



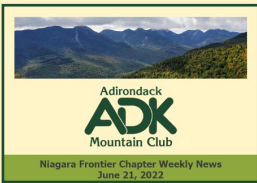
Explore. Educate. Protect.

THE NIAGARA EXPLORER

Newsletter of Adirondack Mountain Club
Niagara Frontier Chapter



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December 2022

Cascade Welcome Center Opens for Inaugural Winter Season

The Adirondack Mountain Club's Cascade Welcome Center is now open for the winter season. A hub for visitor information and community-based recreation, the Center offers 12 miles of groomed cross-country skiing and snowshoeing throughout the winter months.

Grooming will begin as soon as there is enough snow on the ground. Once that happens, recreators will be able to enjoy trails that wind through dense woodland, along open wetlands, and past incredible views of surrounding high peaks. Many of these trails are rated as easy, making this a great area for first-time skiers, families, and those looking for a more relaxing trip.

Until the snow settles in, people are

encouraged to stop by for winter gear retail, including cross-country skis, bindings, and boots, as well as information services for local recreation opportunities.

Other services at Cascade Welcome Center this winter include:

Due to infrastructure limitations, food and beverage service will be limited to snacks and non-alcoholic beverages to start the season.

Skiing and snowshoeing will be available from 9am to 5pm every day of the week. Up-to-date trail conditions and details about rates and services can be found online at ADK.org/cascade-welcome-center. Updates will also be shared on Cascade Welcome Center's Instagram and Facebook profiles.



Nicole Pane



The ADK-NFC Chapter Executive Committee wishes you a healthy and happy holiday season!

December General Meeting

Welcome Back to Our First Post Pandemic Holiday Potluck Dinner and Meeting!

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

6:00: Deck the Halls—Any help with set-up (and cleanup and put aways) is welcome

6:30: Dinner— Eat, drink & be merry! Come one, come all, but don't let someone else eat it all! The potluck dinner is sure to please! Help us make a warm & memorable get together by bringing your favorite signature hot or cold dish to pass. Appetizers, salads, meat or meatless creations, cookies, desserts - use your noggin - a variety of food options is always a big hit. We will have extra tables set up to keep all your dishes readily available, but please remember to bring serving utensils!! Coffee, tea, water will be provided, but members are welcome to B.Y.O. beverage of choice. On behalf of

the planet, members are asked to bring their own reusable plates, utensils, and cups. Feel free to bring a guest!

This is a great time to socialize with old friends and to make new ones! There will not be a program, but the elves (you know who we are), have been busy securing wonderful door prizes! Holiday music will add to the merriment.

Members are asked to take their dirty dishes home with them when leaving (as clean-up in the kitchen would take too much time and the focus is on socializing, fun and fellowship)!

Don't forget to dress in your fun, holiday attire!

- Pam Sander & Sue Kolasz

Looking ahead to January 10, 2023...

Education Workshop at 6:30 pm:

Winter Backpacking Skills with Jonathan Coupal

Main Program at 7:30 pm:

East Aurora native Lauren Molenda discussion of her March 2022 Mt. Kilimanjaro climb, and raising funds for the Kitenga Girls Secondary School.



*The whole world
is a series of
miracles, but
we're so used to
them we call them
ordinary things.*

- Hans Christian
Andersen

November Meeting Recap

Our November meeting featured Lockport's Snowflake Ski Shop and environmental lawyer, podcaster and author, Laura Evans. Snowflake Ski Shop is a family owned shop that's been in business for over 50 years, specializing in ski and snowboard equipment and clothing. They also carry a large selection of snowshoes and Xcountry skis. Snowflake representative, Ellie, came with all the fixins' to entice even the most reluctant couch potato into getting outdoors for some winter fun! She brought a variety of Xcountry skis, snowshoes, boots, clothing, waxes, and accessories. The toddler light up snowshoes were especially adorable, and they'd be so much fun for the little ones in your family! Ellie explained the differences in the various skis and snowshoes, and talked about the clothing and layering techniques required to make sure you stay toasty warm even on those frigid days. In addition to Snowflake swag, we all received discount coupons for the shop, and one lucky winner got a \$50 Snowflake Ski Shop gift certificate! Like true Buffalonians, our members seemed to welcome the thought of another snowy winter season. Be sure to visit Snowflake Ski Shop at 245 S. Transit Road, Lockport, NY, where you'll find the latest in winter sports gear, clothing, and accessories.



