Adirondack Mountain Club — Schenectady Chapter

Dedicated to the preservation, protection and enjoyment of the Forest Preserve

http://www.adk-schenectady.org
Adirondack Mountain Club — Schenectady Chapter Board

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On the cover
Whitewater on the Schroon in May.
From foreground: Ed Martuscello, Rick Gonzales and Don Orr.
See Trip Tales on page 8. Photo by Mal Provost.
Chapter Expands Its Trail Program

The Schenectady Chapter has had an active trails program for most of its 74-year history. In the 1940s, the chapter built the short trail to Mt. Gilligan, in the High Peaks area near Elizabethtown. Though far from being a high peak, Gilligan has a beautiful view across the Boquet River valley to Rocky Peak Ridge and the Dix Range. We still maintain the Mt. Gilligan trail. In the late 1960s, the chapter adopted two trails to Porter Mountain, from the Garden and from the Keene Valley via the ridge over Blueberry Mountain. We maintained these trails for nearly 40 years.

The North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST) is a 4,600-mile trail extending from North Dakota to Lake Champlain. During the last 10 years, Schenectady Chapter members have taken a lead role in the development of the NCNST through the eastern half of the Adirondacks. More than 50 trips have been made to explore and GPS potential routes through this section, many of them through currently trailless areas. In late 2015, the Adirondack Park Agency and DEC released the final plan for the NCNST in the Adirondacks, which incorporated many of our routes and recommendations. We are now helping DEC foresters to update the DEC unit management plans to include the NCNST and to define detailed routes for new sections of the NCNST through the trail-less areas.

We are also expanding the chapter’s trails program by adopting and maintaining some existing trails that will become sections of the NCNST. Earlier this year, we adopted two such trails in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness west of Schroon Lake: the Bailey Pond trail (0.9 miles long) and the south end of the Hoffman Notch trail (1.2 miles long). We are also considering taking on the maintenance of the Big Pond trail, also in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness, most of which will also become part of the NCNST.

Two opportunities to participate in our chapter’s trails activities are included in this edition’s Innings and Outings schedule. On Tuesday, August 22, we will walk end-to-end on the Big Pond trail, to assess its condition and determine whether our chapter is willing to take on the task of maintaining it. On Saturday, September 23, we will do trail maintenance on the Bailey Pond trail and the southern end of the Hoffman Notch trail. See the schedule for further details.

Our trail maintenance work is generally easy or moderate, and involves common hand tools (no chain saws). The chapter has most of the needed equipment (hand clippers, loppers, hand saws), but participants can bring their own. If you are interested in helping with the chapter’s trails program, please sign up for one or both of these outings.

--Norm Kuchar,
Trails Chair
Kelly Center Displays Adirondack Maps

Finding your way around the Adirondacks can be a challenge, most will admit. While that has become infinitely easier these days with good maps, state promotions and GPS, much time spent on trails or back roads frequently will still produce tales of confusion and frustration. So imagine what it was like when the Adirondacks were truly "terra incognito," a forbidding land of deep forests, swamps, peaks and rivers. Plus bugs.

Those difficult early times – going back to the 16th century when explorers slogged and paddled their way along the eastern waterways like the lakes now called Champlain and George – are on display at the Kelly Adirondack Center called "Parts But Little Known: Maps of the Adirondacks from 1556." The display will continue through September 29 during visitor hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays and 1-4 p.m. Thursdays. It includes about 30 maps, from some of the oldest to modern services and reflects the region's development from mystery to lumber and mineral resource to tourism.

The show has been curated by Cal Welch, Union Class of 1962, and his daughter Caroline, Class of 2001, and assisted by Margie Amodeo, Kelly Center librarian. The maps are from the center's historic material and on loan from a private collection.

The display is part of the growing effort of the Kelly Center – owned by Union College and located in the former home of Paul Schaefer on St. David's Lane in Niskayuna – to catalogue and make available troves of historic photos, books, journals and other records. It reflects and continues the efforts of Schaefer – 1908-1996, a ground breaking environmentalist with strong connections to Union College – to protect the wild and historic nature of the North Country. Schaefer, a home builder with limited formal education, received an honorary doctorate in 1976 in recognition of his environmental advocacy, and taught some non-credit courses at the college.

The Kelly Center's efforts over recent months have included lectures and panel discussions (see article on Boeas Ponds), an Adirondack art series, Adirondack Week, which in May included performances and other events, and a summer research fellows program. Reach the center at 518-280-5951, or amodeom@union.edu.

--Mal Provost
Panel Discusses State Boreas Ponds Protection

With summer in high gear the Adirondacks are buzzing. There's the bugs of course, plus loads of hikers, lake vacationers, campers, paddlers and cyclists. And there is at least anticipation for some buzz around how the state should classify the Boreas Ponds and surrounding tract of some 22,000 acres of remote scenic land.

