



# The Oak Leaf

## Newsletter of TRISTATE RAMBLERS

Volume 46 Number 2

FALL 2023

## GETTING THERE

by Dianne Jones, Webmaster

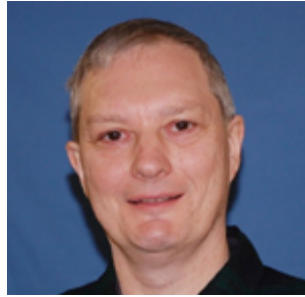
Have you ever gotten lost or been late getting to a hike/bike/paddle because you were not sure of the meeting location? TSR has a [Directions document](#) (also available at the top of the [Directions](#) page on our website) with directions to most meeting places. If the meeting location is not in this document, specific directions are provided in the event description itself.

For those who rely on GPS, there is also a handy feature in the TSR calendar. The calendar entry includes the meeting location. Just click on the location to easily map out the directions (the default map app is Google Maps). You can access the link to the TSR calendar or find instructions to link the TSR calendar to your own calendar on the [Member Info](#) page of our website (member log-in required).

Remember, a park can have multiple meeting locations. Make sure you know the correct destination by fully reading the event description and referring to the TSR Directions document.

Also remember that the listed time is the start time of the event, which means the ready-to-move time. Give yourself enough time to find the hike start point, get situated, gather your gear, use the facilities (formal, portable, or natural), hear any leader comments, etc. so you are ready to set off at the scheduled time. Out of courtesy to others, the leader is not obligated to wait for any latecomers.

## Message from the President *by John Jurasek*



As the 2023 outdoor season draws to a close, I feel that it has been a good year for TriState Ramblers. Once again, we have had at least one outing nearly every day; our membership and number of leaders continue to grow; our financial position is strong; and our volunteers are active and productive.

And as this year ends, so does my term as president. While we do not have term limits on board positions, I feel that, when practical, leadership should be turned over to well qualified, enthusiastic members who perhaps can bring a new perspective to the club and its future.

It is in this light that our current vice president, Gordon Thomas, will

lead our slate of officers as president of TriState Ramblers for the two-year term 2024 and 2025. For the many members who know Gordon, he needs no introduction. I am sure you agree that he is more than capable and has been, and will continue to be, an asset to this club.

In what may seem unusual, I will be returning to the role of vice president for the 2024 term. This will ensure both continuity and progression, and most of the current officers will remain on the slate of candidates in their current positions. The election will take place at our annual meeting on December 2. (See page 2 for details.)

Of course, we welcome additional volunteers for various positions both on the board and off. As I have said many times, our club is only as good as its members. While we have a great group of volunteers at all levels, we are always in need of more. So please consider offering to serve on one of the many committees that allow us to keep TriState Ramblers one of the best outdoor clubs around.



**The Oak Leaf** is a publication of TriState Ramblers of New Jersey. Comments or questions may be addressed to the editor, Lise Greene, at [lise.greene@montclair.edu](mailto:lise.greene@montclair.edu). The newsletter is created electronically by the graphic editor, Jay Winslow, and emailed to all members. It is also posted on the TSR website. In order to ensure receipt of *The Oak Leaf*, please keep your email current with John Crump, membership chair, at [johncrump@yahoo.com](mailto:johncrump@yahoo.com).

# SAVE THE DATE! SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023

Annual Business Meeting and Holiday Party for Members  
Masker's Barn in Watchung Reservation  
9 Cataract Hollow Road, Berkeley Heights 07922



Please join us for our annual business meeting and holiday party on Saturday, December 2 — indoors at Masker's Barn. Everyone brings food to share for the potluck meal; beverages will be provided.

**Annual Meeting/Party:** The short meeting starts at noon, followed by the party. Registration is through SignUpGenius.

**Hikes:** They will be scheduled prior to the meeting/party. Hikers will register through SignUpGenius and carry water and their emergency contact card. Please drop off potluck food at Masker's Barn before hiking.

**Sharpening Service:** Once again, Phil Ross has generously offered to repair equipment and sharpen knives. Bring up to two items; drop them off at Masker's Barn by 10:30.

**Swap Table:** Bring hiking equipment, clothing, and related items in good condition to pass on to fellow club members. Note: If your items are still on the table when you leave, you must take them back with you.

**Help!** Helpers are needed at 9:30 for setup and afterward for cleanup. Please contact Social Committee co-chairs Elise Morrison ([tsrsocialcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:tsrsocialcommittee@gmail.com)) or Kathe Serbin ([katheserbin@yahoo.com](mailto:katheserbin@yahoo.com)) to volunteer.

In the event of a forced cancellation due to extreme weather, notification will be posted through GoogleGroups email.

*With Covid and other respiratory illnesses on the rise again, please follow all recommended CDC guidelines.*

Contact Elise or Kathe (see above) with questions.

## Election of Officers for 2024

The following slate will be presented by the Nominating Committee for election at the annual meeting on Saturday, December 2, at Masker's Barn. (See details at left.) For additional nominations, please contact Sheree Bennett at [shereestarrett@yahoo.com](mailto:shereestarrett@yahoo.com).

PRESIDENT  
Gordon Thomas

VICE PRESIDENT  
John Jurasek

TREASURER  
John Crump

RECORDING SECRETARY  
Elise Morrison

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR  
*Open*

NOMINATING CHAIR  
Sheree Bennett

OUTING CHAIR  
Linda Hetcher

OUTREACH CHAIR  
Kaat Higham

SOCIAL CHAIRS  
Carol Hodge and Jenny Monteleone

EDITOR, *THE OAK LEAF*  
Lise Greene

SCHEDULE COORDINATOR  
Nancy Sierra

WEBMASTER  
Dianne Jones

### Farewell to Our Friend

Arnie Seymour-Jones  
April 5, 2023

# WHAT A PICNIC!

by *Kathe Serbin*

Photos by *Gail Waimon*

July 8, 2023 . . . hot and humid, but the weather did not deter more than 100 members from attending the annual picnic. Luckily, the rain held off until evening.

For those who were not part of the set-up or grilling teams, there were hikes of different mileage available for members to enjoy prior to the picnic. Thank you to our leaders: Gail Biggs, Gordon Thomas, and Dave Sutter.

Naturally, the hikers returned ready to eat the delicious burgers, hot dogs, and varied salads. The grilling team did a fabulous job despite the hot day, with chief cook Jenny Monteleone ably assisted by Gerry Kammerer and Mike Williams. Meiling Chin provided bottled water. Wonderful home-baked desserts and watermelon were a treat, and the *pièce de résistance* — which nobody could “resist” — was a magnificent sheet cake celebrating TriState Ramblers’ 85th birthday.

Phil Ross worked from 9:30-noon repairing hiking equipment and sharpening various items such as kitchen and pocket knives, scissors, and small garden tools. We appreciate his generosity of time and talent.

The swap table was a huge success. Many members went home with new items to wear and love that others just couldn’t use anymore. As Gail Biggs said to Nancy Sierra, “I’m so glad my brand new hiking boots found a good home. They were expensive and mismarked, and I never wore them.”

