



# VHT Pathfinder

**33+ YEARS AND GROWING**

Victor Hiking Trails  
Spring 2024

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*Your membership dollars help fund the creation, improvement, and maintenance of our 70+ miles of trails, bridges, boardwalks, benches, and signs; providing a wide variety of outdoor recreational and educational opportunities for Victor and the surrounding community.*

## The Future of Victor Trails

- |                                   |                                    |                                 |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking    | <input type="checkbox"/> Share  | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family   | <input type="checkbox"/> Biking    | <input type="checkbox"/> Learn  | <input type="checkbox"/> Preserve   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor   | <input type="checkbox"/> Develop   | <input type="checkbox"/> Build  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Community | <input type="checkbox"/> Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle  |

Love Victor's Trails?

Want to save green space in Victor?

Do you have 3-6 hours a month?

Keep us moving forward by volunteering to help build and maintain some of our of multi-use trails.

We're recruiting trail maintenance staff.



**PRESERVE GREEN SPACE, LEARN, GIVE BACK,  
BUILD TRAILS, JOIN OUR TRAIL CREW**

**Contact Chauncy at [TrailBoss@VictorHikingTrails.org](mailto:TrailBoss@VictorHikingTrails.org)**



**VHT 2024 Officers:**

Dave Wright– Chairman  
 Lisa Roberts– Vice Chairman  
 Barb Starr– Secretary  
 Ruth Rugaber– Treasurer  
 Scott Reinhart– Trailmaster  
 Chauncy Young– Trail Boss  
 Larry Fisher– Membership  
 Jeff Miller – Education  
 Paul Knerr— Volunteer  
 Coordinator  
**Open — Social Media  
 Coordinator**  
 Jeff Hennick— Webmaster  
**Open—Parks Liaison**

**VHT MONTHLY HIKES****2024 Hikes**

Apr 13— Ganondagan State Historic Site  
 May 11— Mertensia Park, Bluebells  
 Jun 1— National Trails Day. Meet at Victor Parks & Rec at 8:30 AM  
 Jun 8— ADK Outdoor Expo Hike at Mendon Ponds Park  
 Jul 13— Naples Trails by the Creeks  
 Aug 10— TBD  
 Sep 14— TBD

Mar 24— Oxbow and Harts Woods, Perinton  
 Apr 27— Invasive Species (Naples)  
 May 26— Bird Watching  
 Jun 30— Muller Field Station  
 Jul 28— Geology and Historic Iron Mining

**Green are Educational walks and meet at 2:00 PM**

Note: Please check the message line at 585-234-8226 for details and last minute updates. Also, if you join [https://www.meetup.com/ Victor-Hiking-Trails-Meetup](https://www.meetup.com/Victor-Hiking-Trails-Meetup), you will get notifications of hikes and other events, reminders if you are signed up for a hike, and last minute changes.

All hikes meet at Victor Town Hall rear parking lot, 85 East Main Street, at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. Most hikes are relatively easy and take 2-3 hours. Always bring a snack and something to drink. Dress for the weather. We rarely cancel due to inclement weather.

As noted in our schedule there are several educational hikes planned for 2024. These are usually on a Sunday afternoon, starting at 2:00 PM.

We usually carpool from Victor Town Hall 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 the VHT Message Line, 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. Wednesday morning we meet at the Victor Farmington Library at 9:00 AM for a short, easy walk.

Additional hikes with the Victor PTSA may be scheduled throughout the year.

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.**

**NOTE:** There are several hiking Meetup groups in our area that schedule hikes in Victor. If you like to hike, join those Meetup groups as well.

**VHT Pathfinder**

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 Spring 2024  
*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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Also on Facebook,  
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## Past Hikes

**Jan 1—First Day Hike.** This was a great start to the new year. 19 trekkers covered 6.2 miles on the Auburn Trail, the Domine Trails, the Lehigh Valley Trail and many of the trails in Fishers Park. This hike always gives you a variety of wide, flat railroad bed and narrow, hilly trails. There was a dusting of snow on the ground and the temperature was near freezing, but everyone enjoyed the morning exercise.

