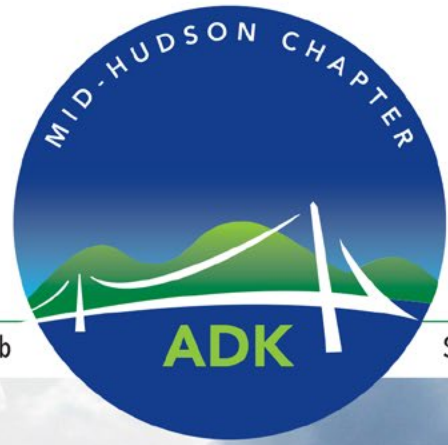


Mid-Hudson

TRAILS



News and activities of the Mid-Hudson Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club

Spring 2021



The Rambling Adventures of Ginny Fauci & Adrienne Scivolette ***By Ginny Fauci***

WHEN NYS WENT ON PAUSE in March 2020, and MHADK and Mohonk Preserve both canceled guided hikes (MHADK resumed in July), Adrienne Scivolette and I felt there was no way we could stay home and do nothing. With the Governor saying outdoor exercise was good, we decided we would hike as many off-the-beaten paths as we could in our local area. We were both self-isolating, only going out for gas and groceries. Adrienne was also the care giver for her 99-year-old Mom at that time, so she had an added incentive to stay safe. Our 10 essentials became 14 with the addition of masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and bags for picking up trash. We didn't hike without them.

Minnewaska State Park Preserve and Mohonk Preserve were at the top of our list, though Mohonk Preserve closed to hikers almost immediately and Minnewaska cut its parking by 50%, which didn't leave many spaces. The park also waived the parking fee, which meant hikers from everywhere flocked to Minnewaska. In order to get in, you had to be in the long line by 8 AM or earlier; and forget the weekends, not worth it. We found Mondays and Tuesdays and any rainy day to be the least crowded days. With our frequent visits, we were able to watch the entire construction of the new Minnewaska Visitor's Center from start to finish.

Minnewaska was always crowded with many maskless groups. After parking, our mission was to get away from Lake Minnewaska at the upper lot and go in the opposite direction of Awosting Falls at the lower lot. Most of the crowds were going to those two areas. We had our favorite

trails where we met very few people. Sometimes we met no one. Those were the best days! We parked at Jenny Lane a few times when we got there early. In the beginning it was not well-known and so was easy to park there, but that ended quickly. Most out-of-the-area visitors to the park didn't know any other way to get in but the main entrance. That meant Peterskill wasn't crowded either, until it was. We hiked all the trails, both old and new, clockwise and counterclockwise.

When Mohonk Preserve re-opened, we had more choices, including starting at the bottom of the "stairmaster" (the East Trapps Connector Trail to Undercliff from the trailhead parking at the Visitor's Center), which was Adrienne's favorite. Members-only parking was 7-9 and then it opened to the public. We went early but so did everyone else. We now know every way to get to the Mountain House

Continued on Page 11

BOARD MEMBERS

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Carla Barrett

Vice Chair

Open

Secretary

Annette Caruso

Treasurer/Finance Chair

Ralph Pollard

Chapter Director

Barry Skura

Chapter Director

Sharon Klein

MH Trustee to ADK Advisory Council

Starchild

Conservation Chair

Daniel Jones

Database Chair

Eli Cohen

Education Chair

Eric Harvey

Membership Chair

Pete Cantline

Newsletter Co-Chairs

Dana Bennet

Georgette Weir

Nominating Committee Chair

Lalita Malik

Outings Co-Chair

Ginny Fauci

Outings Co-Chair

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Sue Mackson

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Tom Amisson

Water Trails & Paddles Chair

Russ Fallor

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Jeanette Tully-Baker

Past Chair

Georgette Weir



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

AS HAS BEEN EVIDENT in emails to members, Chapter work has been underway as usual: a new Chair is in place, volunteers were sought for three Board openings and two of the positions were filled as of this writing (see separate stories), a quick-response plan to offer cross-country ski lessons is now in place in the event of good snow, and hikes, hikes, hikes continue to provide opportunities for exercise and the enjoyment of nature's beauty in our area.

I joined ADK in 2016 when I moved to the Hudson Valley from Central NY. I can honestly say I experienced some of the most wonderful, inspiring, and beautiful moments in my life as a result. With the friends I made in ADK I have hiked all over the Northeast USA as well as several overseas locations. As an adult, I have always believed a person should not just take from, but also give to, the organizations important in their lives. And so, here I am your Chapter Chair.

I urge those of you who have the personal time to do so, to consider becoming active in the Chapter and to perhaps offer to fill one of our vacant positions. You may send an email to midhudsonadk@gmail.com. While things are a little quiet now, we will resume all our activities and events when it is safe to do so, hopefully later this year.

Carla Barrett
MHADK Chair

MUSICAL CHAIRS (AND OTHER BOARD NEWS)

FOR VARIOUS REASONS, 2021 began with several changes to our expected board line-up.

Stepping into the position of Chair from the position of Vice Chair is **Carla Barrett**. Carla was elected by board members at the January meeting to replace **Georgette Weir**, who stepped down for personal reasons.

Nominees for other open positions

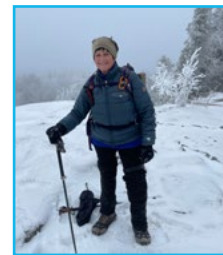
were solicited by email and personal recruitment. As a result, **Sharon Klein** was elected to the position of Chapter Director, a position vacated by **Bryan Sachese**, who announced in December he was moving to Maryland to be near his daughter. Bryan was set to serve as Vice Chair beginning in January of this year. That position remains open.

Filling a new position created as a result of bylaw changes at the Club level approved last fall—Chapter representative (Trustee) to a new Advisory Council to the ADK Board—is **David Starchild Koehler**; **Lalita Malik** will serve as Alternate Trustee.

The bylaw changes at the overall Club level eliminated the position of Club Director to the ADK board. We thank **Wayne Owens** for filling that role the past two years.

