

# Trackin'



Bringing you news and information  
about your Chautauqua Rails to Trails

Fall/Winter 2017

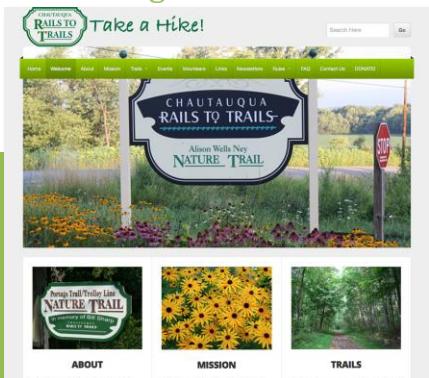


## Inside This Issue!

- Page 2 Community Volunteers
- Page 2 Amazon Smile
- Page 3 Co-Sponsored Hikes
- Page 5 #GiveThanks for CR2T
- Page 6 Statue Unveiling
- Page 7 Swank Culvert Repairs
- Page 8 Join Us, CR2T Store
- Page 9 Village of Mayville Trail

## Help us Go Green!

If you are receiving a paper copy, but would prefer a full-color electronic copy of Trackin', please email [cr2t@chaurtt.org](mailto:cr2t@chaurtt.org) and let us know!



## From The Locomotive

By Jim Fincher – President, CR2T

Fall is here! Leaves are falling, temperatures are falling, and bugs are becoming fewer and fewer. It's really a great time to TAKE A HIKE. Before we know it, snow will cover the trail, allowing for cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and, of course, snowmobiling. So now is a great time to get outside and take a hike.

Your board of directors is working on 5 grants that could, if approved, replace the failing culvert, repair another culvert, find other grants to use for major trail maintenance needs, updating the gates on the trail, and having a professional survey of all the culverts under the trail performed. We feel optimistic about three of these grants but less so about the other two. We'll see.

Work on a strategic plan is ongoing, as is consideration of expanding the trail system. You can see we're busy. We can use more help and more funding. Can you help?

## Check Out Our Website!

For the latest and greatest information, check us out on the web today at [www.chaurtt.org](http://www.chaurtt.org).

# Let's Hear It For These Community Volunteers!

By Wendy Lewellen, CR2T Recording Secretary

It's time to sing about some of our local *unsung* heroes. At our board meetings it often comes to light that people have helped us without being asked and without expecting any credit or payment. How refreshing! Well, mention you, we shall.



In no particular order, **Dr. Bert Rappole** comes to mind. He quietly and steadfastly lends his talent for gardening to the Titus Road Trailhead as does **Judy Thies** at the Prospect Station Trailhead. **Blair Koss** and **Bob Wright** faithfully commit their time, effort and gasoline to mowing much of the trail in the north county section. **John Farnham** of Brocton recently sawed up a fallen poison ivy-covered tree near Colt Road. **Carrie MacCausland** then made sure it was hauled away. **Bill Widell**, *before* he joined our board, contributed detailed notes and photos to help us improve our signage as he walked the entire trail.

I'm sure there are more of you out there who have tossed a branch off of the trail or confronted someone on a motorized vehicle or reported a problem area to us. WE SALUTE YOU ALL! Many thanks! Our trail is what we make it, and we couldn't do it without you.

# An Easy Way to Support CR2T: Amazon Smile

By Wendy Lewellen, CR2T Recording Secretary

Chautauqua Rails to Trails is always in need of financial help. Trail maintenance is an ongoing and expensive process, especially in light of the continuing demise of the huge culvert near Woleben Road in Portland. In addition, we have the possibility of creating a trail on the property we own between Riverside Road and Frewsburg. What an asset that would be to that area of the county- but one that could be costly.

Consider making your purchases online through **AmazonSmile**. It's a user-friendly method of donating .05% of the value of your purchase if you list Chautauqua Rails to Trails as the recipient. We, of course, do not want you to make purchases this way instead of supporting *local*/businesses, that is, businesses owned by local people. Chain stores do not fit in that category. Please think of us the next time you go online to buy things.

Visit <https://smile.amazon.com> for information about how to add a charitable organization to your account.



## Third Saturday Co-Sponsored Hikes

By Judy Takats, CR2T Membership Secretary

One year has passed since we began our 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the Month Co-Sponsored Hikes. CR2T teams up with Chautauqua County Hiking Club to explore our beautiful county. It is a great opportunity to get out for some light exercise, meet new people and learn something about the plant life, bird life and history of our area.

