



The Oak Leaf

Newsletter of TRISTATE RAMBLERS

Volume 48 Number 2

FALL 2025

Message from the President *by Gordon Thomas*



Ramblers of today, with more than 900 members.

The UCHC maintained a section of the Appalachian Trail as well as trails at Bellvale and Bearfort Mountains. Following this tradition, TSR members have also maintained some trails. But, to my knowledge, we have not encountered an obstacle such as the one on an overgrown trail that the UCHC once tried to maintain. To their surprise, it was

Eight people founded the Union County Hiking Club in 1938. The club grew and evolved into the TriState

blocked by a nudist camp. History records that the undaunted hikers valiantly rerouted the trail.

We, the people of the modern TSR, have improved our logistics in recent months, encouraging one another to sign up for outings carefully and follow the club's guidelines.

TSR has continued to grow, thanks to excellent leaders of a cornucopia of paddling, biking, and hiking outings (more than 10 a week). We've enjoyed celebrations in summer and in winter, rain or shine, and generally ended up happier and healthier.

And, yes, we've had new adventures . . . but none in my ken to match those of the UCHC.

BE OUR GUEST!

Yes, guests can attend TSR hiking, biking, and paddling events (under certain conditions, of course)

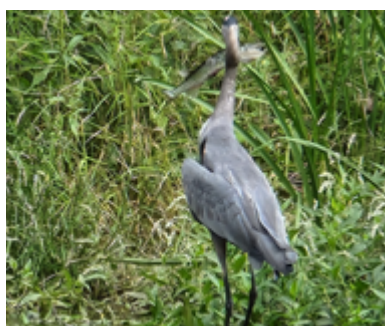
Guests are welcome to participate in TSR events with the following conditions:

1. There cannot be a waitlist.
2. The member must get advance approval from the leader to bring a guest. The leader may not be able to approve until very close to the event.
3. The member must print out the [paper waiver](#) (found on the [For Leaders](#) page of our website). The guest must complete the form, including the emergency contact information on the second page, and show it to the leader.
4. After the event, the member must submit the completed form as instructed on the waiver.
5. Guests may participate in a maximum of three events before joining.

If a member brings a guest without following the protocols, neither will be allowed to participate in the event.

While we understand that this process doesn't make it "easy" for a member to bring a guest, we hope you can appreciate the prioritization of club members over guests. We hope you also appreciate not burdening leaders with paperwork in order to facilitate guests. The "easiest" is for your guest to join our club!

But for those likely limited circumstances where this process can work . . . be our guest!



Cormorant (left) and Great Blue Heron on the D&R Canal (Gordon Thomas)



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. 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 Jodi Ordovery, membership chair, at TriStateRamblersMembership@gmail.com.

Treasurer's Report

by John Crump

TriState Ramblers has been successful in lowering its expenses by terminating printing of the schedule booklet and newsletter. In addition, volunteers carry out all the necessary work with no financial remuneration. This allows TSR to do more in support of our leaders. (For example, see the article in this issue titled "Thanks for All You Do.")

As the club has grown with more members, its assets have also increased. Some funds are in a money market account that generates interest income. For the latest period, insurance payment is not included because it is due after the newsletter deadline.

TriState Ramblers - Treasurer's Report

For Period Ending September 30, 2025

Simplified Statement of Activities

	Twelve Months ending 9/30/24	Twelve Months ending 9/30/25
All figures in \$		

Revenues

	Actual	
Dues (Renewals)	7,823	7,855
Dues (New Members)	3,205	3,468
Total Dues	11,028	11,323
Interest income (Investment account)	185	444
Total Revenues	11,213	11,772

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Expenses

Printed schedules	2,580	1,342
Events - picnic, holiday, other	1,370	1,522
Gifts for Leaders	12	2,282
IT (Web, Meetup, email, cloud, SignUpGenius)	2,047	1,560
Insurance	1,080	
Other	845	673
Total Expenses	7,934	7,379
Change in Net Assets	3,279	4,392

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Statement of Financial Position

Net Assets - Start of Period	17,123	20,402
Net Assets - End of Period	20,402	24,794

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Membership (all figures in numbers)

Number of Members (at end of period)	710	738
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THE HIKE

by Gail Biggs

What makes grown men and women
Strap heavy packs upon their backs
And trudge off to some distant peak,
Sweating, toiling over rocky slides
Or passing silent supervising trees
That guard a teeming forest life within?
Because these rocky paths washed with spring streams
Are capped with open mountaintops at last
And more green hills as far as the eye can see.

Leave No Trace for Group Hiking *by Bonnie Ackerman*

Leave No Trace is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating people about stewardship and environmental preservation. It employs a straightforward seven-principle approach to minimize our environmental impact. Regardless of our actions, we will always leave a slight mark on the environment. However, with proper education, making a simple choice to use the following principles becomes significantly easier.

1. Plan ahead and prepare.
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
3. Dispose of waste properly.
4. Leave what you find.
5. Minimize campfire impacts.
6. Respect wildlife.
7. Be considerate of others.

Leave No Trace emphasizes that these principles exist on a spectrum and are not rigid rules – although there may be legal regulations! Through education, we can guide individuals from one end of the environmental impact spectrum (greater) to the other (minimal). As a TriState Ramblers leader, I often contemplate the additional challenges of practicing responsible Leave No Trace stewardship in a group setting.

Principle 1, plan ahead and prepare, is absolutely crucial for successful excursions and stewardship. As an individual, this typically involves researching your route in advance, checking the weather, informing someone about your destination and expected return time, and packing the 10 essentials: navigation, sun protection, insulation (extra clothing), illumination (headlamp/flashlight), first aid supplies, fire starters, repair kit/tools, nutrition (extra food), hydration (extra water), and emergency shelter.

With a group, much of this responsibility falls on the leader, whose primary role is to plan the route and accurately communicate the terrain, skill level, timing, and other relevant information. A leader typically scouts the route in advance, identifying suitable spots for breaks and separations. Because followers



Bonnie and her son on a backpacking trip

rely on leaders, it's essential for them to possess a map and a comprehensive understanding of the landscape. The better prepared you are as a leader, the more effectively you can communicate with the group and conclude a successful hike.

In Principle 2, durable surfaces are maintained trails of packed dirt, rock, gravel, dry grasses, or snow that are minimally impacted when walked upon. By staying on them, we can avoid trampling plants on the side, widening the trail, or creating "social paths." Puddles present challenges because many believe it's best to walk around them. However, doing so can widen the puddle, which in turn widens the trail; and the bigger the group, the more negative the impact. A leader sets a good example by walking over rocks and roots when they are available. If not, walk directly through the mud and water so others follow suit, thus preserving the trail and leaving less damage.

Principle 3 is to dispose of waste properly. On a day hike, you might assume that this is not a concern. Of course you'll pack out your trash, and you'll likely only need to pee during

the trip. Group leaders must choose appropriate spots for separations: at least 200 feet away from water sources, with good coverage and space to walk a reasonable distance off the trail. Still, there are a few nuances to consider regarding waste disposal. For example, food scraps (including crumbs, peels, and more), toilet paper, napkins, and tissues should never be left behind. They can take years to decompose, are unsightly for others, and pose a hazard to wildlife.

Principle 7 shifts our focus to consideration of fellow humans. When we approach outdoor activities by thinking about how our actions might affect them, all other principles tend to fall into place. We are less likely to make impulsive decisions that could lead to an unpleasant or unsafe hike, damage a trail, or leave trash behind.

Factors to consider include group size, noise level, and rights of way. How much parking is available at the trailhead? How will the number of people affect noise and the trail itself? Many hikers enjoy engaging in conversation while some prefer quiet and solitude. Larger groups can make it challenging for others to pass by. To be considerate, downhill hikers generally yield to those going uphill.

