Volunteer Profile: John Blenninger

A milestone was reached on May 1 when John Blenninger announced he was stepping down as Trails Supervisor of Black Rock Forest (BRF), a position he has filled for 35 years. “Driving distance, advancing age and the tiresome (but necessary) paperwork are catching up with me,” he explained in a letter, adding that he plans to continue to maintain three trails at BRF. John is a legend among experienced Trail Conference volunteers. He has recruited and trained countless maintainers, overseeing significant expansion of trail responsibilities at BRF and adjacent Storm King State Park. He has been a frequent instructor of Trail Maintenance 101 workshops, and enjoys a reputation as “the Rembrandt” of trail blazing.

No mug shot,” John declared. Instead, the trail artist carrying his work pack.

He shakes his head at the mention of this last. “No,” he says in a quiet, deliberate voice, “not Rembrandt—Michelangelo, because he not only painted but was also a sculptor.” John’s eyes twinkle in a straight face as he stakes this claim to blazing great weather. “No,” he says in his quiet, deliberate face as he stakes this claim to blazing greatness. But a glance around the compact office—workbenches, carpeting, and a reputation as “the artist’s studio and collector’s gallery. Trail tools—countless loppers, hand pruners, scrapers (for sculpting tools), bow saws, buckets in various sizes, paint brushes, flick sticks—and 40 souvenir bark, testify to his abiding interest in what has been a nearly life-long avocation: Creat ing a New State Forest on the Guntik Ridge

The land on the Shawangunk Ridge was acquired by the Trail Conference as part of its efforts to create a protected corridor for the Shawangunk Ridge Trail. DEC will add the acres to Huckleberry Ridge State Forest. Money for the state’s $1.5 million purchase also came from the EPF open space program. “The parcel already features a wonderful 5-mile loop hike built by Trail Conference volunteers in 2007. (Find directions to the trailhead and a description of the hikes on our website. Type “Minisink Trail” in the site’s search box.) Following brief remarks by officials from both organizations, Trail Conference volunteer Jakob Franke led a group of 17 hikers on an exploration of the trail.

Just a decade ago, no state forest land existed on the Shawangunk Ridge in Orange County. With this June land transfer to DEC, Huckleberry Ridge State Forest now comprises nearly 1500 acres. The Trail Conference was instrumental in creating this state forest, working closely with partners in land protection, left to right: Clinton County Planning Director; David Church, Orange County Planning Director; William Rudge, DEC; Neil Zimmerman, Friends of the Shawangunks; Robert Anderberg, Open Space Institute; Paula Medley, Bashakill Wildlife Area Association; William Janeway, DEC Region 3 Director; Edward Goodwin, TRC Executive Director; Joe Ann Drake representing State Senator Bonnie; Gaylord Holmes, Trail Conference Board Member; Andrew Gunner, Shawangunk Ridge Supervisor; Trail Conference; Jakob Franke, Land Path Supervisor; Trail Conference; James Duselmo, Orange County Land Trust Executive Director; and Richard Katsive, Trail Conference Board.

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Knock, Knock…

By Chris Ingui

The tapping on my car window startled me, not only because I had been asleep, encased in nothing but muddy workpants and a t-shirt, but also because I had been asleep, encased in nothing but muddy workpants and a t-shirt, but also because it came from a police officer aiming a flashlight at my head. “Do you have a permit?!” he asked through the window. I did, but it was in my tent and under a foot of water more than a 100 yards away. I opened my door to the rain and began explaining myself.

We had set up camp on Friday, April 15 at the Weis Ecology Center in Norwich Green State Forest in New Jersey, handy to the weekend’s work site—a project that would combine trail building with a workshop in stone construction. A total of 22 volunteers had signed up to participate—16 members of the Jolly Rovers stonework crew, 5 additional Trail Conference volunteers for the workshop, and me. Despite several higher campsite options on a near ridge, by ridge, we chose a low-lying field because it offered a large fire pit and space for the trail crew to pitch tents and meet for dinner after work. We knew rain was in the forecast, but high on good spirits, we ignored every sign that we were seeing our- selves up for trouble.

Saturday morning started out well. Those who had not camped on Friday night arrived early, and by 9am we were hiking into the woods with picks, bars, and hammers in hand. The worksite was roughly a mile in, where the trail crosses the base of a marshy valley and the trail is often under water for days after a rainfall. The goal for this trip was to construct several sections of stone turpikes along the wettest sections of the trail. These turpikes, built of native fieldstone, would elevate the trail above the wetland.

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Run (Almost) Barefoot?

Read what a podiatrist reports on the pros, cons, and maybe's of this latest trend.

A Trail for Everyone

New summit loop on Bear Mountain expands the AT community.

continued on page 7

continued on page 7

continued on page 7
Treasurer’s Report for Fiscal Year 2010

By Jim Gregoire, Treasurer

Results for our fiscal year ended September 30, 2010, have been audited and an unqualified opinion dated March 24, 2011, has been issued by the Trail Conference’s auditors, ABD Associates, LLP.

Total revenues for the year were $1,451,555 consisting principally of membership dues and contributions ($997,169), map and book sales ($274,994), and income from various trail building contracts ($155,272). This revenue is approximately $280,000 lower than the previous year, primarily due to a mid-year fundraising and membership expenses decreased by a similar amount, reflecting the hiring of a Development Director in mid-year.

Our net income (a.k.a. “change in net assets”) for the year was down $42,836, bringing total net assets of the organization to $2,843,685 at year-end. Major components of net assets are trail lands and easements ($1,814,421), cash and investments ($552,757), and receivables ($158,984). We have also capitalized investments ($552,757), and receivables ($158,984). We have also capitalized

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Marking the First 90 Years

What does a mission-focused organization do when it enters its 90th year of operation? If the organization is the Trail Conference it looks ahead, not back; asserts its ambitions, not its retirement plans. Mostly, it keeps doing what it was created to do—to make public lands accessible to the public—which translates into recruiting and training nature lovers to build trails, maintain trails, be advocates for trails, and make trail maps and information available for public use.

The fiscal year that preceded the one covered in this report was difficult. The economic recession forced us to cut budgets and programs significantly. We weathered the storm by staying focused on our mission. And we did some organizational projects. Management and general expenses of $88,327 were down approximately $30,000 from the prior year while fundraising and membership expenses decreased by a similar amount, reflecting the hiring of a Development Director in mid-year.