*Photo by Debbie R.*



**Jan 13—White Brook Nature Preserve.** This was an extremely wet hike through the swamp near White Brook. The floating boardwalk was under water. There were at least 20 soaking, wet, cold feet by the time the hike had ended. One hiker was smart and wore rubber boots. At least the sun came out for some of the morning.

*Photo by Dave Wright*



**Feb 10—Cancelled.**

**March 9—Fishers Park and More.**

The forecast was calling for rain so about half of the hikers bailed. It was a little misty but, it never rained hard. By the end of the hike it was clearing up nicely. At any rate, six slogged through the muddy trails in the woods, the grassy meadows and the railroad beds. The great part was that we had five that were new to Victor Trails and one joined VHT.

*Photo by Dave Wright*





## Educational Hikes

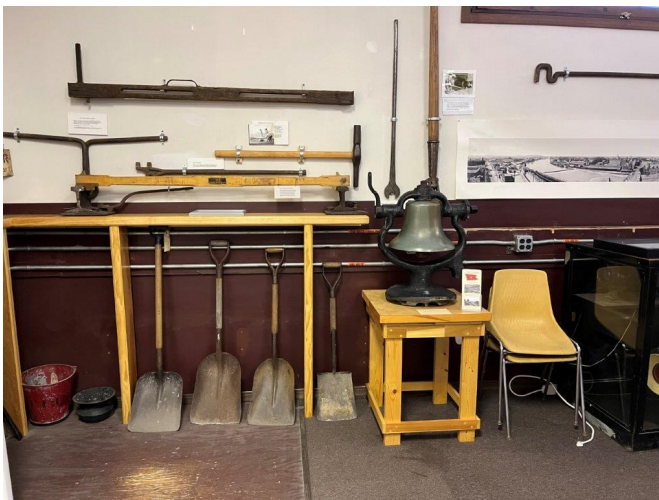
**Jan 28 – Bonna Terra Farms, Bloomfield.** This was an extremely interesting tour of a large dairy farm. 22 attendees were up close and personal with many cows while they were either relaxing in their shelter, munching on the special feed and socializing with their girl friends, or emptying their udder on the milking merry-go-round. There are 80 stalls on the rotary platform and the cows get milked three times per day. It is a 24 hour, 7 day-a-week operation.

The milk goes directly from the milking platform parlor to the tanker trucks that take it to the cooperative for pasteurization and bottling into the containers that you purchase at your grocery store.



*Photos by Jeff Miller and Carolyn*

**Feb 18 — Lehigh Valley Railroad Historical Society Museum.** Located in an old New York Central railroad freight depot in the village of Shortsville, this museum has an extensive collection of photos and memorabilia of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. David Halderman, president of the society, gave an interesting talk about the importance of the railroads in our region.



*Photos by Jeff Miller*

## Trail Maintenance

This has been a busy winter because of all of the dead ash trees and the strong winds. It seems like every week we have been on a section of the Seneca Trail or in the parks cutting fallen trees. A large tree blocked a section of the Seneca Trail between Willowbrook Road and Route 251 that prompted us to reroute the trail. It still took the crew an hour to cut the large trunk and clear the new trail of leaves and sticks.

Just as a reminder, if you see a tree across a trail, send an email to Chauncy Young at [TrailBoss@VictorHikingTrails.org](mailto:TrailBoss@VictorHikingTrails.org) with a photo or description of the tree and its location. Then it will be posted on the Meetup page to get volunteers out to the site to take care of it as soon as possible.

Regular trail maintenance will be starting soon. We always need more volunteers to help mow the edges of the trails, paint the blazes, trim the bushes and general cleanup. Check the Meetup for the day, time and location. It looks like we might only be going on Monday evenings and Friday mornings, unless we can get another volunteer to haul our trailer to the trailheads on Wednesday evenings.



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## Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Thanks to many very generous donations, we surpassed our goal of \$5000. We will soon be picking up the new mower and retiring the old mower.

We did some research to see if it made sense to purchase a battery powered brush cutter. Unfortunately, there is only one brand that makes a mower powerful enough for the type of use we typically do on a regular basis. By the time we purchase the mower and at least two batteries, we would be over our budget.

So for the near future, until more choices are available, we will be using the internal combustion engine powered mower.