As a species, we thrive in communities, as evident in our group hikes. With a bit of education and thought, we can have a profoundly positive impact on the trails we love. By setting a good example, our impact spreads even wider. Together, we can commit to planning ahead and being kind toward others so the trails can be preserved for future generations.

In addition to leading TSR hikes, I am a Leave No Trace Level 1 Instructor and the New Jersey State Leave No Trace Advocate. For more information, consider taking the free 45-minute 101 course at www.LNT.org.



Exciting Eighties-Plus *by Margo Moss*

This is the seventh 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.

As a member of the Riverdale Choral Society in my 50s, I was introduced to hiking by a fellow singer. He saw the Sierra Club sign on my car window and asked if I was hiker. I said no, explaining that I supported the organization due to concern about the environment (especially related to the supply and use of water). He invited me to come on a hike.



Harriman – Margo in white sweatshirt

My first outing was at Hook Mountain State Park in Nyack, New York, with the Green Mountain Club. When their hike coordinator became president, I succeeded him and created training programs for new hikers that continue to this day. I subsequently joined and led for Frost Valley Hiking Club, Appalachian Mountain Club, Adirondack Mountain Club . . . and, of course, TriState Ramblers (beginning 2005).

As a leader, my emphasis is on getting participants safely out and back. Points I stress for new leaders include proper footwear and clothing in addition to always having water, snacks, sunscreen, and insect repellent. Also: If you have another appointment for that day, postpone the hike. You want to enjoy the outing and be relaxed with regard to the time.

Harriman hikes are my most memorable, as they were the first ones I led; the Island Pond Loop was my very first. I also love Bear



Margo's first hike in Nyack

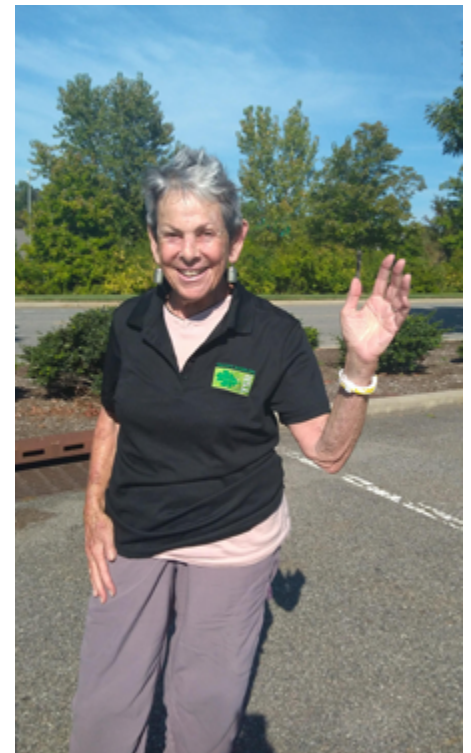
Mountain. In addition to hiking programs, I have created outings for various ages and started weekday hikes for groups that had previously gone out only on weekends. Presently I am leading Meetup hikes for the Outdoors Club and Shorewalkers in New York City.

As a certified learning disabilities teacher consultant, I created a state-approved school for learning disabled students and had a private practice for children and adults. I am also a professional photographer and was on the faculty of The New School in New York City for 18 years. I have hiked and climbed on six continents, and these outdoor experiences have provided endless opportunities for me to share breathtaking views with others. I have met (and continue to meet) some very unusual and special people, and feel privileged to have had such a wonderful life.

At 84, I still explore and investigate; my latest endeavor is to emphasize cleanup events for various organizations. I keep discovering more about the environment and the natural world while sharing the

company of likeminded friends from whom I learn so much.

My experiences with TSR have been a great gift.



Margo wearing TSR leader's shirt

Black River Trail *by Mark Strauss*

Since joining TSR in October 2024, I have participated in many club events. After initially focusing mostly on unique hikes (plus Cooper Mill), I decided to step up my game and start leading.

I began with the Black River Trail within Black River Park, a natural preserve in Roxbury Township. It offers mostly gradual inclines and a few steeper ones. The views of the various ponds are beautiful, especially with turtles and blue herons perched on logs in the water.

The trail starts left of the parking lot; after about 100 feet, it veers left where shade prevails. The footing changes from soil or grass to concrete and asphalt. At this spot, around 1918, Triple Lake Dude Ranch was opened alongside the Randolph border to create a country experience for city folks.

The ranch, small at first, was enlarged in the 1950s by the Gaynor family to include a main house,

bungalow residences, and horse stable. It offered horseback riding and instruction, swimming, tennis, excellent food, and square dancing. The ranch was sold in 1968, but the buyers were unable to run it.

In 1971, the main building became Clyde's Restaurant. After Clyde's burned down (arson suspected) in the late 1970s, the land lay dormant until purchased by Morris County in 1971. The former sand pits used by several industries are now small lakes with vegetation around the shore. The many hiking trails are shared by mountain bikers; you can see that some trails are curved from the bike tires.

Since this park is a new location for TSR, I scoped it out with Bern Cooney to ensure it met the club's guidelines. The hike was just over three miles – perfect for an alternate Thursday. So I offered it on June 12 as an add-on, and 20 members showed up.

The trail I follow is mostly shaded. It starts in Succasunna and goes through the towns of Mine Hill and Randolph. Along the trail is a large rock that contains little rocks; some have been painted and some have sympathetic messages to families of those who perished in the 9/11 World Trade Center disaster.

After the hike, I brought many of us to the Black River Barn, a restaurant right on the lake offering delicious food. TSR doesn't often include eating out together, so I hope this was a welcome change for all who participated.

Since the "scope out" I have led several hikes at Black River Park, and the most common response is: "I pass this place so many times, and had no idea hiking trails (or any of this) existed here!"

Many thanks to everyone who has hiked with me for your kind comments – which have prompted me to add more new trails (coming soon)!

Celebrating 50 Years *by Lise Greene*



Mendenhall Glacier in Tongass National Forest

My husband and I are celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary this year – which is also the 50th anniversary of Road Scholar, a travel organization for small groups of older adults. After reading other TSR members' articles about such trips in this newsletter, Mark and I decided to commemorate our own half-century mark through an Alaskan tour. I wish the trilogy could have been completed by that state's being the 50th to join the union; but alas(ka) – they were only the 49th!

During our 11 warm, sunny, dry, and windless days in Alaska (apparently an anomaly), we cruised on a very small ship through breathtakingly scenic areas. No kids, pool, music, or shows – instead, our on-board "entertainment" was observing mountains, glaciers, forests, seas, skies, birds, and animals.

Our four outstanding guides shared historical, cultural, architectural, and natural information each day. Those preparations were followed by many land excursions. We hiked (in Tongass National Forest, to Mendenhall

Glacier, through rainforests, and more), scouted remote beaches, rode the historic White Pass Railway in Skagway, met with indigenous people, and explored four historical towns on foot: Sitka, Kake, Petersburg, and Juneau.

We also kayaked in quiet bays, accompanied one time by a lone sea otter that floated and frolicked on its back alongside us, almost within petting distance.

Other highlights included seeing humpback and orca whales, harbor seals, mountain goats, eagles and other raptors, diving ducks, salmon migrating to spawn, starfish, mussels, clams, crabs, sea urchins, and porcupines ... plus a lot of bear scat along the trails, although my only actual bear sightings were from the ship. We even had the rare opportunity to observe humpback whales bubble-net feeding.

It was a perfect combination of active, social, and intellectual engagement – just like TSR outings!

A Paddling Life by Helen Lippman

Talk to TSR paddlers about their experiences on the water and one thing becomes abundantly clear: Many have been canoeing and kayaking for decades. Collectively, we're talking centuries of paddling! Here are a few of their stories.

