



THE NIAGARA EXPLORER

*Newsletter of Adirondack Mountain Club Niagara
Frontier Chapter*

Message from the Chair

Friends,

Every month I get a soapbox to stand on and share my thoughts or a call to action with our members here in Western New York, and this month I want to take this opportunity to ask everyone who reads this newsletter to do one thing: for those of you who regularly come to our meetings, bring a friend who isn't in the Adirondack Club with you. Let them know that they'll have an opportunity to meet others who share their interest in the outdoors, will get to learn a few new things about hiking or paddling or watching birds, and might even make a few new friends along the way. For those of you who don't normally come to our monthly meetings, we look forward to having you join us! My own experience over the past few years is that my sense of community has grown, and I've learned to respect the passion other folks in the area have about the outdoors, and the Adirondacks in particular. As I said at last month's meeting, my favorite presenters are the members at our September meeting who share their own adventures with the rest of the group, whether it be paddling the Allegheny River, exploring a bike trail in Wyoming (I think), or checking out an underground river in Vietnam. I look forward to hearing about your adventures as well.



— Jonathan Coupal

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

The Chapter is still seeking a volunteer to fill the position of **Education Chair**

If interested, please reach out to Chapter Chair, Jonathan Coupal

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October 2024

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October Program

October 8th at 7:30 pm, presented by Randi Minetor: *Deaths in the National Parks: Who, How, and Why*

Why do some people lose their lives in America's national parks? Randi Minetor, author of [seven books in the non-fiction "Death in the National Parks" series](#), explores the fatal mistakes people make when they venture into unfamiliar wilderness. Some forget critical steps in their preparation, forging off into wild lands far too challenging for their level of experience. Some refuse advice, ignoring weather reports and warnings from rangers and more seasoned adventurers. Some take unnecessary chances or overestimate their own skill level. Others are simply in the wrong place at the right time, becoming victims of a lightning strike or a falling rock, or camping on the night when grizzly bears' perception of human beings turned from seeing them as a source of food ... to seeing them *as* food. And some fall prey to other people who set out to kill them, banking on the seclusion of the backcountry, the lack of witnesses, and the likelihood that high cliffs or deep canals will hide their misdeeds forever.

Randi shares highlights of her in-depth research and what it reveals about the people who perish in the parks. She offers insights about why people are driven to challenge themselves in the wilderness no matter the odds against their safe return and provides helpful tips on how to avoid your own disaster in a national park.

Author and journalist Randi Minetor has written more than 90 published books, including regional bestsellers *Death in Glacier National Park*, *Death in Zion National Park*, *Death in Rocky Mountain National Park*, *Death in Acadia*, *Death on Katahdin*, *Death on Mount Washington*, and *Death in the Everglades*. She writes primarily about America's national parks, hiking, birding, nature, and historic cities across the country. Her spring 2024 book releases include the second editions of her books *Best Easy Day Hikes* books for Buffalo, Syracuse, and Albany, and her extensive revision of Rhonda and George Ostertag's *Hiking New York* for the book's fifth edition. This fall, her releases include *Birding Texas* (Falcon Guides), featuring photos by her husband, Nic Minetor; and *The Complete Language of Birds* (Wellfleet Press), with folklore and mythology about 400 varied species around the world. — **Programs Co-chairs Pam Sander and Larry Moses**

Program Recap

September 10, 2024—The first monthly meeting after summer hiatus was the return of our traditional ice cream social (hand scooped ice cream with all the toppings), and our slide show program of member's photos of fun and interesting trips and WNY nature scenes! Thanks to all who volunteered to make the evening a success!

This was the first meeting in our new space at Church of the Nativity UCC, 1530 Colvin Blvd, Tonawanda 14223. The response by attendees at our new meeting home was very positive - hope to see you when we meet again on October 8th.



Looking Ahead... Tuesday, November 12th welcomes back our former chair and Mr. O.C., Mike Radomski! Mike's 7:30 pm program will wow and fascinate us with pictures and tales of his Winter 2024 whitewater adventure in the Grand Canyon. We thank Mike for sharing this adventure with us.

Tuesday, December 10, 2024—The Return of Our Traditional Potluck Dinner! This will be a night of great potluck foods, holiday cheer, and door prizes! Further information including meeting time to be announced.

Conservation Corner

Take Action:

Thank you to members who voiced their opinions during the public comment period on proposed changes to New York State's Wetlands Regulations. Changes included improved protection for smaller wetland areas including vernal pools, vital for amphibian breeding habitat and an expedited method to improve wetland identification.