New Chapter Director

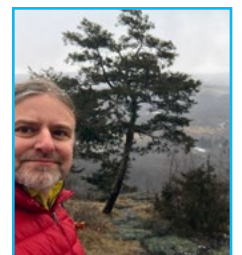
Sharon Klein is joining our chapter board as a director, filling a vacancy. Sharon is an active hike leader for our chapter and brings considerable conservation and organizing experience to our local board. She earned her Catskill 3500 patch



in 2020, and since then has been leading hikes in the Catskills frequently for both MHADK and the Catskill 3500 Club. She currently serves as a full member on the Marbletown Planning Board, selected, she notes "particularly for my more aggressive stance on open space and trail preservation, as a balance to some of the more pro-development members." Sharon is also active in the grass-roots organization "Save Bluestone Wildforest". She regularly runs hikes in the Bluestone Forest to educate people on how they can help fight off the concrete and steel fabrication plant that is being proposed.

MHADK Representative to ADK Advisory Council

David Starchild Koehler, aka Starchild, is a long-time hiker and ADK member who will represent our chapter in the new club advisory council. With the help of **Lalita Malik**, he helped start the Young Members group of ADK, which ran many hiking, white water rafting,



caving, and even rock climbing events, many joint with the Long Island Chapter. He helped persuade ADK to allow the chapters to use Meetup.com site to promote the club, hikes, and events. He now has a family with a child of 12 and has run several children's hikes (outside of the club), and has an interest in bringing children's hikes to our club. He hiked the AT as a thru hiker in 2013, also completed the Long Path and two Camino routes as well as the Catskill 35's. He is a Leave No Trace Trainer, a firefighter who has assisted in wildlands search and evacuation efforts, a former business owner. Now semi-retired, Starchild chooses to work as a ski instructor in the winter months, and also is a volunteer firefighter for Taghkanic Fire in Columbia County. Starchild currently co-leads mid-week hikes with Lalita Malik for our chapter.

WELCOME, NEWBIES!

MHADK WELCOMES the following new members, who joined the club during the last quarter of 2020

October: Jesse and Donna Dann, James De Ricco, Malia Du Mont, Elizabeth Elliott, David Harvey, Charles Humbach, Robert Janiszewski, Tamara Kirkman, Marl Marlow, Matthew Ohm and Helena Leroux, Elise Perry, Barbara Phair, Joanna Porreca, Doreen Ryder, Eugene Sala, Barbara Tanzman, Freya Toedter, Thomas Wiacek

November: Nancy Bruno, William Fil, Alexander and Courtney Hannaford, John and Kirsys Langley, Jong Lee and Christina Choi, Moe Lemire and Jeff Sente-man, Charles Lutomski, Roberta Mulder, Elizabeth and Matthew Rodano, Janet Sabatino, Mark Serino

December: Irene Di Maio, Steve Haimovitz and Diane Perea, Janet Kelly, Amelia McNamara, Gina Ragusa, William Tozzo and Amy Butterfield-Tozzo, Sarah Voor, Peter Wells, Bethani Williams, Sandi Zeko

*Submitted by Pete Cantline
New Member Chair*

GET READY FOR SPRING PADDLING

DO YOU ENJOY GETTING OUT on the water in your kayak or canoe, but don't always have someone to go with you? Consider becoming a paddle leader. As a leader, you'll be able to show other paddlers your favorite places to enjoy from the water. Your outing could be in kayaks (recreational or sea touring), canoes, or both. You'll be able to choose your day (weekday or weekend), time of

IN MEMORIAM: JENNIFER ANDERSON

JENNIFER ANDERSON, membership chair for Mid Hudson ADK from 2012-2019, passed away after a long illness. Ginny Fauci and Jen became good friends through hiking, and Ginny offers these brief words of remembrance.

"I first met Jen when she signed up for my Whites trip in 2011. There were only 5 or 6 of us that year, all women. I was rather ambitious & planned an 8.5-mile hike that went up and down two 4,000 footers, one of them twice. We barely made it back to Galehead hut in time for dinner, totally exhausted. I didn't think she'd ever join me again, but she kept coming back every year until she wasn't able to. We had great times together. I'll miss her and always think of her when I'm in the Whites. RIP Jen."



day, location, and length of paddle. Perhaps you might start by co-leading with a current paddle leader. We will guide you if you have some desire to become a leader or leader's helper. We need new energy in our Chapter's paddling program. Over the years, our stable of paddling leaders has become depleted, and we are eager to help you get started.

We're not asking for a commitment right now. We're only asking you to put your name on a list of members who would consider leading your favorite trip or helping an experienced leader with their trip. What have you got to lose? Just tell us what you're ready to do.

Contact Russ Faller, MHADK Paddling & Water Trails Chair, at russoutdoors@yahoo.com or 845-297-5126, or Glenda

Schwarze, who organizes weekly quiet water Thursday paddles, at (845) 266-5203 or schwar582@aol.com.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHO TAKES CARE OF OUR WATER TRAILS?

WE DO! The Mid-Hudson ADK maintains the Black Creek in Ulster County and the lower Wappinger Creek in Dutchess County. In addition, we would like to open a water trail on the Fishkill Creek in Dutchess County. But to do these things and more, we need volunteers.

You do not need any experience or even tools. We can train you and supply some tools. All you'll need to bring is muscle. But wait! The work on the Black Creek is typically light. The lower Wappinger

Creek is a trash pick-up. The Fishkill Creek is the only one that requires muscle power. You can choose what's right for you. You will never be asked to work alone. All work is done in groups. We usually have a good time and quit when we've had enough. There's an optional social hour afterwards.

If you know of a creek or other water body that needs some tender love and care to become a great water trail, please let Russ Faller know. (Contact info below)

We're not looking for a commitment from you, only your name and contact info for a list of people who are interested in maintaining water trails only when they have some extra time.

Please contact Russ Faller, MHADK Paddling & Water Trails Chair at russoutdoors@yahoo.com or 845-297-5126.