We will be researching electric hedge trimmers, chainsaws, leaf blowers and string trimmers to determine which brand will best suit our needs.





## Victor Farmington Library Hikers

Every Wednesday morning at 9:00 AM a group of walkers meet at the Victor Farmington Library, 15 West Main Street, in the village of Victor, for an easy 1 to 2 hour walk. Sometimes they stay within the village limits and sometimes they car-pool to a local park or trail.

After the hike many of the folks go to the Busy Bean Café for a cup of coffee and a bite to eat. It's a great opportunity to get to know your fellow walkers.

You can sign up on the VHT Meetup page or just show up at the library.



*Photo by Dave Wright*

## New Signs on the Auburn Trail

“There are currently more than 41,000 miles of multi-use trails across America, including 25,000 miles of rail-trails”. Quote From the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTTC) Winter 2024 issue.

Our own Auburn, Lehigh Valley, and Trolley Trails are part of the 25,000 miles of rail-trails and part of the growing network of linked trails in the Greater Rochester area.

We have long enjoyed the luxury of having two linked rail-trails in Victor, but over the past 5 years other trail sections have connected to the Auburn, making it a vital and well used regional resource. According to Ryan Chao, RTTC president, as trails are connected their use goes up by as much as 80%! We are experiencing that increased use here in Victor.

The Victor trails opened in 2000 and in 2018 the Auburn was improved through Farmington to the Canandaigua Town line. As more housing is built in the Auburn Meadows and Hathaway Corners area there are numerous links to the trail. A new community park has been built within the Auburn Meadows neighborhood. The beautiful park has a shelter, playgrounds, athletic fields, a winding crushed stone path, and plenty of parking and clean, heated restrooms.



*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Continued from page 6)*

In 2022 the Town of Pittsford started widening and improving the southern portion of the Auburn, making it possible to travel north to Knickerbocker Road by trail. In 2023 the Town of Pittsford completed the project, adding crushed gravel and signposts to the trail. Now there's only a short on-road section to be navigated before connecting to a spur of the Erie Canal adjacent to Mitchell Road. Then the world's on your doorstep! Travel east on the Erie or head west until reaching the Rochester Riverway Trail and other connecting trails including the 90 mile long Genesee Valley Greenway Trail.

All these connections mean more visitors to Victor and more bicycle traffic on our local rail-trails. To help these visitors know they're in a place with a rich railroad history, a request was made to add signs to the kiosks on the Auburn in Fishers and at the old train station location along Maple Ave.

Thanks to Victor Parks Director Brian Emelson for funding the purchase and staff member Dylan Reed for installing the signs in February. Historic photos celebrating the railroad will be added to both kiosks in the next month. Watch this space for more improvements slated to be added at the Fishers kiosk. The Rails to Trails Conservancy's Celebrate Trails Day 2024 is on Saturday April 27<sup>th</sup> this year. Let's all get out and enjoy our favorite trail that day!



*Photos and text by Lisa Roberts*

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## **National Trails Day**

Victor Hiking Trails will again be hosting National Trails Day to celebrate trails in Victor.

The festivities will begin at 8:30 AM on Saturday, June 1 at the Victor Parks and Recreation facility, 7891 Lehigh Crossing Road in Fishers. Start your day with a continental breakfast of bagels, cream cheese, muffins, fruit, coffee, juice, and hot chocolate.

The first hike will start at 9:00 AM. The hike will be 2-3 miles and take about an hour and a half.

The second hike will begin around 10:45 AM and be similar to but not the same as the first hike.

Pizza and drink for lunch will be available for all participants from 12:30 PM to 1:15 PM after which the final hike will start. Everyone should be back by 3:30 PM.

Participants who complete all three hikes will be awarded with a free, one-year membership to Victor Hiking Trails.



## How Many People Love Victor Trails?

Hundreds. Every day. And that means thousands per year. According to the three trail counters we have located on the Auburn Trail. Not counting all our other trails. And parks.