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An Appalachian Trail for Everyone

The problem of living is, at bottom, an economic one. And this alone is bad enough, even in a period of so-called “normalcy.” But living has been considerably complicated of late in various ways—by war, by questions of personal liberty, and by “menaces” of one kind or another. There have been created bitter antagonisms. We are undergoing also the bad combination of high prices and unemployment—this situation is world-wide—the result of a world-wide war.

It is no purpose of this little article to indulge in coping with any of these [issues]. The nearest we come to such effrontery is to suggest more comfortable seats and more fresh air for those who choose to consider them. A great professor once said that “optimism is oxygen.” Are we getting all the “oxygen” we might for the big tasks ahead of us?

“Let us wait,” we are told, “till we solve this economic one. And this alone is bad enough, though short, offers a superb view of the Hudson Valley all the way to the Cattkill mountains 50 miles to the north.

The project is expanding the trails community in a way that I think MacKaye would appreciate. For hundreds of thousands of mostly novice hikers, often first or "backcountry" this region has to offer. With our members’ and partners’ support, we intend to complete this project, now over halfway done, as well as add a interpretive exhibit to help visitors appreciate and advocate for access to public open space. While the entire length of the Appalachian Trail is protected, we are still working to locate other long distance trails on public lands, most notably the Long Path (350 miles) the Highlands Trail (175 miles), and the Shawangunk Ridge Trail (43 miles).

The Land Acquisition & Stewardship Fund (LASF) accepts credit card donations in 2003 for just this purpose. Until recently, these funds were tied up in land purchase waiting for acquisition by New York State. That is over, with the acquisition of 600 acres in two different parcels by New York Department of Environmental Conservation. (See our page 1 story on this for details.) Funds from the state associated with these purchases will pay off loans and the excess will return to the LASF for additional land protection projects.

Benton MacKaye certainly had the right idea when he proposed that volunteers with “leisure time” could come together to help create opportunities for the larger public to connect with nature. With your help, the Trail Conference is proving his point, year after year, decade after decade.

…”This project is expanding the trails community in a way that I think MacKaye would appreciate.”

Michael Brickman
Executive Director
mbrickman@nynjtc.org
August 2011

We Asked for Your Opinions, and You Gave Them

By Michael Brickman

In an effort to better serve our members we recently completed a survey. Thank you to everyone who participated. The New York-New Jersey Trail Conference thrives because of our active membership and your responses to the survey will help us improve our services to you. The 10 winners of the random drawing for a copy of either the Sterling Forest or Jersey Highlands map set will be announced in the September/October issue.

We received more than 1,000 responses to the survey of which more than 1,000 were members, 10% of our membership.

Survey Highlights

(See our website for the complete report.)

Member Involvement

We surveyed members about their involvement in the Trail Conference. Among the key findings:

• More than 80% of member respondents use our website to look up hiking information! If you are not using the site, there are some amazing features such as the hike finder, a calendar of hikes and events, and of course the official Trail Conference online store. Check us out now at nynjtc.org.

Other top ways members participate are:

• Nearly 25% maintain a trail.
• About one-third of members said they love the shopping discounts at our retail partners.

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Regional Field Notes

Catskills

Jeff Senterman,
Catskills Program Coordinator
jlsenterman@nynjtc.org

The Trail Conference continues to expand its outreach and trail work in the Catskills. We offered two introductory trailwork workshops this spring, one covering lean-to maintenance and the other trail maintenance. Both workshops were great successes with some of the best turnout that we have ever had in the region. In May, we partnered at Keno Outfitters’ first annual Trailfest in Kingston. We will be at the Batavia Kill Stream Celebration in August, and at a number of other events throughout the region this summer and fall seasons.

There is an effort afoot to rebuild the Catskill Trail Crew and create a dedicated crew that can do heavy-duty trail maintenance and building projects in the region. As a start, in June we worked with the staff of the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development to do trail work on the section of the Long Path that crosses the Center’s Plateau Clove Preserve in the northeastern Catskills. Other trips this summer will include bridge work, brook channeling, and helping to form a new Catskills Trail Committee.

The Lean-to Work Crew, with great support from Catskill 3500 Club members, is also up and running this year. We hope to complete a number of lean-to projects, including the reconstruction of the Shandaken Lean-to and the rehabilitation of the Devils’ Acre Lean-to.

The Trail Conference is also working with other regional organizations, including the Catskill Center, to expand recreation opportunities on the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) lands in the Catskills.

On May 6 more than 20 representatives of organizations and regional agencies in the Catskills attended the first meeting of the Catskill Trail Partners at the Catskill Center’s offices in Arkville, N.Y. This inaugural meeting was co-hosted by the Trail Conference and the Catskill Center and represents a cooperative effort to increase communication and coordination so as to improve Catskill trails and work towards more sustainable recreational opportunities.

Finally, a new web page on the Trail Conference’s website is a clearinghouse for updates on the state forest office near Hope, NJ, to Mountain Lake, providing views of the Great Valley and Delaware Water Gap. It will be completed this summer and we are planning to invite Trail Conference members and the public on an inaugural hike in the autumn. Watch for details.

There are still other TM opportunities in western New Jersey. For additional information contact Don Tipp, West Jersey Trails Chair at wwestjerseytrails@gmail.com.

Your Chance to be the Boss

We are looking for a Trails Chair for our new North Jersey Region. The Trail Conference encompasses Stokes State Forest as well as Wayawanda and High Point State Parks. Interested volunteers who wish to be considered for the position or have questions about what it entails can contact me at cingui@nynjtc.org.

New Jersey

Chris Ingui,
New Jersey Program Coordinator
cingui@nynjtc.org

Map Launch

It was a dark and stormy night, but the Trail Conference—on the Land Conservation of New Jersey were throwing a map launch party to give out the first new map to be added to the Trail Conference catalog in 11 years. The map covers over 300 miles of trails in 30 parks and is a virtual visual demonstration of the abundance of hiking opportunities that exist close to home for millions of people.

Congratulations and thanks to the project team led by volunteer Craig Nunn.

