



NYFOA

New York Forest Owners Association

SOUTHEASTERN ADIRONDACK

The Overstory

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WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Brayton Pendell, Glens Falls, NY

ADIRONDACK STUMPAGE PRICE REPORT

New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation
www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5259.html

Much More Than a Picnic

By John R. Greenwood

When my friend and coworker Kurt Edwards invited me to a New York Forest Owners Association woods walk several years ago, I had no idea what NYFOA was or how much enjoyment and knowledge I would glean from becoming a member. I don't own a woodlot or any acreage other than the small parcel my 1940s home in Wilton is built on. However, I spent a lifetime soaking up the benefits of forests in and around the Adirondacks. My involvement in the Southern Adirondack Chapter of NYFOA has been primarily for the social aspect and the wide range of knowledge I've gained about what goes into a healthy and productive woodland. I greatly respect those who put the time and effort into being good stewards of the land. I also enjoy meeting like-minded and devoted conservationists. I'm always amazed at how many generous people I meet at NYFOA events. Most would agree that life is much more rewarding when you surround yourself with individuals who take the time to share not only what they've learned but also the mistakes they've made along the way.

I wanted to share my thoughts about the SAC Annual Picnic hosted by my friends Kurt and Kristie Edwards at their beautiful home and property in Mayfield, New York, on September 23, 2023. The day teased us with rain that never materialized. It was just cool enough to be the perfect weather for a walk in the woods. Folks arrived to a table filled with coffee, tea, and pastry on the large wrap-around porch of the Edward's log home. People milled about saying hello to old friends and shaking hands with new ones. It resembled a family reunion of sorts. NYFOA family members who may not have seen each other since last year all sharing updates on their latest health issues, outdoor events, or home improvement projects.



Trees by the Tub-full

Paul Hetzler, ISA-Certified Arborist

A hot soothing bath is a tried-and-true remedy for calming our nerves, but science has now shown that a better tonic for anxiety and stress is bathing in the forest, fully dressed. True story. Of course, a few details would be helpful.

In a blinding flash of the obvious, research has proven that being in the woods makes us feel better. To be fair, the scientific process requires measurable evidence, so in this case, real-time brain imaging with fMRI and PET scans, as well as blood-cortisol levels, heart rate and blood pressure, were used in a host of studies which showed that being immersed in nature does us a lot of good, even if we're skeptical.

Canada is blessed with an abundance of forested land, so we're ahead of the curve in a new fad headed our way called "forest bathing." In Japan this has been going on for decades, but it has recently arrived in North America. Apparently in Los Angeles, forest bathing is an organized activity led by trained, certified forest-bathing guides. I'm not saying that's wrong, but really, all you have to do is step into a forest for 20 minutes or more. That's it. No fees; no equipment to buy. Although walking as you "bathe" is ideal, you'll reap benefits even if you just sit or lie there inert.

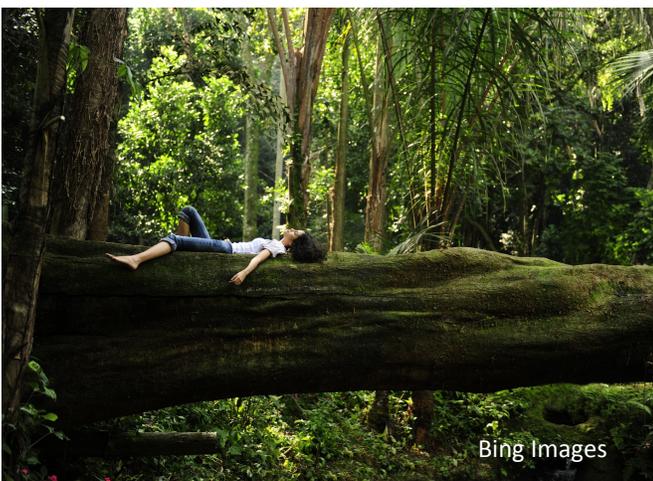
Lest you think this is a lot of fuss about nothing, remember that a solid majority of Canadians reside in urban areas. Down in the US, a 1994 study revealed that Americans spent 93% of their time indoors, and that was before the Internet and smart phones. We may rate better, but I doubt it's by much.

