

THE NIAGARA EXPLORER

Newsletter of the Adirondack Mountain Club
Niagara Frontier Chapter



General Meeting

**Tuesday,
April 8th 2025**

6:15pm
Education Program
10 Essentials
7:30pm
Main Program

Church of the Nativity
1530 Colvin Blvd.
Tonawanda, NY 14223

Keep up to date by checking your

- Weekly Emails
- ADK-NFC Chapter Facebook Group
- Meetup
- Instagram



Event Calendar



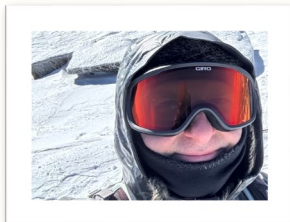
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Message from the Chair

This is going to be a really interesting year for recreation here in New York, both for us in Buffalo as well as for those of us who have chosen to be members of the Adirondack Club.

For us Buffalonians, we are lucky enough to be able to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the completion of the Erie Canal. I encourage you to paddle, cycle, or walk sections of the canal to appreciate the scale of the effort that was made in the early 19th century to bypass Niagara Falls and encourage trade with the Midwest. Bob will likely be leading some paddling events on the Canal (and I'm sure that we'll have at least one paddle through some locks) and I would ask anyone who is interested to setup or coordinate a cycling or hiking/walking event with the rest of us.



For those of us in the Adirondack Club, we can celebrate the 100th anniversary of the JBL (Johns Brooks Lodge). Completed in 1925, the JBL has been a great place to access much of the high peaks from a backcountry lodge that provides lodging and food (with a reservation) along with potable water for the public. Our chapter will be scheduling an outing this summer based in the lodge for anyone who would like to experience the JBL and the high peaks that are easier to reach from there. More to come on that, but this is definitely a great time to experience Johns Brook!

Finally, as members of the ADK club, I wish to remind you all of the stewardship opportunities that are coming up – watch the weekly and monthly newsletters for activities that you can join with your fellow members to help make this world we share a little better place than it was before we came.

- Jonathan Coupal

ADK-NFC Annual T-Shirt Sale Begins April 14, 2025!



Monthly Program

Tuesday, April 8, 2025
7:30 p.m.

ADK-NFC is happy to welcome
 Dr. Stephen Vermette, presenting

A Study of Alexander von Humboldt



Alexander von Humboldt was a towering figure in 19th century science. While most scientists of the time were content to discover, collect and catalog nature – characterizing the many ‘dots’ that are visible in our world - Humboldt’s genius was in connecting those dots to reveal not just the meaning in them, but previously unseen patterns and linkages of seemingly disparate information, referred to Humboldt as ‘chains of connections’. Humboldt’s world view was one of the interrelated questions teasing out how the world works. In today’s world his discoveries form the foundation of our natural sciences. Dr. Vermette’s goal is to

provide a quick tutorial of the man, his travels, his discoveries, his approach to science (Humboldtian Science), his ‘nature paintings’, his popularizing of science and public engagement, and his relevance today - the man may be forgotten but his science is all around us!

Biography

Dr. Stephen Vermette is a professor of geography in the Department of Geosciences at SUNY Buffalo State University where he has taught meteorology, climatology, and environmental courses and mentored students over the past 30 years. Dr. Vermette graduated with his doctorate from McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario) and was initially employed by Environment Canada and later employed by the Illinois State Water Survey, prior to his hiring at Buffalo State University. Dr. Vermette currently serves as a Board Member of the Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District. Dr. Vermette received several teaching awards, and he received a commendation from the National Geographic Society for his dedicated leadership rendered to the State of New York to ensure the geographic literacy of the next generation. Dr. Vermette co-curated (with Tullis Johnson) a traveling art exhibition entitled “Charles E. Burchfield: Weather Event” which received an Award of Commendation from Museumwise, and he organized Buffalo’s Humboldt celebration, in recognition of Humboldt’s 250th birthday, in the fall of 2019.



