I recently took my first group hike since the Mid-Hudson ADK resumed gatherings, thanks to New York's success, so far, in reducing the flood of Covid-19 cases to a trickle. It was a typical summer hike—take it easy, seek shade—up on the Shaupeneak Ridge, with leader Lalita Malik filling in for Georgette Weir. But it didn't feel typical or ordinary. It felt, simultaneously, like a return to normal and a risky, new behavior. As I slowly regain shreds of my pre-pandemic life, I am amazed to find how much I've changed in a few short months, and how much "normal" has changed. It was wonderful to be part of an outdoor-loving group again, but I felt a bit like a feral cat, wanting that bowl of food set out on a back stoop but jumpy about getting too close to people. I kept altering my pace and position to maintain a nice, breathable space around me.

No doubt about it, I'm one of the lucky ones. Even when the boundaries of my world were at their smallest, in the early days of the NY Pause, I still had room to breathe: a house, a yard, fairly quiet roads to walk, books to read. I even discovered a small preserve three miles from my house, where I could step off pavement and onto forest duff. For the longest time I ventured only as far as my feet could carry me, except for infrequent darts into the world for necessities. Two tanks of gas in my car lasted four months. But this self-imposed solitude didn't chafe or feel confining. Instead, the gradual changes of the seasons and the tiny, quiet life going on all around my feet opened up unexpected vistas. By lowering my horizon I've been able to see much farther than I thought possible.

In a normal year, the return of warm weather brings traveling, singing, canoeing, hiking, and visits with family and friends. In a normal year, my garden, which I can't resist planting in the spring, gets scant attention and less watering. My yard gets quick and infrequent mowings. This year, all of my usual summer pastimes have either become impossible or difficult to do with anyone. Instead, I've developed a new rhythm, new habits, and new eyes. A new, sunnier garden, whose fence I sank 10 inches into the ground to discourage my local woodchuck, gets hand-watered every morning and has responded with exuberant gratitude. Close attention to the yard has revealed new plant species and the drama of slow-motion plant colonization strategies and battles for supremacy. Attentive listening has announced which birds are nearby and where some of them are nesting. Small, daily changes in all these things have become as interesting as the books I enjoy in the cool evening.

Part of me is reluctant to give up this peacefulness and stillness. But I know that it's important to stay connected to other people, and the ADK offers me a way to ease into a social world in the comfort of the natural world that gives us all the space to breathe.

Jean McEvoy is a life-long resident of the Hudson Valley, who worked as an environmental educator, rural mail carrier, and environmental-permit analyst until her recent retirement. Her love for the Valley is reflected in many of her original songs, some of which she's been singing with the quintet Betty and the Baby Boomers for 34 years.
ANNUAL PICNIC QUARANTINED; HOLIDAY PARTY? MAYBE!

At our July meeting the Board decided, after much discussion, that it was best to cancel the picnic for this year. This event is usually so well attended that keeping the required 6-foot social distance and wearing masks would be a struggle, if not impossible.

I think the attendees enjoy chatting, laughing and catching up with friends, sharing delicious and unique sides, salads, and desserts, and of course, the hamburgers and hotdogs cooked to perfection by our amazing Grill Masters.

The picnic is also when we vote on the new members to the Board, with a public show of hands. This year the vote will be accomplished online. (For people who do not receive information from MHADK electronically, there is a ballot on page 7.) We also are planning to convene an online Zoom meeting for our members as a way to keep in touch. More about that is elsewhere on this page.

Just a note about the Holiday Party scheduled for December 13. We have the room booked at Locust Grove, but, as of the time of this writing, in summer, we expect that the number of people allowed in the room will be drastically reduced, no buffet allowed, and everyone must bring their own food. Things could change by December, so we will keep you updated.

I will miss being able to sit with friends and enjoy the view of our wonderful Hudson River this fall. Be well, and we hope to be getting together in person soon.

Carole Marsh
MHADK Social Chair

VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT FOR APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY EVENT

Gathering in New Paltz, August 2021

Ron Rosen, MHADK member and co-chair of the Appalachian Trail Vista 2021 event, scheduled for August 6-9 at SUNY New Paltz, is looking for people willing to help out, specifically with local arrangements.

This four-day weekend event, hosted by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Trail Conference’s founding as well as the birth of the A.T. idea in Benton MacKaye’s 1921 article “An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning.”