That question has been before the Adirondack Park Agency since last year and a recommendation to the governor on how restrictive the classification should be is well past its expected release.

The details and options under review have been reported widely for months, centering on road access to the ponds, whether motorized use of the ponds and surrounding land should be allowed, or whether the tract should be classified as wilderness, providing maximum protection of its unique character.

To keep the question before the public, Union College's Kelly Adirondack Center sponsored a panel discussion May 16 that featured three speakers with great knowledge of the region and issues involved. They were Dave Gibson, managing partner of Adirondack Wild; John Sheehan, director of communications for Adirondack Council (partnered with other organizations including the Adirondack Mountain Club); and David Olbert, owner of Cloudsplitter Outfitters and licensed guide out of Newcomb.

Gibson's position on classification was that the entirety of the 22,000-acre tract should be wilderness, including closing of Gulf Brook Road to all but foot traffic, which would mean a hike to the ponds of about seven miles one way. Mountain bikes would be prohibited but hikers could portage canoes or kayaks to the ponds.

He said that position is based in the original intent of the State Land Master Plan (SLMP) adopted in the 1970s with the formation of the Adirondack Park Agency. The primary objective of that plan, he said, was protection of natural resources, with recreation as a secondary issue. The maximum protection of this environment, he said, would be achieved through wilderness classification. He cited a 2016 study of the Boreas Tract by the Wildlife Conservation Society that said half of all the vertebrate populations in the Adirondacks find habitat in the tract, and that this is unique and of critical importance.

Later in the discussion Gibson said that Adirondack Wild "could live" with a decision allowing greater access, as suggested in different forms by Sheehan and Olbert, while maintaining that protection from motorized traffic or heavy usage remains the key.

Sheehan favored vehicle access up to a one-mile buffer zone of wilderness, which would prohibit motorized traffic on or around the ponds. He noted that Exit 29 of the Northway is 20 minutes away from the Gulf Brook Road intersection with Blue Ridge Road, and suggested that this could provide an alternate access area to the High Peaks. While favoring wilderness status for the ponds, he noted the attraction of the commercial success of the Keene Valley area, largely due to being a jumping off point for High Peaks hiking.

The Boreas Tract, he said, "Fits like a puzzle piece into the High Peaks Wilderness." Regarding the economic impact of wilderness areas, he cited a Clarkson University study that showed property values over recent years have increased with the awareness and popularity of remote areas.

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Panel Discusses State Boreas Ponds Protection

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Olbert said he grew up in Tahawus and remembered the population and relative economic strength of the area when there was an open pit iron mine, compared with much more difficult times now. He sees the ponds area as a potential economic spark for the region and cited both the Essex Chain of Lakes and the Santanoni Estate as examples of a popular destination not being decimated by foot or bicycle traffic. He favored vehicle access to the "Four Corners," a dirt road intersection about one mile from the Boreas Ponds proper. This would allow even handicapped individuals reasonable access, he said, further suggesting that there be a steward at the parking area, similar to those on Mt. Marcy, for example.

While Olbert acknowledged there are "bad actors" that pose problems, some oversight would help prevent this, and use would level out after an initial period. He did not suggest motorized use of the ponds or surrounding area, other than the road access.

Buzz notwithstanding, as Lookout goes to press it remains unclear when the next step on the Boreas plan will be taken.

--Mal Provost
How do I sign up for a hike?
For further details or to sign up for a hike, call the trip leader. Try to call at least two days in advance, as leaders may cancel on the day before an outing if there is insufficient interest. Leaders reserve the right to refuse participants for any reason, including lack of experience and/or lack of physical fitness. All equipment and supplies are the sole responsibility of the trip participants.

What do I need to bring?
The trip leader will let you know if any special equipment (crampons, snowshoes, etc.) will be needed. In general, you should always carry food, water, rain gear, map, compass, headlamp, first aid kit and extra clothing, including hat and gloves in case temperatures drop. Clothing for wet or cold weather should not be made of cotton — use a synthetic fleece or wool. If in doubt, ask the leader.

What if I don’t have snowshoes/crampons?
The chapter has hi-tech snowshoes and one pair of universal fit crampons available for rental at $5/trip. Contact Stan Stoklosa at 383-3066 to arrange for pick up from his convenient location in Clifton Park. Gear is also available to rent at local retailers..

Should I reimburse drivers for gas?
Yes! Each rider should pay their driver four to five cents per mile, depending on the current cost of gasoline. With gas at $2 per gallon, four cents per mile should be used and at $2.50 per gallon, five cents should be used ($3/gallon – six cents, etc).

