

Trackin'



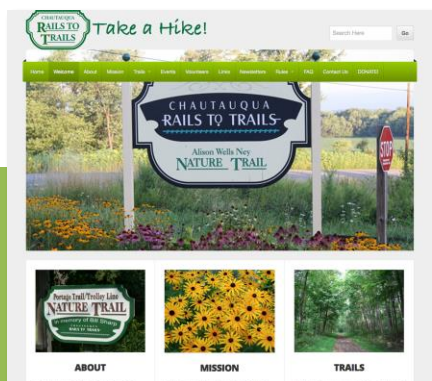
Bringing you news and information
about your Chautauqua Rails to Trails

Fall/Winter 2016



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From The Locomotive

By Robert Berke, MD – (Out-going) President, CR2T

After 25 years of continuous service to the Board of CRTI, this engineer has tendered his resignation at the last Board meeting. It has been a pleasure and a great honor to serve as Board President and participate in the progression of a dream come true. The present 32 miles of natural trail beauty that grace this county are a tribute to all who have worked tirelessly to make it happen. Unfortunately two of my fellow founding members, John Goodell and Samuel Thorndike, did not live long enough to see what has been accomplished, but their unflagging efforts in those early years paved the way for what we have to enjoy today. The incredible support of the local foundations, the Ney, Webb, and Sheldon families as well as the countless hours of volunteer time by Board members has been instrumental in creating a lasting resource in this community. I can hardly wait for what is to come with the enthusiasm and energy that exists in our new Board of Directors. -RB

Check Out Our Website!

For the latest and greatest information, check us out on the web today at www.chaurtt.org.

Trail Manager's Report

by Jim Fincher, Trail Manager



Some very significant things have happened since the last Trackin' was published.

First and foremost, Dr. Bob Berke, longtime president of the Board of Directors and one of the three original founders of the organization, has retired from the office. He has found himself so busy with family, work and other volunteer activities to not be able to devote the time needed to Rails to Trails. So, effective October 1, 2016, Bob Berke will become an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. All of us associated with Rails to Trails and its trail users sincerely appreciate the time, effort and sacrifice Bob Berke gave the concept of a premier recreational trail in Chautauqua County. Thank you, Dr. Berke.

At the same time, M.J. Albert will be leaving the checkbook to other capable hands. MJ has been our treasurer for about 10 years and has done a marvelous job.

So who has taken over in place of Bob and MJ's, you wonder? Well, I was elected President. Breeanne Agett was elected Vice President. Elsa Nelson, an accountant from Bemus

Point was elected Treasurer. Wendy Lewellen, another Bemus Point resident, was elected Secretary, and Keith Carrow and Matt Terrill were selected as Co-Trail Managers. Your new officers hope we do as well as the board we are replacing.

Definition of terms to come:

"Railroad cut": A railroad cut is where the railroad cut into the dirt to lay tracks where there used to be a hill.

"Fill": A fill is where the dirt was placed to raise the tracks so they are fairly level. A cut takes away dirt; a fill adds dirt.



Secondly, the failing culvert and fill about 1/2 mile south of Wolebon Rd. There are three things about that fill and culvert that are troublesome: The culvert itself, the washout, and the trees on the fill.

Culvert

All the political muscle in Chautauqua County met with staff members from Governor Cuomo's office last May in an attempt to find funds to repair the culvert. Senator Cathy Young, Assemblyman Andy Goodell, County Executive Vince Horrigan, Emergency Preparedness Director Julius Leone, Watershed Coordinator David McCoy, and I, made sure the Governor and his staff know about our problem and our inability to fund a fix for it. So far no funding has been offered to replace the culvert, which would cost \$1.5 million, nor is there any funding to repair the culvert, which would cost \$500,000.

However, because the devastation of a culvert collapse is so severe, Rails to Trails feels we must do something to try to keep the culvert from collapsing. So, we have applied for funding to "patch" the culvert. Patching the culvert entails covering the holes in the walls with plywood and

Trail Manager's Report, continued

filling the holes with concrete. That sounds simple but it isn't and would probably cost in the area of \$65,000. We applied for \$40,000 of the county 2% bed tax, water quality money, and had plans to apply for another \$15,000 in grants if awarded.

Unfortunately, we just learned our application for the 2% bed tax water quality grant was not selected to be funded. We are, of course, disappointed, but are planning to re-submit next year and we are also looking at other funding sources. Does anyone know of a Daddy Warbucks who might be willing to adopt us? If you can donate to this worthy cause, we'd be glad to accept your designated donation.

