

The Catskill Canister

The Catskill 3500 Club — Steward of the Catskills

October—December 2015

www.catskill-3500-club.org

Volume 48 Number 4

Trail Mix:

News & Notes From The Club

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We have a new way to keep you in the loop on upcoming volunteer opportunities, both ours (Adopt-A-Highway and the Table-Peekamoose Trail maintenance) and other organizations'. You can still check [Facebook](#) and the [Yahoo group](#), but now we have a volunteer [email newsletter](#). Please sign-up via the link below, and we'll keep you posted on our regular Club events plus volunteer events from other Catskill organizations.

Volunteers play an indispensable role in keeping the Catskills clean, safe and enjoyable for all. We are cooperating with many other organizations in the Catskills to increase volunteer turnout. Events may include clean-up (Adopt-A-Highway, the Blue Hole, etc), trail maintenance (Table-Peekamoose and others), vista clearing, shelter maintenance and more. It's a great, rewarding way to spend time outdoors—and the Club even has a Service Award to recognize those who help.

Your participation is needed and greatly appreciated! Sign up here: <http://catskill-3500-club.org/volunteer/>

Save the Date!

Save the date! The 2016 Winter Weekend will take place the weekend of January 22nd to the 24th at Frost Valley YMCA. More information will be on the website soon. In the meantime, contact Eric Hazard at winterweekend@catskill-3500-club.org for further details.

There is still time!

There are two more weeks of events for the Hudson River Valley Ramble which is held annually during the weekends of September. You can browse the events and register at www.hudsonrivervalleyramble.com.

Early October is when the Lark in the Park takes place. Browse the events and register at www.catskillslark.org. 

Views from the Top

The President's Column


I hope you all had a great summer and got out and enjoyed our wonderful mountains and watering holes. Depending on which of the latter, you might be able to double dip and use it on your list of "Views & Brews". As hot & humid as it was here this summer, the mountains did provide a cooler oasis.

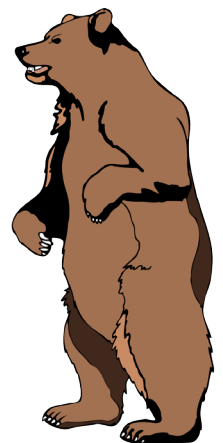
We are now headed into our glorious fall season and along with the changes of color come the hunters. Our hunting season starts on September 1st for Squirrel, followed by the early Bear season from the 12th to the 27th. Coyotes however, can be hunted from October 1st to March 27th statewide with a variety of other game in between. Many people ask if I/we hike during hunting season. I can only answer for me and the answer is yes. I'd miss out on two of my favorite seasons, fall and winter, if I didn't.

With that in mind I do avoid the most obviously hunted areas—North Dome, Sherrill, Bearpen and Vly. When planning a hike I choose to wear bright colors, not hike alone, chat a lot and assess the parking lots. If there are several cars and trucks in the lot I can almost guess that the hunters are there.

If you have concerns check out the club hikes, you may feel safer in a group. The leaders are not only very knowledgeable but also lots of fun. Hope to see you on the trails.

Happy hiking.

Connie Sciutto - President 



The Catskill Canister

President

Connie Sciutto

president@catskill-3500-club.org

Editor

Kevin Morgan

editor@catskill-3500-club.org

Annual Dinner Chairman

Michael E. Doehring

tigermath@aol.com

7 Cloverdale Ave. White Plains, NY 10603

(914) 761-7225

Photo Editor

Katie Anello

photosubmissions@catskill-3500-club.org

Membership

David White

members@catskill-3500-club.org

28 Mulberry St. Clinton, NY 13323

(315) 853-1070

Subscriptions/Aspirants

Mike Dwyer

aspirants@catskill-3500-club.org

237 April Lane

Bayport, NY 11705

Outings

Bill Winterbottom

outings@catskill-3500-club.org

192 Laurel Drive

Shohola PA 18458

(973) 222-1077

T-Shirt Coordinator

Ira Orenstein

ksbiho@aol.com

18 Interlaken Ave

New Rochelle, NY 10801-1102

The Catskill Canister is published four times yearly by the Catskill 3500 Club, Inc. for \$10.00 a year. Articles, not previously published, of less than 1100 words on hiking, essays, or poetry, should be sent to: editor@catskill-3500-club.org

All material contained herein is copyrighted by the authors or by *The Catskill Canister*.