SPRING ACTIVITIES WE HOPE WILL HAPPEN

WATCH YOUR EMAIL and midhudsonadk.org for updates and announcements

April 22, Earth Day, Locust Grove Trail Work (Tom Amisson)

May 1, Hudson River Sweep (Russ Faller)

May 1, Love My Parks Day: Chapter hikes (Ginny Fauci)

May 29, 30 or June 5, 6, Black Creek Cleanup (Russ)

June, National Trails Day, (Tom A, Mine Hole Trail)

June, Kingston Paddle Festival (Russ)

EMAILER WANTED

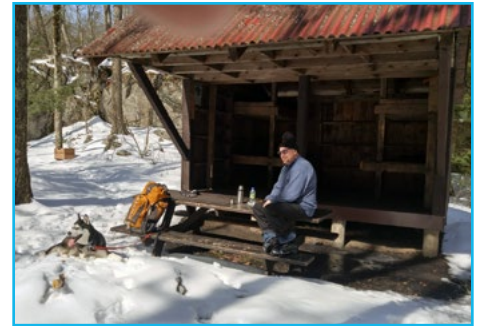
Easy, but Key Volunteer Position Needs Filling

FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, Sue Mackson has been sending out our weekly email updates. Now, she says, "It's time for me to hang up my computer, or, at least, give it a rest."

So, we are looking for a volunteer who can commit to not more than 1/2 hour of work at home weekly, posting our upcoming outings and events. The outings schedule is provided by Ginny. Jeanette posts it to the website. Sue says: "All you have to do is be alert to changes. There are folks who will provide you other information to post. If you'd like to try your hand at this rewarding way of reaching our membership, please contact me, Sue Mackson 845-471-9892, suemackson@gmail.com."

WINTER HIKING ADVICE

MANY, THOUGH NOT ALL, of us hope that by the time this newsletter comes out, winter will be a memory. But, if not, and if you are interested in learning about gear that you may need to enjoy next year's winter season, check out Eric Harvey's winter hiking advice on our website. Here's the link: <https://midhudsonadk.org/2021/01/20/winter-hiking-advice/> Thanks Eric!



Member & Volunteer Profile: RALPH POLLARD

by Sue Mackson

YOU WON'T FIND RALPH POLLARD'S NAME if you peruse the quarterly outing logs. Not even in the canoe reports. He says his body is not up to that stuff anymore. But for decades Ralph has been a mainstay of our Mid Hudson Chapter in one role and another.

Ralph and his late wife, Charyl, came to the Hudson Valley from the Midwest. Each enjoyed outdoor experiences during college, he at Glacier National Park as a bus-tour guide, she at Rocky Mountain National Park. They met on a canoe trip in Wisconsin when they each worked in Milwaukee Post College. Outdoor recreation drew them together and was a feature of their lives and daughters' lives at a time, in the 70's, when all Mid-Hudson Chapter hikes started on weekend afternoons beginning at a corner near Vassar College and lasted half a day. They also participated in Sierra Club activities supporting both organizations.

Ralph was not content just to join activities. He early on became an Outing Leader, and also served as Outings Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary for our chapter. But if there is a job that one associates with Ralph, it's keeping our chapter's finances straight and decipherable for more than 20 years. He remembers that it was Russ Faller who suggested that working with the chapter's finances might be a good fit for him. That's when he began his first several years as MHADK Treasurer. He put the same skills to good use in his role in planning for the spring and fall all-Club outings that our chapter has hosted over the years. Volunteering as treasurer made him aware of his love for balancing and keeping ledgers straight. He loves spreadsheets. Ralph's discovery of this love motivated him to do the same sort of work for the Sierra Club, where he has just stepped down as treasurer, and for the local Meals on Wheels program.

Ralph also is known as the patriarch of the MHADK weekly breakfast meeting at the Gateway Café in Highland, with as many as 20 folks trading news and stories at one long table (pre-Covid). The breakfasts began more than 15 years ago, when he joined Gail Epstein and some other ADKers who paddled the Hudson and then breakfasted together weekly before work. At the diner, the regular waiter, Benny, knows the regulars' regular order. A great camaraderie has developed among these Friday breakfasters, and the friendships were important to Ralph when he lost Charyl 9 years ago.

In retirement from his IBM engineering job, Ralph's love of history motivates his reading choices; presently presidential biographies, and his trips with Roads Scholar. One trip he particularly values followed the Lewis and Clark trail for 18 days from Missouri north to North Dakota and west to Oregon.

Ralph wants you to know that what he most values about MHADK are the friendships he's formed through his involvement in volunteering. The early morning paddles eventually became breakfast only, an official ADK event, which continued during the first Covid warm weather season as a bring-your-own lunch at the Highland waterfront.

When Ralph eventually ends his involvement with our chapter as Treasurer, he will still have those breakfasts (soon, it is to be hoped) and the friendships they nurture.



Ralph and his daughter, Sarah, and grandkids, Nina and Alex, taken by their mother, Susan.



Starchild

Sept. 19, Kayaking the Hudson River in the Hudson Highlands

Soon after launching, a vengeful Mother Nature chased us off her river. "How dare you decide when you can paddle my river!" She blew a double-digit Northwind against the flood tide to create small whitecaps, excessive chop and extreme difficulty for us to progress northward with our meager paddles. We quickly retreated to Constitution Marsh. Mother Nature stopped threatening us and we were able to enjoy ourselves. We tried to go up Foundry Creek, explored other channels, took a walk to an exceptional view of West Point and then walked the marsh boardwalk, discussed the trees and plants growing on the Audubon property with the caretaker and paddled to the waterfalls on the south end of the marsh. We spent about 5 hours in the marsh. The last hour and a half, however, was spent waiting for the water level to go down so we could squeeze under the RR bridge. But we had plenty of time to chat with a couple of kayakers from Hopewell Junction. A stand-up paddleboarder came by. He didn't have to wait. He just laid down flat on his board and hand paddled under the bridge. He just made it and might have put a streak of dirt on the back of his T-shirt. The Hopewell couple tried to get under the bridge before the 2 hours after high tide. They barely made it and shouted back at us: "Don't try it!" Leader Russ Faller with Ernie Gehrler, Charlotte Mann, Roberta Forest, Martha Rabson (all

ADKers), Christopher Davey (guest).

