

The CATSKILL CANISTER

Volume 57 - Number 3
July - September 2024





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The Catskill Canister

Volume 57 - No. 3 | July - September 2024

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Lori Herpen*Vice President*
Colin DeVries*Secretary*
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The Catskill Canister is published quarterly by the Catskill 3500 Club, Inc., a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization. P.O. Box 294, West Hurley, NY 12491 For more information about the club please visit www.catskill3500club.org

President's Column by Michael Bongar



Wow. There are so many things happening with the Catskill 3500 Club that it's hard to keep up. VP Herpen and your Canister Editor Jack Walker and I had the opportunity to join the Peekamoose-Table Trail Crew and to see the Rippers in action. Thanks to those stalwart trail maintainers for joining with the Club's maintenance efforts on this section of the Long Path. There were a lot of blow downs as we hiked up from Peekamoose Rd. When we summited Table, we thought we heard the Denning Rd. trail crew down below. Thanks, Lourdes Sonera, for putting this together and I apologize to the Rippers for forgetting my ice chest. It was early in the season.

Dr. Kara Belinsky was joined by two DEC staff members and four of her students on Sugarloaf for their first foray into a Montane bird study. They heard several Bicknell's Thrush. This study is partially funded by your 3500 Club. Dr. Belinsky will be offering a unique bird program at our Annual Dinner on July 27 at the Ashokan Center. Camp Catskill is planning a pop-up store. These are only two of the surprises that we have in store for you at the dinner. So please hurry up and purchase your ticket now. Tickets go on sale June 15. We are looking forward to seeing our new members accept their well-deserved accolades.

I will be Trailhead Stewarding at Woodland Valley at the end of June, and I look forward to seeing many hikers. Hope you will be one of them. Thanks to Colleen Hardcastle and Lourdes Sonera for helming this program. Please sign up on the 3500 Club website for a spot at either Woodland Valley or at the Slide parking area.

Thanks to those of you who participated in Adopt-a-Highway at the lovely Stony Clove Notch.

Our new Board candidates are Sherrie Goffman, Julie McGuire and Jack Walker. Our new Treasurer is Chris Hummel. They are all going to bring creativity and community spirit to our Board. Don't forget to vote if you are an active member. Ballots will be available on the website and at our Annual Dinner.

The Club invites members to volunteer in any way that's going to be fun and rewarding for you. Please contact me with any questions or suggestions.

See you on July 27 at the Ashokan Center!

*On the cover: Summit of Sugarloaf on the Devil's Path.
Photo courtesy of Steve Aaron #3199*

Trail Mix: News & Notes

In Memorium

Nola Royce, #1515 W596

Nola Royce passed away in March at the age of 78. Some of Nola's conquests included climbing the world's highest mountains on all seven continents. That list included Mount Vinson (Antarctica), Peak Lenin (Russia) Denali (Alaska), Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania), and Base Camp at Mount Everest. Just shy of her 65th birthday, she finished her 54 Colorado high peaks over 14,000 feet. Nola was a long-established member of several hiking clubs including the ADK 46ers and Catskill 3500 Club.

Peekamoose Road Trailhead Permits

The Catskill 3500 Club wants to remind hikers that a permit is required to park at the Peekamoose-Table Trailhead near the Blue Hole, effective **May 15 through September 15**, seven days a week. The fee covers administrative costs, which is consistent with other DEC day-use areas. **Details: \$10 per permit** but six people are covered under one permit, though the permit is attached to a single car and must be displayed on that car. **How to obtain it:** via Reserve America or by calling 1-800-456-CAMP (1-800-456-2267). **Fine for no permit:** up to \$250. No permit is required for the Peekamoose-Table trailhead in Denning. For more information, check out the DEC's site on the topic.

Trail Race Alerts

11th Annual Manitou's Revenge

June 22 from 5 a.m. to 5 a.m. on June 23

Manitou's Revenge runs from Maplecrest to Phoenicia, and the runners will traverse some of the most difficult trail in the Catskills, which is why there is a 23 hour time limit. Starting on Big Hollow road (County Route 56) runners will go East on Big Hollow Road and will turn left on the Black Dome Trail. They will then go south on the Escarpment Trail to Harding Road. Once on Harding Road they will descend to Palenville, use Route 23A to connect to the old Malden Avenue and follow the Long Path to Platte Clove. Then they will continue on the Long Path over Indian Head, Twin, Sugarloaf and Plateau Mountains. Atop of Plateau they will turn south on the Warner Creek Trail (still the Long Path) and follow it all the way over Mount Tremper to Plank Road. The final 1+ miles is along Plank Road, with the course finishing at Parish Hall in Phoenicia.

For additional information, contact Charlie Gadol.

Trail Race Alerts - cont.

Climb It for Climate

June 30, 2024

Climb It For Climate is returning in 2024 as a stand alone event in the Catskill Mountains at Belleayre Resort! Sitting just under 3500ft, this formidable mountain offers epic views of the stunning Catskill High Peaks around every turn. Runners participating will have the option of a 25K or an 8K. Donations being collected through registration & raffle for The Catskill Center.

47th Annual Escarpment Trail Race

July 28th, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m

The Escarpment Trail was the first technical trail race of its kind in the country. The annual trek began in 1977. Runners start at the Route 23 trailhead in Windham, NY in waves of 15 runners every 5 minutes. Contestants run the Escarpment Trail over the "Wall of Manitou" and finish in the North Lake picnic area in North-South Lake Campground.

For more information contact race founder/director Dick Vincent.



PHWB trail in late summer. Photo courtesy of Albert Purdy #2378 W1025



58th Annual DINNER MEETING

Saturday, July 27, 2024



Special Musical Guest: Fred Gillen Jr.

Event Details

Access will be open from 12-8 pm. Your ticket includes entrance to all the trails at the Ashokan Center and a dinner buffet with vegetarian and gluten free options. Iced tea, soda and water will be provided, and a cash bar will be available with beer, hard cider and wine.

Ticket cost is \$55 per guest, and the tickets will be on sale on Eventbrite starting on June 15, 2024. Buy your ticket early because we expect a sold-out event.

Children under 12 are welcome at no charge. Unfortunately, canine hikers are not permitted at the Ashokan Center.

Please come early because we are jam packed with fun activities and you will find old and new friends to catch up with...

Special Features

- 🌲 A special pop-up store will be offered by **Camp Catskill**
- 🌲 **Carol and Dave White** will have a special table with books and club patches and stickers. Tom Rankin will offer his book.
- 🌲 Visit **Colleen and Lourdes** and learn about and sign onto our Trailhead Stewardship program.
- 🌲 **David White** will be awarding our newest members their certificates and memberships.

Dr. Kara Belinsky will be making two presentations during the afternoon in a special event space on the property.

PRESENTATION 1

The Catskills montane birds and trails survey: Balancing human recreation and wildlife preservation in the High Peaks.

15 minutes

PRESENTATION 2

Get to know 12 birds that call these mountains home!

20 minutes

Additionally, this meeting fulfills the requirements of our bylaws to gather membership for an annual meeting. At the meeting, members in good standing (i.e. any member up to date on their dues) will be asked to vote on the slate of Officers and Directors.

Event Times

- 12 p.m.:** Access to the Ashokan Center
- 1-3 p.m.:** Socializing with appetizers and a cash bar. Tables and Activities.
- 3-5 p.m.:** Annual business meeting & awarding of certificates
- 5 p.m.:** Dinner buffet
- 8 p.m.:** Departure

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO PURCHASE TICKETS



Or visit:
www.catskill3500club.org/annual-dinner



QUILT RAFFLE TO BENEFIT CMSAR

Hiking on the Ashokan property and canoe rentals are available. Hiking includes many trails along the Esopus including the 1885 covered bridge, Winchell's Falls and Cathedral Gorge.

Lodging and camping options are available.

Ashokan Center
477 Beaverkill Rd Olivebridge, NY 12461

How You Can Support the Catskill 3500 Club



As a member of the Catskill 3500 Club, you are a “*Steward of the Catskills*” and a vital part of our hiking community. The club is managed solely by volunteers who dedicate their time and resources to doing what we all love; hiking in the mountains!

Since the very beginning, the club has engaged in stewardship and conservation efforts in the Catskills region; from our Trailhead Stewards program; to our Adopt-A-Highway clean-ups; to our Trail Maintenance; to regularly advocating for good policies and legislation affecting the region’s natural resources.

The Club also hosts annual events, and provides the community with courses on navigation, shelter building, and wilderness first aid. Club volunteers run the highly trained Catskill Mountain Search and Rescue Team (CMSAR).

The club offers group-led hikes almost every weekend and some weekdays throughout the year. The club encourages respect, equality and inclusion among the hiking community.

Your support means MOUNTAINS to us!
Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the club and help sustain all these important initiatives.

ONLINE DONATION

Scan the QR code to make an online donation. Payments will be processed through Paypal.



BY CHECK

Checks can be made out to: Catskill 3500 Club, Inc.
and sent by mail to:
P.O. Box 294, West Hurley, NY 12491

Does your employer offer a match for charitable donations? If so, please apply for a match through your employer, or your employer’s foundation’s, web portal.

As a 501c3 organization, all contributions to the Catskill 3500 Club, Inc are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Mission Statement

The Catskill 3500 Club, founded in 1962, continues to uphold the following principles for its members:

- Foster interest in hiking;
- Provide on-going education on outdoor skills; *and*
- Engage in public service, stewardship, and responsible conservation of our region’s natural resources.

Value Statement

We value and celebrate those who have ascended, on foot, the 33 highest peaks on public lands in the Catskill Mountains, as well as those who have additionally hiked these mountains in winter.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

VOTE at the Annual Meeting, July 27, 2024 or by Absentee Ballot!



We are pleased to announce that the time has come for our annual election of Officers and Directors. The annual election of Club Officers and Directors is an opportunity for members to shape the future of the Club by selecting the leaders who will guide us through the coming year. Candidates are selected by the nominating committee and approved by the Board of Directors in accordance with the procedures outlined in the organizational Bylaws. All candidates are listed below and bios are included for the new candidates only.

Catskill 3500 Club Candidates - 2024

The following candidates were nominated and approved in accordance with the procedure outlined in the organizational Bylaws

Officers (4)

President: Michael Bongar
Vice President: Lori Herpen
Treasurer: Chris Hummel
Secretary: Colin Devries

Directors (11)

Chris Adams	Julie McGuire
Maria Bedo-Calhoun	Lourdes Sonera
Jim Bouton	Jack Walker
Sherri Goffman	David White
Jake Haisley	Bill Winterbottom
Colleen Hardcastle	

If you plan to attend the annual meeting, you may vote in person. If you are unable to attend, you may vote by absentee ballot.

Please visit:

www.catskill3500club.org/voting or scan the QR code



Scan the QR code to view the ballot

Vote to Amend Bylaws: The Board of Directors would like membership's approval to amend the organizational Bylaws to reflect minor policy changes. The proposed amendments are:

- 1) Update the policy on when annual membership dues are payable
- 2) Clarification to the Code of Conduct to specify that the club's responsibility pertains to board members and volunteers
- 3) Update to the official list of committees
- 4) Streamline the process of amending the Bylaws
- 5) Addition of historical language about how peaks are defined for the official Catskill 3500 Club list of peaks

Your vote participation is important to ensuring that our leadership reflects the diverse perspectives and needs of our Catskill 3500 Club community.

Thank you for your continued support of the Club.

The 3500 Club extends its appreciation to the following Officers/Board Members who will be departing their positions.



