

Shhh – the Chapter Chair wants to say something....

by Tom Wheeler

I want to acknowledge and thank a number of volunteers who are leaving the Executive Committee at the end of the year.

- **Holly Woodworth** has been our Outings Chair. She has done an excellent job, especially considering the new requirements mandated by ADK for qualifying to be a trip leader.
- **Ellie Menz** has completed four years as our Treasurer and has been invaluable in ensuring that we meet the various new financial and budgetary requirements that ADK has instituted.
- Thanks also to Membership Chair **Kathleen Fitzgerald**, whose duties have been made more difficult by reason of the lack of timely membership information from the club.

Winter in the North Country is sometimes difficult to love. There are those who simply hibernate, hopefully with at the very least a nice fire and an easy chair. But the winter provides recreational activities unavailable at any other time of year.

My favorite winters (and those that seemed to go the fastest) were those when I was outside virtually every weekend skiing and snowshoeing. I discovered a number of things:

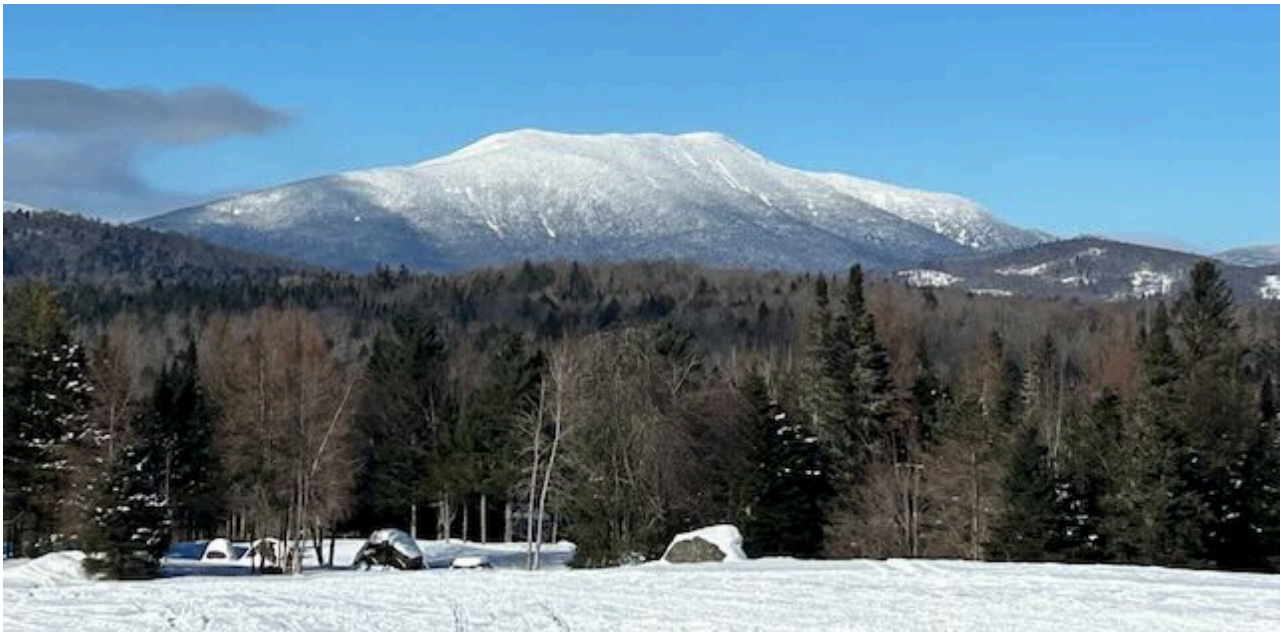
1. Your body has a thermostat; when you are outside at 10 degrees F you will be warm as toast after about fifteen minutes of snowshoeing or skiing.
2. The woods are beautiful in winter. You can see through the trees, now bereft of leaves; snow on the branches glistens in the sunlight; cliffs are outlined by surrounding layers of snow; the sky on a clear winter day is deep blue; at night, moonlight reflecting off the snow provides surreal illumination.
3. I can do this! The recreational opportunities in this area are everywhere; you needn't go far from home. Our Canadian members living near Ottawa have the many trails in the Green Belt, the Gatineau Hills, and the Rideau Canal after (if!) it freezes. In St. Lawrence County there are trails at state parks such as Higley Flow (with groomed ski trails) and at Robert Moses State Park's Nicandri Nature Center. In the Canton-Potsdam area there are the Remington Recreation Trail, Indian Creek Nature Center trails (most suitable for snowshoeing), trails in the Clarkson and St. Lawrence University woods, and trails along the Raquette River such as Stone Valley and the Red Sandstone Trail.