- Pam Sander/Programs Co-chair

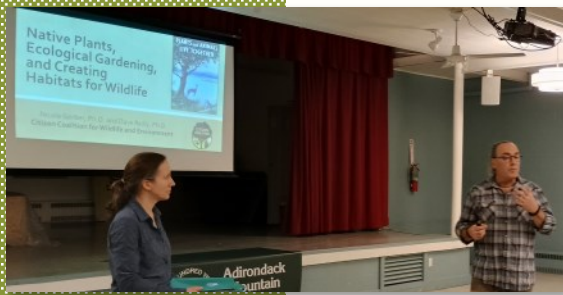


March Program Recap

Native Plants, Ecological Gardening, and Creating Habitats for Wildlife March 11, 2025



Our main program featured Dave and Nicole from [Citizen Coalition for Wildlife and Environment](#) (CCWE), "Native Plants, Ecological Gardening, and Creating Habitats for Wildlife." Dr. Nicole Gerber and Dr. Dave Reilly discussed the importance of protecting and assisting nature, reasons to practice ecological gardening, how we can support biodiversity, and why native plants are critically important. Dave and Nicole explained that because of climate change, pollution, herbicides, habitat loss including old growth forests, these are some reasons why since 2019, 22% of our insects have disappeared. Insects provide food resources for wildlife; birds have had a major decline in the past 50 years (estimated 2.9 billion). We learned about terrific books (a sampling of books was available for attendees to view) and local resources that can help turn our yards from mostly lawn to attractive and resourceful ones that provide food resources for insects, birds, and all wildlife. Attendees enjoyed meeting Dave and Nicole who were very generous with their time and remained available until we left the building.



Dave and Nicole operate the Alt Nature Preserve (formerly the Alt Family farm; Nicole is a sixth generation Alt), a 36-acre property located at 2489 Whitehaven Road, Grand Island, NY 14072. Located near the Margery Gallogly Nature Sanctuary, the Alt Nature Preserve was made possible by the efforts of the Western New York Land Conservancy and permanently protected by funding from the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee. This preserve is a critical landscape and features grassland habitat and wooded wetlands, home to many species of birds and wildlife. Also on the property is a historic schoolhouse that was converted into the Alt Nature Center that serves as the home base of CCWE where Dave and Nicole host events including environmental presentations.

For more information about the CCWE's important contributions to our community and the schedule of events, visit www.facebook.com/ccweinfo; (the website is being updated). An excellent article that appeared in Buffalo Spree, written by Jennifer Hillman and Bill McKeever, Grand Island's Alt Preserve Hosts Birds, Butterflies, and Wildlife https://www.buffalospree.com/style_living/wild_wny/grand-island-s-alt-preserve-hosts-birds-butterflies-and-wildlife/article_6ede1f52-16b3-11ee-9529-4b7f653a5a4f.html

Pam Sander/Programs Co-chair

March Education Session

Dennis Schultz from W2PE (the Radio Association of WNY – RAWNY) made a presentation detailing many of the communication options that are available to folks in the backcountry and frontcountry. He covered devices ranging from radio receivers (including what you might use to receive weather alerts); short-distance radios that one might get to communicate with friends or family, and even devices from Garmin and Starlink that use Satellites to communicate with the outside world!



Conservation Corner

Celebrate Niagara Frontier Conservation History

Have you ever wondered what the Niagara Frontier Conservation Committee does? This year we will be leading a series of hikes to local areas that the committee has played a role in helping to preserve over the past several decades.

Join us for the Conservation Committee's first history hike to the Great Baehre Swamp Wildlife Management Area. In May the second hike will be to the Tillman Road Wildlife Management Area in Clarence.

Conservation History Hike: Great Baehre Swamp

In 1986, just about 40 years ago, the ADK, Niagara Frontier Chapter, Conservation Committee joined with Sierra Club and Amherst Town Councilman Bill Kindel to advocate for the preservation of Amherst's Great Baehre Swamp.

The swamp was a lush Silver Maple-Ash wetland forest noted for its blossoming Skunk Cabbage on Hopkins Road North of Klein. It was then a 350-acre remnant of the great Lake Tonawanda that once covered this area. The swamp was rapidly shrinking in the face of demand for McMansions spreading across Amherst.

We backed Kindel's efforts to have the Town of Amherst make it a nature preserve and save its valuable wetlands with all their environmental benefits: flood control, water purification, home for fox, deer and frogs and for its recreation possibilities.

We wrote letters to the Editor, Op-ed pieces for the News telephoned Town Councilmen and the Town Supervisor.

One memorable night we led a candlelight procession from Clearfield Library to the edge of the swamp. Tina Pijanowski was drafted to wear a bear suit, and I led her in the parade. We were a hit on local TV News.

