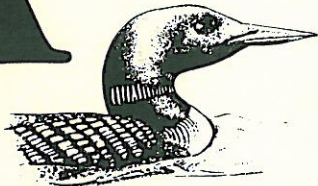


# ADIRONDACK COUNCIL



SUMMER 1989

## NEWSLETTER

### Council Honors Harold Jerry

The Adirondack Council conferred three awards at its annual dinner on July 7 for distinguished service to the Adirondack Park. (See photos on next page.)

The "Outstanding Conservationist Award" was presented by Chairman Kim Elliman to Harold A. Jerry, Jr., whose credentials and accomplishments could fill this and many more newsletters.

Jerry served as executive director of Governor Rockefeller's Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks, whose landmark report in 1970 recommended many protective steps that have since been taken. These include the creation of an Adirondack Park Agency and its parkwide land-use controls, a Wilderness System (no motorized use allowed), a Rivers System (no dams allowed), and Visitor Interpretive Centers (see page 10).

In 1977, Jerry revamped the fledgling Adirondack Council and, as the Council's board chairman, he appointed Gary Randorf as staff director. Jerry is currently a prime mover on the Governor's Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century, where he provides a vital link between the study commission of two decades ago

and a preservationist's vision of the Adirondack Park a generation from now.

Jack Leadley, Jr. received the Council's "Outstanding Communicator Award" for his outspoken columns in the *Hamilton County News* in which he challenged the popular myth that continual growth and development are good for the Adirondacks because they heap economic and social benefits on all (see pages 6-7).

Jack Drury received the Council's "Outstanding Educator Award" for creating the Wilderness Leadership Program at North Country Community College in Saranac Lake and for making the Adirondack Park a national teacher-training center that fosters wilderness recreation, appreciation and understanding.

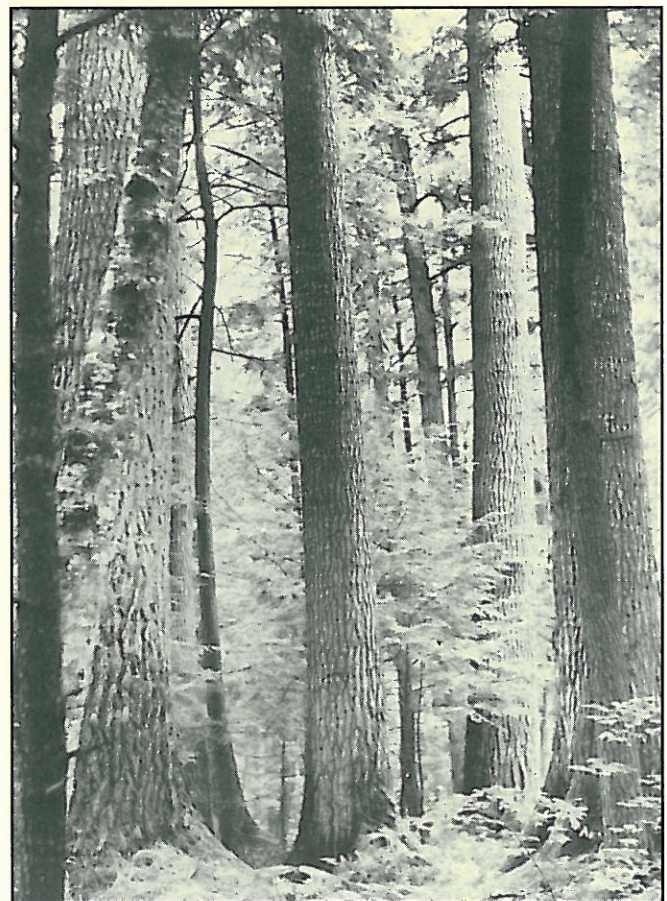
### Randorf Returns

Charles M. Clusen has resigned as executive director of the Adirondack Council and Gary Randorf, who served as the Council's first executive director from 1977 to 1987, has returned to take his place.

Randorf left the Council's staff two years ago to help create the Adirondack Park Visitor Interpretive Center at Paul Smiths, a task he completed when the Center opened in May (see page 10). He will serve as the Council's interim executive director while a national search for a permanent replacement is conducted.

In announcing the staff changes, Chairman Kim Elliman noted that "during Chuck's tenure the Adirondack Council experienced unprecedented strengthening and growth. Membership and revenue increased beyond expectations and our staff has expanded accordingly. All who support the Council and value the Adirondack Park owe Chuck a debt of gratitude."

Randorf, who combines the talents of photographer, writer and naturalist with a penchant for political activism, rejoined the Council on July 1.



Paul Schaefer

**VIRGIN ADIRONDACKS** — One of 65 illustrations from *Defending the Wilderness: The Adirondack Writings of Paul Schaefer*. See pages 12-15.



# Elliman Praised For Leadership Role

Kim Elliman has stepped down as chairman of the board of the Adirondack Council after presiding over the greatest surge of growth and achievement in the Council's history.

When he took over as chairman in 1985, the organization had three staff members, an annual budget of \$125,000, and 2,500 dues-paying members. When he passed the baton to former vice-chairman Barbara Glaser on July 8, the staff numbered a dozen, the annual budget was \$1.2 million, membership stood at 12,500, and the organization had just moved into efficient new offices.

"It wouldn't have happened without you," said Donna Beal, the Council's administrator, in presenting Elliman with a staff tribute (the "Unflappable Leader Award") at the Council's annual dinner.

"Many were responsible for this progress," said Beal. "But more than anything else it was your vision of a bigger, stronger Adirondack Council that converted us, in four short years, into one of the nation's leading citizen-advocacy groups. You professionalized our fund raising and communications. You launched our membership campaign. You counselled us through organizational growing pains. Amazingly, you did all this while you were starting a new business, managing a lot of old business, and pursuing your avocation of naturalist and bird-watcher. And somehow, through it all, you managed to

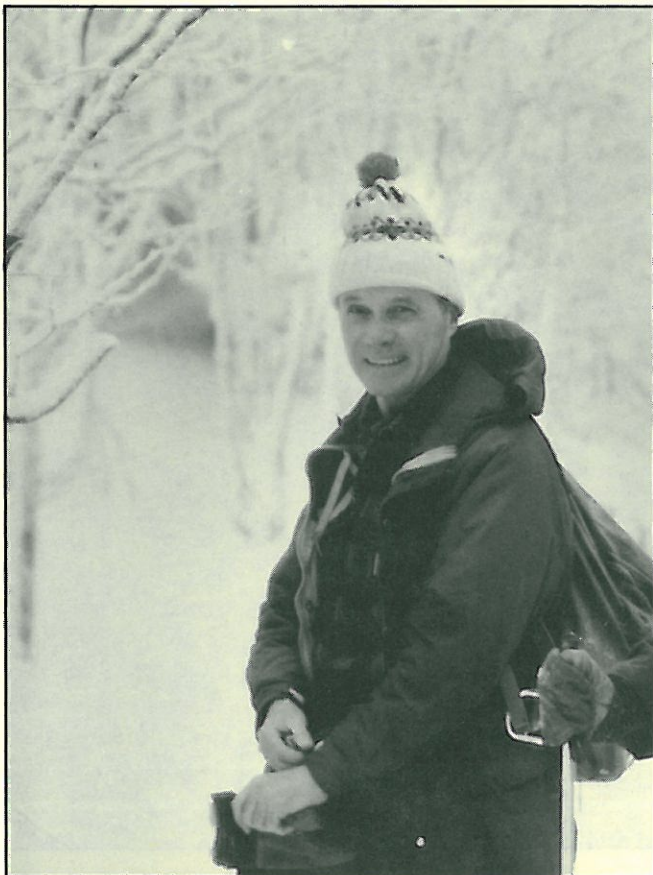
swim a mile every day before the rest of us were even out of bed."

