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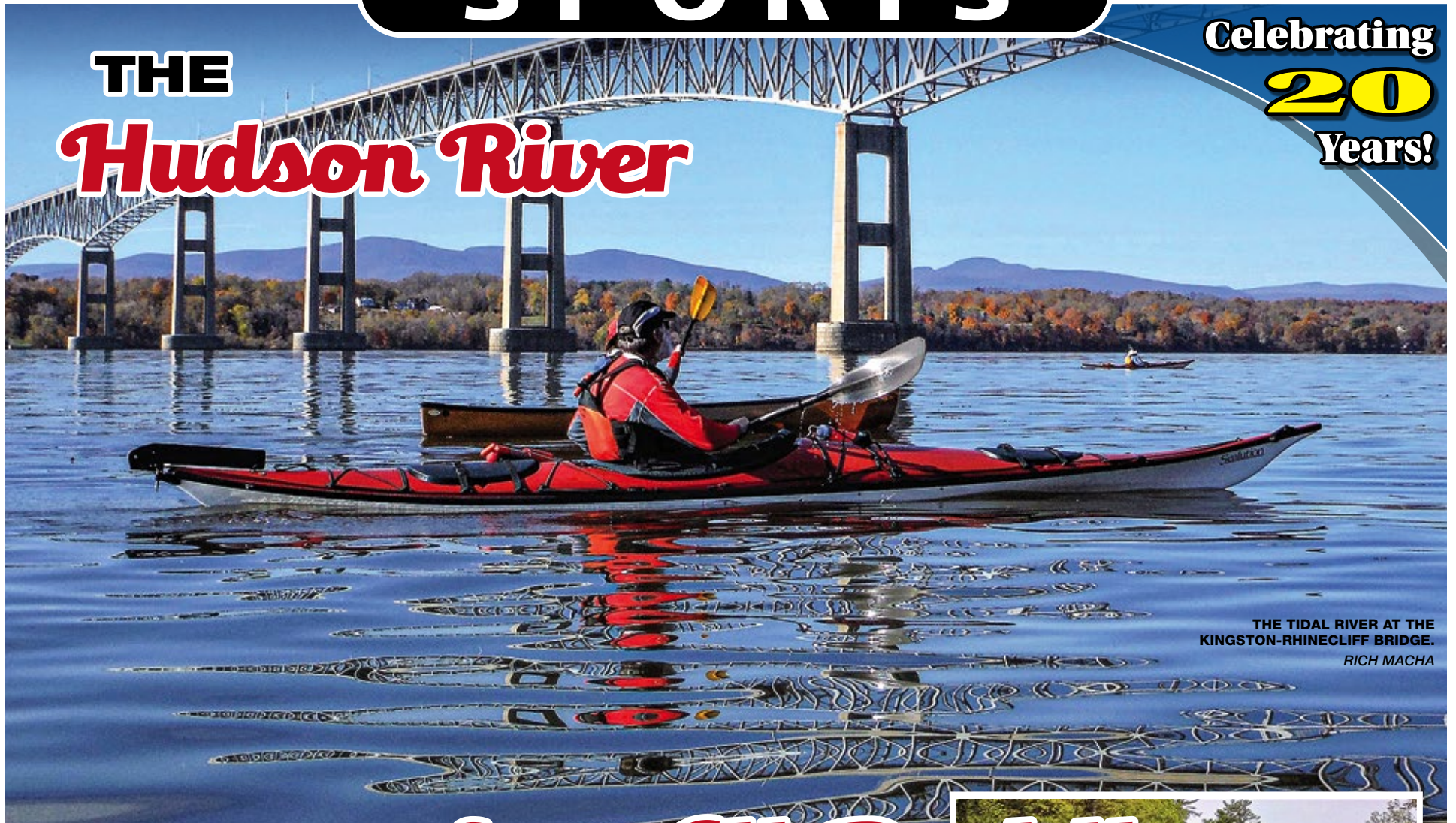
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THE Hudson River



THE TIDAL RIVER AT THE
KINGSTON-RHINECLIFF BRIDGE.
RICH MACHA

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for All Paddlers

By Rich Macha

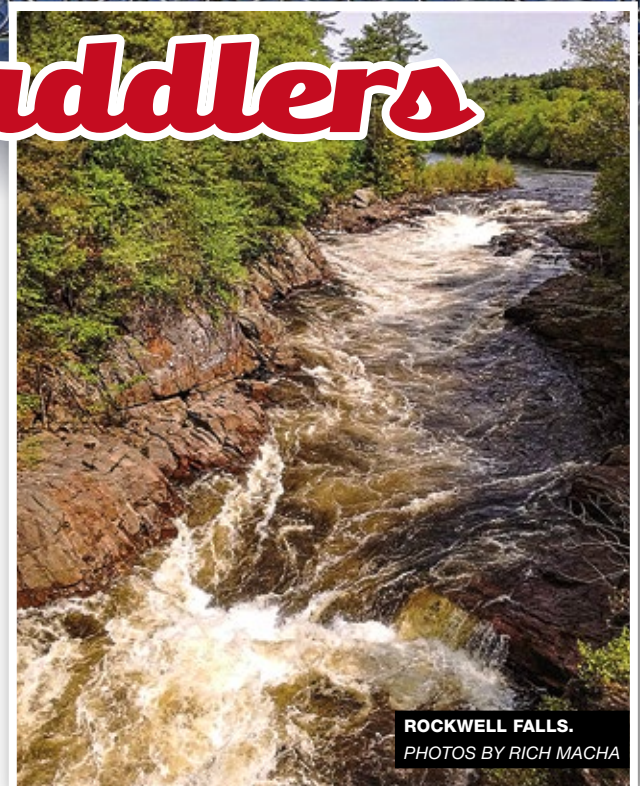
The Hudson River, over its length of 315 miles, has something to offer all types of paddlers. Originating in the High Peaks of the Adirondack Park, the river makes its way south, goes through several transitions, and eventually spills out into the Atlantic Ocean at New York Harbor.

The named Hudson River starts out as the outlet of Henderson Lake. It is a rocky mountain stream for a while before it widens into Sanford Lake. Paddlers can put-in from County Route 76 and enjoy some mountain views. The Opalescent River enters below the lake and adds to the flow. You can paddle downstream for a while longer before reaching a long section of rapids.

The next section of flatwater can be accessed via the shallow outlet of Lake Harris. A sign at the river offers the option of going upstream to Mount Marcy or downstream to New York City - it is worth going in both directions. Upstream through intimate wooded shores to the bottom of a set of rapids and downstream to a more open river with some marshy shores. Note that there is a little quickwater with some rocks to avoid when going under the NY Route 28N bridge. Below the bridge, there is an extensive marshy area that can be explored when the water level is high enough. A bit further downstream, you reach the top of Long Falls Rapids. Flatwater paddlers should turn around here and enjoy High Peaks views before returning to the start at the boat launch on Lake Harris Road.

The next 50 miles, much of the Hudson through a wilderness of great scenic beauty, is mostly for the whitewater enthusiast. The three-mile-long Blackwell Stillwater on both sides of the Polaris/Iron Bridge is the only lengthy stretch of flatwater; there is a 0.3-mile carry to get to the bridge. Rafting trips start on the Indian River and soon enter the Hudson, then pass through the Hudson Gorge over exciting rapids that approach Class 4. Class 2 and 3 whitewater continues past North Creek, Riparius and The Glen, before mellowing out somewhat at Thurman Station - and the confluence with the Schroon River.

The next 14-mile section to Hadley consists of quickwater and



ROCKWELL FALLS.
PHOTOS BY RICH MACHA

is suitable for competent novice paddlers - there is too much current to paddle upstream so a shuttle is desired. The undeveloped left shore is in the Hudson River Special Management Area, where there are hiking trails, campsites, and a dirt access road. In warmer weather, tubers are common over the second half of this stretch. Make sure you know exactly where the take-out is located because, not far downstream, is Rockwell Falls which is best viewed from land or from below. The Sacandaga River, a popular whitewater river, enters below the falls. From here to Troy, the character of the Hudson is mostly influenced by dams.

One of the nicest sections between dams occurs above and below the Spier Falls Dam, as the river cuts through the Palmertown Range at the north end of Moreau Lake State Park. There are boat launches on both sections.

See **PADDLING 19** ▶



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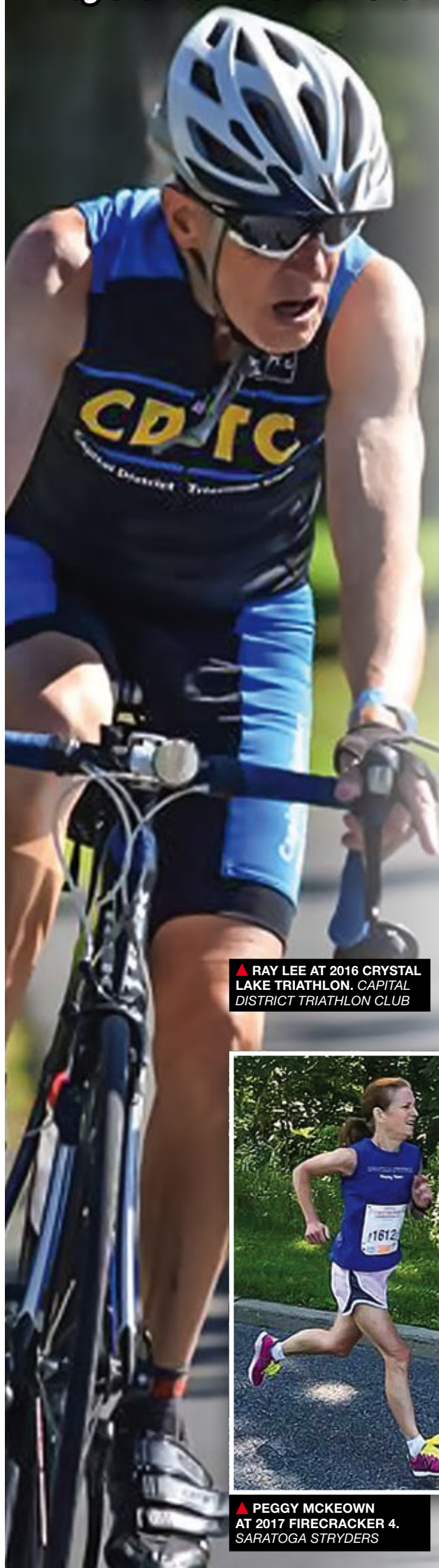
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RUNNING

