Lehigh Trail Progress
By Dave Wright

The Victor Town Highway Dept., with help from the Parks and Recreation staff and guidance from Fisher Associates, is making great progress on the improvements to the Lehigh Trail.

As part of the overall TEA-21 Auburn Trail and Connections Improvement Project, updating the Lehigh was chosen to be the first phase. So far, the trail has been graded, cleared of brush, a base of crushed stone and the final stone dust has been placed and rolled. The trail entrances from the road crossings have been constructed to ADA requirements. And on October 23, several VHT members helped to start the cleaning of the connection between the Lehigh and Auburn Trails.

With chainsaws, gas powered hedge trimmers and lots of human power, a considerable dent was put into the connection.

Town Highway employees chipping the brush on the connection

The highway dept. supplied two workers and a chipper for six hours. They also brought a backhoe for the really big stuff. The remaining work on the parking areas and road crossings as well as the Lehigh and Auburn connecting grade will be completed in the Spring of 2005.

Thanks to all that helped on the project this year.

NEW TRAIL OPENED
By Dave Wright

Thanks to the generosity of Helen Schrader, we now have an additional loop trail connecting to Monkey Run Trails.

The new trail meanders through the woods and crosses White Brook, just south of the Monkey Run Trails.

On a quiet morning, you might see deer, rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, a variety of birds and depending on the season, lots of wild flowers.

Years ago, the Schraders and their neighbors created snowmobile trails through the fields and woods on their farms. Dick and Peg Ryon were the first property owners to allow VHT to use the trails for hiking. Those trails are now Monkey Run Trails.

As old farms get developed, there will be additional opportunities to create more hiking trails and preserve sensitive lands for the enjoyment of the public.

Future plans will include expanding the Monkey Run Trails to connect with additional trails in the general area of County Road 9 and Valenstown Road.

Check our website for updated maps of the trails.
Upcoming Hikes

All hikes meet at Victor Town Hall rear parking lot, 85 East Main Street at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

Jan. 8 – Hike or ski Palmer’s Pond, Belmont, NY. Optional sleep-over with reservations.

Feb. 12 – Hike or ski Beaver Lake Nature Center, Baldwinsville, NY off Rte. 370N.

Mar. 12 – Hike or ski Wesley Hill Nature Preserve, Naples.

Apr. 9 – Hike 1000 Acre Swamp, Penfield. See the early wildflowers.

May 14 – Bike ride on the Lehigh Valley Trail from Fishers to Rush and back. Meet at the Lehigh parking area on Old Dutch Rd. About 30 miles total.

Jun. 4 – National Trails Day. Hike from Victor to Fishers. Meet at the Fishers Fire House on High St. at 8:00 a.m.

Jun. 11 – Quinn Oak Openings, Honeoye Falls.

Jul. 9 – Creek walk. TBD.

Aug. 13 – Finger Lakes Trail, Bristol Branch. TBD.

Sep. 3 – Ring of Fire, Bare Hill. Meet at town hall parking lot at 5:00 p.m. Bring a picnic supper. Eat at the top of Bare Hill.

Sep. 10 – Hang Around Victor Day. Visit our booth between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Oct. 8 – Canadice Lake Trail.

Nov. 12 – Rifle Range Trail, Penfield.

Dec. 10 – Indian Hill Trail, Perinton.

Officers for 2005

At the Nov. 18th meeting, the following officers were elected for a one-year term:

President – Dave Wright
VP – Jeff Hennick
Secretary – open
Treasurer – Chauncy Young
Trailmaster – Carol MacInnes
Trail Boss – Larry Fisher
Membership – David Coleman
Education – Ruth Nellis
Historian – Roberta Lockwood

Newsletter editor and Publicity duties will be fulfilled by Dave Wright.

As noted, we do not have a secretary. This is an easy job that requires only a commitment of 1 to 2 hours per month to attend the monthly meeting and take notes.

If you have the evening of the third Thursday of each month free, please consider attending our next meeting and see how easy it would be to help our staff.

Also, if anyone would like to be the publicity chair or the editor of this quarterly newsletter, we would certainly welcome the help.

Help with the many miles of trails is always welcomed.

Bridge returned to its rightfull place

In September, we had a lot of rain in a short period of time. This caused many of the creeks in Victor to overflow. One such creek was Great Brook. The water flowed so fast along Dryer Road that it knocked over our footbridge off its foundation and swept it through a stone culvert into the Victor Insulator property.

Fortunately, it got stopped and the Village Public Works Dept. was able to remove it from the creek. The Victor Parks Dept. moved it back upstream and a group of VHT volunteers placed it back on the foundations.