The kind of hikes I’d like to do aren’t listed here — what can I do?
Trip leaders may be willing to plan trips based on member suggestions. If there’s a specific trip you’d like to do, contact Larry Woods at 518-810-7552 and let him know.

Wilderness First Aid Course
The Schenectady Chapter Board agreed to provide partial tuition refund for outings leaders who take Wilderness First Aid courses. The program is modeled after the 46ers current program so people who are both 46ers and Schenectady trip leaders can reimbursement. For further information, call Larry Woods at 518-810-7552.

HIKE CLASSIFICATIONS

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<td>A  8-12 Miles</td>
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<td>B Strenuous</td>
<td>B2C Moderate Trip</td>
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<td>B  5-8 Miles</td>
<td>3. Slow</td>
<td>C Average</td>
<td>C3D Easy Trip</td>
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<tr>
<td>C  Under 5 Miles</td>
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<td>D Easy</td>
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Monday, July 31
Young Member Outing: Cascade, Porter & Blueberry Mountains
Class A2B
Contact Jason Waters, 369-6516 or jwate78@gmail.com
Come join us as we hike the Cascade-Porter-Blueberry hiking trail. The trail path starts at the Marcy field in the Town of Keene Valley. Its roughly a 10 mile hike in and out with a 4,284 ft elevation gain. All friendly canines are welcome as well.

Thursday, August 3
Paddle Essex Chain Lakes
Class A2B
Contact Roy Keats, 251-3673 or royskipaddle@gmail.com
This trip will explore the Essex Chain Lakes. Note, the drive into the parking area is a rough dirt road for about 3 miles, so consider your car before signing up. It will require a 0.4 mile portage to Deer Pond, a short paddle, and then a half mile portage to Third Lake, after which we should be able to paddle from Third all the way through to Seventh with a return to our start by retracing our steps (two portages at the end of the day also). If there is interest, we could extend the day by paddling to Second Lake, portaging to the First Lake, and going down its outlet stream and returning. There will be about 10 miles of paddling with a total of about 2 miles of portages, mostly on old roads. If we add the extra 2 ponds it would be more like 13 miles.

Thursday, August 10 from 7 - 9 p.m.
Young Member Social: Centre Street Public House
Contact Dustin Wright, 603-953-8782
If you’re roughly in your twenties and thirties and looking to build some community with other likeminded young adults in the Schenectady area, join us for a good food and great conversation! We’ll spend an evening

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Innings and Outings

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at the Stockades’ top meeting spot discussing the many opportunities available through the ADK for younger members and help us brainstorm about how to increase our young member programming. All are welcome, members and prospective members alike!

Friday, August 11 - Saturday, August 12
Young Member Overnight: The Seward Range
Class A2A
Contact Dustin Wright, pastor@messiahschenectady.org or 603-953-8782

We’ll be hiking the four high peaks of the Seward Range (Seward, Donaldson, Emmons, and Seymour) over two-day hike on a roughly 21-mile route. The trip will include both official trails and herd paths, a beautiful waterfall and provides an excellent backcountry camping opportunity. Some overnight camp gear can be borrowed… please reach out to Dustin who can provide a comprehensive gear list. Feel free to bring friendly canine friends!

Saturday, August 12
Hike Godwin Preserve and Pole Hill Pond
Class C2C
Contact Walt Hayes, 399-7482

Meeting time about 8:30 a.m. with return by about 4 p.m. Four plus miles with climb of 600 feet may do some bushwhacking. Godwin is a new preserve of the Lake George Land Conservancy on the west side of Lake George where we will climb to a lookout on an unnamed peak. We will continue through the preserve to New York State land where we will visit Pole Hill Pond for lunch and swim. This is a beautiful pristine pond in a very nice setting. Bring lunch, swim gear and normal day hike gear including protective clothing for changes in the weather (wet or cold).

Saturday, August 19
Young Member: Big Slide
Class A2B (Difficult 10 mile hike)
Contact Mary Zawacki, 914-373-8733

Join us for a loop hike over the Brothers, to the summit of Big Slide, and back down over Yard Mtn. Each of the peaks offers outstanding views, and the trail crosses several picturesque brooks. Big Slide is #27 of the ADK High Peaks. This hike is strenuous at parts and features some scrambling. We will be moving at a moderate pace; experience and appropriate footwear are required.

