

***Voice of the Chair***

***By Tom Wheeler***

ADK Executive Director Michael Barrett has left the club for new opportunities. The Board has appointed Julia Goren, who had been serving as deputy executive director, as interim director.

I believe this is good news for the club. I have known Julia since she was first hired as an intern by ADK in 2004 and has continuously been employed by either ADK or other organizations focused on Adirondack issues. In my past interactions with her she has always demonstrated intelligence, competence, and enthusiasm. She would be an outstanding executive director should the board offer her the permanent position.

But for many of us, while the main club is important, the heart of our experience with ADK is at the local chapter. It permits us to become directly involved in the outdoors, to have the fellowship of shared adventures, and to focus on the local issues that most directly concern us.

To me, the outings are the heart of the chapter experience. The outings I participated in thirty years ago still have an impact on my life, as I made lasting friendships, learned the lore of the outdoors from more experienced hikers and campers, and developed a love for the Adirondacks. As I gained that experience, I also began to lead outings and share my enthusiasm with others.



## ***Voice of the Chair*** *continued*

Of course, times have changed and there are now requirements for leadership training in order to lead outings.

However, the initial training takes only a few hours. Even if you are reluctant, I encourage you to do the training and then lead a trip to one of your favorite spots. As a leader you can inspire in others a love of the outdoors, an expanded awareness of this unique area, and a better understanding of its place in nature.

Speaking of volunteer opportunities, we will elect a new membership chair, a new treasurer, and a new outings chair this fall. I encourage anyone interested in these positions to send me an email expressing interest. We are all busy, but new volunteers are important to understanding and meeting the needs of our members and the health of the chapter.

### **ADK Laurentian**

#### **Executive Committee**

Tom Wheeler - Chair  
northflow@gmail.com

Holly Woodworth - Vice-Chair, Outings  
hswoodworth@gmail.com

Brenda Curley - Vice Chair, Education  
bcurley3232@gmail.com

Tom Vandewater - Vice-Chair, Conservation  
tblaisdellvandewater@gmail.com

Kathleen Fitzgerald - Vice-Chair, Membership  
membership@adklaurentian.org

David Katz - Secretary, Webmaster  
secretary@adklaurentian.org

Ellie Menz - Treasurer

Tom Ortmeier - Advisory Council Trustee  
tortmeyer@gmail.com

#### **Appointed Positions**

Marg Madore - Hospitality Coordinator  
mmadore@stlawu.edu

John Barron - Publicity Coordinator  
johnbarron@sympatico.ca

Blair Madore - Red Sandstone Trail Coordinator  
madorebf@potssdam.edu

Mark Simon - Stone Valley Trail Coordinator  
bearsars18@gmail.com

Jeff Miller - Outdoors Indoors Program  
Jeff@stlawu.edu

Neal Burdick - North Wind Editor  
nealburdick@gmail.com

Marianne Hebert - North Wind Co-editor  
Archivist  
hebertm@potssdam.edu

Merchandise Coordinator - VACANT



## Red Sandstone Report & Request by Blair Madore

I am getting good activity recently with student groups to do trailwork. At this writing, Clarkson Outing Club is scheduled to work with me on Sunday, September 29. Some students from SUNY Potsdam Environmental Studies will come on October 20. Students from the SUNY Potsdam Wilderness Ed program will continue their work on the gulch this semester as well.

A student from the Potsdam women's rugby team thinks they can get 10-15 students to help out on October 13 and/or 20. If the men's team joins them, that might be 20-30 rugged students!

To manage so many volunteers I need YOUR help. If any of you are available either October day and willing to lead a team of 4-6 on a specific project, please let me know. Sometimes the students have prior construction or trailwork knowledge and can be productive independently, but more often they need a supervisor who can teach them what to do and then let them do it.





## Sierra Nevada & Yosemite vs. Norway vs. the Adirondacks: Random Reflections

In a span of five weeks in August and September, Barbara and I hiked in the Sierra Nevada, at Yosemite, in Norway, and we even squeezed in a trail walk in the Adirondacks. The differences were profound.