Our hikes are very family friendly and usually do not take more than 1 ½ - 2 hours. Because our hikes are scheduled on the same day each month, we find that people are able to plan accordingly so participation has continued to grow this past year.

### May

In May, our hike began in Cassadaga. We carpooled to the entrance of the Eastside Overland Trail. Led by Eileen Campbell, Karen Leary and Judy Takats, we were pleasantly surprised to find a large group of hiking enthusiasts consisting of 20 adults, 2 kids and a beautiful shorthaired pointer named Harley. People came from Warren and Corry, PA, Ohio, Portland, Stockton, Jamestown, Fredonia, NY, as well as various other places. What a great start to our Summer Hikes!



### June

Our June hike started on the Rail Trail at Prospect Station Road and continued to the Bliss Road Memorial Bridge. We had 9 hikers and started out at 10:30. By 11:00 we were all very HOT! Since this hike, we decided to move starting time back to 9:30, especially in the summer months.

We had some avid birders with us that day who either saw or heard a Veery Thrush, Wood Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Hooded Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Chestnut Sided Warbler, Common Yellow Throat, and American Red Start! While I did not see or hear any of these birds, I will trust their eyes and ears. Next time I'll pay more attention and walk behind the group more quietly...and bring some binoculars.



### July

For our July Hike, we decided to check out a location near water since we thought the day would be hot.

We met at the Dunkirk Lighthouse and walked around the entire park area twice, and the beach from end to end. The hike was led by Eileen Campbell and Judy Takats.

After the hike, our party of 8 went out for coffee and breakfast afterwards at Demetri's in Dunkirk where we were 'entertained' by hundreds of motorcycles gathering in the parking lot on their way to a motorcycle rally.

## Third Saturday Co-Sponsored Hikes, continued

By Judy Takats, CR2T Membership Secretary



### August

The August hike began at Woleben Road and took us through a beautiful grassy, cool and picturesque part of the trail to Thayer and Colt Roads and returning to Woleben. It was a beautiful day and Bill Widell related the story of "Duff Brown's Ride."

From Woleben we hiked to a secret, secluded 'cabin in the woods' where we shared lunch, good stories and relaxed in the cool breezes of the woods. The hike was led by Judy Takats and Bill Widell.



### September

The September hike, led by Eileen Campbell took us back to the Eastside Overland Trail but this time starting in Gerry, NY. We had a good number

of hikers- 15 or more. We were accompanied by Patrick Gooch, Senior Planner of Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Economic Development and his film crew. They are in the process of mapping out the East and West Side Overland Trails. Rails to Trails is hoping to obtain funding and do the same type of mapping.



### October

In October, we hiked the Ralph C. Sheldon Trail, beginning at the Titus Road Trailhead in Sherman. It was a beautiful, WARM day and twenty of us were present to enjoy the sunshine, wildlife, and changing leaves. We had some overachievers present who hiked 15+ miles!



**Come join us for a hike!**

Our next hike is scheduled for November 18- the first day of deer hunting season. Since this is not a good day to be in the woods, we will hike around the outside edge of Chautauqua Institution. Led by Joyce and Richard Rose, we'll see sights not

## Hikes, continued

By Judy Takats, CR2T Membership Secretary

normally observed during the Summer season. We will meet at 10:00am at the Welcome Center, located at the Chautauqua Institution Main Gate on Route 394. If you plan to join us for the hike, please call 716-763-6892 to RSVP or email Joyce at [rbrose@windstream.net](mailto:rbrose@windstream.net).

Please consider also that we need your continued dollars to keep our trails maintained and up to date. As mentioned, we are working on new trail maps with GPS locations indicated and new signage at the trail heads. We also have culverts that need repair. All of these things cost money.

If you are uncertain whether or not you are a current member, please contact Judy Takats (Membership Chairperson) by phone at 716-834-7440 or email [jtakats@gmail.com](mailto:jtakats@gmail.com).

Renewing before the end of the year will be greatly appreciated and will allow us to plan for more family friendly, invigorating events in 2018.

Thank you for your support.



## #GiveThanks for CR2T

By Breeanne Agett, CR2T Vice President

Are you thankful for Chautauqua Rails to Trails? Turn that gratitude into a chance for our organization to win a gift of \$1,000 from the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation. To enter, fill out the short form at: <http://crcfonline.org/givethanks/>.



