



# Volunteer Recognition

March 28, 2021

Presented by the  
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference

## Volunteers are our superheroes.

Creating and protecting trails and the lands they traverse is a labor of love.

We celebrate our volunteers—their passion, dedication, and leadership make the trails we all love possible.

Thank you for your service!

## Looking for a new volunteer opportunity?

Outside or inside, close to home or at your go-to weekend wilderness destination, we aim to connect you with the volunteer opportunity that is right for you.

From walking a new trail clipping back brush or surveying for invasive plants, to volunteering on the Arts Committee, to being a much-needed plumber at our Welch Trail Education Center, there are endless opportunities to give back to the lands you love. Let us know if you'd like to be involved in new ways by emailing [volunteer@nynjtc.org](mailto:volunteer@nynjtc.org).

## Schedule of Activities

- 11:00 a.m. Event kicks off with interactive chats and games
- 11:30 a.m. Welcome
- 11:35 a.m. Long Path End-to-Enders
- 11:40 p.m. Presentation of:  
The Major William A. Welch Award for Outstanding Partner  
The Dedicated Service Award  
The Next Generation Award  
The Paul Leiken Award for Going the Extra Mile  
The Hit the Ground Running Award  
The Rising Leader Award
- 11:55 a.m. Raffle Winner Announcement
- 12:00 p.m. Presentation of:  
The Jakob Franke Award for Conservation  
The Joan Ehrenfeld Award for Responsible Stewardship  
The Raymond H. Torrey Award for Lifetime Impact
- 12:15 p.m. Closing remarks



## Long Path End-to-Enders

#179 Patricia Malodobry finished on 6/26/2020

#180 Jeff "Tinman" Sargent finished on 7/4/2020

#181 Thomas Walsh finished on 7/4/2020

#182 Kenton Matthaei finished on 8/12/2020

#183 Marek Rygielsky finished on 9/20/2020

#184 Brian Ibbs finished on 11/11/2020

#185 Heather M. Post Ibbs finished on 11/11/2020

#186 Anna Quell finished on 11/27/2020

#187 Jeffrey Quell finished on 11/27/2020

#188 Rob Taylor finished on 12/05/2020

#189 Jill Moretto finished on 12/05/2020

#190 Kylie Yang finished on 01/03/2021

# The Major William A. Welch Award for Outstanding Partner

*Honors partners who have been strong advocates for and provided significant assistance to Trail Conference volunteers.*

Rebecca Fitzgerald

Superintendent, High Point State Park & New Jersey Veterans' Memorial; Stokes State Forest (temporary)

Rebecca has been a strong Trail Conference partner since 1999. About six years ago, she encouraged Trail Conference volunteers to get involved with Lusscroft Farm, a subset within High Point State Park and in 2019 she and Chris White, the HPSP Maintenance Supervisor, (bio below) supported volunteers in reblazing the trails there. Rebecca helped write a National Recreational Trail Grant that provided funds for materials to make 1,500 metal blazes (and also materials to repair several bridges), engaged Chris to make the blazes and communicated timely to ensure all volunteers had what they needed to get the blazing done. Beyond the blazing project, Rebecca and Chris are consistently and enthusiastically going out of their way to support the volunteers by using State Park mules to haul in construction materials, pushing through approvals for projects such as invasives removal, facilitating procurement and placement of bollards at trailheads, offering for themselves and their staff to remove trees our sawyers were unable to remove, and providing indoor space for Trail Conference workshops (pre-COVID). Rebecca and her team make the work our volunteers do possible.

Steve Marino

Maintenance Supervisor, Wawayanda State Park

For over 20 years and across 3 parks Steve Marino has been a strong supporter of Trail Conference volunteers, particularly the West Jersey Crew's efforts. Together with the various park Superintendents, he has made countless projects possible for the crew to accomplish that would otherwise have been a great deal harder. In his current position of Maintenance Supervisor for Wawayanda State Park and member of the Forest Fire Service, Steve played a direct and pivotal role in the success of the Terrace Pond Floating Walkway. He helped prepare the helicopter drop for materials and also made sure the crew had transportation and special access necessary for construction. Steve is an "enthusiastic fan" of what the Trail Conference's volunteers do, which is exemplified by the high level of cooperation experienced with his whole maintenance team. He has even joined the Crew on his days off!

Nora Porter

Graphic Designer

Nora Porter has designed and laid out Trail Conference books since 1998. She is very skilled, does excellent work, is genuinely devoted and dedicated to the Trail Conference. While Nora is contracted to do work, she always goes beyond what is asked of her and volunteers her time to "go the extra mile" and help the Trail Conference with questions and requests that she is uniquely qualified to answer. Nora is always a real pleasure to work with and our many books wouldn't be the same without her.