The Washout

Heavy rains in March of this year caused a large washout on the south end of the fill over the failing culvert. Were this not repaired, another heavy rain could wash away the whole south end of the fill which would make the trail impassable. We'd lose at least 7 miles of trail. We hired a man experienced in this type of repair, and he placed six large trucks full of limestone rocks in the washout. That is about 160 tons of rock that will slow rainwater so it will not wash away any more fill.

The Trees on the Fill

If you pay attention to active railroad fills, you'd see there are very few trees allowed to grow on the fills. This is because trees can be pushed over by high winds and their root balls can damage the fills and tracks. If you notice the fills on the rail-trail, you'll see lovely canopies and lots of trees. Can you see where I am going with this? The CR2T maintenance team has decided to start removing some large trees from fills. We'll try to leave canopy whenever we can but there are places where that can't be done. Because smaller trees were a danger when felling larger trees on the fill over the failing culvert near Wolebon Rd, we did open the canopy. We hope that is not a common occurrence.

Organized Hikes

Board Member Judy Takats has done a lot of work bringing rails to trails to the attention of a lot of people, many of whom did not know we exist. Judy has organized three guided hikes on the trail. The time, place and dates are listed elsewhere in this Trackin'. We hope you can make one of the hikes.

Errata

In our last Trackin', we had a picture of a beaver-gnawed tree that had been cut down, and we credited the chainsaw work to Charlie Lindquist, a young man in his mid-80s who is still very active and who volunteers on the trail. His name is actually Charlie Lindstrom. Sorry, Charlie! Here's the picture, in case you missed it in our last issue.



CR2T Board of Directors: New Members and Election of Officers

By Wendy Lewellen, CR2T Board Secretary

At the September 12th meeting of the Board of Directors we elected officers and added another new member. We are pleased to announce four recent additions to our evermore talented and energetic group. New members are Torry Ormond (Mayville), Elsa Nelson (Bemus Point), Chautauqua Lake Snowmobile Club President Matt Terrill (Westfield) and Micaela Young (Sherman). Returning members are Breanne Agett, David Akin, MJ Albert, Keith Carrow, Jim Fincher, Wendy Lewellen, Judy Takats, Anna Thibodeau, Bill Ward and Thom Wright.



New Board Members (L to R): Torry Ormond, Matt Terrill, Micaela Young, Elsa Nelson

We accepted with regret the resignations of our president, Robert Berke and our treasurer, MJ Albert in their respective offices. Dr. Berke will stay involved in an advisory capacity. Bob has served on the Board continuously since the inaugural year of 1991. MJ has been our steadfast treasurer for 11 years and has agreed to stay on the Board. Jim Fincher is stepping down as trail manager.

New officers were elected unanimously. They are: President- Jim Fincher; Vice President- Bree Agett; Treasurer- Elsa Nelson; Co-Trail Managers- Keith

Carrow and Matt Terrill; and, returning as Recording Secretary- Wendy Lewellen.



Officers (L to R): Keith Carrow, Matt Terrill, Bree Agett, Jim Fincher, Wendy Lewellen, Elsa Nelson

Several committees have been appointed and are working on several exciting endeavors, including promotional items, a February banquet and a "Ride the Rail" bicycle event on May 20th.

This is an exciting time for our organization and we look forward to your continuing support. We have many, many challenges to meet—foremost being the failing culvert near Woleben Rd. and the immense amount of fundraising required to fix it.



Changing of the Guard: Jim Fincher and Bob Berke

Take a Hike.. *With Us!* By Judy Takats, CR2T Board Member

Rails to Trails is partnering with the Chautauqua County Hiking Club offer a series of 3 fall hikes. The first of these hikes was held on September 17, 2016.

Although an unfavorable weather forecast was looming when we met at the Prospect Station Road Trailhead, the sun was out and it promised to be a beautiful day. We thought the rain would hold off for a few hours, so no one thought to bring their umbrellas (our first mistake; one should always carry an umbrella to ward off rain!).

Fortunately, we met 2 hikers and their dogs from Ohio who were willing to snap this "before" picture for us.



We walked for 35 minutes before hearing thunder and seeing some flashes of lightning through the tree tops. Heading back, the skies let loose. We were completely soaked by the time we got back to the Prospect Station Road trailhead!

At the trailhead, the sun returned (Of course it did! We had our umbrellas by then...) and we were graced with a beautiful sight of the sun shining on the sunflowers across the street with our majestic Lake Erie glowing in the background.



L to R: Eileen Campbell, Linda Koenig, Rich Koenig, and Judy Takats

Despite the rain, or maybe because of it, we all agreed it was a fun (although short) hike.

