

# Trackin'



Bringing you news and information about your Chautauqua Rails to Trails

Fall/Winter 2013

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## From The Locomotive

By Robert Berke, MD – President, CRT

The mild October nights have led to rather disappointing Fall colors on the trails. With winter just around the corner, CRT has been busily engaged in completing tasks for 2013. Looming ever present is the damaged culvert below Woleben Rd. on the Ney Trail. Estimates range up to \$50,000 for a solution and Board members have been working hard to find donors/grants etc to address this issue before we have a significant collapse of the rail bed due to undermining by the runoff from upstream.

We are still looking for volunteers to join the Board to add some new life into a process that began in 1991. Please consider contributions of time and/or resources to help us continue the effort to provide a safe and enjoyable recreation experience for Chautauqua County residents and visitors.

Support Chautauqua Rails to Trails!

Support CRTT's effort to change the abandoned rail lines of Chautauqua County into multi-use trails that can be enjoyed by all who cross their path. We have many ways you can help!

See Back Page of This Newsletter



# I Went All the Way on CRTT!

By Breanne Neal

Do you need some motivation to get out and moving on the trails? Are you searching for some bragging rights? Do you want to support a great organization and trail system in your community? Maybe you just like t-shirts.

No matter what drives you, check out Chautauqua Rails to Trails brand new "I Went All the Way" challenge! Go all the way from Sherman to Brocton (or Brocton to Sherman) on the rail trail and CRTT will send you a t-shirt to wear around and show everyone how hard you worked.

### Here's how it works:

- Travel all segments of the rail trail from Sherman to Brocton (27 miles total) using any mode of muscle transportation (walking, running, biking, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, etc.). You can do this at any pace that works for you- one mile at a time, five miles, or even 27!

- Log your miles on the form found by clicking the "All the Way Challenge" link at [www.chaurtt.org](http://www.chaurtt.org).

- Mail completed form along with a check for \$25 to Chautauqua Rails to Trails.

- We send you an "All the Way" t-shirt.

- You have an overwhelming sense of accomplishment, and a new t-shirt that will make people ask questions.

This challenge is a great excuse to visit the trails, experience nature, get some exercise, and help CRTT raise some money to maintain and improve the trails. Wearing your shirt around will also help raise awareness about the recreational opportunities we provide to the community.

Take a picture of you and your crew in your t-shirts and we will make you famous on our website and Facebook page.

Visit [www.chaurtt.org](http://www.chaurtt.org) to find out more!

### Front of T-Shirt



### Back of T-Shirt



## After the Leaves Fall

By Katie Finch



Autumn in western New York is spectacular with its fiery leaf color. However, after those colorful leaves drop but before the snow flies the natural world seems to lack excitement. The absence of interesting things is merely superficial. If you look a little closer and think a little smaller the natural world can be amazing this time of year.

With leaves on the ground, other things become more visible. A perfect example of this are Woolly Alder Aphids. Like other aphids, these small, 1/8 inch insects feed on sap. They are most noticeable as white, cotton candy-like clumps on alders in the late fall. The excess sap is secreted to form the white strands that cover their

back as well as honeydew (a.k.a. aphid pee).

They are strange but things really get interesting in their relationships with other creatures. Watch a colony and you may see more than aphids. Ants tend the aphids, protecting them from predators so they can eat the sugar-rich honeydew.

There may also be a caterpillar in their midst. It is the larva of the Harvester butterfly, who lays eggs specifically in aphid colonies. The Harvester has the only carnivorous caterpillar in North America. After eating the aphids, the caterpillar covers itself in the white "wool" as camouflage. Overwintering as a chrysalis, this small brown and orange butterfly emerges the following year to feed, not on nectar, but on honeydew.

If you are a student of nature, fall and winter are ideal times to study tree shapes. The leafless tree that looks like an open umbrella is an elm. The one that looks like the pointed part of an egg is a sugar maple. Bark, bud and twig patterns can also be clues to identification.

Look into the leafless landscape and you may see

other things too. A ball of leaves high up in a tree may house a Gray Squirrel's for the winter. If you are quiet you may see a Porcupine slowly moving as he looks fresh bark to eat.