Nominal dates for receiving the Canister are:
Mar 15, Jun 15, Sep 15, and Dec 15.


Conservation Corner

A Note from our Conservation Chair, Carol White

The [Asian longhorned beetle](#) is attacking trees in the United States and it prefers maple species, including boxelder, Norway, red, silver, and sugar maples. Other preferred hosts are birches, horsechestnut, and willows. This beetle has one generation per year. Eggs hatch in 10-15 days and the larvae feed under the bark in the living tissue of the tree and then bore deep into the wood where they pupate. The adults emerge from pupation sites by boring a tunnel in the wood and creating a round exit hole in the tree. Tunneling by beetle larvae girdles tree stems and branches and repeated attacks eventually kill the tree. This beetle probably travelled to the U.S. inside packing material from China.

Early detection of infestations and rapid treatment response are crucial to successful eradication of the beetle. Adult beetles are usually present from July to October and are found later in the fall if temperatures are warm. Adults usually stay on the trees from which they emerged or they may disperse short distances to a new host to feed and reproduce.

If you suspect an Asian longhorned beetle infestation, collect an adult beetle in a jar, place jar in freezer, and immediately notify any of these officials or offices:

- ✓ Your State Department of Agriculture—State Plant Regulatory Official or State Entomologist;
- ✓ State Forester or the Department of Environmental Conservation;
- ✓ U.S. Department of Agriculture—the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine; or Forest Service;
- ✓ The County Cooperative Extension Office. 



Two Views from the Summit

By Maria Bedo

The Catskill 3500 Club, through its Stewardship Committee and in collaboration with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference and the Department of Environmental Conservation, has funded the first year of a Summit Steward pilot program. This initiative has put a steward on the top of Slide Mountain for each weekend through Columbus Day and is a program that has proven to be very successful in the Adirondacks. Our reason for beginning this plan is that, with the increased usage in the Catskills, some summits—especially Slide—have seen significant degradation over the past few years. The hope is that through education we can teach people to enjoy the mountains and trails in a way that will leave them intact for future generations.

We want to introduce you to this year's summit stewards and asked them to write up some thoughts about their experiences and to fill us in on their backgrounds. Andrew Strasburg went with an essay format while Nick Mangieri preferred to respond through questions. It is very gratifying to see two individuals, who clearly feel strongly about their stewardship duties and the environment, educating and sharing knowledge with so many visitors.

Andrew Strasburg

Growing up in Michigan, I first discovered the power of outdoor experiences in our country's wild places on family camping trips, including time spent in the Catskills. During college, my dad and I camped at Woodland Valley and endured a heavy



rainstorm. We ate at Brio's that evening. It wasn't until I graduated from college and moved to Seattle that my passion for outdoor experiences truly formed. Hiking in Washington's North Cascades and Olympic Parks developed my backpacking skills and taught me the spirit of the hills. From Seattle, I moved to Denver, where I

explored a new type of alpine experience, one of high altitude, dry heat, and rugged trails across the Rocky Mountains. I began trail running for the first time and encountered a new way to experience the trail. One more move, this time to New York City, led me to the Catskills.

Initially drawn back to Woodland Valley to visit the site of that camping trip as a young adult, I came to see the humble beauty of these mountains. Working a desk job in Midtown Manhattan, I caught the Metro North train out of the city each Friday to my parking spot in Beacon, NY, from where I set off on many weekend jaunts in the region. Browsing the NY-NJ TC web site one day at work, I noticed the job opening for the Summit Steward. Long inspired by tales of Jack Kerouac, Edward Abby, and Norman McClean, I was called by the opportunity to work in a mountain space. I quickly realized that the role was a much greater opportunity than one of romantic, poetic dreams. It was an important role in responsible use of our state's wild areas. After learning more about Slide Mountain and the challenge of balancing use and public access with preservation, I was inspired by the element of service in the position. Service to the mountain, to the community, to the public, and to the wilderness. It is simple and pure, hiking up the mountainside to put in a day's work of education, communication, and information sharing.