That spring, together with Sierra, we hosted a Wetland Conservation Conversation at UB featuring The Great Baehre Swamp. We had a full morning of speakers with 200 attendees, 50 of whom joined us in a wonderful muddy hike through the swamp in the afternoon.

Finally, the NY State DEC and the Town of Amherst turned 250 acres of the swamp into a Nature Preserve. A few years later the Town built a Boardwalk paralleling Hopkins Road making hiking through the swamp easier on hikers and on the swamp.

Come join us on a tour of this valuable, amazing suburban Nature Preserve, a Nature Preserve that ADK had a hand in creating.

Larry Beahan, Conservation Committee member

- Check out the Outings Section for details on the **Great Baehre Swamp Hike 4/19**
- **Conservation Committee Meeting:** Join us for a zoom meeting on **Tuesday, 4/15 at 7 pm**. All members are welcome to attend to find out the latest conservation news. The zoom link will be in the Weekly ADK Email.



Conservation Corner (con't)

Earth Day April 22nd

This year celebrate the 55th anniversary of Earth Day with the theme **Our Power, Our Planet** focused on renewable energy and fighting climate change. Peace activist John McConnell founded Earth Day due to his belief that humans have an obligation to take care of the earth.

Check this link [The 12 Best Earth Day Events in Buffalo, New York \(wearebuffalo.net\)](https://www.wearebuffalo.net) to find local Earth Day events.



To learn about the history of Earth Day, register (716-688-4955) for the program at the Williamsville Clearfield Library on Monday **April 21st** at 6:30pm.

Mark Your Calendars:

April 19th

Great Baerhe Swamp & Billy Wilson Park Hike

April 21st

Earth Day History Lecture at Williamsville

April 26th

Waterkeeper Spring Sweep at the Thomas

May 3rd

Re-Tree WNY Tree Planting

May 17th

Tillman Road Wildlife Management Area Roadside Cleanup & Hike

Earth Day Celebration in Action



As part of the Earth Day celebrations we will be taking part in the Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper Spring Sweep on **April 26th** at the Brian Higgins River Front Park where the Cazenovia Creek flows into the Buffalo River in South Buffalo.

This park is one of the small but important Erie County pocket parks that sets aside natural areas inside the Buffalo city limits.

Register here [Thomas Higgins Riverfront Park 2025 | VOMO](https://www.vomo.org)



Citizen Science Opportunity: Participate in the Zoar Valley BioBlitz 2025

Starting **April 1st** join the Zoar Valley Coalition in contributing to comprehensive biodiversity data about the flora and fauna at beautiful Zoar Valley. No special skills are necessary. All you need is a smartphone or camera. Download the free iNaturalist app to your phone. If you haven't used the iNaturalist app before, please check out our "Introduction to iNaturalist" webinar here [Zoar Valley Coalition - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



Once you're familiar with iNaturalist and have downloaded the iNaturalist app, head out to enjoy Zoar Valley on your own schedule or on an ADK hike to take photos of plants, flowers, trees, mammals, birds, insects, fungi, and other organisms and upload your photos to [Zoar Valley BioBlitz! - iNaturalist](https://www.inaturalist.org)

Tree Planting with Re-Tree WNY

Do you like to have fun getting muddy?



Join us **May 3rd** as we participate in the Re-Tree WNY bare root tree planting event again this year. Help your community by planting trees throughout Western New York.

Check the Weekly Email for how you can join.

