

# VHT Pathfinder

The Official Newsletter of Victor Hiking Trails, Inc.

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## Thank you Larry

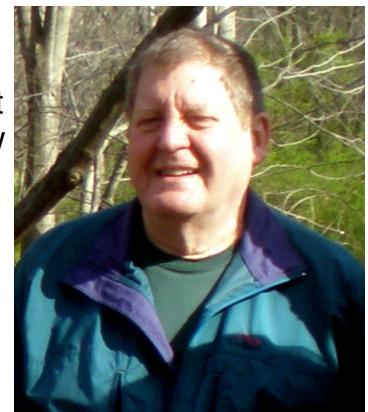
When Victor Hiking Trails had its first meeting in September, 1991, Marcia Bryan was elected Chairman. And one of her first appointments was Larry Fisher to be Trail Boss. I don't know if he really knew what that job would entail or not. We didn't have any trail maintenance tools and actually, no trails. The town of Victor had one or two parks. And one trail in Fishers Park, right behind Larry's home. At the time, the town's water department was responsible for maintaining the trails. As you can imagine, trail trimming was low on their priority list. Very low.

We agreed to meet once a month at Town Hall. We also agreed to conduct guided hikes once a month on established trails in adjoining towns and look for potential trails in Victor. Marcia had been on the town's Conservation Board and was very familiar with the lands in town and many of the property owners. We took a map of Victor and starting dreaming of where it would be good to have trails. Soon our dreams turned into reality. And soon Larry and his crew were busy clearing brush, cutting saplings, building bridges and marking trails.

Monkey Run Trails were first, soon followed by the Auburn Trail and sections of the Seneca Trail. As the town population grew and new developments were built, our system of trails quickly expanded. Larry was busy acquiring power tools and helpers to assist him in maintaining the miles and miles of trail.

We now have over 50 miles of multi-use trails open to the public. Some are on state lands, some are in town parks and some are on private lands. Thanks to Larry and his crew, we have the best maintained trails in the region. We get compliments from trail users all the time. We are all very proud of what we have accomplished over the years.

Larry has announced to the Board that it is time for him to pass the clippers and slow down just a little. We are eternally grateful to Larry for his years of service of leading the trail maintainers, repairing the equipment when needed and storing the equipment at his home.



**THANK YOU LARRY!!!**

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Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes ...*Page 4.*

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The Project includes approximately a 3 mile long loop... *Page 5.*

...ash and hemlock trees lost already number in the millions. *Page 7.*

VHT will miss Larry's wisdom, energy and organizational skills...*Page 8*

## HIKES FOR 2015

### VHT 2015 Officers:

Dave Wright— Chairman  
 Jeff Hennick— Vice Chairman  
 Suzy Paquin— Secretary  
 Ralph Weber— Treasurer  
 Carol MacInnes— Trailmaster  
 Chauncy Young— Trail Boss  
 Peter Ingalsbe— Membership  
 Ralph Weber — Education  
 Wizzy Geno— Volunteer  
 Coordinator  
 David Coleman— Camping  
 Larry Fisher—Parks Liaison

### VHT Pathfinder

Volume 19, Issue 4  
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*The Victor Hiking Trails Pathfinder* is published quarterly for the members of Victor Hiking Trails, Inc.

We encourage submissions of letters, editorial items and advertising pertaining to trails, Victor and the environment.

Ask about our rates. To submit articles for the *VHT Pathfinder*, please contact:

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[www.victorhikingtrails.org](http://www.victorhikingtrails.org)  
 Also on Facebook

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January 10th— Lehigh Crossing Park, meet in parking lot  
 February 14th— Blue Cut Nature Center (Newark/Lyons)  
 March 14th— Harriet Hollister Spencer State Recreation Area  
 April 11th— Fishers Park— Meet at the tennis courts on Wangum Rd.  
 May 9th— Webster Trails (Lake and Phillips Roads)  
 June 6th— National Trails Day (hike in Victor)  
 June 13th— ADK Expo, Mendon Ponds Park, hike in the park  
 July 10-12th— Camp and hike at Robert H. Treman Park and Ithaca  
 August 8th— Stoney Brook State Park  
 September 5th— Ring Of Fire, evening hike at Bare Hill  
 September 12th— Hang Around Victor Day, Village hike at 11:00 a.m.  
 September 27th— 5th Annual Challenge Hike  
 October 10th— Outlet Trail hike, if open  
 November 14th— Boughton Park  
 December 12th— Ontario County Park, new north trails

Note: Please check the message line at 585-234-8226 for details. All hikes meet at Victor Town Hall rear parking lot, 85 East Main Street, at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted. Most hikes are relatively easy and take 2-4 hours. Always bring a bag lunch or snack and something to drink. Dress for the weather. We rarely cancel due to inclement weather.

