



# Trackin'

The Chautauqua Rails to Trails Newsletter

Summer 2003



## Outdoor Nature Festival

The Chautauqua Rails to Trails sponsored Outdoor Nature Festival was held on June 1, the rain date, and was fun for all in attendance. The festival was organized to highlight the trail system, and to be a fundraiser for CRT.

Highlights were the guided bicycle tours, the guided hikes, and the 'try it yourself' kayak demonstrations. Scouts from Troop 126 in Mayville helped the kayakers and enjoyed the boats, too.

**Hollyloft Ski and Bike** donated a Raleigh M20 mountain bike and a Specialized Hemi BMX bike and **Evergreen Outfitters** donated a Jack Wolfskin backpack. All were raffled off and the lucky winners were Sandra Fredenburg and Danny Weimer who won the bikes, and Dave Caplinger who won the backpack. Congratulations.

Tom's BBQ had hot dogs, sausages and chicken dinners for all to enjoy, and they were really good.

There were environmentally friendly vendors exhibiting and selling their products, and the Humane Society brought adoptable pets for people to ahh and ohh over.

And a good time was had by all.

A special thanks goes to Les Johnson who conceived the idea for the Festival and did most of the ground work in organizing it. Thanks Les.

## The Five Ladies Of Brocton

Five women from Brocton are in the habit of using the newly paved trail from School St past Highland to Webster most evenings for exercise and socializing. They are Roberta Harley, Pauline Johnson, Carol Hussey, Joan Riforgato and Marilyn Setlock. They have graciously given us some of their thoughts about the trail, which we pass on to you.



**Pauline Johnson writes:** Every day, several of our TOPS #1094 chapter meet and walk the Alison Wells Ney Trail and we really enjoy the part of the trail that is surfaced as a "Healthy Heart" trail. By walking the trail, we support one another to maintain a healthy lifestyle. We enjoy listening to the many birds and seeing the wildlife as we walk each night. The scenic woodlands also has a small stream along the section to Rt. 20 which is so relaxing as we walk by this area.

**Carol Hussey says:** Walking the Alison Wells Ney trail in Brocton has helped several TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) members do just that. Being part of this support group, we would call each other evenings to participate in the walk program at school. One of our members lived next to the newly paved trail and suggested we try walking there. We did and we thoroughly enjoyed exercising outdoors. The paved trail makes it easy to maintain a rapid pace. There is space for three of us to walk side by side so we can visit as we walk, which makes time go quickly. Now, several members are walking the trail on a regular basis. We meet another older gentleman who also takes advantage of this wonderful trail and pause for a brief visit with him. Another added bonus is the surprise of seeing a deer or two nearby. We really appreciate having this great trail to walk on and we will continue to encourage others to take advantage of it.

(Cont. on page 6)



## ***Chautauqua Lake Central School***



Sue Swank's Life Skills Class

All tired out

xxxx

### **Youth Programs**

In earlier newsletters, we mentioned local high school classes and students who were helping to keep the vegetation from swallowing the trails. Let me tell you what we are talking about. We hosted two work related learning experiences from Chautauqua Lake Central School, and one each from Jamestown and Lo Guidice BOCES.

First, from Chris Rammacher's class at Chautauqua Lake, we have Ben Pitts, who is a BOCES Work Experience Program student. Ben was with us two hours a day, two days a week. He and Jim, our Trail Manager, have worked on the trails installing signs, cutting back weeds and clearing downed trees. He has also cleaned the depot office and put labels on documents. He has done a lot of work and has learned about having a job and what is expected of a worker.

We also had, from Chautauqua Lake Central School, Sue Swank's Life Skills Class, a class of students who are experiencing career preparation and real world academics (the school of hard knocks). This class worked clearing much of the side of the railbed at the Portland Town Park off Rt. 20 in Brocton. In addition, they helped control vegetation on other sections of trail. They seemed to enjoy their outdoor classroom.