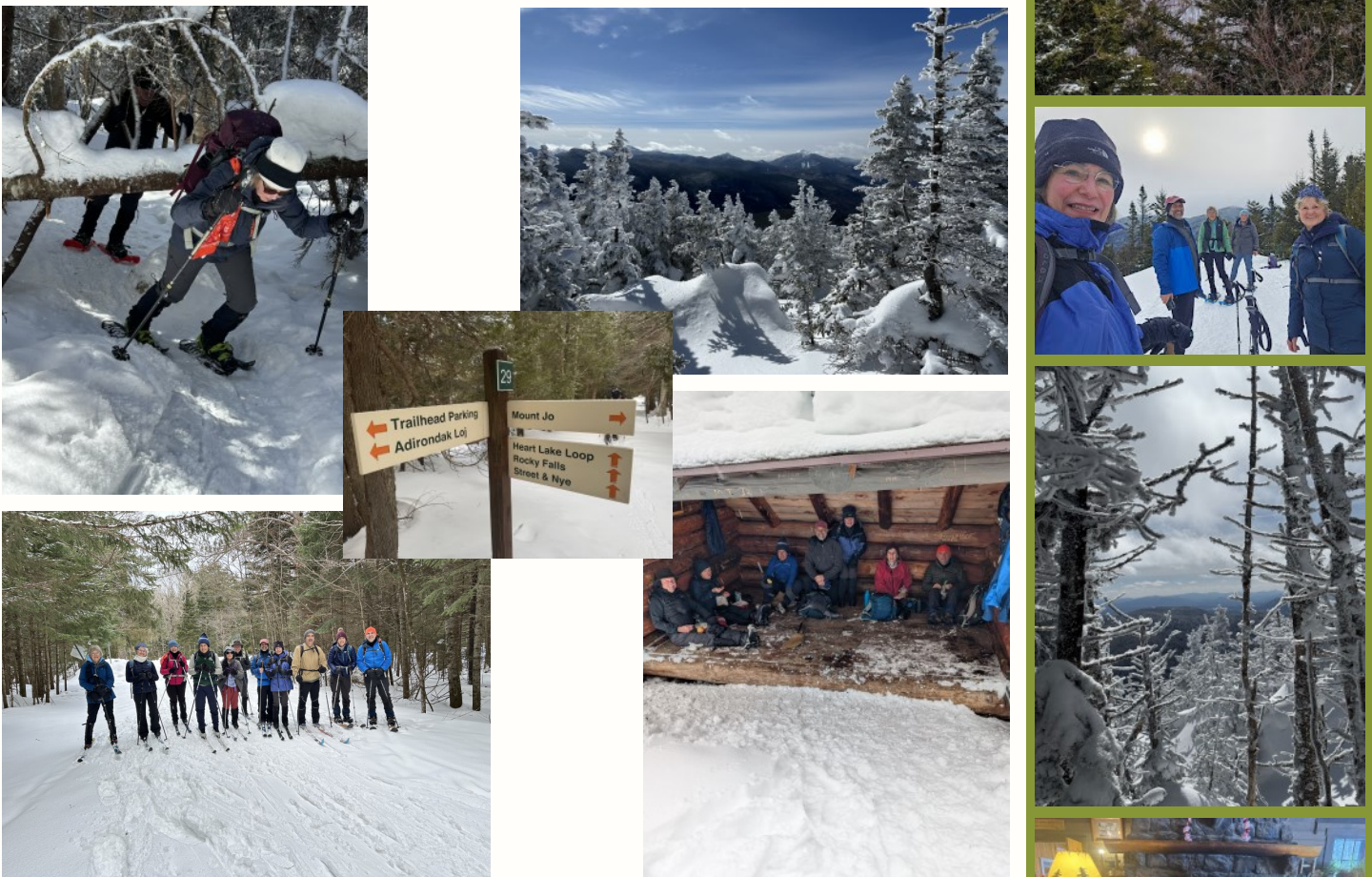
- Lynn Rehfeld-Kenney, Conservation Chair

Trip Report

Winter Outing at the Loj in Lake Placid February 27 - March 2

Fourteen chapter members participated in a long weekend at the ADK Loj. About half of the group climbed peaks and others went cross country skiing. Two people went up Street and Nye, several climbed Cascade and Porter and there were two snowshoe trips up Mount Jo. Skiers went to Cascade Center, up the truck trail to Marcy Dam, and back into a section of the Jackrabbit Trail. Together we enjoyed great food at the Loj and met lots of other people who were staying at the Loj or were out on the trail. Staying at the Loj is always a good time! This trip has been a yearly outing most years, and we welcome new people from the chapter every year. Next summer we are going to have a similar group outing to John's Brook Lodge. I will be putting out information on that in the near future.

Kate Hacker



April 2025 Trivia Challenge

Where did chapter volunteers first join Re-Tree WNY in replanting trees to replace the 30,000 trees that were damaged during the freak October 12-13, 2006 snowstorm?

- Squaw Island Park (renamed Unity Island Park October 2015)
- Tiftt Nature Preserve
- Delaware Park



Trip Photos: Kate H, Carol M, John B, Mark, Alice A, Pauline K, Leslie S, Michael G, Pam S, Brian M, Kevin P, Donna W

In Other News

Send a Kid to Camp



This year the Niagara Frontier Chapter would like to sponsor sending a kid to summer camp, and you can be a part of it.

