

Adirondack Mountain Club-Ramapo

The Ramapough

www.hudsonhikers.org



Fall 2008

The View From The Summit

By now, most of you have returned from summer vacations and have brought back great memories. I visited the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont this summer and enjoyed a few day hikes. I know some of you went further across the U.S. and some traveled abroad joining a hiking tour. Wherever you went, you probably have wonderful photos and pleasant memories of all the hilltops and special views you saw. Those are the reasons hiking is so special to me. While physical activity of any type is usually beneficial to our bodies, hiking stands alone as the best. Why? For starters, it's the easiest to do. There is no special skill required, no special technique involved. You can do it almost anywhere and you can do it alone, or with family or friends. Of all the aerobic exercises, hiking is the easiest. In addition, there are numerous other benefits to be gained from hiking.

- Hiking is a great way to see the natural world.
- Hiking contributes to your physical well-being.
- Hiking helps reduce stress in your daily life.
- Hiking is fun. You'll make new friends.
- Hiking helps prevent osteoporosis.
- Hiking can help you lose weight.

Now that we have a new Fall hike schedule filled with delightful new and old places to hike, led by friendly and interesting hike leaders, I hope you'll come out. There's no better time to see the leaves change colors than in the Shawangunk Mountains, Harriman Park, Sterling Forest, Catskill Mountains, North Jersey Highlands, Hudson Highlands or Hudson Palisades areas. One climb up a low level mountain can bring you to a wonderful vista of thousands of acres of trees displaying their fall foliage.

Fall is also a time for growth and change. We are going to have an election for a new Executive Board consisting of a new President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. I hope you'll come to the dinner meeting on Thursday, December 4th to vote for your new Board. A wonderful dinner party is planned at the Pasta Cucina Restaurant in New City, NY. In addition, your Board is considering other ideas to grow and expand the benefits of being a member of the Ramapo Chapter.

Don't miss the Fall Foliage Weekend planned for October 31- November 2nd at the fabulous Shawnee Inn located in Shawnee on The Delaware River, PA. There will be hiking, golf, canoeing, indoor pool, a spa, and shopping, if you like. Reserve your place by phone: (201-871-3531) or email Suzan Gordon at browning.27@verizon.net by September 30, 2008. Have you wondered who maintains the beautiful trails we hike on? It's a big job and it's done through the help of many volunteers who work with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference. The Trail Conference has crews working every week on trail building and maintenance. For example, The Bear Mountain Trail Project has been ongoing for more than a year, and is a seven year project involved in re-routing and building up the trail over Bear Mountain and has involved more than 200 volunteers. Most trail crew announcements read this way: *"Bring lunch, water, gloves, sturdy work shoes and be prepared to get dirty. All tools, materials and training will be provided. Beginners welcome."* Why not volunteer to spend some time doing work on trails that will bring you long term satisfaction every time you hike the trail you worked on? Contact the Trail Conference at (201) 512-9348 or info@nynjtc.org to volunteer. Conservation and advocacy go hand in hand. Advocacy means being involved by speaking out about political issues that affect our open spaces. Protecting lands from development, keeping them available for everyone to enjoy and protecting the water that flows on or underneath them are everyone's responsibility. I hope you will take action by contacting your elected state and local officials and expressing your support when you read about conservancy issues to help protect the woods and trails for future generation to enjoy.

So, now it's time to take a hike.

See you on the trails.
Peter Reiner, President
845-634-7645, Psr7@aol.com

See page 5 for the list of nominees for the Executive Board.

Conservation Corner

NJ Highlands Plan Is Very Controversial

New Jersey is under pressure to adopt a compromise plan for the future use of the New Jersey Highlands which covers a large area from Morristown to Ringwood and includes 860,000 acres. This largely rural area has remained undeveloped and is critical to water supplies in the state. The Appalachian Trail runs through this area. The environmental groups are critical because the plan does not do enough to protect the environment. However, local farmers and commercial developers feel the plan does not allow them to responsibly use the lands they own.

The operating plan would restrict development in the region to 47,000 units of housing which could be built in the region, and commercial development would be reduced in scope, as well. Despite the restrictions on growth which angered builders and landowners, environmental groups object to the operating plan. They feel the amount of development allowed by the operating plan would cause increased contamination of the water in the region.

The issue boils down to money, as the Highlands Council needs more funds for land acquisition. This plan has been four years in its development and there are no compromises that appear to satisfy either side. New Jersey seems to be a leader in trying to protect the Highlands and it has actively tried to safeguard its part of the region. The final adoption of the operating plan rests with Governor Corzine who has to decide whether to accept the compromise or heed the pleas of a coalition of environmental groups.