The most gratifying experience is hearing all the different reasons the people I encounter on Slide brought with them to the summit. It feels great to be able to engage in a dialogue with people and share information about responsible use, leave no trace, and the impact of use on the mountain. Public awareness is a powerful force. The most difficult experience is always encountering a camper who has already set up camp (or in one instance, started a fire)! The job has definitely honed my skills in diplomacy. I find the best way to deliver a tough message is to position it as a helpful suggestion or comment, instead of a confrontational rule. Most people are appreciative and relocate to the DEC camp spot down the trail. A few stay put. Overall, I feel like we are having a positive impact and that the Steward program has been effective.

The messages I have to relay to other hikers are: bug spray doesn't always work on black flies, so pack long sleeve apparel! Don't forget you can disperse camp below 3500 feet as long as you are 150 feet off from the

Continued on page 8...

Rambles and Brambles: Hike Schedule October — December 2015

Assumed Risk: Hiking involves certain inherent risks and persons participating do so at their own risk. In cold weather hike participants should avoid cotton clothing, as it retains dampness and the resulting chill can result in hypothermia, **which can lead to death.** Instead, wear (and have available in your pack) garments of wool or fleece. Silk or polypropylene make the best base layers, as they tend to wick moisture away from the body. Hats, gloves and a headlamp must be part of the standard fall kit. Ice and snow can come early and unexpectedly to these peaks; if there is any doubt about the conditions that may be encountered, each hiker is strongly advised **to bring snowshoes and full crampons to the trailhead**; the leader may advise that these do not have to be taken on the hike, but be aware that while there may be bare ground at the trailhead, there is often very significant ice and snow as the elevation increases, which could result in those improperly prepared being sent back. Anyone not properly equipped may be refused permission to participate, at the leader's absolute discretion. ***Fall in the Catskills is not to be treated lightly.***

Rating System: Please be advised that the hikes listed herein would most likely be rated more difficult by clubs who hike in non-mountainous terrains.

Sat. Oct. 3 – ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP

Please join us for a few hours cleaning up the Club's section of Rte. 214. Bring work gloves and a great attitude – all else will be provided, including refreshments afterwards. Your participation helps the Club, the environment, and keeps the Catskills beautiful!

Registration Period: Open

Leaders: David Bunde #2269 W925, Tom Martone;
david@dgbdesign.com

Sun. Oct. 4 – BIG INDIAN & DOUBLETOP

Distance: 12 mi. Ascent: 1900' Elev: 3700', 3860'
Moderately paced, trail hike and bushwhack.

Registration Period: Sept 28 — Oct 2

Leader: David Bunde #2269 W925;
david@dgbdesign.com

Sat. Oct. 10 – KAATERSKILL HIGH PEAK

Distance: 7 mi. Ascent: 1330' Elev: 3655'
Moderately paced trail hike and bushwhack with some steep inclines. Heavy rain cancels.

Registration Period: Oct. 1 — 8

Leader: Ted Shemella #1550 w789
tshemella@yahoo.com (845) 687-2208

Sat. Oct. 10 – INDIAN HEAD & TWIN

Distance: 9 mi. Ascent: 2400' Elev: 3573', 3640'
A moderately paced trail hike along the Devil's Path with great fall views!

Registration Period: Oct 3 — 9

Leaders: Tom & Laurie Rankin #1503, 1337
laurierankin@hvc.rr.com (preferred) 845-926-2182

Sat. Oct. 17 – SLIDE MOUNTAIN

Distance: 7mi. Ascent: 1780' Elev: 4180'
A moderately paced trail hike.

Registration Period: Oct 12 — 15

Leader: Jim Malumphy #890 : lump63@hotmail.com
203-206-0586

Sat. Oct. 17 – HALCOTT

Distance: 4 mi. Ascent: 1720' Elev: 3520'
Moderately paced bushwhack.

Registration Period: Oct 12 — 15

Leader: Michael Bongar michael@bongarbiz.com

Sun. Oct. 18 – PEEKAMOOSE-TABLE TRAIL MAINTENANCE

It's our fall trail maintenance day! Please help us keep the Peekamoose-Table Trail clear and safe for the enjoyment of all. Bring work gloves and your favorite trail maintenance tools (the Club will also have tools available). It's fun work and a great way to help the Club and the hiking community. Refreshments will be provided afterwards.