THE NEXT STEP

Regional Runners Reinvent Boundaries



▶ RICH BUSA, 79, POST-RACE AT THE 2009 SARATOGA WINTERFEST. DARRYL CARON

▶ THE AUTHOR, SUE NEALON AND CHRIS MCKNIGHT WITH AWARDS AT BACON HILL 5K. FRANK LOMBARDO



▶ STU EICHEL IS ALWAYS PLEASED WHEN PASSERS-BY LOOK OVER HIS SHOULDER. SARATOGA FLAG

By Laura Clark

Remember how the “Don’t trust anyone over 30” quip slowly morphed into black balloons at landmark birthday parties? If you do, then you’re poised at the threshold of your latest journey: redefining old age. It seems like just years ago I told Rich Busa of Western Mass Athletic Club, and one-time holder of the 70-year-old age group record at the Vermont 100, that I wanted to grow up to be just like him (he’s now 90). Now, at 73 years old, that time has definitely arrived, but I recognize that I’ll never attempt a 100-miler – I simply couldn’t stay awake that long!

What happens to those who finally acknowledge that the pie in the sky is simply that? Being a librarian, with a penchant for research, I turned to books. First, I read *Never Too Late: Inspiration, Motivation and Sage Advice From 7 Later-in-Life Athletes* by Kate Champion. What stood out for me was the fact that all the interviewees had either begun their athletic careers later in life or had jumpstarted after a timeout for family and career. I remember reading somewhere that no matter when you start running, you have roughly 10 years to improve. If you’re lucky enough to fit into either of the above categories you get an automatic Pass Go! card.

This worked well for Saratoga Stryders’ Stu Eichel. Stu, a self-described “skinny wimp,” found himself constantly searching for a sport. He discovered running at 50 years old and placed fifth out of 145 in his age group – “I threw away my tennis racket and never looked back.” His career lasted 30 years, never actually winning a race but usually acing his age group. About 10 years ago, he realized he could no longer run effectively, but still gets out daily to do a bouncy walk. According to Stu, “I’m 88 years old and a hell of a lot of my friends are using walkers rather than exercising. I know how lucky I am and will never quit willingly.”

If Stu Eichel’s name seems familiar, it should be. You have most likely spied him standing on a street corner painting a local scene or in a farmer’s field pondering an old barn or piece of ancient machinery. A Pratt Institute graduate, he continues to exhibit locally and is always pleased when passers-by look over his shoulder. But what does this profession have to do with his running? According to Daniel Levitin, author of *Successful Aging: A Neuroscientist Explores the Power and Potential of Our Lives*, one of the keys to successful aging is not to retire. If you are, don’t despair, just find some meaningful part-time or volunteer work to stretch your brain, broaden your horizons, and get you out in the morning.

I remember as a younger runner noticing that many race directors and volunteers seemed older. I always figured that as you got matured, you couldn’t run as fast so you expanded your circle. But as we progress beyond immediate family and career needs, we soften a bit, visualize the bigger picture, and become more altruistic.

In his must-read study, *What Makes Olga Run? The Mystery of the 90-Something Track Star and What She Can Teach Us About Living Longer, Happier Lives*, Bruce Grierson explores what he has learned from Olga Kotelko, holder of over 30 world records. Olga began competing at track and field at age 77, where she typically entered 11 events per meet, a feat to make Usain Bolt jealous. Bruce concludes with 10 rules that have served Olga well. Two of them are: Be a mensch and cultivate a sense of progress. While age group records and comparison tables level the playing field, progress is more than numbers. Progress is fostering a sense of compassion and a desire to give back to a sport that has given you so much.

Sue Nealon, 70 years old, and race director for the Adirondack Runners’ Race to the Lakes 15K, comments that “Volunteering at local races, on club boards, and directing races is a way for me to give back to a sport that changed my life.” For Sue, more important than age group victories is the camaraderie she enjoys at club

events. Living singly, like Olga, she views her sport as a way to broaden her horizons, meet new friends, and visit new places through racing adventures.

This ties in neatly with Olga’s primary axiom: Break a sweat, daily and differently, with others. Like Olga, 78-year-old HMRRRC’s Ray Lee will never willingly quit. I first met Ray at the Indian Ladder 15K Trail Run. He pulled up to me, bruised and limping slightly, and I naturally assumed he had fallen somewhere. Not the case, though, he had taken a spill on his bike during a triathlon the day before! Made me feel like a slacker! Like Stu, Ray gets out there every day, but embraces the value of mixing things up to keep fresh and avoid repetitive injuries. At a recent Fall Back 5, Ray was acknowledged yet again for winning his age group, an age group he owned. Olga, too, as a 90-something athlete was either competing in her own age group, against younger women, or occasionally even men in her category. Nowadays, Ray regretfully admits that he struggles most with his primary sport of running. But he’s a permanent fixture at races, so much so that cutoff times are sometimes overlooked.

One person who only seems to get faster is Peggy McKeown, age 62, who calls the Saratoga Stryders her family and is the perfect illustration of Levitin’s advice to spend time with those younger than you. While this is a given in a club setting, Peggy also keeps up with the younger set in distances ranging from 5K to the marathon. Surprisingly, there was not much mention in any of the books I read about injuries, frequently a large component of a runner’s life. Peggy has had more than her share, mainly a mysterious rare condition associated with running that seemingly defied diagnosis. She explains that, “I felt like I was ignored or brushed aside, not only because of my age, but also because of being a female.” It wasn’t until she broadened her quest to larger city hospitals that she was treated with dignity, respect and a procedural cure.

Being determined and proactive into your later years is often a requirement. My friend Rich Busa went to the doctor complaining, “When I run more than 30 miles, my shoulder starts to hurt.” The helpful doctor responded, “Why is that a problem?” I wonder if he would have said that if Rich hadn’t been in his 70s.

And now for the final burning question mark: Covid-19. It is worrisome, especially with the new research about long-haul patients presenting an array of symptoms. Still, exercisers tend to have fewer preexisting conditions and are better-in-tune with their bodies. And even those, like Sue Nealon, who feel uncomfortable about entering a race, are still running and participating in virtual events for their community fix. Full speed ahead and damn the cutoff times! 🌲

Laura Clark (snowshoegal133@gmail.com) of Saratoga Springs is an avid trail runner, ultramarathoner, snowshoer and cross-country skier. She is a children’s librarian at the Saratoga Springs Public Library.

▶ RAY LEE AT 2016 CRYSTAL LAKE TRIATHLON. CAPITAL DISTRICT TRIATHLON CLUB



▶ PEGGY MCKEOWN AT 2017 FIRECRACKER 4. SARATOGA STRYDERS

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News Briefs

Silver Bay YMCA Providing Free Stays to Frontline Workers

SILVER BAY - The Silver Bay YMCA Conference and Family Retreat Center has expanded its Vacations Made Possible program to offer rest and renewal at no cost to essential workers who served at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. The program, which was established in 2015 to provide free vacation opportunities to families with limited financial means, broadened its original scope in response to the pandemic that shut the state down for over two months.



Since the announcement of the program's expansion in July, 13 families have been welcomed to stay at Silver Bay through Vacations Made Possible, and will stay on the YMCA's campus throughout the fall season. Many of these families include young children who have not enjoyed quality time with one or more of their parents, who have worked long shifts as healthcare workers in locations from Bolton Landing to Schenectady to the Bronx.

Vacations Made Possible is a 100% donor-funded program that provides respite opportunities to individuals with limited means, individuals who have suffered financially as a result of the pandemic or essential workers who provided essential services to the public throughout pandemic. Individuals may request an application from hjay@silverbay.org.

Ausable River Outdoor Programs

WILMINGTON - The Ausable River Association is offering free guided community paddling, hiking and interpretive experience programs in the Ausable watershed, with consideration given to Covid-19 safety. Paddling trips utilize the Ausable Paddling Nature Trail on Lake Everest in Wilmington, established by AsRA in 2010. The trail includes seven stops along the way, with each discussing some aspect of the natural history of Lake Everest. Staff will accompany paddlers, providing info on the various stops in greater detail, and one of the trips will include a tour of the Adirondack Wildlife Refuge with a wolf and bear expert.

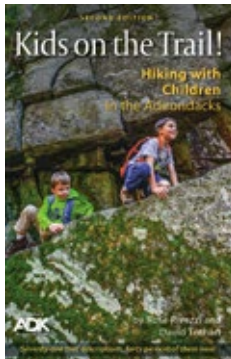
Other guided trips include an Adirondack Riverwalking experience, Leave no Trace tips and tricks workshop, bat and moth research night, and three themed hikes. The Adirondack Riverwalking experience will be led by Helene

Gibbens, a Certified Forest Therapy Guide, who will guide participants in heightening their senses to the sights, sounds, smells and textures of the river. Larry Master, an accomplished photographer and birder, will lead the moth and bat research night and a separate birding hike at Ausable Marsh. Another hiking tour will be led by Ed Kanze, expert naturalist and Adirondack author with 30 years of experience leading walks in wild places. The remainder will be led by AsRA staff who will provide a look into the work they do around the watershed: environmental DNA, water quality testing, and ways to enjoy the outdoors with the least amount of impact.

AsRA's free guided programs will be on weekends through Oct. 10, and are possible by an educational grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEIWPCC. The town of Wilmington is offering free canoe and kayak rentals to participants. Sign-ups, safety protocols, and other info is available at ausableriver.org.

