



**Forest Fire Lookout Association
New York State Chapter
June 2018**

We hit them all! Earth Day (painted at Ferncliff), National Trails Day (work at Blue) and Outdoors Day (The Northeastern Conference)! The Northeastern FFLA conference wrap up is just one of the great highlights in this month's newsletter. Here in New York mid May to mid June is when the snows have mostly melted and we do work on some important fire tower projects, and we even have a new fire tower going up! We will try to make it all fit in this newsletter format.

First our Northeastern Conference. We had thirty some people attend from 8 different states and a slate of excellent speakers. Ed Engelman spoke about how to preserve towers via the National Historic Designation. Barry Knight told the story of picking the pieces of his tower out of a field and putting it back together again. George Profous recounted the early days of the Catskill Fire Tower Project. Doug Fitzgerald entertained us with the cross brace replacement work recently done at St. Regis. Ray Grimes explained the manner in which New Jersey continues to actively use their fire tower system to spot fires. Ryan Trapani gave us an enlightening look at Forestry in the 21st century. We had a special appearance by Chuck Helms who kindly stepped in when we had a speaker cancellation. He discussed his role as an Observer in the new Pennsylvania fire spotting program. Door prizes were given out, the food was tasty, and the conversations plentiful! In addition, we visited 8 fire towers as a group; Jackie Jones, Stissing, Ferncliff, Knight Tower, Leonard Hill, Utsayantha, Balsam Lake, and Red Hill. Some attendees got to 29 towers during their visit to the northeast! Our base for the Conference was Mount Tremper in the Catskills. We supported the local community through our lodging and food choices. We thank the Mount Tremper Fire Hall for the use of their space for the conference - it was a perfect venue. Our attendees and speakers made the conference a great success. Thanks to Ed, George, Doug, Barry, Ryan, Ray, and Chuck for presenting. Thanks to all who attended! *A separate e-mail was sent to attendees with available presentation materials. If you would like copies of those, please let me know.



Updates From Around the State

Panoramic Maps of Fire Towers: Follow up from a discussion on our facebook page where John Sasso included this link to the archives where the panoramic map images can be found – a great resource. Thanks John! http://digitalcollections.archives.nysed.gov/index.php/Search/Index?search=panoramic+map+observatory&s&target=ca_objects

Hurricane: On May 6th, DEC employees along with a New York State Police Aviation unit, spent the day resupplying High Peaks Wilderness Area interior outposts with propane, firewood, and lumber for the upcoming season. In addition, roofing materials for the restoration of the Hurricane Mountain Fire Tower were flown to the summit. Hurricane Mountain was named the best hike in New York State by Outside Magazine! Congratulations! <https://www.adirondackdailyenterprise.com/news/local-news/2019/04/outside-magazine-names-hurricane-mountain-as-the-best-hike-in-new-york>



Kane: It turns out Margaret A. had so much fun painting the graffiti at Ferncliff that she decided to lend a hand at Kane as well. Someone took it upon themselves to spray paint the tower cab inside and out with bright yellow spray paint. If not for that slob, there was not much graffiti to cover over so I like to think we are making some progress with the vandals there. Thanks so much Margaret! It really is fun working with you, makes the time go fast and doesn't seem like a chore at all!

CIC Tower: On Monday, June 10th ground breaking occurred! The holes were dug for the footings and that Friday, concrete was being poured for them. Currently it is expected that the steel will begin to go up after July 4th. Davana LLC is the contractor doing the work. Stay tuned for more details.

Catskill Fire Tower Project: For the 11th year in a row, Lisa Lyons of Morgan Outdoors in Livingston Manor is offering the Fire Tower Passport program. Visit one or all 5 of the Catskill Fire Towers, put your name in a drawing for a chance to win a great prize.

<https://morgan-outdoors.com/?p=2280>



Presentations at local schools: We MUST be certain that we think about our future and how best to involve young people in our fire towers. To that end, I borrowed a Common Core Standards Curriculum developed by David Thomas-Train of the Poke-O-Moonshine group and offered a presentation to local schools near the Balsam Lake Fire Tower as part of our centennial celebration. The Livingston Manor Central School principal and teachers had the students well prepared for the presentations. We obtained the necessary DEC permit and planned a hike to the tower too. Unfortunately, due to the weather we did have to cancel our hike. More info about this will be in upcoming newsletters so you can be ready for next school year.