Elliman will remain actively involved in Council affairs as vice chairman of the board of directors.



Alan Cedestrom

**CHAIRMAN KIM ELLIMAN** giving Governor Cuomo the Council's top award three years ago.

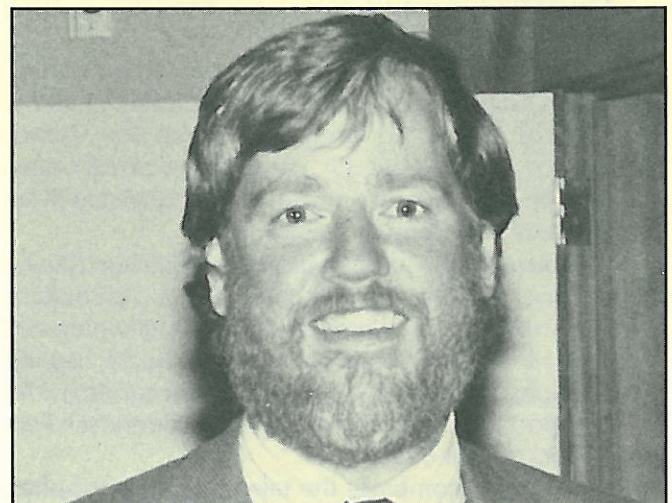


Gary Randorf

**HAROLD A. JERRY, JR.** — Recipient of the Council's Outstanding Conservationist Award, 1989.

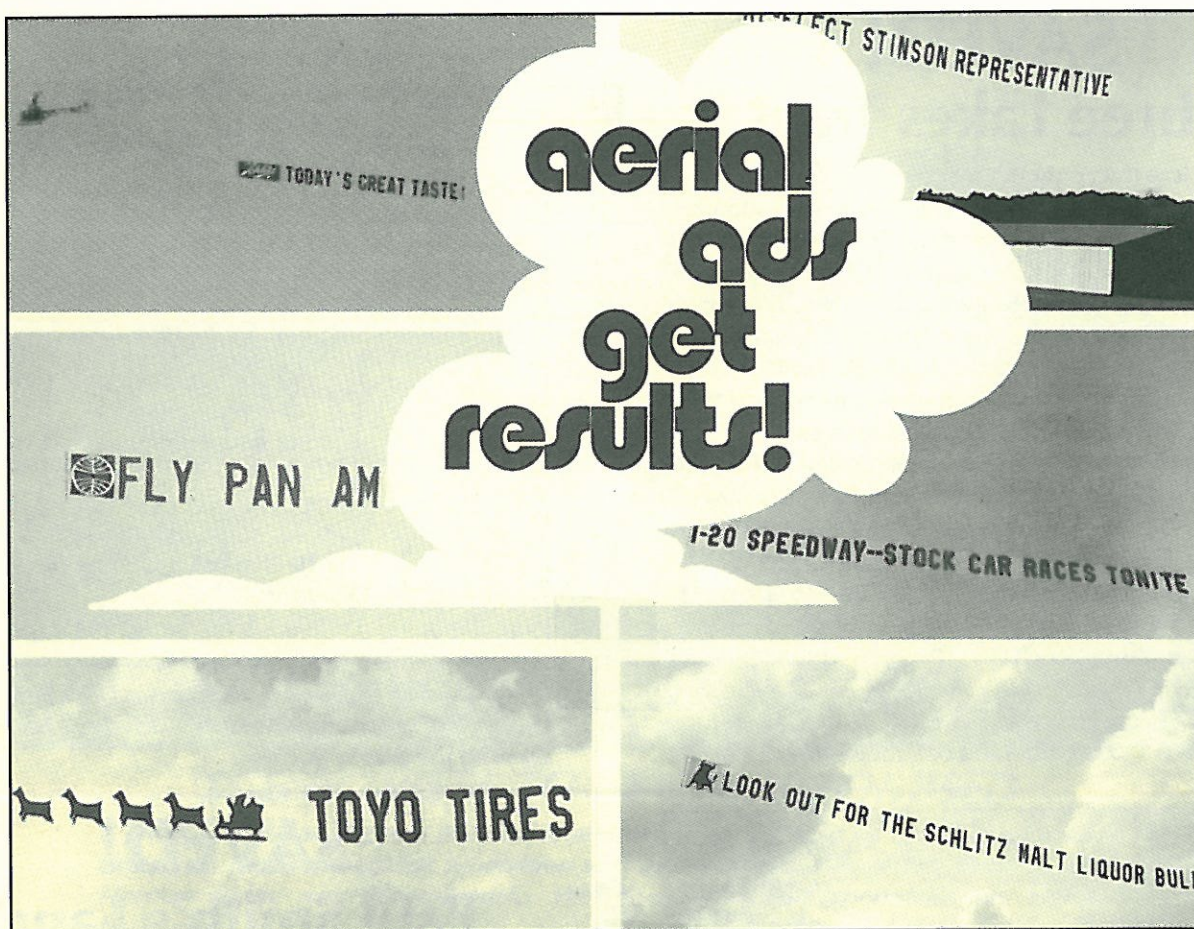


**JACK LEADLEY, JR.** — Communicator Award, 1989.



**JACK DRURY** — Educator Award, 1989.





## VISUAL AIR POLLUTION

# Council Protests Aerial Advertising

Another threat from above has apparently been averted.

The new threat surfaced in an advertisement (see above) circulated by a flight service operating out of the Adirondack Airport near Saranac Lake. The ad proclaimed: **"GET MORE MILEAGE FROM YOUR ADVERTISING DOLLAR BY ADDING A SPECIAL TOUCH THAT WILL KEEP YOUR NAME IN THE PUBLIC'S MIND AFTER THE ADS ARE GONE!"**

"Moving across the sky in giant letters," the pitch continued, "your message becomes an attraction, not a distraction, of the outdoor scene. When a banner appears overhead, people instinctively gaze with curiosity. Through banners, you can reach people when they are on the golf course, on the ski slopes, at the park, the lakes . . ."

The Council sent a letter to the flight service expressing opposition to its plans. "There may be an appropriate place for such advertising," the Council stated, "but we believe the Adirondack Park is not that place."

We also stressed that "much of the delight in being in the Adirondacks is being away from the relentless commercialization so pervasive almost everywhere else. What draws many people to the Adirondack Park is the rare

opportunity to experience an undisturbed and uncommercialized environment."

In a subsequent meeting, the flight service executives were friendly and cooperative, explaining they had no intention of detracting from the natural character of the park. And they promised to concentrate any aerial advertising on population centers outside the park's boundaries.

## ADIRONDACK ACTIVIST DIES

Bill Verner, a leading Adirondack conservationist and educator, died of leukemia on May 8. He was 53 years old.