Chair report continued

When in the outdoors we see evidence of the others that spend the winter up north here with us. The snow reveals the tracks of fox, coyote, and rabbit. There is also a different cast of birds. Some of the far northern birds migrate to our region for our winter. These often include rough-legged hawks, snow buntings, red polls, and sometimes even snowy owls. You may notice that the barred and great horned owls are more actively hooting as they look for a mate. (They usually lay their eggs in the winter, sometimes as early as January.)

Finally, may I remind everyone that our annual New Year's Day event will be at Higley Flow State Park with skiing and snowshoeing followed by a potluck and announcement of the photo contest winners. Be sure to participate in our outings and attend our Indoors-Outdoors programs, both detailed later in this North Wind, throughout the winter as well.





Nominating Committee Report, December 2024

This term's Laurentian Chapter Nominating Committee consists of John Barron, Blair Madore, and Jeff Miller. We are pleased to present the following nominations:

For Vice Chair, Conservation – Tom Van de Water

For Vice Chair, Outings – Dana Chudzinski

For Vice Chair, Membership – Lila Hunnewell

For Treasurer – No nominee at North Wind press deadline

Tom Van de Water: Tom taught Earth and Environmental Science at Canton High School for over 30 years and worked for the U.S. Forest Service in Idaho during summers for over 40 years. He is writing an environmental history of the Grass(e) River, having lived in the watershed for most of his life. He and his wife, Betsy Kepes, are proud grandparents of future ADKer Sylvie Louise Van de Water, like them a resident of Orebed Road, Pierrepont. Tom is currently Vice Chair, Conservation and is seeking a second term.

Dana Chudzinski. Dana, a North Country native from Norwood, joined ADK in the fall of 2010. He immediately became active in outings, leading hikes and snowshoeing trips, often up High Peaks. He has served two terms on the Executive Committee, as Secretary (2012-2015).

Lila Hunnewell: A retired editor/writer with a lifelong interest in the outdoors, Lila moved to The North Country with her late husband, Charles, in the early 2000s and now lives in Canton. She has been an active participant in the outings program in all seasons and has led a number of events as well. She served two terms as Vice Chair, Membership (2013-2016), during which she contributed original and constructive ideas to expand the program, as well as taking an active interest in broader areas of policy in the chapter.



Conservation Report

*Tom Van de Water
Vice Chair,
Conservation*

Observations on Wilderness Protection

We're fortunate to have Adirondack Wilderness nearby. But what does Wilderness with a capital "W" mean?

The Forest Preserve in New York State is defined as "forever wild" in the State Constitution. This means the forests owned by the state within the Adirondack Park (and Catskill Park) cannot be cut or destroyed by anyone, public or private, without a lengthy legal process involving multiple years of voting by the people of the state. This was a radical idea for the 19th century that inspired Adirondack preservationist Bob Marshall to push for "forever wild" lands at the national level in the 1930s, a drive that culminated in the creation of the Wilderness Society.

Marshall and others advocated for Wilderness as a place where natural processes dominated, "untrammled" by those who would use mechanized or motorized equipment. People like Bob Marshall and Aldo Leopold saw wild land as essential for ecological and spiritual reasons. The Wilderness Act, passed in 1964, gives federal protection to these specially designated lands. Bicycles, chainsaws, and helicopters are restricted.

New York State has adopted Wilderness restrictions on the wildest parts of the Forest Preserve, while leaving some "Wild Forest" areas accessible to motorized equipment but still not to be cut. (Interestingly, federal Wilderness is vulnerable to the whims of Congress, whereas New York State Wilderness is protected by the State Constitution.)

ADK Laurentian

Executive Committee

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Vice-Chair, Conservation Report continued

Unfortunately, the idea of Wilderness is still misunderstood by many. Every Wilderness Area in the country has issues of encroaching development and motorized intrusion. Few recognize Wilderness as a small subset of public lands with deep value and important restrictions.