In light of this, and the mounting evidence of how important nature is to our health, mainstream medical doctors in Canada as well as in many European countries now actually prescribe walks in the woods. In the US, more than 500 doctors have joined a group called Park Rx America, a "non-profit organization whose mission is to decrease the burden of chronic disease and increase health and happiness by virtue of prescribing Nature during the routine delivery of healthcare."



Distance from wild forests need not be a barrier for urban dwellers, as a well-treed park will do just fine. In fact, researchers say that if we could get our cities and suburbs to a tree-canopy density of 40% – which is quite feasible, by the way – people could accrue the benefits of "bathing" in a forest right in their neighbourhood.

The positive effect that trees have on our health is not some vague notion – it is being quantified, and the results are staggering. Governments are very interested in potential health-care cost reduction which can be attained through exposure to nature. South of our border, where they have by far the most expensive health care system in the world, Dr. Kathy Wolf of the University of Washington calculates the annual US savings to be at least \$2.7 billion, and possibly as much as \$6.7 billion.



Early in the history of public zoos, keepers noticed that animals deprived of a naturalistic environment tended to get violent, and became ill more often. The same holds true for the human animal. Dr. Frances Kuo from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana says humans living in landscapes that lack trees undergo patterns of social, psychological and physical breakdown that are strikingly similar to those seen in other animals deprived of their natural habitat.

Examples of forest bathing

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Once everyone was present and accounted for, Kurt had everyone introduce themselves with a brief description of the size and scope of their property and the reason for being a NYFOA member. This simple exercise created an instant bond and commonality among the many attendees. There were folks from Schroon Lake, Thurman, Bleecker, Coeymans, Fultonville, Corinth, and Hadley. They owned woodlots of less than an acre up to 420 acres, with a similar range of varied interests.

The Edward's had gone to great lengths to provide guest speakers for the day. Carol and Gerry McDonald, members of the Capitol District Chapter of NYFOA, were kind enough to travel all the way from Coeymans to spend the day discussing and identifying dozens of varieties of mushrooms. As members of the Mid-Hudson Mycological Association, they provided a day filled with interesting facts and anecdotes about mushrooms. Their passion for their hobby was infectious. The couple answered question after question about mushrooms throughout the day and appeared to enjoy answering every one of them. Their discussion brought back fond memories of my grandparent's farm back in the 1960s. My grandmother collected wild mushrooms and dried them on old window screens spread out on the sun porch. The day not only brought back the earthy smell that permeated your nose as you entered the house, but it also made me crave a bowl of her Slovak "Kapustnica" brimming with sauerkraut, mushrooms, and sausages, a taste my mother and aunt could never quite replicate. Homemade sauerkraut and sun-dried wild mushrooms were probably the missing link.

We also had the privilege of having Tom Bielli, a United States Department of Agriculture and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Specialist from the Fultonville Service Center, provide the group with a wealth of information on the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Although many longstanding NYFOA members might be familiar with programs such as these, there were many new members present that day who were not. Tom provided USDA handouts that outlined them and included contact information for those who wanted to learn more. Personally, I had no idea programs like this existed. As a citizen, I believe it's important to know about these programs whether we own woodlands or not. Thanks to the information Mr. Bielli provided at the picnic, I can now share the knowledge of those programs with friends and neighbors who would otherwise never know about them.

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Jerry and Carol discuss mushrooms found in the surrounding area

Remembering Friends....

This past year was tough on chapter we suffered the great loss of some important members and very close friends just as we did last year. Their contributions to forestry and NYFOA will be remembered always.



Barbara Hennig passed away last December (2022) after several weeks in the hospital. She would have turned 98 in January. She never wanted recognition (she told her caregivers she didn't want a memorial service or an obituary). She was a vital part of the NYFOA for many years. She was a member of the steering committee and served as secretary for over ten years. She was awarded the Chapter Service Award in 2013. We must also recognize Barbara's forestry stewardship.