Jenny Jump Trail Recruiting Hike Fills All Slots

Our new West Jersey Trails Chair Don Tipp is off to a great start with this good news report:

Our newest trail in New Jersey is now fully staffed with enthusiastic trail maintainers. West Jersey Trail Crew supervisor Monica and David Day’s recruitment on May 22 provided the participants interested in becoming trail maintainers (TM) with insight regarding the Jenny Jump Trail’s construction and a detailed walk along the newly completed trail. TM’s current potential maintenance needs are significant. Among the six participants agreed to take responsibility for maintaining one of five trail segments covering the 7.4-mile length.

For the past six years the West Jersey Trail Crew members have been constructing a trail through the Jenny Jump State Forest. Originally conceived as the “Water Trail,” the Jenny Jump Trail will run from the state forest office near Hope, NJ, to Mountain Lake, providing views of the Great Valley and Delaware Water Gap. It will be completed this summer and we are planning to invite Trail Conference members and the public on an inaugural hike in the autumn. Watch for details.

There are still other TM opportunities in western New Jersey. For additional information contact Don Tipp, West Jersey Trails Chair at wwestjerseytrails@gmail.com.

New volunteers meet the new Jenny Jump Trail.

East Hudson

Leigh Draper,
East Hudson Program Coordinator
draper@nynjtc.org

East Hudson Community Trails

Last year, this collaboration between the Trail Conference and Teatown Lake Reservation in Westchester completed the 6.5-mile Teatown-Van Cortlandt Hike (TVCH), which travels through several New York City Dept. of Environmental Protection parks and lands directly to Westchester County Parks Kichawan Preserve trails. Thirty volunteers attended two training sessions and four work trips to complete the trail.

This spring the volunteer TVCH trail crew has been at work creating a trail along Ver- nay Lake, which connects to both the Back 40 and Hidden Valley Trails.

On May 21 and 22, the Jolly Rover crews and volunteers worked on two weekends in the Highlands: first at Great Kills and then at Tobacco. The project included a workshop teaching stone step building techniques to a number of other volunteers. The Rover’s efforts were to be in the area again at the end of June to install steps with the Yorktown Trails volunteers.

The Trail Conference has led two workshops for the Yorktown Trails project: a water bar workshop repaired an eroded section of trail in Sylvan Glen. A Trail Maintenance 101 was also held to train and recruit maintainers for Turkey Mountain, Grannie Knolls, Yorktown Trailway, and FDR Park.

Also in the works:

Current maintainers and other interested are encouraged to sign up for an Invasive Strike Force workshop to be held at Teatown Lake Reservation on July 10th.

The Duchess/Putnam Appalachian Trail crews continue to build boardwalks over the Great Swamp and across Pawling. NY. Other crews are making trail repairs and replacing bridges in Fahnstock and Hudson Highland State Parks.

Metro Area

Friends of Pelham Bay Park joined with the Adirondack Mountain Club for the fifth annual lagoon clean-up. Canoes were supplied by the NYC Urban Park Rangers, who conducted a briefing class for novices. Trail work days provided tree plantings for Million Tree Day and a meadow restoration.

A Trail Maintenance 101 was held on Staten Island and the Metro Trail Crew joined volunteers for a trail work day on the Staten Island Belt Path.

Van Cortlandt Park

FVCSP volunteers in trail building and maintenance. In May, we provided two work shops to the park’s trail volun teers. To learn more about the Van Cortlandt Park Trail Crew, visit: www.vancortlandt.org.

HT Views at Risk from Goosepond Mountain

A proposal to build 227 homes and 398 acres in the Town of Chester, NY (Orange County) has raised concern among those who care about scenic views from the Highlands Trail as it crosses the ridge of Goosepond Mountain. In response, West Hudson Program Coordinator Larry Wheelock took those concerns, and a map of the view as it would appear after development, to a meeting of the town’s planning board in April. Similar concerns were expressed in writing by Jim Hall, executive director of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. Town officials promised to meet with Trail Conference representatives about the issue and to report back on the issue to the Highlands Trail in a final plan. If fulfilled, that promise would end a section of road along this route and complete the Maple Path.

Bear Mountain Trails Project

A new chain of trails extending from Bear Mountain. The new 1.3-mile long loop summit, including nearly a half-mile of ADA-compliant, handicapped-accessible trail, was completed in time for a June 4, National Trails Day celebration. (See photos on page 3) As that project neared completion, young volunteers from Boy Scout Troop 258 lent their hands to closing the former route. Volunteers George Padnos and Chris Rowley finish the final touches on this project by paving the 2” x 6” blue rectangular AT blazes (official side trail blaze) along the new section, creating a shortcut across the Highlands. Meanwhile, attention turned to the base of the mountain, where work and workshops are set to begin on a demonstration trail. Located in the vicinity of the old stone Spider Hill House (former-ly a state restroom) has been developed into a new hiking and trails museum). A new 857-foot long section of the Appalachian Trail has been built and is a self-guided interpretive trail illustrating many of the efforts, structures, and thought that go into designing and building hiking
Appalachian Trail on Bear Mountain Summit
The new route of the AT on the summit of Bear Mountain is now open. It incorporates a 0.4 mile section of handicapped accessible trail. See page 12 for a description of a hike on the new loop. For an updated map of the trails on the summit, see right. You can download a larger version of this map from our website: nyntc.org/view/maps. It complements Map #119 of our Harriman–Bear Mountain Trails map set.

Highlands Trail Reroutes
Hikers should be aware that there are a few temporary reroutes along the Highlands Trail for 2011.

First, at Schunnemunk Mountain the HT is not currently accessible from Seven Springs road. Orange County is building new athletic fields and they plan to complete the project later this year.

Second, there is a long, slow walk in Chester, NY. The Highlands Trail Committee is working closely with the Town of Chester to move as much trail off the roads in the area as possible.

Third, the dam in Mahlon Dickerson Wildlife Management Area near Spruce Run Reservoir. The HT now lies closer to Van Wyck Road so hikers can use the road when the trail becomes overgrown in June and July. Trail maintenance is not allowed between April 15 and July 15 in this area to protect nesting birds. The Highlands Trail volunteers maintain this section of trail as quickly as possible after July 15th in order to return it to hiker-friendly condition.

