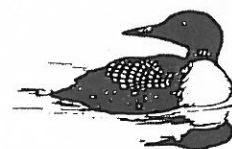




The Adirondack Council NEWSLETTER



Vol. 11

January 1987

No. 37

SUGAR MAPLE DECLINE IN REGION LINKED TO EFFECTS OF ACID RAIN

The widespread dieback of red spruce on the upper slopes of the Adirondack and Green Mountains has been noted by hikers for years, and more recently this devastation has been linked by scientists to acid rain. Now the decline of sugar maples is being documented as another probable result of the same airborne pollution, much of it drifting eastward from sources hundreds of miles away.

Clarence Petty, a forester and Adirondack Council director who operates a sugarbush in the St. Lawrence Valley, has seen the tops of many sugar maples die over the past few years. So has Royal Davis, who works a small sugarbush near Saranac Lake. "The bark has fallen off the upper trunks and limbs," he says. "It looks almost like porcupines have been chewing it off."

Now scientific studies are confirming the damage to the trees and to the maple-syrup industry. *The New York Times* reported last month that aerial surveys in Quebec show that 82% of the region's sugar maples are in

decline. Another study shows a 35% reduction in their growth rate.

A recent issue of *Vermont Life* carries an article by J.W. Edwards entitled, "What's Happening to the Maples?" Dave Martin, owner of a 200-acre sugarbush in Johnson, Vt., describes the disease that is afflicting the trees on which he depends for a livelihood. Over the last few years, he notes, the trees have begun to lose foliage in the crown. Then the disease moves downwards. Bark loosens and falls. Eventually the trees die.

"If this were a human health issue" Davis said, "with the preponderance of evidence there is now, we wouldn't allow it to continue. There just aren't enough advocates for trees."

That may be changing. Environmentalists were encouraged by the strong show of support for acid-rain-control legislation in both Houses of Congress in 1986. A strong bill is closer than ever to passing.

But action can't come too soon. Says one prominent acid-rain researcher, Dr. Hubert Vogelmann of the University of Vermont: "North America is only about five years behind the devastated condition of Europe."

NUMBERS MEAN STRENGTH

Another membership renewal notice has just been sent to those who have not responded to earlier reminders. This postcard-size notice pictures a snowshoer on the front. When you see this dazzling winter scene (shown in black-and-white at right), please remember that the Council is working to protect this natural beauty for you and your children, and all who follow them.

If you have not yet renewed, we urge you to do so at whatever level you can afford, from the \$22 category on up. In the cause of Adirondack preservation, numbers mean strength. Your continued support of the Council is the best New Year's present you can give to the Adirondacks.

Members receive the Council's quarterly newsletter, periodic action alerts, annual State of the Park Report, and an invitation to the Council's annual meeting and awards dinner in a lovely Adirondack setting.



Gary Randorf

APA OPPONENTS HOPE TO BRING "TAKING ISSUE" TO SUPREME COURT

The Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board has retained a law firm (Sidley and Austin of Washington, D.C.) to prepare the first phase of a suit aimed at declaring the Adirondack Park Agency Act unconstitutional.

The Review Board, which consists of local government officials and development interests opposed to state land-use controls in the Park, contends that the APA restrictions have, in effect, taken private property for public use without compensation, a violation of the Fifth Amendment. The Review Board holds that private land-owners must be compensated for any reduction in value on their land caused by the parkwide zoning.

The Review Board hopes to construct a case that can be taken to the U.S. Supreme Court. Eleven Adirondack county legislatures have pledged more than \$50,000

toward the suit, according to Tony D'Elia, the Review Board's executive director.

The Adirondack Council welcomes the opportunity to have this legal issue resolved once and for all. In the Council's view, the federal courts will most likely follow the highest New York State court in upholding the APA law. Nevertheless, the Council will be prepared to intervene as a "Friend of the Court" if the case reaches the federal level.

Meanwhile, new findings seem to indicate that Adirondack land values are experiencing a healthy increase (see below).