In September, on a day off from my job as a fire lookout at the edge of Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, I attended the opening day of a gathering organized by Wilderness Watch, a watchdog group dedicated to preventing abuses of Wilderness and advocating for its protection.

Members of the Nez Perce Tribe (or Nimiipuu, "the people") joined the Idaho gathering. Much of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness was part of their original treaty land (similarly, much of the Adirondacks was originally Haudenosaunee – formerly "Iroquois" -- land). Indigenous voices have joined Wilderness voices in advocating for protection of Wilderness and asserting "rights of nature" worldwide. This movement has the potential to fundamentally change our relationship to nature. Imagine a world where rivers and trees have rights over private interests and corporations. This may be the next step in the evolution of Wilderness, allowing protection for nature, including trees and flowing water.

After the Wilderness gathering in Idaho, I walked with a couple friends to Grave Peak, where Bob Marshall was once treed by a grizzly bear. His brush with death thrilled him. Marshall saw Wilderness as a place to enter with care and consideration, knowing death or injury is possible. When people enter Wilderness, they need to remember the words from the Wilderness Act defining it as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Wilderness is still a challenge to understand and educate others about. As Adirondack Mountain Club members, we have a responsibility to understand the value of Wilderness and advocate for it. Wilderness is more than a convenient recreation area or natural area for our benefit. It is more than a critical carbon sink for buffering climate change, more than a source of ecological diversity.

Most of our Adirondack rivers originate in Wilderness Areas. These rivers and their creatures have a right to exist. Their survival is connected to ours. When we enter a Wilderness Area, we should recognize that we are entering an area dedicated not to us, but to natural processes and the beings living there (and a long history of Indigenous use).

We could stand to be reminded of this when entering Adirondack Wilderness. We are incredibly fortunate to have these uniquely defined lands nearby. They may help save us and all beings from ourselves.

Come in to get out: Indoors-Outdoors Program, Winter 2025

All presentations are Sundays at 7:00 p.m., in the Potsdam Civic Center Community Room. Note that talks will no longer be broadcast on Zoom.

January 26. “Mapping the purple menace: Investigating an invasive plant in Northern New York,” Dr. Jess Pearson. Purple loosestrife is beautiful, but this invasive species has also begun a march to replace native vegetation along roadsides and in wetlands. This becomes a threat to both local and transient wildlife, particularly waterfowl that frequently use our wetlands on their migrations. A well-studied biological control limits this invasion: An introduced leaf-eating beetle that feeds exclusively on purple loosestrife. While purple loosestrife is listed by the NYS DEC as a regulated and prohibited plant, until 2017 it had not been well studied or documented within the St. Lawrence Valley ecosystem. Understanding new mapping techniques to monitor the spread and investigate targets for intervention is crucial in limiting the effects of this invasion. Dr. Pearson will talk about how she’s been mapping this invasion, growing beetles, and studying removal techniques.

February 23. “Hiking in Utah and Arizona,” Marianne Hebert and Jane Gatta Subramanian.

In September 2024, Marianne and Jane traveled to the Southwest to explore Utah’s Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks. They took side trips to visit the Valley of Fire State Park in Arizona, Utah’s Red Canyon SP, and the Hoover Dam Historic Rail Trail. They learned about the unique geology of the Southwest, native cultures, and petroglyphs, and saw a few big horn sheep and lots of interesting trees and flowers.

March 2. “Life on a fire lookout in north central Idaho,” Tom Van de Water.

Tom Van de Water has staffed a Forest Service lookout at the edge of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness for over thirty years. Fire policy and fire behavior have changed during those years, as many photos show. Come join the discussion about life on a remote lookout and wildfires today.

April 6. "A couple of unique hikes in the Minerva area: Blue Ledges and Moxham Mountain,” Peter Brouwer and Patricia Curry.

In the presenters’ words, “We will describe two unique hikes in the Minerva area, both five miles round trip. The first is a relatively easy hike to the Blue Ledges on the Hudson River; if you time it right you can watch the rafters float by and stop for a lunch break. The trail up Moxham Mountain is moderate and offers wonderful views along a series of roughly a dozen ridge overlooks.”



