

North Wind

July - August - September 2026

Mourning *Adirondac*

by Tom Wheeler, Chapter Chair

I believe it was former ADK magazine editor the late Barbara McMartin who said that you can tell the financial condition of the Adirondack Mountain Club by the size of its magazine.

We have had an announcement that there will be just one annual issue of *Adirondac*.

I believe that this is most unfortunate. I regret the diminution of this periodical. Since the founding of the club a regular publication has provided its members with steady contact with ADK, discussed important issues, told stories of adventure and misadventure, educated about nature, and developed the membership as advocates for the Forest Preserve.

I confess that when I became club president in 2003, owing to a financial crisis one of the methods we used to meet the budget deficit was a reduction in the number of pages in the magazine. I recognized that it was the single most important contact that the general membership had with the main club, and for that reason resisted proposals to eliminate it.

The club's very modest presence on the internet is yet a poor substitute for this loss. So I am saddened to see the regular magazine go down this route. To honor it, I provide....

A short history of ADK magazines

In 1922, the year the Adirondack Mountain Club was founded, it began to print its first magazine, *High Spots*. Initially it was only four pages. Over the succeeding years the magazine expanded in frequency and quality such that by the early 1930s it was a quarterly of 32 pages. It contained articles on Adirondack history and important early Adirondack guides. It featured articles by such Adirondack luminaries as Paul Schaefer, Robert Marshall, and Russell Carson.

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And there were debates discussing the conflict between recreational use and protection of the wilderness. Indeed, in Laura and Guy Waterman's important work *Forest and Crag: A History of Hiking, Trail Blazing and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains*, the authors recount how the issue of recreation versus preservation was debated in the Adirondack Mountain Club long before it was an issue elsewhere: "Be it noted that what was a peculiarly New York issue in the 1930s was destined to become a central concern of ... environmentalists in the Northeast--and indeed throughout the nation--but not until a full generation later." (p.399).

Two quotes from this period show the divide: "This club ... needs to become trail-conscious again -- a mountain club that does not climb mountains has no excuse for being alive."
– A.T. Shorey

"The more that's done for hikers in the forests, woods, and mountains, [to that extent] they fail to get the most out of it.... We must retain the challenging character of the Wilderness."
– Walter Collins O'Kane

The birth of *Adirondac*

By the end of the 1930s the Great Depression and the Second World War had devastated club finances such that *High Spots* became an annual, with its final issue in 1944. But things improved at the end of the war, and in 1945 *Adirondac* was launched. For its first 27 years, it was a modest black-and-white publication, just 5½ inches by 8½ inches of 24 pages. Yet it contained important articles about issues affecting the Adirondacks, the controversies about the formation of the Adirondack Park Agency, and the development of environmental ethics.

Eventually, the page size grew, and in 1982 the format changed into the more substantial magazine that is familiar to most of you. Edited for many years by our own Chapter member Neal Burdick, it was filled with timely articles and illustrated with beautiful color photographs. A vivid connection to the club for the average member, it helped create a real connection to the Adirondacks, something that the proposed substitute communications will have difficulty matching.

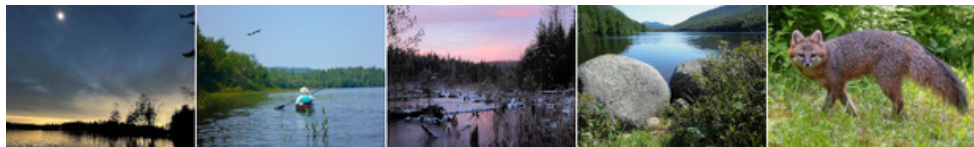
I mourn its passing.