We usually carpool to the trailhead. Expect to share the cost of gas with the driver. If you have any questions regarding any of the hikes, or if you have suggestions for places to hike, please leave a message at 585-234-8226.

Again this year we have scheduled several hikes in Victor or the surrounding communities. We are also leading shorter and easier hikes to encourage families and younger hikers to join us. Based on the success of last year we will again be adding an educational element to some of the hikes.

We only hike as fast as the slowest hikers, so don't worry about not keeping up. If we need to split into more than one group, that is not a problem.

**Come enjoy the fun.**

## Past Hikes

**October 11— Pittsford Trail Loop.** This outing only had 4 hikers; Chauncy, Suzy, Jeff Henrick and Dave Coleman. It was a beautiful day for a hike. The foursome covered 6.36 miles and picked up 6-7 bags of trash along with cans and bottles.

**November 8th— Monkey Run and MaryFrances Bluebird Haven.** There were 13 hikers and they hiked approx 3.6 miles. The group trekked around MFBB and then across Victor-Egypt Road on the Monkey Run trails. After the hike many went to Starbucks for nourishment and social interaction. Chauncy noted that he led the same hike the week after for the Genesee Valley Hiking Club (GVHC) Meetup Group and had 30 hikers that day. There were 53 hikers for the moonlight hike that he led on November 5th on the Auburn Trail in Fishers. Dave noted that the Springwater Trails Group led a hike at Fishers Park on Sunday 11/16. They had about 20 people hiking.

**December 13— Dryer Road Park and Fort Hill.** Seven hikers enjoyed a beautiful morning of fresh snow. Five had snowshoes to pack down the trails for all that followed. The group hiked over to Fort Hill and back, covering about 2.5 miles in 2 hours. The GVHG Meetup Group hiked the same trails that same afternoon.



## Upcoming Hikes

**January 10th— Lehigh Crossing Park.** Meet at the Lehigh Crossing Park parking area at 9:00 a.m. The park is located on State Route 251, about a quarter of a mile from State Route 96. Look for the park sign and driveway on the right if you are coming from Route 96. Plan on an easy, flat (for the most part) hike on the trails in the park as well as the Lehigh Trail and the Auburn Trail. It should be about 3 miles and take about 2 hours. Bring your cross-country skis or snowshoes if we have enough snow. Also you might want to bring a snack and something to drink.

**February 14th— Blue Cut Nature Center.** This will be our first visit to this nature center. The trails take you from State Route 31 through fields, to the edge of a marsh, along a railroad, through mixed hardwoods and pines and up a drumlin. Hiking all of the trails will require a bit of back tracking and will cover a total of over 2 miles. Plan on cross-country skiing or snowshoeing if there is enough snow. The trail head is located just west of the Wayne County sheriff's office on the South side of Route 31, east of Fink Road

and the railroad tracks, between Newark and Lyons.

**March 14th— Harriet Hollister State Recreation Area.** This is one of our favorite parks for winter fun. Due to its high elevation and the grooming of the snow on the trails, the cross-country skiing is always great. Or if you want to snowshoe through the woods, there are plenty of opportunities for that as well. Plan on at least a two-hour workout on these trails. Bring a bag lunch and something to drink. If you live south of Victor and want to meet at the park, plan on being there at 10 a.m.

**April 11th— Fishers Park.** Meet at the tennis courts on Wangum Road in Fishers at 9:00 a.m. This town park is nearly 100 acres of passive recreation with many miles of trails. Plan on a two-hour hike up and down the hills, through the hardwoods and around the open fields. We will be looking for early wildflowers and amphibians to be popping out of their winter hibernation.

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## Great Backyard Bird Count

Friday, February 13th through Monday February 16th is the annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). Bird watchers of all ages are encouraged to count birds to create a real-time snapshot of local bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or for as long as you desire) on one or more of the days of the event and report their sightings online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

Anyone can take part in the GBBC program, from

beginning bird watchers to experts. And you can participate from anywhere in the world. It's free, fun and educational. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year, participants turned in more than 144,000 online checklists, creating the world's largest snapshot of bird populations ever recorded. Please put the dates on your calendar and help break the record.

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## Changes to the Board of Directors

Chauncy Young volunteered to be the new Trail Boss. Ralph Weber was elected the new treasurer. David Coleman was appointed to the new position of Camping Chairman. Larry Fisher was

appointed to the new position of Parks and Recreation Liaison.

## Ground Hog Day

Phil will leave his burrow at 7:25 a.m. February 2nd at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. He will observe the weather conditions and look for his shadow and then make his prediction for the remainder of winter.

