

TWI-LIGHTS



VOLUME 2 | SPRING/SUMMER 2020

First Day Hike ... & Paddle?

OVER 40 HIKERS JOINED
TRAIL WORKS ON JANUARY
1, BUT THE BLUE TRAILS
WERE OPEN THAT DAY, TOO!

Trails & Covid-19

THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC HAS
INCREASED TRAIL USAGE. HOW TO
ENJOY THE OUTDOORS, SOCIAL
DISTANCE, AND STAY SAFE

Alternative Bike Route

BOARD MEMBER GLENN
WALLIS SHOWED VISITORS
WAYNE COUNTY BY BIKE

Trail Works Annual First Day Hike

On Wednesday, January 1, approximately 40 people gathered at Beechwood State Park for our annual First Day Hike. Beechwood was the perfect location to hold this event. It's a beautiful piece of property on the shores of Lake Ontario of approximately 150 acres, and largely undeveloped. This gave hikers the opportunity to see firsthand what the property looked like and the great potential it has. Beechwood is an old Girl Scout camp owned by the State and currently managed by the Town of Sodus. The new Town of Sodus Supervisor, Scott Johnson, was among our hikers. It was his very first day on the job, and we were thrilled to have him hike with us!

We gathered at the East entrance, and President Mark DeCracker welcomed all hikers and went over the basics of our "Hit the Trail" App. We then hiked north towards the lake, and along the way enjoyed views of Maxwell Bay and the varied hardwood forests. Being

On January 1, 2020, Trail Works welcomed forty hikers on its annual "First Day Hike" at Camp Beechwood in Sodus

such a large group, we had the opportunity to split up, and with Supervisor Johnson's blessing, some of us marked the trails on the property for safety. We also explored some of the old Girl Scout structures still standing. The pine plantation on the west side of the park was especially enjoyable. After the hike, we had tailgating with hot cocoa and snacks!

We look forward to working with Supervisor Scott Johnson and Beechwood caretaker Sal Vittozzi to help uncover the beauty of this property so that it can continue to be used and enjoyed by all outdoor enthusiasts! Happy New Year Trails!

NANCY SNYDER

Ed: please see Page 9's "Trail Updates" for more information regarding Camp Beechwood



THE TRAILS AND COVID-19

VISITING THE OUTDOORS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (State Parks) and the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) encourage New Yorkers to recreate locally, practice social distancing, and use common sense to protect themselves and others.

While enjoying outdoor spaces, please continue to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/State Department of Health (DOH) guidelines for preventing the spread of colds, flu, and COVID-19:

- Stay home if you are sick, or showing or feeling any COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever, coughing, and/or troubled breathing;
- Practice social distancing by keeping at least six (6) feet of distance between yourself and others, even when outdoors;
- Avoid close contact, such as shaking hands, hugging, or high-fives;
- Wash hands often or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available; and
- Avoid unnecessary contact with surfaces that are often touched, such as doorknobs and handrails.

DEC and State Parks also encourage visitors to State Parks, State Lands, and other parks to:

- Stay local and keep visits short;
- Visit in small groups limited to immediate household members;
- Maintain distance from others while in places where people tend to congregate, such as parking lots, trailheads, and scenic overlooks;
- Avoid games and activities that require close contact, such as basketball, football, or soccer;
- Avoid playground equipment like slides and swings and other frequently touched surfaces;
- Do not share equipment, such as bicycles, helmets, balls, or Frisbees;
- If you arrive at a park and crowds are forming, choose a different park, a different trail, or return another time/day to visit; and

- If parking lots are full, please do not park along roadsides or other undesignated areas. To protect your safety and that of others, please choose a different area to visit, or return another time or day when parking is available.

If you are sick or have had contact with someone who is sick in the last 14 days:

- Stay home; and
- Spend time in the backyard or other personal outdoor space. Do not visit public outdoor spaces.

If you are over 70 or have a compromised immune system:

- Avoid visiting outdoor public spaces;
- Remain indoors or spend time in the backyard or other personal outdoor space;
- Pre-screen visitors by taking their temperature from a safe social distance; and
- Require visitors to wear masks, if available.

Restrooms: Due to COVID-19 we have closed most indoor spaces – visitor centers, nature centers, and historic houses. Some but not all public restrooms will continue to be available. Please note that many restrooms may still be closed until water systems are restored from seasonal closures. Visitors should plan accordingly and call the park office for more information.