LAND VALUES UP

A preliminary study issued by the State Board of Equalization and Assessment has found that land values within the Adirondack Park have appreciated faster overall than for comparable land outside the Park. The private land in less restrictive zones, particularly "moderate intensity" areas, has appreciated a great deal, while land in the more restrictive "resource management" and "rural use" zones has also appreciated, but less rapidly.

Unfortunately, the language of the report is frequently obscure and jargon-ridden. It is hoped that the final product will be written so the general public can understand it.



Edward Hixon

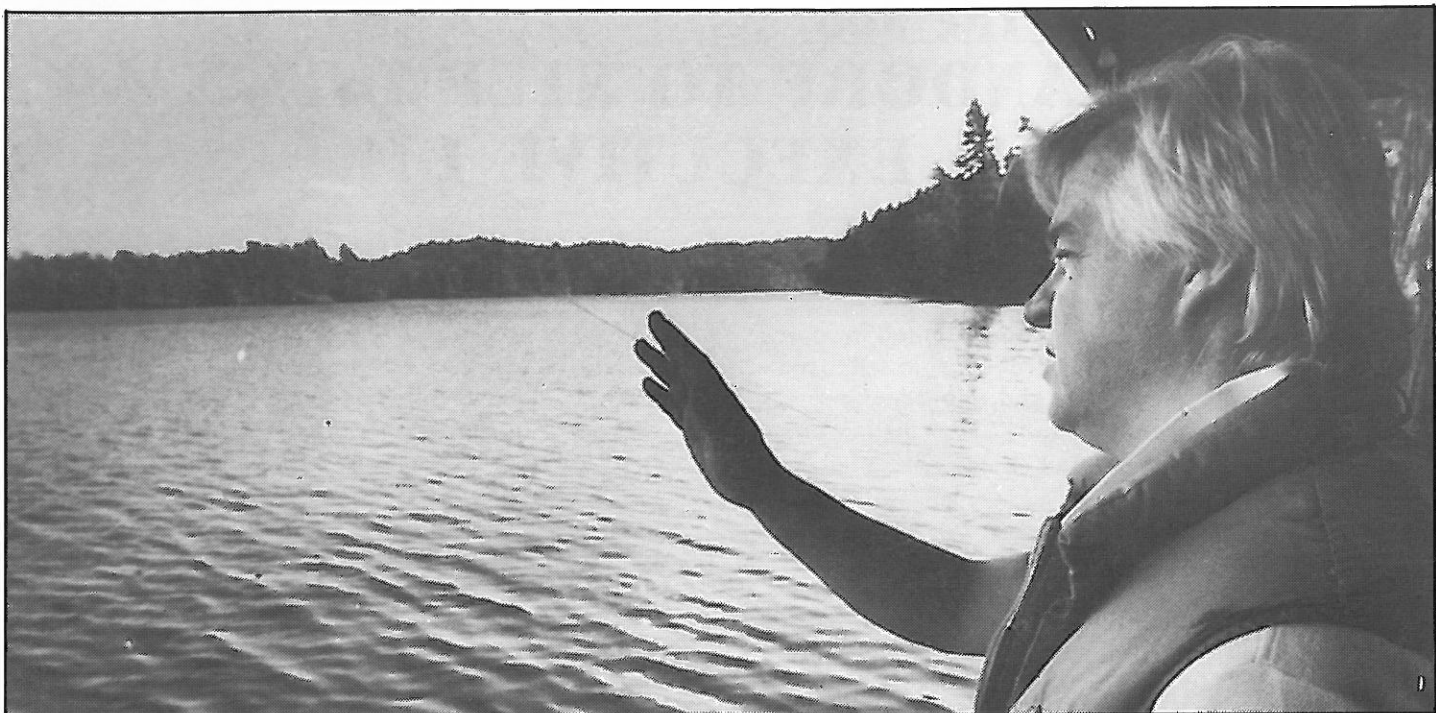
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Adirondack Council has launched a campaign to increase its membership from 3000 to 5000 by the end of 1988. This goal will be pursued through direct mail and other carefully-targeted efforts.