Arnold Bauer has been paddling for 80 years. A city kid from Newark, he discovered the joy of watercraft at summer camp in the 1940s, when he glided along in an oversized aluminum canoe with nearly a dozen other kids. "I was hooked!" says Arnold, who has been paddling ever since for the exercise, the scenery, and especially the sociability it provides.

Pat Chorman dates the start of her "romance with kayaking" to the early 1950s, when she was six or seven. It was her first chance to hang with the "big kids" and she was thrilled when they led her to a wooden craft nestled on the banks of a brook in the woods. The boys boasted about building it and told her she was the first to try it. Proudly using the sticks they gave her to propel the boat along, Pat was exhilarated ... until the makeshift boat began sinking and soon Pat found herself *in*, not on, the water. She had to be carried ashore, but no matter. "I was intoxicated by the experience of sitting on the water," Pat remembers – a feeling that lingers to this day.

It was 1955 when **Jean Fletcher** first went out on a river near her home in Rochester, New York. She was a Girl Scout and "our meetings were paddles," Jean recalls – 50 cents for a two-hour canoe rental. Jean didn't paddle again until she retired in 2000 and took up whitewater kayaking. She became adept at rolls and wet exits, among other maneuvers, but quit whitewater after one too many harrowing experiences. Ironically, Jean's most hair-raising kayak adventure happened on the flat waters of Budd Lake. The wind picked up and the paddler in front of her "blew away" onto the lawn of a lakefront cottage, where Jean landed

moments later. The homeowner assured them that the high-speed gusts would cease, and the paddlers resumed their journey. There was no stopping Jean after that. She has been on the water most weekends for the last decade, weather permitting, often with TSR folks.

Anthony Caruso's maiden kayak outing was in 1997, when he and a couple of other "paddling virgins" went out with a guide on the cold, choppy waters around Kennebunkport, Maine. They paddled among lobster traps whose cork floats bobbed on the surface, and Anthony recalls barely noticing them "until one of the floats blinked at me." A closer look revealed a pod of friendly seals, happily following along. Even more memorable was landing on Walker's Point, the Bush family's private summer home, for which their guide had permission. A boat cruising offshore carried a curly-haired woman they identified as Barbara Bush, security guards on a cliff waved hello, and the kayakers got to stretch their legs and relieve themselves. (That was *not* a political statement, Anthony notes.)

Terri Petner also began paddling some 30 years ago. An avid kayaker and accomplished birder, she enjoys being on the water even on the hottest days. While it's relaxing and fun to drift in and out of conversation with fellow paddlers, wildlife sightings are most memorable: alligators "we coexisted respectfully with" in Georgia's Okefenokee Swamp, an otter family and barred owl in the Everglades, and, most notably, hundreds of herons in the enormous rookery her group encountered in the horseshoe-shaped cove of Sandfly Island.

Adventure. Nature. Tranquility. Companionship. The paddling life has it all. **Linda Lang**, our TSR paddling coordinator and an avid kayaker (with "only" 10 years of experience), works tirelessly to create opportunities for all of us to enjoy on New Jersey's rivers, lakes, and streams.

HONORED MEMBERS: Dave and Naomi Sutter

by Gail Biggs



Dave and Naomi Sutter are the newest TSR honored members. Our constitution and bylaws state: "Honored membership, without dues, may be conferred upon persons who have made outstanding contributions to the club by unanimous vote of the members present and voting at any Executive Board meeting. Honored members shall be accorded all privileges of full membership." The vote at a recent board meeting was enthusiastic and unanimous!

Dave (97) and Naomi (92) have been active members of TriState Ramblers since June 1964. (From 1938 to 2015, our name was Union County Hiking Club.) Their hiking journey began with a friend's invitation to join him on the Waterloo Circular trail at Waterloo Village. Dave's initial reaction was, "No way! I hate hiking!" But once out in the woods, he was hooked. Naomi and their son, John, also became avid hikers and all three joined our club.

The Sutters fondly remember many long-gone fellow members including Bill Miles, an early UCHC giant who taught Dave hiking skills and protocol. Dave accompanied Bill on treks in Harriman State Park as he researched in preparation for coauthoring (with Daniel Chazin) an important and comprehensive book titled *Harriman Trails: A Guide and History*.

Dave and Naomi live at Cedar Crest, a senior living community in Pompton Plains, where they appreciate the many walking trails. They have good memories of hiking in Mountainside Park nearby and reaching the very top, with a view of New York City. The Sutters have enjoyed lives filled with the great outdoors and the many blessings bestowed upon them by this activity.

Hiking in Antarctica *by Ed Leibowitz*

I was 81 years old and wanted to fulfill my dream of visiting Antarctica, so I looked into various travel packages. When I contacted Quark Expeditions, they asked what I'd be willing to pay as a solo traveler. I gave a ridiculously low figure and they countered with an additional \$200, so I decided to take their December 2024 tour. (Note: Their northern Arctic trips are half the price of Antarctica!)



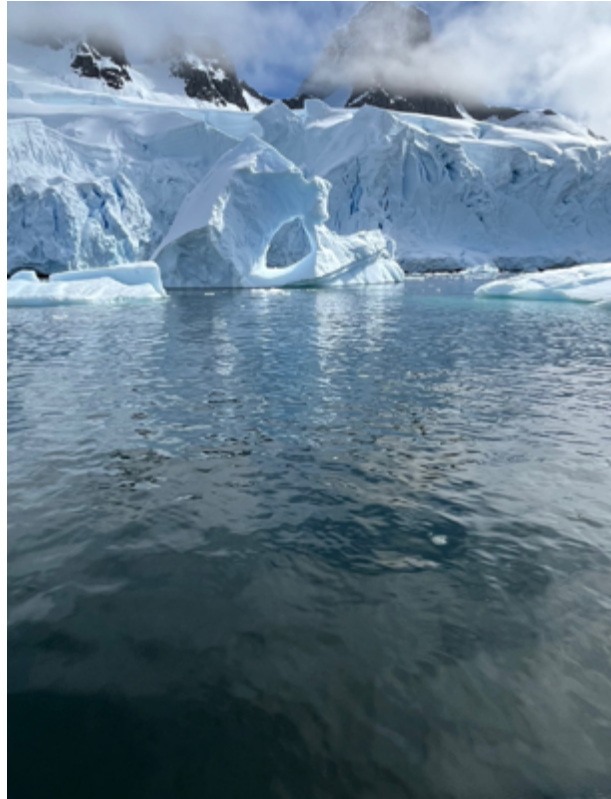
Ed holding the flag of the seventh continent on Peterman Island

Our starting point was Ushuaia, Argentina (the southern “end of the world”), a 15-hour flight from Newark Liberty. Upon arrival, I walked through the town and along the South Ocean. I also visited Tierra del Fuego National Park, the southern terminus of the Pan American Highway that runs from Alaska to South America.

After boarding the *Ocean Explorer*, we traveled through Drake Passage (where I combated motion sickness). Upon arriving in Antarctica, we were divided into groups for traveling by inflatable Zodiac boats to many islands. Quark has strict apparel requirements, including waterproof pants and gloves; they provide knee-high boots and a winter jacket with a zip-out lining. We always wore the boots and used hiking poles to navigate the snow and ice. Separations were not permitted due to environmental concerns. (I even got a slight rebuke for laying my poles down on the snow to take a picture.)

Daytime temperatures were usually 40-50 degrees. One day we attempted to go through Lemaire Channel, which is very narrow and frequently freezes over. But due to global warming, we were able to pass through. On a sunny day, we walked and climbed some hills on Peterman Island.