Registration Period: Open

Leaders: David Bunde #2269 W925, Tom Martone;
david@dgbdesign.com

Sat. Oct. 24 – GRAHAM

Distance: 8 mi. Ascent: 1000' Elevation: 3868'
Trail walk and bushwhack on an easy to follow herd path.
Registration: by Oct. 17

Leader: Michele Corn Farrell
cornfarrell@gmail.com 845-778-6362

***In case of bad weather or dangerous conditions, hikes may be canceled;
if in doubt contact the leader.***

Sat. Oct. 24 - BALSAM & BELLEAYRE

Distance: 9 miles Ascent: 2950' Elev: 3600' & 3420'

A strenuous, trailed through-hike, done at a relaxed pace, that includes a CHH peak.

Car shuttle required.

Registration Period: Oct 14 — 22

Leader: Hans Schick #1853, W759;

Hans.W.Schick@gmail.com (preferred);

(845) 518-7541 C 7:00 to 10:00 PM

Sun. Oct. 25 – ST. ANNE’S and WESTKILL

Distance: 7.7 mi. Ascent: 3300', Elev: 3420', 3880'

Relaxed pace trail hike. Joint with Mid-Hudson ADK.

Registration Period: Oct. 16 – Oct. 23

Leaders: Joe Ferri, newpaltz33@yahoo.com

(914) 489-1582, Shari Aber shnaber@yahoo.com

(914) 489-0654

Sun. Oct. 25 – FRIDAY & BALSAM CAP

Distance: 6 mi. Ascent: 2700' Elev: 3694', 3623'

Moderately paced, strenuous bushwhack.

Registration Period: Oct. 19 — Dec. 23

Leader: David Bunde #2269 W925;

david@dgbdesign.com

**Sat. Oct. 31 – LAND NAVIGATION CLASS —
MAP & COMPASS PART 3**

Must have previous map and compass class or experience in the field.

Must bring your own hiking or orienteering compass and be familiar with it.

Contact hike leaders for additional details and to register between Oct. 24 – Oct. 30th.

Leaders: Tom & Laurie Rankin #1503, 1337; and

Paula Repka # 1827

laurierankin@hvc.rr.com (preferred) 845-926-2182

Sat. Oct. 31 – LONE & ROCKY

Distance: 11 miles Ascent: 2,000' Elev: 3721' & 3508'

A lengthy, difficult bushwhack, done at a relaxed pace and not for beginners.

Registration Period: Oct. 21 — Oct. 29

Leader: Hans Schick #1853, W759;

Hans.W.Schick@gmail.com (preferred);

(845) 518-7541 C (7:00 to 10:00 PM)

**Sun. Nov. 1 – BALSAM LAKE and MILL BROOK
RIDGE**

Distance: 8.6 mi. Ascent: 1800', Elev: 3723', 3480'

Relaxed pace trail hike in remote western Catskills.

Joint with Mid-Hudson ADK.

Registration Period: Oct. 23 – 30

Leaders: Joe Ferri, newpaltz33@yahoo.com

(914) 489-1582 Shari Aber shnaber@yahoo.com

(914) 489-0654

Sat. Nov. 7 – PANTHER VIA GIANT LEDGE

Distance: 6.8 mi. Ascent: 1545' Elev: 3720'

Moderately paced hike. Rain and inclement weather will cancel.

Meeting Place/Time: Please contact leader to register Nov. 1— 6.

Leader: Suzanne Knabe #1326; suzkna@msn.com; 718-435-3092 7pm

Sun. Nov. 8 – NORTH DOME & SHERRILL

Distance: 6.5 mi. Ascent: 2500', Elev: 3540', 3610'

Moderately paced difficult bushwhack.

Well behaved dogs welcome.

Registration Period: Nov. 2 — 6

Leader: Bill Winterbottom #1904

Billw@usdsoftware.com

Sat. Nov. 14 – SUGARLOAF

Distance: 6.3 miles Ascent: 1845', Elev: 3800'

Relaxed paced but some strenuous hiking on steep trails.

Registration Period: Nov. 9 — 13

Leader: Jane Bannon jb_outdoorgirl@yahoo.com

**Sat. Nov. 14 – THOMAS COLE, BLACK DOME, &
BLACKHEAD**

Distance: 7.1 mi. Ascent: 2700', Elev: 3940', 3980', & 3940'

A difficult and strenuous trail hike at a relaxed pace.