Purple loosestrife



Hoodoos from Red Canyon State Park, Utah. by M. Hebert



Your Chapter Outings, Winter 2025

*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

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

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

Wed., Jan. 1, 2025: Laurentian Chapter Annual New Year Outing at Higley Flow State Park

1-4 p.m. Ski, snowshoe or hike (1:00-3:00 p.m.) at the park to kick off the new year in nature. At 3:00 we'll gather at the Lodge for a potluck finger-food social. Bring a snack to share. Weather permitting, we will have a bonfire and the Lodge will be open. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potdam.edu or 315-265-0756.

Thurs. Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Weekly Walk, Red Sandstone Access Roads. 7:30 a.m. We will walk the dirt access roads for approximately 2 miles, 1 hour round trip. If the roads are icy, traction devices such as microspikes 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 (CR59), drive south for 2.5 miles. The access road is on the left just past Sweeney Road. A brown "trail parking" sign marks the entrance. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potdam.edu, 315-265-0756. Level C.

Sat. Jan. 11: Stone Valley snowshoe or hike. Alternate date in case of bad weather, Sunday, January 12. Approximately 3.3 miles. Depending on trail conditions, snowshoes or microspikes may be needed. Contact Jane Khondker, janekhond@gmail.com, or Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potdam.edu, 315-265-0756. Level C.



Fri. Jan. 17: Azure Mountain. Some Laurentian Chapter people are core members and volunteers with Azure Mountain Friends, but North Woods Chapter people visit less often. It's 0.9 mile up, about 980 feet elevation gain, for excellent views from east through southwest and a chance to visit a very fine erratic and a restored fire tower. Joint outing with North Woods, limit 10. Contact John Omohundro, omohunjt@northnet.org. Level C, but steep.

Outings Schedule

Jan-Mar 2025 continued

Sat. Jan. 18: An exploration of the new NEWT (NorthEast Wilderness Trust) land between Boyd Pond and Lampson Falls. Explorers should be ready for walking/snowshoeing on uneven terrain for 3-4 miles. We'll do work with map and compass and GPS. Bring lunch. Contact Tom Van de Water, 315-261-1723. Level C.

Sat. Jan. 18: Lampson Falls. This is a snowshoe hike for beginners along an old woods road to a tremendous 40-foot waterfall on the Grasse River. If you don't have equipment, contact us in advance and we should be able to help you. Meet behind Potsdam Library at 10 a.m. or 11 a.m. at trailhead. 1 mile with option to extend to 3 miles. Contact Blair Madore, 315-261-0751 or madorebf@potsdam.edu. This is a joint event with Potsdam Public Library Outside (PPLO). Level C.

Thurs. Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27: Weekly Walk, Red Sandstone Access Roads. 7:30 a.m. We will walk the dirt access roads for approximately 2 miles, 1 hour round trip. If the roads are icy, traction devices such as microspikes 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 (CR59), drive south for 2.5 miles. The access road is on the left just past Sweeney Road. A brown "trail parking" sign marks the entrance. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potsdam.edu, 315-265-0756. Level C.

Sun. Feb. 2: West Parishville Walk and Talk. Depending on conditions we will snowshoe or walk the trails in the woods behind our cabin on Pumpkin Hill Rd. in West Parishville. Total distance is about 2 miles. Afterwards, we will warm up in the cabin. This outing is limited to 10 people. Call ahead to join and to get details: David Trithart, 315-244-8875. Level C.



Red Sandstone trail



Lampson Falls



Red Sandstone Access Rd.

Outings Schedule

Jan-Mar 2025 continued

Sat. Feb. 8: Red Sandstone Trail. This is a beginner snowshoe hike along the Raquette River and around Sugar Island. If you don't have equipment, contact us in advance and we should be able to help you. 2 miles with an option to extend to 3.5 miles. Meet behind Potsdam Library at 10:00 am or 10:15 am at the northern trailhead. Contact Blair Madore, 315-261-0751 or madorebf@potsdam.edu. This is a joint event with Potsdam Public Library Outside (PPLO). Level C.

Sat. Feb. 15: Skiing at Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Between Cornwall and Upper Canada Village, about 3 hours of easy skiing on level terrain with possible views of the St. Lawrence River. Roughly 3-4 miles. The trails are groomed and trackset, so we can hope for excellent surface conditions. Contact John Barron, 613-828-2296 or johnbarron@sympatico.ca. Level C.