Tuesday, August 22
Big Pond Trail
Class B2B
Contact Norm Kuchar, 399-6243 or nkuchar@nycap.rr.com

A major part of the Big Pond Trail, in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness, is slated to become a part of the North Country National Scenic Trail. On this hike, we will walk end-to-end on the trail, to assess its condition and determine whether our chapter is willing to take on the task of maintaining it. The entire route is on marked trails, although the western end is little used and may be overgrown and have significant blowdown. After spotting a car at the Hoffman Road end, we’ll begin at Loch Muller and follow the Hoffman Notch trail north about 1.2 miles to the west end of the Big Pond trail. This trail, about 5.7 miles long, passes through nice spruce, hemlock and maple forests as it goes over the southern ends of Texas Ridge and the Hoffman ridge before passing Big Pond and ending at Hoffman Rd. Total distance is about 6.9 miles, with about 700 feet of total ascent. Rain date is August 23.

Wednesday August 23

Thomson Cole & Blackdome Mountains, Class B2B
Contact John Susko, 383-1284

Thomas Cole & Blackdome Mountains are the 5th and 3rd highest peaks in the Catskills. There are good views from both of the summits as well as on the way up. We’ll take the trail from Barnum Road which is one of the more scenic trails in the Catskills. The distance is ~7 miles with ~2500 feet of ascent.

Saturday, August 26
Bushwhack Cattle Mountain
Class B2B
Contact Walt Hayes, 399-7482

Meeting time about 7:30 a.m. with return by about 5 p.m. Five miles with 1000 foot climb. The climb itself is off trail - about 2 miles round trip. This mountain is described in the July-August Adirondac on page 22. The leader has never done this trip but there are reports of extensive views from the tops of ledges near the twin summits. This trip starts out on the trail to Wilcox Lake. Bring lunch and normal day hike gear including protection from cool or wet weather.

Monday, September 4
Young Member Outing: Sawteeth
Class A2B
Contact Dustin Wright, 603-953-8782

Sitting near the Great Range, Sawteeth offers a great view of almost every other high peak nearby! A roughly thirteen-mile hike along with views of Lower Ausable Lake and Rainbow Falls before a steep climb to the summit. Unfortunately, this will be a dog-free trip as canines are not allowed in Ausable Club property.

Wednesday, September 6
Climb Cat Mountain
Class C2C
Contact Walt Hayes, 399-7482

Meeting time about 9 a.m. with return by about 4:30 p.m. About 3 miles with climb of 1000 feet - no bushwhacking. Cat Mountain is located on state land on the west side of Lake George with probably the best view of the Lake from the west side. We will take the red trail from Edgecomb Pond. This hike is in the Cat and Thomas Preserve formerly owned and developed by the Lake George Land Conservancy. Bring lunch and normal day hike gear including protective clothing for changes in the weather (wet or cold).

Thursday, September 7 from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Young Member Social: Wolf Hollow Brewing Company
Contact Dustin Wright, or 603-953-8782

If you’re roughly in your twenties and thirties and looking to build some community with other like-minded young adults in the Schenectady area, join us for a good food and great conversation as we brainstorming for the fall at one of best breweries in the Schenectady area! All are welcome, members and prospective members alike!

Saturday, September 23
Bailey Pond Trail and South End Hoffman Notch Trail Maintenance
Class C3C
Contact Norm Kuchar, 399-6243 or nkuchar@nycap.rr.com

The Bailey Pond trail (0.9 miles) and the south end of the Hoffman Notch trail (1.2 miles), in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness, will become parts of the North Country National Scenic Trail. Earlier this year, our chapter took on the task of maintaining these short trails, and this will be

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chapter took on the task of maintaining these short trails, and this will be our first stewardship trip. From the trailhead at Loch Muller, we will hike in-and-out on both trails, doing side cutting, light blowdown removal and minor fixing of drainage problems using hand clippers, loppers, hand saws and a hazel hoe. The chapter has equipment, or bring your own. There is a great view of Hayes Mountain from the shore of Bailey Pond. Total round trip distance is about 4.2 miles, with a total climb of about 400 ft. over gentle slopes.

Sunday, September 24
Young Member: Giant Ledge and Panther Mountain
Class B2C (Moderate 6.5 mile hike)
Contact Mary Zawacki, 914-373-8733
We’re heading down to the Catskills for a day of incredible views and beautiful wildflowers. Panther Mountain is #17 of the Catskill 3500s and features a peaceful alpine forest at the summit.

Saturday September 30
Halcott & Halcott view, Class B2B
Contact John Susko, 383-1284
Halcott is one of the trailless peaks in the Catskills and it also has a rock outcrop near the summit that provides a view. We’ll bushwack up Halcott to the canister and then down to the view point for lunch. Halcott is #34 on the list of Catskill 3500 peaks. The distance is ~4 miles all of it off trail with 2000 to 2500 feet of ascent.

