



**Forest Fire Lookout Association  
New York State Chapter  
July 2019**

June and July are the heart of fire tower work. With longer, warmer days (though still plenty of bugs) there has been lots of activities this month, including a new fire tower!



At the CIC in Mount Tremper we reported last month that the footings were done and the steel would start going up in July. That work began on July 9<sup>th</sup>. I have stopped by periodically to take photos of the progress. I also had photos of the tower just a few days before it was taken down in Venice Florida donated to the Chapter from Jack Kelly. Together they will provide a nice pictorial history. Thanks!

Views from some towers have been hazy due to numerous fires at our neighbors in Quebec. This report from Canada details several of the larger fires. Good luck to all in stopping them and stay safe.

<https://cwfis.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/report>

On Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup> I went back to Ferncliff and painted over all of the new graffiti that had been done since we painted on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. There was a great deal of graffiti this time, even on the footings!



**Trivia:** From Bill Tindall here is question one will have to give some thought to: What fire tower was the farthest from a vehicle access, vehicle defined as something the Observer would be expected to own and drive regularly? In other words, which Observer in NYS had the longest walk to work? No answers to last months puzzles.

**Book of the Month:** Megafire: the race to extinguish a deadly epidemic of flame by Michael Kudas published in 2017 looks like a great read. It is a book described as “Through this prism of perspectives, Kudas zeroes in on a handful of the most terrifying and tumultuous of these environmental disasters in recent years--the Yarnell Hill Fire in Arizona that took the lives of nineteen elite "hotshot" firefighters, the Waldo Canyon Fire that overwhelmed the city of Colorado Springs--and more in a page-turning narrative that puts a face on the brave people at the heart of this issue. Megafire describes the profound impact of these fires around the earth and will change the way we think about the environment and the essential precariousness of our world."

### News from Around the State

The Matt Walters fund was announced earlier this spring as a possible grant funding option. Poke O Moonshine requested funds to purchase a new alidade to replace one that was stolen last year. That grant was approved and the new alidade has been purchased. It looks awesome! You should go visit and see for yourself.



On June 19<sup>th</sup> 4 of us completed the spring trail work on Lyon Mountain. Margaret, Fred, Scot and myself spent a day doing blowdown removal, side cutting, water bar clearing and switchback brushing amongst a million black flies. We do need to return with some safety netting to replace a couple of sections. Thanks Margaret, Fred, and Scot!

On Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, Margaret, Adam and myself went up to Blue to paint. We had assistance from the summer steward, Kali and NYSDEC Forest Ranger, Jay Scott with our work. The DEC and the FFLA have spent considerable time, monies, and effort to get this tower spruced up. We thank Nick at the Northville office for all of his efforts to make this happen!

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, Poke O Moonshine Observer's trail got lots of love from a group of 12 hikers. Led by David Thomas-Train, the group not only cleared trail, but they enjoyed fresh blueberries as well!

Our Governor announced a new Catskill Fire Tower promotion at Bethel Woods this week:  
<https://www.recordonline.com/news/20190711/cuomo-promotes-tourism-in-catskills-issues-challenge-to-hikers>

It has not yet been made clear to the 5 tower coordinators how this challenge works or what is involved, though the article does state you can earn a new license plate and a park pass. There was no mention of any investment in the fire tower structures, Observers cabins, privies, trails, parking areas, kiosks, or sign in register boxes. Perhaps more visitors to the fire towers will showcase the need for NYS to invest more in these historic facilities and infrastructure.

Our neighbors to the south have a great program coming up on July 21<sup>st</sup>:  
<https://www.njherald.com/20190714/forest-fire-service-fire-towers-in-new-jersey-to-be-topic-of-a-presentation?fbclid=IwAR3HaB55IuzVEdVPPKBP72NeZaRBI4I9RrpfM5x6C5-CXJApIV9nrzKu2io>

Annual Lighting of the Fire Towers Event: Saturday, August 31<sup>st</sup> **Guidelines for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Lighting of the Fire Tower Event Statewide:** The original premise for the Lighting of the Fire Tower Event came from Doug Hamilton of the Red Hill Fire Tower Committee. The idea was to light the fire tower with a high powered light, put lots of press releases in the local paper about the time when this would occur and invite people to go to locations around the community where they could look up, see the light on the horizon and remember that there was a fire tower there watching over and protecting the community and surrounding forest. To ensure a safe event and in keeping with the spirit and purpose of the event, please plan on the following:

- a - If there is a specific fire tower that you would like to light, please reach out to the group that maintains that fire tower. If in doubt, let me know and I can point you to the right person. Please let me know so I can maintain an up to date list of the fire towers that will be lit.
- b - Work with the individual fire tower group to reach out to the local press, distribute flyers, etc about the event. Include locations on the ground in the community where people can look up and see the tower lit. Utilize <http://heywhatsthat.com> or other similar web pages to determine locations.
- c - Discuss with the fire tower group the type of light to be used and who will be the Illuminator.
- d - If you choose to organize a hike to the fire tower, please be sure to go as a group with proper gear, head lamps, etc. Hiking in the dark can be difficult and unsafe for the inexperienced hiker.
- e - Please light the lamp for the specified time period; 9-9:30 pm.
- f - Please report back to myself and the fire tower group how the event went and that all are off the mountain safely.

We still only have 2 fire towers participating in the Lighting at this point; Balsam Lake lit by Jeremy and Brandon and Snowy lit by Fred. Is anyone else planning on joining in?

Two Centennial Events between now and our next newsletter: BLM and Hurricane. Stillwater Centennial shortly after our August newsletter goes out.

## CALENDAR

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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> from 4 to 7pm; children's events will be held at the summit on August 3<sup>rd</sup>; and at the Dry Brook Community Hall on August 4<sup>th</sup> from Noon to 3pm. <http://www.viewsandbrews.com/balsamlake/>

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 75<sup>th</sup> 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 / Rain Date: Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>

October 11<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> 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 27<sup>th</sup> Annual RidgeWalk & Run is open <https://runsignup.com/Race/NY/Wellsville/RidgeWalkRun>

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