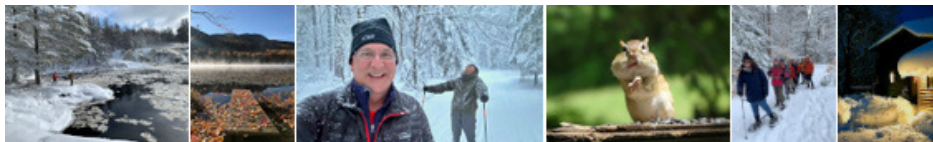
2026 Laurentian Chapter Photo Contest



The Laurentian Chapter is pleased to announce its 2026 Photo Contest. Submissions should be sent by email to contest organizer Tom Ortmeyer at tortmeyer@gmail.com. Digital submissions are preferred. Photos must have been taken between October 1, 2025, and September 30, 2026, for this year’s contest, and be received by October 10, 2026.



Photos should be on topics of interest to members of the Adirondack Mountain Club and its Laurentian Chapter. Preference will be given to photos taken in and near the Adirondack Mountains and the St. Lawrence and Ottawa River Valleys, as well as those taken at ADK events. Photos from Laurentian Chapter members are accepted, as are photos from non-members that are taken on Chapter outings. Photos submitted from those outings are also automatically entered.



Notes from the ADK Advisory Council

The ADK staff has proposed a revision of ADK’s Outings Leaders Guide (OLG). The draft guide is available at <https://adk.org/outings-leader-guide/>. Comments on this draft were solicited from Chapters and members. At present, Education Director Daria Stacy is planning a series of one-on-one meetings to discuss issues that were raised in the comment period.

In its May meeting, Advisory Council (AC) members expressed dissatisfaction with the first version of the OLG draft. As a result, the AC passed a resolution requesting that at least two AC members be added to the committee that will be reviewing comments and developing the next revision of the draft OLG. This resolution has been sent to Board Chair Mickey Orta, who circulated it to the Board.



One More Zero: Small Quantity, Big Difference

A typographical error in your Spring *North Wind* resulted in a significant misstating of the reimbursement for trip-leader training courses. **The reimbursement for trip-leader training courses is \$200, not \$20.** The conclusion of the affected paragraph in chair Tom Wheeler’s report should read, “ADK has established required training for trip leaders, and [Vice-Chair, Outings] Dana Chudzinski has been working hard to encourage [Chapter] members to meet that requirement. While Level One requirements can be easily met online, more advanced training often requires paying for an appropriate course. The Executive Committee has authorized reimbursement for course fees up to a maximum of \$200 for any one person, with specific limitations.”

2026 Azure Mountain Lighting – Coming Soon to Fire Tower Near You

Azure Mountain Friends again plans to participate in this year’s Fire Tower Lighting Event, sponsored by the New York State Chapter of the Forest Fire Lookout Association. The 2026 tower lighting is scheduled for **Saturday, September 5**. Laurentian Chapter members are invited to join the Azure Mountain Friends tower lighters. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, tortmeyer@gmail.com, for details.





Let Your Winter Light Shine: The Outdoors-Indoors Program Wants YOU!



Do you have a favorite or off-the-beaten-path trail that you'd like to share with your fellow Laurentians? Have you taken a trip involving an adventure in the great outdoors? Know some quirks of Adirondack history?

Then consider giving a presentation during the 2027 **Outdoors-Indoors** series. These presentations are held on **Sunday evenings in Potsdam from January through April** and provide ADKers with some **indoor entertainment and socializing** when the weather may not be so great outside.

In 2026 we heard about hiking in the Scottish Highlands, the geological history of the Canadian Barren Lands, the preservation work of Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH), and SCUBA diving and exploring Thailand. Where have your explorations taken you? If you would like to be a 2027 presenter, **contact Jeff Miller, Outdoors-Indoors Program Coordinator, at jeff@stlawu.edu.**

ADK Laurentian

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Outings and Events

July - September 2026

Dana Chudzinski
Vice Chair, Outings

Rating	Effort Level	Elevation Gain (ft.)	Miles	Time (hrs.)
A+	Very Strenuous	4,000	10	10
A	Strenuous	3,000	5 to 10	8 to 10
B+	Moderately Strenuous	2,000	5 to 10	6 to 8
B	Moderate	1,000	5 to 10	5 to 7
C+	Fairly Easy	1,000	5 to 8	4 to 6
C	Easy	Under 1,000	< 5	< 5

*Check for last minute updates: www.adklaurentian.org

*Please contact the leader at least one day before trip.