Mt Morris: Since there is a historic 22 foot tall fire tower on the summit I always keep an eye on the headlines involving this resort: <https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/stories/big-tupper-resort-on-hold-over-legal-and-tax-debts>

Graffiti: how one town is handling it with police and assistance from the public: <https://www.recordonline.com/news/20190612/middletown-cops-on-lookout-for-graffiti-culprits>

NYSDEC Forest Rangers June 12, 2019: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/press/117237.html> and related topics can be found here: To [view a map of wildfires across the state since 2003](#), visit the DEC website. To [view the state's fire danger map](#) that is updated daily, visit the DEC website.

Blue: The NYS Chapter of the FFLA was once again able to partner with the NYSDEC and Team Rubicon on a fire tower project June 1st and 2nd, this time Blue Mountain Fire Tower. I will reiterate my heartfelt thanks to all involved; Retired Forest Ranger Greg George who assisted us in securing lodging for the volunteers; Jeff Vander Molen, the owner of Steamboat Landing who generously provided lodging along with his son Ethan; Nick Addison of the NYSDEC who led this crew along with John of the NYSDEC Camp and Trail Crew; Ron Hart who is a member of the FFLA; and all the members of Team Rubicon who came from so far away to get the work done; Todd their leader who makes organizing these projects easy, Bob, Don, LZ, Missy, and Jason; and last but not least in any way, Tom who makes this all possible. And yes, the weather was not always perfect and the black flies were very hungry but we got a great deal accomplished. The DEC will finish the work and the FFLA will return to complete the painting.



Azure: Last month we reported that the Azure Mountain Friends were reviewing scholarship submissions. Awards are as follows: “Three area high school seniors are winners of \$750 college scholarships from Azure Mountain Friends (AMF). They are: Danielle Eggleston, Massena; Sydney Levison, Norwood-Norfolk; and Haley Raville, Malone (Franklin Academy). Eggleston will attend SUNY Canton in the fall, while Levison will enroll at Sienna College and Raville at Elmira College. Scholarship winners are chosen on the basis of personality, fitness, and familiarity with the Azure Mountain area. In order to earn their scholarship, they are required to serve as volunteer summit hosts/stewards at the 101-year-old restored fire tower on the summit, near St. Regis Falls, on five separate weekend days during the summer. Hike up the mountain and you might get to meet one of them.”

Correction department: In last month's newsletter I reported that the Jackie Jones vandalism was quickly taken care of. I guess something came up and that work did not get done. Hoping it can be repaired real soon. In last month's newsletter I left out Doug Fitzgerald of the St. Regis group in our speaker list for the conference. Doug told me he wanted to finish the cross brace project before talking about it so I had not included him. But I did report in the newsletter that the work had been completed and I failed to update the speaker list. My apologies to Doug who gave an excellent presentation.



BLM: The Centennial would like one, please let me know. Cost - \$5.00. These are and we will not be able to sell them at the fire tower. They will be available at our Centennial Events on August 2nd and 4th. To get things ready for the Centennial season at Balsam Lake we did orientation with several new volunteers and we did some work on the tower. All our volunteers and very much appreciated! Photo courtesy of H. Rampe, patch design by Holly Covart of Media Solstice.

Book of the Month: For those who seek old fire tower sites and standing towers in the North Country, one of the best resources is the McMartin 'Discover the Adirondacks' series. Author Barbara McMartin always mentions the fire tower sites and some history of the area along with maps. Depending on the year of publication of the volume you are looking at, her guides give you a great look at the past uses of the area en route to the fire tower or site.

Stillwater: Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower is looking for volunteers to become Summit Stewards for 2019, July through Labor Day. A “YES” will commit you to a mere 4 hours up in the tower cab from 10 to 2 on a Sat or Sun thru the summer. There will be a handbook for you to refer to that shows what can be seen from the tower, plus enough information that will answer most any question. Your job will be to greet visitors, give them a brief rundown on what can be seen, history of the tower, and encouragement for them to be respectful to the environment. You will give everyone a sticker and kids will get an “I Climbed Stillwater Mt.” card you’ll sign as Stillwater Summit Steward. More detailed information will be sent if you’re interested. This is the third year of having Summit Stewards, and everyone who volunteered enjoyed their day and met lots of great people who love the Adirondack outdoors. Email (fsft@frontier.com) with a 1st & 2nd choice of dates if you’d like to help. Also at Stillwater, some new history has been noted by John Sasso. He found 'SS Snell' carved in the rock, thought to be placed there by one of Colvin's worker's sons, Sidney S. Snell, then age 32.