Finally, efforts continue to improve the Highlands Trail route through the Clinton Wilderness Management Area near Spruce Run Reservoir. The HT now lies closer to Van Wyck Road so hikers can use the road when the trail becomes overgrown in June and July. Trail maintenance is not allowed between April 15 and July 15 in this area to protect nesting birds. The Highlands Trail volunteers maintain this section of trail as quickly as possible after July 15th in order to return it to hiker-friendly condition.

All of these updates as well as section descriptions, maps and other pertinent information are available on the Highlands Trail website, www.highlandstrail.org.

Long Path Relo in Harriman
The Long Path has been temporarily rerouted at 7 Lakes Drive, to avoid the dam reconstruction project between Lakes Shannetar and Askort. The temporary relocation has been blazed to cross the road and involves a stream crossing.

TBD = To Be Determined
For all trips bring work gloves, water, lunch, insect repellant. In some cases, tools are provided. Contact leaders in advance for meeting times and places.

REGIONAL TRAIL CREWS
LONG PATH/HAWKINS RIDGE TRAIL CREW
Leaders: Andy Garnett, arntmaintainer@gmail.com or 845-888-9052; Jakob Frankie, fjfh1989@gmail.com or 201-708-3010.
Saturday, July 15
Long Path, Realty in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. Relocating the LP on Mine Hole Road and the Mine Hole to Brettie Road connector (if permission is received from the park).
Saturday, August 6
Long Path, Realty in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. Relocating the LP (if permission is received from the park). See July 16.

CATSKILL TRAIL CREW
Contact: Jeff Senterman, jsenterman@nyntc.org or 518-703-1196.
Occasional work trips are planned. Contact for details or check the website. If you would like to be notified of our work trips by email send an email to Jeff Senterman and he will add you to the list.

Shandaken Brook Lean-to Reconstruction
Support for this project is provided by the Christopher Novak Memorial Fund.
Dates: Multiple weekends throughout July and August.
Location: Please contact Jeff Senterman for details and registration.

We will be hiking from the Slatehead Trailhead parking area approximately 2 miles to the Shandaken Brook Lean-to. We will be moving the lean-to building materials (hemp, straw, etc.) to the new lean-to site, constructing the new lean-to, and removing the old lean-to when the new one is completed.

Sawyers Wanted!
Jeff Senterman, jsenterman@nyntc.org

Check our website for possible additions or changes to schedules. Get involved with Trail Crews and become a Trail Crew Volunteer.

BUZZZZZZZZZZZ
A chainsaw safety course for Trail Conference volunteers was conducted in April at Hubbard Lodge in Fahnstock State Park. The two-day course, offered periodically by the Trail Conference and required for those seeking to become a volunteer sawyer on our trails, follows a curriculum developed by the US Forest Service.

Have paints, will travel.
Forty years later, John may be giving up the paperwork that goes with being Trails Supervisor, but not the opportunity to practice his trail artistry. Hikers will continue to find him and his handbook on the Split Rock Trail, what he calls the “Serenity Section” of the Stillman Trail (landlocked, western terminus), and the Hill of Pines Trail at his beloved Black Rock Forest.

LONG PATH/HAWKINS RIDGE TRAIL CREW
Leaders: Andy Garnett, arntmaintainer@gmail.com or 845-888-9052; Jakob Frankie, fjfh1989@gmail.com or 201-708-3010.
Saturday, July 15
Long Path, Realty in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. Relocating the LP on Mine Hole Road and the Mine Hole to Brettie Road connector (if permission is received from the park).
Saturday, August 6
Long Path, Realty in Minnewaska State Park Preserve. Relocating the LP (if permission is received from the park). See July 16.

CATSKILL TRAIL CREW
Contact: Jeff Senterman, jsenterman@nyntc.org or 518-703-1196.
Occasional work trips are planned. Contact for details or check the website. If you would like to be notified of our work trips by email send an email to Jeff Senterman and he will add you to the list.

Shandaken Brook Lean-to Reconstruction
Support for this project is provided by the Christopher Novak Memorial Fund.
Dates: Multiple weekends throughout July and August.
Location: Please contact Jeff Senterman for details and registration.

We will be hiking from the Slatehead Trailhead parking area approximately 2 miles to the Shandaken Brook Lean-to. We will be moving the lean-to building materials (hemp, straw, etc.) to the new lean-to site, constructing the new lean-to, and removing the old lean-to when the new one is completed.

Sawyers Wanted!
Jeff Senterman, jsenterman@nyntc.org

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TRAIL CONFERENCE VOLUNTEERS

March 19, 2011 – May 20, 2011

The Volunteer Committee acknowledges these new volunteers who took on or completed an assignment during the time period noted above, as well as existing volunteers who have accepted additional assignments. We extend our thanks to them, and to all our volunteers.

Board Member: Charlotte Fahn
Office Program Assistants: Joan Doris, Ken Hall, Patricia Livingston
Trail Corridor Monitors: Charles P. Holmes, Erica Ward-Gonzalez

Trail Supervisor: Andrew Serius

Did we miss you or someone you know? Please tell us so we can correct our records and give you the thanks you deserve. Contact the Volunteer Administrator via email: volunteers@nynjtc.org

* Adopted multiple trail sections.

Peter Frishauf & K C Rice

Congratulate

Kelley Litzner & Rachel Mendelowitz

On their June 25, 2011 Wedding.
Best Wishes for Great Hikes in the Hudson Highlands & Beyond.

Don Weise Joins TC Fundraising Team

Author, hike leader, and environmental advocate Don Weise has joined the Trail Conference staff as development manager for major gift donations. Don brings over 20 years of business development experience and an inside perspective on hiking and the Trail Conference to the job.

Don has served as a Trail Conference board member and trail maintainer, co-chair of the West Milford Open Space Committee, leader of fundraising and advocacy events for the Trail Conference, and author of Wild Walks of Sussex County, a local hiking book. His latest book, Circuit Hikes In Harriman, is to be published by the Trail Conference.

“The Trail Conference does so much for the hiking community,” says Don. “I feel privileged to be part of this organization’s fundraising efforts.” When not working to build support for the Trail Conference, Don enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, hiking, and running.

Volunteer! The Trail Conference Needs You!

