



**Forest Fire Lookout Association  
New York State Chapter  
November 2022**



November – the month when most of the fire towers closed up for the season. Occasionally there was a dry fall and the Observers were asked to stay later, but more often than not, they cleared the fire tower cab of radios and batteries, binoculars and reading material. The cabins were tidied and all food removed so the mice did not take over the space in the winter. Windows were shuttered against the cold and snow and doors were closed and locked. The Observer would move onto another job for the winter months if they had one secured. Some would do some logging, work on highway departments, and other jobs. Some would take the opportunity to spend time in the woods hunting or trapping.

The winner of this month's photo contest on Facebook was Bill Hill. Bill's photo of Loon Lake Fire Tower taken in November of 2018 got the most votes and certainly illustrated some nice, early snowcover too! Congratulations to Bill and thanks to everyone who participated. We had lots of great submissions.

This fall proved to be unusually warm and allowed us to take on a few last minute projects such as replacing some landing boards at Balsam Lake Mountain Fire tower. We are very grateful for the work of Forest Rangers Martin, Kreft, Sweeney, and Franceschina as well as volunteers Tom and Jim on a fine fall day. We had some landing boards that were in very poor condition (could pull them off with one hand) so we were very thankful that the tower is once again safe for visitors.



## Around the Country

**Catfish Fire Tower in New Jersey:** An excellent educational spot by our very own Bob Wolff:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1kMx\\_tzO7I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1kMx_tzO7I)

We sometimes forget to keep our eye on the goal. Fire towers were placed on the summits in NYS to prevent large wildfires from occurring. Saving the forest can result in saving many things. One wood product we don't often think about is the piano. Our friends at Northern Woodlands included a great article about pianos in a recent newsletter: [https://thehustle.co/how-one-of-americas-last-piano-manufacturers-stays-alive/?utm\\_source=pocket-newtab](https://thehustle.co/how-one-of-americas-last-piano-manufacturers-stays-alive/?utm_source=pocket-newtab)

From Karl Brauneis who heard that several episodes of Lassie were recently posted to Utube:

*Temper the Wind* - This one has it all. Dispatch, Lookout Towers, Old TBM retardant bombers (even an F7F), Heli-Jumpers, Smokejumpers and the added bonus of Lassie saving a stray sheep from the Carlos flock. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZC8QEXS1Dw>

*The Wounded Bear* - The forest rangers wife earns her spurs with a 30-30 when she saves the forest guard from a wounded bear. Of course Lassie holds off the bear while she retrieves the Winchester. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9j1Br4hGZ4>

*Showdown* - Corey Stuart takes on the evil Bob Stokes and gives him a lecture on Multiple Use Management. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbbZ2OB0wQ>

*The Holocaust* - Smokejumpers in our beautiful DC-3 jumping the old candy stripe parachute. The first fire shelters that you could walk around in. Unfortunately, this was the end of Corey Stuart as other rangers took over with Lassie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K6Jgj-aprM>

## Around the State

It's been pretty dry, warm and windy during the first part of November. That set up quite a few fires, but thankfully nothing major.

From the November 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Ranger Reports:

**Town of Bleeker Fulton County Wildland Fire:** On Oct. 30 at 1:05 p.m., Ray Brook Dispatch requested Forest Ranger assistance for a wildland fire off of Lake Edward Road in the town of Bleeker. Three Rangers joined firefighters from six fire departments to work on suppression efforts. By 6:40 p.m., firefighters contained the 18.8-acre fire. One camper trailer was destroyed. Two other structures were protected by fire crews. Rangers are continuing suppression efforts until the fire is declared out. The fire was caused by debris burning.

**Village of Fort Ann Washington County Wildland Fire:** On Oct. 30 at 2 p.m., Forest Ranger Poulton responded to a wildland fire reported as one acre in size on Putnam Mountain. Ranger Poulton determined the fire was actually 11.3 acres at the time of response. Ranger Donegan responded with a six-wheeler and additional tools. Five hours later, fire crews had the fire, which was caused by a campfire, contained after growing to 13.7 acres. Rangers are continuing suppression efforts until the fire is declared out.

**Herkimer County Wildland Fire:** On Oct. 30 at 12:30 p.m., Forest Rangers McCartney and Murphy responded to a call for a wildland fire on Newport Road in the village of Poland. Rangers estimated the fire was 7.2 acres. Rangers and four fire departments worked together to contain the fire, which was caused by debris burning, by 3 p.m. Rangers are continuing suppression efforts until the fire is declared out.