We appreciate the many volunteers who devoted their time and energy toward making this event a success for everyone who attended.

*Editor’s note: Special thanks to our social chairs, Elise Morrison and Kathe Serbin, for their hard (and cheerful) work in creating another delightful picnic for all our members!*

*(continued on next page)*



*Birthday singers for TSR’s 85th*

*Elise cuts the birthday cake*

*Elise and Kathe*



*Gail, Kathe and Linda*



*Gail*



*Gordon and Elise with TSR 85th birthday cake*

# WHAT A PICNIC! *(continued)*



Grill team — Gerry, Jenny, and Mike (Gordon in back)



Phil the sharpener



Lise found some bargains



Swap table



James and Sue shopped for the feast (shown with Gordon)



Tables start to fill up

## Life with the TriState Ramblers *by Joyce Breach*

Alan and I met as college juniors majoring in science and education. Although we were from different colleges, we took a summer field biology course together in Stokes State Forest. Our first date was a Halloween party where we dressed as a pair of dice.

I started hiking 18 years ago at age 58, while still working as a nurse and looking forward to retirement. I really had no hobbies, so I thought this would meet my needs for companionship and healthy exercise. My first hike was at the New Jersey Botanical Garden in Ringwood, led by Jim and Theresa McKay. I was almost instantly hooked!

Alan, who is also a nurse, started hiking with TSR shortly after that. He had been backpacking on the

Appalachian Trail for years. It took him 25 years to finish, and we did the last 500 miles together. Starting at Springer Mountain in Georgia and heading north, we day hiked over the course of about three years. In addition, for 27 years Alan has maintained a 3.5-mile section of the AT near our house, including the High Point shelter.

Friendships from the club led to foreign and domestic travel with small groups. We have been to Norway, Italy, Austria, France, Switzerland, New Zealand, and Australia with TSR friends. We'll never forget the many hikes through the "Whites" in New Hampshire!

I am a view junkie; all my favorite local hikes include views. Harriman State Park, Norvin Green State Forest,

and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area are probably the best.

Here is my advice on choosing hikes. First pick a park you like. Then look at a New York-New Jersey Trail Conference paper (yes, paper) map. Plan your hike for the miles and elevation gain you want that also include the most stars (indicating views). This works for me! Since leaders don't like to get lost with a group, the AllTrails tracking app is helpful to know where you are during a hike.

Over the years we have hiked with many wonderful people. I can honestly say that hikers are a friendly bunch of people, so we look forward to new adventures in North Carolina with new hikers. Still . . . we will miss you all.

## We Will Miss You, Joyce and Alan!



*Joyce and Alan at Gertrude's Nose, Minnewaska (photo by Eck Khoon Goh)*

*Eck Khoon Goh:* Joyce and Alan are wonderful hike leaders. I have many memories of hikes they have led, especially in the spring and fall to view flowers and foliage. Another of my favorite hikes with them is Gertrude's Nose. We would stop at Mountain Brauhaus for a snack before the long ride home.

*Debby Bronner:* I have enjoyed many hikes with Alan and Joyce over the years, especially the New Jersey Appalachian Trail series. Alan worked many hours in planning the logistics to lead those hikes, but the start of the series was put on hold at

the beginning of Covid. Once we had the green light to use the parks and trails again, Alan had to revise all his plans since we were not allowed to shuttle. To cover the same trails, the total mileage grew from 72 to more than 90, with about 18 different segments. Alan and Joyce are wonderful leaders who make each experience fun, interesting, comfortable, and safe — with bonus views along the way. I wish them the best of everything in this new chapter of their lives.

*Lise Greene:* When I first began hiking with TSR, Joyce and Alan gave me kind encouragement on challenging trails — and confidence because of their medical skills, "just in case"!

*Louis Thompson:* Alan and Joyce have been supportive hiking friends since I joined the club nine years ago. They're always so friendly and welcoming to all hikers and speaking with them is a pleasure. A few years ago, I took them on a hike when they were traveling through Arizona. We had gone about two strenuous miles and were descending a steep trail with a steel cable for assist. About 400 feet down, Joyce wondered if it was the correct way. After scouting a bit farther and having only done the

hike once (and not as the leader), I agreed to go back up. Just before reaching our starting point, someone came over the top — and told us we were on the right track. So we ended up enjoying the steep trail twice.

*Donna Burkat:* I wish both of you a long, healthy life ahead with beautiful hikes. Thank you for being so friendly; I'm sorry I only got to benefit from your company for a brief time.

*Bill Correa:* Alan, did you ever finish the last five miles of the AT at Katahdin? If not, moving south is the wrong direction — that's the start! Joyce, I enjoyed your joy and excitement climbing Breakneck Ridge and hiking with you any time.

*Phil Ross:* Joyce was usually near the rear of our group hiking in the Adirondacks. But halfway back to the cars on one long, treacherous trail (mostly like a stream bed, with long stretches of slippery wet rocks), she suddenly bolted past everyone and disappeared ahead in the distance, saying she couldn't wait to finish. Later she posted a scathing review of the trail that was online for a day and then mysteriously disappeared.

*Jason Briggs:* Joyce and Alan, you always took the time to share your  
*(continued on next page)*

## We Will Miss You, Joyce and Alan! *(continued) Photos by the Breaches*



*Gertrude's Nose, Minnewaska*

experiences, and what a life it is! Thanks again for all that camping equipment you gave the Scouts!

*Paul Sanderson:* I have hiked countless miles over more than 20 years with Alan and Joyce on many trails, including the AT in New York and New Jersey, the West Highland Way in Scotland, and the Tour du Mont Blanc in Italy, Switzerland, and France. I think of them as special friends who have always been very enjoyable company! Alan used to brew his own beer, which was always exceptional — or maybe he just didn't share any that wasn't "exceptional"?!

*Lynn Tucholke:* I loved being the "sweep" during your Appalachian Trail hikes. May your trails ahead be as beautiful as the ones we hiked together.

*Elaine Wladyga:* These guys made my hiking adventure in the Adirondacks a true pleasure with their patience and expert tips. They were the perfect roomies — relaxing at night and giving me lessons in Mexican dominoes. North Carolina is very lucky!

*Nancy Sierra:* Shortly after I began hiking with TSR, I decided to try backpacking as well, even though I had absolutely no equipment. When I mentioned it to Joyce one day on a hike, she told me Alan loved to backpack and had all the equipment. Long story short: I went to their house and Alan loaned me everything I needed — tent, backpack, cook stove, etc. We practiced setting up the tent in their backyard and he even gave me some prepackaged instant camping food to try. These are two wonderful, giving people. I'm going to miss them.

*Gail Biggs:* Alan has the most interesting hobbies — making beer, creating beautiful birdhouses, baking delicious treats for our hikes. His coconut macaroons are legendary.

*Ed Leibowitz:* I remember hiking with Joyce and Alan at Anthony Wayne. I am a slower hiker who usually volunteered to sweep, and frequently wound up walking with Alan. Both were very patient and always waited for me. Another reason I enjoyed their hikes: Joyce made very good cookies.