Both California locations were exceptionally dry – sandy trails, desiccated vegetation, especially in the Sierra Nevada near Lake Tahoe and Olympic Valley, a name that thankfully has been changed from the crude and offensive Squaw Valley, site of the 1960 Winter Olympics. We had to knock clouds of dust out of our boots after every hike. It's no wonder half the state catches fire every summer.

Contrast this with the mud, but also the green, of the Adirondacks. Which is preferable?

Yosemite was a little more moist, but not much. The fabled waterfalls trickled like dripping faucets. Everything is big there – cliffs (no picture, no video can do El Capitan justice; it has to be seen live), trees (sequoias so big one of them had an automobile tunnel cut through it decades ago, an atrocious act – I mean, how would you like a tunnel cut through YOU?), crowds, though not as crushing as we'd been led to expect. The trails were more like those in the Adirondacks – foot paths, not dusty roads.

Norway is the most relentlessly vertical country we've ever seen. Trails hairpinned from sea level up the sheer sides of fjords to 3- or 4,000 feet (I think; we gave up converting meters and just luxuriated in the knock-out views). At those elevations, and at that latitude, on par with Hudson Bay, the ecosystem is arctic; treeless, and trails were narrow, rocky, marked with cairns. We were reminded of the few tundra acres at the tops of the higher High Peaks, except that Norwegian landscape ran from horizon to horizon. Given the extremity of the contours, it was possible to go from an Adirondack-like trailhead, through several vegetation zones, to the equivalent of the summits of Marcy and Algonquin, in under a mile.

Dust, rocks, mud, sun, wind, rain – we had it all. But no matter what's beneath your feet or in the air above, if you put one foot in front of the other long enough, you will discover, you will learn, you will remember. -- **Neal Burdick**



## Your Laurentian Chapter Outings *Fall 2024*

Holly Woodworth  
Vice Chair, Outings

3	A+	Very Strenuous	4,000	10	10
3	A	Strenuous	3,000	5 to 10	8 to 10
2	B+	Moderately Strenuous	2,000	5 to 10	6 to 8
2	B	Moderate	1,000	5 to 10	5 to 7
1	C+	Fairly Easy	1,000	5 to 8	4 to 6
1	C	Easy	Under 1,000	< 5	< 5

\*Check for last minute updates: [www.adklaurentian.org](http://www.adklaurentian.org)

\*Please contact the leader at least one day before trip.

\*Car pooling makes sense—so does sharing the cost of gas.

### **Thur. Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Weekly Walk, Bayside Cemetery Potsdam, 7:30 a.m.**

We will walk the roads for approximately 2 miles, 1 hour round trip. Meet at the entrance to the cemetery (730 CR59, aka Back Hannawa Road). Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Marianne Hebert, [hebertm@potsdam.edu](mailto:hebertm@potsdam.edu) or 315-265-0756 for information. Rated C (Easy).

**Sat. Oct 5: Hurricane Mountain.** We'll climb Hurricane Mountain from the Southern approach. The one way distance is 3.4 miles and the elevation gain is 2000 feet. We will enjoy the hike and also the fall views from the fire tower. Rated B+ (Moderately difficult). Call or text Tom Ortmeyer, [tortmeyer@gmail.com](mailto:tortmeyer@gmail.com), 315-244-3707 to sign up or for further information.

**Sat. Oct 19: Cathedral Rock Fire Tower.** This tower was taken down from Tooley Mountain about 50 years ago and raised again by alumni of Wanakena Ranger School on its property. We'll climb up for the views in the middle of a loop through the school's woods. About 3.5 miles RT and 400 feet elevation gain. Rated C (Easy). A joint outing with North Woods Lake Placid Chapter, so members only, please. John Omohundro [omohunj@northnet.org](mailto:omohunj@northnet.org).

# Outings Schedule

Fall 2024

continued

**Sat. Oct 19: Whetstone Gulf State Park.** Ascend one bank, and return by the other bank, of a steep-walled canyon on the east side of Tug Hill Plateau near Lowville. 6 miles RT, 800 feet gain, Level C+. Slow pace. Contact John Barron, (613) 828-2296 or [johnbarron@sympatico.ca](mailto:johnbarron@sympatico.ca).