Black Girls Do Bike Welcomes Teens

TROY - Allison Joseph of Troy returned to bicycling, which she enjoyed while growing up in Guyana, but rarely saw other black riders on roads and trails around the Capital Region. She learned about the national Black Girls Do Bike organization, and founded the local chapter in 2018 to "Ride safe, often and in style." The club now has 100 members and is growing with in-person rides for teenage girls - with helmets required, masks for safety, and obeying traffic laws. Allison is encouraging teenage girls to give the group a try, especially if they're navigating the busy streets of Troy, Albany, Schenectady or the suburbs. Black women of all ages are encouraged as well. For more info, visit Black Girls Do Bike Capital Region private group on Facebook or Instagram.



ADK Releases Kids on the Trail! Guidebook

LAKE GEORGE - Adirondack Mountain Club's long-popular "Kids on the Trail! Hiking with Children in the Adirondacks," by Rose Rivezzi and David Trithart, has been released in a second edition. Seventy-one hike descriptions are accompanied by distance and elevation data, color maps and photos. Almost 40 percent of the hikes are new to the book, and nine descriptions have been added since the first edition. Representing a variety of destinations across the Adirondacks, this guide encourages readers to visit lesser known locations as they enjoy the beauty of the Park. Anecdotal asides, observations, and logistical advice are interspersed.

Before You Lace Up, the book's introduction, is a treasure trove of guidance, suggestions, support and encouragement. The approach points to the authors' lengthy careers in teaching and library science, and draws on their experience as parents, hikers, and now grandparents. Sidebars cover what to bring, realistic expectations, safety reminders, and "ages and stages" considerations, including hikes best-suited to young children. Each trails chapter opens with a list of attractions in the region including public campgrounds.

Kids on the Trail! is a companion to the ADK Kids on the Trail Challenge and includes a personal log to keep track of hikes. The challenge offers free patches to young hikers who complete 16 hikes from throughout the park. Begun in 1998 and sponsored by ADK's Laurentian Chapter, the challenge has prompted 200 children to earn patches while exploring the farthest reaches of the park. In submitting the form, many adult companions include their children's observations and thoughts in letters that often thank the authors for opening their own eyes to the park's outstanding diversity.

Proceeds support ADK's programs in conservation, education, recreation, stewardship and advocacy. Kids on the Trail! is available now at book and outdoor supply stores, ADK stores in Lake George and Lake Placid, by phone 800-395-8080, and at adk.org.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

We are ALLone

In a time of gloom, hope does exist, and it's important to stay resilient. Kindness is being celebrated as people are being nicer to each other, or maybe we're just noticing it more. There is opportunity for us to do good, even from our homes.

Out of tragedy (and a U.S. election) may come a new perspective around the globe. We are ALL one. It's encouraging to see more people wearing masks, practicing social distancing, thanking essential workers - and getting outside.

Thanks for reading *Adirondack Sports* magazine (in-print and AdkSports.com) and our *Weekly* emails. Please support our advertisers and tell them where you saw their ad. Be active, stay healthy, and enjoy the beautiful fall season!



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The guide is a valuable companion to the ADK Kids Challenge, sponsored by ADK's Laurentian Chapter, for which young completers receive a free patch.

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BICYCLING

Essex Chain & Santanoni

Gems of Adirondack Backcountry Riding

By Dave Kraus

It's been a long, hot summer, especially if you've been covering your face and socially distancing. So, grab your gravel, mountain or other wide tire bike, and head to Essex Chain Lakes just outside of Newcomb. Out in the forest you won't have to mask your face, or your enthusiasm, once you've seen this gem of Adirondack backcountry riding.

Situated about five miles south of Newcomb via Goodnow Flow Road, the Essex Lakes complex includes almost 20,000 acres of forest, lakes, streams, and primitive roads left over from the days when the area was logged by Finch Pruyn paper company. Today the logging roads provide access to this area that offers superb cycling, paddling, hiking and camping opportunities. While the area has been open to the public for almost seven years, it generally receives light usage and only on weekends is it likely you will run into other cyclists.

To reach the Essex Chain and this 23-mile loop, take Pine Tree Road off of NY Route 28N, then go south on Goodnow Flow Road, and turn left when you reach the lake. Look for the small unpaved parking area for the Upper Hudson Ski Trail on the left. If you cross the bridge below the dam, you've gone too far.

Now on your bike, continue on Goodnow Flow Road past the dam, and then a left turn onto Gooley Club Road – past the DEC signpost – puts you in the forest and on the road to adventure. To keep you on the right path, make sure to download and print a cue sheet and map at ridewithgps.com/routes/33948822. Logging operations have led to a

complicated network of access roads in this area, creating opportunities ripe for exploring – or getting totally lost. As you continue on your ride, be quiet and watchful for the varied wildlife in the area, which can include deer, bears and moose.

At mile 4.7 from the start, you will reach a major intersection where a left turn will put you on the road to the former Gooley Club camp, on the shore of Third Lake. A mile later, watch for the small spur road on the right that will take you to the camp location, with its spectacular view across the lake. The buildings of the 150-year-old club were removed in 2018 as part of the state's acquisition of the area from the Nature Conservancy, which had purchased it from Finch Pruyn.

Continuing southward again on the main road, you'll encounter the Cedar River as it flows placidly eastward toward the Hudson River. A few miles farther through forest, along the riverbank and past mild rapids, you will reach the end of the road on the bank of the river. The road continues on the other side of the river, toward the hamlet of Indian Lake, and there has been talk of putting a bridge here. But for now, you will need to turn around and head back the way you came.

On your return ride, turn left just before mile 14 to continue on the loop to the causeway, between Fourth and Fifth lakes with its beautiful views in either direction. A large culvert provides access for paddlers between the two lakes. There's also a handicapped accessible campsite on the far end of the causeway.

CHET LASELL OF NISKAYUNA HAS GOOLEY CLUB ROAD ALL TO HIMSELF AS HE HEADS INTO THE ESSEX CHAIN LAKES AREA.



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PHOTOS BY DAVE KRAUS/KRAUSGRAFIK.COM

From here, it's not far until the turn toward the Deer Pond parking lot, where vehicle access begins on this segment that will complete your loop ride. Don't forget to get a photo of you and/or your bike with the slowly rusting logging truck that serves as a gatepost at the entrance to the parking area. Each year it rusts just a bit more, and eventually will be gone. The road is easier to follow from now on, and eventually it turns into the paved Woody's Road that will lead you back to your car, past the many camp cabins along the shore of private Goodnow Flow lake.

Remember when you ride in Essex Chain Lakes:

- These are primitive roads that receive minimal maintenance. Watch for washouts and embedded "baby head" rocks that can lead to a crash.
- Please respect all posted private property. Do not park along Woody's Road, as it is all private.
- Electric assisted bicycles (ebikes) are prohibited on any DEC administered trail or road that is not open to motorized vehicles. Also watch for other signs on some roads in the preserve that are closed to all bicycles.
- This area is remote and cell coverage is often non-existent. Make sure to take food, water, and tools to repair flat tires, etc.



◀ EVEN THE DEC FOREST RANGERS USE BIKES TO PATROL THE MAZE OF LOGGING ROADS THAT RUN THROUGH THE ESSEX CHAIN LAKES AREA.



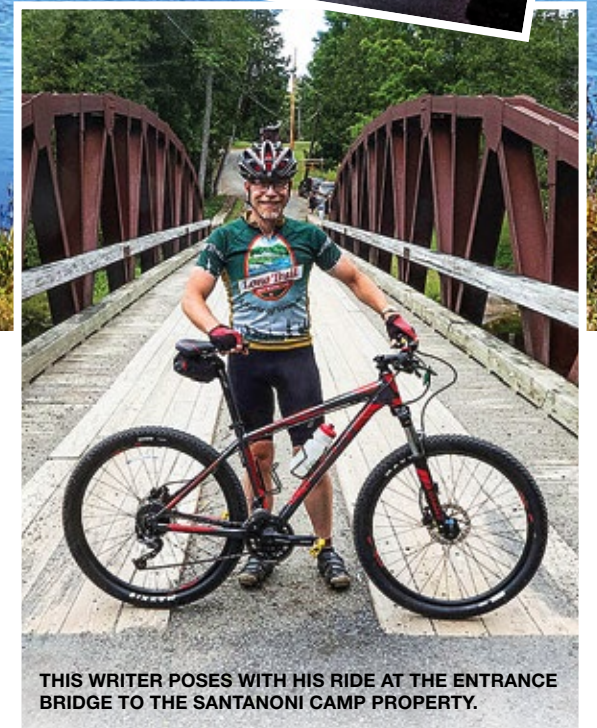
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CHET TAKES A PHOTO OF THE VIEW ACROSS THIRD LAKE FROM THE SITE OF THE FORMER GOOLEY CLUB.



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The main camp complex and 15,000-square-foot lodge is on the shore of Newcomb Lake and also includes the stone Artist's Studio, boat house, and several smaller structures, many of which are open to the public. As you ride in, you will pass other buildings including a stone gate lodge, boat house, and farm and dairy barns - most made from native stone or lumber. Enjoy! 🌲

Dave Kraus (dbkraus@earthlink.net) is a longtime area cyclist, photographer, and writer who is always looking for new, interesting routes to experience the outdoors in upstate New York. Visit his website at KrausGrafik.com.



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HIKING & BACKPACKING

John and Clear Pond Loop

By Bill Ingersoll

In 1897 the state acquired a 24,000-acre tract southeast of Indian Lake for the Forest Preserve. Known as Township 15, it had been owned by the Glens Falls logging company Finch Pruyn. However, it soon became obvious there was a problem: over the years the company had already sold off numerous farm lots to local residents, and these previous sales had not been deducted from the state's purchase.

This created an awkward situation in which the state and the occupants held conflicting titles to the land. Surveys to determine the correct property lines only made the situation more complicated. Therefore the state set up

a special court in 1914 to resolve the conflict. Any resident who could produce evidence that he or she had purchased their lot before the state's acquisition was granted clear title; those parts of Township 15 were no longer claimed by the state.