*Harriman*

*Sheree Bennett:* Alan and Joyce are two of the nicest, most considerate people ever. I will truly miss them.

*Kathe Serbin:* Joyce and Alan are the best! It is impossible not to love them. What I remember most are all the trips they took and how Joyce would remember every detail — not only the names of the trails, but also the level of difficulty and where to stay. Big Bend and the Smokies are two of their favorite places, and I stole their entire itineraries! Alan and Joyce are so enthusiastic about all of their hikes — never a complaint. Alan donated one of his handmade birdhouses for a prize at our holiday party. The nicest couple — I will miss them.

*Willard Dye:* I've always liked hiking with Joyce and Alan. They are always pleasant and enjoyable company — and it's comforting to know that they both have medical training. They frequently led hikes to places most people did not, such as Gertrude's Nose in Minnewaska State Park. They will be greatly missed.

*Bob Bieri:* I enjoyed my many hikes with Joyce and Alan and the great



*Hudson River, Bannerman Island from Storm King*

conversations we had. When I led hikes, it was always comforting when Joyce or Alan, each with 40+ years as an EMT, was with us!

*Dianne Jones:* You can always count on interesting stories when hiking with Joyce and Alan — especially related to their wide-ranging travels. These include Alan's experience on the Appalachian Trail as a volunteer caretaker, trail maintainer, and hiker. Special thanks to both of them for leading a series of hikes that covered the entire New Jersey section of the AT, which Covid made all the more challenging to organize.

*Carolyn and Jim Canfield:* Dear friends: This is not goodbye, but our best wishes for many happy trails.

*Kate Weller:* There are so many hikes and miles that we've spent together. It's a lifetime worth of joy that I will always treasure. Thank you for sharing yourselves, your wisdom, and your love of hiking with me. It changed my life forever. "A walk in Nature walks the soul back home." (Mary Davis) Love always, Kate.



*Lake Skanatati, Harriman*

## Invasives and You: Perfect — Apart *by Willard Dye*



*Willard Dye*

If you are a longtime hiker in the area, this might have happened to you. While hiking a trail, you glance around and suddenly say to yourself, “This doesn’t look right.” It’s not that you are lost, because you know where you are, but the environment doesn’t look the way it should. Why? You might have been confronted by invasive species. While there are invasive insects like spotted lanternfly and emerald ash borer and invasive diseases like beech leaf wilt and chestnut blight, in this article I am focusing on invasive plants.

Invasive plants are usually thorny, bad tasting, fast growing, prolifically reproducing, or some combination of these characteristics. In addition, they are not the preferred forage for white-tailed deer, the only significant wild herbivore in our area. Over-abundant invasive plants around here tend to form two habitats that I call “strungle” (strangling jungle) and “scracken” (scratching bracken). Note: These are not real words.

“Strungle” is identified by the vines that grow into the tops of trees, cutting off the light to native vegetation and weighing it down until it breaks. Typical invasive “strungle” plants include oriental bittersweet, Japanese honeysuckle, and porcelain berry. “Scracken” frequently forms an impenetrable thorny understory consisting of barberry, multiflora rose, and burning bush.

What can we do as individuals to help mitigate this situation? At the landscape level — not much. But at the local level, a number of strategies can be employed.

- Don’t grow invasive plants on your property. Most of them started

as horticultural/landscaping specimens that “escaped” cultivation.

- If feasible, remove those already on your property and replace them with something native and/or less invasive. Over the years, I have removed all the barberries and burning bushes, and am now in the process of surreptitiously removing them from my neighbors’ properties as well.

- A few times a year, I pull all the sprouting invasive plant seedlings to prevent them from reestablishing on my property.

- I have planted hackberry, hawthorn, and serviceberry to help increase native biodiversity.

Unlike many adjoining states, New Jersey still allows garden centers and nurseries to sell invasive plants for landscaping. A state law was passed this year to prevent it, but the law doesn’t fully go into effect for another few years. In the meantime, caveat emptor!

Another caution: Because of changes in the environment, previously well-behaved horticultural species can suddenly become invasive. Forsythia, the yellow flowering shrub of springtime, is now on the emerging invasive plant list. You may soon see them blooming throughout our forests.

If you are like me, you want to do more than improve your own yard — you want to improve the forest. Although it is impossible to remove all invasive plants from the natural environment, headway can be made in specific areas.

Various local organizations like the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference and the Ridge and Valley Conservancy sponsor invasive plant removal days where volunteers go out and literally “weed the woods.” Although invasive plant removal is hard work, pulling small trees and saplings all day gives your back a good workout and you gain the satisfaction of seeing the results the next time you pass through. Also, if the locale does not immediately revert to invasives, these organizations sometimes sponsor restoration events in cleared areas to plant native species.

## WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

*by Nancy Sierra*

All club members know, a few months ago, the format was changed in the Thursday emails that begin the signup process for the following week’s outings. It is now easier than ever to sign up for an outing using blue-colored links to the current monthly schedule, our website, SignUpGenius, instructions for using SignUpGenius, and more.

However, not everyone knows that at about the same time the email format was changed, a group of seven volunteers began personally contacting and welcoming every new member to the club. During this welcome call, which is made a few weeks after a member joins, volunteers make sure that newcomers are receiving the Thursday emails and know how to use SignUpGenius. They also answer any questions new members may have about the club.

This initiative was started on a test basis, as there was concern that many people wouldn’t even answer their phone for a caller they didn’t recognize. As it turned out, there was no need for concern. Not only did people answer the phone; most were delighted to get a call and expressed surprised appreciation that the club has this process in place.

Encouraged by the positive response, each “ambassador” (as they are now called) continues to call three to four new members per month. If you are interested in becoming an ambassador, please contact me by phone, email, or text at 973-347-0690 or [nsmd\\_solo@yahoo.com](mailto:nsmd_solo@yahoo.com).



*Harriman State Park  
(photo by Joyce Breach)*

# Discovering the Wild Side of Singapore by Eck Khoon Goh

A tiny city-state with a population of more than six million, Singapore is hardly a destination one would associate with outdoor activities. Yet, beyond its urban sprawl and nestled among its thousands of high-rises, there exist numerous pockets of tropical rainforests, wetlands, mangrove swamps, green corridors, and nature reserves — all open for walks and exploration.

On a recent visit back home, I took a walking tour of a stretch of wetlands

right in the city center. I was captivated by its diversity of exotic flora and fauna, all within sight of the nearby financial center's skyscrapers.

Equally amazing was the recently completed Rail Corridor that stretches almost the entire north-south length of the island, turning a former railway line into a 15-mile walking/biking trail. Expecting an urban pathway, I was surprised on my first walk there to find the trail heavily forested in parts and a haven for birds and wildlife. It has become

one of my favorite walking spots in Singapore.

For cardio exercise, there's Bukit Timah, the highest hill on the island. Though a modest 538 feet in altitude, the hike up is extremely steep. Encounters with wild monkeys are very common.