On our last day in Antarctica, I did a polar plunge. A belt with a cinch



Graham Passage



Ed starting the polar plunge

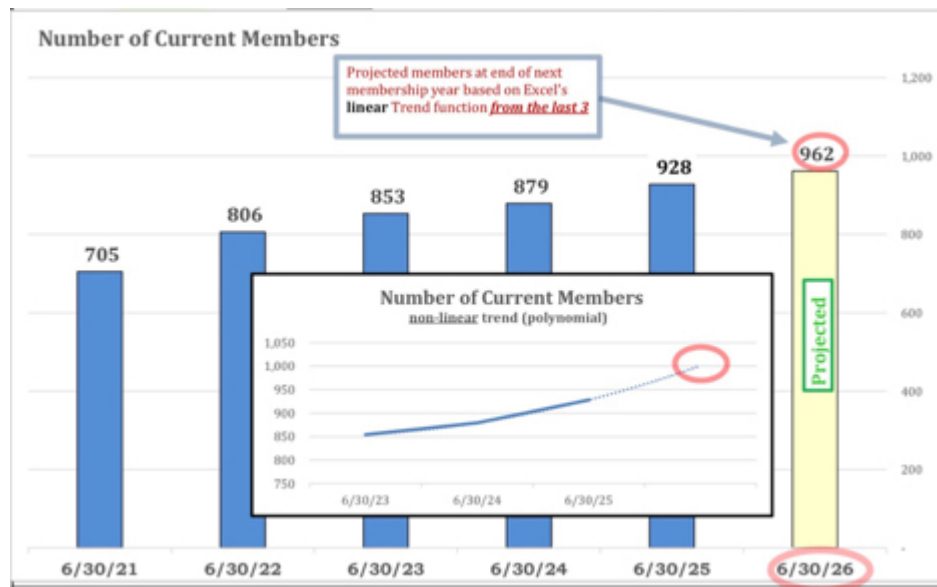
loop was tied around my waist and a long rope was placed in the loop to pull me out if I couldn't take the cold. Most people jumped into the 37-degree water, but I chose to climb down the ladder gradually, afraid of shocking my body. Then we navigated Graham Passage and started our two-day, 800-mile trip back to Ushuaia through Drake Passage.

It was very rough and much worse than the trip south, but we did see some humpback whales.

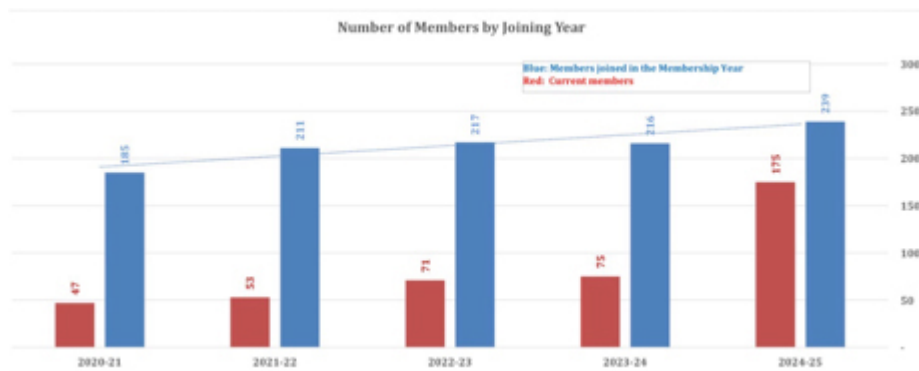
Before flying back home, I spent two days in Buenos Aires. One highlight was an excellent free walking tour conducted in several languages. So, although the entire adventure was not exactly a hiking trip, I was able to do a lot of walking.

FUN FIGURES *by Paul Augustyniak and Dave Hill*

As the TSR data analytics team, we are happy to report that our calculations show the club's average growth rate over the past three years is 4%. The projected linear trend for the upcoming year is 4%. However, the three-year growth rate based on a non-linear trend is 8%, which reflects the extraordinary recruiting and retention efforts made by our special TSR teams. We could potentially achieve 1,000 active members for the first time! The chart below shows membership as of July 1, 2025.



The following chart shows the number of members by joining year.



Thanks to our officers, leaders, and other volunteers who keep TriState Ramblers ... rambling!



Gordon Thomas (center in orange) leading TSR group on one of three Cushtunk Mountain summits (6.8 miles, 2030' elevation)

HOLIDAY PARTY!

by Jenny Monteleone and Brooke Tippens, Social Chairs

It's that time of year again – mark your calendars and get ready to celebrate!

**SAVE THE DATE:
SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 6, 2025**

**TSR Annual Holiday Party
and Business Meeting
Verona Community Center
Saturday, December 6, 2025
12 noon**

We'll kick off the day with **invigorating morning hikes**, followed by a **brief annual business meeting at noon**, and then dive into the fun with our **festive potluck party!**

Here's what's in store:

- **Morning hikes** to energize the day
- **Potluck lunch** – bring a sweet or savory dish to share
- **Beverages provided**
- **Sharpening service**
- **Swap table**
- A joyful chance to **socialize, meet new people, and participate in the festivities**

Registration opens in November through SignUpGenius for the party and hikes – stay tuned!

Want to help make the magic happen? Volunteer and be part of the behind-the-scenes cheer! Shifts begin at **9:30**. To sign up or learn more, **contact Jenny** at jennymonte82@gmail.com.

We look forward to celebrating with you!

Paddling in the Meadowlands

by Helen Lippman (photos by unnamed paddling participants)

On a sunny Friday in September, 13 intrepid paddlers participated in a guided TSR tour on the Hackensack River with a conservation organization called [Hackensack Riverkeeper](#). Some brought their own kayaks, others rented singles, and one brave couple navigated the tidal waters in a tandem.

With the dramatic backdrop of the New York City skyline, we set out into the calm beauty of wetlands, islands, and mudflats. Our guides were experienced naturalists who pointed out animals and special sights, while explaining how these meadowlands were preserved through the efforts of determined volunteers.

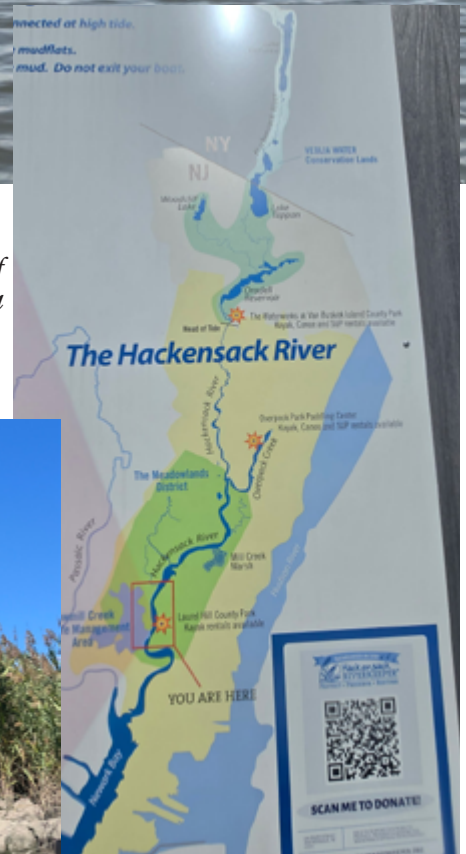
We learned that the area was home to the Lenni Lenape people for thousands of years. After European colonization, the river became polluted through dams, destruction of the wetlands, and overdevelopment. The tidal waters became toxic. In 1997, the Hackensack River finally began to recover through a collaboration of federal, state, and local partners.

Trucks whizzed by as we approached the edges of the water; trains traversed the nearby tracks; planes flew overhead. Yet there was serenity in the abundance of nature: osprey stragglers (many had already begun their winter flight), egrets, great blue herons, and a vast colony of tiny fiddler crabs.

As the tide changed, our group headed back to the dock; no one wanted to be stuck on the mudflats, waiting for the next tide!



Manhattan skyline



*Map of
paddling area*



Hudson Farm Fall Charity Hike *by Lise Greene*



Bear Pond (Melissa Rogers)

My husband, Mark, and I enjoyed a wonderful time in Alaska as an early 50th anniversary celebration in August (see article in this issue). But we still wanted to commemorate our actual date in a memorable way, and that turned out to be easy: The annual fall charity hike at Hudson Farm in Andover was scheduled for that very day!