**Towns of Avoca, Canadice, Colchester, East Fishkill, Lisle, Lysander, Persia, and Petersburgh Broome, Cattaraugus, Delaware, Dutchess, Onondaga, Ontario, Rensselaer, and Steuben Counties Wildland Fires:** From Nov. 4 - 7, Forest Rangers responded to an estimated eight wildland fires in eight different counties. The fires were caused by campfires, debris burning, and power lines. All of the fires, which burned approximately 75 acres of land, are out, contained, or in patrol status. The dry weather and windy conditions lead to fires that spread more quickly. On Nov. 5 at 2 p.m., Forest Rangers responded to a ground fire on the shore of Lake Colby in Saranac Lake Wild Forest. Rangers put out the fire, which was caused by burning at an illegal campsite. The investigation is ongoing.

**Buck:** We had some great news from Buck Mt. Fire Tower this month. A big hold up with the project has been waiting for a permit from the APA for some bridges along the trail. That finally came through early this month, making the chances of getting the tower opened in early 2023 more of a reality! <https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/stories/new-buck-mountain-fire-tower-hike-in-the-works>

**Mount Arab:** Mt. Arab climbers be aware that the Adirondack Railroad line to Tupper Lake has been restored and is active once again. Traffic on the line may include locomotives and service vehicles. The road to the Mt. Arab trail-head parking lot crosses the Adirondack rail line. There are currently no automated crossing safety barriers at the intersections of the roads and rails. It is strongly suggested that you stop, look, and listen for train or rail maintenance vehicle traffic.

Friends of Mt. Arab are seeking items for a full Observer's uniform for their museum. If you would have or know of someone who would have a uniform, hat, boots, badge, etc. that one could donate to this project, it would be greatly appreciated. <http://friendsofntarab.org/donations.html>

**Black Mt. and Cathead Mt. Fire Towers:** From the NYS Police October 13<sup>th</sup> post on Facebook (I would not want to steal from the NYS Police – lol) “Working together: NYSP Aviation-Albany supported Division Communications with a resupply mission on Black Mountain in Washington County to keep the radio tower up and running. Two aviation radio towers provide support to Division Communications, one on Black Mountain and one on Cathead Mountain, that do not have commercial electrical sources. The radio towers are powered by sustainable energy consisting of solar and wind. Since the towers are not accessible at ground level, propane tanks have to be flown to the towers.”

**Hadley:** On November 5<sup>th</sup> Steve, Matt, Mike, Doug, and Judd spent the day preparing the Observer's cabin for winter and clearing out the water bars on the trail. A huge thank you to all of them!

*Finding the Blaze* written by Maryellen Wander Eyer is an is an adventure story in the woods. Jeremy, his mother and friend Alex are hiking trails and help solve an unexpected problem on the top of Hadley Fire Tower. The book includes fire tower history, a list of items to bring hiking, a map, glossary and blank hiking journal pages. A portion of each sale goes to help the Hadley Fire Tower Committee. The soft cover book is available on Amazon.com. For an autographed copy or hard cover edition please use Maryellen's website [wanderingpenbooks.com](http://wanderingpenbooks.com) to place an order. The book is suitable for 1st and 2nd graders and possibly as an independent read for grades 3-5.

**Fire Tower Festival – Save the Date:** The Adirondack's Speculator Chamber of Commerce is proud to present our newest summer festival! Fire Tower Festival will be on July 22nd, 2023! We are in the beginning phases of planning but we hope to have:

- Share the history about our Fire Tower & Fire Towers in general with special guest speakers!
- An interactive experience with local Fire Departments, maybe even a contest?
- A Chili cook off between local businesses
- A live band!
- Food trucks
- Lots of vendors to shop from & more!

**Lighting Event 2022 continued Bald, Belfry, Blue, Hadley, Owls Head, Page Pond.**



Bald/Rondaxe mountain photo by Kurt Gardner



Hadley tower by Mike Becker

The Lighting Event at Belfry partnered with the 46Climbs event to shed the light on suicide prevention. Illuminator Brian Collupy was happy to have the folks from 46Climbs join him in the event. Page Pond is located on private property at Girl Scout Camp Amahami. The Girl Scouts do an excellent job of maintaining the tower, Observer's cabin and grounds. We thank Illuminator Steve Campbell for partnering with the girl scouts on this. Forest Ranger Melissa Milano was the Illuminator at Owls Head and Forest Ranger Jason Scott was the Illuminator at Blue. We are very grateful for the Ranger assistance with this event.



Blue photo by Robert Lewin



Belfry photo by Cindy Plumb Bishop



Page Pond photo by Eileen Mann Shultis



Owl's Head photo by FR Melissa Milano

Thanksgiving is coming up next week. A day to gather together with family and friends. A day to give thanks to those you support us and our work here in New York State. We are very grateful for that support in whatever form it may take. Happy Thanksgiving! Laurie

[www.nysffla.org](http://www.nysffla.org)