Following our workshop, we were treated to a heartfelt talk by author Laura Evans. Evans shared her experiences as an environmental lawyer, sustainability activist, podcaster and author. She took us on a journey through her years as a child, a

law student, a planner, an environmental lawyer, a sustainability activist, and an author by sharing personal stories, reflections on her life and the lessons she has learned. The author talked about her struggles, and her disillusionment with the current environmental law, but she discovered that the process of reflecting on her life and writing her book was cathartic. Evans noted how sustainability is a difficult goal to achieve given the present laws and circumstances; however, she is hopeful for the future. The author outlined ways she has learned to live a more sustainable life and challenges us to also look for new ways to live more sustainably. An engaging Q&A period followed in which our members had many questions and comments. To learn more about the author's life, environmental law, and some steps you can take to live a more sustainable life, check out Evans's thought provoking book, *Silent Seasons: Chasing Sustainability Through the Law*, which can be purchased at Burning Books bookstore, online through Amazon, or by ordering it at Talking Leaves. You can also check out her podcast, "Keeping Things Alive".

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- Sue Kolasz

Message from the Chair

Happy Holidays,

It has been a fantastic year for our club. It has felt great to be back normal with outings, programs, and events. Our club membership has and attendance at our monthly meetings has been spectacular. I feel like our club is firing on all cylinders. It is all because of you!

As we reflect on 2022, ADK's Centennial Year, I want celebrate our club's successes:

- We had a full year of IN-PERSON meetings (Hooray!). Some of the most memorable presentations included Anne McCooley with NWF Community Wildlife Habitat, Alexis Oltmer with her art "An Unnatural Diet", Alan Baczkiewicz with The Backyard Bird Sanctuary, Messenger Woods Wildlife Care and Education Center with their talking American Crow, Pete Hill who gave us all something to ponder, and Laura Evens with Silent Seasons and of course our annual ice cream social.
- Annual Club Picnic at Sprague Brook with guided hikes, music by Gino McManus and Frank Grisanti, and amazing food.
- 100 Mile Challenge with several ADK-

NFC participants including Lori Cej, Pamela Edholm, Mary Jane Shonn Jeffrey Lebsack and Blythe Merrill Kelly Wilder Brandon Macie Dan Herr.

- ADK Voices project: <https://www.adkvoices.org/>
- Countless outings from paddles to hikes to trips to the Loj
- Multiple garbage bags filled at our trail clean-up days
- A refreshed website
- We are 708 members strong with 63 new members!!!
- So many incredible people are volunteering their time to make our chapter the best in ADK!

I am looking forward to celebrating our year at our Annual Holiday Potluck Party. I hope to see everyone there with their ugliest Christmas sweaters.

See you outside,
Mike

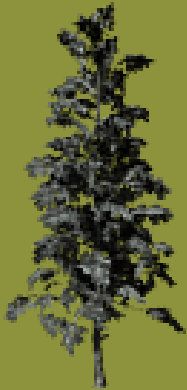
Help Wanted: Monthly Meetings

Are you a naturally friendly person? We need greeters for our monthly meetings. It's a great opportunity to learn the names of club members and welcome new members to meetings.

We are looking for volunteers to commit to one meeting per year. There are seven meetings left (November-May) on the

second Tuesday of each month. You pick the meeting that you want to volunteer at.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact Pam (sanderpamela88@gmail.com) or Sue (Sue728115@yahoo.com).



**HELP
WANTED**

Welcome New Members!

Please join us in welcoming the following new members to our chapter:



Kevin Platte

Thomas Brod

Stephen Spear

James Schuetz

Renee and Michael Korzak

Joy Rodriguez Nowicki

Tyler Lucia

Pamela Moran and Ron Cook

Robin and Christopher Nicolai

Matthew and Anne Bowling

Beth Lucia

Robert Seager

Don Nelson

New Adirondack 46ers

If you've completed your Adirondack 46er this year, please let us know so that we can add you to our chapter's 46er list: <http://www.adk-nfc.org/our-46ers/>. Email your 46er#, Name, Date Completed, and Final Peak to nicole9165@hotmail.com to be added.



Trip Reports

Zoar Valley, October 9th

The group had a beautiful day hiking Valentine Flats and Point Peter in Zoar Valley. After a quick trip to Point Peter to see the sweeping vista, we proceeded down the Valentine Flats trail. The trail



had been improved and it took only 30 minutes to reach the creek bed at

the confluence. We meandered through changing ecosystems, enjoying the many colored leaves until we were on the beach. No one wanted to leave as the bright blue sky, the sound of the rushing creek, and the spectacular gorge walls seemed to mesmerize everyone. Many said it was their first time hik-

ing there and that they would return, especially during spring to see the ephemeral spring flowers.