Oct. 18, Fishkill Ridge Overlooks

Roberta Forest, Sayileela Nulu, Jean McAvoy, Joanna Nadoolman, Kathy Skura, Sharon Klein, Tamar Michaeli joined Barry Skura, to enjoy a beautiful day of Hudson Highlands Fall Foliage. The sky was clear and sunny as we hiked the Overlook and Fishkill Ridge trails from a Beacon Hills trailhead. We climbed a little under 1800 feet and were rewarded with spectacular views of the Hudson River, Gunks, Beacon, and other spots. We even saw NYC in the distance. On the way down, we visited the site and memorabilia from the 1945 airplane crash of a World War II hero pilot. Sayileela Nulu contributed insights from a naturalist perspective. She also collected Mylar balloons and other trash left by prior hikers. She asked us to tell people attending their grandchildren's BIRTHDAY parties to say "NO" to Mylar balloons - the impact is going to be there long after the "celebration."

Nov. 6, Twin Mountain

It was a delicious, warm Fall day for our hike to Twin mountain, a Catskills 3500 footer. As always, the Catskills did not disappoint, as the hike featured an abandoned quarry with panoramic views and slate thrones to view them on a water fall deep in the forest, a beaver pond, and .75 miles of pure jungle gym. The last part of the hike was almost a total vertical climb to the summit with a boulder field and a

series of fun and challenging scrambles. We enjoyed our lunch on the summit so much that no one wanted to head back down to reality, where we were still wondering about the election results. Nevertheless, we all got down the scrambles safely and back to our cars. A great time was had by all. Leader, Sharon Klein, with Pete Cantline, Sharon Zraly, Moe Lemire, Joan Billows, Tracy Rakin, Maria Perez.

Nov. 7, Burger Hill and Ferncliff Forest

An unseasonably warm sunny day made for a stunningly gorgeous view atop Burger Hill at Drayton Grant Park in Rhinebeck with no wind. Seven of us, all ADK members, made the trek, then continued to Ferncliff Forest for an end-of-fall hike through mounds of leaves on apparent trails up to the fire-tower. With the social distancing and limited people allowed at a time the tower, the daring few who wanted to go up didn't get the chance. But we did enjoy a leisurely picnic lunch below it. Lots of folks were out for the same reason on this too-nice day. We'll just have to do this again. Joining the



Nov 7, Burger Hill

Sharon Klein

Note: MWH=Mid Week Hike

leader, Annette Caruso, were Roberta Forest, Sayileela Nulu, Jean McAvoy, Joanna Nadoolman, Kathy Skura, Sharon Klein, Tamar Michaeli.

Nov. 14, Mt. Tremper Fire Tower

We had a great day hiking up Tremper Mountain on Saturday Nov.14. The weather surely cooperated for us once again. It was a crisp Fall day, miraculously, with almost no wind on this usually windy summit. The group took the trails less traveled, utilizing the newly built parking lot at the end of Jessop Road in Willow, then climbing the steep ascent up the Willow trail, which connected with the blue Long Path/Warner Creek trail to the summit. The fire tower had an enclosed cabin enabling those of us with a fear of heights (this writer included) to spend more time enjoying the view. Leader, Sharon Klein, with Georgette Weir, JC Fouere, Kristin, Pete Cantline, Joanna Nadoolman, Victoria Johannet, Malia Du Mont.

Nov. 15, Dover Stone Church

We gathered at 11 am at the Dover Middle School parking lot. It was a sunny, warm day for November. We walked a short distance to the trailhead and proceeded about a 1/4 mile to the information kiosk. We then took the path leading to the cave, aka, Stone Church, and took notice of the rock formations, waterfall and creek running through it. We then proceeded on the Upper Trail, where we stopped for lunch, the Lookout Trail which led to a beautiful view of the valley and Taconic Range, then proceeded back and finally took the Lower Trail. We also took notice of the healthy hemlock trees. We hiked about 4 miles. Leader, John Ragusa with Sayi Nuli, Connie Haven, Ellen Kelly, Joanne Norris, James Dericco, Shirley Freitas, Annette Caruso, Gwen Cardarelli, Margaret Douglas, Pat Marsh.

Nov. 19, MWH at Mohonk Preserve

Parked at Pine Road and hiked to Bonticue Crag and back. Lunch stop at old visitor's center. Warmed up to 40, a little wind, sun and clouds. Another great day in the woods. Joining leader Ginny



Nov 15, Dover Stone Church

John Ragusa



Nov 28, Bowdoin Ramble

Georgette Weir

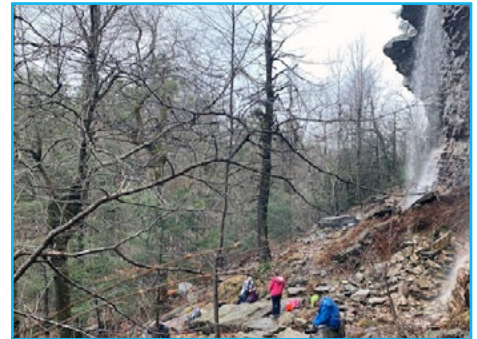
Fauci were Sam and Carol Doran, Adrienne Scivolette, Jill Abrahamsen, Cathy Cumins.

Nov. 20, Mt Taurus

Adrienne Scivolette, Alan Sobel, Cindy Colter, Ginny Fauci, Jean McAvoy, Rich Salz, and Tracy Rakin joined leaders Barry and Kathy Skura to hike Mount Taurus, also known as Bull Hill. The map promised mounds of fantastic views along the Washburn and Undercliff trails—we massaged the route so as to get the best from both. The sun heard about our plan and decided to join the fun. We got what we sought—LOTS of views and fine fellowship. On the way back, we visited the main and outlying ruins of the Cornish estate.