Here's some more info about the campaign from CRCF:

Submissions will be accepted online beginning November 1 and ending November 20. At the close of the campaign, five (5) organizations will randomly be selected to each receive \$1,000. **#GiveThanks** award winners will be announced on November 28, **#GivingTuesday**.

### Rules:

One submission per individual, entrants must be 18 years of age or older.

***Individuals cannot submit for an organization that they are a paid employee of.***

Eligible organizations must be located in Southern Chautauqua County (or Randolph, NY).

Eligible organizations must have a charitable status, whether a public charity, church, school, or unit of government (for a charitable purpose) as described in Section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

# Rails to Trails Commemorates 1872 Train Wreck, Unveils Statue

By Ann Belcher, Jamestown Post-Journal

*The following article was published in the Jamestown Post-Journal on October 23, 2017. Edits have been made to clarify details about the wreck.*

**PORLTAND** — Well over 100 people took a historic path down a historic trail in the woods Sunday. Residents and dignitaries alike gathered at the Prospect Station Trailhead, location of Chautauqua Rails to Trails, for an unveiling and dedication ceremony with historic significance.

Jim Fincher, Rails to Trails president, opened the ceremony noting, *“We’re marking a sad occasion at the same time that part of our county’s history is celebrated today.”*

Fincher explained to the crowd how the wheel display marking the 1872 train accident on the Buffalo, Corry and Pittsburgh trail on Christmas Eve came to be dedicated. Carl Belke, chief operating officer of the Western New York and Pennsylvania Railroad commissioned and had built a set of train car wheels that was unveiled during the ceremony. The creation of the sculpture made possible by Belke contains two wheels connected by an axle, railroad ties, rails, and was installed at the site of the accident.

The cause of the crash, Fincher related was a wheel under the tender (coal car) that broke. After crossing the then existing wooden trestle over the gully and stream, the passenger car fell off the track and landed upside down in the gully. The car caught fire and caused the death of 19 people before the fire died out and of two more in a few days.

Ironically, the actual station office of that section of railroad was located directly where the trailhead parking area now sits. However, as Fincher explained, because of the holiday, nobody was working the station to respond and 10 more passengers would die that night as a result.

*“This is a beautiful section of a tragic piece of history,”* Fincher concluded.

Answering questions from the crowd, Fincher also noted that the train that evening was making its way from Mayville, North East to Brocton. Now that the memorial piece is set, Rails to Trails will commemorate the deceased on Christmas Eve this year at 3 p.m. from the site. More details will be announced as it nears.

Devotional music concluded the ceremony, before all guests retired to the trailhead for refreshments. Fincher thanked those instrumental in Sunday’s dedication as well as those active with the organization, including Robert Wright, John Goodell, Sam Thorndike and Robert Berke.

For more information about the mission of Chautauqua’s Rails to Trails, or events to be held throughout the year, visit [chaurtt.org](http://chaurtt.org) or the organization’s official Facebook page.



# Repairs to the Swank Culvert

By Jim Fincher, CR2T President and Breeanne Aggett, CR2T Vice President

When you're traveling on our trails taking in nature, relaxing, or trying to improve your running pace, you might not consider the infrastructure that lies beneath the packed soil. Lying underneath the trail are several beautiful old culverts. For those of you not familiar with the terminology, a culvert is a tunnel carrying a stream or open drain under a road or railroad.

In addition to being majestic and awe-inspiring, these old structures require a great deal of attention and maintenance.

You often hear us speak of the "Big Culvert" located under the Alison Wells Ney Trail near Woleben Road in Portland. Many of our fundraising efforts have been put forth to benefit that culvert.

A smaller and equally beautiful culvert lies beneath the Alison Wells Ney Trail near Ellicott Road in Brocton. Because of its proximity to the Swank Family home, we refer to this structure as the "Swank Culvert."

As pictured in the tunnel below, the lower left corner of the foundation had been undercut by the regular flow of water.



The Swank Culvert before repairs.

To combat this issue, a team of volunteers convened this fall to make repairs. A big thanks is

due to Steve Swank, Keith Carrow, Thom Wright, David Akin, and Jim Fincher for their efforts.



From Left to Right: Steve Swank, David Akin, Keith Carrow, Jim Fincher (Thom Wright behind the camera)

The crew cleaned out loose stone from under the concrete slab, set up forms and filled the empty space with new concrete.



The team clearing out loose stone.



The completed repair.