So we sent out word to family and friends, including all TSR members, inviting them to join us for the hike. Our symbolic plan was to recruit at least 50 people and begin hiking at 10:04, representing our October 4 wedding date. The organizers were happy to accommodate us with a separate sign-in sheet for our guests.

The day dawned delightfully with sunshine, a light breeze, and temperatures in the 60s and 70s. Mark and I signed in and learned afterward that there were indeed at

least 50 others on our special sheet. Many had arrived earlier and some came later, but about a dozen people set off with us at 10:04. Unfortunately, by the end of the hike, our page had disappeared, so we do not know exactly who participated for us. Thanks to the TSR members who were among them!

The beautiful route was more than four miles, incorporating parts of the Highlands Trail and Lake Hopatcong Trail. It wound through woods, along Bear Pond, over hills, and around a golf course. We returned to the clubhouse – where the idea to create the Appalachian Trail was born in 1921 – to enjoy a barbecue provided by Hudson Farm.

In addition, everyone who completed the course received play dollars equivalent to their age. Hikers chose how to distribute the “money” into boxes designated for various local charities. (Hudson Farm would

later add up the amount in each box and provide the equivalent in real money to the charities.)

Melissa Rogers summed up the event: “It was a lovely hike!” Gail Waimon said that she and Lenny Friedman “really enjoyed every moment. We were so impressed with the volunteers and everything else to make the day a huge success.” Karen Frank added that “it was a picture-perfect day. Sunny, temperate weather, dozens of TSR members among hundreds of other hikers, beautiful scenery of woods, ponds, and rock formations. We hiked along rolling hills on well-marked and well-kept trails. It was a glorious day.”

Mark and I appreciate everyone who helped us reach the goal of at least 50 hikers – thank you!

Note: Charity hikes are held every spring and fall at Hudson Farm. Check the [website](#) for upcoming dates.



*Barbecue lunch
(Karen Frank)*



Hudson Farm – along the trail (Gail Waimon)



Mark and Lise (Gail Waimon)

New AT Postage Stamps



Earlier this year, the US Postal Service issued a new set of 15 “forever” stamps honoring the Appalachian Trail. As one of the 14 states through which the AT passes, New Jersey is featured via the Pochuck Boardwalk Trail in Vernon. From the [official website](#):

“Take a hike from the stresses of modern life with the Appalachian Trail stamps, celebrating the century-old footpath that rambles through unspoiled nature from Maine to Georgia. The pane of stamps includes a photographic view from each of 14 states through which the trail winds. An additional stamp represents the so-called ‘green tunnel,’ an affectionate nickname for stretches of trail through dense forest. Use these stamps to bring natural beauty to each piece of mail!”



Jockey Hollow History

Many TSR members enjoy the network of trails in Jockey Hollow – but how many know its history? Click [here](#) to view the very interesting Public Broadcasting System (PBS) documentary on this popular hiking venue and its important role in the establishment of our country. A map of the main hiking trails is on the left; for a more complete map, click [here](#).

SNAKES! by Dianne Jones (photo by Louis Thompson)



Coiled rattlesnake

New Jersey is home to two venomous snake species: Northern Copperhead and Timber Rattlesnake. Both are considered potentially dangerous. According to the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJDFW), “It is extremely rare for the average citizen to encounter a rattlesnake or copperhead due to their elusive nature, preference for interior forest habitat, small, localized populations, and sensitivity to human disturbance.” In addition, “The copperhead is a state species of special concern and the rattlesnake is listed as endangered.”

So what are the chances of seeing even one, much less two, on the same hike?!

Well, that’s exactly what happened on a July 22 hike I led in Harriman State Park. We were on the Raccoon Brook Trail when I saw a big fat snake stretched across the path in front of me. I do not like snakes and I especially did not like the size or coloring of this one – not a harmless black rat snake, this guy.

Willard Dye was close by and quickly identified it as a rattlesnake. It started to move off the path and we could hear the loud, distinctive rattle,

which kept up for so long that someone actually thought we were hearing cicadas. It was very well camouflaged, coiled up off the path.

Our group of 15 gingerly passed by, giving the reptile a wide berth (even those who were taking pictures), and continued on our way. Belatedly, I wondered if there might be another rattlesnake nearby, but Willard indicated they are usually solo. The NJDFW literature also notes that they do not travel in pairs.

After a lovely lakeside lunch stop, we took the Pine Meadow Trail back toward the parking lot. About half an hour from the end, I saw something moving on the side of the path – another snake! It was much smaller, but again the coloring and pattern did not look friendly. We yelled for Willard and he identified it as a copperhead. Thankfully, this snake was much more eager to slither quickly away and disappear. (Or maybe I was the one who went quickly away?)

Both of New Jersey’s venomous snakes in one 7-mile hike in nearby New York! That’s quite the two-fer ... and something I never want to experience again!

Getting There

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.



Cuddly bear (Louis Thompson)

Leaders: Thanks for All You Do!

by Linda Hetcher (Outing Chair) and Dianne Jones (Webmaster)



(Donna Burkat)

The weather on September 13 was magnificent – a perfect day to recognize the efforts of our club’s hiking, biking, and paddling leaders. We had organized an event to celebrate them and everything they do to make the club successful.

About 40 outing leaders arrived at Lewis Morris Park in Morristown. Many joined one of three morning hikes of different lengths led by Linda Hetcher, Shelley Schwartz, Carolyn Smith, Julie Stanton, and Gordon Thomas.

After hiking, attendees enjoyed a picnic lunch with homemade desserts. There was good camaraderie along with the opportunity to “put a name to the face” and vice versa. Each person received a small, beautifully wrapped nature study guide to serve as a fun and easy way of identifying trees, flowers, mushrooms, and ferns encountered during outdoor adventures. The booklets were designed to fit in a backpack carried on trails, roads, and water.

Although participants often thank individual leaders at the end of an outing, this event was held by the club itself to thank *all* our leaders because:

- Their work and sense of responsibility ensures that everyone has an enjoyable experience – and is safe.
- They are the heart and soul of our club, and we would not be this vibrant community without them.

● They selflessly lead without seeking accolades, and we want to recognize their contributions.

Here are a few comments from leaders who attended the event:

“Job well done. We had a grand time. The food was delicious, and the day itself was glorious.” (Bev and Stan Kaltnecker)

“Thanks for the nature study guide booklet – a delightfully thoughtful and useful gift.” (Phil Ross)



(Donna Burkat)

“Thank you for making TSR best in breed and motivating so many to move!” (Jason Briggs)



(Donna Burkat)

“What a delightful day. I feel so lucky to be part of this wonderful community.” (Shelley Schwartz)



(Linda Hetcher)

If you are thinking about leading for TSR, please do not hesitate to reach out. Contact the Outing Chair (linda.hetcher@gmail.com) or talk to a leader on the trails or on the water to find out more. We have seasoned mentors ready to help you scout a route and/or have you co-lead with them. Additionally, TSR has written leader guidelines that are tailored for specific activities.

It’s quite straightforward to become a leader. The benefits of doing so far outweigh the time and effort, and the contribution to the club is invaluable.



Are you interested in helping the club? To discuss ways that you can volunteer, contact Gordon Thomas, president, at TSRPresident3@gmail.com.

Why Be a Hike Leader?

There's Joy and Safety in Numbers *by Carolyn Smith*

I decided to retire from paid work a couple of years ago. After a fulfilling 40-year scientific lab career focused on heart disease and medical writing, it was time to explore a new life chapter. How could I stay engaged in retirement when I was only two-thirds of a century ... basically, a pediatric newbie elder?