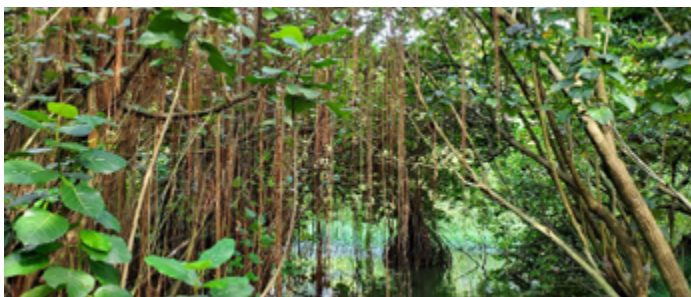
If you should find yourself in Singapore, do take time from the manmade tourist attractions to see the wild side of the island.



*Abandoned quarry*



*Urban wetlands*



*Urban wetlands*

*Banyan trees  
on Rail  
Corridor*



*Wild monkeys*



*Monitor lizard*



*Urban wetlands*



# THE DOLOMITES by Joyce Breach

In early July, Alan and I traveled to the Dolomites in Italy with Jim and Carolyn Canfield. It was a spectacular trip!

We stayed in Selva Val Gardena at Hotel Flora, which I recommend for its ambiance, service, food, and central location. We were close to the grocery store, other shops, and a bus stop. The buses go to all the major trailheads and towns, and hotels provide a free pass for traveling in the entire valley.

Many trailheads have lifts or gondolas to ride up the mountain.

Take it from this view junkie: the mountains were the best I have ever seen! The wildflowers were blooming in profusion.

There was no need to carry a lunch, as most hikes have a *refugio* or two where hikers can get a tasty treat. One of our favorites was goulash soup.

The locals were friendly and helpful. Their language, of course, is Italian, but most also spoke German and some English.

I highly encourage everyone to visit this area.



## Welcome, New Leaders! *by Linda Hetcher, Outing Chair*

The following members have volunteered as new event leaders. Each has received (or will receive) a promotional bucket hat or baseball cap with the TSR logo. Wear it proudly — with our thanks for your willingness to help.

Rosie Brancato  
Larry Brody  
Donna Burkat  
Steve Burkat  
Tim Burman  
Yanling Cheng  
Bernadette Cooney  
Jerry Giordano  
Carol Hodge  
Jennifer Hoffman  
Judy Kossover  
Maryann Kozaczek  
Linda Laidlaw  
Linda Lang  
Dean Leistikow  
Helen Lippman  
Bernadette Miglin  
Olga Plitt  
Anastasia Tavarez

You, too, can earn a TSR hat! Members who would like to volunteer to assist the club in any way are invited to contact Linda Hetcher ([linda.hetcher@gmail.com](mailto:linda.hetcher@gmail.com)).



*Anastasia Tavarez took this picture on her first hike as a leader*



## SHOW AND GO EVENTS: DID YOU KNOW?

*by Linda Hetcher, Outing Chair*

As some questions have been raised concerning Show and Go events, please be aware of the following:

- Show and Go events can include TSR members as well as non-members.
- Guidelines for Show and Go events, including instructions and examples of how to write a proper description, are on the TSR website. After logging in, click on “For Leaders” and then on “Guidelines Add-on and Show and Go Events.”
- Email the write-up to Kaat Higham at [tsrregistration@outlook.com](mailto:tsrregistration@outlook.com).
- Leaders also have the option to post their events on Meetup. (TSR has a subscription.) For help posting on Meetup, contact Kaat Higham at [tsrregistration@outlook.com](mailto:tsrregistration@outlook.com).
- Provide ample time for both emailing and posting on Meetup — ideally at least two days in advance.
- Print a copy of both sides of the club’s waiver form, which can be found on the website under “For Leaders” or “Forms.” Ensure that each attendee signs the form prior to heading out.
- If you have any questions about Show and Go events, contact me at [linda.hetcher@gmail.com](mailto:linda.hetcher@gmail.com).

## Signup Problems?

*by Dianne Jones, Webmaster*

Now and then, members may find they cannot get to the TSR weekly signup their “usual” way. The reason is hard to diagnose, but the solution is easy.

- Go to [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com).
- Log in or don’t log in (it doesn’t matter).
- In the top right corner, click on the magnifying glass.
- On the left side of the page under “Search for a Sign Up by signup creator’s email,” type [tsrregistration@outlook.com](mailto:tsrregistration@outlook.com) in the box.
- Confirm you are not a robot.
- Click on “Search.”

And that should take you to the open TSR signups.

## What Makes a Wonderful Hike? by *Thea Landesberg*

Poised in front of my computer, I am ready to type my hike journal entry as I've done for seven years. I'm going to write about hiking the day before with my friend Angela: location, mileage, special features of the terrain, weather, assortment of observed flora and fauna. But this time, I feel lost.

The hike, I think, was unremarkable. No mind-blowing vistas, no visible wildlife except some crows overhead, no near-disasters to laugh about later, the barest of interesting plants to identify with the Seek app. Gentle hills for easy hiking. No waterfalls, no exciting rock scrambles, no "dangerous crossings" over rushing water. Was this the most mundane hike I ever took?

So I start with the basics: parking at the AT trailhead in Fishkill, NY, a 2.5-mile trek to the overlook with Canopus Lake below, lunch beside a dry brook, clear and cool hiking weather, two fellow hikers on the trail (a retired couple from Iowa), a thru-hiker en route to Maine, a visit to Fishkill Farms on the way back home.

As I begin inserting photographs, the specialness of the hike starts to emerge. Angela and I had discovered a hilltop covered with dainty-colored rock harlequins. The eastward view showed peak after peak of deep green. At the base of the hill was a meadow filled with bright, new spring grass. Canopus Lake, busy during the summer, was blissfully quiet, with an

irregular marsh-filled shoreline that invited us for another hike. The AT was in impeccable condition, not a drop of trash. And yes, we chatted a few minutes with that eager, good-looking young thru-hiker about his journey.

The truth is that every hike with Angela is wonderful. We can walk for hours together — sharing the latest family updates, commiserating about the challenges of getting older, discussing the merits of various vegetarian recipes. At least half our time yesterday was spent laughing. We admired the hilltop view, the new plant species we discovered, and the simple beauty of a grass meadow. And when we arrived at the Canopus Lake vista, we oohed and aahed and took multiple photos to remember the view and celebrate our continued friendship.



On the way home, we stopped at Fishkill Farms, where a vast apple orchard filled the valley below. The farm store offered early-season vegetables and cold, delicious, carbonated apple cider that was the perfect post-hike drink. Stumbling upon an unexpected treat after an outing always adds joy to the day.

As I type, I think: Maybe the hike wasn't so mundane after all. The sum of our day's events equals yet another memorable experience . . . another sweet time in Mother Nature's home.



## TSR's Hiking Traditions Are Great by *Gordon Thomas*

TriState Ramblers leaders usually plan distances and elevations that encourage participation by a group. Some leaders do more than average. I'm comfortable with seven miles and about 1500 feet of elevation. But on August 19 this summer, I planned a hike in Maine without the sensible constraint of a TSR group.