To apply, or for more details about these and other volunteer opportunities, go to the Volunteer Web Page on our website at: www.nynjtc.org/volunteers or contact us at: volunteers@nynjtc.org

OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES

Become a Trail Maintainer! Great Work Environment!

Adopt a section of a trail and help to keep our region accessible, pristine and protected. We have vacancies for maintainers on trail sections in these areas:

- Taconic State Park, Southern Columbia County, NY
- Harriman Bear Mountain (north-west section) in Orange County, NY
- Black Rock Forest, Orange County, NY
- Staten Island, Richmond County, NY
- East of the Hudson, Dutchess County

Get out and about volunteering as a Trail Corridor Monitor:

Corridor Monitors watch the corridors of a section of the National Park Service’s Appalachian National Scenic Trail approximately 2 to 4 times per year, maintaining boundary markings and reporting conditions to the land managers. There are vacancies for volunteers to monitor the trail land boundaries on both sides of the Hudson River.

East: Westchester County, Dutchess County

Since going to press, trail maintenance or monitor opportunities in other areas may have become available, as well as other on-trail positions such as: Trail Supervisor, Corridor Manager, Event Coordinator, Warden, Great Trails Assistant, Land-to-Shelter Caretaker, and Trail Inventory Monitor. Check our current opportunities and see what they entail at: www.nynjtc.org/vol-trail-vacancies

INDOOR OPPORTUNITIES

Member Relations Volunteers

We need volunteers to help us engage with our members in our mission of providing access to open space in our region. Help us with mailing, marketing, responding to questions, offering assistance. We will match your skills, qualifications, and interests to the projects on hand.

Order Processing Assistant

Do you want to be a part of the team that sells our outstanding trail maps and books? We have an opening for a volunteer to assist our Fulfillment Coordinator with various bookkeeping tasks. Come join us in our interesting and educational office environment—we need your help!

Are Your Fridays Free?

If you have a few hours or more to spare on Fridays and would like to share your knowledge of hiking trails in our area and help the office staff, we are waiting for you! Volunteer in our office help front the desk office, answering our phones and questions from fellow hikers. We will provide all the necessary training.

We have details on these, as well as other off-trail volunteer opportunities on our website at: www.nynjtc.org/vol-vacancies

DONORS TO THE ANNUAL FUND

March 24 – May 23, 2011

GIFTS


TRIBUTES

In memory of Chadwick J. Beourd: Catherine O’Hara & George O’Hara-Gall, Jennings High School Class of 1980 Honorarium Committee

In memory of H. Lindel Beidler: Eileen & Tom Beidler

In memory of Donald F. Blau: John A. & Mary Beidler

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In memory of Eunice E. Fontana: Stan F. & Sally Fontana

In honor of Joan Gray: Deborah D. Bialkowski

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & OTHER DONORS


Tributes are only printed for donations of $25 or more.

Board, Delegate Nominations for 2011

The Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors hereby presents candidates for the following Board of Directors’ terms and Delegates at Large for one-year term to be voted on at the Annual Meeting of the New-York-New Jersey Trail Conference, Inc. to be held on October 15, 2011 at Capalot Community Center in Ossining, NY.

For Board of Directors

Daniel Van Engel

Dan is a neurologist in private practice in Ridgewood, NJ. He is a life member of the Valley Hospital in Ridgewood where he currently serves as the Director of the Spine Center. He chairs the Darlington School House Committee for the Trail Conference. Eddie has served on the board of directors since 2005.

Edward Sallit

Eddie is an advisor of biology at Ramapo College, and clinical professor of pathophysiology and neurosciences at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He has served on and chaired the Mahwah Environmental Commission, and was a Board of Education Chair. He chairs the Darlington School House Committee for the Trail Conference. Eddie has served on the board of directors since 2008.

James A. Gregory

Jim sold Goldberg Capital LLC, an investment management and consulting firm. He has been a trail maintainer for the Trail Conference for five years and has been an Appalachian Trail supervisor for six years. Jim currently serves as the Treasurer of the Trail Conference. Jim has served on the board of directors since 2009.

Walter E. Daniels

Following his 30-year career at IBM, Walt has volunteered over 2,000 hours annually for the last 15 years for the Trail Conference. Walt is a long-time trail maintainer, trail supervisor, trail assessor leader, work-shop leader, steering committee member for the New-York-New Jersey Trail Conference, publications committee member and co-author of Walkable Wheelchair.

Richard R. Levine

Rick Levine is the Managing Director of TFP Associates, a commercial real estate developer and manager of transportation facilities, primarily at Newark Airport. He was also executive director of the “Love Newark Committee,” a public-private environmental initiative, a hike leader for the Appalachian Trail, board member of Trucks Debbie for Kids program, and an event leader for the Fashion Institute of Technology.

Anne Todd Osborn

(to fill for one year the seat being vacated by Jane Daniels.) Anne of Canton, NY, is a former member of the Trail Conference Board, Delegate and Board, Delegate since 2009.

Charlotte Fahn

(to complete the term of Josie Gray) Charlotte has been an active volunteer with Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct since 1996, serving as project manager and editor on two map-guide projects and as Friends president. She is project manager of the forthcoming Hike of the Week book for the Trail Conference.

For Delegate-at-Large

George Becker

Robert Berlin

Dave Buchner

Harvey Fishman

Steve Gallia

John Jurasek

Harold Kaplan

Mark Letz

Paul Makus

Jeff Marrocco

Margo Meag

George Petty

Michael Kuff

Trudy Schneider

Ruth Rosenthal

Trudy Schneider

Noomi Surin

Robert Ward

Gary Wilshire

Patricia Wooster

Richard Zinn
Indian Pipe – A Ghostly Inhabitant of the Forest

By Edna Greig

They look like some type of fungus but are underground, mycorrhizal fungi that, in fact, is to the roots of a living tree. Symbioses between mycorrhizal fungi and photosynthesizing plants like trees are common. The tree’s roots gather water and nutrients from the soil by way of the fungus, and the fungus takes carbohydrates that the tree has produced with energy from the sun. It is a mutually beneficial relationship. Indian pipe is an interloper in this symbiosis, stealing the tree’s carbohydrates from the fungus and giving nothing in return. Scientists consider Indian pipe a parasite of the fungus.