My favorite credible medical websites reminded me how healthy aging involves more exercise and strength training, not just weekend dancing! Thankfully, I am blessed with good health entering this chapter, which largely involves taking care of muscles and ligaments, and not just burning off inflammatory visceral fat.

Thus far, I have discovered new countries, friends, and meaningful volunteerism. These activities keep me happy, thinking mindfully, and balanced on one or both feet. My volunteer gigs include support of hiking groups such as TriState Ramblers ... which brings me to the key reason for writing this piece. After enjoying many hikes during my old "work" week, I decided to become a leader because there's joy and safety in numbers!

First is the joy of belonging, which has led to sharing interests with new TSR friends: artist biographies, yoga, international hiking, and a 10-finger mnemonic to help kids learn the Ten Commandments (bless ya, Ken). Taking on the responsibility of leading is one way of volunteering to keep a club successful in the future. Unlike vampires, we are mere mortals, and need to plan for times when leaders move away, "age out" (heaven forbid), and/or need to heal from pesky ailments.

Another more self-centered reason to lead is that I want to hike more than twice weekly, especially when popular routes fill quickly! I also want to build up to a 2012-level of endurance I had with the Interstate Hiking Club, when I could easily cover the strenuous, steep Sunday hikes such as the Stonetown Circular.



Carolyn Smith at Cooper Gristmill in Chester (Debby Bronner)

These were especially enjoyable with leaders Guy and Jennifer Percival and my favorite partner, Mac McCaulley.

Challenging climbs are worth the spectacular views, but risky on the descent. Hiking poles and a knee brace are almost as important as boots, and I plan for inclement or cold weather with additional clothing and outer gear. You could fall when fatigued on long treks, but extreme weather can make even generally flat walks treacherous – like my slip this summer on a sweaty rock, but I safely broke the fall on my keister.

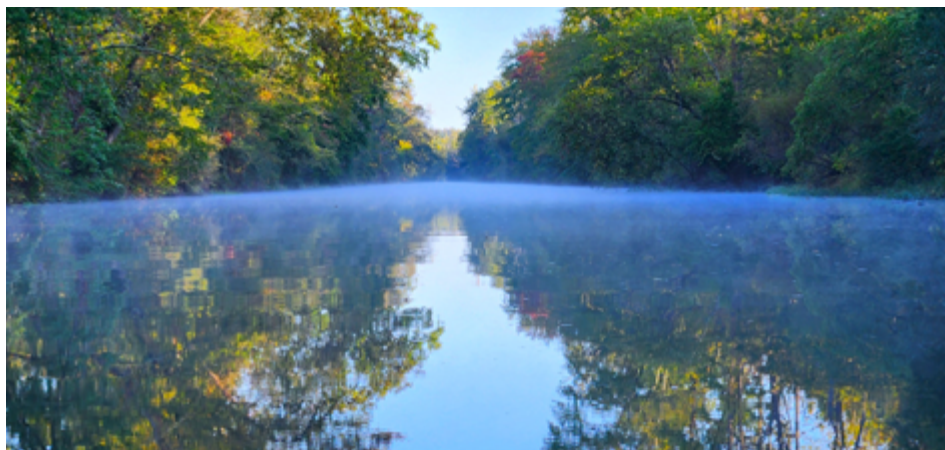
For a leader, an important safety factor is familiarity with the route by performing a scouting run ahead of time, so you can plan for last-minute changes in trail or weather conditions. Key leader tools are smartphone apps like AllTrails, the backup of a paper

map, and a compass. A basic first aid kit is essential for leaders as well as participants. And, of course, all TSR hikers are required to carry personal information cards with emergency contact numbers.

This brings me to another safety factor in groups: What happens if you get too hot/cold/injured/lost? Prepared companions can literally be your lifeboat stretchers, even if they are not card-carrying medics.

While hike leaders in most clubs are not expected to have the training of a certified emergency medical technician, I recommend the Appalachian Mountain Club's Solo Wilderness expedition program. Mac and I took this great workshop in November 2024 at the Mohican Outdoor Center in Blairstown. The introductory training provides medical knowledge on how to help someone, especially those who can't walk back to their cars, while you call for assistance.

To close, I give thanks to new and old friends: Paul Augustyniak, Debby Bronner, and Gordon Thomas for co-leading with me as I got my leader boots "broken in"; Guy Percival, John Infosino, and Jerry Giordano, who helped scout new hikes; and Linda Hetcher, who posted new hike leader documents and club resources, as well as offering fun lectures on the prescient science in the Twilight Zone TV series.



Kayaking at dawn – 50 degrees in the air, warm on the water, like floating on a cloud (Gordon Thomas)

Welcome, New TSR Members from 4/1/25 to 9/30/25!

Karen Bischoff, West Long Branch
Victoria Booth, Dumont
Joanne Borsinger, Chatham Township
Sheri Breitstein, North Bergen
Debbie Bruen, Morristown
Christopher Campanelli, Tenafly
Daniel Cohen, Basking Ridge
Neli Cohen, Basking Ridge
Udi Cohen, Basking Ridge
Jessica Contreni, Suffern
Jennifer Corbett, East Windsor
Debbie Delaney, Randolph
Karen Demetro, Cedar Knolls
Nancy Denholtz, Maplewood
Lynn Doherty, West Milford
Rich Dugan, Cedar Grove
Steve Ellerman, Morristown
Kerry Emmett, Whitehouse Station
Elizabeth Entwistle, Morristown
Paul Ferlazzo, Lake Hiawatha
Ralph Fiore, Elizabeth
Brenda Forte, Bedminster
Gale Frankle, Wharton
Bridget Fujioka, Jersey City
Leeza Furman, Mahwah
Christine Gallagher, Newton
Kathleen Garrison, Cornwall
Barbara Geiger, Roseland
Denise Gerardi, Denville
Ellen Goldblatt, Cranford
Lucy Goyal, San Diego
Anita Green, Park Ridge
Fred Guterl, Bloomfield
Ethan Harris, Westfield
Jennifer Hodges, New Providence
John Hodges, New Providence
Sue Hohorst, Kinnelon
Cynthia Isaksen, Cranford
Charlie Iuliano, Mendham
Todd Jonasz, Glen Ridge
Alan Jones, Woodland Park
Charles Jurgensen, Paramus

Eileen Kiernan, Scotch Plains
Sandy Kogan, Morristown
Marc Korpus, Morristown
Steven Kurland, Montville
Heewon Kwon, Warren
Laurie Landau, Millburn
Claudia Lawrence, Andover
Hyunah Lee, Summit
Karen Leister, New Providence
Christine Lemesianou, Bloomfield
Mark Lerch, Allendale
Cindy Li, Hoboken
Anita Liao, Florham Park
Catherine Lowe, Madison
Kathy Lutz Szmak, West Caldwell
Vivek Machchhar, Lake Hiawatha
Doris Mak, Edgewater
Joe Mangino, Montclair
Kavitha Manley, South Plainfield
Lynda Mansfield, Maplewood
Valerie Marks, Milford
Maureen Marszalek, Morris Plains
Glenn Marum, Morristown
Mercedes Mckay, Madison
Despina Metaxatos, Teaneck
Tom Mulvihill, Clark
Maureen Murphy, Livingston
Stephen Myer, Allenhurst
Montia Nestler, Ridgefield
Bill Nierstedt, Garwood
Donna Orr, Morristown
Lucy Orzechowski, Kinnelon
John Pacanovsky-Nolan, Wyckoff
Vicki Parker, Scotch Plains
Andrew Pavlica, Hasbrouck Heights
Beth Potter, New York
Joan Preztunik, Hasbrouck Heights
Jamie Raby, Wanaque
Janie Rakow, Wyckoff
Joel Rakow, Wyckoff
Jason Redwood, Metuchen
Sharon Rizzi, Hillsborough