Earlier this year, as reported in our last Newsletter, the Adirondack Council presented Bill with an award in recognition of all he had done to explain and protect the park. The award was in the form of a photograph of the High Peaks by Gary Randorf, with a plaque that read: *"To William K. Verner, for his lasting contribution to the cause of Adirondack preservation and for the grace, wisdom and unfailing good humor with which he pursued this cause and inspired his colleagues."*



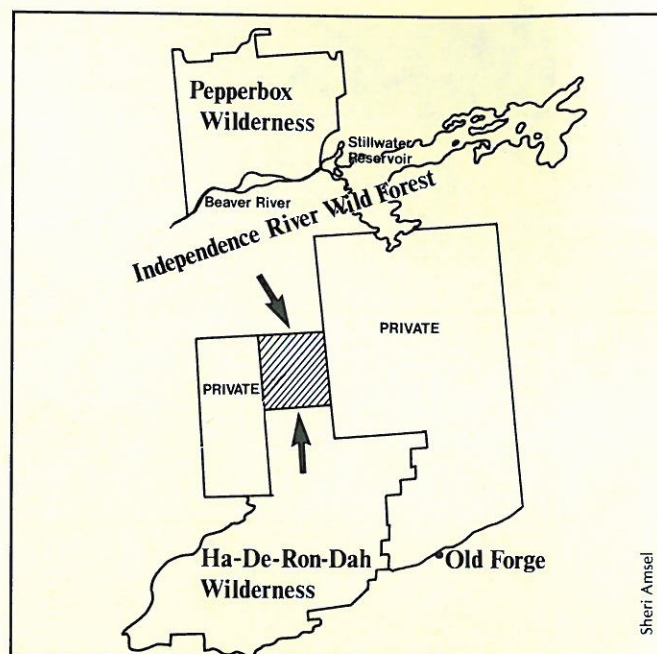
## SAVED! Three Lakes Tract

A 3,200-acre tract connecting key units of public Forest Preserve has been saved from subdivision by the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and the State of New York. This wild and beautiful acreage, situated in the western Adirondacks near Stillwater Reservoir, has been under contract since 1987 to Patten Corporation, which planned to subdivide and sell it as rustic backcountry lots.

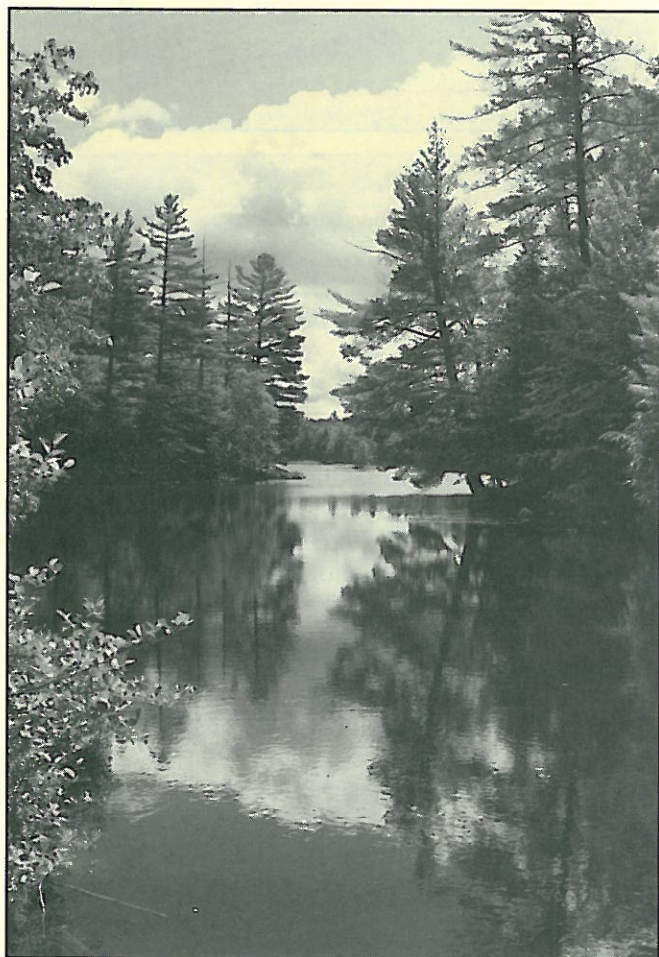
The parcel links the state-owned Independence River Wild Forest and Ha-De-Ron-Dah Wilderness.

At the urging of the Adirondack Council, the State eventually included the tract on its list of priority acquisitions. Thanks to the Adirondack Nature Conservancy (a chapter of The Nature Conservancy) the tract and its three lakes will remain forever undeveloped and open to the public.

The Conservancy purchased the property for \$700,000 and will convey easements to the State, thereby allowing public recreational access. Selective timbering will be allowed but no future building or subdivision can occur.



**THREE LAKES TRACT** — An important link between state holdings, this acquisition in itself adds three beautiful wild lakes to the public domain.



Alan Cedersrom

**ST. REGIS RIVER** — Three crucial miles between Lower St. Regis Lake and the Keese Mill Dam are preserved for posterity, including future generations of paddlers who begin or end a classic canoe trip on this stretch of river.



## SAVED! Paul Smith's Lands

Another important "save" was announced by Governor Cuomo at the opening of the Adirondack Park Visitors Center. The State acquired 8,900 acres of forest and wetlands from Paul Smith's College in fee title (outright purchase) or as easements that allow the college to continue using the land for educational purposes.

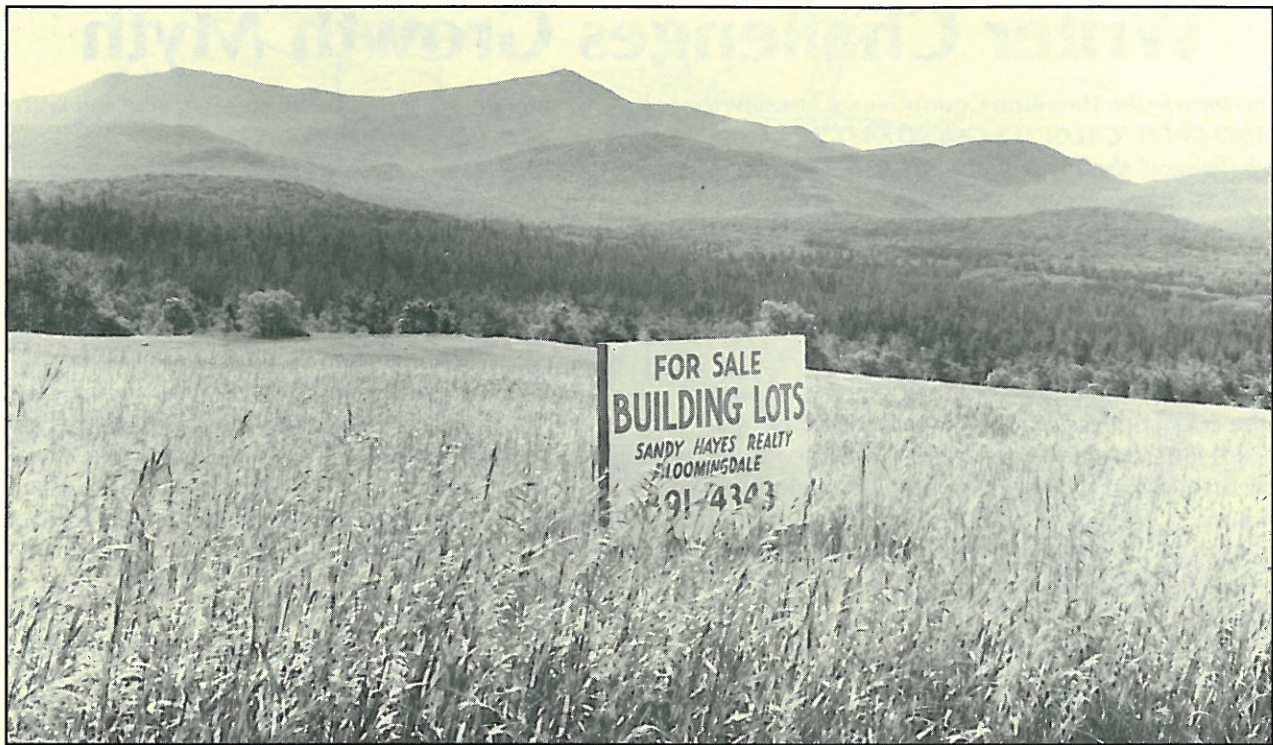
The \$5.5 million purchase includes a popular swimming beach at the east end of Lake Clear and three miles of the St. Regis River as it flows from Lower St. Regis Lake to the Keese Mill Dam. The State deserves special credit for rescuing this lovely stretch of undisturbed river from subdivision and development.

