

# The **Lookout**

*October - November 2020*



**Adirondack Mountain Club — Schenectady Chapter**

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

<http://www.adk-schenectady.org>

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On the  
cover

*Bringing the lumber, old style, en route to a bridge-building project in the Plotter Kill Preserve in August. In front is Don Orr of ECOS and the ADK. Soil and Water Conservation District staffer Nick Klemczak is in the middle and Matt Forshey is in back. (Story on Page 5) Photo by Mal Provost.*

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October - November 2020

# The Lookout

The Newsletter for the Schenectady Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club

## October 27 Annual Meeting Will Be On Zoom

While we cannot be physically together this year due to COVID19, we'll be using our virtual annual meeting of the chapter to celebrate what is best about the Schenectady ADK! We'll hear an update on the future of the chapter from Chair Dustin Wright and a keynote address from Michael Barrett, Executive Director of the Adirondack Mountain Club, who will discuss the ADK's Strategic Plan, particularly on how it relates to diversity, climate change and proposed bylaws amendments. We will also virtually vote on Zoom for next year's officers, on updated bylaws and more.

**The meeting begins at 7 p.m. Connect at:**  
**<https://zoom.us/j/92919207905>**  
**or**  
**<https://www.facebook.com/schenectadyadk/events>**

Perhaps most important, we'll recognize our new Fellows of the Chapter: Rudy Dehn, Robert Grimm, Walter Hayes, Mary MacDonald and Norm Kuchar. We also will recognize William M. "Bill" White and Betty Lou Bailey posthumously. In addition to saying thanks, this will also help our large group of new and generally younger chapter members to understand the people and stories that have made up the Schenectady ADK for decades.

If you can't "be in the room" on Zoom, you can also join us on Facebook or even connect via phone by calling 1-929-205-6099 and putting in code 92919207905#.

**Election note:** Our current officers have agreed to continue in their responsibilities for 2021 also. They are Dustin Wright, chair, Stan Stoklosa, vice chair, Heather Ipsen, secretary and Colin Thomas, treasurer. There are no alternate candidates.

If you're Zoom challenged and did not receive a ballot in a printed edition of the Lookout, please contact Mary McDonald [nptrail@adk-schenectady.org](mailto:nptrail@adk-schenectady.org) and we'll make sure you receive one.



*Michael Barrett, ADK Executive Director and speaker at the Annual Meeting.*

## Feel Better In The Adirondacks? Tell Your Story Nov. 19

Gosh, amidst COVID19, 2020 has been the most difficult year in many of our lifetimes. Many of our ADK chapter members however have still experienced healing, rest and renewal in the wild places of New York State this year, especially the Adirondack Park. **What's your experience?** Join ADK Schenectady Chapter Chair Dustin Wright and Speaker Series Coordinator Sally Dewes for an evening of stories on how the Adirondacks have helped so many get through COVID19. Please contact Sally Dewes at [innings@adk-schenectady.org](mailto:innings@adk-schenectady.org). Feel free to either join us on Zoom or watch the broadcast on our Facebook Page!

**Times of Healing in the Adirondacks**  
**Thursday, Nov. 19 at 7:30 p.m**  
**<https://zoom.us/j/97810796646>**

## Chairman's Report

# ADK, Chapter Deal With Growth Decisions

As we prepare to celebrate one hundred years of working for wilderness in New York State, my gosh, we are experiencing great change. I believe in the thirty-four years of life I've been blessed to experience thus far, at no other time have I witnessed such an inflection point. While our globe and especially our nation struggles to navigate the COVID19 pandemic, to dismantle the scourge of systemic racism and hold together during a time of unprecedented political and cultural divisions, we are also experiencing a great deal of change as the Adirondack Mountain Club.

**Our Annual Meeting of the Chapter will be virtual this year, (see article page 1)** which will include recognition of eight individuals who have offered decades of service to the ADK and celebrate the many ways we've been able to stick together during COVID19. While we will indeed spend time telling the incredible story of our past as a chapter, we will also look to present issues like climate change and diversity in the outdoor community with keynote speaker and Executive Director of the Adirondack Mountain Club Michael Barrett. We won't be able to gather in person, but we will still be able to gather together as a community dedicated to caring for New York State's wild places.