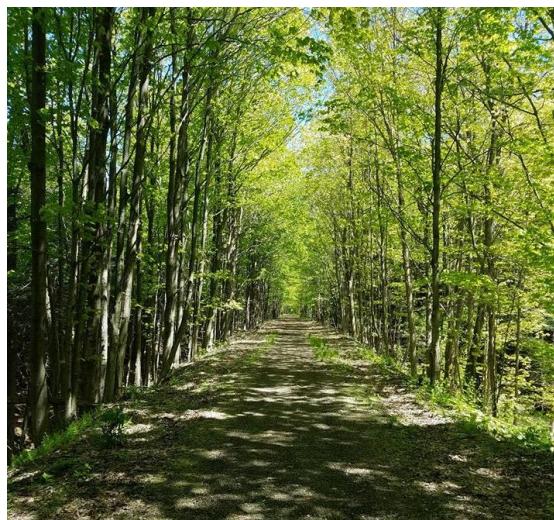
# Interested in Joining Our Board?

By Wendy Lewellen, CR2T Recording Secretary

After the recent stepping down of Anna Thibodeau of Portland, we have some big shoes to fill. She contributed in very many ways, including the perspectives of living in the Portland area, connecting us with SUNY Fredonia, and of being a "horse person." It would also be delightful to get someone from the Frewsburg area in light of our pipe dream of converting our property there into to a viable trail for the residents of Frewsburg.

Those are not prerequisites, however. If you are a trail user or just want to contribute to the quality of life that our trail system affords in this beautiful county, our meetings are the first Monday of each month and are usually held at Webb's Captain's Table in Mayville.

The 14 of us are a mix of ages and genders and backgrounds, hailing from Mayville, Westfield, Sherman, Hartfield, Bemus Point, Lakewood, Busti and Jamestown, and are a pretty nice group of 14 people. Consider visiting at our 7 PM starting time. Maybe you know a board member to whom you could express such an interest. Or you are welcome to just show up and demonstrate your interest or just observe. If you don't know any board members, feel free to email me at [wslewellen@gmail.com](mailto:wslewellen@gmail.com) or call me at 485-6677.



## CR2T Store

By Breeanne Aggett, CR2T Vice President

Need a gift for a friend? Want to think about your favorite trail system every day? Purchase one or more of our new Chautauqua Rails to Trail branded items.



The following items are available:

Coffee Mug- \$10.00

Collapsible Water Bottle- \$6.00

Koozie (Blue or Pink)- \$3.00

Keychain Carabiner (Green or Black)- \$3.00

To order, email Wendy Lewellen, [\(wslewellen@gmail.com\)](mailto:wslewellen@gmail.com) listing the item and quantity you would like.

Stay tuned for the CR2T Store coming to our website soon! [www.chaurtt.org](http://www.chaurtt.org)



# Upgrades to the Village of Mayville Trail

By Breeanne Aggett, CR2T Vice President

The Village of Mayville Trail received a facelift this summer! If you haven't had a chance to check out the upgrades to the trail, we encourage you to get out and take a hike!

The Village of Mayville Trail runs from Mayville Lakeside Park (just off of Route 394) to Route 430 and is owned by the Village. Chautauqua Rails to Trails members in the Mayville area have probably noticed lots of action along this section of trail lately.

The upgrade to this section of trail is the first major effort to establish the Barcelona to Chautauqua Institution Shared-Use Trail, which was a recommendation of the Chautauqua County Greenway Plan.



Photo Credit: Lisa Schmidtfrerick-Miller

A grant was obtained by the Chautauqua County Department of Public Facilities in partnership with the Village of Mayville to complete this phase of the project.

After several months of construction, and a brief delay, the trail is ready for use!

As with all shared-use trails, it is difficult to determine what the best surface for a trail should be. Should it be natural? Paved? Crushed limestone? There are many factors to consider: cost, maintenance, how quickly it will deteriorate, as well as acceptability by users.

We're certain that some trail lovers will miss the natural, "abandoned railroad" feel of this section of trail, while others will be excited to take their kids for a bike ride or roll a stroller on the new paved surface.

No matter your stance on the issue, we encourage you to get out there, check out the trail, and let us know what you think. Try it on for a while and see how it feels. As we move forward with our strategic plan, your input will be a valuable tool to guide our efforts. To get in touch, send an email to [cr2t@chaurtt.org](mailto:cr2t@chaurtt.org), or message us on Facebook.



Photo Credit: Lisa Schmidtfrerick-Miller



## 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!*



P.O. Box 151  
Mayville, NY 14757  
cr2t@chaurtt.org