At first, the College had intended to retain this frontage as a "nest egg" — which meant that sooner or later, the river corridor would be subdivided and "river view" houses built there. But the Council made a strong case for public purchase of the corridor, using a series of dramatic black-and-white photos to show what could be lost. Commissioner Jorling listened, and his department acted responsibly. As a result, this exceptional waterway will continue to serve, as it has for a hundred years, as a delightful beginning or end for an important Adirondack canoe trip.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Thank the Commissioner and tell him to keep up the good work. Write: Commissioner Thomas C. Jorling, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, 50 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12223.





Frank J. Exline, Jr.

## SCENIC VISTA TO BE COMPROMISED

*The Council has begun a photo-documentation of outstanding roadside views that should be preserved against subdivision and development. This picture was taken on Norman Ridge near Bloomingdale. Whiteface and Esther mountains provide the backdrop.*



Gary Randorf

## STAFF MOVES INTO NEW OFFICES

*The Council's growing staff recently moved three blocks to a former hardware store in Elizabethtown. From left to right: Gary Randorf, acting executive director; Mike Carr, membership coordinator; Eleanor Audino, membership assistant; Elaine Burke, secretary; Cindy Monty, secretary; Mike DiNunzio, program director; Dick Beamish, communications director; Donna Beal, administrator; Eric Siy, park specialist; and Lynne Poteau, development director. Missing: Dan Plumley, park specialist, and Jackie Audino, administrative assistant.*



# Writer Challenges Growth Myth

*In his column in the Hamilton County News headlined COME AND GET IT 'CAUSE IT'S GOING FAST, Jack Leadley, Jr. challenged the myth that endless development brings endless happiness and prosperity to a local community. Some excerpts:*

I have had quite enough of people from other places telling me they have to change Speculator and my life for our own good. I like this village just the way it is.

But one developer wants to build 182 condominiums right in the middle of it. Sure it's his land and he has the right to use it. But I don't agree that he has the right to use it in a way that will have a seriously detrimental effect on his neighbors.

I'm talking about jammed roads, higher taxes, more crime and more people from other places . . .

Now don't get me wrong. I'm not against people from away. Some of my best friends used to be from other places. I disparage no individual and welcome each to make his home among us. I just don't want crowds of flatlanders coming in and crowding up the place. I especially don't want more people moving in because they love it here, only to have them discover it would be just perfect if only they could radically enlarge it.

"But we could have full employment and lower taxes," some righteously proclaim. If they actually believe that, they're living in a dream. I don't want their dream to become my nightmare.

These two silly arguments of jobs and taxes are very easily demonstrated to be bogus. We don't want full employment. If we did, we wouldn't have let several

businesses go through the summer and fall with "help wanted" signs on their doors . . .

As for taxes, show me a bigger community and I'll show you one with higher taxes. You aren't going to gain any lasting tax benefit by making Speculator more populous. People move here now because our taxes are low . . .

Some say there's so much state land around we can never be too crowded. Bull! Being jammed elbow-to-elbow against overused woods is not my idea of fun.

Where do they want to put the increased traffic? Already the Four Corners intersection is miserably jammed in summer. Should we tear down the existing buildings along Routes 8 and 30 and make them four-laners? Then those highways would attract fast food joints, garbage, gangs and gaudy suburbscapes.

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***"If you can only be happy mucking up a nice place, go rape some other little village where the people are gullible enough to buy your brand of progress."***

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These pro-development people want to squander the very characteristics that make today's Speculator so livable — its low taxes, natural beauty and lack of crowding. To them I devoutly say: "If you can only be happy mucking up a nice place, go rape some other little village where the people are gullible enough to buy your brand of progress."



## Merchants Boycott Newspaper

Outraged by Jack Leadley's commentaries revealing the down-side of unlimited growth, five local vendors of the *Hamilton County News* refused delivery of the newspaper. Boycotting the publication were Charles Johns Store, Lake Pleasant Marine and Grocery, Abanake Diner, Farber's General Store and Little General Store.

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***"Prospective investors, visitors and residents will not be attracted to our area if this insulting attitude persists."***

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"This writing by Jack Leadley, Jr. has a negative, derogatory and insulting tone," declared Neil McGovern, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Speculator, Lake Pleasant and Piseco, in a letter to members. "Prospective investors, visitors and residents will not be attracted to our area if this insulting attitude persists."

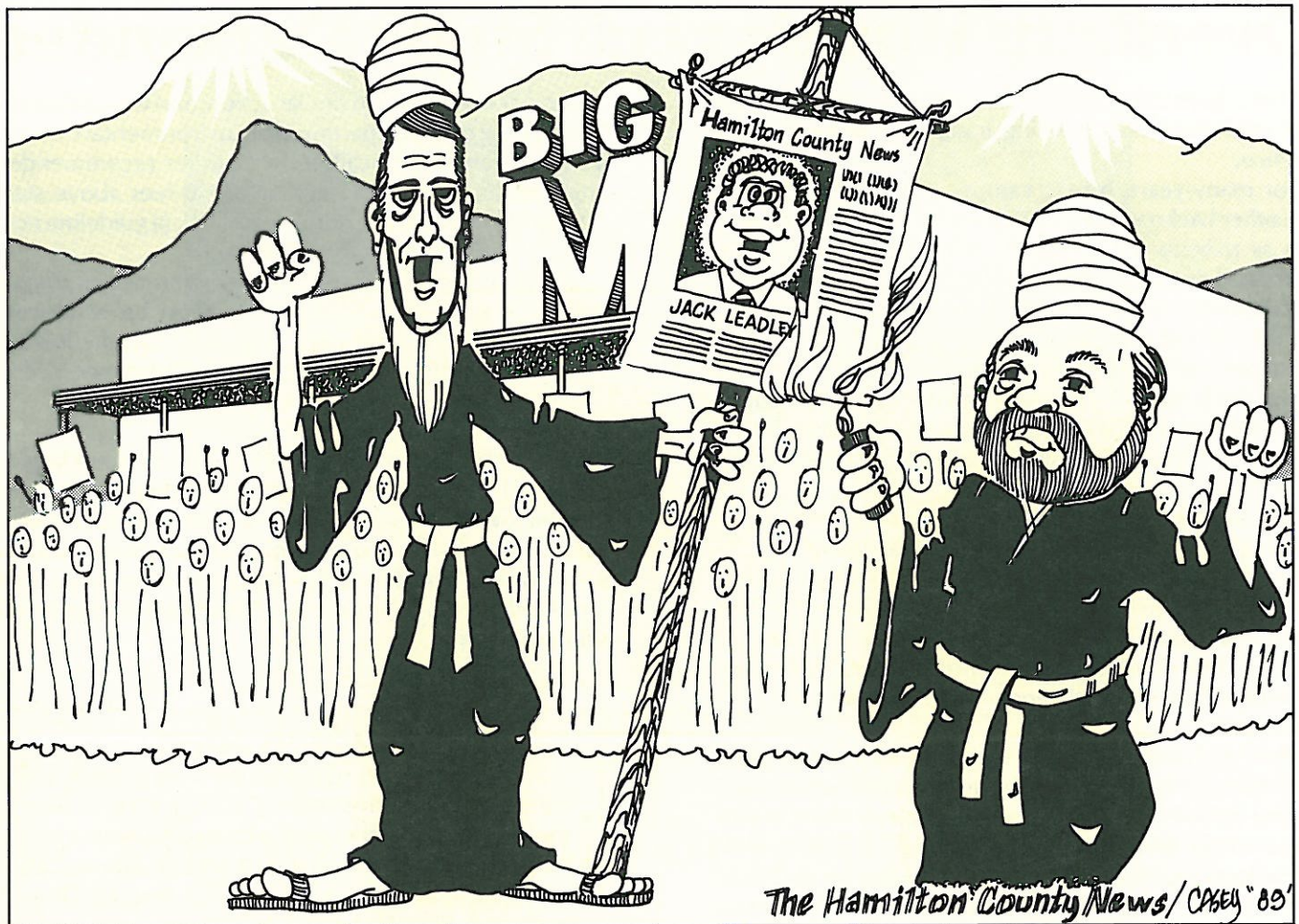
McGovern urged all members to cancel their subscriptions and cease advertising in the paper "until assurance is given that negative, demeaning print regarding growth and tourism shall cease."

