for details and to register. Meet: 9 am at the parking lot of the Hoochery Hills Trailhead, Wantage Twp., N.J.

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After more than 10 years in business, the Catskill Hiking Shack in Wurtsboro closed April 30. The Shack had been a favorite destination for hikers in the market for boots, packs, and other trail gear. "We have truly enjoyed running this shop and have met many wonderful people along the way," owners Susan and John Lavell wrote to their customers in a March email. "It has been a very difficult decision to make and we have given it our best closing." With the current economic climate and dismal forecasts for the near future, we simply couldn't continue to 'hang in there.'"
Trekking Poles: Do You Need Them? By Howard E. Friedman, DPM

May/June 2008 Page 11

Trekking poles have three sections, which can be extended or collapsed. A locking ring mechanism is the most common method of securing the bottom and middle sections of the pole at the desired length. A twist to the right locks the pole, while a twist to the left unlocks it. One locking ring controls the bottom pole section, while another ring controls the middle section. An optional feature is a small spring (which can be turned on or off) in the center of the pole to give a bit of extra shock absorption when the pole hits the ground.

The bottom of the trekking pole usually has a strong carbide tip, which resists wear and tear. Sinking just above the carbide tip is a circular plastic basket-like device. This feature helps the pole resist plowing into mud or bogggy ground. A special snow basket can be inserted for snow treks. This modification makes the poles more useful in situations where you want to increase the surface area of the basket.

Since trekking poles are made for rugged use, pole parts such as hand-cushions, carbide-tips, and locking rings can generally be replaced, if needed.

In contrast, walking poles for the Nordic walking exercise discipline have a more secure wrist strap mechanism as well as a modified and angled rubber tip, may only have one pole (or even less in height), and are lighter in weight. They are designed not to bear the full weight of the walker but only to assist in walking. A hiking or trekking pole is designed for more rugged use and pressures.

Extra Weight, or Worth Their Weight? In the age of “lightweight” hiking and backpacking, some hikers have found that any extra unnecessary weight is a burden that can slow a hiker down. However, people who regularly use trekking poles wouldn’t hike without them.

“Trekking poles are a staple in my gear list, about as important as my shelter or rain jacket,” Skurka wrote in an email. “They put some extra power into my step,” he added.

While the weight of a pair of collapsible three-section trekking poles varies from 17 ounces to over 24 ounces, research studies have shown that carrying this additional weight does not impact the hiker’s performance. The studies also indicate that metabolic use is not increased with pole use. Many hikers and backpackers further justify the extra weight of trekking poles by finding additional uses for them. These include using them for tent or tarp poles—or even makeshift poles to string a line to dry rain-soaked clothes. Moreover, some backpackers reduce the weight of the poles by removing the wrist straps and baskets from the bottom of the poles.

Personal Experiences

Over the past several years, I have become convinced of the usefulness of hiking poles. Before making any investment, however, I “borrowed” two identical kitchen mop handles, attached the wrist strap, and hit the trail. I appreciated the poles during stream crossings, and especially when going downhill. On more than one occasion, being able to plant a pole into the ground prevented or minimized an ankle sprain or fall. Eventually, I began using Leki Makalu trekking poles. I have also used Komperdell Mountaineer anti-shock poles. While I usually adjust the pole length during a hike, preferring instead to simply “choke” up the pole on the up going when uphill, I do find the adjustable feature important. Before the hike, I adjust the pole length to a size that suits me, making certain to tighten the locking rings to avoid droppage (on one occasion, my hiking pole did shorten unexpectedly, since I had not sufficiently tightened the adjustment). Moreover, if I need to use my hands for an uphill climb, I can collapse the poles and stow them in my backpack.

Overall, I would add my voice to those who proclaim that they do not hike anywhere without their two hiking poles.

Howard E. Friedman DPM, www.yourfootdoc.net, is a podiatrist treating hikers and non-hikers in Suffern, NY.

Tracking the Wild Invasives - Year Three

This is the third and final year of a three-year project supported by the USDA, which aims to better understand the spread of invasive plants in those fragile and delicate pole high conservation value and high levels of public use. Field data are collected by volunteer “citizen scientists” drawn from the membership of the Trail Conference and member clubs. An explicit goal of the survey is to identify any areas of whether hikers can collect accurate data regarding invasive plants.

You can register online (www.nynjtc.org/science/projects/2008/uda.html) or contact Anne Osborn, the project coordinator, at the office, 201-512-3948, or by email, aosborn@nynjtc.org.
Stissing Mountain rises like an island amid the still pastoral landscape of northern Dutchess County. Admittedly, it is remote for many in the New York–New Jersey area (even for some of us living in Dutchess County). And offering a relatively short (1.5-mile) lollipop hike from the parking area at the base of the summit, the mountain may seem to fall short for some hikers. But Stissing has virtues that make it a worthwhile destination, including 360-degree views from a fire tower at its summit and an optional 4-mile extension around Thompson Pond at its base.

The hike up Stissing includes an elevation gain of 950 feet, which begins immediately upon leaving the parking area, so hikers who enjoy a strenuous climb won’t feel shortchanged. There is minimal blushing. Shortly after starting up, the trail, which is rocky and eroded, hits a woods road. Turn left on the road, then take the next left at a fork made by a footpath (on the left), and the woods road (which continues right). The fork is marked by a cairn. Pay attention or you may miss this intersection. (You’ll return to this point on the woods road later.)

At the summit (1400 feet) there stands an intact fire tower, which can be climbed by those who want more uphill exercise. It offers fabulous 360-degree views that extend east to the Taconics and west to the Catskills. The tower was saved and is preserved by a local citizens group.

To descend the mountain, walk past the tower and westward; turn right and downhill wherever there is a choice.

Hikers’ Marketplace

NY-NJ TC member? YES NO JOINING NOW Member III

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Make check or money order payable to NY-NJ Trail Conference, and mail to: 156 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430. For a full descriptive catalog, please write or call 201-512-9348. *Tax must be paid on books, maps, misc., but not on clothing or shipping, by customers with NJ ship-to (not billing) addresses. Prices are subject to change. (2008)

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Save time and a tree by joining or renewing online at www.nynjtc.org. Just click on the Join/Renew button.

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**BY APPOINTMENT**

Stissing Mountain offers fabulous 360-degree views that extend east to the Taconics and west to the Hudson Valley. It is an excellent stop for the AAA and New York/New Jersey Guidebook and is featured in 50 Hikes in the Lower Hudson Valley by Stella Green and H. Neil Zimmerman (second edition just published in this spring; see Hikers’ Marketplace). You can also get information from The Nature Conservancy’s website, www.tnc.org; type “Stissing” in the Search box on the home page.