The Council will also be counting on help from its present members to enlist their friends, relatives, neighbors and colleagues. (A recent mailing to members, in which recipients were asked to pass along a Council brochure to another interested person, produced an excellent response.)

The campaign is being financed by foundation grants and individual contributions from those who realize that an expanded membership will mean greater political clout and greater financial stability for the Council.

Council membership peaked at about 3000 in 1982 and has remained at that level since then. But the *potential* membership is believed to be much greater than that. The Council hopes that many others will join once they realize that this organization is the most effective citizen-advocacy group working fulltime to protect the Adirondack Park.



Albany Times-Union Photo by Skip Dickstein

The outspoken entrepreneur at his headquarters on Upper St. Regis Lake.

"I Want It All"

ROGER JAKUBOWSKI ROILS THE WATERS

"I want it all," announced Roger Jakubowski soon after becoming the new owner and year-round resident of Topridge, the former Marjorie Merriweather Post estate on Upper St. Regis Lake.

Jakubowski was referring to his plans for the Adirondacks. "There is no future for this park other than private development," he told a newspaper reporter recently. "Anybody who doesn't understand that yet is going to learn very quickly."

A colorful and aggressive entrepreneur who built a multimillion dollar fast-food, lodging and video arcade business in New Jersey, Jakubowski bought the lavish Post estate for \$911,000 in 1986. Before the year was out, he'd also bought historic Crab Island in Lake Champlain, a mile of Lake Champlain frontage, much of Lake Ozone on the northern edge of the Park, and the Big Tupper Ski Area.

Jakubowski has proclaimed that property in the Adirondacks is "scandalously underpriced" and no matter what he pays for it, "I'm stealing everybody blind."

"There's nothing illegal about what he's doing," said Gary Randorf, the Council's executive director. "But he has a lot of money and he can move much faster than the State to acquire choice private holdings that should remain undeveloped. Public ownership or easement acquisition is absolutely essential on certain private tracts if the Forest Preserve is to be consolidated and the Park's natural character preserved."

"If Jakubowski and others like him get there first,"

Randorf added, "the public is going to lose out."

Also in 1986, Adirondack Mountain Properties, Ltd. purchased the Veterans Mt. Camp on Tupper Lake. This 1300-acre property is bordered on three sides by public Forest Preserve. The fourth side consists of three miles of mostly pristine lake frontage. Under present land-use restrictions, the new owners will be able to subdivide their shoreline into nearly 100 lots. Development is scheduled to begin this spring.

Patten Corporation, a leading land-subdivider in the Catskills and Vermont, has opened an office in Lake Placid and is proceeding to acquire and carve up large tracts of private Adirondack land. Unlike local realtors, who tend to act only as agents in a sale, Patten has the capital to buy property outright for subdivision and quick turnover. Patten is understandably enthusiastic about undeveloped Adirondack shorelines. "Waterfront properties are becoming the finest thing money can't buy," declares a Patten brochure. "The demand is increasing while the supply is steadily decreasing."

These events underscore a problem long recognized by the Adirondack Council and others intent on preserving the natural character of the Adirondacks.

"As comprehensive as it may be," explains Gary Randorf, "the Adirondack Park Agency's zoning plan fails to provide adequate protection for the undisturbed lake-shores, as well as the scenic highway corridors, in private ownership."

Ten Years On The Job

GARY RANDORF TO STEP DOWN AS COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After nearly a decade on the job, Gary Randorf will step down as executive director of the Adirondack Council by June 30.

An environmental educator and natural resource planner by training, Randorf will devote himself to photographing, writing, speaking and in every other way possible interpreting the Adirondack Park to the general public. (More about that in our next newsletter.)

Much has happened to both the Park and the Council during Gary's tenure as executive director.