**Sun. Oct 20: Red Sandstone Trail Work.** Trailwork Projects may include weedwhacking, brush trimming, bridge building and switchback construction. Dress for the weather and bring tools if you have them. All ages welcome. Level 1: Contact Blair Madore (315 261 0751 or [madorebf.potsdam.edu](mailto:madorebf.potsdam.edu)).

**Sat. Oct. 26: Hike in Keewaydin State Park** Come explore the new trails at Keewaydin SP. We'll see views of the St. Lawrence and Boldt Castle and explore the forest trails. Bring lunch. Fairly easy, 3-4 miles, very little elevation gain (level C). Contact Marianne Hebert, [hebertm@potsdam.edu](mailto:hebertm@potsdam.edu) or 315-265-0756.

**Thurs. Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28: Weekly Walk, Munter Trail Potsdam,** 7:30 a.m. We will walk the trails for approximately 2 miles, 1-hour round trip. Meet in the parking lot behind the Clarkson Walker Arena and Hantz Field off Clarkson Ave., aka Back Hannawa Rd and CR 59. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Marianne Hebert, [hebertm@potsdam.edu](mailto:hebertm@potsdam.edu) or 315-265-0756. Level C (Easy).

# Outings Schedule

## Fall continued

**Sat. Nov 9: Peavine Swamp Trail.** We'll explore the ins and outs of the Peavine Swamp trails with views of Cranberry Lake through the bare forest and visit some exceptional trees. Plan to bring a lunch. Rain or shine. 4-5 miles. Moderate difficulty. Call or text Tom Van de Water, 315-261-1723.

**Sat. Nov 9: Walk the New Rail Trail.** Easy walk along the fabulous new rail trail starting from Saranac Lake. About 5 miles round trip up and back. Rated C+ (Fairly Easy) Contact Tom Wheeler at [northflow@gmail.com](mailto:northflow@gmail.com).

**Sat. Nov 16: Walk the New Rail Trail, Part II.** This time we will walk from the Floodwood end. About 5 miles round trip up and back. Rated C+ (Fairly Easy) Contact Tom Wheeler at [northflow@gmail.com](mailto:northflow@gmail.com).

**Thurs. Dec. 5, 12, 19, 26: Weekly Walk, Red Sandstone Access Roads** 7:30 am. We will walk the dirt access roads for approximately 2 miles, 1 hour round trip. If the roads are icy, traction devices such as micro-spikes are recommended. Meet at the Red Sandstone trailhead, north entrance parking lot off Back Hannawa Road (CR59) between Potsdam and Hannawa Falls. From Potsdam, at the intersection of Rt. 11 and Clarkson Ave (CR 59), drive south for 2.5 miles. The dirt access road to the northern parking lot is on the left just past Sweeney Road. A brown "trail parking" sign marks the entrance of the access road to the parking lot. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Marianne Hebert, [hebertm@potsteam.edu](mailto:hebertm@potsteam.edu), 315-265-0756.

**Sat. Dec 16: Higley Flow State Park.** We'll hike or snowshoe about 2-3 miles as conditions permit and have a fire and cookout at the lean-to. Bring your kids, their grandparents, and your leashed dogs for an all-ages fun event. Rated C (Easy). Contact Blair Madore at (315) 261-0751 or [madorebf@potsteam.edu](mailto:madorebf@potsteam.edu).

# Backtracks

Where we went, what we did,  
summer 2024  
(TL = Trip Leader).  
**July - Sept 2024**



## May 12: Paddling the West Branch of the St. Regis River.

Five of us paddled our lightweight pack canoes down this remote river. We spotted osprey, deer and mergansers, and heard ruffed grouse and white-throated sparrows. The trip leader is a member of the fish and game preserve and could open the gate and lead paddlers to an easier portage. After lunch at the preserve's main lodge, we paddled up Long Pond Outlet before floating back down the West Branch of the St. Regis to takeout. Paddlers included John and Susan Omohundro, Bonnie Gardinier, Kathleen Fitzgerald and Greg Smith (TL).