Boat Launches and Marinas: Marinas and boat launch sites are open where conditions allow. Call the park or regional office directly for current status.

Entrance Fees: All entrance fees have been waived. As the situation continues to develop, we will take any necessary actions to protect visitor and staff health. We appreciate your support and patience as we navigate this public health crisis together.

Please remember that both Camp Beechwood and Chimney Bluffs are state parks and subject to the state park rules outlined above. To see some ideas for less-congested trails, and trails where social distancing is easier, please visit our website at trailworks.org.

The Great Backyard Bird Count



The Great Backyard Bird Count took place this year from February 14-17. The public was asked to track and count the birds they saw for a 15 minute period of time, and then record them on the eBird Website in conjunction with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Trail Works Board members Mark DeCracker and Nancy Snyder participated again this year. Nancy logged in with 12 species and Mark DeCracker came in a close second with 11 species. A 50 lb. bag of bird seed was donated from Pine Creek Farm & Feed in Lyons, NY, for the winner. Congrats Nancy!





First Day..... Paddle?!

Our family enjoyed the start of 2020 with a day full of partying in Huron. I recall applesauce, booze, tears, and The Mandalorian. While we missed the First Day Hike with Trail Works at Camp Beechwood, we did not miss the opportunity to get outside to set the tone for the new year.

Our "First Day" activity took place on January 2nd after recovering from the day before. The unseasonably warm weather enticed us to get adventurous and go for a paddle on Sodus Bay. From our cottage at Lake Bluff, we launched two kayaks and Part One of the paddle led us to exploring our property on Crescent Beach. With the constantly changing landscape due to Lake Ontario's high water, it really does feel like a new exploration every time. The Crescent Beach explorers (by land and water) included a multi-generational menu of Burgesses: Gil (71), Seth (35), Jessica (35), Joe (34), Callan (7), Briana (3), and Berk (2).

Part Two of our adventure took me, Jess, and Bri further on the water with a counter-clockwise paddle around Leroy Island. A combination of the bay water on my hands and the blowing wind made me wish I had worn gloves, but I knew they would warm and the prevailing sensation was simply feeling alive. Being outside--especially when the weather causes your senses to heighten--has that effect. Briana napped all the way around the island.

Happy Trails,
SETH BURGESS

Ed.: Seth is a past-president of Trail Works, and is currently serving our country overseas on deployment. Thanks for the submission, Seth! We're looking forward to your safe return, and, of course, an update on the trails of the Kingdom of Jordan.

Trail Works, Inc. 2020 Membership Form

Please check the type of membership:

- ☐ single (\$15)
- ☐ corporate (\$50)
- ☐ family (# of family members: _____) (\$25)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Please make all checks payable to:

Trail Works, Inc.
ATTN: Membership
PO Box 43
Williamson, NY 14589

In Search of New Skis

In December, my husband and I took a ride up to Osceola, NY, in search of a new pair of cross country skis. The pair I had was over 40 years old, and while the skis and bindings were in good shape, the old 3-pin style boots were literally disintegrating. President Mark DeCracker had suggested we run up to the Osceola Tug Hill XC Ski Center to look for skis because they had a huge selection. Looking on line, I saw that the Ski Center was currently up for sale. That was sad to see, as pictures posted showed beautifully groomed trails and plenty of snow. After a phone call, Hugh, the owner for the past 30 years, assured me he had the biggest selection of skis anywhere around. He said to come on up, that he and his wife were there every day in the winter.

Our drive up to Tug Hill started out on dry roads, but as we got closer, the snow was falling hard. When we finally arrived a solid two hours later, we were puzzled by what we saw...a big old farm house. We pulled into the half-full parking lot. "I don't know," my husband said. "I think you've been snookered." I had to agree, it was a possibility. How on earth could this farm house contain the largest selection of skis around? We had expected a much larger facility.

Once we entered the farm house, it became apparent that this was, indeed, the largest selection of skis around! There were rooms upon rooms of skis lined up against the walls, many racks of various size poles, and shelves piled high with boxes of boots. You could barely walk through the place. One room led to another, and we weaved our way to the main office, crowded itself with racks of ski clothing. Hugh's wife, Anna, was manning the desk, directing people here and there. Boots were my first order of business. Anna led us to an open room with chairs, tables, and a nice wood

burning stove keeping the troops warm. People in ski gear were milling around with hot cups of cocoa in hand. Some were relaxing in a cozy, adjacent room with comfy chairs and couches, and racks of snacks. Both adults and kids were inside warming up from the trails as well as those like me, in search of new skis and boots.