Registration Period: Nov. 9 — 13

Leader: Michael Stallbohm #1826;

mstall0128@gmail.com

Sun. Nov. 15 – WINDHAM HIGH PEAK

Distance: 7 mi. Ascent: 1800' Elev: 3524'

Moderately paced trail hike. Well behaved dogs welcome.

Registration Period: Nov. 9 — 13

Leaders: Doug Garrity, #1757, Suzanne Provenzano #1968, garrid0@lycos.com

Rambles & Brambles Hike Schedule cont'd on page 6

Rambles and Brambles: Hike Schedule continued...

Sat. Dec. 5 – WITTENBERG & CORNELL

Distance: 8 mi. Ascent: 2600' Elev: 3780' & 3860'
Strenuous, steep bushwhack from Moon Haw – exceptional views.

Heavy rain cancels.

Registration Period: Nov 26 — Dec 3

Leader: Ted Shemella #1550 w789

tshemella@yahoo.com (845) 687-2208

Sat. Dec. 5 – PLATEAU

Distance: 7.0 miles (or 5.5 depending on conditions and winter closures). Ascent: 1700', Elev: 3840'

Relaxed pace trail hike. Joint with Mid-Hudson ADK.

Registration Period: Nov. 26 – Dec. 3

Leaders: Joe Ferri, newpaltz33@yahoo.com

(914) 489-1582 Shari Aber shnaber@yahoo.com

(914) 489-0654

Sat. Dec 5 – WINTER PREPARATION CLASS

To be held in Arkville. While the Catskills are sometimes seen as ‘easy’ peaks, they can present formidable challenges to the winter hiker. Tom and Laurie Rankin have climbed all of the Catskill 3500 peaks at least twice in winter, as well as all the 4000'+ peaks in the Northeast. They will share their winter mountaineering skills, learned over many years, during an early evening indoor presentation. Bring your gear! This would be a great way to help get ready for winter weekend! Contact leaders for additional details and to register.

Registration Period: Nov. 28 – Dec 4th. Time: 6:30 to 8:30 pm. **MUST PREREGISTER** (minimum 6 participants or class will be cancelled).

Leaders: Tom & Laurie Rankin #1503, 1337

laurierankin@hvc.rr.com (preferred) 845-926-2182

Sat. Dec. 19 – HUNTER & SW HUNTER

Distance: 10.2mi. Ascent: 2300', Elev: 3740', 4040'
Moderately paced hike to the Hunter fire tower with a bushwhack along the way.

Registration Period: Dec. 10 — 17

Leader: Neil Berenholz #2443;

neilberenholz@gmail.com

Bear Tracks



Train Tracks

Hiker Track Identification Tip #45:

Sun. Dec. 20 – RUSK

Distance: 3 mi. Ascent: 1590' Elev: 3680'

Moderately paced bushwhack on steep trails. Well behaved dogs welcome.

Registration Period: Dec. 14 — 18

Leader: Bill Winterbottom #1904


Billw@usdsoftware.com 

In Memoriam

Margaret C. Freifeld, who accomplished much in her hiking career and who brought so many into the wonderful outdoor world and the joy of hiking, passed away on June 29, 2015.

She is survived by her son, Gabriel, and her life partner, Steve Klepner, as well as siblings and nieces and nephews. Margaret was not only a past chair of the ADK Mohican Chapter, but she held almost every position in the chapter at one time or another. She was also very active in the Catskill 3500 Club and led an enormous number of hikers on Catskill hikes as there were many who did not want to tackle the trailless ones without their favorite woodswoman.

Margaret completed all of the *Adirondack 46's* twice, as well as the *Northeast 115*, but she seemed most pleased to have completed the entire *Appalachian Trail*, a task she managed to finish while her multiple myeloma was in remission. She returned to the trails this year after difficult treatment and even joined the Chapter on a winter Catskill hike.