Jim Mattoon put new railings on the bridge and reopened the trail. Thanks to everyone who pitched in and helped with this emergency repair.
PAST HIKES

October 9 – This was a long (eight miles) hike on the Bristol Branch of the Finger Lakes Trail. Nine hikers started at the DEC office on Route 245 in Naples and headed up the switchback trail to the top of Hi Tor. There are many trails in this State Wildlife Area with spectacular views of Canadigua Lake and Conklin’s Gully.

November 13 – It was sunny, windy and cool for nineteen hikers that made the trek to Ellison Park. The hike covered most of the trails from the south end to the north, a distance of about 4 miles. Stopped for a short break at Fort Schuyler, site of an old trading post.

December 11 – Although there was a light rain falling and the forecast was for snow showers, nine hardy (or is it foolish) souls showed up at the fish hatchery at Powder Mills Park for a morning hike. The group hiked some new trails, some less used trails and some favorite trails. Saw lots of deer and a flooded, fast-flowing Irondequoit Creek.

Replica of Fort Schuyler.

Chimney of a burned down house.
Hiking through the woods.

The group.

Interesting mushrooms.

Snack break.

The Blue Trail is flooded.

Coming down a steep ravine.
Hike Victor Trails
Five miles of relatively easy walking in Victor.
Meet at Mead Square near the Victor Free Library parking lot on Main Street West, at 10 a.m. on January 15, 2005.

Geneesee Waterways Center Activities and Programs for January - March 2005
Visit their website at www.geneseewaterways.org

Indoor Rowing: Come inside for the winter and experience a new exercise called rowing. Practice over the winter months with both experienced and beginner's so that you will be ready to hit the water in April, 2005. Classes are held both Tuesday nights from 6:15 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. and Thursday mornings from 9:15 to 10:45 at the Pittsford Rowing Club off of Clover Street in Pittsford. Price is $15 per session. Sign up for five sessions for $75 and get the sixth lesson free! Call the Genesee Waterways Center at 585-328-3960 for more information.

Kids Kayaking: For boys and girls, ages 10 to 18 who have had previous kayaking experience, held at the Harley School, 1981 Clover St., Rochester. Hours are 6 p.m. to 8:30 each Sunday night through March, 2005. Cost is $15 per night with your own equipment. If you need to rent equipment, for an additional $15, GWC will provide you with a kayak and all accessories. Pay in advance for four sessions and receive the fifth session free. Call the Genesee Waterways Center at 585-328-3960 for more information. Class size limited to 10 kayaks.

Family Learn to Kayak: Get your family ready for spring paddling by learning to kayak this winter. Our ACA certified instructors will teach you the basics of getting in and out of a kayak, correct paddle handling, turns and wet exits. Safety is also strongly stressed. All kayaks, paddles and life jackets are provided. Starting Saturdays, February 12, 19 and 26 at the Harley School, 1981 Clover St. from 6-8:30. Cost is $150 for each family pair or $99 for one individual. Space is limited to 10 kayaks so register early at 328-3960.

Winter Snowshoeing Class: To enjoy winter sports such as snowshoeing, you need to know what clothing to wear and what equipment works best. This class starts with a two hour introduction explaining everything you need to know about proper attire, footgear and snowshoe equipment. The indoor class will be held at the Genesee Waterways Center, 149 Elmwood Ave in Genesee Valley Park. Following the indoor training, the class will select one Saturday for a full day snowshoe trek, location to be determined. Instructor is Dave Hurburt of "Get Out and Stay Out". Minimum class size is 5 and maximum is 10. Cost per person for the indoor training and outdoor trek, including equipment and food is $50. Indoor class is January 22 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Genesee Waterways Center.

Trail Walks: Come enjoy the many hiking trails of the Genesee Region. Each weekend at the sites listed below, a knowledgeable trail person will accompany you on a trail in Monroe, Ontario or Wayne County. Each participant should dress appropriately for the hike; bring a lunch and something to drink. Depending on the weather and snowfall, snowshoes and or cross country skis may also be used. Select below, the hike(s) that you would like attend.

Victor Hiking Trails. Five miles of relatively easy walking in Victor. Meet at Mead Square near the Victor Free Library parking lot on Main Street West, at 10 a.m. on January 15, 2005. Leader is Dave Wright.