The volunteer positions Ron seeks to fill include:

- Someone (or a pair working together) to work with the college’s food service on meal planning, including information for the registration packet (e.g., meal times, boxed lunches for hiking, etc.).
- Someone (or multiple volunteers) to work on the hiking committee to identify hikes (A.T. plus many other destinations within an hour of New Paltz), help recruit hike leaders, determine timing and duration, difficulty, etc.
- Someone to help work with the college on finances, especially setting room costs, options, etc., and to coordinate with the NY-NJTC on financial management.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Ron at: rrosen@alum.mit.edu

MEET US ON ZOOM, OCT. 6

Save The Date! The MHADK Annual meeting this year will be virtual, on Zoom, Tuesday, October 6th at 7 PM. It’s no picnic, but we’ll share our chapter’s election results, highlights from the board, and presentations on the year’s activities, hiking and advocacy. Look for further details coming soon in your email from our communications chair, Sue Mackson. We’ll see you there!

Annette Caruso
MHADK Board Secretary
MORE THAN 200 ACRES ADDED TO BLUESTONE WILD FOREST

Property features new trail developed by OSI and its partners, after original acquisition by OSI in 2019

Underscoring ongoing efforts, supported by ADK, to protect the Bluestone Wild Forest in the Town of Kingston from the effects of a proposed industrial development, the Open Space Institute announced on June 24th the addition of 208 acres of forested land to the Catskill Park’s Bluestone Wild Forest. The addition creates an official link between two previously unconnected sections of the Wild Forest: Jockey Hill to the east and On-teora Lake to the west. Located just five minutes from the NYS Thruway in Kingston, the expansion of the Wild Forest, along with a new multi-use trail created by OSI and local partners, will enhance recreation opportunities in the southeast section of the Catskill Park.

During its ownership, OSI, working with the Woodstock Land Conservancy and Tahawus Trails and in coordination with DEC and the bicycle advocacy group Fats in the Cats, constructed the two-mile Main Turnpike Trail on the property. The new trail connects the existing Jockey Hill and On-teora Lake trails within the 3,000-acre Bluestone Wild Forest and establishes a new entry point to the forest via Morey Hill Road.

The multi-use trail is now open for hikers, mountain bikers, runners, walkers, and skiers. The gently sloping, family-oriented trails run alongside bluestone outcrops, creating another fun and relaxing way to enjoy Bluestone Wild Forest.

First purchased by OSI in February 2019 from the Aldulaimi family, the property has been transferred to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Before its protection, the land was listed as one of the most important inholdings in the On-teora Lake region by the Bluestone Wild Forest Land Protection Initiative. OSI’s acquisition of the property also fulfilled New York State’s Open Space Plan goal of consolidating Bluestone Wild Forest between Route 28 and Sawkill Road.

Consisting of forested slopes, wetlands, and remnants of the area’s bluestone quarry history, the property includes the northern portion of a high-quality body of water known as Pickerel Pond. This coordinated effort to enhance the Bluestone Wild Forest has been achieved at the same time that local officials continue to review plans to construct a steel and precast concrete manufacturing operation directly adjacent to the former OSI-owned land. OSI has weighed in on the proposed project, raising both environmental and procedural concerns about the plant, and continues to advocate for the completion of an environmental impact statement to ensure the protection of the surrounding land and water.

THANK YOU OUTING LEADERS!

You see their names on the website, or in weekly update messages where we list the outings that our volunteer leaders organize and create. I want to give special thanks in this issue to those who have stepped up to lead outings under our Covid Guidelines.

Special mention goes to Ginny Fauci for cajoling folks to design hikes, list them, and lead; for putting it all together each month; and for trying to keep the various of us educated in all the aspects of leading. Additionally, she has kept the Mid-Week Hikes going while Lalita used all her resolve to recuperate from injury and then got stuck in Arizona for several months this spring. Lalita has returned, leading weekly again, with her titanium femur and plastic shoulder, right back in the swing of things.

Glenda Schwarze is now an old hand at leading our weekly paddles, though that season was slow to start due to the cold spring. Dave Webber has been able to follow our new Covid rules while continuing with paddles days and evenings on the Hudson River. John Ragusa, our steady hike leader, also has returned to weekend paddles in varied locations. And of course Russ Faller, one of our most experienced leaders, has been leading camping paddle trips on the Hudson and elsewhere.