Those of us who were privileged to travel the world with Margaret, hiking and sightseeing, will remember that she was always ready for any adventure, did not know the meaning of the word “quit”, took pleasure in exploring nature and loved her birds — she was just plain interested in whatever was around the next corner or bend in the trail. A singular person who will be singularly missed. Farewell, Margaret. — Carolyn Harting – ADK Mohican Chapter 



New Members

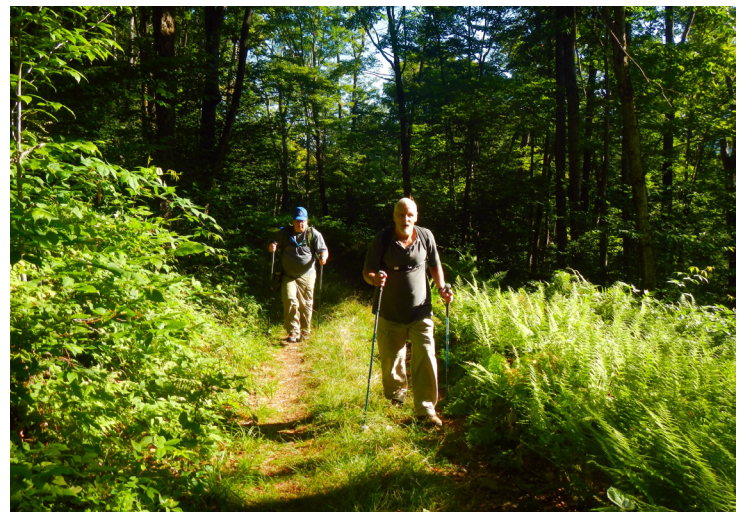
2401	Jerry Meng	04/02/15
2402	Dustin Wood	04/05/15
2403	Tom Mansfield	04/19/15
2404	Christopher P Gilbert	04/19/15
2405	Aimee Paolo	04/18/15
2406	Seong Gui Choi	04/26/15
2407	Young In Choi	04/26/15
2408	Jaclyn Kline	05/03/15
2409	Barley Hyde	05/03/15
2410	Tracy L Santanelli	05/03/15
2411	Stephen Bailer	05/03/15
2412	Caitlynne Cash	05/04/15
2413	David Kozakowski	04/11/15
2414	William C Nieder	03/22/15
2415	Dana C Nieder	03/22/15
2416	Laurie Brown	05/15/15
2417	Raul J Garcia	01/19/14
2418	Joe Gil	05/06/15
2419	Debra L Reif	05/23/15
2420	Michael D Ogden	05/23/15
2421	Damon Towner	05/23/15
2422	Thomas Grossman	05/30/15
2423	Song Kyong Kang	05/31/15
2424	Rae Hak Lim	05/31/15
2425	Pil Ran Heo	05/31/15
2426	Nosa Choi	05/31/15
2427	Suk Bong Kim	05/31/15
2428	Sharon Desrochers	06/06/15
2429	Bruce W Coon	06/04/15
2430	Amber Rose Pitcher	05/17/15
2431	Nate Kaiser	06/04/15
2432	Robert Peak	06/04/15
2433	Larry Telle	06/07/15
2434	Ann Roberti	06/13/15
2435	Prissy Lee	06/14/15
2436	David Sikule	05/17/15
2437	Robert D Drake	06/20/15
2438	Christine Newton	04/12/15
2439	Joseph M Di Salvo	06/20/15
2440	Sheila "SheShe" O'Brien	07/03/15
2441	Kristin DeForest	08/14/14
2442	David DeForest	08/14/14
2443	Neil Berenholz	07/12/15
2444	Brian Crowley	04/12/15
2445	Aneta Guzina	07/25/15
2446	Jelena Jegdic	07/25/15
2447	Kathy Forrestal	06/01/13
2448	James Steeves	08/01/15
2449	Laura Sanford	08/15/15

New Winter Members

0981	John E Thompson	2261	03/19/15
0982	Antonio Aurora	2390	03/21/15
0983	James Woods	2033	03/21/15
0984	John Eshleman	1953	03/21/15
0985	Carol Connolly	2317	03/21/15
0986	Kathy Forrestal	2447	03/01/14

New Life Members

1855	Mary-Helen Hughes
2005	Joanie Merwin
2059	Sam Levine
2423	Song Kyong Kang
2424	Rae Hak Lim
2425	Pil Ran Heo
2426	Nosa Choi
2427	Suk Bong Kim
2440	Sheila "SheShe" O'Brien
Asp.	John Keeler
Asp.	Byoung Doo Chang
Asp.	Bae Ok Shim
Asp.	Sukyoung Kim
Asp.	Tae Sung Jeon
Asp.	Suk Kyong Kim
Asp.	Eugene Kim
Asp.	Kyungsoon Pak
Asp.	Carmen Arguello
Asp.	Julius Donisan



Aspirants on the trail to Balsam Lake Mountain

The Future is Here!
 Now you can renew your
 membership
 with PayPal!
 New members must
 still submit a written
 application.