Indian pipe parasites only a limited number of fungus species. Its dust-like seeds are fertilized, the downward facing flowers are not green coloration. It also doesn’t need leaves to gather sunlight. What it does need is to have its roots connected with an underground, mycorrhizal fungus that, in turn, is connected to the roots of a living tree. Symbioses between mycorrhizal fungi and photosynthesizing plants like trees are common. The tree’s roots gather water and nutrients from the soil by way of the fungus, and the fungus takes carbohydrates that the tree has produced with energy from the sun. It is a mutually beneficial relationship. Indian pipe is an interloper in this symbiosis, stealing the tree’s carbohydrates from the fungus and giving nothing in return. Scientists consider Indian pipe a parasite of the fungus.

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The activities listed are sponsored by member clubs of the NYNJ Trail Conference. All hikes are subject to regular rules and rules of the hike. We are responsible for your safety. Wear boots or other trail boots. Bring food, water, snacks, rain gear, first aid kit, a flashlight and a map. Hikers have the right and responsibility to refuse anyone where they believe cannot complete the hike or is not adequately equipped. Easy, moderate, or strenuous hikes are relative terms; club leaders in all doubt. More than 150 clubs belong to the Trail Conference, and many of our affiliate groups sponsor hikes not listed in the Flier’s Almanar. A description of all clubs, look for our website www.nynjtc.org for more information.

Club Codes
Only those clubs with hikes offered in this issue are listed. Please call member hikes to confirm.

AFW: Appalachian Footpaths
AYW: Appalachian Young Women
GHC: German American Hiking Club
IRC: Interstate Hiking Club
NYC: New York City Hiking Club

AW: Appalachian Woman Leaders
AWC: Appalachian Women’s Coalition
BTV: Blue Hill Trail
CAMP: Catskill Mountain Parks
CE: Catskill East
CH: Catskill High Peaks
CIT: Catskill Indian Trail
FC: Floyd Bennett Field
FVYM CA: Frost Valley YMCA
GHC: German American Hiking Club
GAM: Great American Monticello
GGAH: Gateway Gulf and Atlantic Highlands
HSTR: Hiking for Stark Trail
HVS: Hudson Valley Staircases
LEIGH DRAPER: Leigh Draper Foundation
ỦCH: Union County Hiking Club
WECWW: Wees Ecology Center
WTC: Westchester Trails Association

NYR: New York Rangers
SW: Shrewheaters
UCH: Union County Hiking Club
IRC: Interstate Hiking Club
NYC: New York City Hiking Club

July

Saturday, July 2


Saturday, July 9


Sunday, July 3

WEM: Catskill East, Catskill High Peaks, Catskill Indian Trail
CT: Connecticut Trail Conference
HVT: Hudson Valley Trail
MYC: Mountain Young Cascades
NEW: New England Trails
NYS: New York State Park System
NYNJ: New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
NYRI: New York Recreation Institute
GC: Gateway Gulf and Atlantic Highlands
SHT: Southern High Trail Conference
TRC: Trail Conference
WWE: Westchester Women’s Network

June

Saturday, June 11

NYR: New York Rangers
SW: Shrewheaters
UCH: Union County Hiking Club
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July/August 2011

Find more hikes at www.nynjtc.org. Click on Scheduled Hikes under Go Hiking!
sleeve shirts and pants may not be very comfortable in the summer, but they are a necessity. If you notice difficulties with making repairs on your footwear, at 4:00 pm on this Friday, 10 May

Make sure you apply it every two hours to keep it working effectively. Long clothing. Always use a good insect repellent. I recommend the use of DEET (100% concentration), as it seems to be better. Shuttle required.

Shuttle required. Moderately paced 6-9 hilly miles. Shaded summer glory. Beulahland Trail. After lunch overlooking the Delaware River; we will hike 5 miles along roads and the beach.

WTA. Mianus River Gorge Preserve, Westchester, NY. Leader: Bob Russo is a Trail Conference member and volunteer for the WTA. Croton Gorge Park and the Old Croton Aqueduct.

The grounds of what is now the Weis Ecology Center and the Highlands Natural Pool were once used by the indigenous Lenape people. In the 18th century, the British government acquired the land and established the Highlands, Inc. In the tradition of the Nature Friends, the pool is run and maintained by volunteers who continue to be much loved by all who know it.

If you plan to bring your dog along for a hike, please note: Health rules prohibit dogs on these grounds. (Today, the Nature Friends are still very active in Europe.) The recreation area is a continuation of the Highlands, Inc. In the tradition of the Nature Friends, the pool is run and maintained by volunteers who continue to be much loved by all who know it.

Please make sure you bring in enough water to drink during your hike.

So the next time you come for a hike this way, plan for some R&R and a swim on your way back. Enjoy a bit of history in a natural setting among poplars and evergreens.

Leave No Trace: Ethics & Tip Tricks by Bob Russo

Tips for Summer Hiking

Summer hiking is an important activity in many parts of the country, but the heat and humidity can make it challenging. Here are some tips to help you stay comfortable and enjoy your hike:

1. Wear the right gear: Choose clothing that wicks away sweat and allows air to circulate. This can help prevent heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

2. Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water before, during, and after your hike to prevent dehydration.

3. Protect your skin: Wear sunscreen with a high SPF and a wide-brimmed hat to protect your skin from the sun.

4. Prevent insect bites: Use insect repellent with DEET to protect yourself from mosquito and tick bites.

5. Avoid hiking during the hottest part of the day: Choose to hike in the early morning or late afternoon when the temperature is cooler.

6. Know the hazards: Be aware of the potential hazards of hiking in the summer, such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

7. Be prepared: Carry a first aid kit, a map, and enough water and food for your hike.

8. Leave no trace: Pick up any trash you see on the trail to help protect the environment.

By following these tips, you can enjoy a safer and more enjoyable summer hike. Remember to stay hydrated, wear the right gear, and leave no trace.

Bob Russo is a Trail Conference member and volunteer at the Highlands Natural Pool. For more information about Leave No Trace principles, visit www.lnt.org.

