

FFLA Newsletter – NY Chapter

Early August 2016

Conference: It's here at last – the registration form for the Northeastern Conference of the FFLA to be held in Keene NY on September 17th and 18th! Please take a look at the great line up that is planned, come on over and share some great food, information, and fire tower stories with one another!

Two August Newsletters: The conference, a trip I have planned and all of the work that you folks have been doing is the perfect reason to send out 2 August newsletters. We shall consider this one the early August one and a second will be circulated later this month that we will call late August.

Follow Up from July Newsletter: Some great events continue to happen around the state regarding fire towers. FFLA member Ralph Coy sent me feedback about last months news regarding Berry Hill Fire Tower. Ralph says he first visited Berry Hill about 1950. “It so happens that this tower is located on what was then my Uncle Sam's farm. I believe it was named Berry Hill because right below the tower there was a pasture full of high bush blueberries (we called them huckleberries). I had some happy days eating my fill while my parents filled buckets that got turned into pies.” Thanks for sharing that delightful memory Ralph. Ralph is a great volunteer that serves Hunter fire tower in the Catskills. He and his partner John are often found greeting visitors and sharing information about the historic tower there and the land that it protected for years.

Along the lines of something thought provoking – what would your opinions be on this article? <http://science.kjzz.org/content/327151/cameras-vie-human-lookouts-detect-fires-national-forests>. Replacing humans lookouts? I love the comment that lookouts are a lot more than just our eyes and ears for spotting fires.

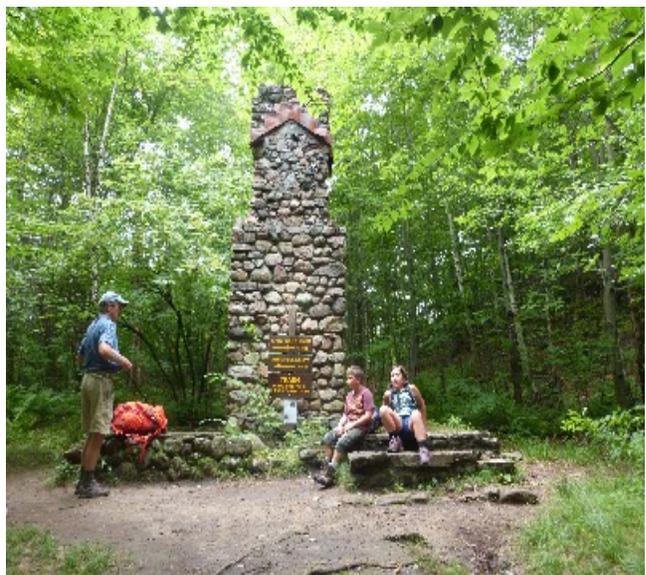
Smokey Bear items that can be given away at your fire tower for educational purposes are available from a few different suppliers. One that I often use sent me a link to some heavily discounted discontinued items: <https://www.symbols.gov/>

St. Regis Fire Tower: The best news from the St. Regis group came on July 21st when the helicopter was able to airlift the new roof parts, the hatch railing and the window frames to the summit of St. Regis Mountain. At the same time, debris from last summer's work was removed from the summit. My hat is off to all of you for the work behind the scenes leading up to this major accomplishment; scheduling, fund raising, designing, and so much more. A NYS Police helicopter (a Huey- I think) flew up from Albany with pilots Pat Hogan and Scott Oseback and Crew Chiefs Steve Jacobs and Rob Jahn. Ground crew consisted of DEC personnel Steve Guglielmi, Jeff Balerno and Kevin Burns and “Friends” Bob Marrone and Scottie Adams. Roof parts, hatch railings and window frame parts were loaded into a sling. The load was airlifted from Saranac Inn Maintenance Center to the summit of St. Regis Mountain approximately 4 miles away. Ranger Kevin Burns, in the chopper and Ranger Tom Edmunds on the summit, unloaded the parts with help from other DEC personnel and volunteers, (Greg Bowler, Sebastian Seubert, Hunter Hintenlang), and Friends of St. Regis Fire Tower (David Petrelli and Rich LaBombard). Dave Vana and his crew of Sean Connin and Jeff Couture, along with FOSRMFT members Jack Burke and Rich LaBombard, worked in beautiful weather Friday. Jack and Rich prepared the panels on the ground. Together with Dave and crew, the panels were hoisted to the cab, and CAREFULLY lifted into place. Then the process of securing the panels to the cab frame and to the

other panels was executed. The roof was capped (again carefully with Dave standing outside the cab!!!) and VOILA – we have a new roof! I look forward to hearing more about this at the conference next month. More info and pictures are on the web site. You can check that out here: <http://www.friendsofstregis.org/fire-tower-restoration/>.



Poke O Moonshine: On July 30th, Educator, Friends of Poke O Moonshine and FFLA member David Thomas-Train held another Adirondack Fire Towers and Land Stewardship Program for the Adirondack History Museum Family Field Day. The day began with a one hour class at the museum (this class meets common core standards and can be used in a classroom as well) followed by a 2.5 mile round trip guided hike to the restored fire tower. Thanks so much to David for continuing to offer this very worthy program to the public. Thanks to the Adirondack History Museum as well. David will be discussing this program in greater detail at the conference next month. The Adirondack History Museum is one of the places we plan to visit during the conference to see what they have done with two fire towers.



Our facebook page is seeing some activity. Please do continue to contribute and share your thoughts, ideas, photos and history there. I have been trying to do a bit of a trivia contest there with some old photos too. See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1736798186564272/> or search for FFLA New York State Chapter.

Trivia Question from last month: Which fire tower is currently located at the lowest elevation in New York State? Historically, which fire tower was at the lowest elevation in New York State? Which fire tower was the shortest in New York State? Is it still standing? I haven't heard from anyone about this yet. How about I give you until the late August newsletter to come up with a guess or two – remember that coveted FFLA sticker is up for grabs to the first correct answer!

The Third Annual Light Up the Night is coming up on September 2nd. On Friday night September 2nd, we invite everyone to find a place with a view of your favorite fire tower on the horizon for our 3rd annual **Lighting of the Fire Towers Event!** This event is meant to showcase the history of the five Catskill fire towers and some of our other friends around the state. From 9:00pm to 9:30pm, look up to see the cabs lit up. Remember that these towers were watching faithfully like beacons over your property for years to help prevent forest fires. The men and women who were in those cabs were there to protect your property from forest fires by providing fire fighters with an early detection and reporting system that was amazingly accurate. If you are lucky, your area may have been covered by more than one tower! For additional information about possible viewing areas near you, see <http://www.viewsandbrews.com/balsamlake>.

Adirondack Life Magazine Article: If you are a subscriber you will see a great photo of a fire tower on the cover of the October 2016 issue. It is of the St. Regis fire tower and was taken by Jonathan Esper. Contained inside the magazine is a great article entitled High Profile by Annie Stoltie. It features FFLA Members David Thomas-Train and Dave Vana. It is a wonderful article about the history of our Adirondack fire towers, includes some awesome photographs and some great comments by these two guys. Unfortunately, it is not yet available on their website, but you may wish to pick up a copy. Thanks so much for the press guys!

Corrections: I feel it necessary to add a new section to these newsletters, the correction section. In the last two months I have made the same error in spelling Ed Engelman's name. I would like to apologize to Ed and let him see that is now corrected. Also Dave Vana let me know that the work at Azure Mountain Fire Tower was done entirely by a great group of volunteers.

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