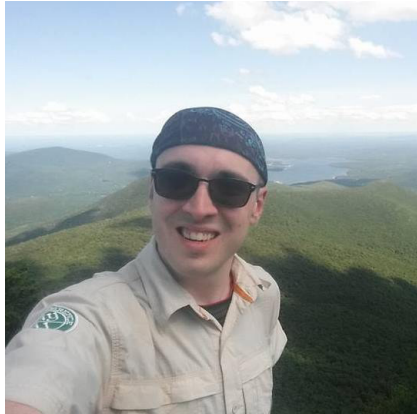


Two Views... continued from page 3...

trail, roadways, and water. There are also several great DEC designated campgrounds/lean-tos on either side of the summit, and consider hiking in from the Denning trail head—it seems hardly used but it is a great way to mix things up.

Nick Mangieri

Describe your background and what made you interested in environmental work?



Ever since I was a kid I have loved being outside. What kid doesn't? I was a cub scout and then a boy scout. I spent every summer at camp with my troop, hiking and boating during the day and roasting marshmallows at night. I think this is what drew me to environmental work. I make such frequent use of the parks and trails in New York and New Jersey I feel almost obliged to give something back.

What was your introduction and experience with the Catskills before this position?

My first hiking experience was as a tenderfoot, backpacking with my troop. It rained the entire weekend. I had packed more gear than I ever could have used in three days. I was wet, cold, tired and loved every minute of it. Something about hauling what felt like 100lbs of stuff up a mountain for a whole weekend made me feel a level of independence I hadn't felt before in 13 years. Thus started a decade long love affair with nature and the Catskills parks.

What was your most gratifying experience as a Summit Steward so far?

A plain and simple fact about me is that I love talking to people. It may be better to say that I love listening to people; all the better as people love to be listened to. My most gratifying experience as steward is being able to listen to stories of people's adventures.


What was your most difficult experience?

I talk to a lot of people each weekend who are either camping illegally or have a fire someplace they shouldn't. Oftentimes people are new to camping in the Catskills or, they remember camping on Slide in their childhood and do not realize camping is no longer permitted. Many people are unaware of the damage frequent camping and camp fires have on the summit ecosystem. A huge part of my job is educating visitors on the potential harm of overuse and, the importance of preventing erosion so that visitors may continue to enjoy the park for generations to come.

What was the funniest moment?

I like to think of myself as an experienced backpacker. I've been on my fair share of trips and worn out quite a few boots. Even so there is always a first time for something to be had. This summer on my second weekend on Slide, I lost my campsite. I had set up camp well away from the trail and still had a few hours of daylight. I took the opportunity to drive to a nearby town for an early dinner. So I hung banners marking the way between my campsite and the trail and, made my way to my car. While I was out a thick fog rolled in ahead of a storm. By the time I made it back to the trail where my first banner hung, the few hours of daylight I had were lost in the fog along with the rest of my banners and my tent. After a futile search I resolved to make my way back down the trail, dejected and defeated, to spend the night in my car. The next morning I found my tent as soon as I stepped off the trail. When you are careless, no amount of experience will prevent you from doing something profoundly silly.

What advice/thoughts would you like to convey to hikers and what have you learned that you didn't know before taking this position?

I meet many new hikers on Slide. I advise everyone new to the experience to familiarize themselves with HikeSafe. Proper preparation can mean the difference between a relaxing hike and a death march. Know the terrain and your own limitations. Hike with friends! If for no other reason than some experiences are best when shared. Finally, be aware of the impact you have on the forest around you. Hundreds of people enjoy these parks and little things we all do add up to a sizable impact. So be mindful of where you step and if you Carry it in, Carry it out! 