The Adirondack Council began life in 1975 to participate in hearings and lawsuits. Two years later, and \$39,000 in debt, the Council was reorganized by Harold A. Jerry, Jr. into the multifaceted environmental organization it is today. Jerry, who had been executive director of Governor Rockefeller's Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks, became chairman of the Council, and a few months later Randorf came on as staff director.

"There wasn't much staff to direct," Randorf recalled. "Just myself and Carolyn Conklin, who served as part-time secretary. That was it for the next five years."

The First Challenge

The Council's first challenge was to eradicate its debts. Over the next couple of years, Chairman Jerry returned the Council to solvency by persuading creditors to forgive or reduce the debts (mostly unpaid legal fees). He also prevailed on the Council's organizational members, including the Sierra Club, National Audubon Society, Wilderness Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks, to help pay off the debts.

Randorf, meanwhile, seemed to be everywhere at once, racking up 30,000 miles a year on his odometer as he criss-crossed the Park and made frequent forays

beyond the Blue Line to Albany and New York City.

He attended countless meetings of his previous employer, the Adirondack Park Agency, where he had served as naturalist and natural resource planner. "The Agency was losing sight of its chief purpose," Randorf said. "Under pressure from local politicians, it was doling out zoning map amendments that allowed intensive development where it just wasn't appropriate."

That was the APA's "giveaway era" when it handed over Green Island in Lake George to a developer by changing the zoning to allow heavy condominium development along the largely undisturbed shoreline of the island. That was also when the Agency caved in to local pressure and allowed the towering 90-and-70 meter Olympic ski jumps to be constructed on a site where they now dominate the natural scene for 20 miles around.

Not A Development Agency

"We had to keep reminding the APA that they were not a development agency but an environmental protection agency," Randorf said. "But it took a few years, and a new administration in Albany, before they finally shaped up."

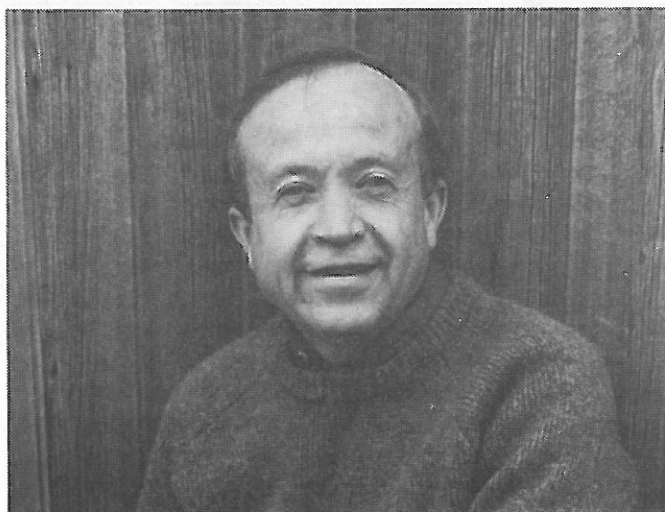
The Council also established a preservationist presence in the State Legislature. Randorf lobbied for a bill that would add additional Adirondack rivers to the State's protective River System, and he lobbied against the perennial attempts to weaken the Adirondack Park Agency Act and erode the "forever wild" protection of the public Forest Preserve.

He presented the Council's view at hearings on major development proposals around the Park. One such was the plan for a massive residential and commercial village at the North Creek ski area. Another was the proposal by Barton Mines to move its garnet-mining operation from Gore Mountain to Ruby Mountain (here the Council sought to minimize the visual impact and protect a neighboring stream).

Getting Out The Message

In his decade at the helm, Randorf has brought the Council's message to thousands of children and adults in and out of the Park. He seemed to be speaking and showing his slides everywhere—to the environmental conservation class at Peru High School, the Lake Placid Rotary Club, North Country Community College, Saranac Lake Free Library, Northeast Air Pollution Control Association, annual St. Lawrence University Conference on the Adirondacks. Wherever people wanted to learn about the Park, Randorf was there to help teach them.