Those who were not able to satisfy the court's criteria, however, were ruled to be squatters on public land, and so these portions of Township 15 were added to the Forest Preserve. All of the buildings were demolished, and the clearings were reforested with plantations of pine and spruce.

Of all these sites, Little Canada is the most notable. A modern foot trail passes through the former settlement, where several cellar holes and one small cemetery still remain. Little Canada occupied a scenic valley on John Pond Brook, located at the foot of Bullhead Mountain. Its boundaries can still be identified by the hard edges of the planted forest, especially when seen from one of the nearby summits.

Today, John Pond and its valley are the setting of a relatively short and easy hike. The lean-to near the pond's outlet provides views of the rocky ridge that snuggles against the western shore, and the trail follows the course of the road that once led through the Little Canada settlement. And in 2017 the state completed a new link trail connecting John Pond with nearby Clear Pond; what had previously been two dead-end trails are now part of a scenic 5.2-mile loop.

Getting There

The loop trail begins from a pair of trailheads located on Wilderness Lane, southeast of Indian Lake. From NY Route 30 about 0.5-mile south of the intersection with NY Route 28, turn southeast onto Big Brook Road, also marked as County Route 4. At 3.4 miles, turn left onto Starbuck Road, which leads to Wilderness Lane one-mile later. The eastern trailhead for Clear Pond is located at this intersection. Turn right to find the John Pond trailhead at the end of the road; signs point left to a driveway leading to the parking area on state land, a total of 4.6 miles from Route 30.

The Trail

The yellow-marked loop trail is equally enjoyable regardless of whether you hike it in a clockwise or counterclockwise direction. Because the John Pond end has a dedicated parking area, let's begin here. The trail leads south from the trailhead, level and nearly straight as an arrow. It is not the most exciting route, but it has the advantage of being easy. One moment of excitement comes at 0.4-mile, where you dip through an open wetland; a short side trail leads right at 0.5-mile to a view of John Pond Brook. At 0.7-mile the loop trail makes a sharp turn left. Continuing straight toward the



▲ VIEW OF JOHN POND RIDGE. ◀ CLEAR POND CAMPFIRE.
PHOTOS AND MAP BY BILL INGERSOLL

brook on a faint herd path brings you to the first of the Little Canada foundations.

Turning eastward on the loop trail, you'll enjoy the scenic view of Bullhead Mountain across the valley at 1.4 miles, where the trail bumps up against the edge of a large wetland on the brook. Then you encounter yet another side trail at 1.7 miles; this one leads north for 120 feet to a small cemetery - Little Canada's most poignant site. Here you will find the graves of Elizabeth Amelia King and Peter Savarie, two half-siblings who died in 1897 from diphtheria. Today their resting place is located deep within a forest of white pine.

Continuing northeast on the loop trail, you reach the crossing of John Pond Brook at 1.9 miles, where only visitors during a winter thaw or the early spring runoff will be stymied in their efforts to reach John Pond. Everyone else should be able to step across this small stream without much concern.

At two miles you reach a junction with a blue-marked trail leading south along the foot of Bullhead to Puffer Pond. Just before this intersection, and within sight of it, look for a cellar hole off to the right.

A subtle ascent leads up to the south end of John Pond at 2.4 miles. A moment before you reach the pond, the yellow-marked loop trail bears right, but for now you should stay on the old road as it leads the final 0.1-mile to the John Pond Lean-To. A plantation of red pine surrounds this site, which offers views of the rocky ridgeline to the west. That small mountain has no official name, nor does it have a trail - but its bald ledges and knobs offers some outstanding vistas of the pond and the surrounding wilderness landscape. Experienced hikers may be tempted to leave the loop trail and seek out its secrets. Most people refer to the mountain as John Pond Ridge.

To continue the loop hike, you will need to backtrack

south from the lean-to to the point where the new loop trail turns northeast. This connector trail is well constructed, although it passes so far east of John Pond that you will have no further views of it. Instead of the shoreline, it favors the high ground, slowly working its way up the flanks of John Pond Ridge.

Clear Pond lacks the close-up mountain views that John is known for, and when you first see the pond at 3.6 miles you may find the view somewhat underwhelming. The trail passes very close to the southwestern shoreline, leading inland to a trail junction at 3.8 miles. Left leads back to Wilderness Lane, but first you really should explore the red-marked spur to the right. This trail leads across the rocky outlet stream with its nearby cattail marsh, then hooks through the woods to a scenic shoreline ledge with a fine view down the length of the pond to Bullhead Mountain. A herd path continues around the shoreline to Clear's best campsites.

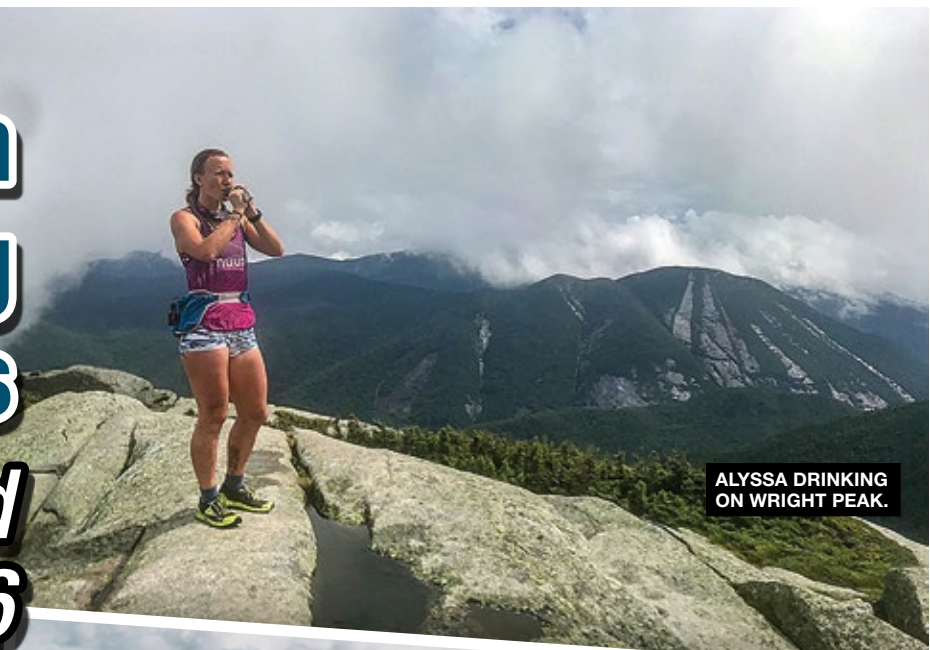
Returning back across the outlet, the yellow-marked loop trail climbs briefly away from the pond before making a slow descent southwest back to the junction of Wilderness Lane and Starbuck Road. You reach this trailhead 4.9 miles into your adventure. If you have a car spotted here, then your hike is over. However, if you parked at the John Pond trailhead then you will need to turn left onto Wilderness Lane and keep walking for a few minutes more; the distance between the two endpoints is a mere 0.3 mile by road. 🌲

Bill Ingersoll of Barneveld is publisher of the *Discover the Adirondacks* guidebook series (hiketheadironacks.com). For more info, consult *Discover the South Central Adirondacks* or his recently-published *50 Hikes in the Adirondack Mountains* (Countryman Press)

ATHLETE PROFILE

Chasing Times in Challenging Times

FKT and ADK 46



ALYSSA DRINKING ON WRIGHT PEAK.



SARAH ON MT. MARCY. DUE WEST PHOTOGRAPHY

ALYSSA AND SARAH AS THEY CROSSED PATHS ON ONE OF THE TRAILS DURING THEIR FKT CHALLENGES.

ALYSSA GODESKY
AGE: 35
RESIDENCE: Charlottesville, Va.
PROFESSION: Endurance Sports Coach, Professional Triathlete
SPORTS: Triathlon, Ultrarunning

SARAH KEYES
AGE: 35
RESIDENCE: Saranac Lake
PROFESSION: Registered Nurse, Adirondack Health; Coaching
SPORTS: Running, Hiking, Bicycling

By Linda Waxman Finkle

Silver linings – that’s what everyone looks for these days as we try to navigate a world gripped by pandemic and civil unrest. More time with the kids, learning new skills, and increased bicycle and kayak sales are some of the positives. But what if you’re a professional athlete who thrives on competition, looks to set new records, and craves being pushed to your limits?

That’s when the other now familiar term, reimagine, comes into play. As the first-quarter of 2020 saw one event after another canceled, athletes were left wondering how to fill the void, and fastest known times came to the fore – sounding

like the perfect description of our planet’s current state. According to guidelines on fastestknowntime.com, a route must be “notable and distinct enough so that others will be interested in repeating it.” It can be on any surface, and of any distance or time duration, but must be focused on hiking and running. And, while there are categories for Female, Male, Non-Binary and Teams, there are no age groups. Lastly, there are three levels of assistance – Supported, Self-Supported and Unsupported – to break things down further.

In a year of calamitous surprises, serendipity finally intervened, and Sarah Keyes and Alyssa Godesky, independently chose to attempt a supported female FKT for the 46 High Peaks in the Adirondacks, starting within hours of each other.

Sarah, who runs for La Sportiva and Julbo, grew up in Paul Smiths, the family drawn there by her father’s love of canoeing. “We spent a lot of time outdoors, even eating lunch on the water. My mom biked, and my sister and I were in rec softball leagues, but I got anxious with other sports.” After high school, she entered AmeriCorps, where 15 minutes of physical fitness a day was part of the program. When that ended, she kept it up on her own, eventually completing a marathon relay with friends, trying a half-marathon, and then turning to trail running because she could cover more territory – and because she was “looking for solace in the mountains.”

Alyssa, sponsored by Smashfest Queen and Nuun

Hydration, recalls a childhood full of competition. “My dad was always putting together a ragtag group of us to walk a mile or throw a shotput.” At that point, the family lived in Maryland, and Alyssa wanted to go to the Naval Academy in Annapolis. “I never worried about my odds, and even though I didn’t get in the first time I applied, my mom just said that we’d make a plan and take it a step at a time. We never looked at things through the lens of success or failure.”