Christopher White  
Maintenance Supervisor, High Point State Park

Chris regularly goes above and beyond to support Trail Conference volunteers. In 2019 Chris and his staff made 1,500 trail blazes so that volunteers could reblaze all 13 trails of Lusscroft Farm. Chris's gratitude to the volunteers is central to all his interactions with them and he is always offering his help. In partnership with Rebecca Fitzgerald (bio above), he used State Park mules to haul in construction materials, made and installed bollards at trailheads, has sent his staff to remove trees that were too large for our sawyers to handle, and made repairs to the floating boardwalk on the Cedar Swamp Trail. Chris and his team make the work our volunteers do possible.

## The Dedicated Service Award

*Honors long-time, dedicated volunteers who have demonstrated exemplary service to the trails and natural areas that surround them.*

Herb Chong  
Publications Committee Member

Over the past 25 years, Herb has offered his diverse skill set on a variety of projects ranging from trail construction to advocacy efforts to cartography and guide book production. Early on, Herb became very interested in developing ways to improve both map data gathering as well as the actual trail maps, and in addition to helping with our efforts to embrace newly-developed GPS technology in the late 90s, Herb produced the Trail Conference's first digitally-produced map in 2000, which covered Sterling Forest. This first map really paved the way for the future of the Trail Conference's digital mapmaking. Herb also served as editor, cartographer, photographer, and field checker for major updates to the Long Path Guide Book in 2002 and 2005 and helped to produce a map of John Boyd Thatcher State Park. He is also a skilled photographer and has offered outstanding photos for the Trail Conference to use in various publications over the years. Herb continues to serve as an active member of the Publications Committee.

Ron Luna  
Former Trail Supervisor: Pyramid Mountain

Ron started as Trail Maintainer at Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area and in 2005 he took over as Trail Supervisor of the park. Ron served as Trail Supervisor until 2018 and during that time he visited the park almost daily to monitor the trails and oversee his maintainers and work crews. One of Ron's bigger accomplishments in the park was counteracting the widening of the highly-trafficked blue trail leading from the visitor parking lot. Ron worked tirelessly to line the park entrance with granite rocks to keep trail users on the path. He also created the Toddler Trail, a nature trail near the visitor center and he helped scout a reroute for the Butler-Montville Trail. Ron continues to help improve the park by fabricating signs and posts to make trails more accessible for new trail users. His love for the trails at Pyramid Mountain is evident not just in his hard work but also his propensity to welcome all visitors and volunteers to the park.

Martha Rabson

Appalachian Trail Corridor Monitor: Putnam County; Invasives Strike Force Surveyor; Trail Maintainer: Fahnestock State Park; Trail Crew Member

Martha has been dedicated to protecting the Appalachian Trail corridor in Putnam County since 2013. In her Corridor Monitoring career she has resolved incursions on her stretch of the trail by reporting signs of illegal hunting and vandalism along the corridor boundary. In addition to looking after her section of the trail corridor, Martha has helped to onboard other Corridor Monitors and she is always willing to help with new projects as they come up. Martha also serves as an Invasives Strike Force Surveyor, a Trail Maintainer at Fahnestock State Park, and a member of the Trail Tramps, Westchester East, and East Hudson Trail Crews.

Robert (Bob) Reardon

Former Trail Crew Member and Trail Maintainer: Camp Smith Trail

Robert began volunteering in 1984 as a Trail Crew Member helping to relocate the Appalachian Trail in Putnam County. He also maintained a section of the Appalachian Trail from the Bear Mountain Bridge to South Mountain Pass for about a decade and when the Camp Smith Trail opened in 1995, Robert adopted the popular northern section to Anthony's Nose which he maintained through 2020. Robert was recognized with the Hoeflerlin Award in 1999 for his leadership on trail crews and as he retires from his Trail Maintainer position we recognize his years of dedication to the Appalachian Trail and Camp Smith Trail.

Robert (Rob) Segal

Trail Supervisor: Long Path from Route 52 to the Catskills; Trail Maintainer: Rainbow Falls Trail

Rob got his start as a Trail Maintainer on the Long Path in the late 80's and in 2000 he stepped up to oversee the Long Path between Route 52 and the Catskills as Trail Supervisor. As part of a major trail relocation effort in 2010, Rob assumed the responsibility of rerouting the trail in his region. An attentive and proactive leader, Rob works closely with his Maintainers to ensure their trail maintenance meets Minnewaska State Park standards he is very responsive to the trail issues raised by his maintainers and the park. Rob proactively plans work trips with his maintainers to tackle bigger maintenance needs and he even lends his expertise of the area by leading group hikes in the park. Overall, Rob's dedication has proved to be a huge asset to the Long Path, Minnewaska State Park, and the Trail Conference over the years. He continues to Supervise this region today.