I had excellent service from both Anna and Hugh. Anna helped fit my boots and then Hugh took over finding me just the right pair of skis. I had the opportunity

to try out the final two pairs of skis on the trails. The trails were beautifully groomed, and the trees were laced with snow. I wish we had planned more time to spend on the trails. When I returned to the farmhouse, Hugh said if I got them home and they didn't work out, to please bring them back and he'd make it right. How could you argue with that?!? I ended up with choosing Alpina boots and

skis, and I'm very happy with them. Everything was discounted on top of the sale price...what a deal!

Just before we left, some acquaintances of ours from back home walked in the door! They had season passes for the Ski Center and come up often. We exchanged phone numbers for a possible ride share in the future. Small world!

I highly recommend anyone interested in new gear to run right up there before all the snow and the biggest selection of skis around disappears! Thanks again, Hugh and Anna!



NANCY SNYDER

THERE IS A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Outdoors

While I was skiing recently, I started to reflect on the outdoors in Wayne County. I started thinking in terms of Ecclesiastes 3 as it relates to the seasons. This can be applied to our trails and waterways. There is a time to ski, a time to hike, a time to paddle, a time to bike, and a time to swim. I think this is what makes living in the northeast so special. The way I look at it, we are given a plate of variety which makes the outdoors excit-

Wayne County. Over the last few years I have seen a decline in outdoor participation, many of the trails it's hard to find tracks from snowshoes or skis. Last year Trail Works introduced the winter badge on the app to motivate people to get outside in the winter. To receive a winter badge, you just need to get to the passport marker between December 21 and March 21st. This has given me a chance to see the variety of won-

There is a time to dress with layers and a time to shed those layers. There is a time to sweat and there is a time to shiver. There is a time for mosquito bites and a time for frost bite.

ing. The ever-changing seasons are something to look forward to every year. Two of my favorites are fall foliage and the spring when the wildflowers are in bloom.

The season that often gets overlooked is the winter. Winter is a time when most people are complaining about the weather, but I have come to love winter. There are times I don't mind going south for sunshine and warmth. Particularly mid-November to mid-December when the days are short and cloudy. Perhaps this is why I took a vacation to the southwest to visit Bryce and Zion National Parks in mid-November. The other season is the

"mud season" after the snow has melted and before the wildflowers are out. So, venturing to South Carolina in mid-March is a nice side trip to get in some biking and kayaking as the spring comes alive.

I bought my first skis in 1978 and I haven't stopped skiing since. One year I skied 100 days in a row in