As a local, Sarah, who also works part-time as a nurse, had been thinking about the FKT for several years. “I started running small peaks, and met endurance athlete, Jan Wellford of Keene



SARAH ON MT. MARCY. DUE WEST PHOTOGRAPHY



ALYSSA NAVIGATING A ROCKY TRAIL.



ALYSSA AND FRIEND APPROACHING SUMMIT OF COLDEN.



ALYSSA AND FRIENDS AT SUNSET ON GIANT - HER FINAL PEAK!



SARAH TAKING A BREAK ON WHITEFACE - HER FINAL PEAK! DUE WEST PHOTOGRAPHY

could have benefited from having another driver.”

In addition to pursuing the FKT, Alyssa ran in support of Alice Green’s Paden Institute and Retreat for Writers of Color (see Athlete Profile, June 2020), which gives authors an opportunity to work on their craft in a rustic cottage on the shores of Lake Champlain. On her GoFundMe page [For website: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/running-46-adk-high-peaks-for-the-paden-institute>], Alyssa spoke of knowing how important representation is, as a female professional athlete. She mentions Michelle Obama, Elizabeth Warren and Megan Rapinoe, when asked about who she looks up to, but says that her real heroes are

her mom and sister. “They live normal lives and have given me so much love and support to help me reach my goals.” She also mentions her coach, Ironman champion Hillary Biscay, who’s inspired her to go into coaching because, “...she pours her heart and soul into helping people achieve their dreams.”

Sarah’s focus was the Adirondack Mountain Club, highlighting stewardship and sustainability, and also bringing an awareness of women’s history in the Adirondacks. On her Facebook page and Instagram, she highlighted Grace Hudowski (Grace Peak), the first woman to summit the 46 High Peaks in 1937, as well as Esther McComb, (Esther Mountain) the first woman to reach a high peak in 1839 at the age of 15. Sarah considers these women to be her heroes, and also looks to Joe Stone, the first quadriplegic to compete in an Ironman, and to late singer-songwriter John Prine, for inspiration.

Sarah and Alyssa chose different routes, with Alyssa ultimately ending up with the FKT in a spectacular 3 days, 16 hours, 16 minutes, just a few hours behind the top men’s record and almost equal to the second men’s number (Jan Wellford) set in 2008. Sarah’s time of 4 days, 22 hours, 15 minutes was also incredible, especially considering

the tendinopathy she experienced when starting on the Great Range. “Realizing that I had a long walkout from the Dix Range was one of the worst times.” For Alyssa, it was at the start of Day 2, when, “... everything was cold and super wet at three in the morning, with rain expected that day, after raining the day before too. I didn’t think that it would be as cold, and should have been better prepared for cold nights.”

For Alyssa, one of the most memorable moments was ending up on Allen Mountain on Day 1 right at sunset. She came away from the whole experience with a stronger belief in herself, and her ability to grow in the sport. Sarah recalls the confidence boost that she had at the top of Mt. Marcy with 100 miles in. She finished with an even greater appreciation for how special this community and the whole Adirondack region is. Both talk about wanting to give back, about getting young girls to the mountains, and about helping others invest in themselves.

Just recently, Nancy LaBaff, 59, and her friend, Claudia Warren, 61, completed the 46 peaks in 6 days, 22 hours, 4 minutes. Dedicating the hike to a mutual friend whom they lost to Covid, Nancy, a cancer survivor who lives in Parishville in St. Lawrence County, is ready to try again. With advances in technology, including 3-D printed prosthetics, better tracking systems, and more information on how best to train, will age no longer be a factor?

What’s next for these outstanding athletes? After taking a few weeks to heal, Sarah is thinking about a 24/24 event, that covers 24 peaks in 24 hours, and possibly a bikepacking trip of the Adirondacks. Alyssa would like to be on the podium for Ironman, and also gain more skills and aptitude in the wilderness, perhaps going after a self-supported FKT. Sarah writes, “In order to achieve goals you have to be willing to dream.” And, from Alyssa, “Journeys of this kind are teamwork, they are hard work, they are preparation, and they are a little bit of luck.” Whatever they choose, there’s no doubt that they will continue to challenge themselves to reach their highest levels, and, in doing so, inspire each of us to reach our own.

■ **Sarah: 4 Days, 22 Hours, 15 Minutes** – Mon, 8/17, 12:15am – Allen Mountain trailhead start, two quick trips to the bathroom and double check the tracker; Go! 12pm – Headed up Seymour. Tue, 8/18, 12am – Headed to Cascade trailhead for start of Day 2. 12pm – Headed up Street and Nye. Wed, 8/19, 12am – Finally asleep in the dirt near the Herbert Brook herd path off Marshall.

12pm – Having just finished Cliff and Redfield was at Uphill lean-to to change socks and resupply. Thu, 8/20, 12am – Descending the Wedge Brook trail from Lower Wolf Jaw, at this point in a lot of pain. 12pm – On Nippletop trying to remedy a knotted quad. Fri, 8/21, 12am – Finishing what seemed to be the longest herd path on Earth out from the Dix Range. 12pm – Finishing Rocky Peak Ridge and Giant and on our way to Whiteface and Esther for the finish. Finished at the Whiteface Memorial Highway tollbooth.

■ **Alyssa: 3 Days, 16 Hours, 16 Minutes** – Mon, 8/17, 4am – Seward trailhead off of Corey’s Road, running in towards Seymour for my first peak! 4pm – On top of Marshall Peak. Tue, 8/18, 4am – Heading up to Santanoni Peak. 4pm – Descending off of Dix Mountain, finishing up a solo section and ready to meet up with crew again. Wed, 8/19, 4am – Climbing up Lower Wolf Jaw from Lake Road, getting psyched to start the Great Range! 4pm – Descending from Redfield, in good spirits after a crew member hiked in eight miles to bring me a Coke! Thu, 8/20, 4am – Somewhere in the bushwhack between Big Slide and Porter. 4pm – Driving over to the Giant trailhead to finish up my last two peaks, Rocky Peak Ridge and Giant!

Some of the numbers that both athletes needed to think about – **Sarah’s metrics:** two pairs of La Sportiva Mutants, 13 pairs of socks, three pairs of Smartwool wool underwear, 10 Tailwind vanilla rebuild shakes, 80 Tailwind hydration servings (8,000 calories), 2/3 family size bag of Sour Patch Kids, three pieces of pizza (on summits). **Alyssa’s metrics:** 160 miles total, 67,412 feet of elevation gain, 11 hours of sleep total, four Bushwhacking sections, four pairs of VJ Shoes, nine Smashfest Queen outfit changes, 13 pairs of socks, four tubes of Nuun hydration sport tabs, 300 calories an hour while moving (estimating 22,000 total). 🌲

Linda Waxman Finkle (lwf518@gmail.com) is a writer, kayak and wilderness instructor, and event manager living in the Capital Region. Besides kayaking, she enjoys running, cycling, skiing, Zumba, and tennis. Ultra is definitely in her future.

Valley, who he encouraged me to do my first 50-miler, and then I started doing 100-mile races around the world. I knew that this effort would take a lot.” Alyssa, with 33 Ironmans [PR: 9 hours, 33 minutes] and 45 ultramarathons under her belt, had spent quite a bit of time in the Adirondacks and felt at home here. “I’m always interested in trying something that will test me both physically and mentally, to find out how far I can push myself. After my FKT on the Vermont’s 273-mile Long Trail [2018 female/supported: 5 days, 2 hours, 37 minutes], I found the confidence to pursue other adventures in the mountains.”

Both understood the importance of building robust crews, with Alyssa choosing endurance adventure racers who understood navigation. “They have more relaxed personalities when things go wrong. And, because of Covid-19, people weren’t racing themselves, and had more time to be there to help me with this.” Sarah also knew that she needed strong athletes, and was fortunate to have great friends, like endurance racer Aaron Newell of Queensbury on her crew, who could run with her for almost 100 miles. “One of the takeaways is from the organizational side,” Sarah said. “I’ve never done anything with this much detail, and we

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 2020

Events in **BOLD** are happening (as of 9/1)

BICYCLING: ROAD

ONGOING

Fr-Su Bike Adirondacks: Small Group Road & Gravel Tours. Professionally guided, 2- or 3-day weekends. Adirondacks. bikeadironacks.com.

Daily Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club. Group rides in the Capital Region. All abilities welcome. Join: mohawkhudsoncyclingclub.org.

SEPTEMBER

1-30 Ride for Missing Children: Miles for Hope. Virtual: ride anywhere to benefit National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. missingkids.org/milesforhope.

3-26 7th Harry Elkes Ride. Now virtual - best days to ride: Thu-Sun (The Hub is open). 50 & 32M scenic lake rides or 15M Brant Lake ride. All cyclists welcome. Ride, pick-up shirt & eat/drink from The Hub, Brant Lake. Register (closes 9/24): bikereg.com.

5 Adirondack ElliptiGO Day. Safe ride, lunch, rentals available. Plattsburgh. 518-310-7030. facebook.com/adirondackelliptigo.

6 Catskill Mountain Cycling Challenge Road Rides. 29M, 57M, 99M. Catskill Recreation Center, Arkville. bikereg.com.

11 The Adirondack Trail Ride (TATR). Grand Depart: 8am. 585M solo, self-supported bikepacking adventure through the Adirondack Park. Northville. theadironacktrailride.com.

12 Tour of the Battenkill. Canceled. 75/42/26M. Washington Co. Fairgrounds, Greenwich. tourofthebattenkill.com.

13 Capital Region Tour de Cure. Virtual. Bike: 10M, 30M, 50M, 62.5M, 100M. Run/Walk: 5K. Ballston Spa. To benefit American Diabetes Association. 518-218-1755 x3606. Diabetes.org/capitalregion.