David Rosen, Succasunna
Matthew Rosencrantz, Summit
Amy Ross, New Hope
Constance Rothermel, Essex Fells
Donna Ruberto, Cranford
Delia Rusmin, Parsippany
Frank Sabella, Ridgewood
Lindsay Sage, Scotch Plains
Bess Samuel, West Orange
Maria Santangelo, South Plainfield
Dominick Scapati, Madison
Eugene Schiebel, Staten Island
Marcia Schulman, Teaneck
Joanie Schultz, Doylestown
Craig Selinger, Spring Valley
Janice Sgalia-Friedland, Randolph
Chinmay Shah, Edison
Albert Shamael, Byram Township
Lorna Silvestri, Rutherford
Diane Simmons, Maplewood
Zach Singer, Woodland Park
Noreen Spataro, Butler
Terri Speiser, Basking Ridge
Becky Spence, New Providence
Dina Spence, Wyckoff
James Sterling, New York
Lin Stevens, Highland Lakes
Christopher Sullivan, Hazlet
David Szmak, West Caldwell
Catherine Terrone, Montague
Joanne Teschner, Morris Plains
Erika Tremper, Hillsborough
John Turano, Mahwah
Miriam Verner, Lake Hiawatha
Cindy Volkert, Hartsdale
Julia Webb, Mount Laurel
Kathryn Weld, Pleasantville
Elizabeth Williams, Mendham
Jennifer Yacykewych, Chatham
Young Yi, Highland Lakes
Louise Zelesnik, Whitehouse Station
Abby Zimmermann, Roseland

Show-and-Go: Did You Know?

As a reminder about these events, please be aware of the following:

- Show-and-Go events can include non-TSR members (up to three outings before they must join).
- Guidelines for Show-and-Go events, including instructions and

examples of how to write a proper description, are on the TSR website. 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 (ideally at least three 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, contact linda.hetcher@gmail.com.

The Vastness of Alaska and a Flat Tire *by Bill Correa*

Alaska is vast – bigger than the next three largest states (California, Texas, and Montana) combined, but with only 750,000 people. (California and Texas have 69 million.) Fairbanks is Alaska's second largest city with just over 31,000 residents.

I went to Fairbanks in August to visit Brian, a friend from college 52 years ago, and his wife, Kate. Two other friends, Dave and Larry, joined us.

From Fairbanks, we all headed about four hours south in a large Ford delivery truck that had been converted to a camper, stopping for lunch at a small hotel restaurant. Dave asked for a salad; the waitress said he was the first to order one this year. Since fresh vegetables can be hard to come by up there, he changed it to a hamburger. The owner said that every two weeks she drives to Fairbanks and back for their food – four and a half hours each way. That would be like New Jersey residents going to a supermarket in Washington, DC.



Flat tire

After arriving at our beautiful campsite on interconnecting lakes, we spent three days hiking and paddling in a canoe and two kayaks. Then our plan was to take the Denali “Highway” west to the other main north/south highway, Alaska Route 3, because the scenery is spectacular and it is one of the most beautiful roads in Alaska. It is also very rough with potholes everywhere. Rental



Scenery on the Denali Highway

cars are not allowed, which was an early warning sign. Sure enough, after about 50 miles, we got a flat on the rear tire and we all jumped out to fix it.

Brian, who had owned the truck only four months, had never changed a tire on it; I doubt that the engineer who wrote the manual had ever done so either. It was complicated and not intuitive. The lug wrench and jack were under the front passenger seat behind a panel that took 30 minutes to remove. The tire under the truck had to be lowered, but we could not find the hole for the wrench to lower it because the plywood floor was screwed down. I finally found a loose piece and we were able to lower the tire.

It became wedged in because we were off the road on an angle. After Brian and I spent half an hour on our stomachs in the mud under the car, we got the tire out. But it was connected to a wire that we could not figure out how to disconnect. Next problem: We could not loosen the lug nuts because they were caked in clay that had hardened into rock. After

messing with this, I got the idea to throw water on it; that worked.

We had been at this for almost three hours, and now we just had to jack up the truck and be on our way. The jack did not work. We were screwed. No car had passed us; we had no cell service; and the closest help was 180 miles away. It would be like calling AAA in Boston to get help in New Jersey. After joking that it was looking like a situation from the movie *Into the Wild*, I suggested dividing up the marshmallows and graham crackers from our s'mores the night before.



View from the breakdown site

Suddenly we saw an RV in the distance. Paul from Nome, Alaska, pulled up and got out his toolbox. He discovered a problem with the fluid in our jack; but his jack did not work on our truck. Screwed again, I thought. Kate had been speaking with our rescuer's wife, who felt 100% sure her husband would figure this out. Paul got pipe, wire, and levelers from his RV and jury-rigged his jack to lift the truck two inches. We were able to change the tire – saved!

We tried to give Paul money; he said to pass it on. “Do something nice for somebody else.” What a great guy! After three and a half hours, we were on our way. I suggested we not jinx it by discussing the fact that we had 150 miles to go with no jack or spare tire.

After reaching Alaska Route 3, we traveled another 45 miles to get well-deserved burgers and beer.

The Hottest TSR Hike? *by Gordon Thomas*

At the end of our Tuesday outing, we stood in the shade behind the Watchung Reservation Trailside Nature and Science Center. The hike had been hot, and the weather was still hot. Several people read that the temperature was near or above 100°, a record high for June 24 in central New Jersey. The humidity was also high, and the report indicated a “real feel” temperature near or over 115°. Nonetheless, everyone who started had finished – even the leader.

Since the weather prediction had been for “extreme heat,” I had not expected many hikers, yet nine out of ten showed up: Albert Bozzo, Donna Burkat, Stephen Burkat, Tim Burman, Willard Dye, John Infosino, Ellen Mazzei, Maya Ruvinshiteyn, and Nancy Sierra. At the usual gathering circle, I said (perhaps unnecessarily), “Ya gotta have water,” and we started off.

At the first fork in the trail, we stopped for a water break. As we walked along the south side of Blue Brook, someone suggested, “This should be called Black Brook or maybe Green Brook, because it looks like that.” I replied, “Water break.”

Another hiker wanted to know, “Is there a stream crossing?” I replied, “Only on a bridge.” Then we had a stream crossing on some rocks, and I announced, “Water break.”

We had lunch in the shade of an old building and I commented, “This bunch of historic houses was once called Feltsville. This building served both as a general store and a church. There’s a restroom on the first floor.” One of the hikers checked and said, “It’s locked.” I replied, “Drink more water.”

Our next stop was at an old cemetery, and then on to the north side of Surprise Lake (more drinking, but not the muddy lake water). At the east end of the lake, someone suggested taking a picture. I said, “Sure ... and drink more water.” Along the south side of the lake, I noted, “The CCC improved the lake during the 1930s Depression. Neighbors used it as a beach with more than 200 bathers at some times. Water break.”

After finishing the four-mile trek as planned, we stood in the shade to discuss whether this was our hottest hike ever and came to agreement: It was a candidate for really hot – and reasonably memorable.

Not Getting the Weekly TSR Emails?

As you probably know, an email goes out every Thursday evening to members who have subscribed to the TSR Google Group. The email serves as a reminder that registration is open for the next week’s events. If you believe you are subscribed, but are not receiving the weekly email, it is likely an issue with your email provider’s spam filters (especially if you are not using a Gmail address).

It’s possible you are receiving other emails from TSR, but not the weekly reminder. Again, that is an issue with your email provider’s spam filters. In both cases, check your spam/junk folder and add tristateramblers@googlegroups.com to your contact list.

If you’re not sure if you are subscribed to the TSR Google Group,

send an email to our webmaster at tsrhikers@gmail.com. If you are a newer member without a Gmail address, you may have missed the invitation to join the TSR Google Group.

The good news is that you don’t need the weekly email! All the information contained therein (schedule, process, rules, registration link) can be found on the [Members Only](#) page of our website (log-in required).