My criterion was: "I wonder if I can do more than usual." So I chose Maine's two Baldpate Mountain peaks — quite different from New Jersey's small Baldpate Mountain, a TSR favorite. Since there is no loop trail to the two peaks, I planned hikes out and back (twice over each peak). I figured that I wouldn't be entirely alone because climbing either of the mountains is very popular. At the top of my third climb, one of the other 30+ hikers that day took my picture with mountains hazy from Canada fires and a support wire from a fire tower.

At that point, I was beat after nine miles and about 3000 feet. I considered calling an Uber, but the nearest road was over the last peak. So I staggered along, resting frequently, drinking copiously, and once sitting mistakenly on a sharp rock. At the end, the 12.3 miles and 4129 feet of elevation reminded me of the old saying about biting off more than you can chew.

The sensible TSR hiking traditions are great.

## What's the Story on Degrees (°) and Minutes (') Versus Decimal Degrees? *by Charlie Kientzler*

Latitude and longitude are both used to describe the location of a point on the earth's surface. Hikers like us use them to describe a specific location. They do not measure miles directly, but with our devices we can determine distances in miles.

**Latitude** refers to the horizontal lines that run parallel to the equator and measure the distance of a point north (+) or south (-) of the equator. The North Pole is +90°.

**Longitude** refers to the vertical lines that run from pole to pole and measure the distance of a point east or west of the prime meridian (0), which is located at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England.

East of the prime meridian is plus (+) and west of 0° is minus (-). Half-way around is Longitude+179.9999° or -179.9999°, depending on whether you go east or west. All of North America is north (N) and west (W)! Note: 1° = 60 minutes and 1' = 60 seconds.

This system is referred to as DMS (degrees/minutes/seconds). A more popular measurement, the XY system, expresses the coordinates in decimal degrees. (Place the blame on

the "Base 60 number system" developed by the Sumerians in the third millennium BC.)

### Using Google Maps and Your Device to Find a Place

**Decimal system (DMS):** Open Google maps. In the search box, enter the location *exactly as shown in the TSR instructions* on the website. (Copy and paste is the most efficient way to do this.) Usually the program will add or subtract misplaced spaces on your typed address to get the correct location; Google should find the location.

**XY system:** Enter the location *exactly as shown* in decimal format, including the spacing. (Copy and paste is the most efficient way to do this.) Google should find the location. Example: My location appears as N40° 57.85', W74° 37.76'. This equals 40.9642, -74.6294 in decimal. The degree mark (°) is implied so that the number can be put directly into a formula for calculation.

**Determining the GPS coordinates of a location:** Open the Satellite View. Click on the location of interest. You will see a location icon.

Right click on it and you will get the corresponding GPS coordinates (in decimal).

**Google address method:** If you input a location using an address, expect good results for city streets and suburban locations, but poor results in finding parks, large tracts, and rural locations. I believe Google places your address in the middle of the plot, *not* in a driveway. Note that Google gives the decimal GPS location to 6 places (+/- 0.3 feet). I round this off to 4 places (+/- 33 feet) to save time and reading error when inputting to GPS devices.

**TSR calendar method:** Open the TSR calendar on our website. Click on the desired calendar event to get the details. Click on the location and Google Maps will open. You can then map directions from your desired location to the meeting location. Note: Sometimes important additional or specific details are included in the directions section of the event description.

Feel free to contact me at [ckientzler@aol.com](mailto:ckientzler@aol.com).

## SMOKY BIRTHDAY HIKE *by Gordon Thomas / Photos by Gail Waimon*

On Wednesday morning, June 7, about 30 TSR members came to hike at Watchung Reservation and help me celebrate a milestone birthday. Looking forward to the afternoon party, most of the group hiked five miles from Masker's Barn west to near Seeley's Pond, back near the barn, around Surprise Lake, and finally a return to the barn on a pretty trail next to Blue Creek. If anyone sensed the impending environmental episode, there was little mention of it. The atmosphere had a light, normal fog and there was a pleasant breeze.

We spent an hour or so inside Masker's Barn, where a party had been organized and decorated in our absence by Debby Bronner, Linda Hetcher, Laurie Larstanna, and Gail Waimon. We snarfed up a big sheet



cake along with ice cream and fruit. The guests sang happy birthday to an octogenarian who replied with a lecture about how the cake had two candles and some holes using a binary number to represent 80.



The air was festive — not smoky. But when we exited the barn around 2:00, what a shock! The sky had turned yellow, the visibility was short, and the air smelled like a smoky smog.

All in all, it was an unusual TSR hike and a great celebration. Thank you to everyone who made the day so special for me.

## EXCITING EIGHTIES-PLUS!

*This is the third in a series of articles by/about TSR leaders age 80 and above. We invite others to share their hiking perspectives and experiences in future newsletters.*

### Hiking Over the Years *by Carolyn and James Canfield*



*Carolyn and Jim recently hiking in the Dolomites in Italy*

As teenagers, we both participated in a variety of high school and college sports — but neither of us hiked. In the mid-1970s, when Carolyn was a teacher at West Milford High School, we were introduced to hiking as chaperones for the Outing Club. This group hiked in northern New Jersey and the Catskills on weekends and during school vacations. During those early years of organized hiking, Carolyn (like other women) was unable to find suitable hiking boots. She resorted to using a pair of boys' work shoes.

During vacations, we camped throughout New England with a tent or small trailer. During one of those trips we arrived in Twin Mountain, New Hampshire, on a beautiful and sunny 4th of July. Our very first mountain hike in that area was to the top of Mount Washington, one of the 4,000-foot White Mountain peaks. In the evening we enjoyed ice cream, our usual post-hike treat, while watching fireworks over the Mount Washington Hotel. (Throughout the following years, with a group of friends, we climbed all of the 48 White Mountain peaks in New Hampshire, completing the challenge in 2002.)

Shortly after retiring in 1995, Carolyn discovered the Frost Valley Trail Walkers. She hiked with them during the week and repeated the hikes with Jim on weekends. After Jim's retirement from engineering management, we began to hike regularly with Frost Valley as well as Union County Hiking Club (UCHC) and Interstate Hiking Club (IHC). Carolyn served as IHC president for two years and Jim as trails chairman for more than 10 years. We became members of TriState Ramblers in 2005 after Frost Valley and UCHC merged.

Our love for hiking quickly extended to both short and long trips throughout the United States and group trips to Switzerland, Austria, and Italy. Organized by us or friends, these included several multi-day excursions such as the Long Path in sections from the George Washington Bridge to Albany; the Wainwright Coast to Coast Walk across England from the North Sea to the Irish Sea; Scotland's West Highland Way; and the Tour du Mont Blanc through Italy, Switzerland, and France.

Whether we are in Europe, Asia, South America, New Zealand, or Australia, we really enjoy traveling when it includes the opportunity to explore local hikes. During a trip to New Zealand, we joined a small guided tour for the five-day Routeburn trek across the mountains with many stream crossings, and have twice completed the challenging Tongariro Alpine Crossing. This past summer, we returned to the Val Gardena in northern Italy to hike in the scenic Dolomite Mountains. We highly recommend this area for any hiker interested in a variety of trail choices, meadows of flowers, and unparalleled mountain scenery.

