



The

Cloudsplitter

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Many thanks to Gail Carr for her cover sketch of "Frost on the Window" and for her continued support of the Chapter with her time and talent!

Business meetings are normally the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Little's Lake in Menands. However, during the pandemic executive meetings are being held on Zoom.

Submission deadline for the Spring 2021 issue (April - June 2021) is February 15th.

Message from the Chair

As Albany ADK's incoming chair, I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself and talk about what the chapter has meant to me. I joined ADK ten years ago and have enjoyed countless skiing, hiking, paddling and backpacking outings ever since. Hiking and being outdoors were not new to me, and our family was often at Five Rivers and many other parks and preserves, both near and far. We'd hike nearby mountains such as Hadley and Overlook, took vacations at national parks and annually spent a week or two at Rollins Pond when our boys were growing up.

Initially I joined Albany ADK with a limited agenda. I was taking a first stab at retirement after a 30-year career in state government and was interested in backcountry XC ski trips. The retirement didn't last—other jobs followed, including serving three terms as town supervisor in Bethlehem—but my love of backcountry XC skiing did. What's more, my interests quickly broadened as Albany ADK opened new worlds of outdoor exploration. I became a dedicated winter backcountry guy, including skiing, snowshoeing and winter peak climbing. I returned to overnight backpacking trips (last done at age 12) and the frequency of our family's backcountry hiking and camping experiences accelerated. After years of listening to my ski buddies talk about paddling, I succumbed to peer pressure and became a regular paddler and canoe-camper. My family has also enjoyed ADK activities and been on outings. Everyone was having so much fun that five years ago we bought a camp in Garnet Hill (near Gore Mountain) and now also belong to the Cold River ADK chapter which covers that area.

I'm very grateful to Albany ADK. Beyond acquiring new skills and enjoying more time outdoors, I've made a lot of friends. The outings, skill building, advocacy and stewardship are all great and I'm glad to be in a position to pay back an overdue debt to the chapter.

ADK activities are more important than ever because being outdoors in a safe environment with others is perhaps the best possible tonic during the pandemic. This year there are many more than usual newbies out on the trails and ADK is an invaluable resource to help guide and educate people. Teaching skills, safety and leave no trace is vital as more people join in appreciating and enjoying the natural environment. It's a great place to be.

John Clarkson
Albany Chapter Chair

***Monthly Chapter meetings normally are held at the West Albany Firehouse Station #1, 113 Sand Creek Road, Albany starting at 6:30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month except July, August, and September. During the pandemic until further notice there will be no general monthly meetings.**

To view the Combined Activities Schedule, Activities Descriptions, and Echoes from the Trail, please visit the website for the Albany chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club.

Rules and Recommendations for ADK Chapter Outings

- Life jackets (PFDs) must be worn on any ADK paddling trip while on the water. (You need to wear AND properly secure your PFD.)
- Participants are expected to have a realistic knowledge of their own ability to select activities within their capabilities and to carry clothing, food and equipment appropriate to the trip.
- Participants must be willing to accept the authority of the trip leader and to cooperate with him or her and other party members to make the trip safe and enjoyable.
- Participants should inform the leader if they feel unduly tired or if the trip is exceeding their capability. Concealing such information to avoid embarrassment or other reasons endangers the safety of all participants.

- Participants must not leave the party at any time without permission of the leader. Participants must not leave the trip area until all party members have safely returned, unless given permission by the trip leader.
- Party Coordination: It is recommended that leaders establish procedures to ensure the cohesiveness of the group. They should explain the concept of having a leader and sweep and stress the importance of maintaining contact within the group
- Safety Considerations: It is recommended that trip leaders and participants observe reasonable safety precautions and that all trip decisions be made with safety as the primary concern.

A leader may curtail further participation by an individual and amend trip objectives if, in the leader's judgment, the safety of the individual or group requires such action. It is recommended that if a trip participant is unable to continue with the trip and must turn back that he or she be accompanied by at least one other person.