Minnewaska Master Plan

The NY-NJ Trail Conference in August submitted extensive comments on the Minnewaska State Park Preserve Master Plan being developed by the New York Office of Parks, recreation and Historic Preservation. The comments include recommendations for improving hiking access, which is now limited to Route 44/55 (except for the Sam's Point entrance) and has not changed notwithstanding the doubling in the Park's size since the issuance of the last Master Plan. Among the recommendations are the following:

- 1) Establishment of four new official parking and access areas: Stony Kill on Shaft 2A Road off Route 44/55; Aumick Road at the south end of the recently acquired Awosting Reserve; Berme Road Park in Ellenville on the northwest side; and Mine Hollow Road in Kerhonkson on the northeast side.
 - 2) Reopening of the Jenny Lane parking area off Route 44/55 as a free hiker parking area.
 - 3) Recognition of the Smiley Carriageway, Stony Kill Carriageway, High Point Carriageway (up to the old Red Trail), and the old Red Trail as official blazed trails which will connect the Park's western portion to its eastern trail network.
 - 4) Integration of the Awosting Reserve on the Park's southern border (where no official trails presently exist) into the Park's trail network by establishing connector trails between the Reserve and Minnewaska Lake, Awosting Lake and Mud Pond, and by the reopening of historic trails to Upper and Lower Palmaghatt Falls and Palmaghatt Ravine.
 - 5) Permanent designation of Hamilton Point Carriageway for foot traffic only.
 - 6) Opening a parking area as early as 7 a.m. instead of the present 9 a.m. for all parking areas.
- Submitted by Peter Reiner.

A Warm Welcome to New Members

Susan Bogan-Zarrabi, Montvale, NJ
 Christopher and Nicola Jones- Port Jervis, NY
 Leon Jones and Jennifer Lim- New York, NY-
 Yong and Misuk Khang, Closter, NJ
 Lori and Nari Ledyard-Hartsdale, NY
 A. Leung- New York, NY
 Kate Liebhold- Englewood, NJ
 Seth and Elyssa Parker-Monroe, NY
 Margery Rothenberg, Suffern, NY
 Sandy Ward, Montebello
 Bob Weinbrecht-Massapequa Park, NY

Trail Closures

All trails running along Queensboro Creek and Popolopen Brook in Bear Mountain State Park - including the Timp-Torne Trail on the north and the joint 1777/1779/Popolopen Gorge Trails on the south - will be closed for at least six months beginning as early as October. The trail closures will occur because of blasting activity associated with replacement of the water main between the water filtration plant at Queensboro Lake and the Bear Mountain water storage tank. The water main generally follows the route of the Popolopen Gorge Trail, which will be restored with new tree and shrub plantings once the main is replaced. Access to Popolopen Torne from Old Mine Road should not be affected during construction activity.

Shawangunk Ridge/Long Path Reroutes

A major reroute has been instituted in the Cragmoor area. The Long Path /Shawangunk Ridge Trail has been blazed along a woods road (the old Rte 52), about 0.4 mi before it reaches Rte 52. The old route to Rt. 52 (about 0.4 mi) is now blazed with yellow DEC disks. The new route crosses Rt. 52 in about 2.5 miles, just before it reaches South Gully, follows the South Gully Trail up the 1400-foot ascent to Sam's Point Preserve, and follows the loop road to the right to rejoin the old route near the Sam's Point parking lot. The old road walk along Rt. 52, up Bear Hill, and through Cragmoor, has been discontinued.

People-for-Trails Hike-a-thon at Bear Mountain State Park Will Occur on October 4th

The NY-NJ Trail Conference and the Palisades Interstate Park Commission are teaming up in support of the hundreds of miles of trails that wind their way through our region's state parks. This is an opportunity for you to help the trails you use just by taking a hike!

With four routes to choose from, each varying in length and difficulty, there's something for everyone. Each hiker is encouraged to seek pledges/sponsorships of \$300 or more, and registration is limited this first year to 300. If everyone meets their goal, more than \$90,000 of critical funds will go to-

ward erosion control, repairs, and safety improvements to the trails at Bear Mountain and Harriman State parks. You can ask friends, family, co-workers to sponsor you by the mile or give a fixed amount. Routes range from easy walks, suitable for children and relaxed walkers, to endurance tests for serious hikers.

For those interested in a leisurely stroll on mostly flat ground, there will be an easy route, which will take you around Hessian Lake and down to the new Twin Forts trail. At the other end of the spectrum the heartiest hikers can test their endurance with an 11 mile, 8 hour hike up and down Dunderberg Mountain on the Timp Torne and Suffern-Bear Mountain trails. Two other hikes will take participants to spectacular views along the Cornell Mine and Ramapo-Dunderberg trails, as well as the 1777E trail, which tracks the historic Revolutionary War route followed by the British as they approached Forts Clinton and Montgomery.