Our US road trips usually include a national park, our favorites being Rocky Mountain in Colorado and Mount Rainier in Washington — although we never miss a chance to stop for a few days of hiking through

Acadia in Maine. We have also found some very interesting historic sites and hiking trails in state parks. Locally we often hike in Harriman State Park and Wawayanda State Park, which is near our home. We have maintained the Wingdam Trail in Wawayanda for more than 25 years.



*Jim and Carolyn (on right) with Ellie King and friends completing the last of the New Hampshire White Mountain peaks*

In 2016 our traveling switched from tent camping to a Roadtrek motorhome — the lap of luxury. Our first major excursion in this vehicle was a 13,000-mile, three-month trip from New Jersey across Canada and throughout Alaska — including, among others, a hike in Denali National Park. Before returning, we visited Olympic National Park in Washington to hike with friends who live nearby. Since then we have spent most winters in Arizona, hiking in Saguaro National Park near Tucson with Joyce and Alan Breach. This past summer, we traveled to eastern Quebec to circle the Gaspé Peninsula and enjoy a 5-mile circular hike of Bonaventure Island to view a colony of about 100,000 nesting northern gannets.

For many years we balanced hiking with biking, but have recently reduced the biking. Having started to date during our senior year in high school and being married for 60 years, in our early 80s we are doing more traveling and less hiking. We do continue to enjoy the outdoors, but for a shorter distance at a slower pace.

# TSR Officers

Our officers give generously their time — a lot of it! — to ensure that our club runs smoothly. The current officers are pictured here. When you see them on the trails or at other events, please let them know you appreciate their work. This leads to a question: What other “work” do or did they have outside TriState Ramblers? See if you can match the officer with one of the current or former professions listed below (answers found on next page).

**Physician**



*Sheree Bennett*



*John Crump*



*Lise Greene*

**College  
Mathematics Professor**

**Actuary**

**High School  
Mathematics Teacher  
and Church Deacon**



*Linda Hetcher*



*Kaat Higham*

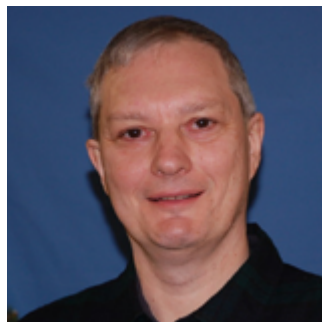


*Dianne Jones*

**University Administrator**

**University  
Physics Professor**

**National and Global  
IBM Sales Manager**



*John Jurasek*



*Elise Morrison*



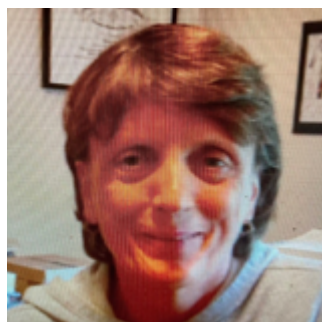
*Kathe Serbin*

**President of Medical  
Instrumentation Company**

**Digital Analyst**

**Middle School  
Guidance Counselor**

**Physician**



*Nancy Sierra*



*Gordon Thomas*

## Leave It to Beavers *by Paul Sanderson*

In Johnsonburg Swamp Preserve, I photographed a tree that sadly died for nothing. The first picture shows where a beaver gnawed the trunk enough on three sides to cause it to split, leaving a sliver of the trunk on the fourth side intact to hold the rest of the trunk up high off the ground. The second picture is

another view of the same sliver of tree trunk. Let us hope the beaver learned a lesson on “how to properly gnaw a tree!”

*Complementing these photos, John Powell sent a link to a short [PBS Terra video](#) on the benefits of “leaving it to beavers.”*



*Beaver gnawed tree on three sides*



## SIGNUP ETIQUETTE

*by Dianne Jones, Webmaster*



Just a reminder about a few things: Whenever you sign up on the **Waitlist**, put in the comment area “1st hike” or “2nd hike.” It helps our hardworking volunteers to more easily monitor the signups.

**Do not jump the queue.** Before adding your name to the hiker list, review the Waitlist to see if anyone else is a “1st hiker.” If so, add your name to the Waitlist with “1st hike” in the comment area. Our hardworking volunteers will move you to the hiker list if there is availability. Signups are time stamped so it can be verified if the queue is jumped.

**Similarly, do not “move” yourself** from the waitlist to the hiker list. Our hardworking volunteers will move you when they have the opportunity to do so.

**If you need to cancel**, please remove your name before 8 pm the day before the hike. Otherwise there may be people on the waitlist who do not get to hike.

Thanks for your cooperation.

## THE ANSWERS

**Sheree Bennett** — Physician

**John Crump** — President of Medical Instrumentation Company

**Lise Greene** — University Administrator

**Linda Hetcher** — Digital Analyst

**Kaat Higham** — College Mathematics Professor

**Dianne Jones** — Actuary

**John Jurasek** — High School Mathematics Teacher and Church Deacon

**Elise Morrison** — National and Global IBM Sales Manager

**Kathe Serbin** — Middle School Guidance Counselor

**Nancy Sierra** — Physician

**Gordon Thomas** — University Physics Professor

# TRAVELS FROM *THE OAK LEAF* by Lise Greene



*Kaaterskill Falls in Haines Falls, NY*

As editor of this newsletter, I have the opportunity to read each article several times before it's published, which often sparks the thought: "I'd love to replicate that trip!" Last spring, I had an opportunity to do just that — well, at least partially.

A beloved cousin passed away, and the burial was planned for Clifton Park, New York, in June. Marilyn loved gardens, animals, travel, and the outdoors. I realized that a time filled with tears could be balanced by a time of nature and nurture, honoring my cousin's life while continuing to live my own in a way she would have appreciated.

Her burial took place on a beautiful day. The historic cemetery is associated with a church founded by one of my cousin's ancestors (other side of the family) in the 1700s. Family and friends spanning several generations gathered to honor Marilyn and share stories of her extraordinary life. After hours of reconnecting and first-time connecting, my husband and I needed a quiet place to process the emotions of the day.

We drove south to a bed and breakfast in Greene County. (Fittingly, the county was named for Revolutionary War General Nathanael Greene, who is in Marilyn's and my family tree on our fathers' side.) Across the road from the little lodge was a rail trail that Mark and I hiked to picturesque [Kaaterskill Falls](#). Though just two sparkling threads of water were trickling then, it was a favorite subject for the Hudson River School landscape painters in the 1800s. We completed the round trip just as night settled softly over my sadness.