Dick Vincent #3055

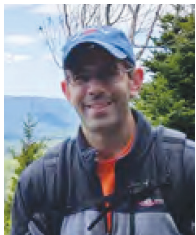
The Catskill 3500 Club would like to thank **Dick Vincent (#3055)** for his service as a Board member and as the New York New Jersey Trail Conference Representative for the Club. Coach Dick Vincent founded the Escarpment Trail Run in 1977 and has run in 7 New York Marathons. Dick coaches the Albany Running Exchange Running Club and is a mentor to many outstanding athletes. Thank you Dick!



Jay Hui #1546 W628

Thanks go out to **Jay Hui (#1546)** the long serving Treasurer of the Catskill 3500 Club. Jay has been a generous volunteer and has spent countless hours on shepherding Club finances. Jay's efforts were the background of the Club's financial integrity. Jay will long be remembered and appreciated.

New Candidate Bio's



Chris Hummel #4097 W1559 - Treasurer

Chris served as Assistant Treasurer for the past year and is currently serving in that capacity having been appointed by the board in May 2024 to fill a vacancy. Chris has lived in various parts of Long Island, Queens, and the Bronx throughout his life, but now resides in Plainview, NY with his wife. As a child, Chris was always fascinated by math and numbers, and years later, started his career working in finance for a wealth management company. After a few years, he switched into the accounting field. He initially worked primarily in auditing while earning his CPA designation, but ultimately found tax preparation, financial statement preparation, and various other accounting services to be an ideal match. He now works for his own firm as well as another small accounting firm based in Long Island. Chris has enjoyed hiking throughout his adulthood, and first joined a Catskill 3500 Club hike in July 2015. He had a great time meeting leaders and other attendees and learning from

their hiking knowledge and experience. Over the years, he continues to enjoy hiking in the Catskills and loves his visits to the region. He is also supportive of the Club's goals not only promote safe and responsible hiking, but also its initiatives to protect wildlife and preserve the health of the forest as a whole.



Sherri Goffman #3950 W1535 - Director

Sherri has always enjoyed hiking, and since the summer of 2021 has devoted much of her time to hiking in the Catskills, completing her Catskill 3500 peaks in May 2022, her Winter 35s in January 2023, the 2022 Catskill Fire Tower Challenge, and most recently, her 4-seasons (Catskill Mountain Club), last November. Sherri likes combining hiking with her passion for travel and has hiked in many European, and Asian countries, and various states in the U.S.

Additionally, in 2022 Sherri participated in the Catskill 3500 Club's Wilderness First Aid training and has supported the Club's Highway Clean-up and Trail Steward Programs, where she has been a Trail Steward for the past two years. She currently serves on the Conservation and Winter Weekend Committees.

Before her retirement in 2021, Sherri was a public school educator, working for many years as a special education teacher, building principal, and central office administrator. Sherri grew up in Rockland County, NY, where she also raised her two daughters. She especially loves spending time with her girls and her 10-year-old grandson. Sherri currently lives in Woodstock, NY.



Julie McGuire #3500 - Director

Julie McGuire is a high school English teacher and backcountry skier who divides her time between NYC and the Catskills. She has been spending her weekends and summers at her family's home in East Durham since the early 1980s. In January of 2021, she became member #3500. Julie is currently finishing up a project to ski all the Catskills high peaks. She also volunteers as a trail maintainer in the Kaaterskill Wild Forest, co-chairs the Social Media and Canister committees for the Catskill 3500 Club, and is a member of the Strategic Planning and DEI committees with the NYNJYTC.



Jack Walker #4190 - Director

Jack is a lifelong hiker, exploring many of the trails throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, and the Hudson Valley in New York. After many years of admiring the Catskill Mountains from the Taconic Range, he became inspired to start his Catskill 3500 journey in May of 2022 and completed the 37 in April of 2023. In addition to hiking the Catskills, he enjoys maintaining trails with the Catskill Trail Crew. Jack is a resident of Danbury, Connecticut and the owner of Infinity – a design + print company. As an owner, he wears many hats including graphic design for print and digital media, customer relations, and print production. Jack is currently the Newsletter Editor for the 3500 Club.

3500 CLUB VOLUNTEERS READY TO LEAD

By Jake Haisley - CMSAR Chair

During searches for missing subjects in rough or wild terrain, searchers are typically assigned to small groups and given a task to complete. In a grid search, searchers are given an area of several acres and asked to comb through it. All searchers line up side by side and walk from one end of the search area to another, doing multiple passes until the area is covered. While this sounds easy in theory, in practice it's often quite challenging. Uneven terrain, dense undergrowth, and inexperienced searchers can lead to confusion and gaps in coverage. A good task leader can keep the team focused and in line, develop a strategy that matches the search area, and ensure that the task mission of running a thorough search is fulfilled.

On searches run by New York's DEC, tasks are generally led by Forest Rangers with great expertise in many facets of SAR. If Rangers are unavailable or spread thin, it may be necessary for incident command to appoint a trained volunteer to lead a task. The 3500 Club's SAR team (CMSAR) has two members who have obtained the DEC's Crew Boss certification. Chief Brad Sayer (#2618) and Captain Bill Winterbottom (#1904) have both completed Crew Boss training, and are ready to step up



CMSAR Crew Bosses Brad Sayer (#2618) and Bill Winterbottom (#1904)

when the need arises. This year, CMSAR is looking to have two more members trained and certified.

Much of a task leader's most important work is done before the group has even left the staging area. A task leader takes stock of the assigned team, and ascertains the experience level and skill sets of searchers. The leader can then assign roles to searchers: navigation, radio communication, medical, and scribe. If a teammate has experience in mental health, they can be assigned to help work with subjects experiencing mental stress. The task leader also has to ensure that all searchers have the necessary personal safety gear (gloves and eye protection are the big ones), and that everyone has the supplies and physical ability to complete the task safely. As in all things SAR, the wellbeing of the searchers comes first.



When a task reaches the search area, the task leader must ensure that everyone is properly spaced out so that searchers can visually assess the terrain with a good chance of finding a clue or a person. Proper distancing must be maintained through the search, with the line compressing in dense areas and expanding in open areas. Searchers should be reminded to look above and

behind them. If a difficult or impassable area is found, the leader decides how to approach it, and notifies Incident Command if any terrain had to be left unsearched.

The task leader also has to demonstrate a good attitude for the team. In searches where conditions are rough or the probability of locating the subject seems low, searchers may become discouraged and lose focus. It's important to emphasize that the mission succeeds by virtue of doing a thorough search of the area, regardless of whether subjects or clues are found.

If a subject is located, the task leader will halt the search line and direct the medic, scribe and mental health specialist to approach. It's important to keep a distressed subject calm, so the rest of the searchers should keep their distance and await further instructions. Information about the subject's location and condition must be relayed to Incident Command, initiating a chain of decisions - how the subject is to be taken out, and what resources need to be brought in to help the subject. If the team is asked to extract the subject, the task leader must determine what the fastest and safest route is, and direct team members to clear any obstacles.

Becoming a Crew Boss requires a great deal of training, commitment, and experience on real searches. I want to congratulate Brad and Bill on attaining this certification, and assure you that we are committed to providing the necessary support and training for all our team members. We thank all 3500 Club members for supporting our team so that we can offer search leadership when the need arises.

If you would like to know more about Catskill Mountain Search and Rescue, or you are interested in joining an upcoming class of candidates for team membership, you can reach the SAR chair at catskillsar@gmail.com.

NEW MEMBERS: CLASS OF 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

By Chris Adams - Assistant to the Membership Chair



As was the case last year, the Catskill 3500 Club's "Class of 2024" has fewer new members than the previous year's class. However, regular finisher numbers are still considerably higher than pre-pandemic numbers. The Class of 2024 had 244 new regular members as well as 62 new winter members compared with 257 and 68, respectively, for the Class of 2023. For comparison, the Class of 2019 (the last class before the pandemic) had 164 regular and 64 winter finishers. While not tracked in annual "classes," Life Memberships in calendar year 2023 included 75 members and nine aspirants.

Slide Mountain is a perennial favorite first climb and the Class of 2024 started there 37 times. Panther (24), Hunter (23), Indian Head (23), and Windham High Peak (21) round out the top-five most-popular first peaks. All but four mountains from the tally—Cornell, Balsam Cap, Sherrill, and Rocky—were climbed as first peaks. Six mountains—Southwest Hunter, Lone, Rusk, Kaaterskill High Peak, North Dome, and Eagle—were climbed by one new member as their first peak.

The four winter climbs necessary for membership lead the list of top mountains on which the Class of 2024 finished their membership tallies—Panther (31), Blackhead (24), Balsam (23), and Slide (22). The next most popular mountain to finish on was Kaaterskill, with 17 finishers. For those who earned their winter membership, Plateau was the most popular finishing peak with five people earning their winter patch on the mountain, followed by West Kill, Cornell, Balsam Lake, and Big Indian, which each had four winter finishers.

Certificates were mailed out with the patch and letter. Pre-pandemic, members who finished by the time of the annual dinner (usually mid-April) were considered to be in that year's class. However, Life Memberships are tracked on a calendar-year basis.

NEW MEMBERS

Class of 2024	Class of 2023
244 REGULAR	257 REGULAR
62 WINTER	68 WINTER

CLASS OF 2024 FAVORITE FIRST CLIMB - TOP 5

Slide	37
Panther	24
Hunter	23
Indian Head	23
Windham HP	21

CLASS OF 2024 FINISHING CLIMBS - TOP 5

Panther	31
Blackhead	24
Balsam	23
Slide	22
Kaaterskill HP	17



2023 CANISTER REPORT

Jim Bouton - Canister Chair

Canister Sign-ins

2023	2022
15,288	14,980

In 1999, the 3500 Club signed an agreement with the NYSDEC to keep and maintain the canisters on the then trail less peaks over 3500'. It was at the same time the canisters were removed from the Adirondacks, as they were felt to be non-conforming and contributed to the further degradation of the peaks involved. There are several theories as to why we could keep ours, but what ever it was, we did, with stipulations, such as keeping the peaks in a pristine condition and providing the

As in previous years, the canisters have all been maintained by painting, doing minor repairs or replacing. Old canisters are recycled for parts and end up on other peaks. The "job" also includes dismantling fire rings, picking up garbage and keeping the summits as pristine as possible. The books are also tallied and the results turned into the NYSDEC who use this data for future use and allocations. The books are also used by 1st responders for search purposes. They are a valuable tool, and one of the few methods to determine back country usage. Brushing over herd paths as soon as they formed was once done, but at this time it is not, as there is at least one major unmaintained trail leading to each of the 14 canistered peaks. We are also not allowed to mark, paint or cut a trail to these peaks.



NYSDEC with a yearly tally. By that time the Catskill Canisters had all been upgraded from the original double coffee cans and ammo boxes to the now familiar PVC tubes, which were the design of Roy Messaro's, who was one of the canister maintainers in the 90's, as well as a steward of the mountains. At first, they were painted bright red, with a white stripe around the top and bottom. Many had a brass name plate, with peak name and elevation. At the time the first agreement was signed, it was deemed they all had to be a neutral color and Region 3 was changed to gray. It wasn't until 2012-14 that Region 4 got the memo and all were changed to gray. And then, just as the last gray paint was drying, it was decided to change them all to the bright orange we see today. This was an attempt to make them more visible and to reduce herd path formation.