Young Members Group Update
Gosh, there’s so many positive things to report. Mary Zawacki has continued to step up leading young member hikes and this edition of the Lookout brings you an outing led by yet another new young member, Jason Waters. Our monthly socials seem to be the main driving force behind this continuous growth, where new folks can get to know the existing crew before heading into the woods together. Thanks so much for all the chapter has done to support our Young Member Group and we look forward to having some new folks for our chapter board in the months ahead as well! -Dustin Wright
Whitewater Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
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<th>Contact</th>
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<td>Nelson Miller</td>
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<td>Bike &amp; Paddle-Sacandaga</td>
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<td>8/12/2017 Sat</td>
<td>Sac Release, Picnic, Gear swap/sale</td>
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<td>Late August TBD</td>
<td>Gatineau River Festival</td>
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<td>Rick Morse &amp; C. Darlington <a href="mailto:morses2@gmail.com">morses2@gmail.com</a></td>
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Trip Tales

scenery along the river was spectacular. Hikers were Dale Blanchet, Walt Hayes, Dave Loux, Ken Marcinowski, Jerry Perregaux, Neil and Susan Roberts, Dan Sexton and the leader Norm Kuchar.

Schroon River
May 21
With the river gauge at 3.9 feet, we had a partly sunny day on the mighty Schroon River. We had a good group for the trip with 8 kayakers and 2 open boaters. The Schroon River has been a classic run for the club and is used as a stepping stone to some of the more challenging runs in the area. On this trip, we did stop to quickly scout the drop and Jim was first to run it and used the opportunity to practice his combat roll. We did have one swimmer here who was able to eventually recover all of his gear and continue with the trip. At the end of the trip, we did use more time at the takeout to practice eskimo rolls as the season is still beginning and there are many more trips on the club calendar. Participants for the trip were Bob Wright and Mike Brun in open boats and Mike Ricciardi, Todd Nolte, Jim Minecke, Carolyn Cyr, Pierre Cyr, Clark Darlington, Carl Heilman and trip leader Norm Labbe in kayaks.

Stevens Pond bushwhack
May 23
The trip was rescheduled to May 22 and then cancelled due to the weather forecast. Leader: Walt Hayes.

Schroon River Whitewater
May 27
Gray days and intermittent chilly rain gave us a break May 27, for a relaxed, mostly sunny moderate-water run on the Schroon River. Paddlers will admit that the duck-weather spring has been good for the sport, with rivers and creeks staying useable well into late spring; that was hardly the case in 2016, when a winter-spring drought severely crimped the season. This day in May was a good example, with the Schroon running at about 3.8 feet, which is plenty of water but also comfortable for paddlers getting a later start on the season. So nine of us gathered at the Riverbank takeout and enjoyed a trip of about 3.5 miles with no swims or mishaps. Participants: Horst DeLorenzi, Clarke Darlington, Ed and Pam Martuscello, Don Ott, Nelson Miller, Rick Gonzales and Carolyn Cyr, kayak, and trip leader Mal Provost, open boat.

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Trip Tales

Riparius-Glen Hudson Whitewater
June 10
Happily, there were enough paddlers – 11, not counting a kayaker picked up mid-trip – to split the June 10 trip into two groups, per standard safety concerns. While Riparius-Glen is a fairly mellow trip for an experienced group, the practice of keeping units small enough to keep track of individual paddlers remains common sense. Conditions were excellent with the Hudson running at just below 5’, temps into the 80s as the run progressed and bright sun. (Thunderstorms that were a potential never cooked up, which was nice also.) Paddlers were Clarke Darlington, John Banevicius, Rick Gonzales, Pam Martuscello (in solo ducky) and Ed Martuscello, leader of that group. Others were Bob Wright (open boat), kayakers Anthony Lamanno, Ryan Konopinski, Andrew Starace, Carl Heilman and trip leader Mal Provost, open boat.

Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve
June 10
We repeated last November’s hike to historic sites in the Vischer Ferry Preserve. We walked along the towpaths of the original (1825) and enlarged (1842) Erie Canals, visited Clute’s Dry Dock, the site of Forts Ferry across the Mohawk and the first white settlement in Clifton Park, and the Whipple Bridge (1869). Most of the group continued on the newly restored towpath trail to Lock 19 (1842). On the hike, we also saw a turtle nest with recently hatched eggs and a newly-hatched snapping turtle, and the trails were brightened with blooming Canada anemone, dame’s rocket and other early summer wildflowers. Our hikers included Beth Baumert, Bill and Joanna Dickerson, Denise Garrah, Michelle Garrah, Clark and Millie Gittinger, Jan O’Hare, Ken and Nilde Marcinowski, Ray and Therese Sergott and the leader Norm Kuchar.