Memorial Day

Troop 23 Closes Roadside AT of Garbage

Boys Scout Troop 23 from West Point completed a trail maintenance project on the AT, specifically on the new bypass trail outside of the zoo in Bear Mountain. The troop collected a significant amount of trash on the side of the road in this area. Troop sponsor Cap J. Chris- tensen notes, “Lots of trash gets tossed out of passing cars over the side of the hill.”

Member Group Profile: Highlands Natural Pool

Did you know that when you park at New Jersey Audubon’s Weis Ecology Center, in Ringwood, NJ, and walk through the Center’s grounds and then around the Highlands Natural Pool—you are passing through a bit of history?

The grounds of what is now the Weis Ecology Center and the Highlands Natural Pool were once used by the indigenous Lenape people. In the 18th century, the British government acquired the land and established the Highlands, Inc. In the tradition of the Nature Friends, the pool is run and maintained by volunteers who continue to be much loved by all who know it.

If you plan to bring your dog along for a hike, please note: Health rules prohibit dogs on these grounds. Today, the Nature Friends are still very active in Europe.

The Highlands Natural Pool was carved out of the hillside by the Nature Friends in 1935 and since 1977 has been owned and operated by the nonprofit Community Association of the Highlands, Inc. In the tradition of the Nature Friends, the pool is run and maintained by volunteers who continue to be much loved by all who know it.

So the next time you come for a hike this way, plan for some R&R and a swim on your way back. Enjoy a bit of history in a natural setting among poplars and evergreens.

Leave a swim advice! Mention your event! And you'll get a discount on the admission fee!

The stream-fed Highlands Natural Pool is adjacent to Norwood Green Forest Service.

Hours in 2011:

- Saturday, May 28 through Sunday June 26: weekends only, 11 am to 7 pm
- Saturday, June 25 through Labor Day, September 5: weekdays from 11 am to 8 pm, and weekends from 11 am to 9 pm
- Saturday September 10 through Sunday September 25: weekends only, 11 am to 7 pm
- Weather conditions and diminishing daylight as the summer draws to a close will affect operating hours. Telephone 973-835-4299; on the web at www.highlandsnaturapool.org.

About Dogs

If you plan to bring your dog along for a hike, please note: Health rules prohibit dogs on these grounds. One of the things you can do to protect the pool’s water supply is to not allow your dog to drink from the pool.

Join the Trail Walker Group!

Get links to all Trail Conference member groups online under the Community tab at www.njtrailconference.org. Start a new group or join an existing group. Submit your news and photos for Trail Walker and the website via email: tw@njtrail.org.
A new footbridge has been constructed and trail maintenance was performed at one of the hiking trails at Camp Glen Gray. This was an Eagle Scout project led by Mahwah High School freshman, Ryan Ciocci, with the help of scouts, parents, and friends of Mahwah Boy Scout Troop 258. The project was completed in May 2011.

North Jersey Trails Chair John Moran guided the project.

The footbridge was built on the Yellow Trail, near the junctions of the Yellow-Silver and Schuber (Orange) Trails. Prior to the footbridge, the rocky terrain and rushing stream were challenging to cross. A footbridge was greatly needed.

Rocks were strategically placed in the upper part of the stream as a means to slow down rushing waters. Rocks were also added to the bank of the stream to prevent flooding. Overgrown shrubs were trimmed, fallen tree branches and other debris, was cleaned up.

Some of Our Discount Partners

The Trail Conference is proud to offer a Membership Benefit Program, which was created to provide our members with money-saving discounts at area retailers and service providers — benefits only available to Trail Conference members.

As part of your Trail Conference membership, you are issued a card identifying you as a Trail Conference member, making you eligible for all program discounts. To receive your member discounts, you must present your valid membership card at the time of purchase. Some stores offer the discount only on select items, so be sure to ask.

We encourage our members to take advantage of this incredible opportunity that comes with a Trail Conference membership. New discounts and offers are continually being added so be sure to visit our website’s membership benefits area at www.nynjtc.org/content/retail-partners for current offers.

25% Discount on Trail Conference publications and clothing when purchased directly from the Trail Conference.

FREE Subscription to the Trail Walker, the Trail Conference’s bi-monthly newsletter filled with timely articles and columns that will enhance your hiking experiences.

Money-Saving Discounts at participating retailers and businesses.

Workshops and Seminars on trail maintenance and construction, leadership training, wilderness first aid, chainsaw operation, environmental monitoring and GPS operation.

Volunteer Opportunities to “learn by doing” in areas as varied as trail maintenance, construction, publications, environmental monitoring, and cartography.

Access to the Hoeffler Library at the Trail Conference office that includes more than 1,000 books on hiking worldwide, along with maps, guides and a historical archive.

Some of Our Discount Partners

VISIT WWW.NYNJTC.ORG/CONTENT/RETAIL-PARTNERS FOR COMPLETE LIST OF MONEY-SAVING DISCOUNTS!
Barefoot Hiking??

By Howard E. Friedman, DPM

Let your thoughts drift back to your last great hike. Scenic vistas. A waterfall or bubbling brook, perhaps. And a rocky trail, no doubt. Now imagine retracing your steps on that hike, but barefoot. If mega shoe manufacturers like Merrell and Nike can convince you, you may just start hiking in a minimalist shoe to a closet slipper than a hiking boot. Of course, if everyone decided to hike really barefoot, there would be no need to purchase the new breed of "barefoot" shoes so heavily advertised at more than $100 a pair.

While there are passionate advocates for running, walking, and hiking barefoot, the term "barefoot running" can often refer to a shoe that is very flexible with a thin sole and little if any mid-foot or arch support. Such shoes are now labeled "minimalist shoes."

Clearly, this type of footwear is not for everyone. Individuals who enjoy several foot items such as toe fingers, significant arthritis of the foot, or medical conditions that require specific footwear, should consult a foot specialist before trying a minimalist shoe. Others may find occasional use of "barefoot" shoes worthwhile.

The Hype

Minimalist shoes have definitely gone mainstream. Nike, Merrell, and Vibram all promote the benefits of minimalist shoes on their websites. For example Vibram, creator of Five Fingers, shoes that look like a glove, claims that their shoes will strengthen the foot and leg muscles; improve motion in the ankles, feet, and toes; stimulate nerve receptors in the feet, which will help to reprogram the brain; improve posture by lowering the heel to the ground; and "allow the foot and body to move naturally—which just feels good."