Additional rules and precautions that must be abided by during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaders will screen participants for symptoms and/or recent contact with an infected person.

Everyone should bring face masks, sanitizer and/or soap.




Avoid hiking or paddling in wilderness and high-use areas, overnight trips to the backcountry, and carpooling (unless members of the same household).

Leaders are advised to keep outings local, local being identified as being within 30 miles.

ACTIVITIES RATINGS

Each outing listed in this issue is rated by the leader for its level of effort. Remember that "level of effort" is not the same as the level of difficulty! A "moderate" hike for a physically fit person may mean a very strenuous hike for a novice or unconditioned person.

It is incumbent on each participant to know their own level of fitness and limitations. The trip leader will ask questions about your experience, fitness, equipment, medical condition, expectations, etc. *Be Honest*

 HIKING	RATING	LEVEL OF EFFORT	FEET OF ELEVATION GAIN	MILES	TIME (HOURS)
	A+	Very strenuous	4,000+	10+	10+
	A	Strenuous	3,000+	5-10	8-10
	B+	Moderately Strenuous	2,000+	5-10	6-8
	B	Moderate	1,000+	8-10	5-7
	C+	Fairly Easy	1,000+	5-8	4-6
	C	Easy	Under 1,000	Under 5	Under 5
PADDLING	RATING	MILES	PORTAGES	WATER CLASS	
	A	12+	Long (1/2 mile+)	II - Whitewater	
	B	6-12	Short	I - Moving	
	C	Under 6	None	Flat	
BIKING	RATING	MILES	TERRAIN		
	A	30+	Moderate to steep		
	B	15-30	Moderate		
	C	Under 15	Flat to Moderate		

Not all trips fit cleanly into one of these categories. Whenever you are unclear about a rating for a trip, leaders will be happy to explain what their designated rating means.

Please Note: Unless otherwise stated, please sign up with the leader for all Chapter activities. Do not simply show up at the designated meeting place. Arrive at the designated site before the stated departure time. Remember, no carpooling unless you are members of a family. Do not bring a pet unless the trip leader agrees that it is okay, and bring a leash. Please stay with the group or ask to proceed and stop at the first intersection and wait for the entire group to reassemble. Practice social distancing and don your mask when passing other hikers. You are expected to carry adequate equipment, water and food. If in doubt about what to bring, ask the trip leader!

Suggested Gear For All Seasons:		Winter Add-Ons
Water (2-3 quarts)	Food	Extra Food
Sturdy Boots	Sunglasses/Sunscreen	Ski Pole or Ice Axe
Extra Socks	First Aid Kit	Skis or Snowshoes
Waterproof Matches	Crampons	Warm Liquids
Headlamp	Layered Clothing (NO cotton)	Extra Layers
Map & Compass	Wind and Rain Shell	
Emergency Blanket	Extra Sweater or Jacket	
Hat/Gloves		

General Information for Paddling Trips

On most Tuesday (some Wednesday) evenings from May thru October, the ADK Albany Chapter paddles various waterways in the Capital District area. There are typically 2 groups (Fast and Relaxed). The Relaxed Group goes as slow as the slowest paddler and may be best for short wide boats or less skilled paddlers. The Fast Group is for most everyone else and goes about 3-4 mph. If there are a large number of paddlers, we may form a moderate group. Expect to paddle for about two hours. Scheduled trips launch rain or shine. It is suggested that you obtain a good roadmap of the Capital District or use www.mapquest.com for directions to the launch site locations. It is customary, after the paddle, for the group Leader to pick a nearby restaurant and convene the Paddlers Committee Meeting (PCM) to socialize, plan future trips, and enjoy a meal with old and new friends. Everyone who paddles is automatically a Committee Member and is invited to participate. If new paddlers would like to join the weekly paddling email list, please email Pamela Bentien and Alison Zoske at albany.adk.paddlers@gmail.com.