From Jamestown High School, we hosted the Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP) students. YAP is a school to work program that allows high school students to work two mornings per week and also take common classes designed to make them more employable (computer applications, workforce preparation). As a part of their experience in the YAP program, students are exposed to community awareness projects. In making their second visit to Rails to Trails, students begin to make the connection between the individual parts of the trail and the greater whole. This connection closely parallels a workplace setting as individual components within businesses and organizations are essentially part of larger systems

The conservation class from LoGuidace BOCES, under the tutelage of Andy Johnson, spent many hours on the trail, keeping the vegetation from overwhelming the trail. These students learned different aspects of conservation and equipment /tool operation. The program opens the students' minds to possible careers in conservation.

The efforts of all the students and the teachers are a win-win situation. Their work in the field helps Rails to Trails and, at the same time, Rails to Trails helps their education. This mutually beneficial arrangement is something we're proud of. We certainly hope and expect it will continue into the future.



Jamestown High School YAP group along the trail

### **Youth Apprenticeship Program**

By Kim Russo

The Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP) of Jamestown High School is a unique program that offers students the opportunity in their junior and senior years to experience a taste of the real working world. Students are out working at job sites throughout the Jamestown area learning a trade or skill as they work closely with a mentor or a coach on the job. Students earn both academic credit as well as money for their experiences.

Students are able to learn first hand the connections between their courses in school with the skills needed and required on the job. In addition to working two mornings a week they also attend school where they experience a slightly altered scheduled compared to traditional students. For example, our students take English and a computer applications class MWF for the entire school year while traditional students take it every day for one semester.

As part of their requirements, we mandate that they do so many hours of community service and that is where Rails to Trails comes in. We thought it would be more fun to get those community service requirements out of the way together. Since most of the students in the Jamestown area are unfamiliar with your program, we decided to introduce them to it. We discovered that they really enjoyed being outdoors and that they are pretty good at pruning trees and clearing branches. We would like to make this an annual thing since our student population in the program will change every year.

# Opportunities for Giving

## **Why do we believe in and support Rails to Trails?**

- To provide safe, attractive recreational opportunities -fight obesity: increase fitness
- To provide places to observe and learn about nature.
- To preserve part of the rich Railroad history of this county.
- To preserve rail corridors for possible future use.
- To add to the economic health of the county.

**You can help. Support Rails to Trails by donating money. Donations can be for specific items and or projects, or can be for general needs.**

**Please check with your employer to see if they have a gift-matching program.**

### General

- Memorials
- Christmas/Birthday gifts - A great gift for the person who has everything
- Bequests
- Memberships (Application form on back page)

Membership dues and general gifts are used for normal expenses and are essential to the life of CRT.  
Please be generous - as generous as you can be.

### Specified Projects

These **Special Projects** need to be accomplished as soon as funding can be obtained. A donation from you could be used to fully or partially fund one or more of these projects.

**Gates:** Each road crossing needs a new 'Saloon' type gate. There is a need for 18 gates, of which the Margaret Wendt Foundation has donated 6. Gates can be funded and installed one at a time.  
Cost: \$800 each

**Stop Signs:** There is a need to install stop signs at all intersections of roads and the trail. The signs would have the name of the road to be crossed on them.  
Total Cost: \$1300.

**Direction Signs:** At each of the breaks in the trail, there is a need for signs directing trail users to the next trail entrance. Total Cost: \$1830

**Vegetation management:** This work would blaze the boundaries of our trail, identify trees that should be cut for firewood, identify trees that should be nurtured for lumber, control brushy growth, establish 'snag' trees (for wildlife), and open scenic vistas. Cost: \$4500

**Historic Signs:** Interesting things that took place along the old railbed could be determined by a historian, synopsised, and a sign erected telling the story. To hire a historian to come up with the stories is the purpose of this project. Cost: \$2500.