In response, the *Hamilton County News* ran a cartoon picturing the boycott leaders, in Ayatollah dress, burning the newspaper (see page 7).

"No matter how offensive some readers may find a column or editorial," wrote managing editor Christine Knapp Yennard, "those readers do not have the right to prevent other readers from reading it. When one person, or a group of people, prevents the public from reading something, that's censorship. And censors, particularly the self-appointed ones, have a nasty way of enlarging their list of no-nos."

"It seems we take our rights as American citizens casually — until they are infringed upon. Our readers are telling me they are furious. They have every right to be."  
(NOTE: The boycott was subsequently called off.)





**"THE INFIDEL HAS INSULTED THE PROFITS."**

## Open Letter To The Adirondack Five

*In "An Open Letter to the Adirondack Five" (the five local merchants who tried to suppress the Hamilton County News after columnist Jack Leadley questioned the benefits of continual growth and development), Pat Leadley, who is Jack's aunt, joined the fray.*

Thanks so much for pointing out the error of Jack's ways. If it weren't for you five sterling business personalities, the rest of us wouldn't recognize opportunity knocking.

I think we should immediately adopt your plan. Build 182 condos, which will necessitate doubling the sewer and water systems in Speculator. Let's also build 200 town houses. We can string them out around Duck Bay for a picture perfect view . . .

Next we should build 200 charming Swiss-style chalets up and down Oak Mountain along ski trails for easy access to the slopes. Then, double the sewer and water systems again, and add street lighting for all new roadways.

And this would be a good time to dispense with our old-style volunteer fire departments as the state will probably mandate full-time paid professional fire fighting

departments anyway . . . Who cares what it will cost? Bigger is better, right?

Next, we'll build a new \$20 million school, because all those condos, town houses and chalets will surely provide us with lots of new citizens to educate. And along about that time, we'll have to add about 10 new policemen for better law enforcement.

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***"Who cares what it will cost? Bigger is better, right?"***

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Of course, taxes will have to go up to pay for these improvements. But don't worry. Speculator will be better. You'll see.

With all these wonderful improvements, we'll need wider streets and extended sidewalks. When those are in, we'll install traffic lights, one at each intersection. After all, we want all the advantages they have in the big cities.

And who knows? Once Speculator catches up with the times, can Lake Pleasant and Piseco be far behind?

Pat Leadley, Piseco



# Overflight Update: Full Study Demanded

Once again the Adirondack Council has demonstrated that conservationists working together can make a difference.

For many years, hikers, campers, fishermen, canoers and other backcountry users have felt frustrated and helpless as military jets streaked overhead, disturbing the peace and destroying all sense of solitude and remoteness.

In January, the Air Force announced plans to intensify its use of the northern Adirondacks by flying B-52 bombers and FB-111 fighter-bombers as low as 400 feet above the ground. That announcement hit conservationists like a sonic boom — and prompted a challenge by the Adirondack Council to this growing abuse of the Adirondack Park.

The Air Force responded to the Council's protests by revising its cursory "environmental assessment" of the new flights and by modifying its plans somewhat. But the bombers and fighters would still come over low and often, they would continue to shatter the natural tranquility, and they could still disturb nesting bald eagles and peregrine falcons, both endangered species, near the flight path.

The Air Force continued to insist that the low-level bombers and fighters would have "no significant impact" on the people and other creatures below. The Council disputed that finding and called for a *real* impact study of *all* military flights over the park, including jet and helicopter sorties by the Army, National Guard and Marines.

Chairman Woody Cole and his Adirondack Park Agency

commission demanded similar action, and Commissioner Tom Jorling of the Department of Environmental Conservation seconded the call. Jorling further recommended that military flights stay at least 2,000 feet above state Wilderness areas in the Adirondack Park (a guideline now observed for all federal Wilderness).

Jorling called for a state-level environmental impact analysis, rather than a federal study, to be conducted jointly under the state's Environmental Quality Review Act by his department, the Adirondack Park Agency, and the State Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

**Those of you who wrote your U.S. Senators and Representatives about the Adirondack overflight problem have helped the cause by putting the pressure on in Washington, D.C. We will soon be promoting a federal "consistency bill" to give the Adirondacks the same protection from military abuse as afforded our national parks and wilderness.**

## Skywatch Alert

If you experience disturbance from a low-level military flight or other military maneuvers in or over the Adirondack Park, please contact us with a description of the event, including time and place. Call or write Eric Siy, Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932, 518-873-2240.



Plattsburgh Press-Republican

**HERE COME THE MARINES! (See opposite page.)**





*Phantom F-4D jets will no longer shatter the silence of Minnesota's Canoe Wilderness.*

## **A LEGAL VICTORY**

# **Flights To Avoid Boundary Waters**

The sonic booms and screaming afterburners of military jets will no longer disrupt the solitude and serenity of the one-million-acre Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness in northern Minnesota. In a major victory for publicly-owned and legally-protected Wilderness, a coalition of citizen groups, headed by Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, recently won a U.S. District Court settlement whereby the Air Force and Air National Guard agreed to conduct aerial training elsewhere.

A key witness for the plaintiffs was Jack Blackwell,

supervisor of the Chequamegon National Forest in Wisconsin. Blackwell put the U.S. Forest Service on record as opposing military overflights as "inconsistent with the purposes of the Wilderness Act."

Eric Siy of the Adirondack Council has been working closely with Rick Duncan, a Minneapolis lawyer representing the Boundary Waters conservationists, concerning possible legal action to halt incompatible military use of the Adirondack Park.

## **A NEW INTRUSION**

# **Choppers Roar Over High Peaks**

Not to be outdone, the Navy recently requested permission to send the Marines to the Adirondack Park from Camp Le Jeune, North Carolina. Arriving in six CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters, the Leathernecks planned to practice "touch and go" landing assaults on Hurricane, Catamount, Debar and Azure mountains.

Because the maneuvers involved military use of public Forest Preserve, a State permit is required. At the urging of the Council, the Department of Environmental Conservation denied the permit.

The Marines then proceeded with day-and-night flights over a revised route. For a week in June, the huge, thunderously-noisy helicopters flew between 50 and 200

feet over the northern Adirondacks. The Marines landed only at privately-owned Marcy Field in Keene Valley, but their troop-transport choppers disturbed the serenity over much of the park as they skimmed the treetops from Figure Eight Mountain east of Malone, south to Loon Lake Mountain, southwest to Iron Mountain, southeast over the High Peaks Wilderness (state land where no motorized use is allowed on the ground to preserve the wilderness tranquility), then north, skirting the Jay Mountain Wilderness, back to Plattsburgh Air Force Base.