Remember, we use the TSR Google Group to provide information about upcoming events, schedule changes, cancellations, and other notices. So if you want to be an active member, make sure you are subscribed and read our emails!

Signup Etiquette: Please Be Considerate of Your Fellow Members

Just a reminder about a few things:

- Members are limited to initially sign up for **two hikes per week**. Join additional hikes if there is space available by signing up *after 8:00 PM the night before* and writing “after 8 PM” in the comments section.

- Whenever you sign up on the **waitlist**, put in the comment area “1st hike” or “2nd hike.” It helps our hardworking volunteers to monitor the signups more easily.

- **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 main list if there is availability. Signups are time stamped, so be assured that names are moved in the order of signup.

- **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.

- Note: That means your **“2nd hike” should always be on the waitlist**. Never put your second hike on the hiker list; you will get moved there if space is available.

- **If you need to cancel**, please remove your name *before 8:00 PM the day before* the hike. Otherwise there may be people on the waitlist who miss the opportunity to hike.

- Should an emergency arise and you have to cancel the morning of the hike, please let the leader know *by at least one hour before the start time*, as there are trailheads with no cell reception.

- Click [here](#) for complete signup rules. We appreciate your cooperation.

White Lake *by Linda Lang*

On a sunny Tuesday in October, 12 TSR members enjoyed free paddling at the White Lake Natural Resource Area, a beautiful 441-acre preserve in Hardwick Township. The deep 69-acre spring-fed water body is the park's most notable feature. White Lake is named for its chalky marl bottom composed of freshwater mollusk shells and clay.

A variety of habitats surround the pristine lake: fertile meadows, karst limestone exposures, sinkhole ponds, stands of mature hemlock, and hardwood forests. The shoreline is

home to various endangered or threatened plant species.

In addition, the preserve is dotted with cultural and historical points of interest, including a lime kiln and the stone wall remnants of an ice house/marl processing facility. The area offers hiking along with paddling.

Our kayaks (including two tandems), paddles, and personal flotation devices were all supplied at no charge. The three hour-long tour slots were spaced out to begin at 10:00, giving each paddler one hour on the water. However, because we

had more kayaks than paddlers, some decided to stay out longer.

The last time I visited this area, we were greeted by two eagles, one of which fished and brought its catch back to the other. This time we saw turtles, fish, and some birdlife. After kayaking, we picnicked in a sweet grove of trees overlooking the water.

It was great way to catch up with friends and meet new friends. The feedback was: a terrific time and a beautiful day on the water. We plan to offer this event again next year in both the spring and fall.



Who Ya Gonna Call/Email?

Not sure who to contact when you need help? If you:

- Have *questions about a specific hike/bike/paddle* (meeting location, difficulty level, etc.) – ask the event leader using contact information in the TSR schedule event description. Do not text if the leader has specified no texts; your message will not be received.

- Must *cancel late or last-minute* – contact the event leader as a courtesy.

- Are a *leader and need to communicate about an event* (for example cancellation, update, Add-On, Show and Go) – see the TSR Leader FAQs on the [For Leaders – Members Only](#) page of our website (log-in required).

- Still *need help with SignUpGenius* after reviewing the [rules](#), instructions for [signing up](#), or instructions for [deleting](#) your sign-up – email the outreach chair (tsrregistration@outlook.com).

- Have *questions about your dues payment, current membership status, updates to contact information, etc.* – email the membership chair (tristateramblersmembership@gmail.com). Contact information updates can also be made online (www.tristateramblers.org/update).

- Are *interested in becoming a new leader* – email the outing chair (linda.hetcher@gmail.com).

- Would like to subscribe to, have questions about, or have problems with the *TSR Google Group email list* – email the TSR webmaster (tsrhikers@gmail.com).

- Believe you are *subscribed to the TSR Google Group email list but are not receiving messages* – it is likely an issue with your email provider. Check your spam/junk folder and add tristateramblers@googlegroups.com to your contact list.

- Would like to *submit an article for our newsletter* – email The Oak Leaf editor (lise.greene@montclair.edu).

- Would like to *volunteer to help with our social events* (summer picnic and holiday party) – email the TSR social committee (tsrsocialcommittee@gmail.com).

- Have *suggestions for improvements* – contact any TSR club officer.

- Note: A list of TSR club officers can be found on our website (www.tristateramblers.org/officerspublic).

Stars in Nature

Enjoy this issue's photo theme: actual stars and natural star shapes. The Spring 2026 theme: **ferns**. Images of interesting and beautiful ferns can be submitted as email attachments in JPG format at any time from now through the next deadline (April 1). Please send original images only *with no editing of any kind*. However, you may request cropping or other edits to be made by our graphic editor. Include a caption with your name, the location, and type of fern, if known, to lise.greene@montclair.edu.



Night in Stokes State Forest (Michael Williams)



Full moon walk at South Branch Raritan River Preserve (Lynn Orlowitz)



Tree trunk star on Liffy Island, Lake Hopatcong (Lise Greene)



Starfish on Colt Island, Alaska (Lise Greene)



Night sky in Cape May (Sue Griffin)



Stars with the northern lights in Norway (Julie Stanton)

TriState Ramblers Executive Board 2025

President – Gordon Thomas (TSRPresident3@gmail.com, 609-977-0267)
Vice President – John Jurasek (jurasek@optonline.net, 845-365-3618)
Recording Secretary – Elise Morrison (elisermorrison@gmail.com, 201-927-4275)
Treasurer – John Crump (johnmcrump@yahoo.com, 973-534-6168)
Membership Co-Chair – Paul Augustyniak (paugust586@aol.com, 973-219-4807)
Membership Co-Chair – Jodi Ordover (tristateramblersmembership@gmail.com, 201-264-4206)
Newsletter Editor – Lise Greene (lise.greene@montclair.edu, 973-663-4396)
Nominating Chair – Sheree Bennett (shereestarrett@yahoo.com, 973-857-0543)
Outing Chair – Linda Hetcher (linda.hetcher@gmail.com, 973-769-1773)
Outreach Chair – Kaat Higham (tsrregistration@outlook.com, 862-221-0170)
Schedule Coordinator – Nancy Sierra (nsmd_solo@yahoo.com, 908-347-0690)
Social Co-Chair – Jenny Monteleone (jennymonte82@gmail.com, 732-245-7284)
Social Co-Chair – Brooke Tippens (brooketippens@gmail.com, 973-902-5650)
Webmaster – Dianne Jones (tsrhikers@gmail.com, 973-428-4924)

Outing Coordinators

Monday – Bev/Stam Kaltnecker (kaltneecs1@aol.com, 201-602-4074)
Tuesday – Louis Thompson (ltpt1@yahoo.com, 732-239-1012)
Wednesday – Kaat Higham (khigham@verizon.net, 862-221-0170)
Thursday – Dianne Jones (diannejones428@gmail.com, 973-428-4924)
Alternate Thursday – Bernadette Miglin (bmiglin@yahoo.com, 973-407-0049)
Friday – Julie Stanton (julienyc@msn.com, 917-972-0212)
Saturday – Lorrie Vece (dixonlowe@aol.com, 201-970-1000)
Sunday – Sheree Bennett (shereestarrett@yahoo.com, 973-857-0543)
Biking – Marianne Ansari (marianneroman@hotmail.com, 201-519-8975)
Paddling – Linda Lang (allinkcorp@aol.com, 973-960-7421)

Special Volunteers

Aide to Outreach Chair – Sue Griffin (sgriffin5@optonline.net, 732-322-6300)
Constant Contact Coordinator – Dave Hill (esruc104@verizon.net, 732-570-1381)
Directions Coordinator/Event Recorder – Tom Pollard (pollard.tom@gmail.com, 973-600-2301)
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Note: Check the TSR website for the most up-to-date list.