Annual Lighting of the Fire Tower Event: Saturday, August 31st. Don't forget to follow the guidelines we circulated with the May newsletter. In brief: A - Tower, B – Press, C – Details, D – Prep, E – Light, F – Report. So far I have Fred lighting Snowy and Jeremy and Brandon lighting Balsam Lake. Who else will step up and light a tower?

Instead of Trivia let's do a puzzle: How many words can be made using the letters in Centennial? A perfect way to pass a few rainy hours which seem to be plentiful. The one who sends me the longest list wins an FFLA sticker.

Trivia: Cory Telarico said he figured EVERYONE would submit an answer to the April trivia question, so he didn't! But after reading that no one had in the May newsletter, he sent in the correct answer - D. B. Smith & Co., of Utica, N.Y., still in business after 130 years! Cory got a new FFLA sticker!



Calendar

Saturdays through October 12th, 2019 between 11am and 1 pm, you can climb the Summit Fire Tower. Hosted by the [Friends of Allegany](#) State Park, the Fire Tower is a short walk on the Art Roscoe Cross Country Ski and Mountain Bike area trail. Located at the summit area on the former Parker property on South Mountain at an elevation of 2,365 feet and 1,000 feet above Red House Lake, the Summit Fire Tower gives visitors a spectacular view of the surrounding area. In 1999 the Allegany State Park Fire Tower Restoration Committee was formed and over the next few years they restored the tower to allow visitors the opportunity to climb the tower once again. These free events are open to the public and weather dependent.

Saturday, July 13, 2019 Friends of Poke-O-Moonshine will be doing trail work on the Ranger's trail. Call David Thomas-Train at 802-989-6134 to sign up.

Tuesday, July 16, 2019 The Town of Horicon Historical Society in Brant Lake will be holding a Meet the Forest Rangers event.

Saturday, July 27, 2019 The Catskill Forest Association will hold their 10th annual Forest Festival in Margaretville.

Friday, August 2, 2019 – Sunday, August 4, 2019 will be the **Centennial** Celebration for Balsam Lake Mountain. Events will be held at Morgan Outdoors in Livingston Manor on August 2nd from 4 to 7pm; children's events will be held at the summit on August 3rd; and at the Dry Brook Community Hall on August 4th from Noon to 3pm.

Wednesday, August 7, 2019: Trail work day on the Observer's Trail at Poke-O-Moonshine. Call David Thomas-Train 802-989-6134 to sign up.

Thursday, August 8, 2019, at 5pm will be a reception and program to celebrate Hurricane Fire tower's **Centennial** at the Elizabethtown museum.

Saturday and Sunday, August 10th and 11th, 2019 Friends of Hurricane Mountain will host hikes to the fire tower and Observer's cabin as part of their **Centennial** celebration.

Saturday, August 10, 2019, from 11am to 5pm The NJ Forest Fire Service is having a big celebration at Liberty State Park in Jersey City for Smokey's 75th Birthday.

Tuesday, August 13, 2019, the The Town of Horicon Historical Society in Brant Lake will be holding an Adirondack History talk by Historian, Mark Friden.

Saturday, August 24, 2019, The Friends of Stillwater Fire Tower will be holding their **Centennial** celebration.

Saturday, August 31, 2019, Fire Tower Lighting Event Date

Sunday, September 1, 2019, Fire Tower Lighting Event Rain Date

October 11th through the 13th will be the Western Conference of the FFLA hosted by the California Chapter in San Diego California: <https://firelookouthost.org/western-conference-2018/>

Sunday, October 20, 2019 Your chance to visit the Alma fire tower. Registration for the 27th Annual RidgeWalk & Run is open <https://runsignup.com/Race/NY/Wellsville/RidgeWalkRun>

Our Chapter activities are supported by your dues and donations and an occasional conference. This past month we received several greatly appreciated donations to help offset the cost of what we do. We thank those contributors!

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