Myriad web and blog sites launched by self-appointed barefoot running gurus also tout barefoot and minimalist shoes with similar claims. Underlying all the claims is the belief that today's over-engineered running and hiking shoes are to blame for many sports-related injuries of the feet, legs, knees, and hips.

What the Research Shows

Recent research does support measurable biomechanical changes in the walking cycle when switching from wearing traditional shoes to going barefoot.

Researchers at Rush Medical College found that for people with arthritis of the inside, or medial, compartment of the knee, increase the forces on the painful joint by almost 12% compared to walking barefoot. A study published in the British Medical Journal in 2011 concurs and adds that forces on the knee are reduced even when walking in a flexible-soled shoe with a flat sole compared to what walking in traditional walking shoes.

Italian researchers published in 2009 that experienced barefoot runners demonstrated decreased stride length, decreased impact force, decreased contact time, and increased stride frequency with similar shoes with a flat bottom as compared to traditional running shoes.

Shorter, more frequent strides, the force of impact on the heel decreased by about 27%.

The mechanics of why barefoot running decreases the force of impact has been explained and published by researchers led by evolutionary biologist Daniel Lieberman, PhD, of Harvard University, in a study supported by the company Vibram. People accustomed to running barefoot experience significantly lower forces as the foot strikes the ground because those runners land on the forefoot first, the researchers report. The force of initial impact generated is three times lower than those runners striking the ground with the heel first.

Changing a barefoot runner landing on his forefoot first to someone wearing shoes landing on his heel first, the overall force decreases by seven times. By the time the barefoot heel strikes the ground, forces have dissipated.

The conclusion is that our brains are set up to respond to the lack of shoe weight. Even someone wearing traditional shoes, however, will decrease his or her overall force of impact a small amount by landing on their forefoot first, that is, walking on tip-toes, Dr. Lieberman explained in an email.

What We Don't Know

Enthusiasts for barefoot running, walking, and even hiking suggest that rates of injury will decrease as more people exercise in more flexible shoes with no elevated heels. An article in the British Medical Journal in 2007 estimated a wide range of between 19-79% as the number of runners who develop an injury.

No concrete proof exists, however, that running shoes are the cause of injuries. Indeed, no published data exist about whether people who have traditionally gone without shoes have a lower incidence of injuries, although Dr. Lieberman's Harvard lab will be publishing that data in the future.

Moreover, walking, hiking, or running barefooted without proper conditioning could very well lead to injuries such as achilles tendinitis or even metatarsal stress fractures. Needless to say people who actually walk, run, or hike barefooted are at risk of simple skin lacerations and puncture wounds.

What To Do?

Any hiker considering experimenting with hiking in minimalist shoes should try the following: walk around your house for a few hours barefoot or in socks. See if your feet, legs, knees, and hips are comfortable. Then, don the backpack you would wear on a day hike to the same weight normally worn and repeat the exercise. How does it feel?

If you feel pain free and are enjoying the experience, you may be a candidate to wear a pair of minimalist shoes on at least part of your next hike. Allow at least eight weeks of conditioning to become comfortable "barefoot hiking."
**New Summit Loop on Bear Mountain**

The full trail includes steps and rugged terrain.

Hike writer Danial Chazin, editor of numerous Trail Conference books and maps and author of the Hike of the Week column, had this to say: “The trail construction is absolutely fabulous, and it represents some of the most exquisite stonework I have ever seen on a trail.”

Credit for this work, which includes a 0.4-mile section of trail built to be handi-capped accessible in accord with the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act, goes to the Trail Conference professional and volunteer trail builders led by Eddie Walsh, principal of Tahawus Trails, in charge of the overall project.

The loop can be accessed from the parking lot at Perkins Tower, as described here, or incorporated into a longer hike starting elsewhere in the park. The following is excerpted from Chazin’s hike description elsewhere in the park.

**Introduction**

Hikers’ Marketplace

**NY-NJ TC member?** □ YES □ NO □ JOINING NOW □ Member # □

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**Books**

| Walkable Westchester (2009) & see combo | $24.95 | $18.71 | $5.70 | |
| Hiking the Highlands (2007) | $22.95 | $17.21 | $3.70 | |
| New York Walk Book (2005) & see combo | $22.95 | $17.21 | $3.70 | |
| Hiking Long Island (2008) | $22.95 | $17.21 | $3.70 | |
| Kittatinny Trails (4) & see combo | $18.95 | $14.96 | $3.50 | |
| Scenes & Walks in the Northern Shawangunks (2006) & see combo | $13.95 | $10.46 | $3.50 | |
| AMC Catskill Mountain Guide (2009) | $23.95 | $17.96 | $3.50 | |
| AOK Catskill Trails (2005 ed. with revisions, 2009) & see combo | $19.95 | $14.96 | $3.50 | |
| AOK | $19.95 | $14.96 | $3.50 | |
| 50 Hills in the Lower Hudson Valley (2008) | $16.95 | $12.71 | $3.70 | |
| Best Hikes w/ Children in the Catskills & Hudson Valley River (2002) | $14.95 | $11.21 | $3.70 | |
| West Milford Baker’s Dozen (2008) | $9.95 | $7.46 | $2.70 | |

**Combo-Packs**

| NEW! | | |
| New Jersey map combo (Jersey Highlands Trails: Central North and North Jersey) | $17.11 | $12.84 | $3.20 | |
| Harriman map set & Harriman Trails book | $29.95 | $22.95 | $7.00 | |
| NEW! | | | |
| Old Croton Aqueduct map set (2 maps) | $26.71 | $19.95 | $6.50 | |
| NEW! Westchester (Old Croton Aqueduct map, Westchester & Walkable Westchester book) | $38.60 | $29.85 | $8.70 | |
| NEW! | | | |
| Catskill & ADK Catskills Trails book | $31.73 | $23.80 | $7.90 | |

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| Note Cards: TC Collection | $12.00 | $9.00 | $3.00 | |
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| Trail Conference Logo Patch | $2.50 | $2.50 | $0.00 | |
| DEC Circle: Inside Outside | $8.50 | $6.50 | $2.00 | |

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For a full descriptive catalog, please visit nynjtc.org/shop.

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**TRAIL WALKER**

July/August 2011

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