19 Tour de Farms. 30M/10M. 8:30am. Vergennes Union High School, Vergennes, VT. 802-989-6980. acornvt.org/tourdefarms.

20 13th Tour of the Catskills. 75M, 52M, 24M. Tannersville. bikereg.com.

26 9th Drops to Hops Race & Ride. 43M & 23M. Brewery Ommegang, Cooperstown. clarksportscenter.com.

27 16th Team Billy: Virtual Ride & Walk. Saratoga Springs. Register: teambilly.org.

OCTOBER

4 19th Whiteface Uphill Bike Race. Canceled. 11M. Whiteface Ski Center, Wilmington. bikereg.com.

BICYCLING: OFF-ROAD

ONGOING

Fr-Su Bike Adirondacks: Small Group Road & Gravel Tours. Professionally guided, 2- or 3-day weekends. Adirondacks. bikeadironacks.com.

Daily Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club. Group rides in the Capital Region. All abilities welcome. Join: mohawkhudsoncyclingclub.org.

SEPTEMBER

4-6 Wilmington Mountain Bike Festival. Canceled. Wilmington. wilmingtonmtbfestival.com.

13 Farmer's Daughter Gravel Grinder. Canceled. 65M. Crellin Town Park, Chatham. farmersdaughtergravelgrinder.com.

OCTOBER

3 Nomad Cyclocross Race. Individual time trial & team relay. Maple Ski Ridge, Schenectady. bikereg.com.

3 Wilmington Whiteface MTB Race. Canceled. 100K Leadville qualifier or 50K. Whiteface, Wilmington. wilmingtonwhitefacemt看.com.

3-4 Adirondack Mountain Bike Festival. McCauley Mountain, Old Forge. adirondackmountainbikefestival.com.

24 Cross Mountain Crusher Gravel Grinder. Catskill Recreation Center, Arkville. bikereg.com.

NOVEMBER

7 MHCC Gravel Gobbler Gravel Grinder. Virtual. To benefit Regional Food Bank of NE NY. S&S Farm Brewery, Nassau. mohawkhudsoncyclingclub.org.

HEALTH & FITNESS

ONGOING

M-F Rock Your Fitness: Total Body Training. Outdoor Boot Camp (9/9-10/2): MWF 5:15am, 6:30am & 9:30am at Malta Community Center, Malta. First class free: 518-522-9765. facebook.com/rockyourfitnessllc.



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ONGOING

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Adirondack Mountain Club. adk.org.

SEPTEMBER

- 3 **High Peak & Fire Tower Day Hike: Phelps.** Elev. 4,160', 8.2M. 7:30am. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 4 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Mt Marshall.** Elev. 4,360', 15.5M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 6 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Seymour Mtn.** 14.4M. 7:30am. Route 3 & Coreys. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 7 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Iroquois.** Elev. 4,840', 9.4M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 19 **Care for the Trails Day.** 8:30am-12:30pm. Grafton Lakes SP, Grafton. Trail maintenance, email reg required. 518-279-1155. parks.ny.gov.
- 21 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Dix & Hough.** Elev. 4,857' & 4,400', 13.7M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 24-28 **Backpacking: Thru-Hiking 101.** Wakely Dam to Long Lake. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x120. adk.org.
- 25-27 **Trailless Peak Backpacking: Allen Mt.** 18M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 26-27 **Map & Compass Bushwhack.** Education Yurt Village, Lake Placid. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.

- 28 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Street & Nye.** Elev. 4,166' & 3,895', 9M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.

OCTOBER

- 1 **High Peak & Fire Tower: Phelps Mtn.** Elev. 4,160', 8.2M. 7:30am. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 5 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Macomb, South Dix & Grace.** Elev 4,405'; 4,060' & 4,012', 12.3M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 3 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Iroquois.** Elev. 4,840', 9.4M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 4 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Esther Mt.** Elev. 4,240', 6.6M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 5 **Guided Hike: Macomb, South Dix & Grace.** 12.3M. 7:30am. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 8 **Trailless Peak Day Hike: Tabletop Mtn.** Elev. 4,427', 9.8M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 9 **High Peak & Fire Tower: Sawteeth Mtn.** 12.8M. 7:30am. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 11 **High Peak & Fire Tower: Hurricane Mtn.** 7:30am. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.
- 11-13 **Trailless Backpacking: Santanonis.** 18M. Adirondack Mountain Club: 518-523-3480 x111. adk.org.

MULTISPORT: TRIATHLON, DUATHLON & SWIM

SEPTEMBER

- 8/15-9/13 **44th Josh Billings RunAground Triathlon:** Virtual. Bike, paddle (or swim) & run anywhere. Fundraiser for Berkshire Humane Society & United Way. Lenox, MA. Info/register: joshbillings.com.
- 5-6 **15th Lake George Triathlon Festival.** Canceled. Olympic & 70.3. Battlefield Park, Lake George. adkracemgmt.com.
- 12 **Greene County Y Triathlon.** Canceled. Coxsackie. cdyca.org/race2020.
- 13 **Ironman 70.3 Lake Placid.** Canceled. Olympic Speedskating Oval, Lake Placid. ironman.com.

OCTOBER

- 10 **HITS Triathlon Races.** Williams Lake, Kingston. hitstriathlonseries.com.

OTHER EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 26-27 **Great Adirondack Moose Festival.** Indian Lake. indian-lake.com.

PADDLING: CANOE, KAYAK & ROW

SEPTEMBER

- 1-12 **10th Kayaking 4 Meso: Virtual.** Kayak, canoe or SUP and contribute your miles to event's collective goal of 2,500 miles. Albany. 518-495-6099. kayaking4meso.com.
- 1-19 **Feeder Canal Virtual Canoe & Kayak Race.** Feeder Canal, Queensbury. 518-792-5363. feedercanal.org.

Continued

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CONT. FROM PG 13

- 4 Evening Paddle.** 6-8pm. Waterford Boat Ramp, Waterford. PFD, light, whistle, mask required. Alison & Joe Zoske: 518-899-4031. albany.adk.org
- 5 Remington II Race.** 6M downstream. 9am. Oswegatchie River, Rensselaer Falls to Heuvelton. slvpaddlers.org.
- 9 Evening Paddle Ballston Lake.** 5:30-7:30pm. Lake Road Boat Launch at Villago Restaurant, Ballston Lake. PFD, light, whistle, mask required. Alan Mapes: 518-424-3582. albany.adk.org.
- 11-13 38th Adirondack Canoe Classic: 90-Miler. Canceled. Old Forge to Saranac Lake. adirondack90miler.com.
- 15 Evening Paddle Rensselaer.** 5:30-7:30pm. Hilton Park Boat Launch, Rensselaer. PFD, white light, whistle, mask required. Pam Bentien: 518-421-7247. albany.adk.org.
- 22 Evening Paddle.** 5:30-7:30pm. Lock 7, Niskayuna. PFD, light, whistle, mask required. Alison Zoske: 518-899-4031. albany.adk.org.
- 29 Evening Paddle Bethlehem.** 5:30-7:30pm. DEC Boat Launch, Henry Hudson Park, Selkirk. PFD, white light, whistle, mask required. Tom McGuire: 518-588-4808. albany.adk.org.
- 21 Paddle-Hemlock Lake & Picnic.** 10am-1:30pm. DEC Boat Launch, Hemlock Lake. Peg Jacobs: 585-730-9945. adk-gvc.org.

- 5 Slate Valley Scramble Trail Run.** 13.1: 8:30am. 8K: 9:30am. Slate Valley Fairgrounds Trails, Poultney, VT. 303-507-8791. slatevalleytrails.org.
- 5 5K Run & Walk-N-Roll for Spina Bifida: Virtual.** 7:15am-12pm. Central Park, Schenectady. runsignup.com.
- 7 Labor Day 5K Run. Canceled. Harriman Office Campus, Albany. hmrrc.com.
- 8-15 Suffrage Scramble 5K Run/Walk: Virtual.** cvrunners.org.
- 11-12 Old Forge Marathon, Half, 10K & 5K.** Hildebrandt Recreation Center, Old Forge. runsignup.com.
- 5-13 Malta 5K & 10K Run/Walk: Virtual.** Complete race between Sept. 5-13, then report results and upload a photo on your confirmation page. Select the 5K/10K Combo to also receive a discount for the 2021 event. Malta. 518-290-7202. malta5k.com.
- 12 Groton Forest 26.5M/15M/6.5M Trail Runs.** Boulder Beach State Park, Groton, VT. cvrunners.org.
- 12 Charlotte Covered Bridge 5K/10K & Half Marathon.** Shelburne Orchards, Shelburne, VT. 802-316-7142. racevermont.com.
- 12 7th Cops & Joggers 5K Run: Virtual.** Amsterdam Police Benevolent Assoc. zippyreg.com.
- 13 19th Teal Ribbon Run/Walk: Virtual.** 5K run & 1M walk for ovarian cancer. Washington Park, Albany. Kelly Quist-Demars: 518-866-1147. runsignup.com.
- 13 Capital Region Tour de Cure.** Virtual. Run/walk: 5K. Bike: 10M, 30M, 50M, 62.5M, 100M. ADA: 518-218-1755 x3606. diabetes.org/capitalregion.
- 13 Shark Shuffle 5K, Fun Run & Virtual Option.** 8:30am. Cook Park, Colonie. runsignup.com.