With the renewal of outings in July, we welcome to our core of experienced hike leaders Adrienne Scivolette, who’s been racking up the miles with Ginny over the months when we were unable to offer official outings, and Sharon Klein, who’s already led two and listed an additional hike.

Veterans Barry Skura and Roberta Forest, Georgette Weir and JC Fouere posted hikes for July or August. And we hope to again join Lou Rudisch, Carla Barrett, Sayi Nulu and Tom Amisson on the hikes they post in the future.

If you have experience or want to gain experience as a leader, please contact outings@midhudsonak.org. We welcome you as co-leaders if you don’t want to plunge in as a solo leader.

Sue Mackson
Communications Chair
Outings Log

After a two-and-a-half-month hiatus, we resumed member outings, with restrictions appropriate to the stage of the epidemic, on July 2nd, with a midweek hike led by Ginny Fauci.

July 2, Midweek Hike

Today was first MWH I’ve led since March. Eight hikers, all social-distancing and wearing masks when needed. Very humid and hot. Planned an eight-mile loop hike, but shortened it to five miles. Great day in the woods! Low bush blueberries were abundant on top of Jenny Lane. We munched our way through. Lunch by the Peterskill. Sharon K, Lenore, Marsha, Diane, Connie, Melissa M, Adrienne and myself (Leader, Ginny Fauci).

July 7, Huckleberry Point

We had a lovely outing. Overcast and cool. Six sign-ups with two last-minute dropouts making it five including myself. (See my photo above from our mostly viewless but nevertheless magical day.) We waited for magic to happen as we sat on the ledge in the clouds and, for a brief moment it did. Leader: Sharon Klein. With members Lenore M, Martin B and guests Julia Boomer, Chris Rodriguez.

July 9, Midweek Hike

Five hikers on today’s MWH. We hiked nine miles all around Minnewaska. Up to Hamilton Point, climbed up to Castle Point, followed Upper Rainbow Falls across Battlement Terrace to Litchfield Ledge, crossed over to Blueberry Run and back to the lake for a nice loop. Hazy, hot and humid, but gorgeous views. Rhododendron blooming. Great time in the woods on trails less traveled. Dave, Wendy, Barry, Adrienne and Leader, Ginny Fauci

July 10, Shaupeneak Ridge

I hadn’t seen these trails since the early 2,000s, so decided to join the hike to Shaupeneak Ridge which was led by Lalita Malik, substituting for Georgette. We met at the lower parking lot and Lalita indicated that we’d ascend the White Trail up Shaupeneak, follow the Blue Trail around the lake and visit a splendid viewpoint before heading back down to our cars. In my ignorance, I imagined reaching “the top” and meandering along the shore of a tranquil lake. We did reach the “top” of the trail and stopped at a viewpoint looking east across the Hudson. We then followed the Red Trail to reach Louisa Pond. We continued ascending and descending around the pond with not many views of the pond, which was covered with reeds, algae and water lilies. We did find a lovely clearing, facing the lake, with enough room to comfortably spread out for a lunch break.

We’d only just come out of late spring/early summer drought and I expected only ferns would provide floral interest. But, there’d been hard rain two days earlier and we found several colorful mushrooms which must have swelled up in the previous day. Our greatest surprise was on descent (retracing our steps), where it wasn’t hard to spot, amidst the brown and green woods, a large bright yellow flower on a 1.5 to 2 ft. stem. It seemed impossi-
ble that none of us had seen it on the way up. Jean thought it was because it was located on the descending side just after a steep section. (Does everyone always look to the right?) It was a Smooth Oak-leech, one of a number of more or less parasitic plants, about which Ellen had lots of questions. She’d seen some weird ones on Shaupeneak earlier in the spring. Common name: Squaw Root, related also to Ghost Pipe, some specimens of which were just unfolding amid the brown leaf litter. The other plant in abundance was Spotted Wintergreen—nearly everywhere in the woods. Strangely, all these plants grow in the presence of certain trees with which they have biological relationships crucial to their growth.

One plant found in abundant patches was in the geranium family—what Jean knows as Herb-Robert but is also known as Red Robin, Death Come Quickly, Storksbill, Fox Geranium, Stinking Bob, Squinter-pip (Shropshire), Crow’s Foot, or (in North America) Roberts Geranium. Whatever it’s called, its ferny foliage and small bright pink flowers make it very attractive.