Alfred (Arnie) Seymour-Jones

Cartography Volunteer

A long-time Trail Conference Member and Volunteer, Arnie served as a Trail Maintainer in Harriman State Park for 11 years and then shifted his focus to become one of the Trail Conference's most consistent and reliable map assembly volunteers. Our paper map sets arrive in separate pieces and must be assembled into bundles to make them store-ready. Arnie has been assembling maps on a weekly basis for 13 years and he single-handedly assembles thousands upon thousands of maps every year!

Tom Schmitt

Trail Maintainer, Sawyer, and Trail Crew Member: Yorktown Trails

When the Trail Conference acquired new park land in the town of Yorktown in 2010, Tom almost single-handedly designed and built the 5.6 mile network of mountain biking trails in what is now known as Granite Knolls Park and by 2014, he had added an additional 1.4 miles of trails. Moreover, Tom helped set the stage for cooperation between hikers and mountain bikers in the park. Today Tom continues to maintain 3.7 miles of trails in the park, in addition to volunteering with the Yorktown Trail Crew, and removing blowdowns in Granite Knolls and surrounding parks.

Peter Tilgner

Trail Maintainer: Tenafly Nature Center

Peter has single-handedly maintained the 7-mile trail system at Tenafly Nature Center for over a decade, upholding high standards for clearing, blazing, and tread improvement. One of his many accomplishments was coordinating the removal of 279 blowdowns after Superstorm Sandy. Peter also recruits and trains other volunteers to help maintain the trails at Tenafly and he has worked with multiple Eagle Scouts in the design and construction of bridges and boardwalks to preserve wetland habitats along the trails.

Susara Van Niekerk

Trail Maintainer: Stokes State Forest, Schunemunk Mountain, Sterling Forest; Club Trails Chair: Interstate Hiking Club

Susara has reliably maintained the Tinsley and Geology trails in Stokes State Forest for over 10 years, a large trail assignment totaling 3 miles. She also holds the position of Club Trails Chair for the Interstate Hiking Club and has enthusiastically led the maintenance of an additional 12 miles of trails in Sterling Forest and Schunemunk Mountain State Park since 2016. Susara's passion and attention to detail make her an outstanding asset to the 15 miles of trails she sustains in Stokes State Forest and southern New York.

## The Next Generation Award

*Honors volunteers under 25 years of age who have enthusiastically and passionately made contributions serving the Trail Conference's mission.*

Maxwell and Nathalie Chow

Invasives Strike Force Surveyors; Trail Maintainers: Ringwood State Park; Trail Crew Volunteers

Max (16) and Nathalie (14) Chow are two busy teenagers who, despite having packed schedules, willingly make time to volunteer because they have a deep passion for the environment (in fact it's been their idea to volunteer, not their parents!). In fall 2019 they joined the Conservation Corps for strenuous workdays in Sterling Forest. When these were canceled in 2020 due to COVID, they steered their passion to the Invasive Strike Force and spent over 20 hours completing their surveyor assignment. In fall 2020 they had a desire to take on long-term volunteer roles and became Trail Maintainers in Ringwood State Park. We look forward to Max and Nathalie continuing to grow in their volunteer roles!



# The Paul Leiken Award for Going the Extra Mile

*Honors volunteers who have recently “gone the extra mile” and made a significant, noteworthy contribution in the last 12 to 18 months.*

## Loop Blazing Volunteers

Alan Abramowitz, Alec Malyon, Chris Compel, Chris Connolly, Hank Hafelfinger, John Moran, Keith Scherer, Malcolm Spector, Nick McKenna, Patricia Fuge, Richard Fuge, Wendy Fowler

In 2020 these individuals went above and beyond their normal roles to implement the large-scale reblazing of existing trails in Ramapo Mountain State Forest, Wawayanda State Park, Abram S. Hewitt State Forest, Norvin Green State Forest, Long Pond Ironworks, and Ringwood State Park to create user-friendly loop trails as part of a concerted effort to improve trail networks and reduce the amount of lost hikers. Years of careful planning on behalf of our volunteers, staff, and park partners enabled our volunteers to transform these trail networks without a need for trail construction. This was no small feat on the ground—our loop blazing volunteers set out with their paint brushes and hammers and devoted over 500 hours through the pandemic and heat of the summer to reblazing over 26 miles of trail to create these exciting new loops.

## Carole Baligh

Habitat Helpers Crew; Invasives Strike Force Surveyor; Appalachian Trail Natural Heritage Monitor

Carole has devoted more hours than any other volunteer for our Habitat Helpers Crew for the last couple years. With volunteer activities limited due to the pandemic, our Habitat Helpers were unable to access the garden for months. Once we were able to reinstate limited Habitat Helpers workdays, Carole went above and beyond by participating in every workday often the first to arrive and last to leave working tirelessly to catch up on managing the garden. In addition to Carole’s involvement with Habitat Helpers, she is also an Invasives Strike Force Surveyor and Appalachian Natural Heritage Monitor.