The growing threat of acid rain took him to Washington, D.C., where he urged the fence-sitting members of the New York State congressional delegation to support



Anne Lacy



Gary Randorf

"Range after range, the mountains tumble off to distant horizons... clouds roll by, the sun slowly arcs, and birds swoop gently out of the sky. You lie back with your head on your pack and are soon nearly asleep, only slightly aware of the sunlight, the birdsong, and the rustling wind."

Gary Randorf

acid-rain controls. Until quite recently, Randorf recalled, many of the State's congressmen were undecided on the issue. Today, all but one, Representative Jack Kemp of Buffalo, favor corrective legislation.

Pesticide abuse has been another continuing concern of the Council. Randorf has been the leading Adirondack spokesman for restraint in the use of chemical poisons against blackflies, gypsy moths, and the recent infestation of Eurasian watermilfoil in parts of Lake George. The famous exchange of "Purdy-Randorf Letters" attest to the intensity of the debate.

Always On The Opposite Side

"Bob Purdy was supervisor for the Town of Keene and later executive director of the Local Government Review Board, the chief opponent of state land-use controls in the Park," Randorf said. "It seemed like every week he or I would have a letter in a local newspaper, always on opposite sides of the pesticide issue and almost every other issue. For some years, the Council worked to promote the use of a bacterial larvicide against blackflies instead of the standard aerial spraying of dangerous chemicals, which weren't having much effect on the blackflies anyway. I remember one of Purdy's suggestions in a letter to the editor at that time.

"'Randorf had better watch out,' he wrote, 'Or he'll find himself chained to a stump, left there to be devoured by blackflies.'"

Looking back on his busy decade with the Council,

Randorf paused to savor a few victories. One highpoint was inducing local governments to adopt the new biological control in their eternal battle against the blackfly. "Even Purdy's town started using Bti [the natural larvicide] last year," he reported. "And they're pleased with the results so far."

Another memorable moment was the enactment of conservation easement legislation in New York State. "It took years of pushing and prodding," he said. "But in 1983 we finally got a bill passed. It enables the State to buy protective easements while leaving the land in private ownership and—of critical importance—reimbursing the local government for any loss of assessed value on the property."

Park Agency Evolves

Also gratifying to Randorf has been the evolution of the Adirondack Park Agency back to its mandated role as environmental protector. And he is delighted that the Department of Environmental Conservation has fully recognized the Adirondack Wilderness System [comprising one million acres of Forest Preserve] as a national treasure that requires special care and management.

Perhaps most personally rewarding were his visits to Camp Montserrat near Lake Placid. Run by Jesuits from New York City, this summer camp serves minority children, mostly black and Puerto Rican, from the New York metropolitan area.

(Continued next page)

Randorf To Step Down

"They were the most receptive audience I ever had," Randorf said. "After I finished showing slides and talking about the natural history of the Park, the kids wouldn't let me go. They kept asking questions. Finally, after an hour or so, an administrator had to shut them off. And then I'd hear later about how the boys were suddenly seeing nature for the first time, really looking at mushrooms and wildflowers and birds. The staff was amazed!"

By 1982 the Council's membership had grown to about 3000. That same year George Davis returned from the Rocky Mountains to become the Council's part-time program director. The Council purchased a home of its own on Water Street in Elizabethtown, and the staff continued to expand. (See page 7.)

His Basic Mission

Spreading the word about the Adirondack Park—what's here, why and how it must be preserved—has been Randorf's basic mission. Few have spread this message farther and more effectively. His superb photographs have aided greatly in the task. In his "Celebration of Wildness" slide show, in the Council's brochures, newsletters and annual Park Report, in the *Adirondack Wildguide* and *Adirondack Life* magazine, in a photo-documentary he is currently assembling on the effects of acid rain, Randorf graphically shows why the Adirondacks must be protected.

His success as an environmental advocate may also be attributed to his demeanor. He is at once calm, measured, reasonable and informed. And he has a sense of humor, an important asset in the environmental arena.