Beyond her love of the woods, the woodwalks on the Hennig Preserve, and the Preserve itself, attest to her commitment to forestry and the principles that NYFOA/SAC stand for. One of the ways in which Barbara's spirit lives on is in her and her family's gift to Saratoga PLAN of

the Hennig Preserve on Center Line Road in Middle Grove/Barkersville and north of Galway. The Hennig Preserve—more than 600 conserved acres of land—is Saratoga PLAN's largest preserve.

John Sullivan died on October 29, 2023, at age 85, after a long, courageous fight with lung cancer. His love of the woods began at a very young age, by spending summers in the Adirondacks, hiking the mountains, swimming, and surviving endless adventures in small boats. In 1996, he moved to the 400-acre Kipp Mountain Tree Farm in Chestertown that had once been home to his great-grandparents. He was proud of his work on the stewardship of his beloved Tree Farm. He was secretary of the New York Forest Owners' Assoc. (NYFOA) in 2005 and 2006, chairman of the southeastern chapter of NYFOA from 2008 to 2009, and was named Forest Owner of the Year in 2006. He was also awarded NYFOA's Heiberg Memorial Award in 2008.

During his life John worked as a newspaper reporter and editor, public relations practitioner, media producer, freelance writer, and book editor. He also built things: a log home on his maternal family's farm in the Adirondacks; a boat; and an airplane that he flew, low and slow, over the Adirondack Mountains—as well as on a memorable trip all the way to Alaska and back, often camping next to grass-strip runways along the way.



John running his sawmill at a NYFOA/SAC event

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The advantages of experiencing nature are amazing. In a Feb. 2014 article in the guardian.com, Richard Louv, author of Last Child in the Woods, tells how patients in rooms with tree views had shorter hospital stays and needed less pain medication compared to patients without a natural vista. Elderly adults tend to live longer if their homes are near a park or other green space, regardless of social or economic status. College students do better on cognitive tests when their windows face natural settings, and after just an hour in the woods, memory performance and attention span improves 20%.

Scandinavian countries quietly embraced this idea long ago. In Norway there's a movement called Friluftsliv, "open-air life," which kind of boils down to forest bathing. They even have a law, Allemannsrett, or "all humankind's right," which allows anyone to walk on rural land not under cultivation.

We need to think of nature as an essential part of our health, and treat it accordingly. I encourage everyone to start forest-bathing as soon as possible. For that over-the-top stress, however, perhaps you could arrange to have your tub moved into the woods to get the best of all worlds.

For more information on forest bathing, see <https://www.webmd.com/balance/news/20190611/forestbathing-nature-time-hot-health-advice> Dr. Wolf's research on the health benefits of trees can be found at <http://www.naturewithin.info/>

A Permanent Resident of Canada, Paul Hetzler lives in Ottawa. He is a member of ISA-Ontario, the Canadian Institute of Forestry, and the Society of American Foresters. Before moving to Canada he was the Natural Resources Educator for Cornell University Extension in northern New York State.

Remembering Friends...continued

Robert (Bob) Manning, passed away on November 23, Thanksgiving Day. He had been a member of NYFOA since at least 1982, over 40 years. Bob's love of the natural world was evident, as a youngster he loved scouting camp which flamed his love of science. That enthusiasm led him to become a science teacher. Besides teaching high school he enjoyed running, skiing and hiking with his family. He retired to Garnet Lake and became a steward to his property on Oven Mountain. He managed his forest making trails to the overlooks and enjoyed hosting group climbs to view the



local peaks. Bob volunteered his time to our chapter in so many ways. In 2004 he became the vice chairman of our SAC chapter. The following year he became the chairman for the 2005-2006 term. In 2008 he became our communications officer and in 2009 the office of treasurer, both positions he eagerly continued until his recent passing. In 2011 Bob was presented the SAC Chapter Service Award for his many contributions to our chapter leadership. His skills and knowledge were vast and very valuable to our organization. He also assisted NYFOA's state level with postings to the facebook page. Bob was a great photographer! He contributed

Our hike up oven mountain—Bob Manning Center with orange vest

several photos that appear on the NYFOA website main page. We always looked to him and his camera to photograph our chapter events. Bob rarely missed a chapter meeting or event since we have known him during the last two-and-a-half decades! Bob also volunteered for 6 years as a MFO (Master Forest Owner Volunteer) through Cornell Cooperative Extension. We are all truly going to miss him!