The following are the Albany Chapter guidelines to participate in the Evening Paddles:

- 1) **Respect Other Users of the Waterways** - Steer clear of fishermen. Don't forget their fishing lines go well out into the water. Stay close to shore when motorboats are out. Red & Green Buoys mark the deepwater channels so stay between the buoys and shore. Paddle in a tight group when crossing large bodies of water.
- 2) **Launch on Time** - Please be in your boats on the water and congregated near shore before the launch time. People launching after start time are not officially with the group. The leaders will conduct a short On-the-Water Meeting with the group to discuss the water, weather conditions and plans for the paddle.
- 3) **Duty of the Paddler** - It is the responsibility of the paddler to stay with the group and know who the leaders are. If you don't know, ask someone.

- 4) **Leaving the Group** - The leaders take a headcount at the On-the-Water Meeting. Therefore, please notify one of the leaders if you need to leave the group for any reason. ADK is not responsible for paddlers who choose not to paddle with the group.
- 5) **Required Gear** - All paddlers must bring along a white light (a headlamp is good), a whistle (a pealess one is best) and must wear a PFD (Personal Floatation Device aka life jacket). Your PFD needs to be securely fastened (zippered and buckled). There are no exceptions to these requirements. It is also a good idea to bring raingear, water, bug-dope (mosquitoes are quite active in summer at dusk) and an extra set of clothes in the car.
- 6) **Clothing** - Other than in July and August, all paddlers should not wear cotton clothing, If you must wear cotton, bring along a full change of clothing in a dry bag. Expect to have your feet in the water when launching. Some of the launch spots are slippery and have underwater debris. Waterproof footwear (most experienced paddlers use neoprene booties or mukluks) is highly recommended in the cooler months.
- 7) **Guests** - You may bring a guest. He/she is your responsibility and must adhere to all of the Evening Paddle Guidelines.

Conservation Notes

Green Amendment – Questions and Answers

The Green Amendment had first passage by the New York State legislature in 2019 (A2064/S2072), and will be up for 2nd passage in 2021. It will then go to a statewide ballot vote in November 2021. This New York State Constitutional Amendment would add Section 19 to the Article 1 Bill of Rights as follows: “Environmental Rights: Each person shall have a right to clean air and water, and a healthful environment.”

What is a Green Amendment? Green Amendments are self-executing provisions placed in the Bill of Rights section of a constitution that recognize and protect the inalienable rights of all people, including future generations, to clean water, clean air and healthy environments. A self-executing provision means that no state law is needed to make the right legally enforceable. Green Amendments serve as a check on government authority, and make clear the government’s duties to protect and respect the environmental rights of all people.

Does New York have a Green Amendment? New York State is in the process of securing a Green Amendment to the New York State Constitution. A Constitutional amendment is a multi-year process requiring legislation to be passed by two separately elected state legislatures, followed by a public referendum. The first part of that process was completed in 2019, when the New York State Legislature passed a bill containing the following 15 simple words: “Each person shall have the right to clean air and water, and a healthful environment.” The next elected legislature in 2021 must pass the same bill, referred to as “second passage.” The Green Amendment can then be presented to the voters as a referendum on the ballot. The earliest the Green Amendment could appear on a ballot in New York is 2021.

Why do we need a Green Amendment when our state already has a well-developed set of environmental protection laws? A Green Amendment offers a paradigm shift in the way environmental protection is addressed. While there are thousands of federal and state environmental laws in the statute book, these laws are designed to permit and manage pollution, clean up and remediate contamination, and conserve natural resources. A Green Amendment changes the legal landscape and elevates the fundamental notion that clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment are inalienable rights and puts in place a constitutional mandate that is a guiding mandate for the crafting and implementation of all laws that must be complied with. What is more, the need for a preventative mechanism is needed. Despite a comprehensive environmental regulatory framework in place, there have been a significant number of devastating, arguably preventable, environmental issues that have impacted New Yorkers in recent years.