*Erie County is updating its Forest Management Plan and is requesting public involvement. Go to [Home | Erie County FMP \(wixstudio.io\)](https://www.wixstudio.io) to obtain background information about the process. One of the 12 forestry lots is the land on Genesee Road in Sardinia where a warming hut and maple sugar shack are located. As an outdoor recreational group, we are interested in keeping or expanding hiking trails on this and other forestry plots. Also express your views on whether the undeveloped forest plots should be part of New York States commitment to the 30 x 30 global campaign to protect 30% of ecologically productive lands and waters by the year 2030.

In the news:

*Zoar Valley – Local TV stations have been covering citizen's concerns about the DEC plan to log 100-120 year old trees in the Zoar Valley Multiple Use Area that abuts the protected Zoar Valley Unique Area. The Unique area was established to protect old growth forest that comprises only 1%-3% of this forest type in NYS. Fragmenting the mature forest canopy would lead to increased parasitization by the brown headed cow bird on songbird nests, damage the unique landscape hydrology and spread invasive plant species.

Roadside Clean-up at the Tillman Road Wildlife Management Area 30th Anniversary celebration

Part 2.—Thank you volunteers for another successful roadside clean-up marking the 30th Fall anniversary. How wonderful that ADK volunteers continue to help keep this area free of litter. However, it is unfortunate that 30 years later our services are still needed to pick up trash, including two large contractor size trash bags this past September. Thank you to the volunteers who carried on that legacy: Lynn & Doug Kenney, Paul Gannon, Lee Clukey, Emma Piascik, Marcus Russo, and Larry Moses. Numerous leopard frogs hopped out of our way while Canada Geese flew overhead honking during the beautiful 78 degree sunny day.



Conservation Corner (cont'd)

Eyesore cleaned up in Chestnut Ridge Park—Many hands made lighter work.

ADK-NFC long time member and friend, Mr. Map & Compass, Ed Kasperek, asked the Chestnut Ridge Park Conservancy, Town of Orchard Park Highway Department, Boy Scout Troup #285, M & T Bank, ADK-NFC, and others, to help him remove old garbage from an area on the Boy Scout Trail (orange trail, near marker #80), near Ed's property. This eye sore of a dump began some 80 years ago by the town and was added to by generations of people that lived nearby. Ed loves Chestnut Ridge Park and after years of walking the trails and being disturbed by the garbage dump, reached out and got the help needed to remove it. Thanks to Ed for proving one citizen **can make a difference** by asking the right people for help.

Arriving early in the day, volunteers came wearing work clothes and gloves and started the removal process on August 29th. The highway department vehicles (dump truck and loader) safely parked just outside the park border (this would have been impossible if the ground was saturated by heavy rains). Volunteers dragged out a smorgasbord of junk that included tires, car parts, household items, glass bottles of all shapes and sizes, shoes – you name it, we dragged it out. With Ed operating his machine to drag out the “stuff” to the lawn, the highway department crew then collected it and took it away to the appropriate refuse facilities. As the saying goes, “many hands make light(er) work!”

Chestnut Ridge Conservancy provided water and lunch (delicious pizza and wings from Brunners!), which were enjoyed on Eds comfy patio. A very gratifying hard day's work. — **Pam Sander**

Conservation Event: Tree planting at Tift Nature Preserve—Date and time to be determined for a Saturday in October or November

Conservation Committee meetings scheduled for Tuesday, October 15th. Location to be announced in Weekly ADK Email. All members are welcome to attend to find out the latest conservation news.

—Lynn Rehfeld-Kenney, Conservation Chair

Trivia Challenge

Where did ADK members volunteer to pick-up litter during the 1970's in Cattaraugus County?

A) Little Rock City B) Allenberg Bog C) Zoar

Answer on page 10

Trip Reports and Outings

October 25-27, 2024

Annual Albany ADK Fall Outing

The Annual Fall Outing will be held October 25-27 at the Ashokan Center, Olivebridge, NY. The Center (www.ashokan.org) is a camp/event space on a 385-acre preserve. It is located 20 minutes from the Kingston exit of the NYS Thruway and within 30 minutes from Catskills trailheads. On-site events start Friday at 5 pm but the site is available to us as of noon. Outings are planned for Friday afternoon through Sunday morning for hiking and other activities in the Catskills, Shawangunks, and other local sites. The site has trails so people arriving mid-afternoon can stretch their leg right there.

Friday evening we will have a meet-and-greet at 5 pm with musical entertainment. Dinner (6:30) pasta bar.

Saturday evening we'll have happy hour at 5 pm, buffet dinner and after-dinner presentation, speaker to be announced.

On-site housing is in semi-private (4 person) or larger (24 person) bunk rooms. Camping (tent) is available on site. There are other accommodations within 15 min drive.

