

Adirondack **ADK** Mountain Club

THE NIAGARA EXPLORER

Newsletter of Adirondack Mountain Club Niagara
Frontier Chapter

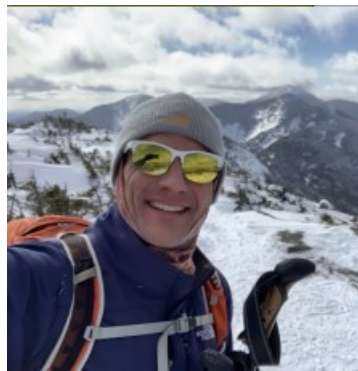
Message from the Chair

ADKers,

On behalf of the Executive Committee, we want to wish all of our members and their families a happy and adventure-filled holiday.

As we celebrate another trip around the sun and close out 2024, it is a great time to reflect on what the club has accomplished.

Pam and Sue have organized some fun and informative programs that included bats, timber rattlesnakes, and rocks (geology). We put an emphasis on education with Jonathan organizing many sessions to get our trip leaders inline with the club's new Outdoor Leadership Guide. Our education programs included topics like emergency shelters, trip leadership, map and compass, and Leave No Trace. It was great to see club members stepping up to share their knowledge. I am excited to report that we have more than a dozen certified trip leaders.



These leaders, under the guidance of Frank, have organized some incredible outings from backpacking the West Rim Trail in PA to bikepacking the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) to weekends at the Adirondack Loj.

We took some steps forward technologically this year. We implemented Meetup for our outings streamlining communication and registration. Emma and Peggy are keeping us "in the loop" with our social media presence and newsletter. We also made some much needed upgrades to our website.

Mostly, our chapter was successful this year because of you. We gained 45 new members and your

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attendance at meetings and outings has been amazing. We need to keep our momentum for 2024.

We will need some leaders to step forward as some positions on the executive committee need to be filled. We need 2-3 individuals to step forward to act as the nominating committee to select a new club Chair and vice-chair(s) of Programs.

Be bold, start cold. Stay safe and get outside in 2024.

See you outside,
Mike

January Monthly Program

A recent Buffalo News article really spiked the interest of the program committee chairs when we read “**Jason Lape** challenged himself to climb every major peak in the eastern U.S.” Of course we had to contact this guy! He responded with a resounding yes, and submitted the following biography:

“When conditions are just right, with the smell of autumn in the air, and the silence of the forest is broken with the crunching of dry leaves under your boots, it’s easy to understand how someone could fall in love with the mountains. The opportunity to disconnect and enjoy amazing mountainous views leaves you refreshed with a sense of accomplishment and a longing to return. But on the days when the rain is relentless, or subzero temperatures chill you to the bone, or maybe an injury afflicts you, the will to persevere doesn’t come as easily.

A challenging day can really deplete the desire to return to the mountains in that moment for some, but the obsession of a peak bagger seems strengthened by the adversaries that were overcome.

For those who find themselves continually drawn to the sport of bagging peaks, mountaineering perhaps means something different for each of us.

My need for adventure, and my quest for bagging peaks began long before I even reached my first mountain summit.

Years ago, I was struck and then run over by a drunk driver’s pickup truck. Bystanders watched my body being launched through the air and then ran over.

Both my legs were in really rough shape. Surgeons worked on multiple breaks and stitched me up where they had compounded through the skin. Along with multiple broken bones, I’ve had several knee reconstructive surgeries. And I had trauma that now causes me seizures. It’s been a long recovery, but there’s a deep sense of gratitude for the many adventures I’ve been fortunate to enjoy over the years.



Mountaineering has been a labor of love for me. There are many layers of reasons why I’ve fallen in love with the sport.

I’ve been fortunate to reach well over 100 different mountain summits now, in a lot of different really remote places, through every type of condition, and in all four seasons.

There have been so many intense and extraordinary experiences throughout the many adventures I’ve had. Some really radical mishaps, some treks that came close to taking my life, and even one mysterious ghostly event that has my climbing partner and I still perplexed to this day.

My name is Jason Lape, and I go by Jay. I am a barber by trade, and I own a barbershop in the village of Hamburg, called Jay’s Barbershop, a village boutique, grooming lounge, shoeshine, and barbershop.

I am a skydiver, a climber, a mountaineer, and just an overall adventure enthusiast. Join me on January 9, and listen in while I share the many extraordinary tales throughout my experiences while in the mountains.”