2023 saw a total of 15288 sign -ins, up from 14980 in 2022. It is estimated that around 10% don't sign. This number is much higher for trailhead registers, where it is thought over 50% don't sign. 2020 saw the most usage, with over 17,000 sign ins. When I first started in 2008 it was around 2000. There is no data from years before that. May again for the 3rd year was the most popular month, with 1611 sign-ins, disconcerting because spring is the most sensitive time of the year for trail conditions, fledgling birds and birthing time for other wildlife, and emerging plants. March saw the fewest sign -ins with 956. KHP had the most for the year, Rocky the fewest. It is hard to decipher how many individuals are actually hiking. As in past years, by doing a random sampling of a couple months in a few peaks, I would estimate about 500 different individuals, with around 100 accounting for 25-50% of signing, the average being about 33%, or a third.

As per our current VSA (Volunteer Service Agreement) with the NYSDEC, the tallies were submitted. As stated before, this data will be used for determining future use. A trail-less peak study has been under way for a couple of years, and these findings, with recommendations and possible new regulations, may be released soon.

CELEBRATING OUR CLUB EXTRAORDINARY VOLUNTEERS

By Lourdes Sonera | Trail Maintenance Chair

As we reflect on the busy spring season filled with trail maintenance work, Adopt-a-Highway, and Adopt-a-Trailhead programs, we are filled with gratitude for the dedication and hard work of our incredible volunteers. Their unwavering commitment to giving back and preserving the beauty of our community has made a significant impact, and we are immensely thankful for their efforts.

Trail Maintenance Recap

A special shoutout goes to the dedicated trail crew volunteers who joined us for the Spring Trail Maintenance on April 20. Despite facing challenges such as heavy storms and numerous blowdowns, our amazing crews worked tirelessly to clear Peekamoose and Table Mountain trails. Their commitment to keeping our trails safe and accessible for all hikers is truly priceless. A heartfelt thank you to each volunteer who participated in this crucial work.

We would like to extend our gratitude to Steve Emanuel for his exceptional leadership in leading the Peekamoose Crew and sharing his knowledge. His dedication to the trails throughout the year is truly commendable and greatly appreciated.

To all our trail crew volunteers, your passion for the outdoors and willingness to give back to the community is truly inspiring. Your hard work not only preserves the beauty of the Catskills Park but also ensures that everyone can enjoy our trails safely. Special thanks to:

Jack Walker, Lori Herpen, Casey and Penny Conlin, Harold Oakhill, John Barringer, Mike Siatkowski. Michael Bongar, Steve Emanuel, Jim Gerhard, Matthew and Chris McBride, Jessica & Brenda Robie, Samantha Cash, David Lenmo and Lourdes Sonera

We are incredibly thankful for your dedication and support!



Photo credits: Lourdes Sonera, Lori Herpen, Michal Bongar

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

LITTER REMOVAL ON ROUTE 214



A huge shoutout to our amazing 3500 Club members for their unwavering dedication to the Adopt-a-Highway crew on May 19th:

- Karen Bischoff #4281
- Pat Johnson #3284 W1392
- Harold Oakhill #283 W1244
- Jeffrey Levitt #2145 W918
- Sherri Goffman #3950 W1535
- John Estok #3505
- Judith Estok #3506
- Stephen Tsang #4420 W1634
- Christopher Leon #3881 W1474
- Linda Betancourt #4282
- Larry Leslie #208 W131
- Lourdes Sonera #2525 W1075
- Mikey Siatkowski #4134

Your commitment to maintaining Route 214 clean is truly inspiring. We have noticed a significant reduction of litter the last couple years which is a positive indication of impact of education and fostering a cleaner, greener environment for all. Thank you for your hard work and commitment - each and every one of you is simply amazing!

If you are looking to make a difference and join our volunteer programs, we invite you to become a part of our incredible team. Your contributions can help us continue to create positive change in our community and preserve the beauty of our natural surroundings.

Together we can do more!



All photos courtesy of Lourdes Sonera

3500 Club Adopt-A-Trailhead

A SUCCESSFUL OPENING WEEKEND OF THE 3500 CLUB TRAILHEAD PROGRAM

By Colleen Hardcastle & Lourdes Sonera | Trail Steward Program Co-Chairs

I hope the new Canister finds you well and filled with the same enthusiasm and passion for preserving our Catskill Park as we are at the 3500 Club Trailhead Steward Program. What an incredible start to our fourth season it has been, with perfect weather and dedicated stewards making a positive impact at our trailheads. The trailheads were busy with hikers and backpackers looking to enjoy all the benefits of being in nature. The dedication and passion of our stewards have made a significant impact at our trailheads, creating a positive environment for hikers and backpackers to enjoy the beauty of nature.



We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our partners, including DEC Rangers Martin and Horn, AR Yasmina, Tori, and the Trail Steward from the NYNJTC, for their unwavering support in preserving the park and promoting ethical hiking practices. A special acknowledgment goes out to Andy Garrison and Charlie Gadol their hard work in clearing the Boroughs Range before our official kickoff day, a contribution that has not gone unnoticed and is appreciated by hikers.

A round of applause to all the Club Stewards who volunteered during the opening weekend, including Richard Iaia #3873, Colleen Hardcastle #2990 W1416, Linda Betancourt #4282, Karen Bischoff #4281, and Suzanne Knabe #1326 W0498 at Slide, as well as Maryse Mitchell-Brody aspirant, Mikey Siatkowski #4134, Lawrence Leslie Jr #0208 W0131, Lourdes Sonera #2525 W1075, Jessica Robie #4209, Brenda Robie #4208, and Ryan Raaum #3819 W1537 at Woodland Valley. To all the stewards who have committed to this season, we thank you for your dedication and belief in the ripple effect to

preserve the park for future generations.

As we continue our mission to promote ethical hiking practices, it is essential to remember the significance of Leave No Trace principles, responsible hiking, and respecting wildlife and ecosystems. By participating in the Trailhead Steward Program, volunteers have the opportunity to educate themselves and others on these vital practices, ensuring the longevity and preservation of our trails and parks.

For those who are passionate about protecting natural spaces and making a positive impact in their community, we encourage you to consider [joining our program](#). Together, we can cultivate a culture of stewardship that benefits our environment, wildlife, and the well-being of all hikers.

Let's continue to foster a healthy and ethical hiking community that inspires others to explore the outdoors responsibly, creating unforgettable memories in the midst of the beautiful Catskills Park.





FLEDGLING SEASON IN THE CATSKILLS

By **Jim Bouton**

Stewardship & Conservation Co-Chair

Fledgling and birthing season is now underway in the Catskills. This includes birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Of special interest/concern are Montane birds who typically live in the spruce/fir forests that are only found on the summits and ridges of a few Catskill Peaks. Most notably the long boreal ridge and peaks from Slide to Peekamoose Mountain. This zone has seen significant impact from fire, global warming and increased human use in the past several years. There are other areas as well, including KHP, Round Top, South Double Top, Hunter, South West Hunter, North Dome and any other area above 3000' with predominantly spruce/fir forest. These zones are dwindling.

Many of these Montane birds' nest on or close to the ground. Species above 3000' include the Yellow-Bellied Fly Catcher, Swainsons and Hermit Thrushes, Yellow- Rumped and Magnolia Warblers, Juncos and White Throated Sparrows. A little higher up the Blackpoll Warbler and the 3500 Clubs mascot, the Bicknell's Thrush, call home, typically only above 3500'.

As hikers, we hike. But we can minimize our impact. Listed are several ways to do this.

Do fewer hikes to these areas between May15 and July 15, which is considered prime breeding and fledgling season. If you go, reduce the size of your group to a minimum. Stay on the major herd paths, the most open of the unmaintained trails that crisscross these areas. Go slow, watch where you step and avoid low thick balsam and spruce branches. Many of these birds' nest in these thicks, no more than 4' off the ground, if not on the ground itself.

Most importantly, leash your dog. Low lying nests and fledglings are easy prey for predators, an unleashed dog the same. I have watched several ground nests destroyed by unleashed dogs while stewarding at a fire tower. Most dogs will naturally chase fleeing fledglings. Even if not caught, the stress alone can kill the bird. If you come upon a nest or a bird acting injured trying to lead you away, leave the area immediately. Again, stressing these birds will sometimes cause them to abandon the nest or kill them outright.

Studies are being conducted of these species at this time, the 3500 Club is even funding one. This information will be used to determine the effects of global warming, hiker impacts, bird populations. The DEC could use the results to determine future use.

It's a small sacrifice we as hikers can make to do the right thing, but the rewards can last for years to come.



Nest photo by Jim Bouton #1539 W614

Bicknell's Thrush photo by Yana Levchinsky-Grimmond #2814 W1222

FIRST GROWTH FOREST ALONG THE ESCARPMENT TRAIL

By Michael Kudish #147

This is the sixth article of a series about the history of forests along the Catskills' longest trails. We've already mapped the Devil's Path, Pine Hill–West Branch, Dry Brook Ridge–Mill Brook Ridge, Wittenberg–Cornell–Slide, and Mongaup–Hardenbergh Trails locating first growth forest, logged, barked, and burned segments.

Of the six trails, the Escarpment Trail is by far the most disturbed and therefore has the least original forest left. The three tracts it passes through have a total mileage of 3.05 miles of its 24.25-mile length: only 12.6 percent. See the addendum to this article for a comparison of the percent of first growth forest remaining along the other five long trails.



The author on Burnt Knob checking his barometer to measure his elevation. The forest has oak and had therefore burned - not 1st growth. Note from the author: My Dad, Aaron Kudish, took the photo.

My mentor, Edward G. West (#45), then retired Superintendent of Land Acquisition for New York State, told me that this trail was his favorite. It was quite new at that time, the last links built, and the trail completed through, in 1967 when I was still a graduate student. He liked it because of the frequent views. It was only later that I learned just how disturbed the forests were historically.

Mileage in this article is taken from New York-New Jersey Trails Conference Map #141. Elevations of entry points into first growth are obtained from this writer's field notes and then plotted on U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps to determine supplemental mileage not indicated on Map #141.

In about a mile from the Schutt Road Trailhead (mile zero), the Escarpment Trail passes near, and well above, a small first growth tract in the bottom of Kaaterskill Clove, between Kaaterkskill Falls and Bastion Falls. It does not go through this ca. 32-acre tract.