*Car pooling makes sense—so does sharing the cost of gas.

Thursday Weekly Walks

We will walk the Munter Trail every Thursday in July, August, and September at 7:30 a.m., typically for 1 hour / 2 miles. See the events schedule below for details.

Fall Outing - Just over the horizon

Autumn is coming sooner than you think, so it's time to plan to be part of **ADK's Fall Outing**. Hosted by our neighboring North Woods Chapter, it's locked in for **Friday, September 18 – Sunday, September 20** at the Saranac Village Young Life Camp. See the events schedule below for details.

Outings and Events

July - September 2026

NOTE: ADK's more stringent Outing Leadership Guidelines seem to be discouraging members from offering trips. These are not just ADK trying to be difficult; many are mandated by new legal and financial requirements imposed on the club, and they are undergoing examination and customization, where feasible, at the highest levels of ADK leadership. Please consider them closely while pondering this comment, also in Chair Tom Wheeler's column, from an early ADK leader, for whom a "shortcut" trail in the Great Range is named: "A mountain club that does not climb mountains has no excuse for being alive." –A.T. Shorey. Please also see "One More Zero" on page 4, and "Notes from the ADK Advisory Council" on page 3.

Thursdays, Jul. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Munter Trail 7:30 a.m. We will walk the trails for approximately 2 miles, 1-hour round trip. Meet in the parking lot behind the Clarkson Walker Arena and Hantz Field off Clarkson Ave., aka Back Hannawa Rd and CR 59. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, tortmeyer@gmail.com, 315-244-3707. Level C (Easy).

Saturday, Jul. 18: St. Regis Fire Tower The first two miles are relatively gradual, until a bridge over a small stream. Then the steeper approach begins. There are a few scrambles near the summit, which has an awesome view even without climbing the fire tower. Wear good hiking boots, bring enough food and water, and bring/wear clothing appropriate for the weather and tick protection. Trekking poles are always helpful. There are some eroded and rocky areas. We plan on eating lunch at the summit. Round trip a little over seven miles including road walk to and from trailhead. Elevation gain of 1650 feet. Level B. Contact leader Jane Khondker (janekhond@gmail.com) for exact time and meeting location, either at the trailhead or in Potsdam.

Thursday, Aug. 6: Thursday Paddle - Indian River and Red Lake Meet at Indian River Boat Ramp, Nelson Rd. in Theresa. This trip explores a fascinating ecosystem of small glacial erratic lakes in the Indian River Conservancy. After shuttling cars, we will paddle to Red Lake and explore the shoreline. After taking out, we will visit the Butterfield Lake boat put-in and have ice cream in historic Redwood. Bring lunch, water, PFD, boat and paddles. Leader: Greg Smith, 919-602-0457, Smithgn.Greg@gmail.com. 6.5 miles C+ limit 12.

Thursdays, Aug. 6, 13, 20, 27: Weekly Walk, Munter Trail 7:30 a.m. We will walk the trails for approximately 2 miles, 1-hour round trip. Meet in the parking lot behind the Clarkson Walker Arena and Hantz Field off Clarkson Ave., aka Back Hannawa Rd and CR 59. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, tortmeyer@gmail.com, 315-244-3707. Level C (Easy).

Thursdays, Sept. 3, 10, 17, 24: Weekly Walk, Munter Trail 7:30 a.m. We will walk the trails for approximately 2 miles, 1-hour round trip. Meet in the parking lot behind the Clarkson Walker Arena and Hantz Field off Clarkson Ave., aka Back Hannawa Rd and CR 59. Leaders for each week will vary. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, tortmeyer@gmail.com, 315-244-3707. Level C (Easy).

Outings and Events, July - September 2026, continued

Saturday, Sept. 5: Clear/Long/Lilypad Ponds This six-mile round trip hike is located just outside of Parishville. Although it is a short distance from town you get a sense that you are truly in a backwoods wilderness area. Perfect for beginners who do not want a great deal of elevation gain (350 feet). Great views of three great ponds. Contact trip leader Dana Chudzinski (chudski63@yahoo.com) for more information as well as meeting time and location. Level C+.

