



The Cloudsplitter

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Many thanks to Jim Cramer (Art contributor) for the copy of his painting Barn Going Away.

Business meetings are normally the 3rd 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 Winter 2021 issue (January - March 2022) is December 15, 2021.

Fall 2021 Message from Chair John Clarkson

Is the paper Cloudsplitter gone forever? Should it be?

If you're reading this, you're reading it in the Cloudsplitter – a venerable Albany ADK publication that's provided information on outings, issues and activities for many decades. However, unlike past years, you're not reading it on paper, you're reading on a screen, whether desktop, laptop, phone or tablet.

The pandemic caused Albany ADK to stop printing and mailing paper copies of the Cloudsplitter. Since then, it's only been available electronically, and upcoming outings are no longer listed there. We've been getting along for more than a year this way, making it a good time to reconsider how we share information.

Some people are strongly attached to paper, whether for books, newspapers or newsletters. Many others are not, and it's hard to ignore the benefits of providing information online. These include the ability to share information immediately, update it at will, far greater graphic capabilities, major cost savings and reduced use of resources.

This pandemic will wane and hopefully disappear eventually, and we're looking forward to a time when we can get together in person again at chapter meetings. However the waning of pandemic necessities doesn't mean we should stop reconsidering communications – because the general movement away from paper and the continually evolving means of electronic communications will not wane.

Let's look at the costs and benefits and find a preferred path for the Cloudsplitter moving forward. This should include evaluation of new technologies and possibilities. The "pdf" version of the Cloudsplitter duplicates its format as a paper document, and that means we're not yet reaping the full benefits of not using paper. Many modern online formats allow for clicking on topics, enhanced graphics, and more.

This is not a new conversation by any means, but it's an opportune time to work together to identify the costs, benefits and opportunities for new approaches. As always, we'd like to hear your thoughts!

***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. The next Executive Team meeting will be in October.**

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 Flootation 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.

Calendar of Events

The general membership meetings will resume in October on Zoom. Information about dates, times, and presenters will be disseminated to all members prior to the meetings.

Reflections from the Trail

by Brad Schwebler

This year has been a year of firsts for me. I reached the summit of my first two Adirondack high peaks, I paddled a kayak for the first time, I hiked in the Adirondack Mountain Reserve (AMR) for the first time, I saw puffins for the first time, and I just had my first hot air balloon ride, albeit tethered and only about 80 feet up.

I started leading hikes to show other people all the wonderful places I knew in the Shawangunks, but I also wanted to expand my horizons and reach out to new places, new experiences. Fortunately my hiking companions did not complain when we hiked on trails they had been on before but were new to me, and even offered suggestions of special places to go. And even though I have lived much of my life in the Hudson Valley close to where I went kayaking, I saw the Hudson River from a different vantage point and as a result I saw birds I had never seen on the Hudson before, a swan and cormorants.

I also saw more of the Lake George area than I have ever seen in my life. Over the years I have been to Lake George Village and Hague numerous times, but had only hiked up Prospect Mountain once and to Shelving Rock Falls. This summer I hiked with my hiking friends to Fifth Peak, Pole Hill Pond, Cat Mountain, The Pinnacle, Sleeping Beauty Mountain, Pilot Knob Ridge, Shelving Rock Mountain and Falls, and Buck Mountain. I didn't know there were so many peaks around Lake George, many with great

views of Lake George. Roman raved about Pole Hill Pond and urged me to hike the Tongue Mountain Ridge. Besides the lake views these hikes also offered pretty secluded ponds like Pole Hill Pond and Bump Pond, and waterfalls. Someone else recommended Sleeping Beauty Mountain and Cat Mountain. All were worth the effort.

As I have a daughter suffering from Lupus, elderly parents with limited abilities, and witnessed friends and relatives who perished relatively young, I realize how tenuous life is. For this reason I endeavor to accomplish as much as possible in exploring our beautiful earth, as the end comes all too quickly. At the same time, I don't want to rush through just to say I had reached the top. Along the way I want to see the flowers, the mushrooms, the animals, the rock formations. Some call it forest bathing. One young fellow raced past me to reach the summit. I asked him if he saw the Indian pipes. He looked at me like I had two heads. We met two fellows on Arizona Mountain who said they were running the escarpment from Thomas Cole Mountain to North Lake, 22 miles. I wondered if they even saw the red trillium.

From The Archives

In October, 1925 the Albany chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club planned a hike to Lester Park. Those who participated met at the Albany post office at 10 AM and rode a trolley to Geyser Park on the Sate Reservation in Saratoga Springs. From there they hiked through Rolland's Hollow (Rowland Hollow Preserve) to Lester Park, a state reservation of 3 acres that contains the "Cryptozoan Ledge," a ledge filled with fossils of the earliest marine plants known to exist in ancient times.

A representative from the state geologists' office accompanied them to talk on the subject. Participants were instructed to bring a pocket lunch and cup. Tea and coffee would be provided by the leader. They would return to Albany by trolley arriving at 6 PM. Approximate cost: \$1.30.