Sue Kolasz and Pamela Sander

2023 Holiday Party and Meeting



Our annual holiday gathering and monthly chapter meeting on Tuesday, December 12th, was a special and fun filled event! **Carol Schuster** was able to arrange for desserts provided by an Orchard Park baker (and former Dessert Deli employee) which were beautiful and scrumptious! Friendship Hall never looked better with white tablecloths and decorations (thank you **Mary Schraven**), red poinsettia's (thank you **Sue Kolasz** for your early Black Friday shopping), festive music provided by **Mike Radomski**, and even a visit by Santa himself (**Roy Tocha**), helped to bring in the holiday spirit!

The Program elves put together a nice array of door prizes with donations from Patagonia and our chair Mike donated several items too!

The special members door prize of donated new Leki hiking poles went to none other than the wonderful Richard Schraven!

The best part of the event was the lively conversations, laughter, and birthday songs filling the room-it was obvious people were having a fun time! Our chapter is composed of wonderful people and has been in existence since the early 1970's, and hopefully will continue for many years to come. The success of our chapter depends on the community of members volunteering their time, so our meetings run smoothly, our outings calendar is varied and consistent, and helping to seek out new members. To quote a current and overused phrase, "We're all in this together"! - **Sue Kolasz and Pamela Sander**

January Education Program

The snow isn't going to be here forever, and when the weather warms up we'll be getting back on our bikes and riding the roads and trails. January we have **Liam Burgeson**, a cyclist who has ridden across the country (twice!) sharing his experience with us. Our education session will cover basic spring preparation, safety, and a review of a few useful bike accessories you might have forgotten to ask Santa for.

Looking ahead...

February - Mary Ronan, Environmental Educator with Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve, will present a program entitled, "Freedom Seekers-Naturalists of the Northeast"

Paul Gannon will be presenting to us about what to do if you get lost, with some technology help from Jonathan Coupal.



NEW Trivia Challenge

Who is the founder of the Niagara Frontier ADK chapter? (Answer on page 8)



Conservation Corner

Enjoy reading the following article to help keep you informed about local and statewide environmental topics. If this piques your interest, I encourage you to attend a Conservation Committee meeting to learn more about environmental issues and how you can make a difference.

Thank you to members who contacted Governor Hochul to request that she sign [The Birds and Bees Protection Act](#) to discontinue the use of neonicotinoid insecticides on corn, soybean and wheat seeds and its application to outdoor ornamental plants and turf. The bills were passed by the NY state assembly (A.7640) and the NY senate (S.1856) and signed into law by the Governor in 2023. The insecticide is widely used to protect crops from insects; however, it often results in the death of bees and other pollinators. Without pollination there would be an overall decrease in agricultural food production of all types of crops (vegetables, grapes, fruit trees) and impede pollination of non-agricultural plants such as wildflowers. The use of the insecticide would be allowed on a limited basis, for example to prevent invasive plant species from spreading. The bill would not prevent other types of insecticides from being used on crops.



Erie County has been awarded a 5.2 million dollar grant to expand urban forestry by planting trees in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Buffalo. Increasing trees in the city can have multiple benefits such as helping to clean the air to reduce high rates of asthma, managing storm water to prevent polluting runoff, mitigating flooding, cooling neighborhoods and improving people's mental health.

During an East Buffalo Environmental Forum meeting, Patrick Marren, the DEC region 9 forester, discussed how the United States Forestry Service will assist Erie County with implementing the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) grant. The plan is to collaborate with various community groups to assist with planting the trees. The ADK Conservation committee has informed Re-Tree WNY that our chapter would like to assist with planting trees.

Stay tuned for the details about when you can join us to plant trees in April and November. The ADK Conservation committee has informed Re-Tree WNY that our chapter would like to assist with planting trees. Stay tuned for the details about when you can join us to plant trees in April and November. The trees are grown and tended to by inmates at the Alden Correctional Facility as part of the Sheriffs horticultural and composting project through the Climate Smart Communities initiative.

There is ongoing concern over the negative ecological impacts that the construction of the STAMP (Western New York Science & Technology Advanced Manufacturing Park) project in Genesee County could have on the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge that sits adjacent to the development.

Conservation Corner (cont'd)

The Tonawanda Seneca Nation, who's land is also adjacent to the property, recently sued the federal government in the U.S. district court over the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approving the construction of a waste water pipe that would run from the STAMP project in Genesee County through the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge and empty into Oak Orchard Creek in Orleans County. The pipeline has already leaked inside the refuge and Orleans County is concerned about the impacts of the treated waste water on the fish population in Oak Orchard Creek.

The lawsuit claims the pipeline is not compatible with the purpose of the refuge under the terms of the following laws. The suit claims it would violate the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act.



The ADK Conservation committee is also concerned over the negative impacts that the construction of multiple companies so close to the refuge would have on a national bird flyway and bird nesting habitat.