The Council has called on Marine Corps Commandant Alfred M. Gray to cancel future exercises in the Adirondack Park pending an environmental impact study.



# Interpretive Center Opens

Though the Adirondack Park may be “only” a state park, it is much larger, and possesses a greater diversity of forests, mountains, lakes, streams, wetlands, farmlands and human settlements, than any other park in the United States. Yet for generations the Adirondacks has lagged behind our national parks in public education and awareness. Aside from the superlative Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake, there has been no serious attempt to explain the Adirondack Park to the world.

“With its strange blend of public and private land,” an Associated Press reporter recently wrote, “the Adirondack Park suffers from an identity crisis of sorts — many people don’t realize it’s a park.”

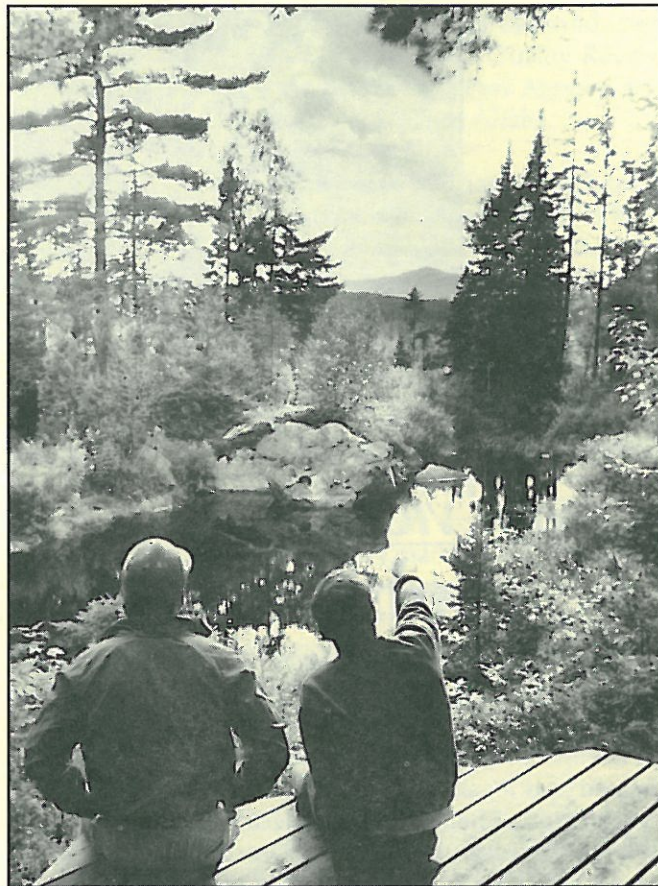
For more than a decade, the Adirondack Council has pushed for a system of state-owned interpretive centers that would explain the park’s extraordinary resources. Due in large part to the strong advocacy of Adirondack Park Agency Chairman Woody Cole, and to Governor Cuomo’s view of the park as a great public treasure, the first Visitor Interpretive Center opened for business on Memorial Day Weekend.

Situated on 2,800 acres of land leased from Paul Smith’s College in the northern Adirondacks, the Center sports an auditorium, natural history exhibits that even succeed in making Adirondack geology comprehensible and interesting, a 16-projector slide presentation of “wilderness experiences” available in the park, and miles of self-guided nature trails around Heron Marsh with views of nearby St. Regis and Jenkins mountains.

The Center’s staff includes naturalists and educators, and its facilities include video screens that produce, at the touch of a finger, information about skiing, hiking, camping, canoeing, bicycling, hunting, fishing, restaurants, shops, and tourist accommodations.

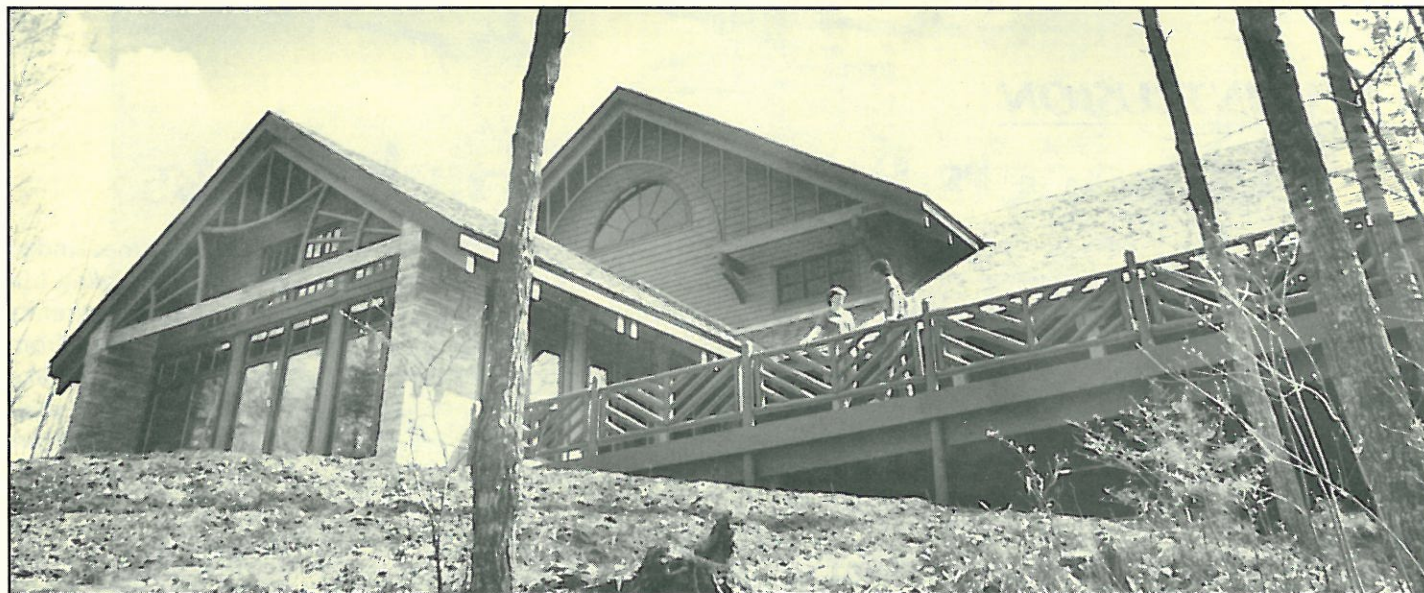
A smaller “satellite center” is due to open next year at

Rich Lake near Newcomb in the central Adirondacks. Said APA Chairman Cole at the recent groundbreaking for this second facility: “It is incumbent upon us not only to help visitors enjoy the Adirondacks but to help them understand, appreciate and have reverence for this planet earth and its plants and animals.”