- Mary Schraven

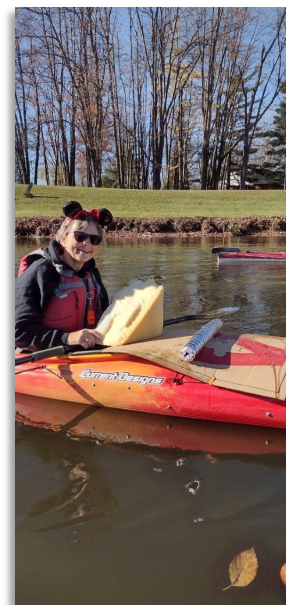


Ellicott Creek Paddle, October 29th

A hardy group met at the put-in at Ellicott Creek Park on Niagara Falls Blvd to kayak. Even though it was a chilly morning, everyone had a great time in the sunshine. Afterwards, we sat outside and cozied up to a bonfire with delicious salads, treats and Richard's famous chili. A time to celebrate the end of the kayaking season with long-time and new

friends. Make sure you join us for this annual event next year!

- Mary Schraven



Reinstein Woods, November 14th

Reinstein Woods Environmental Education Center is located at the Dr. Victor Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve - a unique 292-acre complex of forests, ponds, and wetlands surrounded by suburban de-



velopment., and is located at 93 Honorine Drive, Depew, N.Y. On Monday, November 14, 2022, a foursome of ADK-NFC members walked the trails of Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve, and learned the history of this unique property. Though most of the hardwood trees have lost their leaves, we marveled at the many pretty beech trees that will hold onto their leaves for months to come. We heard birds, but saw few (perhaps due to the happy chatter of our group)! We admired the great, new signs on the property, that are both attractive and informative. We spent time admiring the boarded up Reinstein family summer home that is made of limestone, which was most likely locally quar-

ried. The building sits next to one of the lovely ponds designed by Dr. Reinstein who was inspired by the country

life of his ancestral Germany. We had fun inspecting the stones and found many fossils of the creatures that once inhabited the ancient waters of our area. On the return

to the Education Center, and next to the water's edge and the trail, we watched an old Great Blue Heron who posed for us and a photographer. Time was spent in the Education center that offers great information on nature and about the many animals that call Reinstein home. Every visit to Reinstein is special and should be frequented by all who appreciate the benefits of time spent in nature.

- Pam Sander



Paddling North Florida & Touring the Gulf Coast, October/November

10/23/22 to 10/29/22 –Paddling and Biking near Pensacola

This week involved exploring several rivers within the Blackwater River State Forest, the largest state forest in Florida. Rivers we explored included the Backwater River, Coldwater Creek, and Juniper Creek. The highlight of the week was seeing an Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake while hiking on the Florida Trail near Fort Pickens. We also found time to bike on the Backwater Heritage Trail near Milton. Joining me were Rosemary Daley, David Tanner, Mike and Margaret Anderson, Moi-

ra Morrissey, Ann Johansmeyer along with our guides, Greg Pflug and Bill Durkin.



Paddling North Florida & Touring the Gulf Coast (continued)

10/29 to 11/4/22 – Touring the Gulf Coast

Since we had a week in between paddles, we decided to tour the Gulf Coast. Highlights included:

- Beauvoir in Gulfport, the Jefferson Davis Home and Presidential Library.
- New Orleans, where we visited the National Museum of WWII, along with a swamp and plantation tour.
- Touring the Vicksburg Battlefield, the last Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi.
- Biking the Longleaf Trace Trail near Hattiesburg.



11/6/22 to 11/12/22 - Paddling and Biking out of Wakulla Lodge

Unfortunately, this part of our trip was cut short due to Tropical Storm Nicole. However we did paddle the Wakulla, where we witnessed a rattlesnake swimming across the river. We also got to see several springs while paddling on the Wacissa. On our last day, some of us paddled the Suwannee. Biking included the Tallahassee – St Marks Rail Trail. Joining me on this trip were : Rosemary Daley, Jack & Lenore Reber, Joe & Alison Zokse, Dan Van Uithuizen, Jim Leinweber, Lynn Filarecki, Claire Pospisil and Cynthia Cross. Along with our guides, Greg Pflug and Bill Durkin.

- David Pisaneschi

Finger Lakes Trail Ithaca, October 16th

I spent a few days in Ithaca this past fall to do some hiking and see the foliage. I hiked at a few of the popular spots, such as Buttermilk Falls and Taughannock Falls, as well as a section of the Interloken Branch of the Finger Lakes Trail. However, my favorite hike of the trip was the Ithaca section of the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT). For those unfamiliar, the Finger Lakes Trail runs from the NY/PA border in Allegany State Park all the way to the Catskills and passes through many state parks and forests, wildlife areas, nature preserves, as well as a good deal of private property. In addition to the well over 500 mile main trail, there are also six branch trails. I'm a huge fan of the FLT; it tends to be less crowded and a bit more remote than many popular hiking areas. You also never know what to expect as far as terrain/trail conditions (yes, there is both good and bad to this). This particular section of trail starts just west of