The NYS DEC runs a summer camp program for youth focused on outdoor activities, including hiking, fishing, hunting and camping. You can learn more about the program at this link: <https://dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/summer-camps>.

With two programs directed at children ages 11-13 and 14-17 years old, there are plenty of opportunities for a child to have a summer to remember.

The Niagara Frontier Chapter of the ADK club would like to sponsor sending a child to the DEC summer camps this year and is looking for candidates. If you are an ADK member in good standing and have a child in your family that you would like to nominate, we would love

to hear about them.

Start the process by sending a brief email to our current Chapter Chair, Jonathan Coupal (✉Jonathan) with the child's name and the contact information for one of their parents or guardians. We would also like you to provide a brief (2-3 paragraph) description of the child and why you think the Chapter should sponsor their week at summer camp.

The committee should receive all of the submissions by the end of the day on **Tuesday, April 15th**.



The ADK-NFC Chapter Executive Committee will select one child by lottery from the submissions received and, assuming the child is accepted to camp, will reimburse that family for the cost of the week once they are accepted.

photos: dec.ny.gov

Mark Your Calendars!

ADK Niagara Frontier Chapter Annual Picnic

Saturday, June 14, 2025, Akron Falls Park

Keep an eye out for more details in future newsletters.

Basic Life Saving (BLS), AED, CPR Training (TBD)

We've discussed BLS, AED, CPR training with our friends at Earth Spirit and are working on a date. This training is important for all of us to have, and it is a Level 2 requirement for hike leaders.

The training we have in mind will most likely be on a Saturday or Sunday, and at our meeting location, Church of the Nativity, UCC, 1530 Colvin Blvd., Tonawanda, NY 14223.

Those who are interested, please contact me and I'll put you on the contact list. When we are a go with Earth Spirit, I can email you with the particulars.



Thanks!

Email: ✉Pam Sander

Library Corner

The library cart has a new cover in a neat Adirondack themed fabric! Thanks go out to Carol Schuster for the fabric and Jonathan for helping me make the cover.



If you read a book from the cart or another source that you think other ADK members might be interested in, let me know by sending a review or comments to ✉Karen. I will include it in the next newsletter.

Reminder: If you checked out a book and are done with it, please return it and cross off your name on the list. Thank you!

Karen

Outings

Great Baehre Swamp led by Lynn Kenney

Saturday, April 19, 2025
9:45 AM

Join us for the first Conservation History Hike at the Great Baehre Swamp Wildlife Management Area. Enjoy two short hikes that both start at the Amherst's Billy Wilson Park located on Hopkins Road. We will hike along the boardwalk to view plants that thrive in a swamp habitat and take a side trip to walk along a grassy berm that runs partway into the swamp. We will back track to the parking area and then walk the .7 mile loop trail through the Billy Wilson Park while we look and listen for migrating birds. Wear appropriate footwear for the berm side hike.



Arrive at 9:45am. Hike starts at 10am.

Call #716-825-7329 to register or for questions. Or register online at Meetup.

Day of hike call #716-361-6172.

SEND ME YOUR OUTINGS!

Frank Meyer
Outings Chair &
Editor Weekly

Newsletter

Ph: 716-982-3086

Email: [✉Frank](mailto:Frank@adk-nfc.org)

Hike the Conservation Trail!

The [Conservation Trail](#) is a footpath that extends from the PA border in Allegany State Park and proceeds northward for 177 miles to end at the Rainbow Bridge in Niagara Falls. Our current Chair, Jonathan Coupal, is leading a set of group section hikes of the Conservation Trail in 2025 and 2026. Jonathan has put a lot of thought and planning into this endeavor. By the end you will have completed the entire Conservation Trail to the PA line.

Section 3 Hike

 **Sunday, April 23, 2025**
8:30 AM to 4:00 PM EDT

[Darien Lake State Park](#)

We're going to meet at the "end point" at the Parking for the Trail at the North Section of Darien Lakes State Park and then shuttle forward to Schad and Clinton, walking 9 miles back to Darien Lakes, where there is more parking. As it's the spring, dress for the weather (possible rain, maybe mud) and bring lunch, snacks and water for yourself. This hike will be a mix of road and trail walking.

We'll leave most of the cars at the end point and carpool to the beginning, hiking back to the cars. Final details including map and specific parking coordinates will be supplied to those who [RSVP in Meetup](#)

Before joining any Meetup Groups, you'll need to create a

[Join Meetup](#)

Meetup account.