Sat. Feb. 22: Snowshoe or Hike Henry's Woods. This trail system near Saranac Lake offers a nice mix of hardwood and conifer trees, moderate hills and occasional mountain views. 2-4 miles, elevation gain 377 ft. Fairly easy. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potsdam.edu or 315-265-0756. Level C.

Thurs. March 6, 13, 20, 27: Weekly Walk, Red Sandstone Access Roads 7:30 a.m. We will walk the dirt access roads for approximately 2 miles, 1 hour round trip. If the roads are icy, traction devices such as microspikes 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 (CR59), drive south for 2.5 miles. The access road is on the left just past Sweeney Road. A brown "trail parking" sign marks the entrance. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potsdam.edu, 315-265-0756. Level C.





Outings Schedule

Jan - Mar 2025 continued

Sat. March 1: Clear Pond. This will be a beginner/intermediate snowshoe into and around Clear Pond, south of Parishville. While still relatively close to home, the majestic forest and glorious expanse of the pond give a true feeling of remoteness. If you don't have equipment, contact us in advance and we should be able to help you. 4-5 miles total. Meet behind Potsdam Library at 10 a.m. or at Clear Pond trailhead at 10:30 a.m. Contact Blair Madore, 315-261-0751 or madorebf@potdam.edu. This is a joint event with Potsdam Public Library Outside (PPLO). Level C+.

Sat. March 15: Ski into Great Camp Santanoni. This ski trip from Newcomb will be on the final winter weekend scheduled by the Santanoni Partners, Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH), the Town of Newcomb, and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The Artist's Cabin on Newcomb Lake will be open and warm, and the Gate Lodge will also be open. 9 miles round trip, with minor elevation change. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, 315-244-3707 or tortmeyer@gmail.com. Level C+.

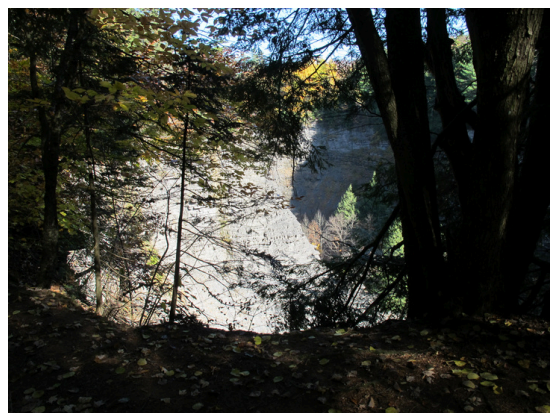
Sat. March 29: Carry Falls Road Walk. Avoid the mud and ice by taking a road walk. This is a pleasant route with views of wetlands, the reservoir, and a split rock (photo below). 3.5 miles RT, elevation gain 335 ft, with an option to extend the walk on the dirt road past the picnic area. Fairly easy. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potdam.edu, 315-265-0756. Level C.



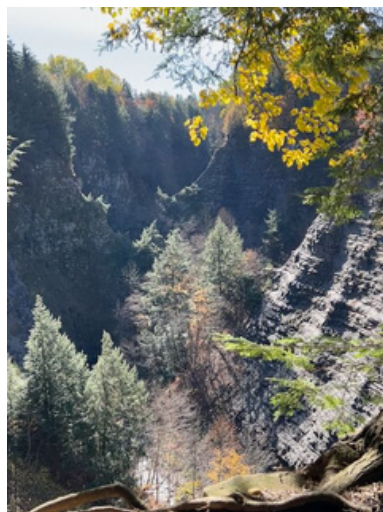
Split rock on Carry Falls Road



Backtracks Oct-Dec 2024



Saturday, October 19 - Whetstone Gulf State Park. We ascended the north rim and returned by the south rim of the three-mile-long canyon on the eastern edge of the Tug Hill Plateau. The views were spectacular the whole way; conversely, some caution was required because most of the time we had a sheer drop of several hundred feet just a short distance from our footsteps. The trail is very well maintained and is in excellent condition. Weather was perfect - sunny and mild. Foliage was a bit past peak but still very colorful. Participants: Marianne Hebert, Jane Khondker, John Barron (TL).
Photo by John Barron.



Photos: of Whetstone Gulf by Marianne Hebert



Backtracks Oct-Dec 2024

Sunday, October 20 - Trail Work on Red Sandstone Trail.