*Dustin Wright*

By the time you read this letter you may have already voted on significant changes to the Adirondack Mountain Club's bylaws and governance structure.

If you're reading this in paper copy the results may have already been announced. While it's not my job as chapter chair or the job of your chapter board to tell you how to vote or how to interpret results, I will offer some brief reflections here that are my own. First, I've served on way too many boards and overseen a number of controversial bylaws revision processes for various nonprofits over the years. This includes serving as vice chair of Schenectady Community Ministries (SICM), serving as president of the New York State Council of Churches and as a pastor (sort of) acting as an executive director of my own congregation of Messiah Lutheran Church here in Rotterdam. I also briefly served as director for our chapter.

My time as director was so brief because I quickly realized the size and makeup of the main club's board of directors was both unwieldy and extremely ineffective. Each meeting simply seemed like people reading reports that I could have read on my own at home rather than an effective meeting of individuals tasked with casting and stewarding the mission of such an important organization as the Adirondack Mountain Club. I deeply believe one positive result of COVID19 (amidst many heartbreaking tragedies) is that we are all considering how we may have failed to maintain and strengthen many types of institutions in recent decades including government, faith communities, nonprofits and more. Our beloved ADK certainly falls into this category.

That said, after considering the wide variety of opinions shared by many of our members, including our own director Jason Waters and our publicity chair, Mary Zawacki, who also serves as the executive director of a local nonprofit, I personally cannot support the bylaws changes as proposed nor the manner in which this vote has been conducted. Most notably, I have concern that both the proposed bylaws and the voting process do not conform to New York State nonprofit law. There are other issues as well from how new board members will be elected to not including a youth on the board to not recognizing the full spectrum of human gender by only using he/she pronouns in the document itself.

Please note that concerns about diminishing the voices of members has generated great debate among individuals and chapters, as the proposed bylaw changes seek to streamline the board. I urge you to consider the wide range of different opinions shared on social media, via email and through a number of chapter newsletters. The current September-October issue of Adirondac contains a much more detailed discussion of the needs of the ADK as it heads toward its second century, plus the full text of the bylaw changes under review.

*Continued on Page 3*

# Conservation Report

## Environmental Bond Act Delayed By Pandemic

So many things have been whacked out of shape by the pandemic that you may feel you need a scorecard. Well, one thing you won't have to think about for this year is your vote on a major state bond issue for environmental improvements. That's been pulled from the November state ballot, since the governor decided asking for a long-term \$3 billion plan would be unpalatable now.

The ADK and other conservation groups were strongly in support of the plan, which would finance energy efficiency in state buildings, water and sewer infrastructure projects, carbon reduction in the atmosphere and recreational improvements. Its a huge list that would be financed over decades, but aimed at big environmental improvements statewide.

Michael Barrett, ADK executive director, released the following statement: "Although it is disappointing that the Restore Mother Nature Bond Act will not be on the ballot this year, we understand Governor Cuomo's decision and acknowledge that he is using good judgment in waiting to promote this important initiative. We look forward to supporting the bond act and the vital clean water and recreation projects it will fund in the near future."

The economic losses from the pandemic shredded the state tax receipts – clearly for this year and next -- and any federal assistance is problematic, so a prediction of when the bond act will be put forward again is pointless.

There is other fallout as well. Money was already allocated for the Environmental Protection Fund for annual projects, but many are not happening. Cathy Pedler, director of advocacy for the ADK, said many spending decisions are on hold.

### Invasives monitoring

On the upside, she said "The summer backcountry water monitoring project went well this year. Maggie Newell, was our trip leader and surveyed 10 ponds on seven trips. All together, with those ponds, a couple I did, and volunteers, we were able to survey 20 ponds this year...We had 34 participants this year (18 in the training, 12 on guided trips, and 4 volunteer surveyors.)

--Mal Provost, Conservation Chair

## ADK, Chapter Deals With Growth Decisions

*Continued from Page 2*

Thank you for however you vote, friends, and for all the ways you have worked for wilderness through the Schenectady ADK. I very much hope you will be able to join us for our annual meeting of the chapter October 27!