We're looking forward to seeing more people at our next hike in Sherman on October 15 and Mayville on November 19. Check our Facebook page and website for any updates about the hikes.



**Facebook.com/
ChautauquaRailstoTrails**



CR2T

&

Chautauqua County Hiking Club

**HIKE THE CHAUTAUQUA RAILS TO TRAILS
3 CO-SPONSORED FALL HIKES**

**3RD SATURDAY OF
EACH MONTH**

Sept. 17

Prospect Station Rd. Parking Lot

Oct. 15

Titus Rd. Trailhead Parking Lot

Nov. 19

Mayville Depot Parking Lot

10:30 AM Start

**About
3-4 miles (2
hours) of
hiking**

Contact:

Judy Takats
jtakats@gmail.com

Eileen Campbell
chautauquahikes@aol.com

Erosion Troubles

By Keith Carrow, CR2T Board Member

This summer we had a problem with erosion on the Alison Wells Ney Trail south of Woleben Road. At some point this spring, a large maple tree blew over along the side of the trail. The disturbance altered the flow of water and without the root system holding the dirt the water eroded one side of the ravine crossing.

The following photo demonstrates the damage caused by the fallen tree.



To fix the problem, 6 loads- nearly 160 tons- of oversized limestone were placed in the eroded area. The delivery of the materials was pretty impressive.



An excavator was used to place the stones in the section that was washing out.



The objective of our repair project is for the stone to anchor the soil as the root system of the tree had been. As the water flows from above, the stone will hold the soils and slow the flow of the water allowing sediment to release from the water rather than carry our trail material all the way to the bottom.



The photo above shows the finished product. Here's hoping the limestone does the trick and protects the rest of the land from eroding and damaging the trail. Thanks to everyone who helped out with the repair!

CR2T at First Friday

By Judy Takats

Rails to Trails participated in the First Friday Festivals this summer in Westfield, NY. This event runs on Main Street from 5pm to 9pm on the First Friday of each month. Music, vendors, restaurants, arts, crafts, raffles, wine tasting and a classic car cruise- in are only a few of the many events offered at First Friday.



Judy Takats and Wendy Lewellen at First Friday

Judy Takats, Wendy Lewellen and Jim Fincher hosted a Rails to Trails Information Table on 3 Fridays

(June, July, and September) sharing Information about our trails, handing out membership forms and getting an email list together of people interesting in learning more about the trails and wanting to walk.

We heard from many of the people that we talked to that they would be interested in more organized hikes sponsored by Chautauqua Rails to Trails.

Greystone Nature Festival

By Judy Takats

Chautauqua Rails to Trails participated in the Greystone Nature Preserve's Nature Festival on August 27. Jim Fincher, Judy Takats, and Wendy Lewellen, handed out membership information and answered questions about the trails.

Our team was in good company with representatives from environmental agencies such as the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, Roger Tory Peterson Institute, Ecology and Environmental, Inc., and JCC Earth Awareness Club.

The highlight of the festival was the guest speaker, Merlin Tuttle, who is a world-renowned specialist on bats. He gave an inspiring talk about bats, showed many photographs, answered questions and signed books. In all, he was able to inform over 100 people about all aspects of bats and hopefully inspire conservation efforts.

Terry Mosher, Mark Baldwin and John Ruska were featured speakers who led workshops that focused on birds. Sarah Souci led a Medicinal Plant walk. The Chautauqua County Bee Keepers Association had an excellent booth and also presented workshops on bee keeping and the importance of bees.

Over 20 different children's activities were available and also a number of different vendors were present selling locally-made products.

The evening consisted of a catered dinner, acoustic bat walks and bat mist netting, a bonfire, fire-spinning demonstrations and finally a "Nighttime Walk of Courage."

The event was made possible with a grant from the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation. Rails to Trails was proud to be part of this distinguished group of nature lovers and hope to participate in this event again next year.

Tip One for the Trails Fundraiser

By Bree Agett

On June 22, lots of Rails to Trails supporters gathered at the Brazil Craft Beer and Wine Lounge (3rd Street, Jamestown, NY) to tip back a few drinks to support our organization and celebrate the start of what turned out to be a beautiful summer. The event marked the second year in a row that Brazil has hosted a bike-themed fundraiser of this sort.

Led by Shelly Wells of the Chautauqua County Health Network, a group of approximately 40 cyclists kicked off the event with a “slow roll” along Jamestown’s beautiful Riverwalk. A slow roll is a group biking event that welcomes bikers of all ages, skill levels, and all types of bikes. One goal of such a “roll” is to raise awareness that our streets are for all users- not just motorized vehicles.