Saturday Sept. 12: Buck Mt. Fire Tower Hike a new trail that was opened in 2023. While the elevation gain is only 500 feet, much of this is gained in a series of at least seven newly constructed ladders. Good hike for those who want to practice on ladders! The summit is wooded, but there is a good view from the fire tower. We will meet at the trailhead or carpool from Potsdam. Trekking poles are suggested and good hiking boots are required, as well as enough water and snacks, and appropriate clothing for the season. Meet in Potsdam or at Buck Mountain Trailhead, 484 South Sabattis Circle Rd, off Rt. 30 between Tupper Lake and Long Lake. Contact leader Jane Khondker (janekhond@gmail.com) for meeting time for carpool and/or time of hike. Level C+.

Friday - Sunday, Sep 18 - 20: All-Club Fall Outing Hosted by our neighboring North Woods Chapter at the Saranac Village Young Life Camp. This premier Adirondack retreat on the shore of Upper Saranac Lake is in the heart of prime paddling, hiking, and biking country. In addition to a long list of guided outings available to all registrants, evenings will be filled with live music and dancing. Outings will include hiking Ampersand Mt. and Mt. Arab with its restored fire tower, cycling on the recently completed Adirondack Rail Trail, and paddling in the St. Regis Canoe Area. Camp facilities include an indoor gym, game room, and beach. For information on fees, accommodations, meals, and more, visit the ADK website's Events page at <https://adk.org/event-directory>.





Backtracks

April 25: Gould Lake Conservation Area

We wended our way through an interesting network of trails, some segments moderate and others very steep and challenging. We had lunch at Blue Lake, by which time we had a feel for the difficulty and the time required and opted to use a short connector trail to follow an easier route to our exit. Excellent spring weather

had brought a number of hikers and paddlers out to Gould Lake.

– John Barron



Photos: Gould Lake (by John Barron), Blue Lake (by Jean Giblin)

May 2: Buck Mountain We had great weather for this hike. The current trail was built in 2023 with a very large parking lot to accommodate many vehicles. I am sure the trail gets a lot of visitors during leaf-peeping season! It starts with a gradual grade, which increases toward the top. There are many sets of stairs in the steep portion, making a very comfortable climb. At the peak you are rewarded with a fire tower that is taller than most. Great view, great company, great hike.

Participants: Tom Ortmeyer TL, Jeff Miller, Dana Chudzinski.

Photos by Jeff Miller



May16: Azure Mountain Trail Work We had a productive day on Azure. We cleared four trees that had fallen across the trail (all in the 6" diameter range), cleaned waterbars, and hung a few new trail markers. We did some erosion control on the summit, and discussed options for future efforts of this nature. The weather was good, and there were a good number of hikers on the mountain. Participants: Mike McLean, Jane Khondker, Tom Ortmeyer TL.



Backtracks, continued

May 29: Clarksboro Trail

“I’m afraid no one joined me for my hike, but it was lovely anyway,” reports TL Tom Van de Water. “Hardly any blackflies!”

In this selfie, the combined trip leader and sole participant gestures through the newly green woods to the site of the long-gone-to-forest mining community of Clarksboro and hard-to-spot Twin Falls (see arrow in upper right of photo), both along Tooley Pond Road.



June 2 and 4: Indian Creek Conservation Field Days A big success was an ADK station at this annual event. Kim Baxter, our new Education chair, and I, as Conservation chair, introduced about 500 fifth graders from St Lawrence County schools to map-and-compass and no-trace camping. Groups of about 20 split into pairs and had 20 minutes to navigate to different campsites demonstrating various levels of impact and report their findings. Their “favorite” was a messy site with trash and TP, to contrast with a clean no-trace site that was much more welcoming. We hope to do this again. Kids had a great time. The station next to us was Joe Longshore leading a primitive fire-building workshop, also a great success. –Tom Van de Water