Mount Colden
June 11
High winds and hot sun prevailed during our ascent of Mount Colden. Along the way we enjoyed the views at Avalanche Lake, and marveled creating some challenges for hikers’ feet and paws alike. After a relaxing lunch near the peak, we summited, stopped for pictures, and quickly descended back down to Heart Lake. The mountain’s 13.5 miles took us about 9.5 hours. The participants were: Scott Birdsey, Dan Kemp, Mark Oliviere, Josh Casey, Todd, Rusty, Hazel, and the leaders, Mary Zawacki, Jason Waters, and Michael Diana.

Sacandaga River Whitewater- Stewarts dam to the Hudson
June 11
Trip leaders: Rescue Practice- Rick Morse; River trip leader- Clarke Darlington
10 paddlers convened for rescue practice, discussion and a river trip. Paddlers: Ed Cunningham, Allison St Pierre, Clarke Darlington, Cathy Darlington, Rick Morse, Grahame (IKE) Fitz, Ed Martuscello, Karl von-Heilman, Nelson Miller, and Don Orr. Rescue practice discussion was initially led by Clarke Darlington and consisted of a discussion about insurance provided by ADK and the rules to ensure good compliance with coverage. This information was obtained previously from a discussion that Clarke had with Neil Woodworth- (ADK Executive Director/CEO and Corporate Legislative counsel). Two specific points were emphasized: 1) Always make sure all paddlers sign the Release of Liability form – even for small last minute trips; 2) No class 4 rivers or class 4 sections of rivers as an ADK sponsored activity. Rick Morse conducted the second part of the rescue practice with first aid recognition and management of shoulder dislocations in remote locations. Following the rescue discussions, was a very pleasant trip down the Sacandaga, and a few ‘unexpected’ rescue practice drills. It was a pleasant and informative day of paddling for all.

Sacandaga River at Hadley Whitewater Paddle
June 18, 2017
Threatening clouds dissipated giving us some clouds and sun. The water temp is still slightly cool but refreshing. There were a total of 8 paddlers that ferried from river left to right as usual at the top, with 3 of the more skilled enjoying the play wave for quite some time. The other 5 of us headed back to the left and played and practiced on several of the usual features. One small mishap resulted in a combat roll. A relaxing float through the flat included a short break to stretch some legs. The lower section was fun and your leader took a new line behind Mal through the

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Trip Tales

big rocks under the Bow Bridge and was successful—great fun! One of the less experienced in the group got flipped near the bridge and swam out below the confluence. One of the paddlers went after them and corralled the boat while the rest of us got them to shore and boat and we all worked our way over to the takeout. By the time we got out and up to the parking area, the playboaters were arriving as well. A successful outing for your first time leader, my thanks to everyone. Paddlers included leader Don Orr, Bob Brand (good to have you back!), Mal Provost, Horst DeLorenzi, Amber Mooney, Anthony Lamanno, Mike & Rachel Raley.

Paddle – Blue Mountain Lake
June 22
It was a nice sunny and relatively warm day, when the 13 of us in 10 boats gathered on the shore of Blue Mountain Lake. The wind picked up, so we tried to shelter ourselves behind islands or along the shore using alternative paddling paths to ease dealing with waves, so all of us, in various types of boats, could safely enjoy the trip. In general, we paddled counterclockwise around the lake, starting from the town beach, toward the northern shore, below the slopes of Castle Rock, toward Eagle Lake and under the picturesque Durant Bridge. The leaders pointed out some general points of interest, and Tom Riley, a Blue Mountain Lake resident paddling with us, added many details and histories along the way. We took our lunch break on a small public island in a group of islands near our approach to Eagle Lake. We finished our nearly 4 hour trip gliding with the wind along the southern shore of the lake, by the beach areas of the Hedges and other picturesque resorts. It was a wonderful day with great group! Trip participants were Moira Goldfarb, Peggy Knowles, Tom Riley, Ron Philipp, Jerry White, Ron and Susan Larsen, Michael and Yvette London, Tom and Pam Speer, and the leaders, Sue and Roy Keats.

G Lake Hike
June 27
The trip was rescheduled due to the weather forecast to June 28 and we hit a cool and bright sunny day. The trails around G Lake are not marked or maintained so have grown in over the last several years. It is still a nice walk. We visited the site of a former camp building on the peninsula and then walked around the lake clockwise. Beavers have raised the water level about a foot higher than the old concrete dam level. We saw and heard two loons on the lake. We saw two people fishing from a boat. They were the only other visitors to the property that day. The trails disappear in the area of the dam so for about 1500 feet it is a bushwhack. We had lunch at a campsite that has the remains of a folding chair labeled "TOWN OF POMPEY". The old road/path along the north shore of the lake is obscure in places but the going is never bad. We stopped at two different former house sites on the east side of the lake. It was a gorgeous June day to be in the woods. Norm Kuchar, Mary MacDonald and the leader, Walt Hayes.