Estimated cost pp for the whole weekend and including 2 night stay, 2 dinners, 2 breakfasts and bag lunches for Saturday and Sunday will be about \$300. Meals will be optional. Cancellation policy: Full refunds will be issued to those who cancel their registration prior to October 4, inclusive. A 50% refund will be issued to those who cancel between October 5-18, inclusive. No refunds will be issued after October 18.

Registration will be through a form accessed from this webpage - <https://members.adk.org/fall-outing/registration.aspx> We hope that other chapters that frequently hike in the Catskills or other areas in the lower Hudson Valley will help with leading outings. **Patrick Van Roey, Albany Chair**

Trip Report: September 12, 2024—St. Regis Area Canoe/Kayak trip Paddle

We could not have hoped for a better weekend than these 4 days in the Adirondacks paddling in the St. Regis area: We paddled 10 ponds and did 7 carries, camping out overnight three nights at several exceptional campsites. The weather was so awesome we were afraid to move the last day because there were so many people who were out on the water taking advantage of the amazing weekend - in fact, we asked a wonderful couple to stay with us the last night because they couldn't find a place to stay themselves. From Virginia, they were celebrating their anniversary by coming up to the same pond (and almost the same campsite) that they'd paddled to 40 years ago! This is what the Adirondacks means to so many people; we make amazing memories and share them with our friends and family.— **Jonathan Coupal**



Trip Reports and Outings (cont'd)

Trip Report: September 15, 2024 - Audubon Preserves

Chapter members enjoyed a chunk of time together on a beautiful day hiking the trails of two lesser-known Audubon preserves-Rose Acres and Ghost Pond in Java, New York.

Once the summer home of Mrs. Clifford Rose, Audubon was given the 53 acres property in 1975. The tranquil preserve includes trails, a 5-acre pond, and abandoned large beaver dam, glorious hemlocks and hardwoods, and up to 20 active bee hives! We noticed many trees that have been sawed down-presumably within the last 1-2 years, the stumps are of massive black cherry and maple. One black cherry measured 51 inches across! It is incredibly sad to see the large stumps and the leftover debris from the logged trees at Rose Acres- the next time you visit Beaver



Meadow, I urge you to stop in the administration building and ask for an explanation. The area where Mrs. Rose's summer home once stood includes a gorgeous view of the pond with a sweet wooden bench to take in and enjoy the surroundings. Nearby is the old powerhouse and on a still standing large tree, electrical lighting. Can you imagine spending nights in this beautiful forest of peace, tranquility, and beauty, oh, my!

Our group (that had carpoled to Rose Acres as there is limited parking in the dirt driveway and road shoulder), headed back to Beaver Meadow where we then drove to the arboretum shelter for lunch. After lunch and conversation, we saddled up and drove the short distance to Ghost Pond Preserve. This trailhead to this 60-acre property is nondescript-you can easily drive by the small sign which is set back from the road. We hiked Ghost Pond Trail and Mandrake Trail and spent a few moments of reflection at Meditation Point.

The Adkers enjoyed a mixed bag of sights on this outing. The feeling of loss of massive, large trees at Rose Acres, and also the beauty of the pond and surviving hardwoods and hemlocks. The trees at Ghost Pond have not been chopped (yet?); the trails are gorgeous, the woods full of interesting fungi and colorful autumn perennials. — **Pam Sanders**

Library Corner



I'm looking forward to getting back to our monthly meetings after having the summer off. The book cart will be back at our new meeting location. Please remember to bring back any books you checked out and are done with. See you soon! —

Karen Coupal

Where to find us

Website: adk-nfc.org

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

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

Follow us on [Instagram \(adk_nfc\)](#)

Membership: If you would like to join the Niagara Frontier Chapter you can sign up at a monthly meeting or online at <https://www.adk-nfc.org/membership/>

[Chapter Outings & Events Calendar](#)

Are you a current ADK member? We will soon be switching over to the ADK membership list as supplied to us by the ADK. However, the ADK is running late in processing new members and adding them to the roster. If you are not a current member please renew SOON since if you are not on the list, you will not be getting any newsletters in the future! See our Facebook page for details—<https://www.facebook.com/groups/adknfc>

Picture Page

Tillman Road Wildlife Management Area



St. Regis Area Canoe/Kayak trip Paddle



Picture Page



Audubon Preserves



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Historic parabolic bridge, Hadley, NY

- Photo Credit Peggy Naughton

Trivia Challenge Answer

C) Zoar Valley

In 1976 and 1977 ADK members picked up litter in Zoar Valley at Valentine Flats, next to the now removed Forty Road bridge area and along the shoreline of Cattaraugus Creek in-between these two areas.