Nancie Battaglia

**NATURE TRAIL LOOKOUT**



Nancie Battaglia

**HEADQUARTERS BUILDING — A mile north of Paul Smiths, just off Route 30.**



## **AFTER EIGHT LONG YEARS**

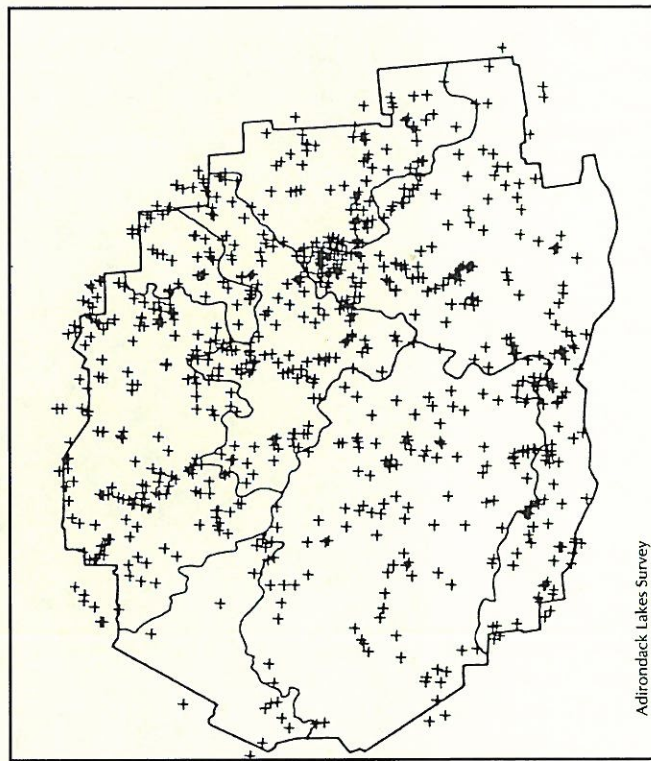
# **White House Finally Moves On Acid Rain**

At long last there appears to be hope for acidified Adirondack lakes. True to his campaign promise, President Bush has proposed restrictions on coal-burning power plants that would reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 10 million tons, or 40 percent, by the year 2000. Nitrogen oxide emissions would be cut by 2 million tons, or about 10 percent. These two kinds of emissions are a chief cause of acid rain.

Though the proposals fall short of the Council's goal of a 12-million-ton reduction in sulfur dioxide and a 6-million-ton reduction in nitrogen oxides, the President's proposals marked an encouraging break with the Reagan Administration, which for eight years blocked any action to curb acid rain.

The proposal comes none too soon. A recent survey shows that 25% of the Adirondack lakes studied have little or no fish life due to acidification. This condition has been caused mainly by airborne pollutants from coal burning plants in the Midwest.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO** — Urge your U.S. Representative to amend the Clean Air Act to reduce annual sulfur dioxide emissions by 12 million tons — and nitrogen oxides by 6 million tons — by the year 2000. Write to: Honorable \_\_\_\_\_, House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.



**ACIDIFYING ADIRONDACK LAKES**

## **Council Monitors Lake Placid Development**

Last year a consortium of resort developers bought the down-at-the-heels Lake Placid Club and its 1,100 acres of prime Adirondack real estate. Recently the new owners revealed detailed plans to convert the aging resort into a hotel, golf course, equestrian and condominium complex.

The centerpiece will be the transformed Lake Placid Club facilities, expected to be on a par with the world-class Gleneagles Hotel of Scotland. One of the partners is the British brewer, Guinness, who owns the Gleneagles resort. The other principal is U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty of Baltimore.

Of particular interest to the Council is the scale of the luxury housing development. Some 400 condominium units and building lots are proposed. The condos will be placed around two new 18-hole golf courses (designed by Jack Nicklaus) within a state-designated "scenic vista" that affords spectacular views of the High Peaks.

It's rumored that building lots may be priced as high as \$500,000.

"This development will add enormously to the seasonal population of Lake Placid," said Mike DiNunzio, the Council's program director. "The impact will be staggering. Along with the obvious environmental concerns we are looking closely at what the development could do to land values and property taxes, and the strain it could put

on the local infrastructure — the roads, water supply, sewage system, fire and police service, and so on.

"This project has the potential to turn Lake Placid into another overdeveloped Lake Tahoe," DiNunzio said. "The growth-inducing implications for the entire northern Adirondacks are of real concern. We need to go into this with our eyes open."

The Council has retained G. Gordon Davis, an Elizabethtown lawyer and former counsel for the Adirondack Park Agency, to assist in our review of this project.

### **ONWARD AND UPWARD**

Council membership continues its steep upward climb, exceeding 12,500 members as of July 1. This compares dramatically with a membership of 3,000 in early 1987 when we launched our membership drive under the leadership of chairman Kim Elliman and executive director Gary Randorf.

An analysis by Mike Carr, the Council's membership coordinator, shows that 75% of our members hail from New York State. About 10% of our total membership (1,250) reside permanently in the Adirondack Park and another 10% live in towns and cities near the park boundary.





Howard Zahniser

*John S. Apperson and his disciple, Paul Schaefer, 1947.*

## **ONE MAN'S LIFELONG CRUSADE**

# **Five Decades Of Defending The Wilderness**

It boggles the mind. Paul Schaefer, who many regard as the John Muir of the Adirondacks, became a conservationist in 1919. He was then 11 years old.

At Schenectady High School he attended a meeting of the old Conservation Commission — the predecessor of the Conservation Department and the grand-daddy of the Department of Environmental Conservation. After some wildlife films were shown, Commissioner Pratt asked if anyone would like to be identified with the conservation movement. Paul said yes, he would. Mr. Pratt gave him a gold pin with the picture of a deer and grouse on it. The pin said: "New York State Conservationist."

Paul Schaefer was off and running, and he hasn't stopped since.

Five decades of Schaefer's Adirondack writings are contained in *Defending the Wilderness*, to be published this summer by Syracuse University Press. From these essays and the photographs that accompany them, there is no question that Schaefer writes for one specific pur-

pose: to protect the Adirondack Park and keep the state-owned Forest Preserve "forever wild."

This book is an indispensable record of key Adirondack conservation battles from about 1930 to 1980, from the fight to keep tourist cabins out of the Forest Preserve (a step that would have transformed "forever wild" into "forever domesticated"), to setting aside certain pristine areas as Wilderness where motors are not allowed, to enactment of parkwide zoning and land-use restrictions. This book, like the author himself, provides an important and fascinating link to other great conservationists of generations past — all the way back to the 19th century's visionary Verplanck Colvin. It was Colvin's romantic writing that inspired the lanky young Schaefer, in the 1920s, to become both a woodsman and political activist.

Schaefer's early essays also link him (and the reader) to John S. Apperson, a legendary Adirondack conservation leader of the early and mid-20th century who taught this eager disciple how to organize for a cause and mobilize public opinion in support of it.



*Defending the Wilderness* also serves as a how-to book for environmentalists. Here we see how Schaefer marshalls his facts and builds his case . . . recruits and organizes his forces . . . uses photographs, movies and maps to illustrate and dramatize his cause . . . and applies political pressure at the right points and at the right moments. The reader soon perceives another reason for Schaefer's success: his extraordinary modesty and eagerness to give credit to his associates. Shining through all that he writes, says and does is his tendency to praise others for hard work and dedication.

The book is, above all, a testimonial to the benefits of persistence. Today it is fashionable in the environmental movement to speak of personal "burn out." Those two words are not part of Paul Schaefer's vocabulary. Neither are words like "give up."

Just one issue alone, the seemingly-endless legislative, political and legal fight to stop destructive damming and flooding of the Forest Preserve, took Schaefer and his crew more than 10 years to resolve. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the author drove many thousands of miles around New York State, on his own time and at his own expense, rallying support. He devoted hundreds of evenings, and countless work days as well, to this anti-dam campaign. It is hard to believe that this man also had to earn a living and support a family.

"As a builder of traditional homes," he explains at the beginning, "I was usually under great business pressure, since I usually had a half-dozen jobs under way simultaneously and 20 or more craftsmen working for me. But

the Adirondacks always came first. When a problem surfaced, I would leave the jobs in the best hands possible."