## Don Cohen

Trail Maintainer: Neversink Gorge, Minnewaska, Catskills; Trail Crew Member: Hudson Nor’Westers; Sawyer

Don has gone above and beyond in many ways since he started volunteering. When he adopted a trail at the Neversink Gorge Unique Area in 2017, he took on a particularly overgrown section and restored it. He regularly attends work trips at the Gorge and his natural leadership has helped make these trips run smoothly. As a sawyer he’s cleared many blowdowns in the park over the last couple years, and after one storm he responded to 35 blowdowns. In 2019 Don took up the charge of advocacy and his efforts supported our Albany Advocacy Days. He’s also done important research to bolster our conservation work. And in 2020, Don adopted a third trail section in the Catskills and helped remove blowdowns in various locations on the Long Path. In addition to his other responsibilities, Don is an active member of the Hudson Nor’Westers Trail Crew.

Alec Malyon  
Sawyer; Assistant Regional Trails Council Chair: New Jersey

Over the past 3 years, Alec has devoted over 500 hours of his time as lead Sawyer and maintenance crew worker for 200 miles of trails in Bergen and Passaic County, New Jersey. Alec also been instrumental to removing blowdowns in Sterling Forest. In 2020, Alec went above and beyond in his sawyer work for the Trail Conference. Despite the numerous storms that battered our area including Tropical Storm Isaias, Alec was always ready to grab his chainsaw, gear, and a swamper or two to keep up with him - and hit the trail. Alec devoted 269 hours to clear 240 blowdowns in New York and New Jersey from July to December. Alec was also a key volunteer in the major loop blazing projects of 2020 which yielded 5 new trail loops in the Ramapo Mountains.

David Miller  
Trail Maintainer: Long Path; Sawyer

Since David started as a Trail Maintainer on the Long Path in 2018, he has gone the extra mile, contributing a minimum of 150 hours to his 2-mile trail section each reporting period. In 2020, when another maintainer was unable to volunteer, David volunteered himself to temporarily fill in. In addition to maintaining these two sections, David also attended multiple trips to remove blowdowns in the Catskills, assisted with relocations of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail and Long Path, and attended maintenance trips in Schunemunk and Harriman State Park.

Rob Rex  
Trail Maintainer: Norvin Green State Forest

Ever since Rob joined the ranks of Trail Conference in 2007, he showed an amazing aptitude for going above and beyond what is expected. Always up for a challenge, he brings a wave of energy to every trail project he coordinates. He provides a vital link between Lake Iosco Community and Norvin Green State Forest: in 2020, on numerous occasions Rob gathered his neighbors to execute various projects such as blazing the entire Posts Brook Trail in a lightning-fast manner and completing a re-route to by-pass a trail section that was destroyed by ATV traffic. Last fall, Rob was essential in implementing improvements to the Lower, Carris Hill, and Posts Brook Trail intersection which resulted in clearer, easier paths for hikers to follow.

Karen Rose  
Trail Maintainer: Harriman State Park; Club Trails Chair: ADK-North Jersey Ramapo Chapter

Karen is a long-time Trail Maintainer for multiple sections of the Long Path and Ramapo-Dunderberg trails in Harriman State Park. As Club Trails Chair of the ADK-North Jersey Ramapo Chapter, Karen has been responsible for recruiting maintainers to help with these trail sections. Karen proactively leads trail maintenance hikes to encourage others to get involved and she holds her maintainers to the park's standards. In 2020, Karen went above and beyond when her maintainers were unable to continue maintaining. For the duration of their absence, Karen filled in and singlehandedly covered two of the club's lengthy, 2-mile sections. Overall the Trail Supervisors that Karen works with have been very impressed with Karen's enthusiasm, leadership, and reliability.

Noel Schulz  
Trail Maintainer: Harriman State Park; Swamper

Noel has been a Swamper for the Harriman area chainsaw crew for years. He coordinates work trips for the crew, including scouting blowdowns prior to each work trip. Since Tropical Storm Isaias, Noel has been out twice a week for hours at a time removing downed trees. Noel is also a long-time Trail Maintainer of the Tuxedo Mount Ivy Trail in Harriman State Park.

Jim Simpson

Publications Volunteer: Editor for *Walkable Westchester*

Jim lent his time, creativity, and talent to serve as editor for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> editions of *Walkable Westchester*. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, authors Jane and Walt Daniels were faced with the challenge of having limited space to add new parks and trails. Jim's suggestions to use tables to display information and to make use of sidebars to eliminate the need for an "Additional Resources" page were instrumental in meeting the book's length requirement. Jim researched park history for the book, wrote up valuable pieces for the sidebars, and his background as a NY Times photojournalist resulted in picture captions that caught your attention. Jim's ability to give tactful and helpful advice on wording and layout was a tremendous help in producing the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *Walkable Westchester*.