If you have questions or want to know more about these issues, please contact David Pisaneschi at: dapadk@gmail.com or 459-5969. For updates on conservation issues of concern to ADK members, please visit the chapter website at: <http://www.adk-albany.org/conservationNotes.php>

From the Archives

by Brad Schwebler

The United States has endured a difficult year in 2020 fighting an invisible foe which has altered our daily lives and our activities including with the Adirondack Mountain Club. In 1942 the United States was in its second year of World War II and although we were fighting a very different foe then, the Albany chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club was similarly affected in that there were only informal meetings and hiking activities were curtailed to the local area. The reasons then was because some of the members were called to military duty and serving overseas, many of those not in military service were engaged in war production or busy with other support services, and there was also gas rationing which limited travel for pleasure.

Although the Albany chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club was less active in 1942, as it has been this year, it was pointed out then that they still are in existence, as we are now, and looking forward to a brighter and more active future, just as we are now.

Reflections from the Trail

by Brad Schwebler

Although we have been living through a pandemic, I was still active hiking this year, almost every week, and in the course of this hiking I made many discoveries, some very close to home in local preserves. In one preserve I had hiked before and expected it to be boring, I was pleased and excited to find for the first time a jack-in-the-pulpit and observe a pileated woodpecker. In another park I found a pretty pond I had not seen before, and on a trail in the Shawangunks in the rain I discovered a lone pink lady's slipper. The raindrops on the flower and my black card I use to block out the background made it more special. In many cases the new discoveries were the result of going farther than I had gone before on familiar trails, or going to someplace totally new. Sometimes it was just seeing the place in a new light or a different season.

I also made new discoveries in technological areas. To help me identify the flowers and insects and fungi we encountered I used apps on my iphone. I already had Plantsnap to identify plants. Then a hiking friend told me about Google Lens to identify plants, insects, fungi, and many other things. My grandson told me about Seek, an app to identify plant and animal life that also makes it a game.

I also discovered and worked with new navigation apps on my iphone. I already had paper maps in my backpack which helped me a couple times when I accidentally went off course. However the computer apps can tell you exactly where you are at any moment. I had used the AllTrails map. I liked the red lines and the blue dot that told me where I was at. This was great as long as there was cell service, at least with the free app. On one hike one of the hikers was using Gaia which works off satellite which was very useful for us that day where the trails were not very well marked. Since then I have used Gaia more often. I also like the icons on the map (binoculars for viewpoints, coalbin for quarries, waterfall for waterfall). I also have the Azenza app (similar to Gaia) except you have to buy the maps. I was also

introduced to CalTopo by one hiker which works with Gaia and Avenza to design maps. I tried this in a local preserve. This is useful to design maps in areas where maps are not already available.

In planning my outings I also became more aware of special concerns because of the pandemic. I tried to plan hikes where there was less traffic. Often that was the case where there were few if any other hikers. It did not always work out that way and in cases where there were other hikers, my hikers were encouraged to wear masks and step aside. Also, because we had to drive to the sites in our own vehicles there was the concern of space available in parking lots. For the hike up Anthony's Nose I decided to have everyone park in the Hessian Lake parking lot. It was a good decision. It made it a longer hike, but there was ample parking and the added scenery of Hessian Lake and the walk over Bear Mountain Bridge was great. Another time we were going to hike Roostercomb in Keene Valley. We left at 7 AM, earlier than I originally planned. Again that was a good move because there were already many cars up there when we arrived and we had just enough space for our cars.

The Gallery



Overlooking Bear Mountain Bridge



Climbing Roostercomb



Posing in front of Cornish Estate



In the Snowhole



On top of Hadley Mountain



An ichneumon wasp



Coming out of a hole on a rock scramble



Minekill Falls



Overlooking Mohonk Lake



Standing on a rock in a talus field



Red newts



Resting on top of Vroman's Nose

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