Nov. 27, Rainbow Falls

Leader Sharon Klein shepherded Joanna Nadoolman, Pete Cantline, Tracy Rakin, Kristen Decker, Alan Sobel, and Victoria Johanet in a post-Thanksgiving day hike to Rainbow Falls in Minnewaska SP. Due to popular demand, two groups went out separately, taking different routes (see next entry). Ginny Fauci led the second group. Water was flowing everywhere and a couple of gnomes and hobbits were seen peeking out from the moss-covered rocky knolls in the gully by the falls. The crowds seem to be dying down as the cold weather sets in. In the case of us hikers, the fewer the merrier!



Nov 27, Rainbow Falls

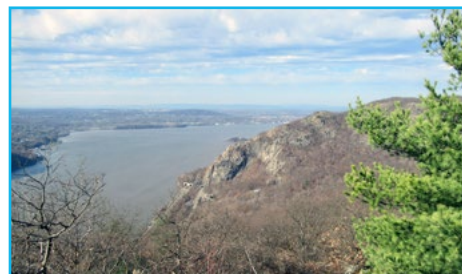
Sharon Klein

Nov. 27, Rainbow Falls (No, you are not seeing double)

Took Sharon Klein's overflow group to Rainbow Falls today, out to Lake Awosting for lunch at the old Ranger's Cabin, and back on Jenny Lane. No sun, but warm enough for a no-jacket day! Lots of beaver activity in the area. Another great day in the woods. Leader, Ginny Fauci with Russ Faller, Dave Webber, Shari Aber and Alice (that's a four-legged creature who's completed the 3500, in case you didn't know).

Nov. 28, Bowdoin Ramble

A modestly early start (9:30) at Dutchess County's Bowdoin Park in Poughkeepsie enabled our group to beat the crowds and take a sunny 4-mile meander through fields and woods, enjoying Hudson River views, identifying winter trees by their bark, gazing upward at the magnificent eagle's nest, and being struck not-quite-speechless by the enormous sycamore/London plane tree north of the playground. Joining leader Georgette Weir were Sayi Nulu, John Ragusa, Connie Haven, Ellen Kelly, Margaret Douglas, and Jean McAvoy.



Nov 20, Mt Taurus

Dec. 3, Anthony's Nose MWH

Started from hikers' lot on 9W, walked through Fort Montgomery State Historic Site, across the suspension bridge and



Dec 3, Anthony's Nose

Bear Mountain Bridge, where we started our steep climb up Anthony's Nose. Lunch on top. Bright sunny day, warm in the high 40's. Down the AT and back across the bridges. Leader, Ginny Fauci with Joan Billows, Martha Rabson, Adrienne Scivolette, Jean Martin.

Dec. 4, Fahnestock Flashback

On an unexpectedly sunny day, Barbara T, Jean McAvoy, Kathy Skura, Pat Gandolfo, Pete Cantline, Russ Faller, and Sue Mackson joined leader Barry Skura to hike the AT, Three Lakes, and Old Mine Railroad trails in central Fahnestock. We learned some of the area's history but had to change the route, due both to high creek crossings and to the leader having a last-minute injury. Instead, we thru-hiked the pleasant Sunken Mine Road and a smaller, adjacent woods road. We also went hunting for two mines from the mid-1800s - the Hamilton and Sunk mines - where Thomas Alva Edison tested a new iron extracting technology in a (futile) attempt to reinvigorate the area's prior mine industry. The leader pledged both to reschedule the original hike and to develop a new hike focusing on several old mines.

Dec. 10, Minnewaska MWH

Beautiful sunny day in the 30's for a ramble around Minnewaska. Snow, ice, wind, trails, carriage roads, views. Even got a scramble up to Castle Point. Another great day in the woods. Leader, Ginny Fauci with Dave Webber, Joan Billows, and Roberta Forest.

Dec. 11, Fahnestock

A sunny, mild December morning: Yay! Perfect for the planned 4.5-mile morning loop hike at Fahnestock State Park. Joining leader Georgette Weir, were Ellen

Kelly, Connie Haven, Jean McAvoy, Charlotte Mann, Pete Cantline, JoAnn Norris, Margaret Douglas, and Pat Galfano. We finished at noon, then everyone went on their way to run errands or return home.

Dec. 12, FDR State Park

Leader John Ragusa and members Margaret Douglas, John Martin, Ellen Kelly, Carol Gray, Connie Haven, Sandi, Karen Flaherty, Barry and Kathy Skura met at 10:00 am in Parking Area #5. The day was cloudy and damp. We started on the yellow trail through a dense forest and a very wet trail. It started to drizzle. We then circled around to drier ground and the drizzle stopped. We then picked up the white trail for about a half mile then picked up the green trail after reading some plaques on the history of the area, which was used as a training camp for the CCC during the 1930s. The green trail went through some nice forest with large tulip poplar trees and then the fog rolled in. We finished up on the yellow trail again to the parking lot having spent about 2 hours hiking.



Dec 13, Gertrude's Nose

Dec. 13, Gertrude's Nose

After some re-scheduling and threats of bad weather, perfect weather was ordered up for this hike to Gertrude's Nose in Minnewaska lead by Sharon Klein. The rains fortunately did not bring the slippery rocks and leaves we were afraid of. Instead, trail conditions neared perfection on this challenging hike to the outer reaches of the cliffs of Minnewaska. The crowds of weekend warriors carrying only water bottles seen in the past 6 months seem to have thinned out, leaving the serious hikers back in charge. Leader Sharon Klein was joined by Martha Rabson, Victoria Johannet, Janet Sabatino, Eddi Zamft, Patrick Cumins.

Dec. 13, Valkill

Such great December weather! On Sunday December 13th a herd of hikers signed up to enjoy the Top Cottage and Eleanor's Loop trails at Valkill in Hyde Park. To social distance we split the group in two: Georgette Weir led Samuel, Shirley Freitas, Carol Gray and Eileen (Carol's sister), Sayi Nulu, and Gwen Cardarelli on the earlier trek; Annette Caruso led Jeanette Tully-Baker, Connie Haven, Terese Ohnsing, Marie Caruso and Jonathon Baker an hour later. Our paths crossed at the entrance to Eleanor's Loop, the first group had just completed Top Cottage and second was just starting out. It was a mild, clear day and the views from the top were expansive through the bare trees so we could see the Catskills.