From mile zero to mile 13.9, the Escarpment Trail passes through disturbed forest, first burned repeatedly by Native Americans. Evidence from charcoal preserved in peat bogs along the crest of the Escarpment tells us that flames swept up from the Hudson Valley below with increasing frequency and intensity beginning about 7000 to 6000 years ago. This was

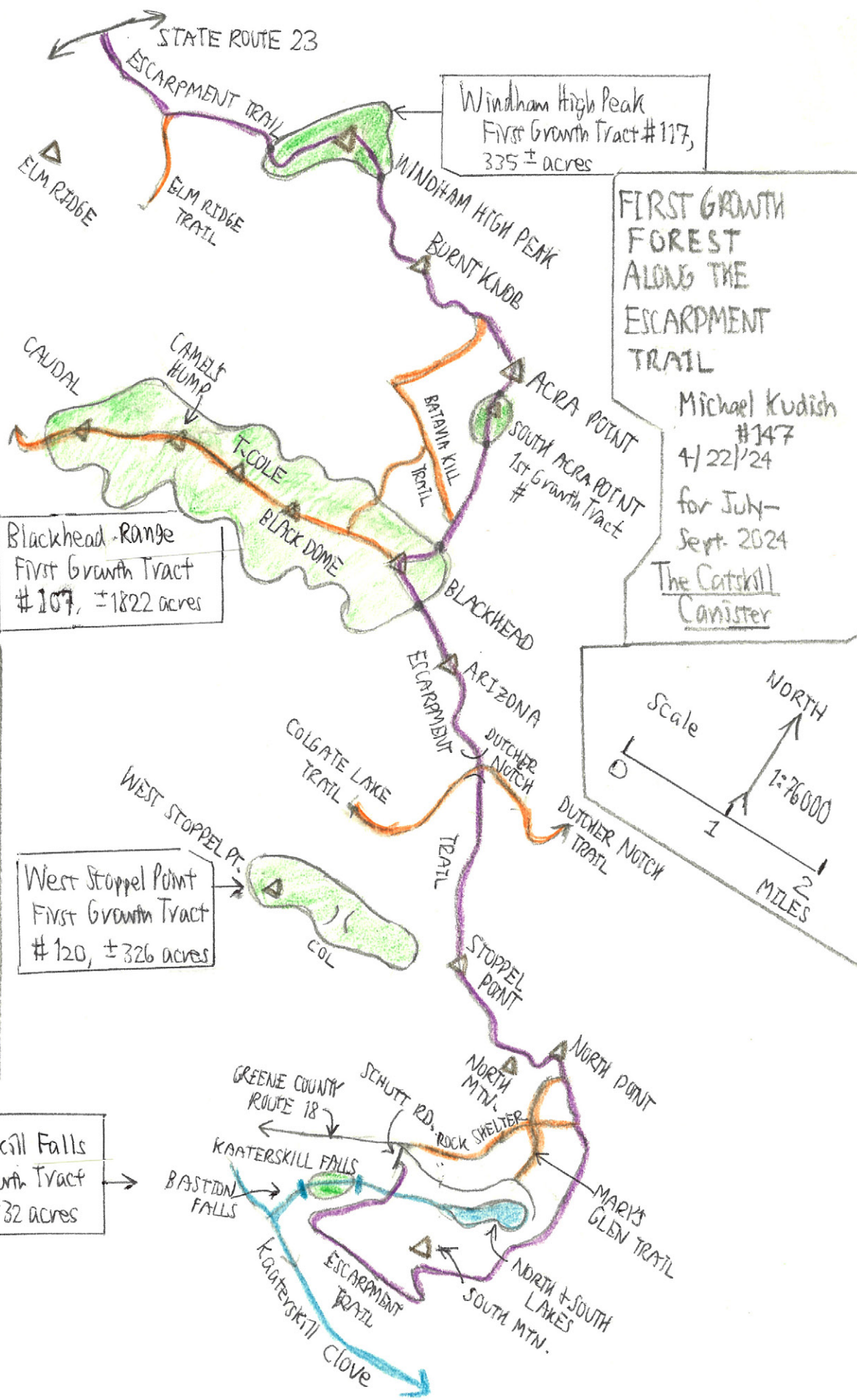


June 9, 1985. Sugar maple-Veratrum grove, southeast shoulder of Blackhead, on Escarpment Trail, about 3750 feet. Sugar maple groves do not climb much higher than this, and when they are up over 3500 feet, it's always in a seep.

followed, beginning around the time of the American Revolution, by the continued burning by European settlers, by accident and by design (some burns for blueberries) until about the time of the turn of the twentieth century. In 1854, a forest fire threatened the back buildings of the Catskill Mountain House. On May 5, 1887, a burn occurred in the Kaaterskill Clove. Perhaps the most famous burn was on August 10, 1900 best remembered today by the Layman Monument. All the oaks, pines, hickories, American chestnut sprouts, mountain laurel, and huckleberry to this day locate the old burns for us.

Then came the era of hotels beginning with the Catskill Mountain House (1824 to 1963), the Laurel House (1836 to 1967), and the Hotel Kaaterskill (1881 to 1924). Vacationers were then swarming all over the region at these and many other nearby hotels, although some closed long before they burned.

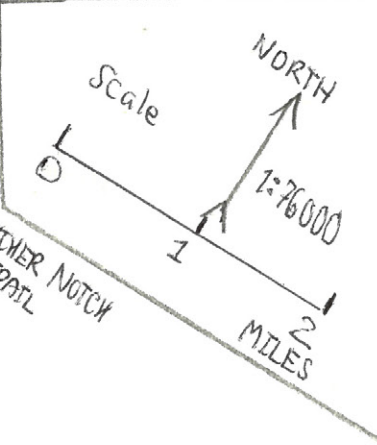
Even North Point and North Mountain were burned along the Escarpment Trail. The WEST side of



FIRST GROWTH FOREST ALONG THE ESCARPMENT TRAIL

Michael Kudish #147
 4/22/24
 for July-Sept. 2024
 The Catskill Canister

- ESCARPMENT TRAIL
- CONNECTING TRAILS
- SUMMITS
- FIRST GROWTH FOREST TRACTS
- ROADS



Kaaterskill Falls
 First Growth Tract #140, ±32 acres

North Mountain seems unburned, but was logged between 1913 and 1916 by Oliver Perry who had a contact with the Beach Family of the Catskill Mountain House.



June 9, 1985. Summit of Blackhead with the Escarpment Trail sign pointing north. The balsam fir cap forest is first growth.

The forest tells me that the summit of Stoppel Point (mile 9.3) does not remain in first growth. However, hike just 0.3 mile west down its west spur to elevation 3260 (entry point #645, my catalog number) and you will enter a first growth tract that extends farther down along the spur, into a col, and over West Stoppel Point. The north spur of Stoppel Point was logged mainly for spruce by Holdridge and West between 1898 and 1902, Ed West once told me.

The Dutcher Notch (mile 11.5) has an old road passing through it. Arizona (mile 12.8) and the lower slopes of Blackhead burned in 1881 and again in 1900. It is not until we climb up to the 3450-level on Black Head, mile 13.9, where we enter first growth (my entry point catalog #67). We stay in first growth over the summit of Black Head (mile 14.3), and descend to elevation 2900 feet (mile 14.9) where we leave first growth at entry point #68. From entry point #68 for a

distance, which includes the junction with the trail coming up from the Batavia Kill Lean-to, we are in burned and/or logged terrain again.

There is a small knob, elevation 3060, over which the trail passes from mile 16.0 (entry point #178) to mile 16.45 (entry point #70). This small knob is still apparently in first growth.

Acra Point, elevation 3098 at mile 17.1, as does most of the Escarpment, seems burned. I still cannot determine the year that Burnt Knob burned; it pre-dated Guyot's 1880 map and still has plenty of oak to prove it.

The higher elevations of Windham High Peak constitute the third, and largest, tract of original growth forest along the Escarpment Trail. At 3070

feet, entry point #162 at mile 19.7, we enter first growth. The summit is passed at mile 20.5 and we descend to 2860 feet at mile 21.3. Here at entry point #161, we have a most unusual situation for the Catskills. Typically, descending a peak, we go from first growth forest to second or subsequent (i.e. logged, barked, etc.) growth, and then into old pasture. But here, first growth abuts directly against abandoned agricultural land. Ed West and his crew planted the Norway spruce in these old fields in 1934 (see the July-September 2022 issue of The Catskill Canister, pages 9-13, for an article on plantations). We finally come out of the plantations, turn north and descend Elm Ridge to reach the Escarpment Trail's north end at Route 23, mile 24.25.

ADDENDUM: COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF FIRST GROWTH AMONG THE SIX LONG TRAILS

- 90.4%** 6.6 of 7.3 miles along the **Mongaup-Hardenbergh Trail** in a single tract.
- 73.8%** 10.4 of 14.1 miles along the **Pine Hill-West Branch Trail** in a single tract.
- 63.4%** 10.9 of 17.2 miles along the combined **Dry Brook and Mill Brook Ridge Trails** in three tracts.
- 56.8%** 13.85 of 24.20 miles along the **Devil's Path** in 4 tracts.
- 52.6%** 5.15 of 9.8 miles along the **Wittenberg-Cornell-Slide Trail** in a single tract.
- 12.6%** 3.05 of 24.25 miles along the **Escarpment Trail** in 3 tracts.

Two minor corrections to the Mongaup-Hardenbergh Trail article in the April-June 2024 issue of the Catskill Canister, Volume 57, No. 2, pages 18 to 20:

I have two minor corrections to this article. The text states that my entry point number at mile 7.1, almost at the end of the trail, is #170. It is #130. The map shows the correct number.

In the last paragraph, "The" of Catskill Center should be capitalized the first time it is mentioned. The formal name of this organization is The Catskill Center.

Michael Kudish's Ph.D. thesis was on the vegetational history of the Catskill High Peaks (SUNY E.S.F. 1971). This thesis initiated a life-long study on the forests from the end of the Ice Age to the present. He became member #147 on Panther Mountain on March 12, 1973 (with Ed West #45), and around that time wrote several articles for The Catskill Canister. Professor Mike taught in the Forestry Division of Paul Smith's College in the Adirondacks for 34 years, retiring in 2005, and moved to the Catskills to continue studying the forest full time.

The Catskill 3500 Club Gear Review Video: Hydration Packs

This gear review is brought to you by CAMPMOR in Paramus, NJ



Click the above image to watch the gear review

Looking for suggestions for carrying water on your outdoor quests? In our latest gear review you will hear some good advice from Steve Caldwell of Campmor in Paramus NJ. Steve will go over bladders, insulators and simple methods for carrying water on all your outdoor adventures.

All Catskill 3500 Club members in good standing will receive a 10% discount on all full price items. (excludes car racks and boats)

Campmor began decades ago in a garage, and has blossomed over the years into one of the world's foremost retailers of outdoor gear and camping equipment. How'd we do it? By providing superior equipment and service, great customer support, and fair prices; a perfect storm of outdoor enthusiasm.

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[/Campmor](https://www.youtube.com/Campmor)



11th ANNUAL FIRE TOWER LIGHTING

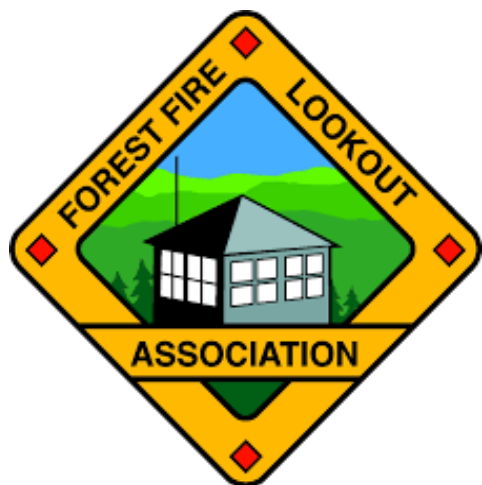
Saturday, August 31st at 9:00 pm

The NYS Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association is pleased to announce the 11th Annual Lighting of the Fire Tower Event! Saturday, August 31st at 9:00 pm we hope to have a light begin to shine in the cab of many towers across NYS! Last year we had so many wonderful volunteers that we were able to light 37 towers! We hope to increase that number this year. In the event of rain, the event will be held on Sunday, September 1st at 9:00pm.