With your paid \$30 registration fee, all event hikers will receive a customized participant's bag, which will include a map detailing their selected route including aide station locations and route mileage markers, a 2008 People for Trails t-shirt and more!

Major Donation to Create Hudson River Parks in Westchester

Scenic Hudson, the land preservation group, has received a \$45,000 grant from Consolidated Edison to help create new waterfront parks and enhance public access to the Hudson River in Westchester. The grant will be used to transform waterfront areas in Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow, Yonkers and Peekskill from industrial sites. Scenic Hudson will use this money to create places where people can enjoy the beauty and recreation along the waterfront. For example, in Tarrytown, they will help to build a new park where an unsightly asphalt plant had stood for 80 years. The partnership with the town will develop the Scenic Hudson River Walk Park at Tarrytown. This park will also link up with other waterfront parks in the area. Similar projects are planned for Yonkers, Peekskill and Sleepy Hollow.

NEWS ON THE TRAILS

In August, the NY-NJTC North Jersey Weekday Trail Crew completed construction of the 1.9-mile orange blazed Lake Sonoma Trail and 1.2-mile white blazed Overlook Rock Trail in Norvin Green State Forest in West Milford. The Lake Sonoma trailhead can be accessed 3 miles down the northern part of Burnt Meadow Road off Greenwood Lake Turnpike (Route 511). The two new trails now make possible a variety of loop hikes using the Hewitt-Butler, Burnt Meadow and/or Stonetown Circular Trails.

The NY-NJ Trail Conference has made available on its website (nynjtc.org) its new map of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail (SRT). In addition to a printout of the entire 41-mile SRT system between High Point State Park in New Jersey and Minnewaska State Park in New York, the northern, middle or southern SRT portions can also be separately printed for no charge. Submitted by Chris Connolly

**A FLUMIN' GOOD TIME**

Tis not an embattled mountaintop fencer in the photo, but only Chris Connolly celebrating the completion of his 48th and final New Hampshire White Mountain 4,000-footer upon Flume Mountain along the Franconia Ridge.

According to the meticulous calculations of trip leader Aaron Schoenberg, this peak experience occurred precisely at 1:24 p.m. on Saturday, July 19 of this year. Thunder and all-too-near lightning bolts marked the atmospheric moment, witnessed by Aaron and fellow Chapter member Alex Mitrakos. Chris gives special thanks to Aaron, without whose annual White Mountain trips this feat would never have been feted.

Submitted by Chris Connolly

A Thunderstorm on Pound Mountain

By Dean Gletsos

Predictions for Saturday, 8/2/08, calling for occasional thunderstorms in our area, did not stop Denis Kmiek from leading his scheduled hike entitled "Pound Mountain Circular". Being a perpetual optimist, I decided to take a chance, along with a group of about 10.

We met at Johnstontown Rd. circle, under cloudy and threatening skies, and went off up the Blue Disc trail. We summited Dater Mt. and were about to climb Pound Mt., when the storm came upon us so quickly that nobody had a chance to put on rain gear. The lightning and thunder were very close, while the rain was pouring madly down upon us. Frightened, and wet to the bone, we were "pounded" on Pound Mt.!

While I decided to stay up there for a while, in the drenching rain, with thunder and lightning all around, the others headed down immediately. As cover, I used my aluminized "Space Blanket" hoping that the thunderstorm would pass by soon. Meanwhile, my poncho was sitting comfortably into the bottom of my backpack!

It suddenly occurred to me that my aluminized cover would make me an excellent lightning target! I quickly folded it, put it in my rain-soaked backpack and headed down through the heavy rain, keeping a low profile. I made it back to my car, where Denis and a couple of my co-hikers were waiting to be sure I was not left behind. Many thanks to them!

However, about half way down I realized that in my haste I had forgotten my hiking poles up there. Naturally, I was not going up again to retrieve them under those weather conditions. I decided to do that another time.

After I went home, beautiful sunshine, no clouds, appeared; I decided to go back and find my poles. I jumped back into my car, drove to Johnstontown circle and up I went. As I was going up, I heard some remote thunder rumblings and the skies became dark. I said to myself "Not another storm!". Yet, that is exactly what happened! After I found my poles, I headed down immediately. The new thunderstorm was approaching fast. I almost started running down, as fast as I could. Yet, the storm caught me about 200 yards from my car. I got wet again, but not too badly. God is Great!! The moral of the story: ALWAYS carry rain gear or at least a poncho with you! Forget the "Space Blanket" in a thunderstorm!