Dec. 19, MWH Mohonk Preserve

Parked at Pine Road and hiked to Bonticue Crag and back. Lunch stop at old visitor's center. Warmed up to 40, a little wind, sun, and clouds. Another great day in the woods. Joining leader Ginny Fauci were Sam and Carol Doran, Adrienne Scivolette, Jill, Cathy Cumins.



Dec 13, Valkill

Dec 22, Nuclear Lake



Connie Haven

Dec. 19, Quick Response X-C Ski #1: Norrie-Mills State Park in Staatsburg

The first major storm of the Winter dumped 10-12" of snow. Conditions were excellent. We skied from the road to the Riverside Pavilion to the Mills Mansion, enjoying beautiful views of the Hudson River and the Catskill Mountains-Kaaterskill High Peak and Round Top. We marveled at Victorian buildings along the way. Buildings with distinctive architecture, even the stables. And the grand finale was the Mills Mansion, a structure that could rival any mansion on the River Seine. We got a glimpse of the world of the ultra-wealthy during the Gilded Age. Upon reaching our starting point, a majority of participants decided to make it a 1/2 day of skiing. Three of us decided to continue on. We worked our way down to the Riverside Pavilion and happened upon Sam and Carol Doran, who had started skiing from the Mills Mansion. We skied together for a while, then split up, going our separate ways. It was a cold, but sunny and still day. Everyone had fun. Joining leader, Russ Faller, were Martha Rabson, Mark Eis, Barry and Kathy Skura, Roberta Forest and Dave Webber.

Dec. 22, Quick Response X-C Ski #2: Fahnestock State Park

We met at the Sunken Mine Road parking area with high hopes of skiing this closed road with its engaging hills. We had heard rave reviews the days after the big snow of Wednesday night. But, alas, we were a week too late. The snow was chopped up from bare boots, and crusty and icy after thawing and re-freezing. We tried, but even the most gentle descents sent us racing out of control, with no soft snow to even accomplish a snow plow. It was no fun. So we moved to the Winter

Park X-C Ski area. Because it had been so beautifully groomed, skiing there was 1000 times better. The tracks were icy, which enabled us to fly along the flats, but with control. The groomers kept the snow in the skating lanes fluffed by running some kind of grinder over the snow. This maintained enough soft snow and ice for easy plowing on downhills. There were a few thin spots, but nothing to make the skiing difficult. The weather was sunny, still, and got warm enough to ski in shirt sleeves. The happy skiers were Martha Rabson, Marsha Kramer, and the leader, Russ Faller.

Dec. 22, Nuclear Lake

In light of the more than a foot of snow that had fallen less than a week before, I decided to approach the lake from Old Rt. 55, where a jeep road reaches it in under a mile. The day was warmer than I expected. And everyone had their traction. I just didn't put mine on. We walked all the way on snow that mostly had been trampled to form a path and had no problem reaching the far western part of the lake walking halfway around it... At that point we encountered two low-flying eagles, who sailed over the

water and quickly disappeared from view. The lake's gray cast and partially frozen state enhanced its tranquility. We met almost no other folks on the trail. I was able to walk without traction to the turnaround point, but finally got to try out my new Micro-Spikes on the way back. They certainly made a difference in stability. Pete Cantline got to learn "The Bear Went Over the Mountain" and, though some precipitation started about halfway into our return route, it quickly stopped, keeping Ellen Kelly, who hadn't brought rain gear, from what she thought would be a soaking. Joining leader Sue Mackson were the folks above and Connie Haven, Charlotte Mann and Karen Flaherty.

Dec.26, Vanderbilt Loop Walk

Brrrr! We knew it was winter, but having enjoyed temps near 60 degrees F for a couple of days, the sudden drop into the 20s was a shock to the system, despite the sun. A couple of people had second thoughts, but 14 ADKers, divided into two walking groups, turned out for a post-holiday stretch of the legs. Conditions underfoot were good—no ice and no mud. Thanks go to Annette Caruso, who agreed to lead a second group to accommodate all those on the list. Group 1 led by Georgette Weir included Pete Cantline, Ellen Kelly, Connie Haven, Kathleen Yeager, and Carol Gray. Group 2 led by Annette comprised Gwen Cardirelli, Shirley Freitas, Jeff Kover and grandson Jasper, and Ann and Jeff Gross.

Jan. 2, 2021. Vassar College Campus

Happy and Auspicious New Year: In September, it will be two decades since everything changed.

The first Sat of the New Year hike. At the beginning of the week the forecast was for 80% chance of rain on New Year's Day. By Wednesday, it was 40%. I didn't want to chance it and had sufficient folks signed up for separate hikes. So, I led the first one on Jan 2. Of course, it didn't rain



Georgette Weir

Dec 26, Vanderbilt Loop



Jan 2, Vassar College

on New Year's Day until the evening, but Lalita says that's because I decided not to walk that day. The morning was overcast, but at least not raining and by mid-morning the sun was out. What a treat. The weather, as I mused to the group, was way warmer than what I'm used to on that day. It was in the forties and I didn't wear a hat or glove—clothing I never go without in the winter.

We walked over to the campus passing, at the end of College Ave. the Vassar faculty housing that's to be torn down for a new Conference Center and some parking lots. We covered most of the campus, including the two observatories – the one that gave altitude to our walk, and the one with the bust of the eminent Maria Mitchell, lady astronomer of the 19th century. At Connie's suggestion, we enjoyed the Tiffany Glass windows of the Chapel from outside. Usually I shake the locked front doors and assure the walkers that they would enjoy the windows if only they could get inside. We did not forget to admire the great sycamore just inside the main gate and where Connie Haven, Carol Gray, Ellen Kelly and Gwen Cardirelli hung out weekly during the warm weather. Joining leader Sue Mackson, in addition to those previously mentioned,



Jan 14, Minnewaska

were Pete Cantline, Jeanette Tully-Baker, and a representative of a younger generation, Amelia McNamara.