### Proposed Changes to our Chapter Bylaws

At our Oct. 27 virtual annual meeting, the chapter will consider modest changes to our Schenectady Chapter bylaws, mostly suggested as a wider effort to streamline our board job descriptions. In addition to slight tweaks to job descriptions, an alternate director and historian position would be added (as ex-officio members of the chapter board) and an officer of the chapter would now be required to be a member of the chapter as well. As it would be difficult to summarize here every little tweak to the bylaws to be considered, draft changes will be posted to our chapter website and mailed to members for review upon request by contacting Mary MacDonald at [nptrail@adk-schenectady.org](mailto:nptrail@adk-schenectady.org).

**“Please note that concerns about diminishing the voices of members has generated great debate among individuals and chapters, as the proposed bylaw changes seek to streamline the board.”**

--Rev. Dustin G. Wright, Chapter Chair

# Outings

**Saturday, Oct. 3**

**YM Hike Windham High Peak (Catskills)  
Class A1B – difficult; 7.5 miles with 2,000' ascent.  
Mary Zawacki, please text at 914-373-8733**

A hike with great views of the Catskills -- and hopefully fall foliage! Windham is one of the Catskills 3500 requirements, and offers beautiful views along the way. We'll be taking the Escarpment trail from the Black Dome Range trailhead, which will take us over Burnt Knob. After the hike we'll stop off at Hop Barn Brewing in Greenville if it's open.

**Tuesday, Oct. 6**

**Moxham Mountain  
Class C2B**

**Mary MacDonald. Please email at hiker2931@gmail.com or phone 518-371-1293.**

The round trip distance is 4.6 miles and the views are exceptional, especially with the thought of fall colors. Meet at trailhead at 9:30 a.m. with mask and social distancing. The number of hikers will be limited to eight. Prepare to have date change if weather limits views. Bring lunch and appropriate clothing.

**Thursday, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m.**

**Young Adult Social: Dustin's Campfire  
4 Oak Street in Rotterdam  
Dustin Wright at [dustingwright@gmail.com](mailto:dustingwright@gmail.com)**

We'll keep our safe and socially distanced young adult socials going as long as it's warm enough to gather comfortably outside! Join us at Dustin's for an awesome campfire, hot spiced apple cider and a bunch of different fall treats. Please have a mask on hand and only come if you're comfortable following social distancing guidelines.

**Friday, Oct. 16**

**Clear Pond and John Pond Loop Hike  
Class B2B**

**Roy Keats at [royskipaddle@gmail.com](mailto:royskipaddle@gmail.com) or 518-466-8544**

The loop is in the northern part of the Siamese Ponds Wilderness, near Indian Lake. This loop will check out a new ski trail to Clear Pond, and then the connector trail to John Pond followed by hiking out on the regular John Pond Trail. The total trip is about 6

miles. It is 1.1 miles to Clear Pond with a delightful view. The new trail then follows the southwest shore of the pond and climbs gradually to attain a narrow ridge, which leads to John Pond. There is a lean-to and resting spot with a great view across John Pond.

**Saturday, Oct. 17**

**Young Adult Hike: Owl 's Head Mountain  
Class B2B**

**Dustin Wright, [dustingwright@gmail.com](mailto:dustingwright@gmail.com) or 603-953-8782**

Owl's Head Mountain Trail is a 6.3 mile, out and back trail that gains 1,532 feet in elevation near Long Lake, New York that is on both the ADK Firetower Challenge and ADK29er Challenge peakbagging lists! Join us for what will certainly be a beautiful fall hike!! There 's only a limited number of folks allowed on the hike due to social distancing guidelines, so please reserve your spot today.

**Thursday, Nov. 5 at 6 p.m.**

**Young Adult Social: Mohawk-Hudson Bike Trail Walk  
SCCC Center City, 433 State Street in Schenectady**

Dustin Wright at [dustingwright@gmail.com](mailto:dustingwright@gmail.com). It'll be getting a bit cool but why not join our young adult group for an evening autumn stroll along the Mohawk River? We'll meet by the soccer fields at Schenectady County Community College and walk a couple miles along the Mohawk-Hudson Bike Trail. Please have a mask in case it's needed! Social distancing guidelines will be followed to keep everyone safe.