### Master Summary

Download as [Excel](#) [CSV](#)

Year	Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	ADT†	ADT†x365	Days with data
2023	Auburn & Seneca Junction near stairs										2,175*	1,619	1,436	55,037	20,089	81
	Auburn at Fishers Fire Hall												2,567*	82,800	30,222	10
	Proximity												3,711*	119,700	43,691	30
2024	Auburn & Seneca Junction near stairs	773	1,935*											37,933	13,884	45
	Auburn at Fishers Fire Hall	1,458	2,405*											58,200	21,301	45
	Proximity	2,265	4,298*											96,444	35,299	45

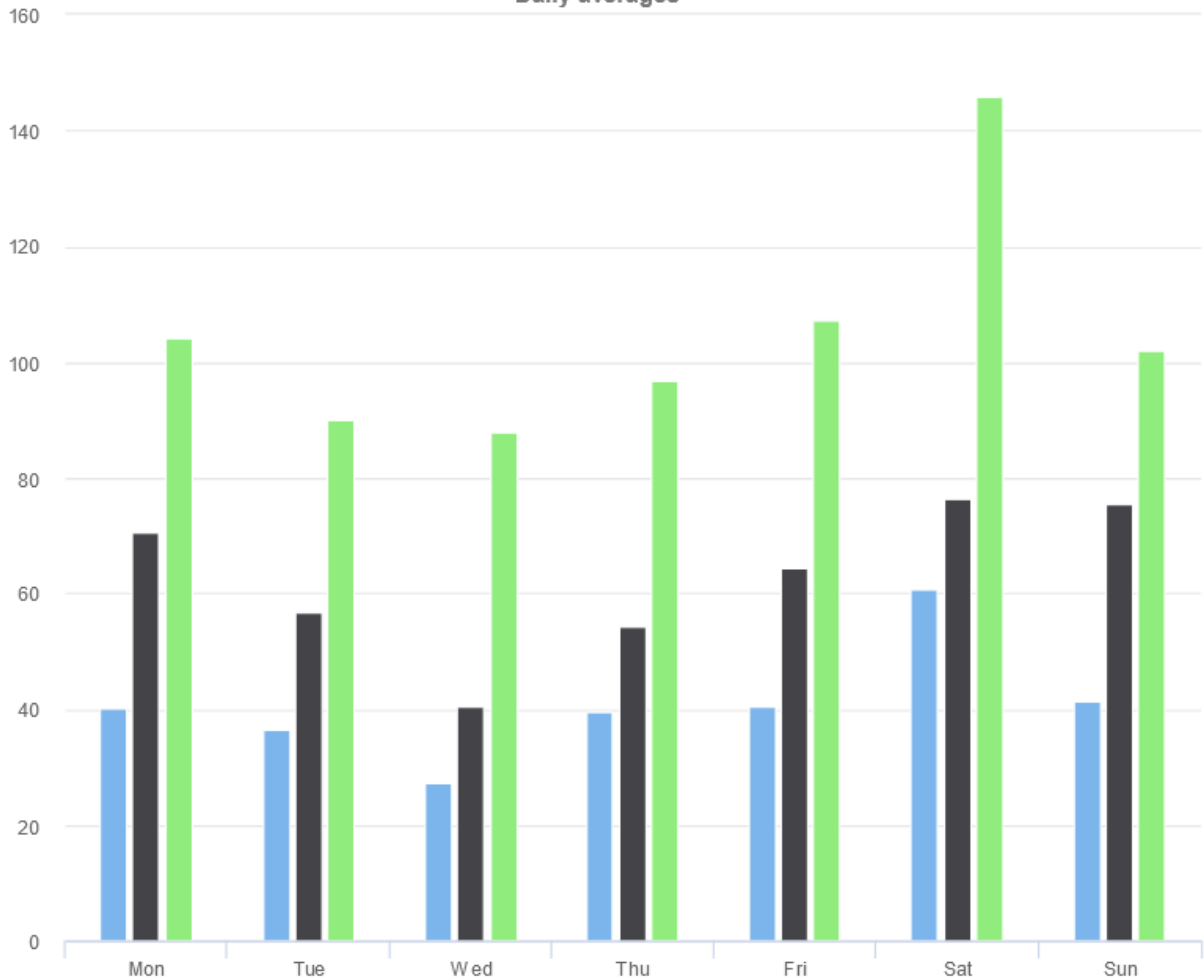
ADT† = Average Daily Traffic

\* = based upon that month's ADT [Learn more](#) Indicates months with less than 6 days of data.