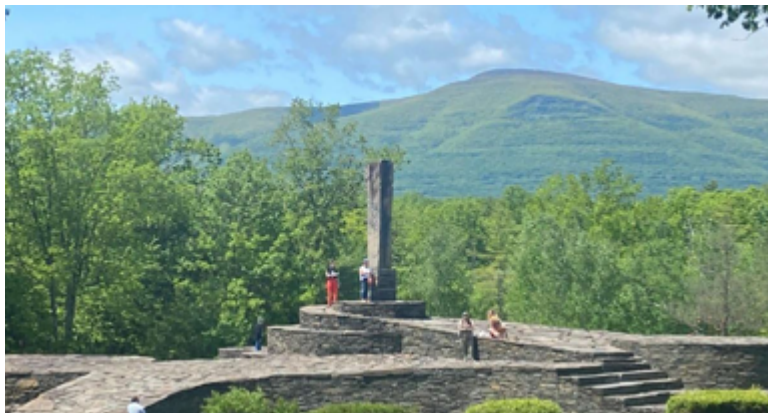
While checking the location of the lodge on a map before leaving home, some names of surrounding areas had seemed familiar . . . yes, in *The Oak Leaf* two years earlier, a club member had written about hiking there. More recently, another club member told me about a place she had visited decades before that resonated with our "rockitecture" feature in this year's spring issue.

Inspired by their enthusiasm, the next morning we drove first to Saugerties to explore [Opus 40](#). A former bluestone quarry, it was acquired by a college art and sculpture professor in 1938. Harvey Fite built his own house and studio before creating a surrounding sculpture environment in harmony with the woods and mountains. Estimating that it would take 40 years to complete, he named it Opus (artistic work or composition) 40.

Using ancient methods such as Mayan dry stone construction and Egyptian leverage/hoisting, Fite sculpted terraces, alleys, ramps, steps, fountains, and rain-fed pools using only bluestone from the site. The focal point is a monolith weighing more than nine tons. After he died, three years short of the 40-year goal, Opus 40 became a nonprofit sculpture park with historic quarries and trails; it is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. (Thank you for the suggestion, Helen Rosenberg! Yes, it is an awesome example of "rockitecture.")

*(continued on next page)*

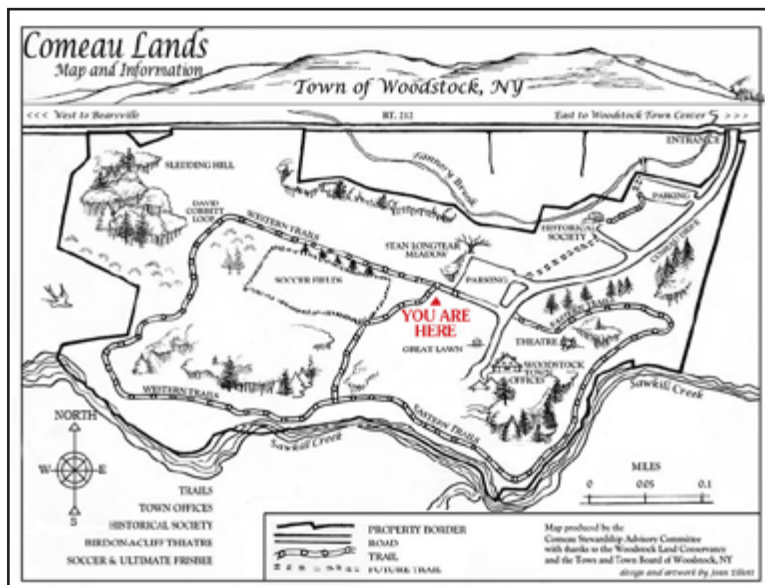
*Opus 40 —  
from website*





## TRAVELS FROM *THE OAK LEAF* (continued)

Comeau Property map



Our next stop was in nearby Woodstock, a colorful Catskills community that looks just the way my teenage self had imagined it in the late sixties. However, our destination was not the town, but the Comeau property — a short trek of about a mile that encompasses a variety of views and terrain. We walked through woods and beside the Saw Kill, climbed up and down hills, and sauntered along a field bordered on the far side by magnificent mountains. A trail volunteer told us that some of the wooden planks over wet areas came from Coney Island when its famous boardwalk was dismantled; although I could not verify his claim, we did appreciate walking on boards rather than mud. (Thank you, Carolyn Smaka — for this experience and future destinations in the Catskills!)

Our last stop was a special treat. Despite having edited 11 issues of our club newsletter, I had never met our graphic designer and former TSR president, Jay Winslow. He lives in Kingston, and our collaboration is all online or by phone. Since Kingston is not far from Woodstock, I suggested introducing ourselves through a short visit on Mark's and my way home. Jay readily extended an invitation to join his regular afternoon walk in the woods — with his three goats. So we drove up a hill to a 42-acre paradise

where Jay and Marg welcomed us warmly. We toured the impressive plots containing many types of

vegetables and flowers (all watered by hand, which is even more impressive) . . . learned about birds and beekeeping . . . admired the chickens and geese that produce eggs . . . and then fell in love with the three goats we accompanied on their daily expedition. All wore bells, and Splash and Sweet Pea had leashes. The oldest goat, Iris, was trusted to walk untethered. We meandered through woods and over hills, listening to the merry tinkling and imagining ourselves in Switzerland. (Thank you, Jay and Marg, for your hospitality and homemade honey!)

The weekend became a metaphor for life with its sudden sorrows, peaceful pauses, and moments of delight and enlightenment. I am grateful for all the people who have enriched my life.



Jay Winslow with Iris, Splash, and Sweet Pea

## Picatinny “Piques” Interest in the Paranormal *by Glenn Gross*



*Tour guides Jason, Rachael, Jeff (Linda Laidlaw)*

Have you ever driven up Route 15 and wondered what was behind the big sign at Picatinny Arsenal? I have. And I finally got to scratch that itch thanks to Lise Greene’s coordination of another tour of the grounds at Picatinny Arsenal on September 22. It was a beautiful day to explore the history and operation of this vital resource where “stuff that goes pow” is imagined and developed for our armed forces.

Two dozen TriState Ramblers were hosted by a trio of Picatinny research staff. Jason, Jeff, and Rachael enthusiastically shared some of the Arsenal’s work and history. We could tell that they had a great handle on its past and, as keepers of the historical torch, enjoyed bringing our group up to speed.

Soon after its opening as the Dover Powder Depot in 1880, the facility was aptly renamed Piccatinny (with a double c), an Indian word meaning “rugged cliff by water.” (We had lunch near that cliff, now called Picatinny Peak.) We walked to several points of interest, including the ruins of a local schoolhouse and a cemetery from Revolutionary days. Extensive research has been done on the life and times of those who lived in the area, including prominent families such as the Waltons and Dolands. We

also heard about paranormal activity observed by some on the property that (depending on one’s take on such matters) either amused or got our hair standing on end!

We visited a monument previously situated on Route 15 that has been moved to a new spot on the grounds.

One of our Picatinny hosts, Jeff, read words spoken by the Commandant in 1945 honoring the 90 Arsenal employees who gave their lives in World War II.

It was interesting to see some of the storage magazines where ammunition was kept. They were built into the earth, which provides excellent shock absorption, to protect against explosive accidents such as the terrifying event that took place on July 10, 1926. After World War I, Picatinny had become a storage facility for powder and ordnance. On that fateful day, a lightning strike ignited some of the powder at the adjacent Lake Denmark Naval Ammunition Depot (now part of Picatinny Arsenal), setting off a chain reaction. Huge quantities of powder blew up, resulting in death and destruction — a reminder of the dangerous nature of Picatinny’s business.