More hikes to follow shortly

YogaKids Workshop: Introduce your child to the benefits of yoga! YogaKids has created traditional yoga techniques in playful, simple and fun ways for young people. The children will engage in active, inspiring class activities including yoga poses, music, games, creative arts and be guided slowly to a place of quiet and relaxation. It is an exciting new way for kids to explore and appreciate their creative potential while discovering a sense of awareness and respect for themselves, others and world around them. Heidi Kaufman, an YogaKids Associate, will instruct for Adventure Out! Students should wear loose-fitting clothing. Mats will be provided.

Dates: Saturday, January 29 and March 5
Time: 9:30 to 10:30
Ages: 7 - 11
Class size: Maximum of 10
Cost: $5 per class per student
Location: Genesee Waterways Center, 149 Elmwood Ave in Genesee Valley Park
Call 328-3960 to register

Pilates: IM=X Pilates focuses on developing superior core muscle power, increased muscular control, greater body alignment and postural endurance, all of which help optimize physical performance. Other benefits include joint stabilization, increased back strength, hip flexibility, a heightened sense of body awareness and release of tension. Lori Shill, of Adventure Out1, will instruct.

Dates: Wednesdays starting January 19 and (Continued on page 6)
All about snowshoeing

Strap on a pair of lightweight snowshoes and you'll quickly learn why so many people enjoy this sport.

If you can walk, you can snowshoe. The sport is inexpensive, can be done almost anywhere there's snow, and provides great cardiovascular and conditioning workouts. Snowshoes will take you into areas where you can observe nature in serene, stress-relieving settings. Bring a picnic, or conduct a nature scavenger hunt! It's fun whether you're alone on a trail behind your house, or with your family on a backwoods hike.

Gear Up

Before renting or purchasing equipment, ask yourself a few questions: How much do you think you'll be snowshoeing? Will you be snowshoeing only on a vacation or also near where you live? Determining your projected commitment level will help you decide whether to rent or to buy equipment.

Your equipment options include:

Renting equipment at your local outdoor or snow sports shop. You can usually rent equipment by the day or week. This is recommended for your first time.

Buying used equipment at a local shop or ski swap. Stay away from garage sales and be careful at swaps because you may wind up with gear that is outdated and inappropriate.

Buying new equipment.

In general, modern snowshoes are made of a lightweight, aluminum frame with durable synthetic decking materials for flotation, and an easy-to-use, supportive binding system to hold your feet in place. Snowshoes can also be made of plastic or composite materials, while traditional snowshoes have a wood frame with rawhide lacing.

There are three categories of snowshoes, designed for different activities:

Recreational hiking/fitness/walking: This includes winter walking, casual hiking and family outings. Snow conditions are primarily packed or broken snow trails over rolling terrain. These snowshoes generally feature a “bearpaw” or Western-style frame. This oval, symmetrical frame shape evenly distributes your weight for greater stability and balance. Built-in crampons (“teeth” that dig into the snow) on the snowshoes' frame maximize traction.

Running/aerobic fitness: This includes winter running and fitness training, usually on packed or groomed trails. These snowshoes tend to be smaller and lighter than other styles of snowshoes. Some running/aerobic fitness snowshoes also have an asymmetric shape, allowing for more clearance and a natural, more efficient stride.

Hiking/backpacking: This includes making steep climbs and descents. Snow and terrain conditions are variable, including powder snow on unbroken trails and wind-packed snow. These snowshoes are generally the most durable, and are designed to withstand extreme weather conditions and use. They usually feature highly supportive binding systems, built-in toe and heel crampons for maximum traction and durable decking materials.

Measure up

Snowshoes are usually measured in inches. The size of the snowshoe you need depends on your weight and the snow/trail conditions you will be experiencing.

The type of snow you will be snowshoeing in can determine what style and size of snowshoe to use. Wet or icy snow conditions, often experienced in North America in the Northeast and Northwest, call for smaller snowshoes with grip-enhancing crampons. Plastic composite snowshoes can also be a good choice for these conditions because of their molded-in treads. Lighter, drier snow or fresh powder calls for a larger snowshoe with greater flotation. In general, keep in mind that unpacked snow will require a larger snowshoe.

Depending on the type of snowshoeing you are doing, the weather and the snow conditions, you have a choice of footwear. For casual recreational hiking and walking, insulated boots or rubber boots should be fine. For running and aerobic conditioning on packed snow, some athletes use running shoes. In powder snow, waterproof hiking shoes or boots are recommended. For hiking and backpacking, use waterproof, insulated hiking boots. If you're hiking in fresh powder, you may also want to wear gaiters (waterproof coverings for your lower legs), which will keep snow out of the top of your boots.