For further details, I recommend reading the multiple articles that have been published in The Batavian Newspaper [WNY STAMP | The Batavian](#).

All ADK members are welcome to attend the Niagara Frontier Conservation Committee meetings to discuss conservation topics and plan upcoming events. Meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month either in-person and/or by zoom. See the ADK Niagara Frontier Chapter Weekly Email for further details.

Lynn Rehfeld-Kenney, Conservation Chair

Advisory Council Report

This month new Board of Directors officers were elected, and new board members were approved. I'm sure the information will be published in the Adirondack magazine. The new board members were chosen for their skills and ability to manage the organization and work on fund raising next year to help pay the remaining mortgage for the Cascade Center. The Cascade Center had a very successful year last year, and is open for skiing, which is free for members. They have a consignment shop there with lots of good gear and new equipment not available in any of the shops around here. Back country skiing is big up there. The annual budget was approved, and significant funding is being put into training. As you have probably seen, a system of certifications for various levels of training has been put into place this year. The Advisory Council voted to pare back or modify some of the requirements, and some changes may be in store if staff and the Board approve. I have completed all of the training courses now and found all of them to be worthwhile and interesting.

A new computer system for customer relation management is being implemented this year that will allow everyone to enter their own data into the system.

Advisory Council Report (cont'd)

You will be able to maintain your data, such as emails and addresses, renew, sign up for training and other programs, view chapter activities, and donate. A couple of local chapter members will manage chapter emails and the newsletter and later the local website may be put into the system. This will allow the Club to better connect with members.

Any questions, concerns or comments? Send me an email at hackerks@gmail.com

Kate Hacker, Trustee representing the Niagara Frontier Chapter

Website: adk-nfc.org

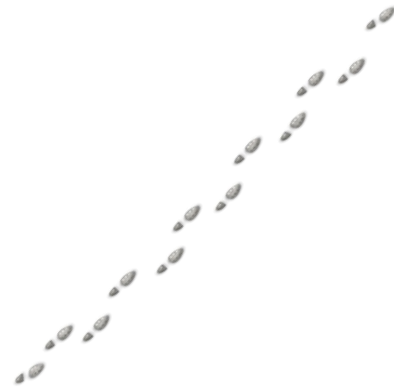
Facebook Group: [ADK-Niagara Frontier Chapter](#)

MeetUp: <https://www.meetup.com/adk-nfc/>

Follow us on Instagram ([adk_nfc](#))
[Chapter Outings & Events Calendar](#)

Welcome New Members!

Deborah-Deuro Naughton
Beth Gulakiw
Sandra Kelkenberg
Jane and William Harrington
Ken Wawrzyniak
Dennis and Marie Pack
Scott MacDonald
Tammy Giancola
Emma Piascik
Marcus Russ



The Chapter is seeking Nominating Committee volunteers to find candidates to fill the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair Programs and Treasurer. Please reach out to current Chapter Chair, Mike Radomski

Trip Reports and Outings

Chestnut Ridge Park Hike

We successfully burned off some Thanksgiving calories during an energetic hike at Chestnut Ridge Park the Saturday after the holiday. The morning was crisp and clear and colored leaves littered the forest floor. The 10 of us chatted as we hiked 3.7 miles along several wooded trails connected by short lengths of road.

It had rained earlier in the week, so we were treated to the sound of rushing water in the numerous creeks as water cascaded over the shale ledges creating mini waterfalls. Hikers reminisced about past hikes at this county park and noted how fortunate we are to have such a nice park to hike at so close to home.



New Year's Day Hike-January 1, 2024

Join Randy, Pam, and Sue as we welcome in the new year with a hike at Franklin Gulf Park. With its many streams, waterfalls and wooded ravines, this is easily one of the most beautiful parks in Western New York.

We'll be meeting at the **Larkin Road** entrance, and hike for approximately 4 miles, from **noon until about 3 pm**. Alltrails rates this hike as moderate.

The terrain is hilly, and there will be some streams to cross, so it is important to wear at least mid-height (or higher) waterproof hiking boots. Trekking poles are highly recommended. Bring snacks and water. Also, if the ground is snow covered or frozen, ice cleats will be necessary. If conditions make the streams unsafe to cross, we will change our hike to Chestnut Ridge Park.

Please note: This is a dog free hike. Thank you for your cooperation.

Check out ADK-Niagara Frontier Chapter Meetup for more details and sign ups.

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Trivia Challenge Answer

Ray Markiewicz, a Buffalo veteran radio and television newsman, known on the air as Ray Marks, decided to form our local chapter after enjoying hiking trips to the Adirondack Mountains.