Eileen West

Publications Volunteer: Field Checker for *Walkable Westchester*

Eileen contributed in many ways to the production of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> editions of *Walkable Westchester*. For both editions she checked trails and parks to ensure the new books would be accurate and up-to-date; for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition she checked more than half of the locations (even after breaking her wrist!) and for the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition she devoted 172 hours to making site visits. Eileen also volunteered to complete the monotonous task of converting PDF's to Word Documents and she proofread the final copy. Eileen's willingness to visit parks on short notice and her ability to collect reliable information made her a huge asset to the Trail Conference's latest publication.

West Jersey Trail Crew

Billy Cerezo, Bill Taggart, Chris Durning, David Day, Dan Walter, David Copperman, Don Walter, Greg Bernet, James Mott, Jean Brennan, Justin Robinson, Lee Mott, Linda Taggart, Lori Pluta, Mike Daly, Monica Day, Nicole Zonsius, Rabindra Singh, Sean Sullivan, Shelley Harvey, Tamar Schrager, TJ Robinson, Tom Karakowski, Tom Robinson

In 2020 the West Jersey Trail Crew, under the leadership of David and Monica Day, took on the challenge of constructing a new floating walkway over a muddy, bog-like crossing at the outlet of Terrace Pond. The popular Terrace Pond Circular trail crosses the outlet, which is a 120 foot stretch of waist-deep mud that poses a hazard for the many hikers of varying abilities who attempt to cross. The sheer rock edges and loose organic material made it impossible to set bridge foundations, so the crew had to find an alternative solution. The crew devoted over 1,000 hours last summer to install a unique 120-foot-long floating walkway across the bog. The process involved significant logistical efforts, including coordinating a helicopter airlift, and the crew worked tirelessly every weekend throughout the summer, wading in bottomless mud, even during times when the crew would usually call off their work for the heat. Together the crew contributed the most significant improvement to the Terrace Pond trail network in generations and transformed a difficult crossing best suited for adventurers to something any hiker can readily cross while staying dry. Additionally, without being asked the crew took it upon themselves to go beyond what was expected of them and improve other challenging sections of the trail by installing a ladder and 37 stone steps.

# The Hit the Ground Running Award

*Honors volunteers who have "hit the ground running" and made a strong impact within their first two years of service.*

David Andrews  
Ashokan Rail Trail Steward

David joined the Ashokan Rail Trail Steward program in October 2019. He immediately began going above and beyond the regular duties, working with staff to create a tracking and reporting process for the stewards which has contributed to the program's success. When there's a trail issue David proactively alerts others and for situations he can handle, like clearing small downed trees or helping a turtle safely cross the trail, he's on top of it immediately. David is fantastic at engaging and educating users to hike responsibly and his positive demeanor can put a smile on anyone's face.

*\*Note: The Ashokan Rail Trail Steward program is run in partnership with the Woodstock Land Conservancy and Ulster County.*

Stephen Howard  
Welch Trail Education Center Volunteer

Stephen was first introduced to WTEC in September of 2019 and became quickly passionate about it. On his first visit he fixed a broken water heater and identified a list of projects to be done. Since then, he has restored 19 windows at his home shop and built new windows for ones that couldn't be restored, built 4 new exterior doors, and replaced custom fit siding. His love for history and restoration work shine through his work and he is always willing to lend a helping hand.

Steve Krause  
Welch Trail Education Center Volunteer

When the pandemic hit, Steve who had always worked a 60+ hour week as an engineer suddenly found himself with more time. When volunteering opened back up Steve discovered a love for WTEC and began going almost every week to help fix and restore it. With his own tools he repaired countless appliances, sinks and pipes; reinstalled all the restored windows Stephen Howard had completed; installed new fixtures and toilets; made 3 custom window screens; replaced custom fit siding for 7 days; and restored or replaced custom fit boards along the chimney. At the end of the season he engineered a new way to board up and preserve WTEC over winter. No job was too big or too small to be fixed for Steve!

Michael Lawless  
Invasives Strike Force Surveyor; Trail Maintainer: Black Rock Forest

Michael Lawless has been an incredible addition to the Invasives Strike Force volunteer program. As a new volunteer in 2020, he eagerly attended over 8 different educational/training events to grow as a learner and environmental steward. He carefully applied these skills to the field taking on 12 separate survey assignments and in 2020 became the most prolific surveyor (in terms of a combination of assignments taken on and hours dedicated in a given year) in our program's history! He also became a Trail Maintainer for Black Rock Forest. In early 2021 he became the first volunteer to help with scouting, surveying and removing spotted lanternfly adults and egg masses from a newly infested site in New York State.