**Saturday, Nov. 7**

**Young Adult Hike: Vanderwhacker Mountain  
Class B2B**

**Dustin Wright, [dustingwright@gmail.com](mailto:dustingwright@gmail.com) or 603-953-8782**

Vanderwhacker Mountain is a 6.1 mile out and back trail that rises 1,706 feet and is located near Minerva. The mountain has beautiful views from its fire tower and is on the ADK29er Challenge list as well! What an epic hike and way to get out and enjoy the fall air! There 's only a limited number of folks allowed on the hike due to social distancing guidelines, so please reserve your spot.

## HIKE CLASSIFICATIONS

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Leader's Pace</u>	<u>Terrain</u>	<u>Examples</u>
A+ 13 Miles or More	1. Fast	A Very Difficult	A+1A Most Difficult Trip
A 8-12 Miles	2. Moderate	B Strenuous	B2C Moderate Trip
B 5-8 Miles	3. Slow	C Average	C3D Easy Trip
C Under 5 Miles		D Easy	

**How do I sign up for a hike?**

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

# Chapter ADK Hikers

## Rock The Northville-Placid Trail

### Group of Four Wastes Little Time On Marathon North Country Walk

On Saturday, Aug. 15, a group of hikers made up of Eric Avery, Jason Waters, Katie Rhodes and Kenny Rhodes started on what would become an epic journey. From the Northville Placid Trail's southern terminus at the center of Northville Village, we began our trek northward, toward Lake Placid. We spent the first day hiking 18.8 miles to West Stoney Creek Falls, where we slept in our tents. The trail was in surprisingly good shape up to that point, and the water crossing at West Stoney was low. The second day brought us a challenge as we encountered a lot of blowdown between Silver Lake lean-to and the Mud Lake lean-to. After walking for 17 miles we ended our day at Hamilton Lake Stream lean-to where we spent the night.



*Hiking on the perimeter of a Northville Placid Trail section that has been flooded by beaver dams. In front is Katie Rhodes followed by Jason Waters.  
Photo by Kenny Rhodes.*

On the third day of the trip, we made it into the Town of Piseco. What a beautiful small town! Everyone around town was nice, as they waved and said good morning to us. After 3 miles on the road through town, we made it back to the wilderness. We completed a total of 17.2 miles, and ended our day at Spruce Lake #3 lean-to. The trails in that section were in amazing shape. The next morning we made our way through the West Canada Lake Wilderness which was one of the most beautiful sections of the hike. Just past Cedar Lakes, the sky opened up and down-poured on us as we made our way to our camping spot at Carry lean-to. Rain aside, the 17.8 miles of trails in this section were dry.

The fifth morning started out as an adventure as we made our way through wetlands where beaver activity has caused the trails to become very wet. The water was up to our calves if we stayed to the right. If we had stayed left, we were up to our knees! We were aware of the water, so we started the day with no socks on, just our shoes. After the morning's very wet hike, we made our way to our car, parked near Lake Durant. There, we refueled and changed clothes. We also had the luxury of cold beers as we relaxed a bit before continuing on to Tirrell Pond. The fifth day was our longest of the whole trip with a 20-mile walk, and it was well-worth it. The O'Neil Flow lean-to was one of the best ones we stayed at on the journey, and we enjoyed both the sunset and sunrise views.

The sixth morning brought fog, which made the lake look beautiful. As the day went on, we summited our highest point of the trip at an elevation of 2,840 feet. We made our way down the other side of the hill toward Long Lake and Route 28N. We made our way back into the forest to head toward Plumley Point lean-to on Long Lake. Disappointingly, after finishing 19.6-mile, both lean-tos were taken. The nice part of that, though, was that a woman staying in one of the lean-tos gave us a box of wine. True trail magic!

Long Lake was a wonderful spot to camp for the night as it gave us an amazing sunset. On Aug. 21, the seventh day of the trip, we made our way toward the Cold River bridge and on to the Rondeau hermitage area. That part of the Adirondacks is known for the hermit Noah John Rondeau, the "Mayor of Cold River City."