Jan. 4, Vassar College Campus

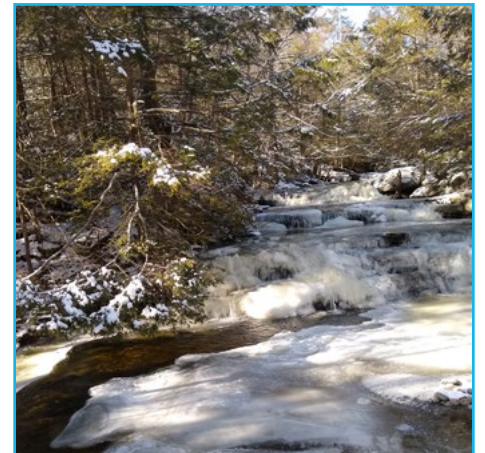
This was the overflow crowd from New Year's Day consisting of the same leader, Sue Mackson, joined by Margaret Douglas, Tamara Kirkman, Barry and Kathy Skura, and new to the Hudson Valley and new members Melissa and Richard Kurtz. It was pretty much the same walk as on Jan 2 described above. Air a bit colder but the landscape had been transformed by a light snow the previous day. We were lucky –Vassar grounds keepers had cleared the walks. We hit all the landmarks, though no one hugged the great sycamore tree. Because we walked before noon, we missed seeing western light shining through the Chapel windows. Nice to celebrate the beginning of the year even if not on Jan 1.

Jan. 9, High Peterskill to Awosting Falls

The loop started at the Peterskill Lot of Lake Minnewaska SP. At the entrance we were told that conditions were icy. Everyone had foot traction (mostly MicroSpikes) and some members wore them for the duration of the hike. We started by going to Compass Rock where we could get an overview of the ridge where we'd spend the greater part of our day hiking. Then we hiked down to the, which was part ice and part swiftly flowing water. We followed the High Peterskill Trail up the ridge. After the steepest part of climbing we could look across and see Compass Rock where we'd been. We followed this continually rising trail, stopping for lunch when the sun came out. When the trail ended we visited Awosting Falls. It was partly frozen, the walls around it covered with ice. Our walk back to our vehicles was on a snow-packed carriage road, giving the feel of a New England winter day. Joining leader, Roberta Forest, were Pat Galfano, Pete Cantline, Janet Sabatini, and Denise Surman.



Jan 9, Roosevelt Woods



Jan 10, Vernoy Kill

Jan. 9, Roosevelt Woods Trail

The day was gray and windy. The parking lot, frigid. But once we got below the hilltop and into the woods, it was actually not bad, temperature-wise. Big demand resulted in a long wait list. Thankfully, Lalita Malik said "Yes" to Georgette Weir's invitation to lead a second group. The two groups of 8 (counting leaders) left at different times and followed somewhat different routes, but everyone was glad for a social walk in nature, with masks, etc. Joining leader Georgette Weir were Connie Haven, Ellen Kelly, Shirley Freitas, Annette Caruso, Jeff Kover with grandson Jasper, and Jeanette Tully-Baker. Those joining Lalita Malik were Karen Flaherty, Margaret Douglas, Carol Grau, Irene DiMaio, Mary Williams, William Fil, and Pat Lund.

Jan. 10, Vernoy Kill Loop

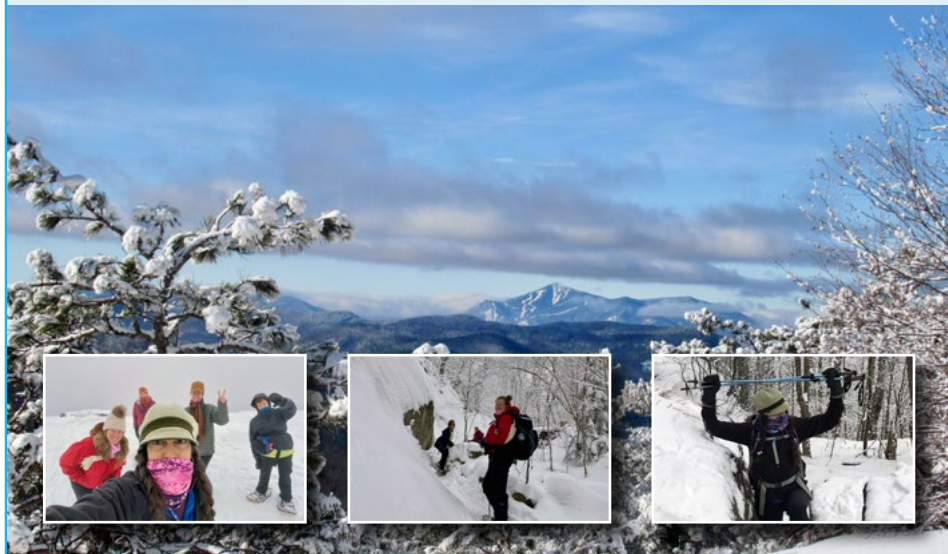
The weather cooperated beautifully for the magical hike to Vernoy Kill Falls from Yagerville Road in the Sundown Wild Forest. This was done as a loop hike of close to 8 miles. It traversed a forest of thick, snow covered conifers, streams, and stands of mountain laurel. Despite the fact that most of the hikers had been to the Falls numerous times, this loop hike was new to all of us. Thanks to leader, Sharon Klein, the intrepid map geek who discovered this remote and magical route. Joining Sharon were: Georgette Weir, Jean-Claude Fouere, Patrick Cummings, Joanna Nadoolman, Martha Rabson, Sue Mackson, and Russ Faller, who provided a snow shovel which came in handy for clearing unexpected snow piles from the parking area.