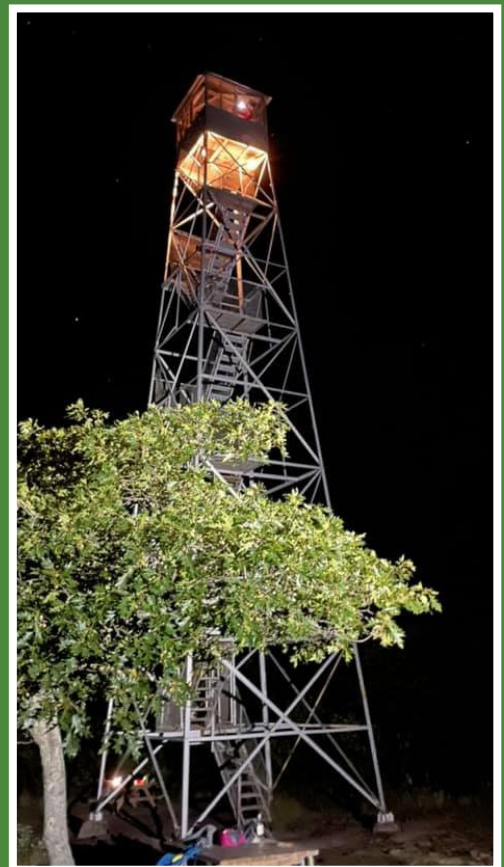
The event is done to honor the men and women who worked in these historic towers; protecting homes, businesses, communities and surrounding forests. The plan is to place a light in fire towers around the state from 9 to 9:30pm. We invite people to go to locations around the community (listed on our website) where they can look up, see the light on the horizon and remember that there was a fire tower there watching over them. Thank you to Doug Hamilton for this wonderful idea to honor the past!

All Illuminators also read aloud the names of those who served in the towers as they turn on the light and that they include these names in local advertisements for the event.

If you have any questions, please reach out to lauriejrankin@gmail.com and I will get you all the information you will need. We will begin registration for the event on Monday, July 15th and we will close registration on August 19th. Additional information can be found at the website: www.nysffla.org



Balsam Lake Fire Tower. Photo by Tom Rankin #1503 W627



Overlook Fire Tower. Photo by Lourdes Sonera #2525 W1075

Board Member Spotlight: A Q&A with Lourdes Sonera #2525 W1075

By Julie McGuire #3500 | Photos courtesy of Lourdes Sonera



In this issue, we will be featuring Lourdes Sonera, Board Member, Adopt-a-Highway Chair, and Trailhead Stewards Co-Chair. Lourdes shares a brief background of herself as well as her unwavering passion for the Catskills and the hiking community.

How old were you when you first got into hiking? How did that come about? Did you hike in Puerto Rico?

Lourdes Sonera: Growing up in the northwest side of Puerto Rico in a small town called Quebradillas, I was immersed in nature from an early age. Our outdoor adventures to the river, local caves, and hikes to the beach were a fundamental part of my upbringing, even though we never referred to it as “hiking” – we just took off walking. These experiences laid the foundation for my love of the outdoors. During a recent trip back home, I had the chance to revisit these familiar places with friends and family, reminiscing about our past treks and creating new memories. Being surrounded by nature was simply a way of life for me growing up.

When did you become a 3500 Club member? What inspired you to hike the 35s?



LS: My journey with the 3500 Club began as I started exploring different trails solo in Hudson Valley. Meeting fellow hikers and joining various groups expanded my hiking horizons. In 2015, I discovered the beauty of the Catskills, and the allure of conquering the 3500 Club peaks

captivated me. Carpooling with friends and immersing myself in the wisdom shared by experienced hikers, I found myself planning and daydreaming about my next 3500 hike. The camaraderie and knowledge shared during these adventures were invaluable. I even ventured into winter hiking after receiving advice on the right gear, and successfully summing all 3500 peaks.

Describe your journey from being a Club member to joining the board. What made you want to take on this responsibility? What role(s) do you play on the board?

LS: Attending the annual dinner made me realize that the Club was more than just hiking and collecting patches. Witnessing the efforts to preserve the park and educate others inspired me to be an active member. I was already involved in organizing trail maintenance and litter pickups when a board member approached me about joining the board. I saw an opportunity to connect with like-minded hikers dedicated to ethical hiking and sharing knowledge. Currently, I serve as a director on the Board, overseeing trail maintenance and founding the trailhead steward program dedicated to educating visitors on leave no trace and hike safe practices.



One of my proudest achievements is our team of dedicated volunteers. They selflessly contribute their time and knowledge to trail maintenance, often traveling long distances to participate. Their commitment is truly commendable. Thanks to their efforts, our club can offer

Attending the annual dinner made me realize that the Club was more than just hiking and collecting patches. Witnessing the efforts to preserve the park and educate others inspired me to be an active member.

group hikes and other essential programs, including training, trail maintenance, Adopt a Highway, and the steward program.

How did the Steward program come about? How did you organize it? What do you enjoy most about leading this endeavor?



LS: During the pandemic, concerns about foot traffic in the Catskills became a hot topic. Many of these concerns stemmed from people not knowing about Leave-No-Trace practices, wilderness guidelines, and regulations. To address this, I proposed creating a trailhead steward program. I reached out to Laurie Rankin, who was running a successful steward program in the ADK's, and adapted the program for Catskills. Laurie became my mentor during the process and volunteered for the program. Despite some initial challenges, I persisted. Ian Dunn, a great partner, helped guide me through the partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). In 2021, we launched the 3500 Trailhead Steward Program at Slide Mountain. By 2023, we expanded to cover Woodland Valley, connecting both sides of the Borroughs Range. We use social media and the Canister to engage members and encourage volunteering. The impact our stewards make and the hunger for guidance keep our program growing. While there's plenty of information online, nothing compares to the storytelling and kind advice shared by fellow hikers—just as I've learned from others' experiences. As for what I enjoy most about leading this endeavor, it's the sense of community and the opportunity to make a positive impact on the environment and fellow hikers.

What would you like to say to those who are thinking of joining the Steward program but might be hesitant? What have you learned in leading this program? How do you think it benefits both hikers and volunteers?

LS: First and foremost, I'd like to share that it's in giving that you truly receive. When you leave the trailhead after a day of stewardship, your heart is filled with hope and optimism. Why? Because you've witnessed the ripple effect of education. You help someone. But let's break it down further: The Ripple Effect—every action matters. When you help hikers have a positive experience while hiking, share real-time data and trail conditions, you're creating a better experience for all hikers. Others see your dedication and are inspired to do their part. Each time I volunteered, I felt a sense of fulfillment; it's about leaving a legacy. You must try it to truly understand the feeling of contributing to preserving the park—that's something special.



And here's the exciting part: The training is all available digitally. You can complete the training at your own pace. It's flexible and convenient. Plus, the program extends until October, so there's still time to volunteer this year. Knowing that you're contributing to preserving the park becomes part of your legacy. But it goes beyond that. When others see your commitment, they're influenced to do the same. That is the magic of the hiking community!

THE CATSKILL 3500'S FROM THE OUTSIDE, LOOKING IN – A PHOTO ESSAY

by Steve Aaron #3199

As Catskill 3500 hikers we all are familiar with the scenes and views of the Catskills from our hikes. We enjoy the close-in views of forests, streams and ledges, and the distant views offered from Catskill High Peak viewpoints and summits. I've long had a fascination with looking at the Catskills from the outside. I suppose this is rooted in my childhood growing up

just southeast of the Catskill High Peaks – always seeing them, wondering what peaks I was looking at. This photo essay looks at the Catskills from the outside, looking in. Starting with the Blackheads, we'll work our way clockwise around the Catskills.



Blackheads From Basic Creek Reservoir

The Albany area provides a few different views of the northern escarpment of the Catskills – primarily the 3 peaks of the Blackhead Range. One September morning, I was driving south from Albany on back roads and wound up at the Basic Creek Reservoir, which is one of the reservoirs for the city of Albany. It was a calm September morning and the Blackhead Range was in clear view and well reflected in the still water of the reservoir. This scene captured my attention and surprised me – it was a lucky find.

© Steve Aaron Photo. All photos in this article used by permission.



Northern Escarpment of the Catskills

A bit south and closer in, this shot from the Greenville area clearly shows that the Blackheads aren't exactly on the front line of the escarpment. Blackhead is on the far left, its summit shrouded in the clouds, as is Windham High Peak also kissing the clouds on the right. Acra Point & Burnt Knob, between the high peaks, actually form the front range of the northern Catskills.



Catskills in the Post Sunset Silhouette

The peaks of the eastern Devil's Path have a distinctive profile. This silhouette of the Catskills in the setting sun was photographed northeast of the peaks, providing a less familiar look at Indian Head, Twin, Sugarloaf and Kaaterskill High Peak in the center of the image. To the left, we see Overlook & Plattekill Mtns., and Round Top is on the right.



Catskill Autumn From Ferncliff Forest Fire Tower

The views of the Catskills from the Ferncliff Tower are incredible. This view looking northwest shows the tops of a few high peaks, but is dominated by Overlook and Plattekill Mtns and the Great Wall of Manitou. Not seen here, are the great views directly west to the Burroughs Range and other summits in the southern high peaks region.



Two Images From the Shawangunks – Summer Sunset on The Devil’s Path (Top) and The Eastern Catskills in Autumn (Bottom)



The Shawangunks provide some of the best views of the Catskills. These images were photographed from Mohonk’s North Lookout, which has stunning views to the north and west. The view of the profile of the Devil’s Path peaks is clear in this summer sunset shot. The autumn pano view shows the Catskills from Peekamoose & Table on the left, through the Burroughs Range to the Devil’s Path ultimately ending at Overlook Mountain. I think there are at least 13 of the Catskill 3500 peaking in the image – possibly a few more. It’s interesting to view the high peaks to the left and the right in the pano image. The lower peaks in the middle are found in the Esopus Valley, which divides the northern and southern Catskills in this image.



Peekamoose, Table and the Burroughs Range from the Gunks

Traveling further down the Shawangunks, we get a good look at the southern high peaks. Table, Peekamoose and Slide really stand out in this scene shot from the Gunks just above Ellenville.



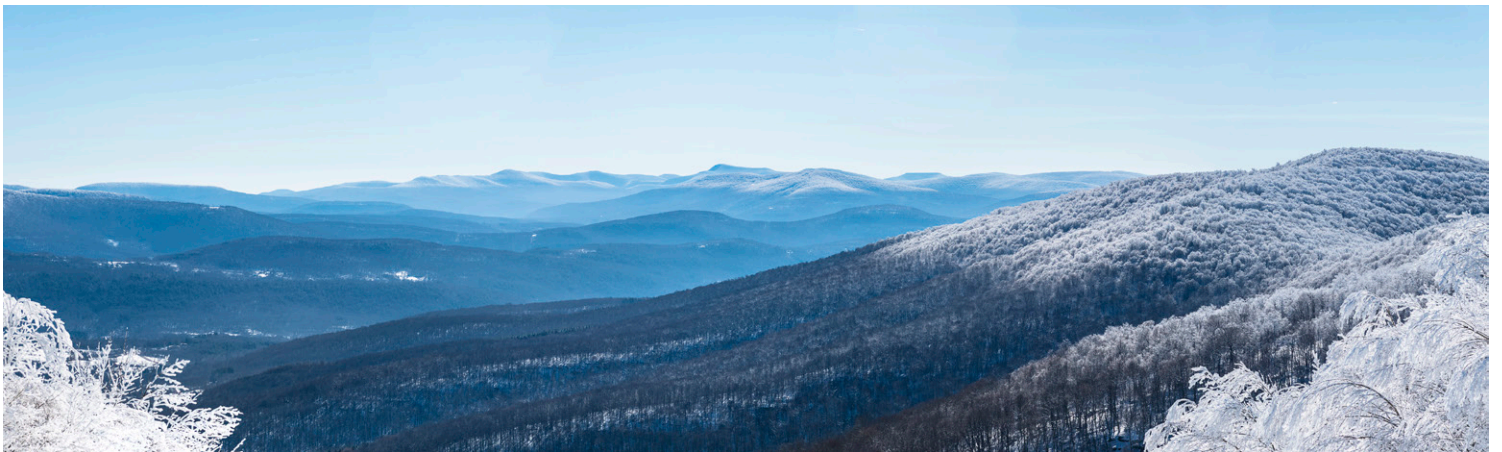
Table & Peekamoose from Sullivan County

Heading west into Sullivan County, we get this great view of Table and Peekamoose, where the two peaks are distinctly separated and the flat summit of Table is plainly visible. This photo was shot on a humid summer day near Mountindale, NY, and was really the first time I noticed these high peaks from this area. As we head west, the Catskills soften gradually into smaller peaks and ultimately low mountains and rolling hills.