After visiting the Rondeau hermitage area, we started hiking towards Duck Hole. As we were doing so, a storm came in and we found ourselves in another downpour. When we came upon Duck Hole #1 lean-to, we called it a day, having completed only 16.4 miles for the day. On our eighth and final day, we only had 11.8 miles left. After exiting the wilderness, we cleaned ourselves up and headed into Lake Placid to hit up Lisa G's. The group ordered beers, big salads and then of course cheeseburgers and fries, finished off with desserts.

--Jason Waters

# Northville-Placid Hikers

## Couple Meets Critters Large and Small On Their Late Summer Journey

My husband Bill Ports and I were planning on hiking the entire Northville-Placid Trail starting Aug. 28 but were put off by the predictions of Hurricane Laura paying the Adirondacks a visit. Since our food pickups were already planned, we decided to start in Piseco and hike the northern two thirds of the trail starting on Aug. 31, after Laura.

In the first hour we saw two bear cubs scrambling up a tree about 30 feet in front of us. "Where's mama?" was the first thought. We never saw her but the cubs scrambled down and away from us. From there we had a great hiking trip. We saw lots of birds (grouse and woodpeckers), multitudes of amphibians (frogs, toads, newts, salamanders), small mammals (including TOO many mice!), and a bunch of snakes! And of course, the natural beauty of the Adirondacks lakes, ponds, streams, vleys, and hillsides, and mountains in the distance.



*Sally Dewes navigates a narrow foot bridge north of Tirrell Pond, en route along the Northville Placid Trail. Photo by Bill Ports*

As New Yorkers, we felt happy that virtually all the land that we walked through is ours! As Bill says, look at all this lake front property we own as New Yorkers! We talked to many fine people hiking north or south. We stayed in lean-tos about half the nights and squeezed into a small but oh-so-watertight tent (thank you Big Agnes!) the rest of the nights. We finished in Lake Placid nine days later, taking our time soaking in the beautiful sights.

first third of the trip (Northville to Piseco) we turned around and hiked that part. About 30 minutes after we started hiking in the woods in Northville guess what we saw!? Three bears -- two cubs and mama -- almost as close as the previous encounter. At least we knew where mama was this time! Off they scrambled in the other direction, thankfully. An auspicious start!

We went home for a few days, and since all our food and gear was already packed for the

The Northville-Piseco leg was just as wonderful as the Piseco-Placid part. Lots of beauty and quiet. We enjoyed not hearing about current events (many other hikers said the same thing). The only rough part was sleeping in lean tos with mice running about and sometimes over us (yech!!) and the dreaded spur trail into Long Lake! The last night before we exited we chose to sleep in our tent instead of a lean-to just to avoid the rodents. We walked out mid-afternoon, collected our car, and returned home.



*Bill Ports takes in the view of Long Lake on the Northville Placid Trail. Photo by Sally Dewes.*

--Sally Dewes



# Volunteers Help With Plotter Kill Bridge, Trail

One long-needed improvement to the North Rim Trail in Schenectady County's Plotter Kill Preserve was added to the "done" list in August, with Schenectady County Soil & Water Conservation District staff and volunteers from the ADK and Environmental Clearing House (ECOS). That simple bridge joined the list as a small victory following major renovations including a steel and wood bridge over the creek at the main entrance, improved parking and construction of overlooks of the scenic falls, projects over the past couple years.

The major work has been done with state and county money to improve access by safety crews and improve public access, but there is a ton of work needed not only in the Plotter Kill Preserve (632 acres), but the Indian Kill (102 acres) and the County Forest (100 acres). That is in addition to the county's 25-mile piece of the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, according to Kathy Fisher of



*The beginnings of the bridge. Photo by Kathy Fisher*

the county Environmental Advisory Council, which works with the Soil and Water Conservation District. It's a huge work load for very limited staff, and Fisher has reached out to the ADK and ECOS for boots on the ground.

The bridge over a seriously eroded gully was built with trees cut from nearby as stringers and two-by-six pressure treated planks carried in by the crew. Fisher notes that this is the first significant project built by the Conservation District with volunteers and the county, although trail clearing has been done also. Other efforts have included state eradication efforts against invasive species



*Dave Pigeon, with chainsaw, Don Orr, right, and Matt Forshey lay bridge planking. Photo by Mal Provost*

including the hemlock woolly adelgid. Continuing plans for this year include some trail reworking in the Plotter Kill and improved location signs. In early September Conservation District workers and volunteers cut a new section of North Rim trail to bypass an eroded steep section downstream from the falls and under the power lines there.