- 13 Hop on Home Rabbit Sanctuary 5K Run/Walk or Virtual Run.** 9:15am. Children's Hopathon: 10am. Hudson Crossing, Schuylerville. active.com.
- 13-20 Dutchess County Classic: Marathon, Half, 5K & Kids' Fun Virtual Run.** Poughkeepsie. dutchesscountyclassic.org.
- 15-11/30 Great Cow Harbor Race 10K: Virtual Run.** Run anywhere in the world. Northport. cowharborrace.com.
- 17 CDPHP Workforce Team Challenge. Canceled. Empire State Plaza, Albany. cdphpwptc.com.
- 18-28 15th Saratoga Palio Half Marathon & 5K Run/Walk: Virtual.** Individual or teams. Strava upload required for awards. Saratoga Springs. thesaratogapalio.com.
- 19 Literacy 5K Run/Walk.** 10am. Guided Nature Walk: 8:15am. Story Walk: 9am. Youth Mile: 9:30am. New: Virtual Run/Walk Option. Run today, tutor tomorrow - event supports Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County. Schodack Island State Park, Schodack Landing. zippyreg.com.
- 19 ADK 5K Run/Walk.** 10am. It's happening with safety precautions. Adirondack Pub & Brewery, Lake George. adk5k.com.
- 19 Race the Lake Marathon, Half Marathon & 5K. Canceled. Clark Sports Center, Cooperstown. clarksportscenter.com.
- 19-10/12 Adirondack Marathon, Half Marathon, and 2 & 4 Person Relays.** Virtual. Run anywhere between 9/19-10/12. Schroon Lake. adirondackmarathon.org.
- 20 17th TAM (Trail Around Middlebury) Trek.** 19M trail race: 7:30am. 10K trail race: 9:30am. 2M fun run/walk: 10am. Wright Park, Middlebury, VT. 802-388-1007. maltvt.org.
- 24 Have A Drink On Me 5K.** 9am. Singlecut Beersmiths, Clifton Park. greatamericanbreweryruns.com.
- 26 Helper's Fund 10K/5K. Canceled. Municipal Building, Chestertown. adirondackmarathon.org.

RUNNING & WALKING

SEPTEMBER

- 1-13 Utica Boilermaker 15K & 5K Races.** Virtual. Utica. boilermaker.com.
- 4 New Balance 5th Avenue Mile: Virtual.** 1M. Anywhere, Free. nyrr.org.

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- 26 **FAM 5K "Fund" Run/Walk.** Canceled. Cobleskill Fairgrounds, Cobleskill. fam5k.com.
- 27 **16th Team Billy: Virtual Ride & Walk.** Saratoga Springs. Register: teambilly.org.
- 27 **1st Montgomery County Half Marathon & 5K Race.** Canceled. Tribes Hill Community Park, Tribes Hill. zippyreg.com.
- 27 **Muddy Sneakers 5K Trail Run.** Canceled. Glenville YMCA, Glenville. cdmca.org/race2020.
- 27-10/11 **46th Falling Leaves 5K & 14K Run/Walk: Virtual.** uticaroadrunners.com.

OCTOBER

- 1 **1st Virtual 5K Run/Walk for Literacy.** Community literacy solutions that help all kids learn to read. Hosted by Teach My Kid to Read & Dyslexia Initiative. Albany. Sign-up: bonfire.com/walk-or-run-for-literacy.
- 1-4 **4th LGLC Amy's Adventure Race for the Lake.** 4.5M trail run. Virtual edition. Amy's Park, Bolton Landing. Lake George Land Conservancy: 518-644-9673. Register: lglc.salsalabs.org/amysrace2020.
- 2-11 **NYRR Staten Island Half: Virtual.** 13.1M. Anywhere, Free. nyrr.org.
- 3 **4th Amy's Adventure Race for the Lake.** 4.5M trail run. 9am. Amy's Park, Bolton Landing. lglc.org.
- 4 **Cantina Kids Fun Runs.** 1M & 1/4M. Congress Park (near the Carousel), Saratoga Springs. zippyreg.com.
- 4 **Pfalz Point Trail Challenge.** 10M. 8am. Mohonk Preserve's Spring Farm Trail Head, High Falls. zippyreg.com.
- 10 **Lake Placid Classic Half Marathon & 10K.** Canceled. Lake Placid. lakeplacidclassic.com.

- 10-24 **Fall Foliage 5K & Cider Run: Virtual.** Heart and Sole Running Club. zippyreg.com.
- 11 **10th Fall Foliage Half Marathon & 5K.** 10am. Rhinebeck. fallfoliagehalf.com.
- 11 **Mohawk Hudson River Marathon & Hannaford Half Marathon.** Canceled. Schenectady & Colonie to Albany. mohawkhudsonmarathon.com.
- 17 **Peak 2 Brew Relay: Finger Lakes.** Sprint Team Relay. Greek Peak, Cortland to Heritage Hill Brewery, Pompey. p2brelay.com.
- 17 **Spud Run.** 5K run: 10am. 1M fun run: 9am. Hartford Central School, Hartford. adirondackrunners.org.
- 17-11/1 **TCS New York City Marathon.** Virtual. Run for the Love of Running. 26.2M. Anywhere, free. nyrr.org.
- 18 **Peak 2 Brew Relay: Catskills.** Canceled. Windham Mountain, Windham to Brewery Ommegang, Cooperstown. p2brelay.com.
- 18 **20th Ghostly Gallop 5K and Fun Run.** 10:30am. Hudson High School, Hudson. ghostlygallop.info.
- 18 **CHaD HERO Races: 13.1M, 5K Run/Walk, 1M Fun Run, Hike.** 35M/50M bike ride. Dartmouth Green, Hanover, NH. Hanna Snyder: 603-308-2236. chadhero.org
- 20 **Race Away Stigma 5K.** Hudson Hall, Hudson Valley Comm College, Troy. Larry Ellis: 518-629-7175. hvcc.edu/cct/race.html.
- 24 **Trick or Trek 5K.** 9am. 1K Kid's Run: 8:30am. Oakwood Cemetery, Troy. cdmca.org/race2020.
- 25 **Have a Drink on Me 5K.** 10am. Singlecut North Brewery, Clifton Park. greatamericanbreweryruns.com.

- 25 **Saratoga Cross Country Classic 5K & 8K.** 2K & 3K Developmental XC Runs. 10am. Saratoga Spa State Park, Saratoga Springs. saratogaxcclassic.com.
- 24 **Trick-or-Trek 5K.** 9am. Oakwood Cemetery, Troy. zippyreg.com.
- 26 **Goblin Gallop 5K.** 9am. Halloween Hop 1K Kid's Run: 10am. Abraham Wing School, Glens Falls. adirondackrunners.org.
- 31 **Hairy Gorilla Half Marathon and Squirrely Six Trail Races.** 6M/13.1M: 9:30am. Gorilla Chase Kids Race: 9am. Thacher State Park, Voorheesville. zippyreg.com.

NOVEMBER

- 1 **50th New York City Marathon.** Canceled. New York. nyrr.org.
- 7 **9th Revolutionary Run for Veterans 5K.** Fort Hardy Park, Schuylerville. runsignup.com.
- 7 **Rogers Rangers Ramble Run.** 5K trail run. 10:30am. Ticonderoga Golf Course, Ticonderoga. lachute.us.
- 8 **MVP Stockade-athon 15K.** 8:30am. MVP, State St, Schenectady. hmrrc.com.
- 20-22 **Girls on the Run 5K Run/Walk: Virtual.** Albany. gotrcr.org.
- 22 **Turkey Raffle Run (1 hour).** 10am. Tawasentha Park, Guilderland. hmrrc.com.
- 23 **Our Towne Turkey Trot 5K Run/Walk.** Bethlehem Middle School, Delmar. ourtownebethlehem.com.
- 26 **73rd Troy Turkey Trot.** 10K, 5K, Grade-school mile, Walk. 8am. Downtown Troy. troyturkeytrot.com.
- 26 **Family of New Paltz Turkey Trot 5K.** 8am. Water Street Market, New Paltz. 845-255-7957. familyofwoodstockinc.org. ■

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TOM O'GRADY

Chester Challenge

Opportunities Close to Home

By Tom O'Grady

There is a saying that all public health begins at the local level. Additionally, one of the basic services of local public health agencies is in the provision of health education. For the past five months public health, science, and society at all levels have been wrapped up in addressing a separate basic public health service – communicable disease control. Covid-19 has demanded our attention in a fashion similar to Maslow's hierarchy of human needs demanding our attention at a basic human level. Though not without due cause because infectious agents can demand our attention it is important for individuals to spend some of this time paying attention to their full physical, spiritual and social well-being, and not just the absence of illness.

One of the cornerstones of maintaining and improving community health is the collaboration between local municipalities and non-profit hospitals to provide health education, community engagement and health interventions. Currently in the U.S. these types of collaborations occur in approximately 50% of municipalities. The Chester Challenge is an example of this type of collaboration and is a partnership between the Town of Chester and Glens Falls Hospital. The collaboration was formed out of a desire to promote physical activity as well as health and fitness in the greater Lake George area.

Considerable thought went into the creation of the challenge and a community mapping project was chartered to identify suitable recreation areas. The process was a true collaboration as town officials sought opportunities for new areas of recreation and had to engage land owners and stakeholders to obtain trail access. In 2015, the end result of the Chester Challenge initiative was the creation, improvement, and maintenance of 11 trails at eight recreational areas in Chester that were located on a combination of private, municipal and state land. Individuals visiting and hiking along six of the 11 trails can log their hikes and be eligible to receive a special challenge specific pin and stickers for their efforts. Although none of the hikes are particularly challenging or taxing in their own right, the entire initiative is important and unique.

The Chester Challenge was completed in 2015, prior to a dramatic cutting in public health funding at all levels. Each hike is designed to allow people of all abilities to enjoy the outdoors and beauty of nature while exercising. A beginner may see the trails as a pathway to a future lifetime of health and happiness, and a veteran may see the trails as a quick, easy way to maintain overall health and fitness. The location of each trail in the Exit 25 to Exit 27 area of the Northway gives people an introduction to the southern Adirondacks and many opportunities for beautiful views along each trip.

Chester Creek Trails – The trails along Chester Creek are a convergence of two trail networks that run behind the Chester Municipal Center. The center itself is an old school building. One trail entrance is located in a parking lot next to a basketball court. The trail runs for a little over a quarter-mile before converging with the second entrance along a row of solar panels. Along the trail leading from the basketball court there is fitness equipment for perform stretching and bodyweight exercises as desired. The fitness equipment



was constructed as part of an Eagle Scout project. As the two trails converge, they cross Chester Creek along an old bridge. The current bridge is in need of repair and it's difficult to cross without getting wet – boots are advised! On the other side of the bridge the trail passes along wetland area that is supposed to be great for bird watching in the spring while another section borders powerlines.