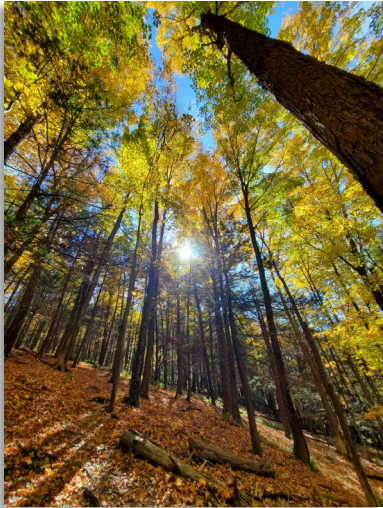
Robert Treman State Park and I had hiked a little bit of this section earlier in the summer during my visit to Robert Treman. The first thing I noticed is that the parking area had been re-done and expanded, and, without even starting the hike, the views of the hills in the distance, which were at peak foliage. The first half mile or so of the trail is flat and goes through the Tapan Mitra Preserve (a recently acquired piece of land by the FLT) and the Lick Brook Natural area.



Lick Brook Falls

There was a creek crossing (which is the lowest elevation point on the entire FLT) before I reached Lick Brook Falls. Having seen pictures of this falls, it looks quite beautiful when it has water in it. When I saw it over the summer it was completely dry and on this day there was only a small stream of water. The fallen leaves on the

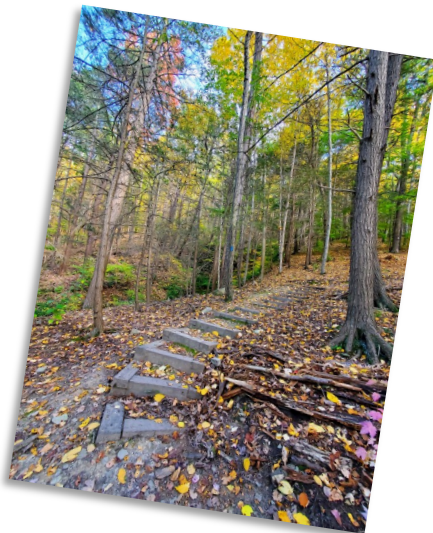
made beautiful scene less. cross-Brook heads wood to ther up a the and a the



shale for a tiful fall regard- After ing Lick the trail into the and starts climb ra- steeply, gorge for next mile half into Sweedler

and Thayer Nature Preserves. The climb itself was challenging, but beautiful. The sun shined through the tree canopy illuminating the fall colors. From the top, there is a partially obstructed view over the gorge and across the hills and valleys in the distance. Sweedler/Thayer is a popular area on the FLT, and I saw quite a few people here. The hike

continues along the edge of the lick brook gorge, a beautiful area with many small waterfalls. When I reached the end of the preserves, there was a private property section that was closed for hunting season so rather than walk-



ing the road bypass I turned around to head back. I decided to take the lick brook spur trail on the way back, although it cut some distance, it ran right along the gorge. The trail work here is impressive. Switchbacks all along the trail with steps around every steeply graded corner. Much easier on the knees than I expected this to be. Every time I hike a new FLT section I say it is my new favorite and this one was no exception. Highly recommended if you are in the area.

- Nicole Pane

Hikes & Outings Calendar

March 2nd-4th: Winter Outing at the Loj in Lake Placid

We are going to do another winter outing at the Loj in March again this year. This time we reserved 3 nights starting Thursday and leaving Sunday, and the chapter will pay for one of the nights. We hope to get some people who have never stayed there before along with some experienced people who know the area and can lead hikes or other adventures. There are many good trails out of the Loj and good skiing is just down the road or out of the Loj. We reserved the loft which has 12 bunks, but once we fill up others can reserve other spaces on their own and the chapter will reimburse them one night at the loft rate, which is \$57. Weekends at the Loj in winter fill quickly, so if you contact them now to reserve a spot you should be able to get one. If you want to reserve one of the loft spots you will need to send \$114 to Doug Gaffney, 830 George Urban Blvd, Buffalo, NY 14225. That will cover your bill for two nights. You will have a separate bill for dinners, trail lunches and drinks which you will have to pay to ADK when you leave. Breakfast is included. If you only want to stay two nights you will still have to pay the full fee because the chapter will have to pay for your space. Please email me at hackerks@gmail.com to reserve a spot or to ask questions.

Three more spots left as of mid November! After that a waiting list will be kept.



Keep up to date on outings by checking the events calendar on our website:

<https://adk-nfc.org/events/>



Adirondack
Mountain Club
Niagara Frontier Chapter



ON THE WEB:

adk.org

adk-nfc.org

facebook.com/ADK-NiagaraFrontier

Nicole Pane



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