**Natural Interpretive Signs:** Trail users may or may not notice interesting geologic, biologic, botanical, etc. features along the trail. We need a naturalist to inventory such items and write synopses of the features for signs. Cost: \$2500

**Boulders:** There is a need to obtain, transport and install large (2 ton and over) boulders at different places on the trail, mostly at road crossings. These rocks would block the trail from being used by motorized vehicles, protecting trail users from injury and the trail surface from damage. We need 18 boulders. Cost: \$250 each

**A plaque with donor's information will be displayed**

**See Reverse Side For Form**

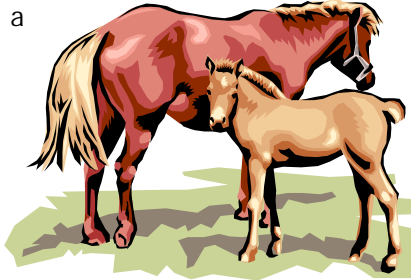
# FROM THE CORRAL

By:  
Carolyn Witt

Heavy rain has kept most of us off the trail and close to the corral for the early part of the summer trail riding season. Pulled shoes and muddy trails can be a problem, especially for those who have horses who are afraid to cross large puddles and streams.

The best way to get a horse to cross or go by obstacles that he balks at or shies away from is to use an opening rein technique. First and foremost, make sure you have good body position with your heels down and shoulders square. Make sure you are looking forward keeping your weight centered on the horse's back, not over his withers giving him the excuse to stop or wheel around.

If you know he is going to balk, use the four-beat rhythm of the horse's walk to apply leg pressure encouraging him to go forward. Place your reins in two hands keeping your elbows tucked in and



a little bit of slack in the reins. Approach the object with confidence, not reluctance, which can give your equine friend a mixed message you might also be scared of going across the creek.

If your horse suddenly stops or begins to try and turn away, catch him by pulling the rein opposite from the way he wants to turn. You may have to do this a few times. Keep giving him leg pressure and while facing forward. Sooner or later the horse will go forward. However, he may give what I call a "leap for life", that sudden jump forward to try and go over an object instead of walking through it.

He might do this a few times before the novelty wears off. After a few firm and successful crossings, the horse will gain confidence in you and your riding ability not to put him in harm's way and go through or over anything you might encounter on the trail.

A great way to avoid losing shoes is to have your farrier place two toe clips on the front of each shoe and to make sure they secure the shoes with the maximum number of nails on each shoe. Remember to pick out your horse's hooves before and after each ride to make sure he did not pick up any stones.

The best trail ride is a safe trail ride. Be sure to take along the proper equipment like a hoof pick, first aid kit and a pair of wire cutters. Riding with a helmet is also a good idea. Have a safe and happy summer. Rocky, Peppy and I hope to see you out on the trail soon.

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## Gifts or Memorials Form

Christmas Gift

Birthday/other Gift

Memorial

Name of Donor \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Donor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Recipient \_\_\_\_\_

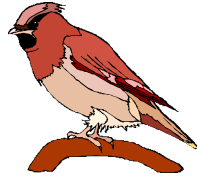
Address of Recipient \_\_\_\_\_

The donation is to be: to the general fund, or specifically for \_\_\_\_\_.

Do you have any special Instructions for us in our acknowledgement to the recipient?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Birding  
The Rails to Trails  
Sites***  
By  
**Dick Miga**



It is hard to believe that this is my eighth article regarding this topic. Since I started this project, I have been introduced to a new section of the Rails to Trails network named the Lori Baer Section. This site is located on Bliss Road in the towns of Westfield and Portland where the trails intersect with that road. While I have not birded the entire section as of this trail as of the writing of this article, I have received reports from other birders who have covered the entire length. This is truly a sight to be explored for birds. The habitat at the start of the trail opens up into several ponds enhanced by beavers, and then proceeds thru woodlands, open fields and shrub zones, providing an excellent habitat for a variety of both migrating and breeding birds.

As of June 13, 2003, 68 species have been recorded on the trail. The variety of birds range from large waders such as American Bitterns and Great Blue Herons to the smallest local birds such as the Ruby-throated Hummingbird and several species of warblers.