Many snowshoers use poles to help with their balance and rhythm. You can choose alpine, cross-country, or backcountry ski poles, which are made from fiberglass, aluminum, graphite or some combination of these materials. Backcountry poles are collapsible and height-adjustable, advantages that many snowshoers prefer.

Get going

You can either sign up for a short clinic (inquire at your local snow sport or outdoor shop) or just strap on the snowshoes and head out. Modern snowshoes, with their compact, streamlined

Get smart

In addition to this guide, there are a number of resources to help you get started snowshoeing, including:

1. Your local outdoor or snow sports shop. More than 1000 stores (locally try Dick's, Galyan's, EMS) in the United States carry snowshoes. Employees should be able to answer many of your questions.

2. Your local ski/snowboard area or park system may have trails suitable for snowshoeing. (Mendon Ponds, Powder Mills Park, Harriet Hollister Recreation area are just a few of the local places to try)

3. Snowshoe magazines and books. Check out Rich and Sue Freeman's guide book "Winter Trails".

4. Other websites, such as www.americanhiking.org, which can put you in touch with local clubs.

(Continued on page 7)
Snowshoe Treks in Genesee Valley Park: Come join Julie Doyle of "Adventure Out!" on fun snowshoeing treks in lovely Genesee Valley Park, Mendon Ponds and Duran Eastman Parks. Bring along the kids on Family Day, January 15 and enjoy trudging through the snow together, building a snowman and ending your hike with hot chocolate! Or take advantage of the other dates and go solo. No prior experience needed. Equipment includes 2005 Atlas snowshoes and trekking poles. Rentals are on a first come basis.

Dates, Times and Locations:
January 11, Mendon Ponds Park, 12:30 to 2:30
January 15, Genesee Waterways Center in Genesee Valley Park, 9-11 Family Day
February 9, Mendon Ponds Park, 9-11
March 3, Duran Eastman Park, 9-11

Class size: Maximum of 10.
Cost: $25 per person except for Family Day when the cost is $25 for a family of up to four people.
Call 328-3960 to register.

Parent and Child Ceramic Class: Have Mom or Dad work together with one of their children to hand build a clay large bowl or box for the first week and the following week paint it with colored slips and a glaze. The materials fee includes the clay, glazes and two firings. You can also check out the website (www.rochesterclayworks.com) for ideas.

Instructor: Mary Beth Fitzsimmons, Rochester Clay Works
Dates: Sundays, January 16 and 23 (Session 1)
Sundays, February 6 and 13 (Session 2)
Saturdays, March 26 and April 2 (Session 3)
Times: Sundays, 1:30 to 3 p.m.
Saturdays, 10:30 to Noon
Class size: Minimum is 2 pairs, maximum is 5 pairs
Ages: 6 years old and up
Cost: $45 per pair
Location: Genesee Waterways Center, 149 Elmwood Ave in Genesee Valley Park. Call 328-3960 to register.

Winter Break for Kids Ceramic Class: Tired of having the kids watch TV on their vacation? Well why not have them attend this special class which goes for the entire week of Winter School break. For one and a half hours each day, the kids will learn the basics of working with clay by creating a teapot, vessel or who knows what? Let their minds be creative. All materials are included in the fee.
Instructor: Mary Beth Fitzsimmons, Rochester Clay Works
Dates: February 21 through 25
Times: 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. each day

Class size: Minimum 5, Maximum is 10
Ages: 6 years old and up
Cost: $75 for the week, includes all materials, glazes and firing

Presentations: Outdoor Adventure Speaker's Series
The Genesee Waterways Center's Outdoor Adventure Speaker's series presents lively discussion on travel, adventure, conservation and living well. Each presentation is approximately one hour long and is held at the Genesee Waterways Center Conference Room. All presentations are at 7 p.m. A donation of $5 per person is suggested. Light refreshments are served. Reservations can be made at 585-328-3960. Capacity is 50 people.

January 18, 2005,
Welcome Back Otter! Learn about the success story of the return of river otters to Central and Western New York State. Speaker Dennis Money of the Genesee Waterways Center will tell how the project started, the partnerships it forged, how children became involved as well as some of the unique marketing efforts required to raise over $300,000 to make the project successful. A presentation for the entire family to enjoy.

February 7, 2005
A Region of Beauty – Trails and Waterfalls of the Finger Lakes
In Western New York, we truly live in a region of beauty. There is no need to travel far to find natural gems. Many of them are right in our own backyard. Join local guidebook authors Rich and Sue Freeman who will share their slides on where to go to find spectacular waterfalls and trails for hiking and biking in the Finger Lakes region.