Groundhog Day, February 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. It is also a legend that traverses centuries, its origins clouded in the mists of time with ethnic cultures and animals awakening on specific dates. Myths such as this tie our present to the distant past when nature did, indeed, influence our lives. It is the day that the Groundhog comes out of his hole after a long winter sleep to look for his shadow.

If he sees it, he regards it as an omen of six more weeks of bad weather and returns to his hole.

If the day is cloudy and, hence, shadowless, he takes it as a sign of spring and stays above

ground.

The groundhog tradition stems from similar beliefs associated with Candlemas Day and the days of early Christians in Europe, and for centuries

the custom was to have the clergy bless candles and distribute them to the people. Even then, it marked a milestone in the winter and the weather that day was important.

Groundhogs are one of the few animals that really hibernate. Hibernation is not just a deep sleep. It is actually a deep coma, where the body temperature drops to a few degrees above freezing, the heart barely beats, the blood scarcely flows, and breathing nearly stops.



## Auburn Trail Extension South

*By Ronald Brand,  
Town of Farmington Director of Development*

The Genesee Transportation Council, at their meeting on December 11, 2014 approved the Auburn Trail Connector Project located in the Towns of Farmington and Canandaigua. This Project will be added to the GTC's Transportation Improvement Program. The Project includes approximately a 3 mile long loop that extends from the County Road 41, southeasterly along the former Penn Central Railroad Auburn Branch to the west side of New York State Route 332. Along this section there will be a trail connection to the Farmbrook Neighborhood. Then, at 332, the trail extends south along the west side to the intersection of Canandaigua/Farmington Town Line Road. Then westerly along the south side of the town line road to the Auburn Meadows Subdivision Tract. Then north connecting back to the Auburn Trail alignment.

The Initial Project Proposal has been completed and forwarded on to the Federal Highway Administration. A State/Local Agreement has been

ordered and should be signed in early 2015. The first phase of this Project will involve Early Design and Right-of-Way Incidentals. Final design is scheduled for March 2016. The PS&E will be produced in September 2016 for a bid opening in October 2016. Construction start will be in January 2017 and construction completed by December 2017. The total Project cost is \$1,950,881.00, with \$1,560,705.00 being the Federal Funding portion.

This Phase 1 project is the first phase of an approximate 9-mile trail that will close the critical gap in the regional trail system between the existing Auburn trail that currently terminates at County Road 41, and the Ontario Pathways trail that is accessible from North Main Street and East Street in the City of Canandaigua. With the completion of this 9-mile trail, the links will also be to the Finger Lakes Trails and the Erie Canal Corridor Trail, the Lehigh Valley Trail and the Genesee Greenway Trail Systems.

## AmazonSmile helps non-profit organizations

AmazonSmile is a program operated by Amazon that generates donations for 501(c)(3) public charitable organizations. Now when you make purchases at Amazon.com you can designate that they donate 0.5% of the value of your purchase to Victor Hiking Trails.

To get started, log on to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com).

Then select Victor Hiking Trails Inc. as your charity. The funds will automatically be transferred to our VHT bank account. So the more we spend, the more Amazon will donate to VHT.

Let us know if you have any questions or problems.

## Free Firewood

The Victor Historical Society lost several large trees on their property when we got some strong winds. The trees were exposed to the elements when the adjoining property was cleared for new shopping stores.

Some of the trees have been cut into logs and placed along the trail, up the hill from the yellow house at Valentown Square. More of the downed trees still need to be cut up and the area cleaned up. We plan to do more cutting after the holidays.

Meanwhile, if you would like to take some firewood, help yourself.



## New Membership Level

We now have a level for Corporate membership. For a mere \$100 per year a business can join and all the employees automatically become

members. When applying, a list of employees, with their home address and email address, should be attached to the membership form.

## Nature News

By Bob Lasher

### They're creeping up on us.....

While you're out and about hiking you should be aware that New York State forests are being devastated by some non-native invasive insects. Non-native invasive species are any insect, plant, mammal that is not native (or alien) to an ecosystem and can cause environmental or economic harm, or harm to human health. Of growing concern are two non-native invasive insects. These are the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and the Emerald Ash Borer.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is native to Asia. This is a nymph-like insect that hosts on hemlock trees. It attaches itself to the underside of new growth twigs and feeds deep into the plant tissues. It's believed it was accidentally introduced into this country from Japan in the mid 1950's. It's documented to now be in at least 18 eastern states from Georgia to Maine. In New York it has spread from Long Island and the Hudson Valley, to the Catskill region, Rochester and more recently into the Finger Lakes.