Says Charles Callison in the introduction: "Sometimes, by the very force of his determination he kept wavering allies in the battle. When confronted by the [State's] decision to permit a major dam on the Moose River, he sought help from a leading Adirondack conservation group." And when they told him that the proposed dam was beyond legal appeal, that the situation was hopeless, Schaefer left the meeting in a "cold fury" vowing: "Well, we are going to fight. We may get beat, but if we do we'll go down with flags flying."

Of all Schaefer's accomplishments — and he has been an organizer, strategist, pamphleteer, press agent, lobbyist and super-salesman in most of the important Adirondack battles of this century — it was his campaign to save the Moose River Plains from the proposed Panther Mountain Dam for which he is perhaps best known. For years he fought this hydroelectric scheme and, by extension, the dozens of other dams then on the drawing board for the Adirondacks.

Along the way he forged the largest and most eclectic coalition in the annals of Adirondack conservation. In his Pied-Piper style, he attracted bird watchers and big game hunters, garden clubs and church groups, mountain climbers and labor unions. He imported wilderness advocates from Washington, D.C. to testify at legislative hearings. Among his "star witnesses" was Howard Zahniser, who would later draft the National Wilderness Preservation Act of 1964 in the seclusion of a backwoods Adiron-



Paul Schaefer

**MOOSE RIVER PLAINS: The land Paul Schaefer and his allies saved.**



dack cabin that Schaefer found for him.

When the public finally got to vote on it, Panther Mountain Dam went down in flames. Voters rejected the proposal by almost 3-to-1. The Moose River Plains were saved, and soon after that, thanks to a constitutional amendment, no such projects would ever be allowed anywhere in the Adirondack Park where Forest Preserve was involved.

Through it all, Schaefer seemed always on the move, traveling from the lobbies of the State Capitol west to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, from New York City north to the Thousand Islands. He brought his slides and movies and enthusiasm to every group that would listen. And listen they did.

"I found that words crystallized and took on a luster far beyond their dictionary meanings when illustrated with photographs," Schaefer writes. "No combination of words could describe the beauty and virgin forest in Moose River country or the devastation of Wolf Mountain by forest fire. When you compare the photographs, the images formed in the mind present us with a choice of either protecting nature or allowing it to be destroyed. The emotions that the combination of words and pictures evoke are so powerful they impel us into action."

Whether his audience was legislators, Rotarians, sportsmen or Episcopalians, Schaefer did much more than tell his story. He *showed* his audience what was at stake.

"This dam would be built largely on Forest Preserve

land and would put the Moose River Plains under more than 40 feet of water," he explained, as he pictured the beauty and wildness that would be lost.

"The Moose River Plains is known to be the largest winter yarding grounds for deer in the Adirondacks," he continued, picturing the threatened deer.

"The Adirondacks will lose, in a single, devastating stroke, the heart of its most extensive wild area (picture) . . . virgin forests (picture) . . . and probably the best hunting and fishing area in these mountains (picture of happy hunters and fishermen).

Schaefer's principal opponent in this longest and toughest of Adirondack battles was Alleyn Beamish, an Albany lobbyist and public relations man who later recalled: "We just couldn't compete with those damn pictures. Paul would get up there and dazzle the audience with his slides, and it would be all over. They'd be eating out of his hand!"

In the opinion of Schaefer and many others, Panther Mountain Dam marked a turning point in public opinion. It was the beginning of widespread awareness of the value of the Adirondacks and the need to preserve the region for all time.

"Until then it was an uphill effort," Schaefer says. "But the Panther Mountain Dam battle was so long, and so publicized, and the victory was so decisive, that every Adirondack battle since then has been easier. Before the dam fight, conservationists were usually on the defensive,



Paul Schaefer

**EAST BRANCH OF THE SACANDAGA RIVER**



fighting a rear-guard action to protect the Preserve from cabins, roads, jeeps, timbering, reservoirs, bobsled runs, you name it. Since then, we've seized the initiative. Conservationists have pushed successfully for a Wilderness system, for zoning and land-use controls on the private holdings, for a Wild River System that prevents any new dams. We now have a vigorous acquisition policy, and we have an Adirondack Council in place to keep the State honest and responsive."

"None of this could have happened in the days before Panther Mountain Dam," he stresses.

Schaefer ends the introduction to his book with this quote from Teddy Roosevelt: *"Aggressive fighting for the right is the noblest sport the world affords."*

As these essays and pictures reveal, nobody has fought more aggressively or more nobly than Paul Schaefer for the cause of Adirondack preservation.

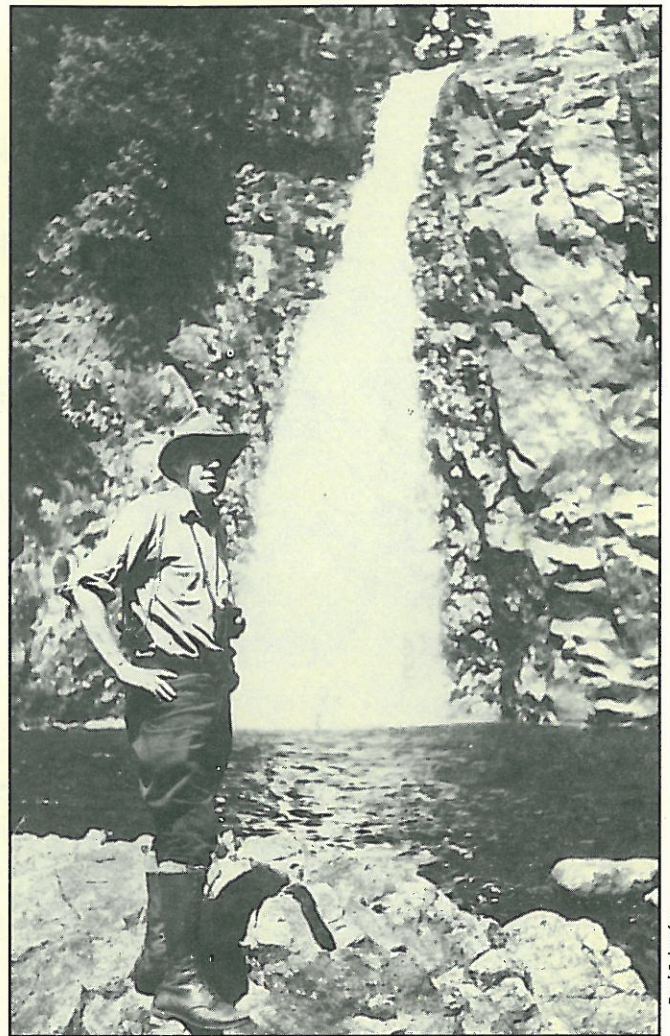
R.B.

(A longtime member of the Adirondack Council's board of directors, Schaefer received the Council's Outstanding Conservationist Award in 1985.)



**JOHNNY MOREHOUSE, 1928.** *The author's companion and fellow guide.*

Paul Schaefer



Paul Schaefer

**HOWARD ZAHNISER**, author of the *National Wilderness Preservation Act of 1964.*



Paul Schaefer

**THE ADIRONDACK ROOM** — *Focal point of Schaefer's home in Schenectady, NY.*

## Adirondack Writings

*"Defending the Wilderness: The Adirondack Writings of Paul Schaefer."* 336 pages, 65 photographs. Cloth \$29.95. Paper \$14.95. Syracuse University Press, 1600 Jamesville Ave., Syracuse, NY 13244.





**ADIRONDACK HIGH PEAKS — Photograph by Barbara McMartin.**

## ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

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*A coalition of the National Audubon Society; The Wilderness Society; Natural Resources Defense Council; Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks; National Parks and Conservation Association; and other concerned organizations and individuals.*

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