February 28, 2005
Geocaching!
Geocaching is an entertaining adventure game for GPS users. Participating in a cache hunt is a good way to take advantage of the wonderful features and capability of a GPS unit. The basic idea is to have individuals and organizations set up caches all over the world and share the locations of those caches on the Internet. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches. There are over 3400 geocaches hidden in New York State alone! Join Geocache President Sandra Forbes for this unique talk.

March 3, 2005
Where to Canoe and Kayak Near Home
Rich and Sue Freeman want you to "Take a Paddle" with them. They will share slides taken while researching their newest guidebooks and show the most scenic, unique and just plain fun places you can flat water paddle in a kayak or canoe in our region.

March 7, 2005
Flying with Geese!
Remember the hit movie, "Winged Migration"? Ever wonder how the movie was made and how the flying birds were able to be photographed so closely? Mark Romanofsky of Hilton has been training (Continued on page 7)
BOOTS & SNOWSHOES

BOOTS:
First, let’s talk boots. Waterproof hiking boots work fine—preferably leather. I’ve used my Dolomite Ortles G hiking boots for snowshoeing without problem. They are one-piece leather with a gore-tex liner. I find the gore-tex is very nice in the winter because it does keep the feet a little warmer, especially handy in the snow.

I’ve also used, with success, my Sorel Bighorns (warm to -40 degrees, so they say). Plastic boots work but are a bit rigid. Basically, it doesn’t matter, as long as your feet stay dry, warm, and comfortable.

SNOWSHOES:
Now the snowshoes. Snowshoes have been around for a long time—much longer than skis. The earlier versions that we have used were made of wood with rawhide-lace lather-work inside the wooden frame. The bindings were typically made of leather. They were long, bulky, and heavy. They were not made for recreational purposes, per se, but for traveling and/or hauling loads over snow.

Today’s versions of the snowshoe are considerably different. They are smaller, lighter, stronger, and consequently, much more maneuverable than their older counterparts.

Instead of wood, most newer shoes are made of high-quality, light, durable, aircraft aluminum. Instead of rawhide lattice, the deckings are made of highly durable materials like Hypalon. Most good ones now cost in the range of $200 to $300, although you can usually get them on sale in the spring, at most outdoor shops.

Snowshoe Terminology:

(Continued from page 6)
Canada geese for several years to fly with his motor boat and now his ultra light. Come hear Mark speak about this unique passion for his winged critters and you will leave with a better understanding of how Winged Migration was made.

March 21, 2005
The White Deer of the Seneca Army Depot
The former Seneca Army Depot was built in 1941. Little did anyone know as the fence was built around the 11,000 acre munitions depot over 60 years ago that the few whitetail deer enclosed within the depot carried a recessive white gene. With protection from the Army, the white gene soon manifested itself into several hundred white deer, the largest herd of white deer in the entire world! Come learn about the history of the depot, the wonderful natural resources it contains and the future of the white deer. Dennis Money of the Genesee Waterways Center will speak.

(Continued from page 5)
frames, allow you to have a natural stride in varying snow conditions. You’ll soon learn the proper technique to make the most of your new snowshoes. Not only is snowshoeing fun and easy to learn, but you also can do it in your backyard or local park.

Snowshoeing is a low-impact activity that allows you to burn between 420 and 1,000 calories per hour, depending on whether you are walking or running, on packed snow or powder. It’s great cardiovascular conditioning and excellent winter cross-training for runners and cyclists.

Dress in layers and bring along a lightweight pack or waist pack with some high-energy foods such as fruit and energy bars, plus water or a sports drink. Don’t forget to bring and use sunscreen.

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Time to renew your membership?

Please look at the mailing label. The first line contains the month and year that your membership expires. If you are past due, please send a check today.

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

Name ___________________________ Date ___________

Address __________________________

City ___________________ Zip ___________

Phone (____) ___________ 

E-Mail __________________________

I want my newsletter (please check one) Mailed _____ E-mailed _____

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

Amount submitted $10 _____ $20 _____ $100 _____ $250 _____ other $ __________

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

Make check payable to: VICTOR HIKING TRAILS, INC.
And mail to: 85 EAST MAIN STREET
VICTOR, NY 14564

Website changes

We are working on revamping our website to make it more user friendly and to add features that will benefit all visitors.
Watch for the changes in February or March.

New format

You may have noticed this issue is a little different than the previous issues. We were having problems with the template and decided to start fresh.
We are interested in your feedback.
Do you like this format?
Any suggestions for future issues?
Send us your opinions to dwright@victorhikingtrails.org

Check out our website at www.victorhikingtrails.org

Connecting the gaps in Victor