The Slow Roll Crew

Board member Bree Agett offered a similar, but shorter, and smaller walk along the Riverwalk. Board member Bill Ward adopted the task of entertaining the crowd with his fun, acoustic sound inside Brazil.

To raise a little extra money, we featured basket raffles, 50/50 ticket sales, and held water balloon rolls- the biggest hit of the night. Thank you to all of our sponsors who donated baskets, gift cards, and other prizes to help us raise funds.



Brazil Craft Beer and Wine Lounge graciously donated 50% of the night’s profits to our organization, along with trays of cheese, crackers, and fruit for our guests. In total, the event allowed us to raise just over \$800.

We had so much fun that the neighbors called the cops on us. Thanks to everyone who came out to have some fun, and raise a little money in the meantime.



Lincoln and Zach Agett, and Jason and Oskar Toczydlowski were the biggest party animals at the event.

Why so fat?

By Thom Wright

Chances are good that if you will be out hiking, snowshoeing or cross country skiing this winter, you will see some fanatical yet determined individual biking on the snow. This odd creature is called a “fat biker.” They are not dangerous nor delirious, just motivated individuals that love to bike and have discovered the fat bike.

These bikes were an oddity in the area just 6 years ago, but their numbers have been steadily increasing. You may find them riding alongside the road, on the Overland Trails, at Harris Hill Extension (HHE), Long Point and the Rails to Trails throughout the four seasons, but winter is their natural habitat.

Their rims and tires are 2 to 3 times the size as the typical mountain bike (at least 3.8 inch tire width). This extra surface area allows the weight of the rider to be further distributed across the surface of the snow allowing for more float and traction.

However, fat bikes are not magical, they do have their limits, which is usually up to 6-8 inches of snow. Beyond that, and in certain other snow conditions it is a no-go. That is why you will likely find fat bikers seeking out trampled down paths of

hikers, snowshoers, or slipping onto one of the many snowmobile trails that traverse on public lands. They even groom their own trails with plans to groom singletrack in the HHE area specifically for fat biking.

The fat biker tends to be rather friendly bloke although perhaps a bit out of breath. They will almost always greet you with a smile and be willing to answer questions about their ride. If you encounter one while out enjoying the trails, be careful, if you ask to try it out, chances are you might get infected with the fat bike virus.

If you do get the urge to explore this new mode of winter enjoyment, stop down to Hollyloft Ski and Bike- they have a small rental fleet. All three county bike shops, Hollyloft, Jamestown Cycle Shop and Loud Performance carry various fat bike makes and models. But remember, just as with cross country skiing and snowshoeing, it is best to dress in layers. Even the most level path can bring the heart rate up and get you breathing hard. The best tip I’ve heard is, “if you are a bit chilly at the start of your ride, you are dressed correctly”. These fat bikers have such a fondness for biking, they don’t plan to let something like snow get in their way.



Snacks for the Trail!

Board member Anna Thibodeau wanted to share this recipe for a classic delicious trail snack with you!

Chewy Granola Bars (Original Source: Hodgson Mill, 2006)

Ingredients

1 cup dark brown sugar
2/3 cup crunchy peanut butter
1/2 cup corn syrup
1/3 cup butter (melted)
1 & 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 & 1/4 cups oatmeal
1 & 1/4 cups (Hodgson Mill) oat bran
1 & 1/4 cups (Hodgson Mill) unprocessed wheat bran
2 Tablespoons sesame seeds
1/2 tsp salt



Directions

- Pre-heat oven to 350°F
- Lightly grease/butter a 9X13" oblong baking pan
- In a large bowl, combine brown sugar, peanut butter, corn syrup, melted butter & vanilla.
- Mix together well.
- Stir in oatmeal, oat bran, wheat bran, sesame seeds & salt.
- Mix together well.
- Dump mixture into the prepared pan & press down until distributed evenly.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes at 350° (until light brown).
- **COOL COMPLETELY BEFORE CUTTING INTO BARS.**
- Standard yield: 24 bars

Support The Efforts of CR2T!

____ Yes, I want to support CR2T's effort to change the abandoned rail lines of Chautauqua County into multi-use trails which can be enjoyed by all.

____ Individual \$25 ____ Sustaining \$100

____ Family \$40 ____ Benefactor \$500

____ Patron \$60 ____ Sponsor \$1000 & up

____ Business Partner \$100/\$200 per year for 10 years

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Detach & mail form to: Chautauqua Rails to Trails, P.O.
Box 151, Mayville, NY 14757. *Thank you!*



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