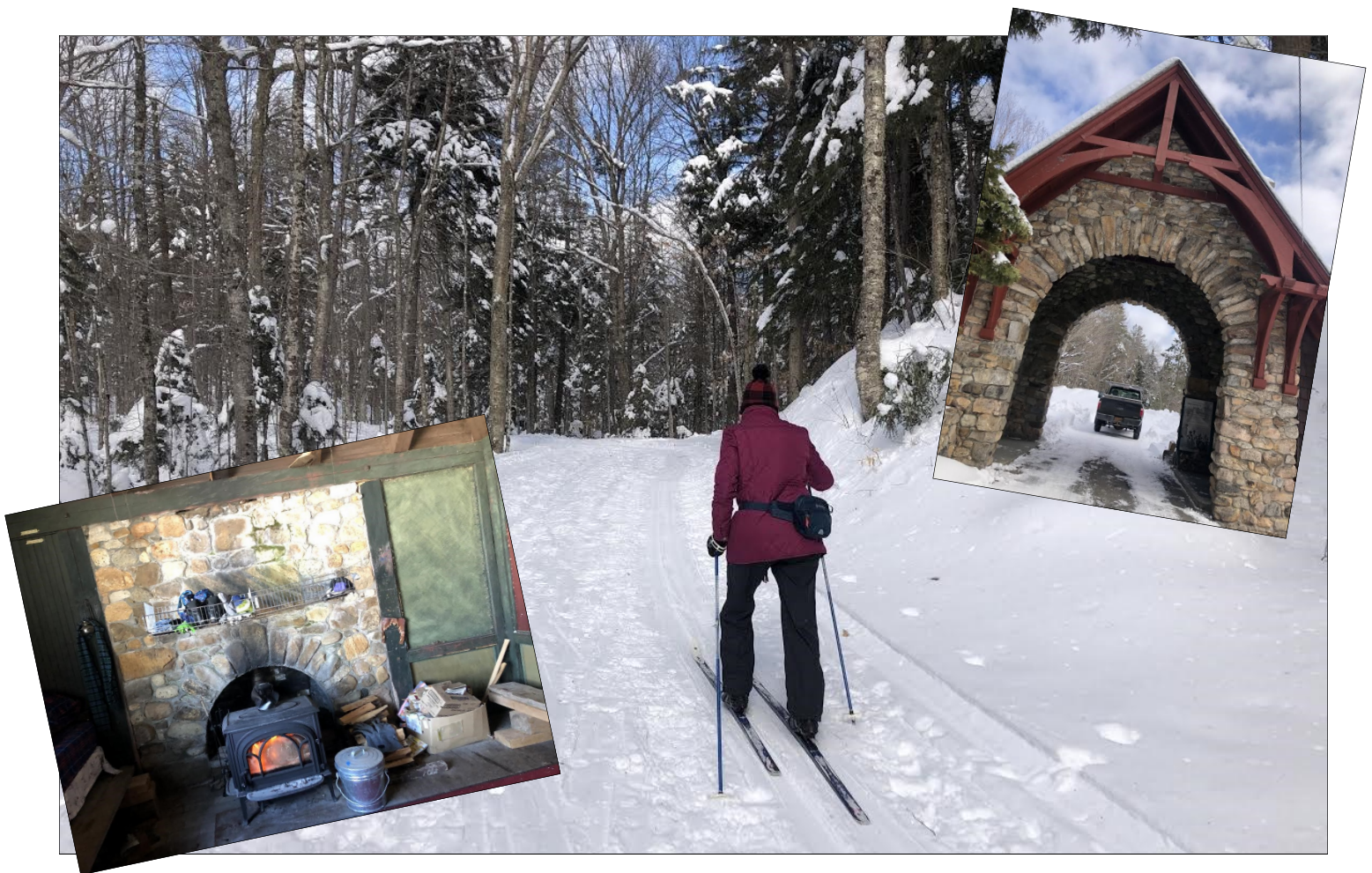
derful trails we have in Wayne County. Trails like Whistlewood, Alasa Farms and Third Creek remind me of being in the Adirondacks without having to drive

three hours. Winter also can be very beautiful—there is nothing like a fresh snowfall with bright blue skies. Oh, and some of those trails near wetland that are full of mosquitoes in summer you have no worries in winter. I know you will be reading this when the snow has disappeared, but spring is a good time to get deals on winter equipment for the winter of 20-21.



There is a time to dress with layers and a time to shed those layers. There is a time to sweat and there is a time to shiver. There is a time for mosquito bites and a time for frost bite.

MARK DECRACKER



CAMP SANTANONI IS A TRIP BACK IN TIME

BY MARK DECRACKER

It was at the Mays' ski in late January that Carol told me I should make sure I skied back to Camp Santanoni in Newcomb, NY in the Adirondacks. I put it on my bucket list for this winter. At the last minute my wife and I decided to drive up to the Adirondacks and planned on skiing on the Monday of President's weekend. I called ahead and the winter and snow conditions were perfect, so without hesitation we were on our way. There was only one problem we didn't have a place to stay. We stopped in Old Forge and there was no room at any inn. I swear there were more snowmobiles than cars in the parking lot. I asked at the desk do you have any recommendation. The lady at the counter said the Big Moose Inn, luckily, they had one room available. While staying there we found the Big Moose was famous for a murder at the turn of the 20th century. This resulted in a book call An America Tragedy and two movies about this same murder, "A Place in the Sun" and "An American Tragedy." Already our weekend was filled with adventure.

We left around 9:00 a.m. for Newcomb, the day was filled with bright blue sky and fresh snow everywhere. The trees were laced with snow as the spires of the spruce reached for the sky. We arrived around 11:00 to start the ski down the road to Camp Santanoni. The conditions were perfect, blue sky and a tracked ski trail for five miles. The road for the most part was level, which resulted in making good time except that I kept taking my gloves off to take photos. We arrived at the camp a few hours later to the hospitality of volunteers who opened up the artist cabin to those that made the trek. With a blazing fire and free hot chocolate and coffee I thought I was in paradise. After a warmup and a tour of the camp we were back on our way. We reached our vehicle at around five p.m. with just enough time to drive up the road to the panoramic view of the High Peaks in winter. It is a wonderful trip and perhaps one Trail Works could schedule as a group outing next winter. The Camp is open to camping in the summer and you can even ride a bike down the road.