The entire Rails to Trails network is truly becoming a birders paradise. Easy walking through a rich variety of habitats has produced a composite total of 186 species in the Chautauqua county region. To summarize some of the totals from other section of the network, the following trails and the species recorded are as follows:

- Sheldon Trail - 179
- Allison Ney Trail – 75
- Lori Baer Trail - 68
- Wheeler's Gulf – 143

While the Wheeler's Gulf section is not yet an official part of the trails network, it is one of the oldest and best known. As a college student, my old Biology professor, Willard F. Stanley, loved the area and conducted many classes and walks on the trail. Back then it was still possible to have an occasional switching engine and/or train move us off the tracks. Dr. Allen Benton, also a former professor and now a colleague of mine, did many bird studies as well as research on local reptiles and amphibians on the trail. So the area is very well known as a biologically rich region. It is hoped that this trail will soon become a part of the Rails to Trails Network protecting the wildlife of the area.

For further information about the species identified on these trails, a list for each trail mentioned above can be obtained by contacting me at 716-672-7363 or the Chautauqua Counting Birding Hotline 716-595-8250. When contacting the hotline, press 2 and leave a message.

***View From  
The Locomotive***



By **Robert Berke**

The fragile economy has had its toll on the movement of this train. CRT is at a critical juncture in its evolution. From the initial efforts to acquire and protect railbed through the methodical process of improvement of trails and facilities, the effort has been carried by a dedicated group of volunteers and Board members.

The financial issues that beset our county and state have not left us untouched. CRT is in need of an infusion of resources both capital and human.

No effort can go on indefinitely without getting recharged with vital forces. We are at that point and it is critical for the preservation of what we have accomplished so far that our ranks swell with folks ready to pitch in and help push this process along. The train is in the station, engine running.....

***If Trails are Important to  
You***

If you are public spirited and want to be part of our exciting venture to convert railbeds into trailways, we **need** you on our **Rails to Trails Board.**

Generally we meet the first Monday of the month. Our headquarters is located in the Mayville Depot.

**Visit and check us out.**

**Contact information:**

Phone: (716) 269-3666

E-mail: [crtt@cecomet.net](mailto:crtt@cecomet.net)

**Yes** I want to support CRT's effort to change the abandoned rail lines of Chautauqua County into multi-use trails that can be enjoyed by all.

Individual \$20       Sustaining \$100  
 Family \$35       Benefactor \$500  
 Patron \$50       Sponsor \$1000 up  
 Business Partner \$100/\$200 per year for 10 years

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Chautauqua Rails to Trails  
PO Box 151  
Mayville, NY 14757-0151

**CRT website is at: [www2.cecomet.net/crtt](http://www2.cecomet.net/crtt)**

The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. **[Walter Bagehot](#) (1826 - 1877)**

### **Five Ladies cont.**

**Marilyn Setlock comments:** The trails have brought to me much 'inner peace'. As I walk along the trails each day with our walking crew, I enjoy listening to the spring peepers or watching the water flowing over rocks next to the grape vineyards along the dirt trail, and seeing white tail deer run across our path. So many happy memories have been shared during our walks and I know many more will continue for days to come.

**Roberta Harley writes:** I was asked by one of my fellow walkers to comment on the trail going through Brocton. This is a very pleasurable walking area. The cinder part gives us quite a challenge to our older bodies and the paved area just kinda lets us relax and enjoy. We get to see all kinds of animals and lots of deer tracks. We can also now keep track of the preparations for the new school buildings. We are not only keeping our health by our walk, but also losing weight and building lasting relationships. We are dedicated to this walk; we are there rain or shine. Thanks so much to the people that keep it maintained and we will try to be patient until more funding is available to complete the project. *Editor's note: The fifth lady is Joan Riforgiato.*

Return Service Requested



P.O. Box 151 Mayville, NY 14757-0151  
[crtt@cecomet.net](mailto:crtt@cecomet.net)