The crew for the bridge project was Dave Pigeon, Matt Forshey and Nick Klemczak of the Conservation District and Fisher from the SCEAC, plus Don Orr of ADK and ECOS, Steve Jones of ECOS and Mal Provost of the Schenectady Chapter of ADK. The trail work crew included Tyquan Brown and Joseph Maisonette under Pigeon's supervision and new volunteer Peter Stoj.

**--Mal Provost**



*Part of the trail crew Sept. 9 in the Plotter Kill, working on a reroute to bypass a steep section on the North Rim. From left are Joe Maisonette, Dave Pigeon, Don Orr, Tyquan Brown and Peter Stoj. Photo by Mal Provost*



*Photo by: Johnathan Ampersand Esper*

## Boreas Ponds Vehicle Access Unlikely This Year

Vehicle traffic into the Boreas Ponds apparently will not resume until next year, according to information from the Department of Environmental Conservation. Gulf Brook Road remains closed to vehicle traffic until bridge and culvert repairs are completed, which is not expected until spring at the earliest, according to David Winchell, DEC Region 5 spokesman.

The former logging road that runs about 7 miles from Blue Ridge Road to the Boreas Ponds was damaged severely by heavy rains in October of 2019, followed by an ice storm that took down trees and did further damage. While the ponds are still accessible by foot, bicycle and horse, vehicles are not allowed until work is complete. That eliminates use of the convenient parking areas nearest the ponds, which were a major project of DEC to enhance public access for paddling, hiking and fishing. The ponds on former Finch Pruyn land were acquired by the state and are popularly known as the "Jewel of the Adirondacks."

Winchell said in an email that this summer DEC brought in three of four bridges needed, repaired washouts that do not require new culverts or bridges, repaired signs and fixed the road for heavy equipment passage. Completion of bridge and culvert installations is not expected this year.

--Mal Provost

## ADK Crew Builds Bridge On Jones Hill Trail

In late July, the ADK professional trail crew built a foot bridge across Rogers Brook, on the new trail to the summit of Jones Hill in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness west of Schroon Lake. This trail, a section of the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST), was laid out and built in 2017-2018 by DEC, the ADK Schenectady Chapter and the ADK professional trail crew, with funding from the National Park Service. This year's project was funded by a \$5,000 grant from the North Country Trail Association, a group that supports development and maintenance of the NCNST.

Until the bridge was built, the brook crossing involved a short but steep descent, followed by a hazardous crossing on submerged rocks in the swiftly moving stream; high water levels could make it impassable.

The bridge uses a single-span log stringer design, with log cribbing (supports) at both ends due to the 30-foot length. The crew recycled fallen cedar trees for the cribbing, stringers, and handrail. Because the bridge is in the Hoffman Notch Wilderness, only hand tools were used in the construction. The bridge was built in five days, and COVID-19 protocols were followed.

--Norm Kuchar, Trails Chair

# 'Ididaride' Goes Virtual, Serious Riding Is Real

Cyclists cranked through thousands of miles, hills and conditions from warm sun to cold rain in this year's "Ididaride." That's normal for the first 14 years of the annual ADK fund raising bicycle tour. But this year's 15<sup>th</sup> tour was "virtual" in that there was no mass gathering, camaraderie (except in small groups) and no big dinner to wrap it all up. Instead, to keep the tour alive and meet state strictures for pandemic protection, riders were asked to register for a \$50 fee, ride individually or in small groups and report their rides to the ADK for T-shirts and online recognition.



The event is a major fund raiser for the Adirondack Mountain Club, and this year grossed \$20,750, Sunday Conine, event organizer for the ADK, reported. "This year's foray into virtual events was a success!" she reported. The net receipt for the 2019 event was about \$15,000, she said. Costs for a traditional event include a dinner for all participants, supplies for rest stops such as food, drinks and portable toilets, none of which are needed for a virtual event.