Cougar Nature Trails – Much like Chester Creek, the Cougar Nature trails are a network of four trails that were constructed as interconnected loops, adjacent to the North Warren Central School. The nature trails owe their name to Cougar Hill on which they run along. This is a fun trail system that is suitable for a quick walk or a longer trail run or hike with ranging from 0.9-mile to 4.5 miles for the entire system. If a relaxing walk is the goal, there are beautiful views at the top of Cougar Hill and a picnic table available for enjoying a snack. The trails are well marked with several information areas. This is a true multiuse trail network as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing is encouraged in the winter. There are many different plant species along the trails. We came across a large patch of raspberries that was not quite ripe when we visited.

Dynamite Hill and Caroline Fish Memorial Trails – The combination covers 133 acres of land and offers 2.6 miles of multipurpose trails that are truly intended for four-season usage. In warmer months hiking, trail running, walking or mountain biking are enjoyable options, while cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are options in the winter. If you're looking to spend the day in this area you can get your exercise in early before taking advantage of the seasonal picnic pavilion. While you are exploring take note of the lean-to that offers a nice place to rest and relax.

Green Hill and Catamount Trail – It's important to note that this duo is both the most strenuous of the hikes on the challenge and also requires an admission fee at Natural Stone Bridge & Caves Park in Pottersville. The name is deceiving, as Green Hill is both the highest and longest hike on the challenge, and requires covering 4.6 miles and 1,263 feet of elevation gain. The difficulty of the trip is adequately rewarded with views of the Adirondack High Peaks. Catamount Trail is also a deceiving name as this mountain is a steep and strenuous 1.8-mile round-trip that requires a climb of close to 700 feet.

Kipp Mountain – The hike up Kipp Mountain is rewarding and offers visitors a lot for a relatively short round-trip distance of 1.9 miles and 500 feet of elevation gain. The trail itself is wide and well-maintained with a relatively even surface the entire way up. This is a great family hike but adults should be aware that the last tenth-of-a-mile has a steep drop off of the side and care should be taken. On a clear day the view from the top is stunning. While Lake George is blocked by mountains, Loon Lake is visible in the foreground and Prospect, Crane and Gore mountains are all clearly visible from 20 miles in the distance.

Meade and Beckman Mountains – The round-trip circuit up the mountains is just under 2.0 miles and has over 600 feet of elevation gain. Starting from the parking lot, the first half-mile is quite steep before leveling off just before the summit of Meade. Although one of the more strenuous sections of the entire challenge, the exertion is well worth the effort once at the top. There is a small bench to sit and lookout over an open-faced rock overlook. Gore, Crane and Hadley mountains are clearly visible in the distance, in addition to several lesser known mountains that are identified with wooden reference sign. After the steep climb up Meade, the walk over to Beckman is relatively level with only a slight decline and incline over 0.2-mile. The view from the top of Beckman is as rewarding as the view from Meade. Immediately visible in the foreground are Kipp Mountain and Loon Lake, while Crane, Hadley and Prospect mountains dominate the southwest and Lake George area mountains dominate the eastern view. On the way down there's an opportunity to stop at picnic table near an outcropping for one final view, so rest or snack if desired.

Palmer Pond – This 31-acre recreation area is also a multiuse site that has a 1.5-mile trail leading to Palmer Pond. The elevation and grade are easy-to-moderate and DEC has created handicap accessible campsites. There are several spurs that allow added distance and addition views of water. The main attraction, Palmer Pond, is stocked with rainbow and brook trout so it's a great place to take your children if you have a fishing license.

Stewart Mountain – Stewart is an intermediate hike on the challenge and a great transition from the flatter trail adventures to the steeper hikes. Approximately 200-feet of elevation gain is covered over a gradual 0.8-mile round-trip through dense pine forest. Out of the thick tree coverage, the summit opens up to a nice lookout that provides a great view to the west across Loon Lake, with several homes visible along the shore. The most prominent mountain visible is Gore with its ski slopes, although both Crane and Prospect mountains are visible to the southwest.

It's been less than five years since the inception of the Chester Challenge and it's easy to see how the intended purpose was to promote health and fitness while providing hikers with a preview of what the Adirondacks have to offer. With the Challenge's close proximity to the Capital Region, it's clear how this public health intervention can take on a second life and meaning during the pandemic, offering individuals and families relatively easy opportunities to get outside and exercise. 🌲

Tom O'Grady, Ph.D., M.P.H. of Slingerlands is a public health professional and researcher who's also a NASM certified personal trainer and a USATF Level 1 and VdotO2 certified run coach. For more info on training or coaching, email ogrady.strategies@gmail.com or visit ogradystrategies.com.

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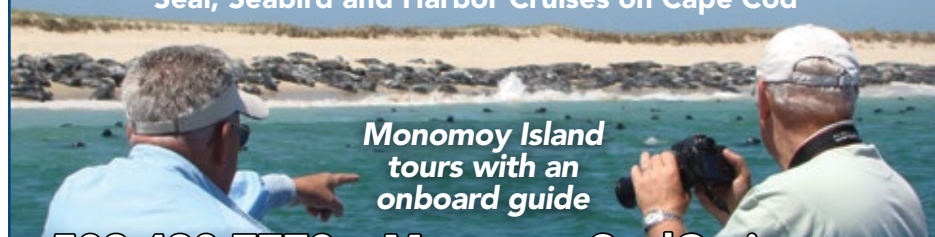



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PADDLING continued from 1

PHOTOS BY RICH MACHA



BELOW THE SPIER FALLS DAM.



VIEW OF WALLFACE FROM HENDERSON LAKE.

The river from Fort Edward to Schuylerville to Mechanicville is relatively scenic with places of historic interest off the water. Due to several dams, you may have to go through the Champlain Canal locks. South to Troy and Albany is nice despite more civilization and road noise. The Waterford Harbor and Peebles Island State Park, at the confluence of the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, are of great interest and I always enjoy paddling that area.

Below the Federal Lock and Dam at Troy, the river is tidal, despite being about 153 miles away from the ocean. The Mohican name for the river, *muh-he-kun-ne-tuk*, means "the river that flows both ways." The difference in high and low tides can be as much as 5.5 feet. Low tide reveals sandy beaches in some spots which can be used for lunch breaks or rest spots. The current flows downstream for about seven hours and upstream for about five hours, so it is best to plan your paddling trip to accommodate this flow. This tidal estuary is of great ecological interest and significance, and it retains some of its wild character in many places.

South of Albany, there are marshy areas to explore such as Tivoli Bays, Constitution Marsh, as well as the East and West Flats - between the communities of Coxsackie, Stockport, Hudson and Athens. Some tributaries, such as the Papscanee, Esopus and Catskill creeks, can be paddled up for a change of pace. Barges and ocean-going ships can be encountered, especially close to high tide. Their wakes are often not as big as you may think and any resultant waves are more easily handled by staying away from shallow water where the waves may break like surf at the ocean.

There are views of the Catskill Mountains, and several unique lighthouses along the Hudson, which can be observed from the water. The Saugerties Lighthouse at the mouth of the Esopus Creek, even has a resident male harbor seal that has spent over a year in the area - 113 miles from the open sea. Bald eagles can be seen in most areas along the river but are especially abundant in the tidal reaches. Small groups of mute swans are often observed; the white adults can sometimes be seen with young grey-colored cygnets.

With fall foliage season approaching, the Upper Hudson River will be showing its best in late September and early October, while the Lower Hudson will be at its showiest in late October. To get the most out of your paddling adventures, I highly recommend get-



PADDLING WITH THE BIG BOATS ON THE LOWER HUDSON.

ting a guidebook for whatever section that you plan to paddle.

Adirondack Paddling: 65 Great Flatwater Adventures by Phil Brown - This is a great up-to-date collection of mostly day paddling destinations - not that you couldn't overnight it on many of these trips - into the wilder areas of the Adirondacks. Color photographs add to this book's appeal and to the appeal of the waterways included here. The book has a nice blend of stream and lake paddling, featuring old favorites, as well as newly-accessible areas like the Opalescent River.

Adirondack Mountain Club Canoe and Kayak Guide East-Central New York State edited by Kathie Armstrong and Chet Harvey - While this guidebook includes flatwater trips on streams and rivers, it also has a fair amount of whitewater in it making it a must-have for the river-running paddler. Much of the Hudson River from Newcomb to Troy is described here, as well as the easy whitewater of popular streams like the Batten Kill.

A Kayaker's Guide to New York's Capital Region by Russell Dunn - This book covers in detail, the Mohawk River from Amsterdam to Waterford, and the Hudson River from Mechanicville to Catskill. You can be sure that Russell Dunn will offer historical background and interesting tidbits in his books and this one is no different.

New York State Canalway Water Trail Guidebook and Map Set by Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor - This mile-by-mile guide features launch sites, paddler-friendly facilities, and places of interest for 450 miles of the canal system, including the Champlain Canal. The set of four maps




SOME INTERESTING SIGHTS AND SHAPES IN THE ALBANY AREA.

are tear-resistant and waterproof. Go to: eriecanalway.org/watertrail.

Hudson River Water Trail Guide by Ian Giddy - Revised by the Hudson River Watertrail Association. The seventh edition is now available and is by far the best guide to the tidal Hudson River from Troy to New York City. Boat launching areas, campsites, historical sites, and natural areas of interest are covered. Black and white charts for every section help in navigating New York's most famous river. Find it here: hrwa.org.

A Kayaker's Guide to the Hudson River Valley by Sheri Aber - This guide covers the smaller and quieter waters of the valley, on either side of the Hudson River, from Kinderhook south to Beacon. 🌲

A lover of wild places, Rich Macha has led many trips for the Adirondack Mountain Club, and has spent 20 years in the paddlesport/snowsport business. More of Rich's adventures can be found at northeastwild.blogspot.com.



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