College students from Clarkson and SUNY Potsdam joined Jeff Miller and Blair Madore for an afternoon of trail projects. Working together, we were able to weed whack and tree trim large portions of the trail, build stairs at three sites on Sugar Island, erect signs at multiple locations, and do some major benchwork along the pipeline near the Northern Trailhead. Thanks to all of the following good workers: Clarkson Delta Nu Fraternity, David Hunt, Daniel Sterba, Riley Cairins, William Moore, James Reilly, Ethan Marcum, John Kapp, Aiden Hurley, Nathan Draper, Chase Larson, John Polley, Aidan Sullivan, Fritz Olson, Coby Roberts, Matthew Berns; SUNY Potsdam Environmental Science Students Jacob Ford, Cooper Bennett, Avery Lanfear, Mia Iaccino, Molly Pickering, Jack Luck; SUNY Potsdam Math, George Clapper; SUNY Potsdam AKPhi : Olivia King, Rachel Madarassy.



Backtracks Oct - Dec 2024



Saturday, October 26 - Hike at Keewaydin State Park.

Five of us had a lovely day exploring the trails along the St. Lawrence River. It was partly sunny, with enough fall foliage to brighten our day. The trails were mostly wooded with plenty of elevation changes to keep them interesting. The intersections were marked well, but trail markers were sparse, and tricky to follow with all the leaf clutter. This would be a great place to practice your map navigation. We had terrific views of the river, and we enjoyed exploring the stonework remnants from some time ago. Participants: John Barron, Jean Giblin, Tom Ortmeyer, Jane Khondker (co-leader), Marianne Hebert (TL). Photo: L-R Tom Ortmeyer, Marianne Hebert, John Barron, Jane Khondker. Photo by Jean Giblin.



Saturday, November 9 - Peavine Swamp.

Seven of us walked the Peavine Swamp trail adjoining Cranberry Lake on a beautiful clear morning. An advance party scouted ahead, clearing a few obstructions for the hoped-for ski season. Magnificent spruce, yellow birch, and hemlocks line the trail partway in. Dry conditions allowed passage through the usual mud and we all finished together back at the trailhead after snacks. A perfect November day! Participants: Tom Van de Water (TL), Holly and Neil Woodworth, Ken Williams, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Bonnie Gardiner and Lynn Ross. Photo by Holly Woodworth.



Bonnie Gardiner, Kathleen Fitzgerald and Lynn Ross

Backtracks Oct - Dec 2024



(L to R) Howard Putney, Margaret Madore, Sandy Tyler, Marianne Hebert, Cornelia Yuen, Jason Howald, Francis Howald, William T. Eckhert (PPLO), Fiona Eckhert. Not pictured, Elayne Howald.

Photo: Blair Madore (TL).

Saturday, November 16 - Indian Creek Nature Center. Glorious sunshine tamed the cool weather as temperatures climbed above 50F. We tromped through crunchy leaves around three loops, admiring the bark and branches on the now barren trees. Panoramic views of the wetlands were magnificent even if the water levels were low. It was especially nice to experience the natural surroundings through the eyes of young and old. We discussed beaver trails, beaver-chewed branches, a porcupine-gnawed tree trunk, and Marianne gave us a lesson about marcescence [From the Latin marcescere, “to fade”; per the web, “A phenomenon where some deciduous trees keep their leaves through winter,” among them oaks, American beech, hornbeams and witch hazel -NB]. Great way to spend a fall day! This was a joint event with Potsdam Public Library on the Outside (PPLO), coordinated by William Eckhert.



Photos by Marianne Hebert

In Memoriam: Gene Kaczka

Laurentian Chapter member Gene Kaczka passed peacefully in his sleep on October 14, 2024. According to the obituary written by his son and daughter, he and his wife, Carolyn, who survives him, “spent nearly forty years hiking, paddling, skiing and snowshoeing in New York State’s Adirondack Park, earning their 46er badges many times over. Gene was a master gardener, a talented artist, and a superb cook. He loved his roles as professor (UMass Amherst, Memphis State, Clarkson)” and Dean of Clarkson’s School of Management. He and Carolyn worked as a team in many roles with both ADK and its Laurentian Chapter; he was also a member of the Board of Directors of Azure Mountain Friends. Donations to the Adirondack Mountain Club or the Alzheimer’s Association are encouraged.