Up there you may also see a Bald Faced Hornet's nest. These round, paper-like nests were created by hornet colony all spring and summer, only to be abandoned in the late fall. After the first few frosts, nests can be safely dissected to see the structure inside. The queen has mated and burrowed under a log or in a crevice for the winter. All the others- female workers and males and dead. Come spring the queen will awaken, build the start of her nest and lay eggs again.

You may also see other abandoned nests. Look for different shaped cups and bowls of songbird nests. Fall and winter are good times to examine the materials of a nest. Mice will line and cover an old nest to use over the winter so be careful when you go in for a peek.

Go for a walk, take a look around and you may be amazed at what you can find.



If you've been to the Titus Rd trailhead you've probably seen evidence that the beavers are back. Water is not running across the trail, yet, but the water is high on both sides. By looking at the drainage pipe on the road, you can see a somewhat different sort of beaver dam and the reason for the high water. This dam is semicircular and in front of the pipe rather than plugging the pipe straight across. It is built with lots of sticks, stones, mud and grass. The town has removed the dam once but beavers, being as busy as they are, have replaced it. It shouldn't be too long before the beavers have eaten all there is to eat in the area and will move on.

Should you travel on the trail from the Sherman Village center (behind the restaurants), you'll see another beaver dam clogging up another drainpipe. It's about 100 yards from the parking lot on your left.

## Trail Managers Report

By Jim Fincher

It is impressive since it is in the Village and close to people. Hope it doesn't get too much higher and cause water to go over the trail. Then we'd have to do something about it. We'd much rather live with wildlife than have to fight their natural activities.

The damaged culvert south of Wolebon Rd is still damaged and there are no appropriate grant opportunities in sight. So, in order to do something, we built a dam across the discharge end of the culvert in hopes the runoff water will be stopped by the dam and will back up into the culvert, which will slow the rushing water and rob it of its ability to inflict further damage. If the water can move big blocks of stone, a dam of tree trunks may not have a chance, but we'll see. Here's what the dam looks like (see picture above). We are gladly accepting donations dedicated to help repair the culvert. And if you'd like to see where your donation is going, I'd be happy to show you the culvert. Just let me know and we'll take a hike.

We're still looking for e-mail addresses to send the Trackin' newsletters to. We'd be happy to send it to you, in living color. All you have to do is send us your address. Send it to [crtt@chaurtt.org](mailto:crtt@chaurtt.org).

We are still looking for a new picture to put on the front page of the trail guide. Please feel free to send us your candidate and we'll certainly consider it. The picture needs to be an action shot, on the rail trail, with people willing to be on the cover of the trail guide.

Come take a hike with us. On your calendars, place the word hike in bold letters on Dec 24, 2013 and on April 19, 2014. On December 24th, we will gather at Prospect Station at 2:30pm to remember the victims of the tragic train wreck that killed 20 people 141 years ago. On April 19, we'll gather at the Titus Rd. trailhead to take a hike and celebrate Earth Day, (which is on April 22, a Tuesday).



# Thank you...Thank you...Thank you!

There are two Chautauqua County master gardeners looking after two of our trailhead gardens.



Patty Petrella (above) is caring for the Thayer Rd trailhead flower garden. That bed is planted with (mostly) ground cover, most of which is very happy and growing well.

When you travel south from Wolebon Rd, you come upon these trail amenities (right). And according to the donator, these items are used a lot. He is surprised at the number of people using the trail. We thank Jerry Speelberg and Speelberg Enterprises for thinking of the trail and taking action to make it better.



Debbie Gorski (below) is caring for the Titus Rd trailhead flower bed. She and her husband have made many improvements to the bed, which is planted in annual flowers.



Like Our “New” Newsletter Format? We would love to hear from you! Please drop us an email at [crtt@chaurtt.org](mailto:crtt@chaurtt.org). We are looking for ideas for our next newsletter. Happy Trails To All!

## Support The Efforts of CRT!

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want to support CRT's effort to change the abandoned rail lines of Chautauqua County into multi-use trails which can be enjoyed by all.

_____ Individual	\$25	_____ Sustaining	\$100
_____ Family	\$40	_____ Benefactor	\$500
_____ Patron	\$60	_____ Sponsor	\$1000 & up
_____ Business Partner	\$100/\$200 per year for 10 years		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Detach & mail form to: Chautauqua Rails to Trails, P.O. Box 151, Mayville, NY 14757. *Thank you!*



P.O. Box 151  
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