Trail Updates



Work continues on at Third Creek trail. “Branch Manager” Gary Abbott has been busy constructing a small bridge over the water in the central area of the trail. This has involved some heavy lifting a mile into the woods, so thank you very much, Gary! The bridge is just about finished, and will allow hikers to cross Third Creek while staying dry.

Vandalism and arson unfortunately continue to be an issue at Beechwood State Park. The commissary building was burnt down the night of March 9th, and there was another fire at the nurse’s station in the early morning hours of May 3rd that thankfully didn’t spread to the woods thanks to the work of the fire companies from Sodus Point, Alton, and Wallington. In early April, multiple groups of vandals were caught on the property and dealt with by the Wayne County Sheriff’s office.

Despite the setbacks, progress is being made. A betterment committee has been formed, and future goals for Beechwood include electricity and a security system, removing unwanted vegetation, and a bike trail through the western orchard side of Beechwood. Some of the structures that have not been destroyed also may be worth rehabilitating. Keep your eyes open for hopefully more good news coming out of Beechwood instead of bad news. Thanks to Sodus Town Supervisor Scott Johnson and caretaker Sal Vittozzi for their work.

Be sure to check out the new “Throop Trail” at the Cornwall Preserve! Trail Works and the Genesee Land Trust are hoping to work with volunteers in the coming months to put a boardwalk in. We’re also aware of missing & damaged passport markers, and are working on replacing those. Lastly, the new passport book is off to the printer, and will hopefully be available soon!

BETHANY COMELLA



Alternative Bike Route

Last year, twice within five days, I experienced the joy of personally guiding a couple, Pam and Dana, and then, along with my wife, a single biker on an alternate route to what is the official Erie Canal Trail (aka the Empire State Trail) through Eastern Wayne County and into Port Byron (Cayuga County). My wife and I have, for years, used parts of this route for biking and walking outings. Because it runs along back roads and along both Clinton's Ditch and the Enlarged Erie Canal, as opposed to along State Route 31, it has more history and much less traffic. In spite of the steeper hills and a dog that gives chase to bikers, it is well worth the effort.

While out for a ride about a mile from home, crossing Route 31 heading toward Clyde, I came upon a married couple straddling their bikes and consulting a map. At that time the Erie Canal Trail Map took cyclists on Route 31 from Lyons to Clyde. They were not looking forward to more on-road cycling. The canal path from Lyons toward Clyde had just been surfaced for cycling/walking and was not yet on any maps. Because they didn't know it was there, I offered to guide them along it. They were perhaps the first through-bikers to use it. Days later, my wife and I, out for a ride, stopped in at Kee Kee Run for coffee in Clyde and caught the eye of a single cyclist, who was confused as to where the official Erie Canal Trail ran through Clyde. "Would you like to cycle off of the official route and see some canal history?" I asked him. Just as the couple eagerly agreed to try an off-route ride, our new acquaintance did as well. All three riders were on the very popular tour route from Buffalo to Albany.

These rides took place just prior to the opening of an approximately 2.25 mile section of off-road bike trail from Lauraville landing in Clyde eastward to Brown Road. To follow our ride with the above three, you would use this off-road section when leaving Clyde. Follow the Erie Canal/Empire State Trail signs. After crossing the canal on the Route 414 bridge, make an abrupt left at the side of the bridge to arrive at Lauraville Landing Park. Cycle on east along the Erie Canal Trail which was once the West Shore Railway. Upon crossing the trestle bridge and reaching Brown Road, instead of following the official route by returning to Route 31 continue east on Lockpit Road. In less than a mile the road turns south (to the right) and continues but watch for a dog coming from a yard on your left just before you make the turn: a German Shepard that is only sometimes alerted to your presence. Good Luck! Now heading south along the line of drumlins you will pass the Lockpit Cemetery where the only person to be executed for a crime in Wayne County, William Fee, is buried.