Robert Remillard  
Sawyer; Swamper

From day one Robert "hit the ground running" not only as a hard worker but as a source of valuable information and ideas. In 2020 he helped cut and swamp over 100 trees in High Point State Park, Lusscroft Farms and Stokes State Forest. He also helped to clear and blaze the new Ridge Connector Trail, which loops together many of the upper trails at Lusscroft Farms. Robert has over 30 years of professional natural resource management experience, having worked for 2 agencies within the US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), including 22 years with the US Forest Service. He now uses his skills in his volunteer roles and to support the Trail Conference.

## The Rising Leader Award

*Honors volunteers who have taken on additional responsibilities with great enthusiasm over the last two years and demonstrate leadership qualities. It is given to those who selflessly keep dedicating more time and effort and show no signs of slowing down.*

Brian Bacher  
Trail Supervisor: Storm King State Park; Trail Supervisor: Long Path; Sawyer

Brian started as a Trail Maintainer in Storm King State Park in 2003 and after 10 years of service he stepped up to become Trail Supervisor of the park. Brian also became a certified sawyer and he regularly responds to blowdowns in Storm King. Brian is a thoughtful and communicative leader and he is thorough in his onboarding of new Trail Maintainers. Outside of the Trail Conference, Brian is a high school English teacher and he's been a member of the Cornwall Fire Department for over 20 years. In 2018 Brian thru-hiked the entire Long Path and his love for the trail drove him to get involved as a volunteer; in 2020 he accepted a second Supervisor position overseeing the Long Path between Harriman State Park and Schunemunk State Park. We're excited to see all that Brian accomplishes in his new Supervisor role!

Marilyn Blaho  
Trail Supervisor: North Central Westchester; Trail Crew Member: Trail Tramps Crew, East Hudson Crew and Bash Bish Crew

Marilyn got her start as a member of the Westchester Trail Tramps Crew in 2012. Marilyn's love of nature is infectious and she offers valuable knowledge, limitless energy, humor and joy to the crews she volunteers with. In 2018, Marilyn took on the role of Trail Supervisor for North Central Westchester. She is a reliable leader, checking her trails often and maintaining strong relationships with landowners. When a problem arises, Marilyn puts in time to find the best resolution, then plans it out and seeks the persons and resources needed to resolve. She operates with efficiency and is always careful to keep all stakeholders informed. Additionally, Marilyn's patience and knowledge make her a go-to person for working with new volunteers and her passion is valuable in attracting people to trail maintenance and the protection of parks and preserves.

Donna Chapman

Local Trail Chair: A.T. Dutchess/Putnam; Trail Maintainer: Appalachian Trail

Donna's dedication and love for the Appalachian Trail led her to be a maintainer in 2013 and in early 2019 when the Chair of the A.T. Dutchess/Putnam region was stepping down, Donna readily took on the responsibility. As a full-time nurse Donna has been at the forefront of fighting COVID for the past year. Always putting the health of her patients first, Donna's professional life demanded so much of her time and energy. Yet throughout fighting a global pandemic, she somehow still worked tirelessly to navigate all the A.T.'s needs while keeping her team engaged and accountable. It's obvious that she gives everything she has to all facets of her life and she does so with an infectious positive and friendly demeanor.

Michael Pashley

Regional Trail Chair: East Hudson; Co-Crew Leader: Trail Tramps; Assistant Trail Supervisor: A.T. Dutchess/Putnam; Sawyer; A.T. Corridor Monitor: A.T. Dutchess South Lands

When Michael joined the Trail Conference it was quickly obvious to that a true gem had been discovered. He dove headfirst into being a crew member, swamper and maintainer. His dedication and passion shined when leadership positions began to open up and he enthusiastically stepped up to fill the needs. Since 2019 Michael has become a successful RTC Chair, co-Crew Leader, Assistant Trail Supervisor, and sawyer, on top of his role as an A.T. Corridor Monitor and plugging holes where needed, such as East Hudson's Policy Council liaison until the role could be filled. He is a pro-active and effective communicator, brings new ideas to each role that further those around him, and fosters a strong sense of community in his region. Co-volunteer Rose Bonanno sums it up well: "It has been a pleasure to be able to depend on someone with his talent and dedication."