It was very interesting to get a peek at what’s inside the grounds of what I had considered an off-limits

*(continued on next page)*



*Picatinny Peak (Paul Sanderson)*

## Picatinny “Piques” Interest in the Paranormal *(continued)*



*Marci with dowsing rods  
(Glenn Gross)*

place. Thanks to our Picatinny hosts for an informative tour.

### **Follow-up tour on October 13:**

A group of us, obviously not triskaidekaphobics, braved Friday the 13th for a follow-up tour at Picatinny Arsenal that focused on paranormal activity observed at the site. Another beautiful day set the stage for what were astounding demonstrations of connections beyond. The tour was hosted by Jason, Jeff, and Marci.

We set out on a short walk to the schoolhouse ruin. Using a device called an Ovilus, Marci determined that the spirit of a young girl named Alice was present. Initiating a



*Marci with Phasmabox (Glenn Gross)*

“conversation” using dowsing rods and a series of yes-or-no questions, Marci was able to establish that Alice was a member of the Merritt family, which was new information for the Picatinny researchers.

At Marci’s invitation, Alice followed us to the Walton family cemetery. There she manifested as a woman about 60 years old and was joined by other spirits who “spoke” to the group in answer to a series of questions. Their voices were captured by a device called a Phasmabox, which drove different-sounding voices to a portable speaker. When asked where we were, one of the spirits responded quite clearly with “Mount Hope” — it was rather startling to hear.

Our tour leaders made the trek around the Picatinny grounds both enjoyable and informative, giving us quite the history lesson. Learning about the devastating explosion and fire in 1926 was sad. The cemetery history with a possible 100 graves was enlightening. It was truly amazing, if not a little spooky, to see our leader, Marci, communicating with spirits on the second tour. The history of Picatinny Arsenal is very interesting and I appreciate that they give these tours to share it with the public. (Barbara)

I really enjoyed our picnic lunch next to the lake at the base of Picatinny Peak. (Linda M.)

It was a wonderful day all around, complete with perfect weather and



*Gravestone pieced together (Bern Cooney)*

With Halloween on the horizon, it was enlightening to have experienced a brush with the spirit world. Although it was hard to follow exactly what was going on at all times throughout the morning, those who are open to it had a peek into the spirit world. If the paranormal doesn’t ring true for you, it was still a nice walk through Picatinny on a beautiful autumn day! What could be bad?

### **Participants’ Comments:**

I was fascinated by the stories told by the two guys who were the tour guides in the graveyard — about seeing ghosts in their homes. (Bern)

Great trip. (Arnold)

very knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides. On the first stop, our guides were speaking of buildings and pointing at large mounds of grass. Looking more closely, I could see there were chimneys poking out of the grass. These were the buildings, covered with earth! (Linda L.)

I had a conversation with Jason about the wildlife at Picatinny. I’m reading a book called *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife of New Jersey*, which mentions Picatinny and the surrounding area with their mines as a refuge for endangered Indiana bats. I learned that these bats are still at

*(continued on next page)*

## Picatinny “Piques” Interest in the Paranormal *(continued)*



*Walton Burial Ground (Laurie Larstanna)*



*Walton Burial Ground (Barbara Capsouras)*

Picatinny, and they have a total of eight species. (Allen)

Jason, Rachael, and Jeff enjoyed doing their jobs and it showed. Their enthusiasm made the tour a delight. It was a perfect day. (Laurie)

I was amazed to find out that a nuclear warhead on a projectile was invented there and eventually tested in Nevada. And it worked — mushroom cloud and all! (Gail)

We visited the “experimental high-explosives site”: porosity of explosives without air gaps in shell; use of pressure to drive explosives into shell bodies; automated melt pour; safety slides in buildings for quick escapes (though not quick enough to escape an explosion); did this until 1977 when Picatinny Arsenal’s mission changed. (Elise)

I was very intrigued by the cemetery and the paranormal activity discussed. I had a very peaceful feeling while standing on the burial grounds of those who came before. (Therese)

Very nice presentation with some very knowledgeable guides and well worth the time investment. I look forward to the next hike! (Omer)

I was impressed by the historical significance of the site from revolutionary times; the 19th-century families who lived in the area; memorials to the fallen; the 20th-century science and armed forces commitments that were made in WWII and other wars; the pride that

each of our guides showed in telling the Picatinny Arsenal story and in speaking about those who built and maintained the facility over the years; the beauty of the property, green mountain ridges, lakes, and dense forest. This is what living is all about: making a mark on the world in some positive way and preserving history. (Warren)

I would highly recommend joining a future tour of Picatinny Arsenal. It was an enjoyable day where we learned much about the history of the complex and how it operates today. Additionally, we were able to hike the various areas on site across multiple terrains. (Linda M.)

The tour of Picatinny Arsenal was awesome, outstanding, excellent, and so enjoyable. This was a great day. (Al)

I was very moved by the care and commitment the Picatinny staffers

showed while discussing the cemetery on the grounds, and how they hope to continue honoring the lives of those buried there. (Jane)

What wonderful and enthusiastic guides we had on both trips. Jason even went out in the morning to do some weed whacking the second time, which made the walk to the schoolhouse much easier. It was so interesting to hear the history, about which I knew nothing. Friday the 13th was the crowning event with Marci as our guide into the paranormal world. In the past I really did not believe in the existence of spirits; yet there they were. Alice let us know she is still around and probably wants to be. Hearing the voices at the cemetery was awesome. This certainly gives me a lot of food for thought. Many thanks to all our wonderful guides. (Lori)



*Picatinny Lake (Linda McCarthy)*

# IN-TREE-GING TREES

Enjoy these photos taken by club members of interesting trees with four or more trunks. In the next issue, we'll feature wildflowers. Photos can be emailed (as JPG attachments) to the [editor](#) at any time.

*(continued on next page)*



*Berkshire Valley Wildlife Management Area — Lise Greene*



*Colonial Gardens — Carl Wilder*



*Cushetunk Mountain Preserve — Gordon Thomas*



*Gladwyne, PA (1) — Debby Bronner*



*Gladwyne, PA (2) — Debby Bronner*



*Glen Rock — Thea Landesberg*



*Horse Pond Loop, Long Pond Ironworks State Park — Donna Burkat*



*Lewis Morris Park — Paul Sanderson*

# IN-TREE-GING TREES *(continued)*



*Longwood Gardens — Paul Sanderson*



*Natirar Park, Somerset County — Carl Wilder*



*New Vernon — Linda Laidlaw*



*Palm Springs, CA (1) —  
Elise Morrison*



*Palm Springs, CA (2) —  
Elise Morrison*



*South Mountain  
Reservation —  
Anthony Caruso*



*South Mountain Reservation —  
Donna Burkat*



*Vineyard Haven on Martha's  
Vineyard — Elise Morrison*