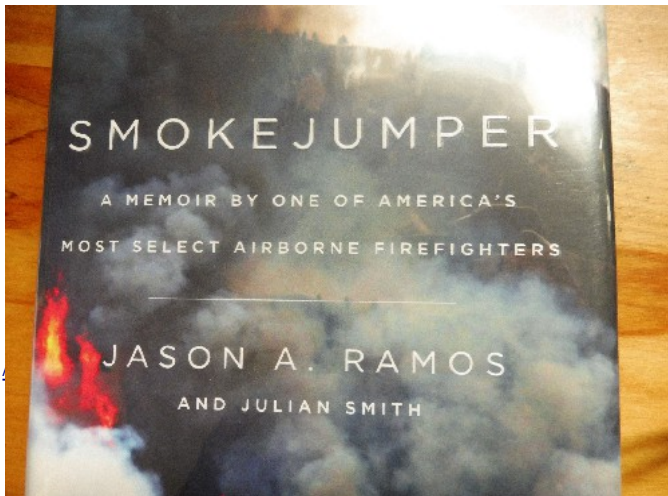


## Forest Fire Lookout Association New York State Chapter August 2017

Thanks so much to those of you who joined the FFLA last month! It is great to see the organization continue to grow.

**Trivia Question for July:** In August of 1991 when Fred Knauf was the State Director and organized a conference in Old Forge, how many NYS Members did Fred report? No one ventured a guess on this one, but I think it speaks well for how our organization has grown. Fred reported 5 members in NYS. There were 69 members nationwide. Current NYS Membership is approaching that number!

**Trivia Question for August:** Standard Equipment for an Observation Station included what? I believe it included 4 items. If you can accurately name them you can win an FFLA sticker!



**Book of the Month:** Let's head west for a different sort of read this month and a bit of adventure. *Smoke Jumper A Memoir by One of America's Most Select Airborne Firefighters* by Jason A Ramos is a compelling read.

New York State did head west to help aid in fighting the Montana fires: [http://www.thedailystar.com/news/local\\_news/three-locals-return-after-fighting-montana-fire/article\\_45ffd3c2-d7aa-56d8-ab8f-657a0d4bafa7.html](http://www.thedailystar.com/news/local_news/three-locals-return-after-fighting-montana-fire/article_45ffd3c2-d7aa-56d8-ab8f-657a0d4bafa7.html)

Our neighbors to the south were also busy since last month's newsletter:

[http://www.nj.com/burlington/index.ssf/2017/07/forest\\_fire\\_rages\\_well\\_into\\_day\\_2\\_could\\_be\\_largest.html](http://www.nj.com/burlington/index.ssf/2017/07/forest_fire_rages_well_into_day_2_could_be_largest.html)

### Updates

**Azure Mt:** Check out the web page for Azure Mountain and see their new fund raising goal. Also be sure to click on the photos on the left side of the page of the recent painting done by the SCA crew! It looks marvelous! <http://azuremountain.org/>

**Sterling Forest:** The Friends of Sterling Forest were awarded one of the \$500.00 FFLA restoration grants. Could your tower use some help with a restoration project? If so, check out the web page: <http://ffla.org/resources.html> I would encourage all of you to visit the Share with a Teen page to see the video that the teens who helped on the project put together. It is a great piece of volunteer work showcased by these teens video: <https://www.facebook.com/927517914027417/videos/1306814276097777/>

**Upcoming Centennial Celebration: Hunter Mountain Fire Tower** is turning 100 and they have plans for Saturday, August 19th. This follows NYSDEC Region 4 working on getting the tower a fresh coat of paint, a new roof and some other updates. For details of the event contact Fire Tower Coordinator Gordon Hoekstra at 518-565-0150.

**Poke O Moonshine and Hadley Centennial Celebrations:** Here is a great article about the Poke O celebration: <http://www.adirondackdailyenterprise.com/news/local-news/2017/08/towering-legacy/?platform=hootsuite> Hadley got some press too: <http://www.adirondackalmanack.com/2017/06/hadley-firetower-centennial.html>

I was fortunate to attend both celebrations in some capacity. Congratulations to both groups on putting together such great events. It was certainly a great deal of work, but it also was a wonderful opportunity to showcase what you all do. The Observers who were once caring for those towers would have been very proud! Here are a few more photos.