View from the Balsam Lake Fire Tower

I had to cheat with this view from Balsam Lake Fire Tower as it is a High Peak – not exactly looking in from the outside. But the view into the high peaks of Graham, Doubletop, Slide, Table and even the Blackheads in the distance on the far left really paints a good picture of the scene looking east into the Catskills.



Looking East to the High Peaks From Plattekill Ski Area

Plattekill Ski Area provides a great easterly view towards the Burroughs Range and surrounding peaks like Table on the right and I believe Halcott is also in the center left. This was photographed on a beautiful clear winter day, with views for miles.



Looking East from Mt. Utsayantha

Various Catskill books identified Mt. Utsayantha as the unofficial point where the Catskills start in the northwest, so I had to visit and take in the views. This view from Utsayantha shows the Windham Ski Area on the right, with Windham High Peak in the clouds, and what I believe to be Bearpen straight ahead in the distant center.



Windham High Peak

We've come full circle and will wrap up the tour with this humid summer view of Windham High Peak and the northern escarpment of the Catskills. We've pretty much traveled around the Catskills and returned to the starting point. I really enjoy seeing all these favorite hiking peaks from the outside looking in. I hope you enjoyed the tour and the photos.

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CANISTER ← BACKTRACK →

*Reprinted from the
July-September 1981 issue
of the Catskill Canister*

EAGLE - BIG INDIAN - FIR

By Walter Gregory #18 W008

Alpine Inn at Oliverea in the CATSKILLS is a delightful place to stay. Located in the southern tier of the High Peaks, it provides easy access to many climbing and skiing opportunities. Eric and Edna Griesser are the second generation owners and provide very fine lodging and superb meals. In October 1972 the Westchester Trails Association (WTA), of which I was President at the time, spent a weekend there.

On Friday evening, I spent a long time carefully plotting the compass course for the three-mountain climb of Eagle, Big Indian, and Fir. At the time there was no apparent need to take this measure, other than that it is always a good idea to know the proper compass directions when bushwhacking in the mountains.

On Saturday the temperature was moderate, but as we started, we noticed that the peaks were shrouded in clouds, "Oh well, it should clear before long, and be bright and shiny by the time we reach the summits." Down across the road out front and up the easy long ridge to the top of Eagle, all went fine except that about half way up we picked up mist and fog, and now depended on the compass. Still, we continued up and up, although we could not see much beyond the ghostlike trees. This presented no real problem. It was necessary that we stay together, so those up front slowed to a convenient pace.

By the time we arrived on top of Eagle, it became apparent the weather would not change much, and we could expect a day of compass bushwhack in the fog and rain. From Eagle to Big Indian

we were on the trail, which was easily followed. After crossing the false summit and bushwhacking on to the real summit, sure enough, there was the canister; we hit it right on the nose. After a short lunch stop, off we went once more.

Up to this point it had been quite simple, but from here to Fir it's not that easy. The col between Big Indian and Fir is unbelievably short and narrow. Compass bearings were necessary, along with the fact that one must remember to stay high and keep to the left. What luck! There it was, only about 50 feet wide and not much longer. If you missed that col you could surely be in trouble, and could easily wind up deep down and off the mountain.

The climb from there to the main ridge on Fir was not too long. We made a sharp right turn on the ridge, and after a number of short climbs we reached the canister. Again, right on the nose! I was feeling better, and the inner butterflies were settling down.

After a short rest and finishing what was left of lunch and the usual congratulations all around, we started back along the ridge to return to the Inn and hot showers and dry clothes. If done correctly one would come down into the backyard of the Inn. In haste to get down and out of the fog as soon as possible, however, I followed the first likely looking wood road, without consulting the compass, because we were descending now. How can you go wrong going down? We should have stayed with the compass, as we came out on the Slide Mountain Road too soon.

The only comfort was that we were down and out of the fog, but we had about a mile of travel along the Macadam Road.

As we crossed the parking lot at the Inn, Joe let out a shout. His Jeep was gone. "What's that down there?" Sure enough, Joe's Jeep. It seems he had left it parked in gear without the brake on. His wife needed some articles while we were gone, had grabbed the gear shift for support, and accidentally moved it into neutral. As the Jeep was facing downhill, it slowly started to move. She jumped clear in fright and sustained only minor scratches. The Jeep scraped one car enroute, and slowly gathering momentum, crossed the field and came to rest among the trees at the bank along the brook. There being no real damage, Joe was able to drive it back to the parking lot, but this time he was careful to put on the brake.

Really a day full of fun and all sorts of problems, but we had one more still to come. There had been a power failure at the Inn and the result was NO HOT WATER. One of our bright thoughts all day had been that the hot showers awaiting would surely feel good. Oh well, to Plan II: make do with a sort of mop and pat operation with doubtful results.

Despite all, we had a grand challenging day. Also, I surely was relieved upon our safe return, even though a bit off target at the end. Careful planning insured a successful day under trying, cold, wet, and foggy conditions. It is always so relaxing to return to luxurious comfort and good food.

BLACKHEAD MOUNTAIN- FAIRWELL TO A TRAILBLAZER

By Kevin Armstrong - Aspirant



Having hiked the entire Finger Lakes Trail (FLT) and all of its branches I was looking for some new trails. I had climber Slide and Balsam Lake Mountains so knew that I really enjoyed the Catskill Peaks. Because I live in Geneva NY it was impractical to aspire to all 33 peaks without a partner to share the drive, expenses, and fun. My brother David Owen expressed an interest in joining me. I jumped at the opportunity. A plan was formed and together we became aspirants. Since Dave had never climbed a peak, we decided our first peak should be guided. Michael Bongar was leading a 3500 group on May 18, 2024. Dave and I signed on.

It was a beautiful day for a hike. Not too hot, not too cold. Michael was a great guide taking time to point out details along the way. The group was pleasant. We ranged in experience from first time climbers to well-seasoned veterans, and everything in between.

We reached the summit of Blackhead Mountain sometime between 11:00 AM and Noon. After a few minutes of observation and discussion I asked the group for their attention.

I explained that at this very moment, in Chicago, a memorial service was being held for a most unique man. I had told his loved ones that I would take a moment for Dennis when I reached the summit of whatever mountain the 18th found me on. The group graciously indulged me in a moment of silence.

Dennis Downes was an artist. He worked in oils, stone and bronze. He was a great lover of nature and of history. He was arguably the world's leading authority on culturally modified, First Nations trail marker trees. That is how I came to know him. I share Dennis's love for the history, forests and art. When I first learned of Trail Marker Trees, I knew that I had seen some in the woods around the western Finger Lakes of New York.

In fact, the trees are so unique that I had taken photos of some of them. I found Dennis's email on his website and sent a couple photos for him to verify. It wasn't too long before my phone rang with a very excited Dennis Downes on the other end of the call. Indeed, my trees were trail

marker trees. That was the first of many phone calls. He was delighted to find new trees in New York State. I gave him GPS positions and string method age measurements of "my trees" for his data base. By 2018 Dennis had begun production of a documentary on Indian Trail Marker Trees. In October he came to Canandaigua, NY with a film crew and I took him to "my trees". He and the crew really had to work for it. All of my trees were deep in the woods, not an easy place to get professional video production equipment. Anyone who knows the Bristol Hills knows that no matter which way you go its all up hill. We had a wonderful October weekend lugging equipment through the woods. It was worth it. The feeling of finding the trees was like the feeling of reaching the peak. Dennis got the footage he needed. I was delighted to guide him and explain the significance of the trees to known native trails, villages, etcetera. He was delighted to see new trees.



Indian Trail Marker Tree near Seneca Castle, NY

You have to imagine yourself a native traveler 500 or more years ago. You are many miles from home but you have a destination. You are a keen hunter, a practiced observer. Your eye is trained to constantly scan for the horizontal line of a deer's back in a forest of vertical lines. That is where the Trail Marker Trees AKA: 'culturally modified' trees come in. For untold generations native people bent saplings with the terminal bud pointing at an object like a village, a camp, a fording place, a spring, a deposit of chert. The sapling would be bent more or less to the level of a deer's back and tied down with tongs to hold its position. Most upright branches would be removed with only one or two being allowed to remain. As the years went by the tree continued to grow in its bent position. The most common shapes were an inverted h or a backwards L. Their purpose was nothing more or less than a blaze, a permanent road sign that would last for generations. Some have survived up to very this day.

Dennis devoted his life to locating, recording and protecting Trail Marker Trees. In addition to record keeping his legacy includes the establishment of the GREAT LAKES TRAIL MARKER TREE SOCIETY, and his excellent book NATIVE AMERICAN TRAIL MARKER TREES – MARKING TRAILS THROUGH THE WILDERNESS. As well as sculptured reproductions of some of the trees he cherished.

When I met Dennis around 2016, he had just been diagnosed with cancer. By 2018 it had metastasized but he would not let cancer stop him. He fought cancer as a stoic warrior. He was determined to finish his documentary. Then covid hit. Covid ended film production for two years. By the end of two years the cancer had taken its toll. The film producers were working hard to finish in time for Dennis to see it to fruition. Last summer we were still cleaning up some of the audio. We did not finish in time. Dennis passed away in May 2024.

Other sources of information on Indian Trail Marker Trees are an excellent DVD (also on YouTube) by Mountain Stewards 'MYSTERY of the TREES' featuring Wes Studi, and TALKING TREES & SPIRIT TRAILS by Carl Andrew Koehler (He Finds Trees).

From the summit of Blackhead Mountain, we paused as his memorial was going on in Chicago. We honored him with a moment of silence. Dennis Downes, a trail blazer in his own right. In the silence we released his spirit from the third highest peak in the Catskills, just as it was being released from his home in Chicago. Thank you for marking the trail for us Dennis.

ATTENTION SHOPPERS!!!

\$10 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

\$10 ASPIRANT MEMBERSHIP

\$200 LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

There's a special item offered in Aisle Three. That is, the membership page on the Catskill 3500 Club website.

You can purchase your annual memberships and your aspirant memberships. You can purchase them for a yearly renewal or you can purchase them with automatic renewal.

Oh yes, and if you are feeling your immortality or if you are just a big shot and a swell person, you can get a lifetime membership too....