Chapter Officers Announced for 2008-2010

The chapter nominating committee has presented the following slate of executive board offices for 2008-2010:

- President.....Suzan Gordon
- Vice President.....Richard Sumner
- Secretary.....Debbie Bell
- Treasurer.....Lilo Kassel

Ramapo chapter members will be asked to vote at our meeting/dinner on Thursday, December 4th at Pasta Cucina Restaurant, New City, NY.

Nominees' Biographies:

Suzan Gordon, Nominee for President

Suzan has served for the past two years as Vice President of the chapter. She is a retired special education teacher and has served as the Programs and Special Outing chair for the past four years. She has been responsible for the guest speakers at our quarterly members meetings and the successful Mohonk Day outings. Suzan lives in Tenafly, NJ.

Richard Sumner, Nominee for Vice President

Richard has served as treasurer of the chapter for the past five years. He has also served as our webmaster, and was instrumental in the design and development of, and currently maintains, our chapter website, www.hudsonhikers.org. When not waiting for broken bones to heal, he is an active hiker. Richard has lived in Pomona, NY since 1990, just a stone's throw from Harriman State Park.

Debbie Bell, Nominee for Secretary

Debbie is new to the ADK Executive Board, but has served on boards of running and cycling clubs, and other groups. She recently retired as an administrator with Columbia University. In addition to leading hikes for the ADK, Debbie volunteers for various organizations in the County. She lives in Nyack, NY.

Lilo Kassel, Nominee for Treasurer

Lilo has been the editor of the newsletter for the past two years. As a retired teacher with a specialty in Math, and now a math tutor, she will strive to make the numbers "add up". She has been a volunteer at SeniorNet for the past ten years, teaching senior citizens computer skills, and also volunteers at Nyack Hospital. She is an avid hiker, and lives in Nyack, NY.

FALL FOLIAGE WEEKEND AT THE GAP

There is still time (September 30th) to make your reservations for the fall weekend (Oct. 31-Nov. 2) at the beautiful Shawnee Inn in the Delaware Water Gap Park. We will be guests at the Inn for two nights and two days filled with choices of planned hikes of various abilities, swimming in their large indoor pool, playing golf, kayaking, fishing, shopping, visiting the spa and health club, or relaxing on the veranda overlooking the Delaware River. Visit their website for pictures and more information www.shawneeinn.com. Please call or e-mail Suzan Gordon for more details at 201-871-3531 or at browning.27@verizon.net

BOOK REVIEW: The Hudson: America's River

(Columbia University Press, 2008)

In my misspent sedentary years, the Hudson River was merely the largest obstacle to be bridged over and tunneled under on my commute to New York City. Once a hiker, though, I fell under the allure of the Hudson, of its history and mystery, and am always ready to read tales of its past and present glories. I am, therefore, especially happy to recommend Frances F. Dunwell's new book, which in 363 well-illustrated pages recounts not only the river's geopolitical and commercial importance since its first European visit in 1609, but also - and of equal importance - its profound impact on the American imagination. Particularly absorbing are the author's descriptions of the "sacred" and "mythic" river that inspired the first schools of American landscape painting (accompanied by 14 full-page color reproductions) and literature; the "sublime" river that made West Point and the Hudson Highlands the first American stop on the 19th-century European grand tour; the "picturesque" river that (through the story of undeservingly little-known A.J. Downing) formed the American landscape garden tradition best known to us in Central Park; and the "healthful" river that impelled city folk to seek out relaxation and recuperation in Highlands countryside and Adirondacks wilderness. It is the Hudson's imaginative impact that continues to loom large in the river's post-industrial present, uniting its passionate advocates (as in the campaign to save Storm King from dam construction) to preserve its ecology and panoramas. Dunwell, who has helped to restore the Hudson in her work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, has "done well" in communicating her love of the river to the reader.

Reviewed by Chris Connolly

**Adirondack Mountain
Club-Ramapo Chapter
20 Gerlach Drive
New City, NY 10956**

**NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S POSTAGE PD
MONSEY, NY
#5612**

SAVE THESE DATES

- **October 31-November 2, Fall Foliage Hiking Weekend, see page 5 for details.**
- **This year's Holiday Party will be held on Thursday, Dec. 4th at the Pasta Cucina Restaurant, 253 S. Little Tor Road, New City, NY.**

We will enjoy a delicious three course dinner which will include your choice of chicken francese, salmon cucina, veal saltimbaca, or eggplant rollantini as an entree. Our party will take place in the large room upstairs from the main dining area. The cost for the evening of fun, friends, and food, is \$28.00 per person which includes tax and tip. The only additional cost is a cash bar for wine, etc. Soft drinks, tea, or coffee are included as part of our dinner.

Please notify Suzan Gordon before November 26th if you, with family or friends, plan to attend our holiday event. Last year we all had a marvelous time.

Suzan Gordon 201-871-3531 browning.27@verizon.net