High Peaks Management Plan Update Pushed

The signs of increasing use in the Adirondack High Peaks are undeniable:

On a fall weekend, cars line the shoulders of Route 73 along the corridor from the Northway to Lake Placid. The state is counting more and more hikers at Cascade and the Adirondack Loj trailheads. The Adirondack 46ers club has topped 10,000 members. State Forest Rangers are swamped by search and rescue missions.

Leaders of some the Adirondacks most prominent advocacy groups – the Adirondack Council, the Adirondack Mountain Club and the Protect the Adirondacks – agree that state officials should take a new look and consider changes to current High Peaks Wilderness management plans, which was adopted in 1998.

After the Department of Environmental Conservation moves past a controversial fight over what land classifications to gives thousands of acres of new state forest preserve south of the High Peaks, the advocacy groups hope the state would reform the High Peaks Citizens Advisory Committee that helped develop the current plan.

“We need to have a conversation about different ideas about spreading hiker use out,” said Neil Woodworth, executive director of the Adirondack Mountain Club. “We believe that there are no indications that we won’t just start right back at the user levels that became so large… If this continues, it’s not sustainable; we are talking about mountain soils that took eons to form.”

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Pete Bauer, director of Protect the Adirondacks, said he thinks the state should also reevaluate the management plans of other high mountain wilderness areas – like Dix Mountain Wilderness and Giant Mountain Wilderness. Bauer said there is a “critical underinvestment” in trail maintenance, parking, staffing and public education in the High Peaks.

“It’s a real head-scratcher when the governor (Andrew Cuomo) is proposing to put $30 million into a new facility at Exit 29 to try and attract visitors,” Bauer said, referring to a budget proposal to build a Adirondack “gateway” center at the site of the old Frontier Town. “We already have something no one else has in the northeast, which is the High Peaks Wilderness… it gets thousands of visitors each year and is critically underfunded.”

Bauer also emphasized that the heavy trail use strains and problems are heavily focused on a handful of trails and mountains – chiefly Cascade and Porter, the trails that lead to Mount Marcy, trails from the Adirondack Loj trailhead and Mount van Hoevenberg trail.

At Cascade, the number of hikers registering at the trailhead – which understate actual usage – increased nearly 65 percent from 2012 to 2015, and those numbers have continued to climb, according to DEC and the Adirondack Mountain Club.

For its part, a spokesperson for the DEC said that reestablishing the High Peaks advisory group, which would be a step toward considering changes to the wilderness area’s management plan, “is not the immediate priority of DEC at this time.”

State officials and Adirondacks advocates are also ramping up efforts to spread out intense use of the High Peaks by encouraging hikers to explore other parts of the park. During peak fall hiking season, DEC posts information about hikes outside the High Peaks, and advocates are pushing other hiking challenges like the Saranac Six and the long Northville-Placid trail.

If the management plan is reopened, advocates said it is worth examining whether permitting or day-use fee systems could help with overuse. They also talked about expanding the number of trail stewards and ramping up education about the trails and summits at major trailheads. Others have suggested a traffic crackdown on parking along 73 could teach the hordes of hikers a lesson.

But the 46 High Peaks remains the park’s preeminent destination, and even as hikers finished out their 46 peaks they move onto finishing them in the winter. Some are even attempting to climb every High Peak in every month of the year – a hiking “grid” that would take years to complete and requires 552 mountain ascents.

Forest Ranger Scott van Laer, who patrols the heart of the High Peaks, said more hikers are setting out on more ambitious – and challenging – day hikes than ever before, sometimes attempting to climb 10 or more peaks in a single day.

“You see a phenomena where people are challenging each other to get out and do peaks and compete with each other to see who can do the most peaks,” Woodworth said.

The president, Brian Hoody, and vice president, Siobhan Carney Nesbitt, of the Adirondack 46ers club did not respond to email requesting comment.

Some in the hiking community worry that the drive for more and more High Peaks and the winter challenge, coupled with a deluge of Instagram-ready nature pictures, is putting hikers in more dangerous situations. While the number of search and rescue missions reached an all time high last year, more than one mission per day, rangers that cover the High Peaks won’t say definitively if they think today’s hikers are any less prepared than they were in previous years. But they do point to the lightweight hiking trends, social media meet-up groups and ambitious itineraries as possibly
And the 46ers have come under some criticism for pushing the high use of the High Peaks region, but the group helps maintain trails and promotes wilderness safety and leave no trace practices. Pete Fish, a former High Peaks forest ranger, said he thought the 46ers filled a positive role, pointing to a trash bag program they were organizing in the 1970s. He did say the club “opened a new door” when it created the winter challenge, possibly luring inexperienced hikes into challenging winter conditions.