Jan. 14, MWH at Minnewaska

Jenny Lane/Blueberry Run/Lake Awosting/Jenny Lane Loop. Mostly bare trails, some ice and snow, soft on carriage trails, no spikes. Ice sculptures on the cliffs were

Jan. 5-7, A Trip to the Adirondacks

It's difficult to imagine a better way to spend the first week of the New Year! Winter-loving Women of the Woods Martha Rabson, Jodi McKee, Ginny Fauci, Sharon Klein, and Sherry Roulston, led by Adriene Scivollette, enjoyed three days of hiking in the glorious Adirondacks! Day 1 was a 6.8-mile round-trip snow-shoe hike to the summit of St Regis Mountain, elevation 2,874 feet not including the beautiful fire tower. The day was overcast, but that seemed to highlight the fine snow/ice filaments on the trees and branches. Day 2 was a short, relaxing trail-crampon hike up beautiful Baker Mountain, elevation 2,457 feet, and Day 3 was another trail-crampon hike to the fire tower atop Poke-o-Moonshine Mountain, elevation 2,180 feet. The sun was shining and the sky was blue, and Whiteface Mountain stood showing-off in the distance. In addition to the group hikes, some intrepid members of this group "arrived early and left late," bracketing the group hikes with cross-country ski outings at Henry's Woods and Cascade Ski Center. Invigorated by new hiking achievements, the Women of the Woods returned home to await hopefully the next snowfall.



awesome, as usual. Lunch at Rangers Cabin on Lake Awosting. No sun, cloudy all day, up to 35. Still, another great day in the woods. Hikers Dave, Charlotte, Jean, Sam, Carol, Jill and the leader Ginny Fauci.

Jan. 22, Black Rock Forest

Three "peaks" (Whitehorse Mtn, Mt. Misery, and Black Rock) were conquered by our collegial group on a great day of winter hiking—solid ground underfoot, but no ice. Our last climb brought us to Black Rock

and its magnificent view north and west, but windy conditions led to a quick departure. Joining leader Georgette Weir were Sharon Klein, Pat and Anthony Galfano, Cindy Colter, Pete Cantline, and Martha Rabson.

Jan 29, Stillwater Lake, Fahnestock

The morning of this hike, ADK members in New Paltz and Kerhonksen woke up to single digit temperatures. Being adventurous, they decided to go south for warmer weather. So, leader, Barry Skura with Pete Cantline, Russ Faller, Charlotte Mann, Cindy Colter, and Sharron Crocker met in the warmer temperatures of Fahnestock. At Pelton Pond the temperature was already up to 14. Being well-prepared, we were cool with that. (Thank you to Eric Harvey for the winter tips on our website). Our route had short, medium, and longer options. We chose the medium option, a five-mile circular that started at the Pelton Pond picnic area and included mellow hikes around Stillwater Lake and Pelton Pond. Both were scenic, with a light snow covering and tranquil feel. Once we were moving, we felt comfortable enough to maintain a social tone and pace (which had the side benefit of keeping us from overheating). The weather and trees both cooperated—the forecast high winds never materialized.



Jan 22, Black Rock Forest

Georgette Weir

A Year of Hiking During a Pandemic

Continued from Page 1

from any Mohonk Preserve trailhead. We've done them all. It was eerie being on Mountain House property before it re-opened to the public. We discovered so many special places we never knew existed. In the beginning, all the scrambles were closed at both Mohonk Preserve and the Mountain House. Once they opened, we climbed them all except the Lemon Squeeze, which was overrun.

We also discovered all the Scenic Hudson parks in the area and got to know every inch of them since we hiked them at least once a week, sometimes twice. Our favorites were Shaupeneak, Esopus Meadows, and Burroughs. In New Paltz we found River-to-Ridge, the Gateway, and Nyquist-Harcourt Sanctuary, where we were lucky to see two gorgeous eagles perched high in the trees by the Wallkill River. When not on an actual hiking trail, I walked a lot of the local rail trails, Joppenbergh Mountain in Rosendale, and back roads around my house, where I saw many deer and one bear that walked out of the woods just ahead of me. Adrienne did the same from her home.

Some of the perks of hiking lesser-known trails was seeing the wildlife, birds, and all the different flowers as they bloomed in the spring. The woods were overrun with chipmunks; they were everywhere! We saw porcupines waddling down the trails, lots of deer, mama bear and two cubs crossing in front of us (we backed out on



The author (above left and lower right) and Adrienne Scivolette (above right and lower left) hiked about 1600 miles from March to March

Significant progress was made on the new Visitor Center at Minnewaska during the course of the pandemic year.



the trail after taking some zoom photos of mama watching from the base of the tree where her cubs were). We also saw lots of snakes—black racers, black rats, and garter snakes, but no rattlers or copperheads, though we were watching out for them. We saw Mr. Snapper, the long-time resident at Duck Pond and smaller turtles at Kleinekill Pond. And the birds! Ducks, geese, ravens, hawks, vultures (both turkey and black), eagles, ruffed grouse, black and blue tree swallows, and pileated woodpeckers. And we can't forget the red efts, bumblebees, hummingbird moths, monarch butterflies and the spring peepers singing their song.

We got to see trillium, trout lilies, jack-in-the-pulpits, lady slippers, foxglove, marsh marigolds, cardinal flowers, Dutchman's-breeches, columbine, violets, and Indian pipe. Over the Spring we got to see all of the laurel family as it bloomed. First the wild azaleas, sheep laurel, mountain laurel, rhododendron and rhodora, which

only blooms for a short time and is found by Mud Pond. We picked high-bush blueberries, huckleberries, and wineberries and went home with enough to eat and freeze for later. It was a good year for berries!

We watched the seasons change, along with our footwear and layers. Spring brought flowers, snakes, wildlife, fern forests, plush carpets of moss, lots of green and rushing waters in the streams and waterfalls. Stream crossings are my nemesis so the Summer drought helped with that. Fall brought the change of colors and it didn't disappoint. Back into Winter and the ice sculptures on the cliffs, the frozen waterfalls, and icy trails. We got some snow, enough for a few days of snowshoeing. After about 1600 miles, the seasonal circle has almost ended, and the pandemic is still here, but there's hope on the horizon in the form of a vaccine. But, we still need our masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and trash bags.

Stay Connected...

Adirondack Mountain Club: www.adk.org

Mid-Hudson Chapter: www.midhudsonadk.org

NY–NJ Trail Conference: www.nynjtc.org

To make a change of address, phone, or email,
send a message with specifics to adkinfo@adk.org
or call 1-800-395-8080 x2

To be included in the Mid-Hudson Chapter email list
or to change your email, please send a message to
ebc12533@yahoo.com