My editorial of the above – Brad Schwebler

The Geyser Loop Trail in Saratoga Spa State Park is well known. It is an interesting place with geysers, mineral waters and mounds made from oozing mineral water deposits, a waterfall near SPAC, and pretty scenery with tall evergreens.

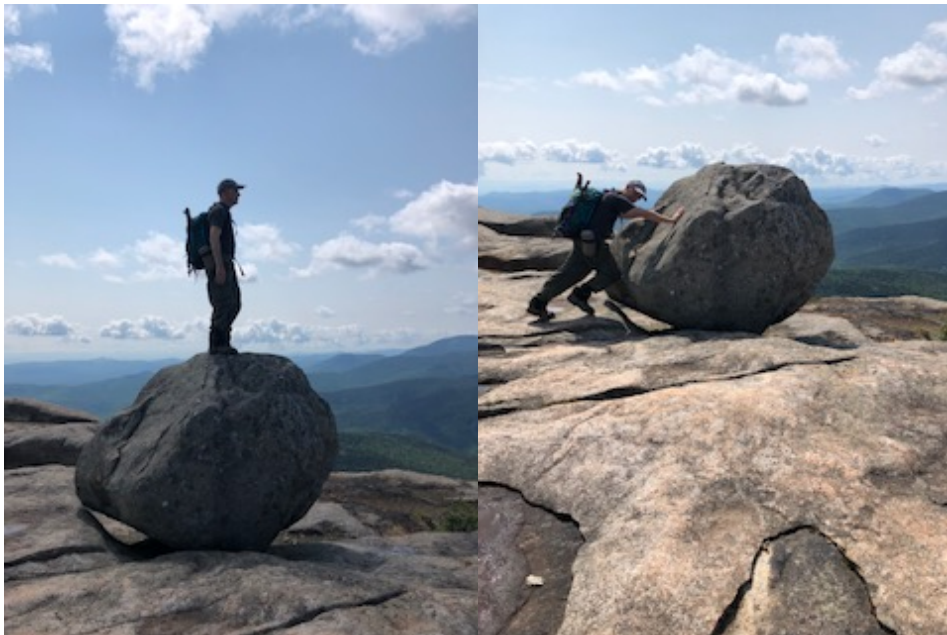
Rowland Hollow Preserve, now part of Saratoga PLAN, is much less known, about two miles northwest of Saratoga Spa State Park. It has an easy one mile trail.

Lester Park, is a small park that is also not well known. It is a natural history site donated to the New York State Museum in 1914 by Willard Lester. It is located about 4 miles northwest of Saratoga Spa State Park in Greenfield Center. It contains 490 million year old stromatolites, ancient blue-green algae that existed in a shallow tropical sea

when the area that is now New York State was south of the equator. The park contains informational signs. This place is so off the beaten path that it is included in the Atlas Obscura.

At the beginning of the 20th century trolleys were common. The Capital Limited provided trolley service from Albany to Saratoga Springs starting in 1908 and made stops in Schenectady, Ballston Spa, Forest Park, and Saratoga Springs. The company bought a large tract of land on the south end of Ballston Lake and established Forest Park which included attractions like a casino, dance hall, pavilion, toboggan slide, baseball park, and merry-go-round to attract passengers. Passenger traffic dried up after World War I. The profitable line to Saratoga Springs lasted another decade after the war.

Gallery



Karl on Hurricane

Pushing the rock on Hurricane



Cascade Mtn Summit



View of Lake George



Crane Mountain ski lift car



Amanita Jacksonii mushroom



Meadowsweet



Climbing a ladder on Crane Mountain



Gill Brook falls



Lower Ausable Lake



Buck Mountain view of Lake George



Inside Rock Rift Scramble



Karl and Kelly on Plateau Mountain



Mergansers in Voyageurs NP



Nancy in Rock Rift Crevice



Paddling on the Hudson River



Ralph and group hiking Pole Hill Pond



Boat trip to Voyageurs NP



Shamrocks on Plateau Mtn.



Voyageurs NP sunset



Milk snake on Beacon Mtn.



Fringed polygala

Bio of Art Contributor

James Cramer was born in Albany, N.Y. in 1948 and moved to Greene County, New York with his wife Stancia in 1974, where they raised their two sons. James studied outdoor landscape painting with Marcia Clark, Albert Handell, Nina Rosa Irwin, and watercolor with Staats Fasholdt. James is inspired by the Hudson River School paintings (Albany Institute of History and Art), European and American Impressionism. He has continued painting outdoors for over forty years. His paintings have been exhibited throughout the Hudson Valley and beyond, including the Mark Gruber Gallery in New Paltz, New York, Albert Shahinian Gallery in Rhinebeck, New York, and Sherry French in New York City.

In 2017 James participated in the Sixth Annual Finger Lakes Plein Air Event, Canandaigua, New York and the Hyde Collection Plein Air event, Glens Falls, New York in 2019.

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