“The 46ers seem to be getting a black eye because they exist, and I don’t think they deserve it,” Fish said. “If it wasn’t for their organization there would be another group that was less responsible.”
Ticks in Adirondacks a Growing Problem

Paul Smith’s College’s efforts to monitor tick populations and tick-borne pathogens in the Adirondack region, in collaboration with the New York State Department of Health, have documented an increase in infected ticks in the North Country. Focusing primarily on St. Lawrence, Clinton, Franklin and Essex counties, Paul Smith’s College biology professor Dr. Lee Ann Sporn, a team of students and Adirondack Watershed Institute stewards have been collecting blacklegged ticks, also known as deer ticks, which are tested by the Department of Health for disease-causing agents. In addition to an increase in the bacteria causing Lyme disease, the researchers have also recently found ticks carrying the agent that causes human babesiosis for the first time ever in the North Country.

Babesiosis, a malaria-like illness historically encountered in southeastern New York and coastal New England, typically presents with fever, chills, sweats, fatigue, and anemia. The infection can be very serious in the elderly, people without a spleen, those with poor immune systems, and if left untreated. Babesiosis is treated with standard antimalarial medications.

While cases of Lyme disease have increased 1.5-fold statewide over the past 13 years, counties in the Adirondacks have seen a twentyfold jump in the same period.

Preventing a bite is as simple as wearing light-colored clothing, tucking pants into socks, wearing an insect repellent, and remembering to check oneself “head-to-toe” at the end of the day for ticks. Sporn added that May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month, a timely reminder for all New York State residents to be vigilant for ticks and take actions to prevent tick-borne illness.

Paul Smith’s College field researchers, who collect ticks by dragging cloths in the understory vegetation, have found that tick populations are still patchy in the North Country. High density areas are typically found at lower elevation sites, but blacklegged ticks can be found throughout the region.

While tick bites can happen year-round, even on 40-plus degree days in the winter, both people and pets are especially susceptible in mid-May through July, when nymphs are out seeking a host. The young ticks are small and more difficult to spot. Nearly half of the adult blacklegged ticks, and a quarter of the nymphs, that were collected in North Country counties tested positive for the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, also known as Borrelia burgdorferi.

One potential predictor of Lyme disease risk in humans is cases in dogs, since they are often more likely to encounter ticks than their owners. In Franklin County, 26 percent of dogs tested show exposure to Borrelia burgdorferi. The number of human cases of Lyme disease reported in Franklin, as well as Clinton and Essex counties, increased by nearly 200 percent from 2012 to 2015.

Paul Smith’s College researchers and the New York State Department of Health collect and test ticks for five different pathogens that could affect humans. While Lyme disease is a major focus in the Adirondacks, this summer researchers will further investigate the prevalence of the pathogen causing babesiosis, which was found in about 12 percent of adult blacklegged ticks in an area near the border of Clinton and Essex counties last year.

This story is courtesy Adirondack Almanack (adirondackalmanack.com), the daily online news journal of the Adirondacks.
Schenectady ADK  
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http://www.adk-schenectady.org

CHAPTER BOARD MEETINGS: Are held regularly on the first Tuesday of the month. No meetings are held in July or August. Any concerns members have may be expressed to any board member listed on the inside front cover, or attend the meetings which are open to the membership. Call a board member for date, time & directions.

CHAPTER DISCLAIMER: People who attend outings reminded that such activities entail a certain degree of danger; and persons participating do so at their own risk. This disclaimer is for both whitewater and regular outings of the chapter.

SCHENECTADY CHAPTER PATCH: This lovely patch (shown at right) can be purchased by mailing a check (payable to Schenectady Chapter ADK) to Mary MacDonald, 27 Woodside Drive, Clifton Park NY 12065. The cost is $3 per patch, which includes the mailing cost.

TRIP LEADERS: If you do not want your trip listed in the local newspapers, call Publicity Chair Roy Keats at 518-370-0399, or royksueski@yahoo.com. This newsletter goes out over the Internet.

EQUIPMENT RENTAL: The chapter has hi-tech snowshoes and one pair of universal fit crampons available to rent at $5/trip. Call Stan Slote at 383-3066 to arrange for pick-up.

WEBSITE: http://www.adk-schenectady.org — All of the latest information will be posted on the Web, i.e. any changes or corrections. Please review our website and related Internet resources Acceptable Use Policy.

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Adirondack Mountain Club 814 Goggins Road, Lake George, NY 12845 or drop it off at Adirondak Loj or Headquarters.

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