Registrations totaled 326 this year compared with 344 for 2019. That was comprised of 225 registrants claiming a 55-mile ride and 101 for a 23 mile ride. Conine said the best year to date was 2017, when 525 riders registered. (The standard Ididaride now offers choice of a 55-mile road course or a 23-mile gravel grinder.) Where anyone rode was up to them, as was the choice of schedule, as long as the ride report and photo reached the ADK by early September.

*Schenectady Chapter cyclists and friends, from left, Elvira Brandkov, Derek Snyder, Sally Dewes, Bill Ports, Laura Labbe and Norm Labbe, take a break at The Glen during their 'Ididaride' circuit. Photo by Mal Provost.*

In the case of the Schenectady Chapter of the ADK, a group of seven left the parking lot of The Hub in Brant Lake on a bright, mild Aug. 19 for a tour that included roads adjoining the Schroon River, Hudson River, Friends Lake, Warner Pond, Schroon Lake, Beaver Pond, and Brant Lake. We did 57.2 miles with ascent of 2,536 ft. in 4 hours, 17 minutes, encountering a couple serious squalls of cold rain but ending in bright, warm sun.

Conine noted a highlight among riders: Peter Rossi of Virginia reported a century ride -- 100 miles -- around the family camp on Piseco Lake.

--Mal Provost

## Contact State Legislative Chairmen

It never hurts to write to political leaders to make your positions known, and there are a ton of topics active this year for sure. Over time these will include budget issues such as how many forest rangers are employed. **Your voice counts.**

Following are the chairmen of environmental conservation committees for 2019 in the state Senate and Assembly:

**Todd Kaminsky**  
 Chair of Senate Environmental Conservation Committee  
 Legislative Office Building Room 302  
 Albany, NY 12247  
 Phone: 518-455-3401  
[kaminsky@nysenate.gov](mailto:kaminsky@nysenate.gov)

**Steve Englebright**  
 Chair of Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee  
 Legislative Office Building Room 621  
 Albany, NY 12248  
 Phone: 518-455-4804  
[engles@nyassembly.gov](mailto:engles@nyassembly.gov)

## Hike Leader, Civic Activist Joe Platukis Passes

Long-time chapter member Joe Platukis passed away on Aug. 12 at the age of 90. A graduate of Siena College, Joe had a long career with the New York Telephone Company.

He joined the Schenectady Chapter in 1973 and quickly became a hike leader. He served on the chapter board as outings chair in 1975 and as a chapter director from 1992 to 1995. Throughout this time, he was an active hike leader. He especially liked to hit the trails in the Lake George area, and his easygoing manner made his trips enjoyable for established members and newcomers alike. In addition to his long involvement with ADK, Joe played a leadership role in several civic groups, including the Shenendehowa Kiwanis Club and the Clifton Park Historic Preservation Commission.

--Norm Kuchar

## Scholarship Winners Thank Our ADK Chapter

Dear Jacqueline McGinn  
and Members of the ADK Mountain Club,

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your Schenectady Chapter ADK Scholarship. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honor and I deeply appreciate your support.

After graduation from high school, I plan to move on to SUNY Stony Brook to pursue a further education in marine vertebrate biology on a pre-veterinary track. The financial assistance you provided will be of great help in assisting me in my educational expenses so that I can focus on my studies and attend good veterinary school post-Stony Brook.

Thank you again for your generosity and support, both in your financial scholarship and sponsorship of me as a member of your club. Your scholarship allows me to be one step closer to my dream of helping animals and protecting our environment.

Sincerely, Kiana Pearson

~

Dear Mrs. McGinn,

I just wanted to thank you and the other members of the selection committee for awarding me the Schenectady Chapter Adirondack Mountain Club scholarship. It really means a lot to me to have this money available to put towards my education. I plan to continue to study ways to learn about and to protect our environment, and your scholarship puts me one step closer!

**Connor McDermott, Niskayuna High School Class of 2020**

## Trip Tales

### Zim Smith Trail End-to-End Monday, July 13

Three bikers set forth from the new this year eastern end of the Zim Smith Trail in Mechanicville on a bright and sunny day. We enjoyed a pleasant ride to the outskirts of Ballston Spa and back - 23 miles round trip. Highlights were riding through the hissing geese on the trail and the downhill ride through the tunnel into Mechanicville at the end. Participants were Charlie Beach and Jan and Marc Limeri, trip leader.