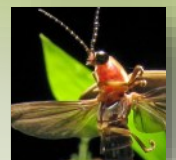
This is a pretty simple process, and the site guides you through each of the steps.



If you haven't joined Meetup please do so as the next **Conservation Trail Hike** has been posted there for RSVP's.

Looking Ahead

May 13, 2025, Monthly Program:
Adele Wellman, Allegany State Park's Environmental Educator
Presentation on Fireflies



In Other News

Need a New T-shirt? You Sure Do!!!

Our annual T-shirt sale begins April 14, 2025, and ends May 18, 2024.

We are offering two T-shirt styles this year and both were designed by a longtime member, Tim Kerr.



Our most popular choice is the four activity design that captures what we love to do (hiking, paddling, biking, and skiing) and includes our chapter name (the back has no lettering). The other choice is the very cool, “Rock On” design (some members may remember), that includes a printing on the back of the shirt with a list of the many favorite hiking locations members love, available in dark navy or black with white lettering.

Made from 100% polyester interlock, the Sport-Tek Posicharge Competitor Tees and Team 365 tees are light, roomy, breathable, and moisture wicking. They are available in men’s, women’s, and unisex sizes, in short sleeve, long sleeve, crew or V-neck versions. Our traditional four activity T is available in four background

colors with white lettering – our favorite, stealthy Forest Green, high visibility Deep Orange, True Royal Blue, and a sharp Iron Grey.

Hamburg, N.Y., company, Strictly T’s, is selling on-line only and will ship directly to your address. The sale can be found at: ADKCLUBGEAR.COM All orders received during this period are processed at the end of the sale with delivery before our Saturday, June 14, 2025 picnic.

Women’s and men’s shirt styles and colors will be available on the website. The Traditional 4 Activities Logo range from \$16 - \$20, long sleeve prices \$18 - \$22. The Rock On version is slightly more at \$21-\$27 because of the added printing on the back. These prices are the same from last year.

□ Remember, online ordering is available April 14, 2025, and will end on May 18, 2025 □

Kudos to Our Hospitality Team!



Our hospitality team has been providing great snacks and beverages at our monthly meetings. Many positive

comments were made at the March meeting where along with prepared, packaged chips and treats, attendees enjoyed shamrock cookies and a healthy veggies tray! Many people come to our meetings directly from work and appreciate our snacks and beverages. Please thank our hospitality team, Sandy and Pauline, who arrive early to set up and take care of the post program cleanup. And, btw, the plastic donation jar is not for ‘tips;’ this money goes directly back to our chapter- every little bit helps!

Pam Sander



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>



Join our Team

ADK-NFC is
Looking to Fill
Two Executive
Committee Chairs

- ★ **Education**
- ★ **Membership**

Interested?

Contact Jonathan Coupal
[✉Jonathan](mailto:Jonathan@adk-nfc.org)
for more information.

April 2025 Trivia Challenge

Answer: a. Squaw Island Park

Soon after Re-Tree WNY was formed in 2006, Dave Gomlak, NFC Conservation Chair brought together ADK volunteers to participate in Re-Tree WNY's efforts to replace trees damaged in the early March snowstorm that broke limbs and snapped tree trunks that succumbed to the weight from heavy snow covered leaves. Members felt a sense of accomplishment as we planted bare root trees throughout the park and along the waterfront on a cold blustery April day.

ADK Niagara Frontier Chapter Executive Committee

Chair Jonathan Coupal	Secretary Larry Beahan	Treasurer Brian Monckton
Conservation Chair Lynn Rehfeld-Kenney	Advisory Council Trustee Kate Hacker	Membership Chair Vacant
Programs Co-chair Pamela Sander	Programs Co-chair Larry Moses	Education Chair Vacant
Outings Chair & Weekly Newsletter Frank Meyer	SEND ME YOUR OUTINGS! Frank Meyer Ph: 716-982-3086 Email: Frank Meyer	
Outings Co-chair: Waterways Bob Van Hise	Outings Co-chair: Biking Vacant	Outings Co-chair: Hiking & Winter Leslie Salathe
Webmaster Jonathan Coupal	Newsletter Editor Laura Liebel	Digital Communications Emma Piascik
Hospitality Sandy McCready Pauline Bartl	Archivist/Historian Lynn Rehfeld-Kenney	Librarian Karen Coupal