**Volunteer Opportunity:** How would you like to spend a weekend in the Catskills enjoying the view from a fire tower? Mount Tremper fire tower has openings available for volunteers to greet visitors on weekends through Columbus Day. If you are interested, please reach out to the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development: <http://catskillcenter.org/>

A special get well wish from all of us to Bob Spear, FFLA Historian and Archivist. We hope you are hitting the steel again soon!

**Thank you to the Pine Hill Community Center** for hosting the slide show on July 27<sup>th</sup>. We had a pretty good turn out for such a small town on a weekday. Lots of good information was shared and exchanged and we even got a sneak peak at some great collections too.



**Volunteer Opportunity:** Would you like to spend a day at St. Regis Fire Tower? Visit their website and click on their volunteer calendar: <http://www.friendsofstregis.org/> Here is a bit of follow up from their July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting: Friends and interested folks gathered on July 10, 2107 at the Historic Saranac Lake, John Black room to view a powerpoint presentation about past restoration efforts and to learn of plans for the future. Photographer Mark Kurtz bought along some large prints of the panoramic vistas from the tower which will be printed on sturdy material and installed in the cab to allow identification of the surrounding topography. Dr. Ed Hixson of Upper St. Regis Lake, Jack Burke of Paul Smiths and Bob Marrone of Vermontville have been elected to the Friends Board of Directors. Marty Podskoch delivered a very entertaining and personable presentation at the Paul Smith's Visitor's Interpretive Center (VIC) on July 23, 2017. Although the tower is open, there is still a great deal of restoration work to complete before the tower is completely preserved for future generations. The Friends are currently working on a grant to be submitted to the Cloudsplitter Foundation to raise money for the complete replacement of all the diagonal cross braces (24).

### SAVE THE DATES

**On September 15<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 pm, I will be presenting the latest edition of 'Fire Towers from a Historical Perspective' at Morgan Outdoors in Livingston Manor. This presentation will focus on 2 nearby towers, Balsam Lake and Red Hill, and the community connections.

**FFLA Picnic: Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>** I have reserved a tent at the Grafton Lakes State Park for our gathering. The FFLA will provide hot dogs and hamburgers. Please plan to bring a dish to pass and your favorite beverage. I would ask that anyone who would like to attend please send me an rsvp so that I can plan accordingly. Families are welcome as well. We can plan to gather at noon and some people may wish to make a visit to the Dickinson Hill Fire Tower while there.

**Catskill Fire Tower Project:** On Saturday night September 2nd, we invite everyone to find a place with a view of your favorite fire tower for our 4th annual **Lighting of the Fire Towers Event**. This event is meant to showcase the history of the five Catskill fire towers and some of our other friends around the state. Find an area in your neighborhood where you have a view of one of the fire towers. From 9:00pm to 9:30pm, look up to see the cabs lit up. Remember that these towers were watching faithfully like beacons over your property for years to help prevent forest fires. The men and women who were in those cabs were there to protect your property from forest fires by providing fire fighters with an early detection and reporting system that was amazingly accurate. If you are lucky, your area may have been covered by more than one tower! For additional information about possible viewing areas near you, please refer to the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development website: <http://catskillcenter.org/events/> or <http://viewsandbrews.com/balsamlake/>.

Loon Lake Fire Tower is our centennial tower of the month. This area of the northwestern Adirondacks was the location of several forest fires. In 1903, 1908, and 1913 several fires spread. A wooden tower was initially erected on the site (does anyone have a photo of same?). In 1917 under the watchful eye of Forest Ranger Albert Tebeau, the current 35 foot Aeromotor fire tower was erected. The headlines from March 1928 read “The tower that was erected on the Mountain by the state was blown down and wrecked in a heavy windstorm which tore over the mountain some days ago.” The tower was restored that very spring as it had such an important coverage area. The first standard cabin was also erected that year. The tower was in service through 1971. In October of 2013 NYSDEC and the SCA constructed and opened a new 2.8 mile trail to the summit.

She still stands proudly one hundred years later, though looking pretty poorly at the moment. In a recent conversation with a NYSDEC Supervising Forester about another tower, he added “we’ll do Loon Lake next” to our conversation, so perhaps in the near future she will get spruced up.



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