### Garnet Lake Paddle/Lizard Pond Hike Saturday, July 18

Our group paddled from the Keats' Camp on Garnet Lake to the Lizard Pond trailhead on a beautiful sunny day. We passed several loons, mallards and mergansers on our way down the lake to the trailhead. After a little over a mile hike we reached Lizard



*Jan and Marc Limeri prepare to enter the tunnel on the recently completed section of the Zim Smith bike trail in Saratoga County.  
Photo by Roy Keats*

# Trip Tales

Pond at the base of Mt. Blue with another loon floating by. We had lunch; returned to our boats and paddled the rest of Garnet Lake before returning to our cars. Trip participants were Mary MacDonald, Margie Litwin, Marc and Jan Limeri, Kendra and David Pratt, and Sue and Roy Keats, trip leader.

## Maine Paddling Trip July 23-26

A group of whitewater paddlers, mostly from the Schenectady and Albany chapters of the ADK, traveled to The Forks area of Maine for four days of paddling on the classic rivers up there. We stayed in two separate campgrounds and enjoyed great company, water, and weather. We paddled the Kennebec River, the Dead River, and the Seboomook section of the West Branch of the Penobscot. Some of the paddlers stayed on and paddled a bit more and some even went on to hike Mt. Katahdin in Baxter State Park. There were no casualties except for a Subaru Outback



*Mary MacDonald starts downstream from the put-in below Raquette Falls on the Raquette River flat water paddle. Photo by Roy Keats.*



*Norm Labbe runs a drop on the Seboomook River during an ADK trip to Maine. Photo by Sally Dewes*

with a broken weld and a flat tire. But the Suby survived to see another day and be repaired under warranty. Participants include trip leaders Anthony Cagino and Ed Martuscello, and paddlers Norm Labbe, Ryan Konopinski, Jason Greene, Jordan Martin, Karl Heilmann, Marci N, and Sally Dewes.

## Raquette Falls Paddle Friday, Aug. 14

We arrived at a very full Axton Landing parking lot. Apparently lots of others like the location too. Shortly after starting upriver to the falls we passed two women returning to the put-in on standup paddleboards (SUPs) with camping gear and backpacks. That was a first for us. The day was beautifully sunny with perfect water conditions. The falls were beautiful. A few kids were swimming in the big pool below the falls, but we did not go in. The return trip was much faster than the trip in. We finished up our day with pizza at Little Italy in Tupper Lake sitting on their

outside veranda for an end to a perfect day. The trip participants were Marc and Jan Limeri, Mary MacDonald, and Sue and Roy Keats, trip leader.

## Mongaup Whitewater Run Sunday, Aug. 23

A group of 9 paddlers (6 kayakers and 3 open boaters) from Schenectady ADK traveled to Port Jarvis to paddle a two barrel (1000 cfs.) release on the Mongaup River. We managed 2 runs on this scenic class 3 run with beautiful weather to boot. The paddlers were Matt Briere, Tom Flynn, Curt Gellerman, Anthony Lamanno, Mark Mershon, Nelson Miller, Don Orr, Alan Wood, and trip leader Robert Wright.

## Rollins Pond Loop Friday, Sept. 11

Our first wildlife of the day was a bald eagle spotted from the Stewarts Shop in Tupper Lake, our meeting spot. With the cold temperatures forecast for the morning and not being too psyched to do three portages, we decided to do a paddle up Fish Creek out of the Fish Creek Ponds Campsite instead of the loop trip. As we approached the Copperas Pond outlet, we saw an adult loon and a chick. So we turned up the outlet and went into the pond. We then found another chick and adult and watched them all fishing. We continued our paddle up Fish Creek past occasional obstacles into Floodwood Pond, and had a chilly lunch. Immediately after lunch the sky cleared. We warmed up, toured the pond and returned down Fish Creek to our put-in. The leaves had just barely started to turn, but it was still a beautiful trip. Participants were Mike Brun, Karen and Richard Wang, and Sue and Roy Keats, trip leader.

*the Lookout*

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