# Backtracks

continued  
July - Sept 2024

The Silky Rosegill  
Mushroom



## July 14: St. Regis Mountain

We set out bright and early and hit the trail after a brief stop at Paul Smiths VIC. The day was warm and humid, but the trail was in good shape only four days after Hurricane Beryl had created havoc in parts of the Adirondacks. On the hike in, we were treated to several points of interest by Hike Amateur Mycologist (HAM) Jeff Miller, who introduced us to sightings and lore of the hemlock varnish shelf and silky rosegill mushrooms as well as the unique ghost pipe. After conquering the last, steep section, we arrived at the summit to spectacular views of the St. Regis Canoe Area and High Peaks. The hike out was highlighted by our introduction to eyelash cup mushrooms and a brief stop to cool our feet in a small and refreshing stream.



Participants: Tom Ortmeyer (TL), Jeff Miller, Jane Khondker



(L-R) Jeff Miller, Tom Ortmeyer and Jane Khondker on St. Regis Mountain.

## Backtracks July - Sept 2024

### *September 19: Owens Pond Chain*

Driving into Wilmington Notch to the trailhead is always a scenic treat. Shuttling cars for the one-way trip was easy. Climbing steeply up to Winch, our first pond, wasn't easy, but the troops showed good spirit. Many of the North Woods Executive Committee were on this hike, so we held an impromptu budget meeting, trying to argue clearly and huff and puff at the same time. Little Winch looked like someone had pulled the plug; the muddy shores were wide. A short trek to Copperas brought us to its lean-to above deep clear waters; we were tempted to swim but no one had come equipped. After a half-lunch we continued to the shores of Owen, passing swamp #1 (christened Drowned Swamp) and swamp #2 (christened Grassy Swamp). Owen presented us with a splendid mountain view (just beginning to color) and we took some more lunch. The hike out to the car featured a spectacular large yellow birch embracing an erratic. John Omohundro (TL).



Photo by Don Straight

**And now, our own multi-chapter event:  
June 9-14: Cycle outing, more than just bicycling**

Twenty-nine bicyclists enjoyed five days of rain-free riding in the U.S. and Canada at the 2024 ADK Cycle Outing, hosted by the Laurentian Chapter. Every day, we offered a short and a long trip, selected from the 26 bike routes made available on a website for download or printing.

The outing was based at Wadhams Hall, a former seminary in Ogdensburg, which offered both suite and dorm-style lodging as well as an area for basic food preparation. There was ample opportunity for mingling at our welcome picnic on the shore of the St. Lawrence River and at Wadhams Hall.

There seemed to be interest in more than just cycling. We offered rides that featured shopping at Pickens General Store in Heuvelton, which features Amish crafts; a visit to the Tibbetts Point Lighthouse on Lake Ontario; and stops at the Nicandri Nature Center, New York Power Authority Visitor Center and Eisenhower Locks, all aspects of the St. Lawrence Seaway near Massena. A highlight, on a long ride, honored Canadian culture by gorging on poutine in Long Sault, Ontario.

***--Greg Smith and Tom Ortmeyer, Outing Leaders***



# Cycle Outing 2024 photos



## *In Memoriam: Mary Jo Whalen*

Long-time Laurentian Chapter member Mary Jo Whalen of Canton passed away on September 5, 2024, at age 96. She served as chapter chair from January 1994 to April 1996, and was the chapter's membership coordinator for many years. She led both chapter and club-wide trips, including windjammer cruises, canoeing the Fulton Chain of Lakes, and numerous ski and paddle outings; gave an Outdoors Indoors talk on the Great Camps of the Adirondacks in 2009; and was honored as a chapter Distinguished Volunteer in 2010.

An SLU graduate, retired school teacher, swim coach and B&B operator, Mary Jo loved travel, visiting all seven continents. She enjoyed canoeing and skiing, and was an ardent naturalist. Among many other involvements, she was a charter member of the Wild Center in Tupper Lake. According to her obituary, "Mary was never one to say no to an adventure, an outing, or a cup of coffee with her many friends." Her surviving family members suggest that those who wish to may plant a tree, or trees, in her memory.



Susan Omohundro (L), and Mary Jo Whalen (R), were recognized as Laurentian Chapter Distinguished Volunteers in 2010. Chapter chair John Barron (center) presented the awards at the fall meeting on November 20, 2010.