Snapper Petta

LTC Chair: Catskills Shelters

In a year's time Snapper has completely transformed the Catskills Shelter Caretaker program. When the position opened in mid-2019 Snapper expressed interest; serendipitously he would be retiring at the end of the year and was open to taking on a bigger role. From the moment he officially stepped into the position in January 2020, Snapper has identified ways the program can be improved and then acts on those ideas and never settles. In less than six months he onboarded 12 new caretakers. His enthusiasm is infectious and he has a gift of putting people at ease so his caretakers know they can reach out with any question or request for help. As one caretaker said, "Snapper has been a great resource of inspiration and support...He made me feel very important to the work that the Trail Conference does [and] left a big impression on me regarding the importance of giving back no matter how large or small the task might seem...[He also] made a point of remembering to have fun and enjoy the experience...He is a true team player who I would consider one of the best representatives of the Trail Conference."

Rich Rockwell  
Crew Leader: Invasives Strike Force NJ; Invasives Strike Force Surveyor

Rich has shown seemingly boundless energy, enthusiasm and capacity for volunteering. He began volunteering in 2017 on a Lenape Trail project and in 2019 he became an Invasives Strike Force Surveyor, quickly mastering 14 invasives species and traveling all over NY and NJ to complete assignments. Rich could be counted on to take on strategically important and/or ecologically complex assignments. He continued to grow his roles and learning as he joined invasives removal workdays, helped manage the Lower Hudson PRISM species web pages, and became a trusted ecological resource to other volunteers and staff. When we turned to digital learning due to COVID-19, Rich volunteered to lead one of our first webinars. Then in June 2020 he became our first ever volunteer leader for the invasives programs as the Invasives Strike Force – NJ crew leader. He successfully led half a dozen workdays in less than 5 months. Simply put, Rich sees a need, challenges himself to learn about it and proactively seeks solutions.

## The Jakob Franke Award for Conservation

*Honors volunteers who have advocated for and dedicated significant time and effort to land preservation and trail protection in the face of encroaching development. It is given to those who embody our value that conservation is a shared duty and that we must preserve the integrity of our natural world.*

Clarence Putman  
Club Trail Chair and Founding Member: Long Path North Hiking Club; Trail Maintainer: Long Path

Clarence Putman has a passion for the Long Path and has dedicated over 25 years and countless hours to build, improve, protect and maintain over 50 miles of the trail. He was one of the Long Path North Hiking Club's founding members, born in 1992 out of Trail Conference discussions to extend the Long Path north from the Catskills. Clarence's history as a NY State Department of Conservation forester was relayed into his volunteer work over the decades. He has been instrumental in advancing the Long Path through many state forests in Schoharie County and along the way directed the construction of the lean-tos and footbridges. He was also a longtime Trail Supervisor in Schoharie County.

Clarence served on the NYPA Blenheim Wildlife Taskforce where he advocated for Long Path foot bridge over Pigeon Creek that eventually came to fruition and was declared a National Heritage Trail in 2015. He served on the NYS Open Space Committee for Schoharie County to advocate to get the LP on the High Priority list for land protection and has supported land acquisition efforts and landowner relationships for decades. He also manages what started as the "Adopt a Resource" program, now Stewardship Agreement, between the LP North Hiking Club and DEC for the LP in Schoharie and Albany counties.

Clarence never says no to helping other maintainers or on trail projects and always shows up on time, rain or shine. Without his knowledge and many talents, the LP north of the Catskills would still be a hiker's dream!

Robert (Bob) Ross

Conservation Committee Member; Membership and Development Committee Member

Bob is extremely passionate about preserving open spaces for future generations, and he has turned that passion into action by contributing both significant time and significant funding and fundraising support toward conservation projects throughout our region. Bob is a Trail Conference Life Member who first became involved with our organization in the 1960s. He has served as a trail maintainer in New Jersey, was an important benefactor in the restoration of our current headquarters, and more recently, Bob has been a strong advocate for our Trail Angel Society and has been a very active member of the Conservation Committee.

During his time with the Conservation Committee, Bob has contributed in so many different ways, just a few of which are: donated his legal services and expertise toward multiple land acquisition efforts to protect portions of the Long Path and Shawangunk Ridge as well as in New Jersey to connect parklands and protect trail corridors; renewed his attorney license in New York for the specific purpose of being able to handle due diligence and closing processes; assisted with land protection efforts to protect the trail corridor between Wawayanda State Park and Abram S. Hewitt; helped fund nearby efforts to establish a floating walkway along Terrace Pond to help protect the unique environment; and served as an important link between us and our partner, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey.

Most anyone who has had the opportunity to meet and talk with Bob could likely tell you that his passion, optimism, and can-do attitude is infectious! In Bob's own words, "It's easy to take for granted that access to open space will always be available, but without the Trail Conference, I know the trail system would crumble into disrepair."



# The Joan Ehrenfeld Award for Stewardship

Honors volunteers who have dedicated significant time and effort to the conscientious stewardship of protected natural areas or environmentally responsible trail construction and education. It is given to those who embody our value that the right path is always a responsible one.