Earlier in the summer, the Edwards invited Suzanne Treyger, a Forest Program Manager for Audubon, NY., to walk their woodland with them. They were seeking additional ways to improve the habitat for their current bird population. They were also interested in enticing new species to the woodlot, one of them being the increasingly rare whippoorwill. Kurt and Kristie spent much of the day relaying the information and suggestions Suzanne had provided them. The couple also shared the details of the two EQIP Grant Projects they'd completed.

The comfort level people had asking questions stood out to me throughout the day. Sharing knowledge is a positive gesture at any time, but it felt even more so on this day. The Edwards, their speakers, and their guests were indicative of the typical NYFOA member throughout all chapters.

Hungry after a long woods walk, we were all treated to a vast and delicious spread. There were grilled hotdogs, hamburgers, various salads, desserts, coffee, tea, and even a pitcher of home-made lemonade. I think most of us would have stayed the night if asked.

I want to thank everyone involved with NYFOA, especially our day's hosts, speakers, and guests, for what they do and stand for.

Now, go to the top of this piece and re-read the title.

It fits like a glove.



Tom Bielli, NCRS, provides information of programs available to forest owners.

Coming Events....

SAC Annual Meeting Saturday, January 20th, 2024

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County
50 West High Street, Ballston Spa
10am Business Meeting
11:30 - 1pm pot luck lunch

Please bring a dish to share for the potluck lunch, beverage and table service.

1 pm Presentation
DEC Supervising Forester Rob Ripp
Will discuss:
Deer population and their impact
on our forestland.

SAC Spring Event

"Keeping Your Forest Healthy"
Saturday May 4th, 2024
10am – 12pm

4H Training Center
556 Middleline Road, Ballston Spa, NY

Join Kristopher Williams from the Capital Region Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (CR-PRISM) for a Presentation and Woods Walk on "Keeping Your Forest Healthy" using Score Card created by The Nature Conservancy and Cornell Cooperative Extension System. The program will be broken into two parts one a presentation on sustainability with a focus on invasive species the other a woods walk will use a scorecard to help guide general discussions on basic forestry concepts. Content will include discussions on forest resiliency and practices to control invasive species. Kristopher will also draw on his experience as the Cornell Master Forest Owner Volunteer Regional Director. Facilities are located on the 4H Campus, please be prepared for weather and take tick prevention measures.

Following the woods walk we will gather for lunch, if you plan to stay please bring a bag lunch and beverage.

Please RSVP to Kurt Edwards by April 27th at (518) 661-5685 or by email: edwardsk922@gmail.com

Burke Receives Chapter Service Award

We live in a time when politicians, celebrities, and many others have a need to focus attention on themselves, rather than what they have done. It is our NYFOA chapter's great luck that Bill Burke is just the opposite of that kind of person. Bill joined our Southeastern Adirondack Chapter in 2009, and has been a significant but quiet force in our chapter for many years.

Despite the other demands in his life, in 2014 Bill volunteered to be Secretary when the chapter was in need of officers. Before then, year after year, Bill volunteered to move the impossibly heavy and awkward wooden display panels for our summer fair booths in Saratoga and Washington Counties when nobody else was able to do so. And after that, Bill took over and continues to coordinate staffing at the Saratoga Fair.

Bill attends nearly all our meetings and functions, and serves as an important contributor to our deliberations in his understated way, never turning the focus onto himself, but rather onto his ideas. It was Bill's suggestion, and his efforts, that connected us with Chronicle columnist, Dan Ladd, who wrote about our Chapter, became a member in 2018, and forged a connection with our chapter.

Bill exemplifies what is best about NYFOA members. He is an informed advocate for best forestry management practices and a consistent contributor to our chapter activities in large and small ways. We are a much stronger organization because of Bill's efforts on our behalf.

Please applaud Bill Burke for being the recipient of the Southeastern Adirondack Chapter, Chapter Service Award.



Are you interested in hosting a woods walk?

Do you have a suggestion for a chapter event?

If so please contact Kurt Edwards, event coordinator,
at 411 Beech Street, Mayfield, NY 12117, or at edwardsk922@gmail.com



New York Forest Owners Association

SOUTHEASTERN

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