When asked what advice he would give his successor, Randorf replied: "Be open minded and always listen to what other people have to say."

As for the Park's future, Randorf expresses both

optimism and concern. His greatest worry is what acid rain appears to be doing to Adirondack forests.

"When we pass federal legislation curtailing the sulphur and nitrogen emissions that cause acid rain, the lakes should recover over time. But I'm not so sure about the forests. The nutrients are being leached away. As a naturalist, I've seen great change in 15 years. The trees are not doing well. How long it will take for the soil to recover is anyone's guess.

Randorf also sees the "slow, incremental development" of private Adirondack lands as a major threat to the Park. "We need additional protection for the more fragile and visible areas, like shorelines and roadsides," he said. But he is more optimistic about this problem.

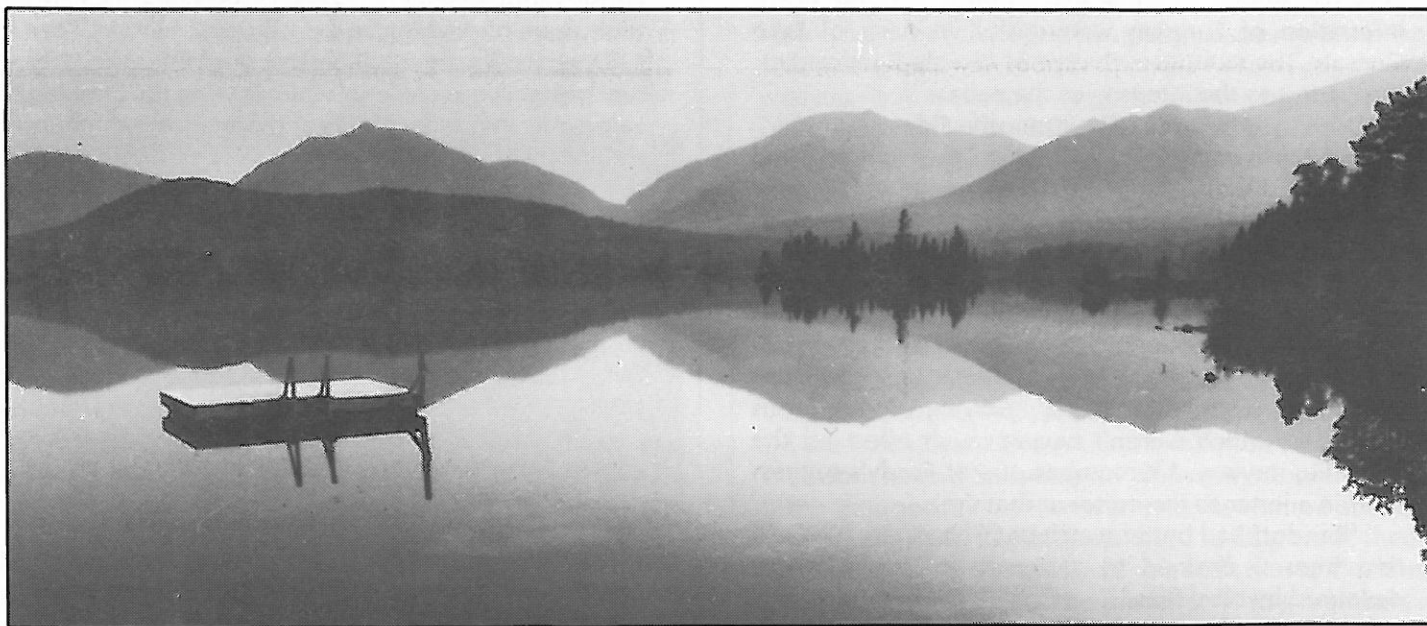
"The Council is pushing the State—with considerable success—to protect the more vulnerable land through direct purchase and easement acquisition," he said. "I only wish that the Adirondack Park Agency would also take an active leadership role here."