We arrived back at the parking lot unscathed, though there’d been one fall. Peter told us we’d gone six miles. Others said seven. I was just glad the last part was descending. Some folks prefer ascending. Not me. Description: Sue M. Leader: Lalita M. With Jean M., Ellen K., Gwen, Connie, Tracy R. and Pete C. (whose name you might note in most of the hike descriptions for this month).

**July 12, Catfish Loop + Chimney Top**

Five adventurous hikers joined leader Barry Skura to plot their escape from Covid jail. Appropriately masked, they gathered in Fahnestock State Park and were greeted by clear and sunny skies. They then did a loop hike on the moderate but interesting Catfish Trail, visiting several hilly spots, ledges, boulders, small streams and rock walls. During the first half of the hike, they did a short side trip to Chimney Top, with its great Hudson Highlands views. Being in a generally mellow mood and liking the company, they stopped both for a late breakfast at Chimney Top and a “proper” lunch later. Participants: Connie, Ellen K, Jason W, Kathy, and Pete C.

**July 14, Millbrook Mountain**

An intrepid Gang of Four enjoyed a nine-mile loop hike with 1350 feet total elevation gain on a warm, humid, puffy-cloud day. Wendy, David W and Ginny joined leader Adrienne Scivolette on one of her favorite hikes, starting at Mohonk Preserve’s Warwarsing parking lot “stairmaster,” then up along Millbrook Ridge Trail to Millbrook Mountain. After enjoying lunch with a Catskills view, the group looped back down through Trapps Hamlet. We spotted a lovely juvenile Black Rat snake crossing the trail! Another fine day!

**July 16 Shaupeneak**

Seven hikers joined leader Ginny Fauci at the bottom of Shaupeneak for the Grand Tour. Some took a side trip to the falls. Very humid on the uphill, which caused slow going for some. Humidity was lower at the top as we wandered around the orange trail through fern forests back to Louisa Pond for lunch at the benches. Backtracked around Louisa Pond to the green trail, more fern forests, a hidden toad and mushrooms. Onto the aqua trail, past beautiful old stone walls, boundary markers, a stone bench and chair and more ferns, including Christmas ferns. Then back onto the green, where we met a beautiful Black Rat Snake with white designs and saw Indian Pipe. Continued back around Louisa Pond, then out to the overlook and down to our cars. The Grand Tour covered all the trails except the connector trail and was 11.5 moderate miles. Attendees were Joan, Lenore, Kathy, Wendy, Tamar, Adrienne and Ginny.

**July 17, Taconic Ridge Hike and Bike**

Leader: JC Fouere. With Dave Webber, Pete Cantline, Jon Chenette

**July 18 Peterskill/Mohonk**

Five hikers joined me on what I called “the Peterskill Meander.” The very hot weather brought us in a complete canopy of shade, along streams and popup waterfalls. The eight-mile loop took us down the Trapps carriage road in the Mohonk Preserve, over route 44/55 in Minnewaska, and down the hill to the Peterskill.
where we had a snack before heading over to "End of the World Pool," a magical swimming hole where the water was about neck deep. No one wanted to leave, so after almost an hour we headed up the hill to Compass Rock to enjoy the panoramic views of the Catskills. Heading down the Coxing trail, we wound up at Split Rock for another cool off in the Coxingkill before climbing our last hill back to the cars via the Shongum Path. THIS is the way to plan a hike in the heat of the summer! Slow, steady, stopping to drink frequently, and always keeping cool. Leader: Sharon Klein. With members Lucinda, Sayi, Victoria, Ellen B and guest June Archer.

### July 19, Croton River Paddle

The day was hot and humid but there was a slight breeze that made it somewhat bearable. We met at the launch site at 10:30 AM and paddled up the Croton River. We saw a deer right in front of us walking across the river where it was shallow. We then paddled to the rocks where you cannot paddle any further. We got out on one of the islands and had lunch. The water was ice cold, since it was being released at the Reservoir upstream. We then paddled downstream, where the water is very shallow and you can get out of your kayaks in the middle of the river to enjoy the view. Still, the water was cold and numbed your feet, even in 95-degree weather. When we paddled back we found our cars had been ticketed! Leader: John Ragusa. With his daughter Gina and Nancy J.