About two miles after having made the right turn note that you are following Clinton's Ditch/Enlarged Erie. When you arrive at a pile of boulders at a four corners the road becomes a dirt road that continues along the old canals on your right. Continue straight along the shaded dirt road maintained by the local landowner. Nearly a mile farther on the trees will end. New Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge land is on the left, fields on the right. Armitage Road in the distance. Take the higher, more scenic path on the left, if accessible, because you will have a great view of wildlife, mainly birds, in the MNWR. The Enlarged Erie runs parallel between it and the lower road, a continuation of Lockpit Rd.. Shortly after the boulder pile Clinton's Ditch had taken a more westerly route. Its berm can now be seen in the distance on the right, where the fields meet the woods.

At this point Dana received a business call on his cell phone and Pam confided in me that Dana's day was made by our encounter. He was thrilled to have met a local who could take them on a back route and tell them about the area they were travelling.

Go left on Armitage Rd. and enjoy the two-mile long drumlins roller coaster ride eastward. You are now on what the early settlers called Crusoe Island. In much older days it was surrounded by water, which left mostly muck and wetlands behind. There is a great view of "The Flats" on the eastern edge of the "island" from atop a drumlin. Not long ago there was a thriving potato industry here. These lands now are part of the ever-expanding MNWR. At the bottom of the hill you will reconnect with Route 31 (East), and continue on the official canal trail. Across the flats is Cayuga County. Later, in Port Byron, when we said our goodbyes, Dana gave me a bear hug.

A few months after these chance meetings I gave blood at a Red Cross drive in Newark. Afterwards, at the mandatory recharge station and before heading home, I overheard the woman volunteer, who was serving drinks and snacks, talk about Tupper Lake. She told me she grew up there and had relocated to Newark. I mentioned the couple, Pam and Dana, who I had escorted and who had been on vacation from Tupper Lake. They had been posting their experiences to friends while on tour and the woman said to me "I know who you are."

GLENN WALLIS

Stop, Speak, & Smile

when you share the trails

Equestrian use of our Wayne County Passport Trails is not widespread, but you may meet up with horses on a few of the trails in northern Wayne County. Beechwood State Park, the Sodus Point –Wallington Rail Trail and the trails at Alasa Farms all welcome horseback riding. The trail courtesy suggested here applies to equestrians, off-road cyclists, and hikers alike!

STOP: When you meet other trail users, stop riding and stop walking.

SPEAK: As soon as you see another trail user, call out to them so everyone has time to stop. Ask what the best way to pass is if you are not sure. Trail courtesy says hikers yield to horses, bikes yield to both horses and hikers, and downhill bikes yield to uphill bikes. Once you agree who will move off of the trail, your whole party should move to the same side of the trail.

Calling out before approaching a horse helps keep them from overreacting. Your voice tells them you are a human and not a predator preparing to attack. A startled horse endangers both you and its rider.

SMILE: Treat everyone you meet on the trail just like you'd treat a friend. You will make someone's day with a friendly smile and hello. We are all on the trails because we love them, we just enjoy them in different ways. Being friendly can defuse a trail confrontation before it happens.

The trails of Wayne County are a great place to connect with others and improve everyone's trail experience.

PALMYRA WETLANDS WINTER EVENT

On Feb 22nd, we had a beautiful 41 degrees, with lots of sunshine for this event.

This trail is well-used by not only cross-country skiers but daily walkers. We were able to talk with potential members and trail users for the 30 trails in Wayne County. We handed out Hit the Trail passport books and the new membership brochures. We showed visitors to the area how to use the Hit the Trail app. The people were very interested and intrigued by what Trail Works, Inc. is doing for the Wayne County area.

The trail was so beautiful to walk and ski on today. The sun hitting the snow make it so peaceful.

One of the visitors, Paula from the Fairport area, remarked that she was glad she stopped to talk to us to find out more about the 30 trails in Wayne County.

MARK DECRACKER AND MARIE CRAMER



TRAIL WORKS, INC.
PO BOX 43
WILLIAMSON, NY 14589

Winter Hike at Mays' Apple Farm

I would like to thank the Mays for opening up their beautiful orchard to us for 10 years. It is always so fun to take a walk into the orchard and find our "Hidden Pond" decorated with white lights hanging from the trees. It is great to meet new & old friends and then, gather around at the end with a bonfire, talking and snacks that everyone brought to share with each other.

The Mays' barn is from the year 1846. It has a Gambrel roof barn with hand-hewn beams and wooden pegs all hand-done.

We had 17 people gather around and join in a hike of 2-3 miles, even one person our own President, Mark DeCracker, was cross country skiing to make his goal of 100 days of skiing in Wayne County, NY. When we're able to gather safely again, we hope to see you at our next event!

MARIE CRAMER