Visit: catskill3500club.org/dues

or scan the QR code



Recollection of a Bushwhack

– Henry Dircks

(please start at the bottom)

summit.
widening horizon,
windswept elevation,
jagged scramble,
biting icicles,
imposing ledges,
concealing groundcover,
panoramic valley,
trailing footprints,
impromptu switchbacks,
random scat,
empty treestand,
supine trunks,
vulpine tracks,
slick leaves,
crunchy snow,
wobbly sandstone,
bystanding beeches,
intermittent ferns,
misty exhalations,
sharpening incline,
distant whitetails,
brilliant moss,
impeding underbrush,
crystalline coating,
thirsty gullies,
haggard wall,
narrow ford,
deserted trailhead,
Frosty sunrise,



CATSKILL 3500 CLUB MEMBERS - 2024 / 3Q

Members #4445 and above are considered to be the Class of 2025. However, they and those between #4200 and #4444 will be celebrated at the upcoming annual dinner. Winter members 1601W through 1666W will also be acknowledged.

NUMBER	NAME	DATE	LAST PEAK
4416	Annabelle Riesler	03/03/24	West Kill
4417	Monika Mezei	03/03/24	Balsam Lake
4418	Mark Vermilyea	03/04/24	Balsam
4419	Katherine Haynes	03/09/24	SW Hunter
4420	Stephan Tsang	03/17/24	Sugarloaf
4421	Evan Moore	03/10/24	Kaaterskill
4422	Laura Hechtlinger	03/09/24	Balsam
4423	Robert Visker	03/09/24	Blackhead
4424	Michael Wolfson	03/13/24	Panther
4425	Michael Goldman	03/12/24	Blackhead
4426	Glenn Paynter	03/12/24	Blackhead
4427	Veronica Luik	02/24/24	Balsam
4428	Brandon Kurta	02/21/24	Balsam Lake
4429	Charles Warnke	03/18/24	Slide
4430	Miriam McGiver	03/26/24	Windham
4431	Patrick Smith	03/09/24	Slide
4432	Anuj Sharma	03/17/24	Sugarloaf
4433	Benjamin Bryant	02/18/24	Kaaterskill
4434	Sam Lorenz-Schweikert	12/23/23	Panther
4435	José Haro	03/20/24	Fir
4436	Russell DeGone	03/16/24	Balsam
4437	Bismarck Vanegas	02/17/24	Panther
4438	Christine Guarino	03/15/24	Friday
4439	Ben Thompson	03/16/24	Blackhead
4440	Jason Myers	03/09/24	Blackhead
4441	Jeff Giniger	03/05/24	Rocky
4442	Joycelyn Francis	03/24/24	Balsam
4443	Joseph Finucane	03/24/24	Balsam
4444	Melissa Goodwin	05/20/24	Balsam Cap
4445	Andrew Brana	03/30/24	Halcott
4446	Zoë Hutchins	03/30/24	Twin
4447	Katelyn M Reepmeyer	03/31/24	Sherrill
4448	Mickey Dyeovich	04/04/24	Balsam Lake
4449	Bill Diver	04/13/24	Wittenberg
4450	Katie Pasquarella	04/14/24	Balsam Lake
4451	Jessica Padula	04/21/24	West Kill
4452	Derek McKendree	04/20/24	Twin

NUMBER	NAME	DATE	LAST PEAK
4453	Caroline Vargas	04/20/24	Rocky
4454	Heidi Langer Atkinson	04/20/24	Lone
4455	Lexi Friedman	04/22/24	Balsam Cap
4456	Rachel Pitt	04/22/24	Balsam Cap
4457	Nicholas Matos	04/20/24	Eagle
4458	Laura Payack	04/23/24	West Kill
4459	Michael Jones	04/21/24	Balsam Lake
4460	Frank Somers	05/03/24	Lone
4461	Josh Manne	04/27/24	SW Hunter
4462	Reinhard Gsellmeier	04/27/24	Panther
4463	Marilyn A MacGown	04/28/24	Rocky
4464	Noah Rohde	04/28/24	Table
4465	Nancy Kaetz-Blatt	05/03/24	Lone
4466	Adam Sanghera	04/27/24	North Dome
4467	Andrew Robinson	05/04/24	Lone
4468	Alizeh Hussain-Robinson	05/04/24	Lone
4469	Krista Gressman	05/05/24	Wittenberg
4470	Alison Aaron	04/28/24	Wittenberg
4471	Tyler Burton	05/14/24	Balsam
4472	Corey Dufel	05/17/24	Rusk
4473	Kinshasa Madison	04/20/24	Rocky
4474	Trevor Simon	05/20/24	Blackhead
4475	Michael Cantwell	05/05/12	Rocky
4476	David Acquavella	05/18/24	Windham
4477	Brian Johnson	05/22/24	Noth Dome
4478	Kyoungdo Seo	05/22/24	Twin
4479	Kelly Yarpezeshkan	11/13/23	Cornell
4480	Gregory Shields	05/25/24	Cornell
4481	Sean Boyle	05/26/24	Cornell
4482	Carlie Myers	05/22/24	West Kill
4483	Graham Robinson	05/28/24	Windham
4484	Gary Palatucci	05/28/24	Windham
4485	Carl Gregory Johnson	05/22/24	North Dome
4486	Jacob Steinberg	06/01/24	Cornell
4487	Lori M Parenti	04/27/24	Kaaterskill
4488	Rob McDiarmid	06/03/24	Panther



LIFE MEMBERS

2049	Fran Shumway	4156	Lisa Whittaker	4440	Jason Myers	ASP	Peter Santoro
2050	Steve Shumway	4171	Jason Friedman	4460	Frank Somers	ASP	Mark Benigno
2914	Ernie Mossl	4420	Stephan Tsang	4466	Adam Sanghera	ASP	Sean Lewis
4119	Richard Todd	4424	Michael Wolfson	4475	Michael Cantwell	ASP	Bradley Rosenberg
4151	Ben Fontana	4429	Charles Warnke	4486	Jacob Steinberg	ASP	Kevin Armstrong
4153	Keith M Clark	4435	Jose Haro	4488	Rob McDiarmid		

NEW WINTER MEMBERS

NUMBER	NAME	REGULAR #	DATE	LAST PEAK
1631	Zachary T Stein	3867	03/08/24	Bearpen
1632	Margie O'Brien	2753	03/09/24	Kaaterskill
1633	Jonathan Burn	3693	03/09/24	Cornell
1634	Stephan Tsang	4420	03/17/24	Plateau
1635	Gaia Pelton	4259	03/16/24	West Kill
1636	Mira Surowiec	4266	03/14/24	Kaaterskill
1637	Monika Mezei	4417	03/16/24	Cornell
1638	Kathy Steeves	3102	03/10/24	Rocky
1639	Percy Bright	3973	02/10/24	Kaaterskill
1640	Michael Rea	3960	03/17/24	Sherrill
1641	Mimi Ji	3864	03/16/24	Balsam Lake
1642	Brian Hoody	3805	03/17/24	West Kill
1643	Kymberly Langdon	4128	03/16/24	Big Indian
1644	Lerissa Langdon	4127	03/16/24	Big Indian
1645	Brandon Garcia	2475	02/11/24	Kaaterskill
1646	Linda Francois	3756	02/22/24	Windham
1647	Ellen Pitt	3967	03/18/24	Cornell
1648	Daniel Colomb	3837	03/01/24	Eagle
1649	Dylan Gagler	4394	03/16/24	Slide
1650	Jesse Roy	3825	03/08/24	Sugarloaf
1651	Francis Lora	3998	03/09/24	Kaaterskill
1652	Jessica Breslin	3824	03/09/24	Plateau
1653	Jill Moretto	3139	03/09/24	West Kill
1654	Dale Haas	4230	03/15/24	Windham
1655	Ben Thompson	4439	03/15/24	Rusk
1656	Donald Hopper	3872	03/18/24	Big Indian
1657	Nancy Rosario	3101	03/17/24	Kaaterskill
1658	Taylor Latsha	4226	03/16/24	West Kill
1659	Jason Waters	3138	03/17/24	Balsam Lake
1660	Gary Glick	3650	03/12/24	Peekamoose
1661	Karol Andino	4071	03/16/24	Cornell
1662	Steve Markel	3663	03/19/24	Eagle
1663	Victoria Lawrence	4348	03/17/24	Wittenberg
1664	Gerald Kabat	3287	03/01/24	Friday
1665	Tyler Burton	4471	03/21/24	Fir
1666	Terrence McGovern	2455	03/20/24	Wittenberg

THE CATSKILL 3500 CLUB GROUP HIKES: PRINCIPLES & GUIDANCE



Familiarize yourself with the seven Leave No Trace Principles for all your hikes.

- 1 Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2 Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- 3 Dispose of Waste Properly
- 4 Leave What You Find
- 5 Minimize Campfire Impacts
- 6 Respect Wildlife
- 7 Be Considerate of Other Visitors



THE CATSKILL 3500 CLUB'S HIKING CREDO INCLUDES THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES:

- 1 Follow the Rules
- 2 Use your Map & Compass
- 3 Know your Limitations

THE CLUB ALSO PROMOTES THE ADHERENCE TO THE HIKESAFE HIKER RESPONSIBILITY CODE.

hikeSafe encourages hikers to be prepared:



- ✓ with knowledge and gear
- ✓ to leave your plans
- ✓ to stay together
- ✓ to turn back for emergencies
- ✓ to share the hiker responsibility code with others

Assumed Risk

Cool Weather & Summer

Hiking involves certain inherent risks and persons participating do so at their own risk. In cool weather, hike participants should avoid cotton clothing, as it retains dampness and the resulting chill can result in hypothermia, which can lead to death. In summer participants should have available in their pack garments of wool or fleece and a headlamp, should one have to unexpectedly spend the night in the mountains. Anyone not properly equipped may be refused permission to participate, at the leader's absolute discretion.

Hike Pace

Pace is indicated as one (or a range) of the following, based on the intended moving pace. It should be understood that for any particular hike, actual pace is usually slower in steep/icy/difficult terrain or while bushwhacking.

- Relaxed (1 mph or less)**
- Moderate (about 1.5 mph)**
- Quick (about 2 mph)**
- Fast (faster than 2 mph)**

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. Club hikes may be canceled at the hike leader's discretion if dangerous weather conditions exist. When in doubt (heavy rain, high winds, or other serious weather conditions), please contact your hike leader.

Private Property

All Catskill 3500 Club hikes respect "No Trespassing" signs and the owners' wishes in such regards; leaders shall obtain permission to cross private property when so required. Identify private property via the NYNJTC Catskill Trail maps (2023 13th edition), and determine property ownership via online county tax maps.

Cold Weather & Winter

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 traction aids 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. The hike leader may specify required clothing or gear for a hike. 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.

Group Size

Maximum group size is limited to **12 persons** including hikers and leaders, but a leader may specify a smaller groups size. During fledgling season (June 1-July 15), hikes on trailless peaks will be limited to **8 hikers. The minimum group size is 3.** The hikes listed here and on the online events calendar are official Catskill 3500 Club hikes. Any other advertised hikes to the 3500 peaks are private hikes and, while they can count for membership to the Club, the Club is not affiliated with those hikes.

Blaze Orange Alert

Please refer to this DEC link (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/65231.html>) for the summary of hunting seasons. Wear orange, avoid white and remember the same for your four-legged hiking companions!