The Catskill Interpretive Center – Myth or Reality?

by David and Carol White

The 1988 first edition of ADK's Guide to Catskill Trails stated: "The Catskill Interpretive Center is scheduled to open in 1991." It states in the present tense: "Educational experiences and the training of teachers and leaders take place here. Programs focus on natural science and ecology, natural resources and environmental quality management. Staff-guided field trips, self-guided interpretive trails, exhibits, audio-visual presentations, and more can be enjoyed by visitors." This was written in the pre-Internet era!

Fast forward to the 1994 second edition with only one reference in a Samuels Point bushwhack: "... if future development of the Catskill Interpretive Center comes to fruition ...". That write-up foretold a new Long Path segment from the Terrace Mt. lean-to junction to Phoenicia, which like Rip van Winkle materialized twenty years later. How we searched for this elusive Interpretive Center while writing Catskill Day Hikes—one of the great unsolved mysteries of the Catskills! The only CIC reference in the 2005 third edition was in Appendix III, as part of a Day-Use Area west of Boiceville; an information kiosk was built later near the highway. The Long Path plan said simply: "if recommended changes occur."

The 2013 fourth edition went from "if" to "when." In a later reprint, not only was the new Long Path over Cross, Pleasant, and Romer Mountains a reality, but the CIC was announced! Following ribbon cutting at 5096 NY 28 in Mt. Tremper on July 1, 2015, the Catskill Interpretive Center has been staffed from 9:30 to 4:30 daily. It offers two running slide shows, four iPads and an iMac with an app for tracking down places of interest, information boards, racks of tourist brochures and two display cases of books, maps, and fire tower t-shirts and caps for sale. A full-size fire tower is planned for the property, as are more trails, an amphitheatre and a pavilion. We hope the great activities discussed in 1991 are added soon.

Our club donated \$2,000 two years ago and we are listed as sponsors on a plaque inside and in a slide presentation. Now that the CIC is operational, on June 27, 2015, our board voted to donate \$3,500 (a singularly significant amount to all of us). Volunteer staffers come from several organizations, including ours; other volunteers are encouraged, as word gets out. Applications are obtained from mdrillinger@catskillcenter.org, 845 688-3369, www.CatskillInterpretiveCenter.org.

Thanksgiving In The Catskills

It was one of those long Thanksgiving weekends which happened to be fairly good down in NYC.

Arriving at Phoenicia, the weather looked quite different. Larry and I hired a taxi to take us to the foot of Peekamoose and there started up an easy-going wood road. This, however, did not last long, and soon we found ourselves bushwhacking thru the damp undergrowth. The clouds were hanging low, and a steady light drizzle made the climb rather wet.

Once at the summit ridge, the marked trail took us to the top of Peekamoose and then down to the saddle of Table. By then we were soaked and had to find an acceptable site for the night camp. On a terrace just below the trail, our plastic sheet shelters were put up in a hurry. Some sandwiches had to do for supper, and the sleeping bags for much needed warmth. The rustling plastic sheet woke me up some time later. It had turned very cold; wind-torn clouds let some stars shine through; below one could see the lights of the Hudson Valley. For a while my mind travelled down into the comfortable looking homes, and then again far away with the clouds and the stars.

The first daylight saw us squatting around a little fire in underwear and damp boots, watching our frozen-stiff clothing over the fire to thaw and dry. A cup of hot tea warmed the shivering body. Well, we made it to the saddle between Friday and that hump just before Cornell. It was a most beautiful autumn day with clear panoramas from many of the rock ledges on the summits. We enjoyed some rock climbing problems on Lone and Rocky, but also cursed the almost impenetrable thickets on Rocky, Friday, and the approach to Balsam Cap.

The night camp was a terrace just west of the saddle from Friday; it had a streamlet and we made ourselves quite comfortable with a full supper. Next morning, however, the water had disappeared, and whatever was left of small puddles was frozen to ice, leaves and needles, not very good for melting, so we skipped breakfast with a thought of the coffee shop down in Phoenicia. We hit the trail at the bottom between Slide and Cornell. The rest of the day was easy, though at times slippery going, as we had the first snow of the season. The whole trip had been quite a success as we had bagged six new 3500 peaks for our list, besides having a great Thanksgiving in the wilderness of the beautiful CATSKILLS. —Ted Wolfrum, Seattle, Wash. (*From the Autumn 1968 Catskills Canister*)