### July 24, Franny Reese State Park

Our group of eight enjoyed getting out together for a short morning hike taking in the yellow, white, and blue trails at this Hudson River state park just south of the Mid-Hudson Bridge. Face coverings and social distancing didn’t keep folks from enjoying casual conversation as we walked in the deep shade along historic carriageways, footpaths, and past the ruins of the mid-nineteenth century estate of “painless dentistry” innovator and entrepreneur Charles Roberts. Joining leader Georgette Weir were members Pete C, Margaret D, JoAnn N, JoAnn and Dieter S, Connie, and Carol G.

### July 24, Storm King Mountain

We started out with six hikers from Scenic Hudson’s Stowell Trailhead and climbed up the Stillman Trail to the top of Storm King. One hiker became nauseated near the beginning of the climb, about a mile in, and turned around. Dave went back with her and caught up to us on top for lunch. He also rescued Wendy’s phone which she had left on the top of her car. Thanks again, Dave! Very hot, hazy and humid, so we were pacing ourselves and also munching on blueberries and huckleberries on top. After lunch, we continued on the Stillman Trail over to Butter Hill stopping at all the viewpoints before heading back down through the ruins to our cars. Joining leader Ginny Fauci were Wendy, Tamar, Alan and Dave.

### July 30, Mohonk Preserve to the Mountain House and back

Three of us started out from Pine Road at 8:30 AM to beat the heat. We kept a leisurely pace as we headed up the mountain, stopping at Duck Pond to find a snapper (we saw two). We took mostly carriage roads up with a few off-road trails thrown in. Guests at the Mountain House were hiking, paddle-boarding, boating, kayaking and swimming. It was good to see it open again. Chatted with a guest, who was also a nurse, and she said everything was immaculate & they were doing a great job adhering to Covid rules. Walked through the gardens and had lunch in a two-story gazebo perfect for social distancing before heading back down. Barry, Lou and the leader, Ginny Fauci.
Hiking with a dog can be a most rewarding experience. Ayla, my husky, is my most faithful hiking partner. She is always ready to go, has more energy than I do, and never complains. She just wags her tail with a look of “Let’s go!” Her curiosity about our surroundings often gives me reason to pause and observe things along the trail that I may otherwise have missed. I value her companionship greatly.

Like most things in life, of course, taking a dog out on a hiking trail entails responsibilities for the owner. First and foremost, the dog must be under the control of the owner at all times. Certainly, keeping the dog on a leash is the most sure way of accomplishing that. For dog owners who choose not to, a leash should still be carried. The dog must respond to voice command. Every time. I have frequently had the experience of a dog running out at me with the dog’s owner calling out its name, to no avail. This should never happen. “Oh, don’t worry, he’s friendly” is not acceptable. Some dogs, and some people, will react badly regardless of the dog’s demeanor. If the dog does not respond immediately when there are distractions such as people or other dogs, the dog should be leashed.

Another consideration is the dog’s waste. When hiking in a park or other open space, the dog owner should plan to carry a doggy bag to pick up the waste. That bag should then be disposed of properly. Leaving the bagged waste along the side of the path or trail accomplishes nothing, except to prolong the time it takes for the waste to decompose, along with leaving plastic refuse. While hiking in the woods, picking up the waste might not be quite as practical, particularly if the dog is off leash and well off the trail. If the dog does leave a pile on the trail, it is most definitely the owner’s responsibility. If no bag is at hand, find a stick and push it off the trail. Gross? Yes. Necessary? Absolutely.

It is also necessary to consider the dog’s health when hiking. Like us, the very young and the elderly will not be able to walk as far or as fast. When the dog’s pace starts to markedly decrease, pay attention, and consider slowing your pace or shortening the trip. Extremes of temperature must also be considered. I do not have to worry about Ayla in the winter, as her tolerance for cold is greater than mine, but many breeds of dogs can experience distress in cold conditions. Like most dogs, Ayla is capable of having difficulty in the heat of summer. Plan to carry extra water, and if distress is observed, find a stream or pond for the dog to cool off in, for as long as he or she wants.

With a bit of care and consideration you, your dog, and the people you encounter along the trail can all have a safe and enjoyable hiking experience.
DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

It's time to vote for 2021 MHADK Board Officers. See page 7 for details.

Stay Connected...

Adirondack Mountain Club: www.adk.org
Mid-Hudson Chapter: www.midhudsonadk.org
NY–NJ Trail Conference: www.nynjtc.org

To make a change of address, phone, or email, send a message with specifics to adkinfo@adk.org or call 1-800-395-8080 x2

To be included in the Mid-Hudson Chapter email list or to change your email, please send a message to ebc12533@yahoo.com