CLUB HIKE SCHEDULE - JULY

Wed. July 3 - PANTHER

Distance: 6.6 Mi, Ascent 1900', Elev: 3724'
Beginners welcome. Great views from Giant Ledge.
Relaxed Pace (Target 1 to 1.3mph including breaks)
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Roger Green #2627 W1383

Sat. July 6 - WITTENBERG, CORNELL & SLIDE

Distance: 10 mi.
Ascent: 3600', Elevs: 3782', 3857', 4184'
Challenging scrambles at a moderate pace. Shuttle required.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Yanny Hecht #1868 W751

Sat. July 6 - TREMPER

Distance: 7.6 mi. Ascent: 1378' Elev: 2730'
Moderate- to quick-paced out-and-back from Willow parking area.
This peak is not required for membership.
Registration Period: June 18-28
Leader: Colin DeVries #3382 W1589

Sat. July 6 - SW HUNTER & HUNTER

Distance 9.5 mi: Ascent: 2,244 Elev: 3,753' & 4,030'
Moderate Pace
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Matthew McBride #3841 W1574

Sun. July 7 - KAATERSKILL HIGH PEAK

Distance: 7.8 mi. Ascent: 1938', Elev: 3645'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

Sun. July 7 - INDIAN HEAD & TWIN

Distance: 7.3 ml. Ascent: 2349'; Elevs: 3650', 3573'
Through hike on marked trail at a relaxed moderate pace.
Beginners welcome. Shuttle Required.
Registration Period: June 30-July 4, 2024.
Leader: Tonda Highley #1944 W857 420G 38

Tues. July 9 - OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN

Distance: 6.2 mi. Ascent: 1550', Elev: 3140'
Relaxed pace. Good introductory mountain hike. Overlook is not required for the 3500 club. Beginners welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Roger Green #2627 W1383

Wed. July 10 - WINDHAM HIGH PEAK

Distance: 6.2 mi. Ascent: 1500', Elev: 3525'
Relaxed paced trail hike.
Registration Period: by Open
Leader: Ed Moran #2007 W950

Sat. July 13 - BALSAM & EAGLE

Distance: 9.35 mi. Ascent: 2180', Elevs: 3607', 3583'
Moderate pace from Rider Hollow. Beginners welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Yanny Hecht #1868 W751

Sat. July 13 - BLACKHEAD, BLACK DOME, THOMAS COLE

Distance: 8.3 mi. Ascent: 3153', Elev: 3940', 3994', 3953'
Relaxed pace shuttle trail hike
Registration Period: July 1 - 12
Leader: Michael Bongar #2173, W994

Sun. July 14 - RED HILL FIRE TOWER

Distance 4 mi. Ascent: 2990' Elev: 1200'
Trail hike at moderate pace.
This peak is not required for membership.
Registration period: July 7th-11th
Leader: Suzanne Knabe #1326 W498

Sun. July 14 - LONE & ROCKY (Limited to 8 hikers)

Distance: 9.6 mi. Ascent: 2066', Elev: 3721' & 3494'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

Sun. July 14 - BEARPEN & VLY

Distance: 6.5 mi. Ascent: 2060', Elev: 3587', 5541'
Beginners Slow-Slow Hike with lots of instruction.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Russell Ley #2927 W1262

Wed. June 19 - TABLE & PEEKAMOOSE

Distance: 9.5 mi. Ascent: 2500', Elevs: 3825', 3819'
Moderately paced trail hike.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Ed Moran #2007 W950

Sat. July 20 - FRIDAY & BALSAM CAP

Distance: 7.5+ mi. Ascent: 3000', Elevs: 3692', 3608'
Challenging bushwhack at moderate pace, including visit to B25 crash.
Registration period: July 14 - 19
Leader: Jake Haisley #2488 W1065

Sat. July 20 - WINDHAM HIGH PEAK

Distance: 7.5 mi Ascent: 1,752' Elev: 3,525'
Relaxed to Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcomed
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Matthew McBride #3841 W1574

Sun. Jul. 28 - HALCOTT

Distance: 4 mi. Ascent: 1650', Elev: 3509'
Relaxed to Moderate Pace.
Registration Period: Jul 20-27
Leader: Lyn W. #2865 W1312

Register for a 3500 Club hike:

catskill3500club.org/hike-schedule

Or scan the QR code:



All Official Catskill 3500 Club hikes may not be republished without written consent from the Board of Directors

CLUB HIKE SCHEDULE - AUGUST

Sat. Aug. 3 - BALSAM CAP & FRIDAY

Distance: 7.69 mi. Ascent: 2,813', Elev: 3606', 3660'
Relaxed pace bushwhack
Registration Period: July 19 - Aug. 2
Leader: Michael Bongar #2173, W994

Sat. Aug 3 - WITTENBERG, CORNELL & SLIDE

Distance: 10 mi. Ascent: 3600', Elevs: 3782', 3857', 4184'
Challenging scrambles at a moderate pace. Shuttle required.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Yanny Hecht #1868 W751

Sun. Aug. 4 – TABLE & PEEKAMOOSSE

Distance 9.6 mi. Ascent: 2846', Elevs: 3825', 3819'
Relaxed - moderate pace. Beginners welcome.
Registration period: Open
Leaders: Ira Orenstein #415 W777 & Karen Bloom #1733 W776

Thurs. Aug. 8 - LONE & ROCKY

Distance: 9.6 mi. Ascent: 2066', Elev: 3721' & 3494'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

Fri. Aug 9 - WEST KILL

Distance: 6.2 mi. Ascent: 1900', Elev: 3898'
Moderately challenging trail hike at relaxed pace.
Target 1 to 1.2 mph including breaks. Beginners welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Roger Green #2627 W1383

Fri. Aug. 9 - Windham

Distance: 6.3 mi. Ascent: 1475' Elev: 3525
Relaxed pace trail hike
Registration Period: July 21-Aug. 7
Leader: Sharon Klein #3364

Sat. Aug 10 - Indian Head & Twin

Distance: 8 mi Ascent: 4,511' Elev: 3,573' & 3,650'
Moderate Pace
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Matthew McBride #3841 W1574

Sat. Aug 10 - RUSK

Distance: 3.7 mi. Ascent 1600', Elev: 3686'
Short but steep bushwhack. Moderate pace.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Yanny Hecht #1868 W751

Sat. Aug. 10 - BALSAM LAKE

Distance: 5.9 mi. Ascent: 1150', Elev: 3729'
Slow-Moderate pace trail hike with beginner instructions.
Registration Period:
July 14th - August 5 end of Hike Request Period
Leader: Russell Ley #2927 W1262

Sun. Aug 11 - FRIDAY & BALSAM CAP

Distance: 5.8 mi. Ascent: 2906', Elev: 3691' & 3622'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

Wed. Aug 14 – FIR AND BIG INDIAN

Distance: 10.5 mi. Ascent: 2650', Elevs: 3629', 3699'
Moderate paced bushwhack and trail hike.
Registration Period: July 1 – Aug 12
Leader: Ed Moran #2007 W950

Sat. Aug 17 - Slide

Distance: 6.5 mi Ascent: 1,801' Elev: 4,184'
Relaxed to Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcomed
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Matthew McBride #3841 W1574

Sat. Aug.18 - Blackhead Range

(Blackhead, Black Dome & Thomas Cole)

Distance: 7.3 ml. Ascent: 2650'; Elevs: 3940', 3994', 3953'
Relaxed moderate paced hike with challenging climbs & beautiful views. Shuttle required.
Registration Period: Aug.8-15, 2024.
Leader: Tonda Highley #1944 W857 430G 38

Sun. Aug. 18 - SOUTHWEST HUNTER & HUNTER

Distance: 9.2 mi. Ascent: 2100', Elevs: 3753, 4030'
Relaxed to Moderate Pace.
Registration Period: Aug 10 - 17
Leader: Lyn W. #2865 W1312

Wed. Aug 21 - HALCOTT & RUSK (2 Hikes in 1 Day)

Distance: 3.5 mi. & 2.9 mi. Ascent: 1788' & 1587', Elev: 3524' & 3678'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome.
Short drive between trailheads.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

Sat. Aug. 24 - SUGARLOAF & TWIN

Distance: 7.8 mi. Ascent: 3,030' Elev: 3783', 3650'
Moderate- to quick-paced out-and-back from Roaring Kill. Steep climbs, great payoffs.
Registration Period: Aug. 1-10
Leader: Colin DeVries #3382 W1589

Sun. Aug 25 - FIR & BIG INDIAN

Distance: 10.7 mi. Ascent: 2440', Elev: 3629' & 3681'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

CLUB HIKE SCHEDULE - SEPTEMBER

Sat. Sept. 7 - WITTENBERG & CORNELL & SLIDE (BURROUGHS RANGE)

Distance: 10.2 mi. Ascent: 3800', Elev: 3780', 3860', 4180'
Relaxed paced shuttle trail hike
Registration Period: Sept. 1 - 6
Leader: Michael Bongar #2173, W994

Sat. Sept 7 - TABLE & PEEKAMOOSSE

Distance: 9 mi Ascent: 2,497 Elev: 3,825' & 3,819'
Moderate Pace
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Matthew McBride #3841 W1574

Sun. Sept 8 - SUGARLOAF

Distance: 7.1 mi. Ascent: 2070', Elev: 3783'
Moderately challenging trail hike at relaxed pace. Target 1 to 1.2 mph including breaks.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Roger Green #2627 W1383

Sun. Sept 8 - BALSAM & EAGLE

Distance: 9.35 mi. Ascent: 2180', Elevs: 3607', 3583'
Moderate pace from Rider Hollow. Beginners welcome.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Yanny Hecht #1868 W751

Sun. Sept 8 - SHERRILL & NORTH DOME

Distance: 8.4 mi. Ascent: 3136', Elev: 3550' & 3596'
Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcome. In and Out from Shaft Road
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Sue Hall #2460 W1091

Wed. Sept 11 - BALSAM LAKE & MILL BROOK RIDGE

Distance: 9 mi. Ascent: 2400', Elevs: 3729', 3465'
Moderate to quick paced challenging bushwhack and trail hike.
Shuttle required.
Registration Period: Aug 1 - Sept 9
Leader: Ed Moran #2007 W950

Sat. Sept. 14 - ACRA POINT, BLACK HEAD, BLACK DOME & THOMAS COLE

Distance: 9 mi. Ascent 3175', Elevs: 3110', 3940', 3994', 3953'
Moderate paced hike to some of region's finest viewpoints
Registration period: Sept. 8 - 13
Leader: Jake Haisley #2488 W1065

Sat. Sept 14 - Westkill

Distance: 6 mi Ascent: 1,946' Elev: 3,898'
Relaxed to Moderate Pace. Beginners Welcomed
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Matthew McBride #3841 W1574

Sun. Sept 15 - Rusk

Distance: 3.7 mi. Ascent 1600', Elev: 3686' Short but steep bushwhack. Moderate pace.
Registration Period: Open
Leader: Yanny Hecht #1868 W751

Wed. Sept. 18 - Slide, Cornell & Wittenberg

Distance: 10 ml. Ascent: 2700' ; Elev: 4184', 3857', 3782'
Challenging hike with multiple scrambles at a relaxed pace.
Shuttle required.
Registration Period: Aug. 25-Sept. 2, 2024
Leader: Tonda Highley #1944 W857 420G 38

Fri. Sept 20 - Bearpen & Vly

Distance: 7.35 mi. Ascent: 1890', Elev: 3587', 3541'
Relaxed pace trail and unmarked trail hike
Registration Period: Sept 5-18
Leader: Sharon Klein #3364

Register for a 3500 Club hike:

catskill3500club.org/hike-schedule

Or scan the QR code:



Newts in late summer. Photo by Kristen Taylor #3288 W1299