## Days of the week

2023-12-21 to 2024-02-16

Daily averages



Site Name	Average	Median	STDV	Min	Max
Auburn & Seneca Junction near stairs	40.9	40.1	9.2	27.3	60.6
Auburn at Fishers Fire Hall	62.5	64.4	12.0	40.4	76.4
Proximity	104.9	102.1	18.0	87.9	145.8



## Lehigh Crossing Park 2023 Project

*By Barb Starr, Victor Hiking Trails Secretary*

Lehigh Crossing Park is at the junction of the Lehigh Valley and Auburn Trails in Victor, NY. It features a manmade pond that was a mitigation project funded by a nearby business that infringed on a wetland area in early 2000. Many years prior, a business had attempted a quarry, but with so much water in the vicinity, it was not successful. The property was eventually donated to the Town of Victor. Now, various frogs, birds, at least 30 Painted Turtles, dragon and damselflies and other wildlife frequent the pond and vicinity. However, within the last 10 years, the area has been seriously invaded by a number of non-native plants, in particular phragmites, Autumn Olive, and bush honeysuckle. It seemed clear that some enhancements of the pond and surroundings might improve the habitat for the wildlife and perhaps increase species of invertebrates, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and perhaps fish.

The project at Lehigh Crossing Park came out of the committee for special projects of VHT. With the blessing of VHT and the Victor Parks and Recreation Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), a simple proposal was presented by a VHT member to the CAC. The proposal suggested adding logs to the pond for turtles, 4 nest boxes for cavity dwelling birds, a pollinator garden and removal of some of the invasives using volunteers. This proposal was accepted by the CAC and a partnership formed.

Once the project at Lehigh Crossing Park was approved and partnered with Victor Parks and Recreation Dept in April 2023, work parties commenced at the Lehigh Pond on 5/9/23 when a group of 7 volunteers gathered to harvest several local fallen logs to place along the shore of the pond. Through the spring, early summer and again in the fall and early winter, a total of at least 25 work parties engaged in a "labor of love" around the Lehigh Pond. Parties have consisted of VHT members, neighbors, family, a member of the local Boy Scout Troop (61). Parties lasted anywhere from 30 minutes to 3 hours. Numbers of volunteers were between 2 and 7 per party. This small number works well where mostly hand tools have been used, with an eye for any valuable native plants that can be spared while invasives are removed. More focus in the new year will be on adding appropriate plants to the pond and areas in close proximity.

Ultimately, the goal is to restore as many native plants as possible while keeping as many invasives in check as possible. As we work to restore some of the beauty of this park, some additional signage would help to keep visitors informed and invested in the park. Originally, a pollinator garden was suggested, but what could be more appropriate and sustainable with modest financial investment, is doing our best to plant what perhaps was there, even before the early quarry operation, and supporting the many native plants that are still thriving. Perhaps a consultation with a local professional ecologist knowledgeable about such restoration projects. Certainly, we don't need a building or input of lawn care or lights or paved roads. Lehigh Crossing Park has so much to offer and is easily accessible. Perhaps it can remain a haven for a few wild things, a place to bring children to see frogs and turtles, for families or individuals to enjoy some quiet fish and release activities, for local residents and visitors outside our area to bike and hike, but also a destination for anyone to stop and soak up a little peacefulness and connection with nature around the pond any time of the year.



*Photo by Dave Wright*

### Special Projects

Saturday, April 20th is plant-a-tree day. Every Spring, the Victor Village Tree Board selects an area in the village to plant some trees. This year they have selected Harlan Fisher Park located on Lynaugh Road.

VHT will help along with several other community groups. We will put this on our VHT Meetup schedule so if you have an hour or two you can help the Board plant more trees.



On Sunday, April 21st, VHT will be organizing a Spring Cleanup on the trails. We will meet in the northeast section of the Cobblestone Court Plaza by the T.J.Maxx store at 9:00 AM. Trash bags, disposable gloves and some grabbers will be provided. Groups of 2 to 6 will be assigned a section of trail to walk. Full trash bags can be returned to the plaza for pickup in the afternoon. Look for the event on the VHT Meetup to sign up. More volunteers will mean more miles of clean trails.



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VHT Map Link

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