Encouraging Changes

Randorf sees an encouraging change in local attitudes. "Most of the old timers aren't going to come around and embrace the APA, but the new generation of Adirondack school children shows a more positive attitude about protecting the region. Also, new people are moving to the Adirondacks, drawn here by the natural qualities that make the area unique. These newcomers have seen other places messed up. Many of them are determined *not* to let it happen here. That's a very healthy trend."

We'll have more to report on Gary Randorf's future plans in our next issue.

Meanwhile, a search for a replacement is underway. Applications for the position of executive director should be sent to the Adirondack Council, Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932.



Gary Randorf



Gary Randorf

ADIRONDACK COUNCIL STAFF: 1987

From 1977 to 1982, during its first five years as a citizen-advocacy group, the entire staff of the Adirondack Council consisted of Gary Randorf (see page 4) and a part-time secretary. Today the staff includes:

Donna Beal—Hers is the first voice you will usually hear when calling the Council's office. As administrative assistant, Donna handles all financial accounting and general inquiries, arranges special events such as the annual awards dinner, and keeps things running smoothly. She also deals occasionally with unusual visitors.

"For example, a woman came in one day to complain about skunks under her porch," Donna recalls. "I referred her to the appropriate state agency." Another visitor, a man holding an aluminum pot in one hand and a clump of seaweed in another, claimed to have discovered the cure for acid rain. Donna referred this caller to Gary Randorf.

Evelyn Hatch—Serving as the Council's secretary, Evelyn also reviews and clips various newspapers, supervises the mailing of action alerts, newsletters and other communications, handles the distribution of slide shows, and much more.

Anita Davis—As part-time membership drive analyst, Anita determines (with computer assistance) which mailings to prospective members elicit the best response. She also monitors fund appeals and membership renewal mailings. A member of the original Adirondack Park Agency staff in the 1970s, Anita has, since 1982, performed a variety of tasks for both the Council and the Adirondack Land Trust.

George Davis—As program director, George monitors state agencies responsible for the Park and is currently assembling a detailed acquisition plan to guide future land and easement purchases by the State. He was formerly executive director of the Wilderness Society and, from 1971-76, served as director of planning for the fledgling Adirondack Park Agency.

Lynne Poteau—Serves part-time as fund-raising director and membership-drive coordinator. A brand new resident of the Adirondacks, Lynne was formerly director of foundation fund-raising for the National Audubon Society.

Dick Beamish—Serves part-time as communications director responsible for Council publications and press relations. Dick was formerly communications director for the National Audubon Society and, from 1972-77, public relations officer for the Adirondack Park Agency.



Gary Randorf

WISHING YOU AND THE ADIRONDACK PARK a safe, healthy and happy New Year are, clockwise from lower right: Gary Randorf, Evelyn Hatch, Lynne Poteau, Anita Davis, George Davis, Donna Beal, and Dick Beamish (center).

ACTION ALERT CONTINUED: MORE LETTERS PLEASE

In November, voters approved an Environmental Quality Bond Act that will provide \$250 million for public land acquisition in New York State. Many local interests are now jockeying for a portion of the funds. Decisions will soon be made governing the use of these funds for many years to come.

It is essential that the nationally-significant Adirondack Park receive its fair share. The Council believes that the Adirondack and Catskill Parks together will require a total of \$125 million in acquisition funds over the next decade, with specific allocations to be made as needed along the way.

Governor Cuomo needs to hear from you about this. Our recent ACTION ALERT to Council members appears to have stimulated a number of letters. More are now

needed. If you haven't yet done so, please take a moment right now to write to:

Governor Mario M. Cuomo
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

While you're at it, please remind the Governor that new Adirondack acquisition funds are needed not only to round out the public Forest Preserve but also to purchase conservation easements along scenic roads and river corridors. Such easements leave the land in private ownership while protecting the Park's natural beauty and providing public access to prime areas now closed to the public. And they cost the State less than outright purchases.



Gary Randorf



The Adirondack Council

Box D-2, Elizabethtown, NY 12932
 (518) 873-2240

January 1987

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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