Eddie Saiff

Board Chair 2016 – 2020; Board Member 2009 – 2020; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Member

Eddie served on our Board of Directors from 2009 through 2020. During this time he provided important leadership that always put science-based reasoning and balanced judgement at the forefront. As a Professor of Biology and Dean of the School of Theoretical and Applied Science at Ramapo College of New Jersey, combined with his great love of the outdoors, Eddie understands the importance of pursuing scientifically-sound and responsible initiatives to land stewardship approaches, and in his various leadership roles with the Trail Conference, Eddie has helped to push the organization ahead in an environmentally-responsible way.

His leadership over the past decade has also included: serving as Chair or Member of the Nominating Committee, Management Committee, Governance Committee, and Finance Committee; helping to lead various strategic planning initiatives; being a founding member of both our Trail Angel Society and Giving Circles; serving as chair of the Darlington Schoolhouse Steering Committee; and serving as a crucial liaison between our organization and nearby Ramapo College.

It requires a special set of skills to be a leader that can inspire those around them to take action, and Eddie definitely possesses these skills! Outside of his Trail Conference duties, Eddie's involvement in other organizations also supports his efforts to seek responsible and science-based stewardship goals. Beyond his roles at Ramapo College of New Jersey, he is a past president of both the Mahwah Board of Education and Mahwah Environmental Commission, an Eagle Scout and past scoutmaster, and a member of the New Jersey Academy of Science, New York Academy of Science, American Ornithologists Union, and American Association for the Advancement of Science.

# The Raymond H. Torrey Award for Lifetime Impact

*The Trail Conference's most prestigious award honors volunteers who embody our mission and uphold our values. This award is given to those who have made significant and lasting contributions that have impacted the trails, natural lands, people and/or operations of the Trail Conference.*

Walt Daniels

Recently Retired Board Member (2011 – 2020); Trail Supervisor: A.T. Putnam; Crew Leader: Yorktown Crew; Crew Member: Trail Tramps; Sawyer; Publications Committee Member; Policy Council Member; Governance Committee Member

Since 1979, Walt has shown consistent dedication to advancing the work of the Trail Conference. Particularly impressive is his leadership in nearly every aspect of our mission including trail maintenance and design, publications, Board and committee leadership, technology, and invasive species management. He has reliably promoted the values of inclusion and environmental conservation. While he typically works behind the scenes with little publicity, his tireless work has been instrumental in the Trail Conference's ability to carry out our mission.

His storied legacy all began with litter. Walt and his wife, Jane, first volunteered with the Trail Conference for our Litter Day in 1979 and by 1981 he was leading the program. He became Trail Supervisor for the A.T. in Putnam County in 1983, a position he still holds, and relocated the trail off roads onto a protected corridor. A recognized leader in trail maintenance, construction, and design, he has: led many crew projects on the A.T. and more recently construction of extensive trails in Yorktown, NY; was the primary author of our Trail Design Standards document; has used his expertise to teach countless volunteers through workshops and work trips; and designed and built trails such as the Camp Smith Trail and trails in Hubbard Perkins Conservation area, now part of Fahnestock State Park. Walt and Jane have mentored over 20 Boy Scout Eagle Projects on trails for which they are responsible.

Walt's accomplishments are extensive and it's nearly impossible to condense all of the positive impacts he's had on the Trail Conference. Other highlights of the past four decades include:

- Serving on the Board of Directors from 2011-2020 and being a leading member of the Publications, Strategic Planning, Governance, and Bylaws Committees. He has served on the Policy Council since it was formed in 2015 and has been a major contributor to nearly all its documents, particularly the Trail Management Guide.
- Building strong relationships with land managers including the ATC, where he served on their Board of Managers. He was the registrar for the ATC Biennial Conference in 1983 using a computer to log in registration and served as the webmaster for the 2007 conference.
- Being a certified chain sawyer since 1997. He continues to clear trails for hikers along the A.T. and in surrounding regions and provide valuable input regarding potential new sawyers.
- Conceiving of the idea of *Walkable Westchester*, one of our most popular books, now in its third edition. Walt was responsible for the technical aspects of GPS tracking the trails that became the maps in *Walkable Westchester*. Additionally, they have donated all proceeds to the Trail Conference and extensively promoted all editions, and by association, the Trail Conference.
- Leading the Trail Conference's technology efforts, which started when he applied for an IBM grant in 1982 to obtain our first personal computer. He was instrumental in building the Trail Conference's first website in 1996. After he retired from IBM in 1998, he maintained and migrated it through several generations of technology. Walt's dedication and passion has helped mold the Trail Conference into the organization it is today and his legacy will be felt for generations to come.

Thank you for attending the Volunteer Appreciation Event!  
We wish you all a wonderful 2021 season!