The Emerald Ash Borer is also native to Asia. This is a boring beetle that feeds on ash trees just under the bark. It's believed to have been introduced into this country through wooden packing materials from Asia. It was first identified in 2002 in Michigan and has spread to at least 15 states. In New York there are scattered infestation areas from Ulster to Erie County. Locally Monroe County has many areas of infestation. The distribution of ash wood products, including firewood, is believed to be a contributing factor to it's spread.

What's at stake? It's estimated that the ash and hemlock trees lost already number in the millions. The loss of these trees means entire ecosystems can be negatively effected including bird, insect, fish, etc. There are a variety of management plans for either of these insects. However the most important management technique is early detection. That means locating where the insect is as early as possible to implement management options timely enough to minimize its spread. Since we are dealing with such vast forest areas including state lands, local parks, and private lands large numbers of people are needed in these management efforts. The only way this can be carried out is through volunteers. Lot's of them!

You may have seen signs of these volunteer efforts while you were out hiking. At the Ganondagan State Historic Site you'll find white ties on ash trees, "purple prism traps" used to trap the insect for identification, and other project markers or signs. Efforts like this are happening all across our area, but require large numbers of people to be successful.

There is a website that can offer additional information on non-native invasive species: New York Invasive Species Information at [www.nyis.info](http://www.nyis.info). There are also many other excellent sites on this topic. If you have questions or would like information about volunteering opportunities please contact me at [shagbarkbrook@outlook.com](mailto:shagbarkbrook@outlook.com).

Bob Lasher  
Master Naturalist  
Shagbark Brook  
[shagbarkbrook@outlook.com](mailto:shagbarkbrook@outlook.com)

## Larry Fisher Steps Down as Trail Boss

*By Chauncy Young*

Larry Fisher, a founding member of Victor Hiking Trails, Inc. (VHT), decided to step down as Trail Boss late this past fall. For over 20 years, he has headed up the crews maintaining the growing number of trails that VHT maintain. Additionally he was always willing to help with special events to enhance the public awareness of the trails in the Town of Victor or projects to enhance the trails. The picture on the right is of Larry standing by one of the mile markers on the Auburn Trail he helped make and install last spring.

As depicted in the picture, Larry is an avid biker and he enjoys the comradery of the gym/yoga setting where he has many friends. He is also still involved with the community through the Town of Victor Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

VHT will miss Larry's wisdom, energy and organizational skills in coming years.

His relaxed demeanor created a dedicated group of volunteer trail maintainers, while small in numbers, did their best to make sure the trails that Victor Hiking Trails maintain are in great shape. We hope that he will find some time to get out on the trails with a crew every once in a while between



trips to New Hampshire to see family and his other activities.

Thanks again Larry for all you have done for Victor and the trails in the Town of Victor.

## Ultra Marathon on the FLT

On Saturday, August 29th, the Inaugural Twisted Branch Ultra-marathon will take place on the Finger Lakes Trail. This will be an end-to-end race starting at 5:00 a.m. at the Ontario County Park in South Bristol. The race will end in Hammondsport, NY at the high school, a distance of 63.3 miles (102 km).

VHT has volunteered to help at one of the stations.

We will hand out water, fruit and encouragement to the participants. If you are interested in helping us, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Wizzy Geno at [genoe657@gmail.com](mailto:genoe657@gmail.com).

If you are interested in being a participant or you would like more information about the race, go to [www.twistedbranchtrail.com](http://www.twistedbranchtrail.com).



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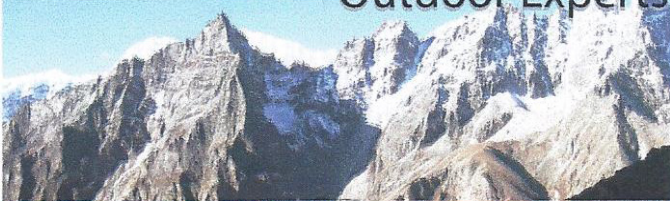
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All VHT newsletters are now available on our website.  
View it and download it in full color.

Annual membership is for 12 months, beginning when you first join. Please send your renewal check promptly so we don't have to come after you. We will use your dues and donations for new and improved trails.

*Filling the gaps in Victor*

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VHT Map Link

*Yes, I want to join / renew membership in VHT!*

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Please note that we need your e-mail address to notify you when the latest edition of our newsletter is available on our website.

I can help with: Trail Acquisition \_\_\_\_\_ Trail Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_ Trail hikes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ Fund Raising \_\_\_\_\_ Special Events \_\_\_\_\_ History / Education \_\_\_\_\_

Amount submitted \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Corporate membership at \$100 per year allows all employees to be members.

Victor Hiking Trails, Inc. is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization.

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