



# EMPIRE STATE NEWS

THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF FCRV



DECEMBER 2024



*The officers and chairmen of the New York State Association would like to wish you all a wonderful, safe and prosperous Holiday Season, filled with safe travels and happy gatherings of friends and family*

Greetings to all, I hope everyone is excited for the arrival of Christmas and the beginning of a New Year, wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This time of year signals to all that a new camping year is not that far away. Beginning conversations have started for the 2025 State Spring camp out, details will be forthcoming soon. In the meantime, enjoy all that the season has to offer with family and friends, and that we may all look forward to an exciting New Year of camping, going to new places and meeting friends in some of our become favorite spots. Remember our organization is about the people, and the friendships we make.

Sean P McHale  
NYSA President

We are coming off a very active year for the New York State Association of FCRV, after hosting the 75th anniversary celebration of NCHA/FCRV right here in our own state at the Herkimer County Fairgrounds back in



June. So many of our members contributed in SO many ways to the success of that rally! Hours and hours of cleanup, painting, sprucing up, and working with the fairgrounds team helped NYSA to put our best foot forward to our members and guests. We had attendees from as far away as California join us, and they enjoyed our seminars, entertainment, and many more activities held during Campvention. So now that its over and we have (mostly) recovered, Joe and I want to extend a hearty THANK YOU to our New York team and those who stepped up to the task. We will see you in the spring, and look forward to enjoying your

company again. **HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!**

Joe and Patty Wittmeyer  
New York State Directors

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Information and registration page for NYSA State campout
- Updated FCRV International Scholarship application
- District reports - Family Stuff too!
- Conservation Update



Once again we have to collect dues from each member of the New York State Association. The fee for families and for independent members of FCRV is \$2.00 per family. Please mail your checks, payable to Suffolk District, to: Clare Gunning, 2 Lollypine Lane, Medford, NY 11763-4110. Payment is due by January 31, 2025. Chapters typically collect the money from their members, or in some instances pay the NYSA dues from their chapter treasury, and send in one check for the dues. These checks are also due by January 31, made payable to Suffolk District, and mailed to Clare Gunning at the same address.



## DISTRICT REPORTS

### **FINGER LAKES DISTRICT**

The Finger Lakes District, composed of the Top of the Hill Chapter, and the PALS Chapter, had an active fall, with each chapter camping several times when weather permitted. While not as extensive as the flooding down south, the lower central New York area also experienced severe weather, road washouts, and flooding. But once the land recovered, so did we. Campouts were rescheduled and friends once again came together. Their season was wrapped up with the Finger Lakes District Campout, where members of each chapter enjoyed some “Fun In The Country”. Friday saw a shared dinner, followed by visiting around the campfire. Saturday featured the usual chapter sales, district meeting, and lunch. After that the group enjoyed a (somewhat) bumpy hayride, followed by a scavenger hunt. Other events during the weekend included an auction and a donation breakfast on Sunday. (taken from the “Chatterbox” newsletter of FLD). Plans are underway for 2025 campouts and will be shared when published. As always, all are welcome to attend.

### **SUFFOLK DISTRICT**

This district is experiencing some serious upheaval due to the change in administration of the Recreation Department of Suffolk County, and the way campsites must be reserved. There are already a lot more campers than available campsites on Long Island, and getting in anywhere is always a challenge. The protection of being a group allowed to register several sites at once has been removed, and with it, the potential loss of members, who see the advantage of being a member of FCRV in this regard slipping away. We will continue to try and work with the administration on Long Island, but it looks like it will be a rough path ahead.

### **WESTERN DISTRICT**

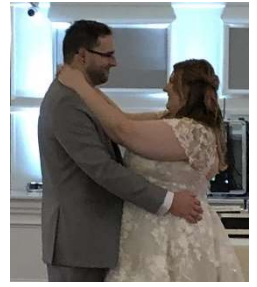
This district is also now at two chapters, the Ken-Ton-A-Wanderers, and the Fiddlers Green. When possible, the two chapters have camped together, and always make an effort to attend the Western District campout together in September. This year we had a group dinner of chili and side dishes, we participated in the Halloween Trick-Or-Treat with kids from the campground, and used the high circulation of people to share the information about FCRV via Your Chair Awaits. The campfires lasted well into the night.





Chris and Dana McHale

Ken-Ton then took a break from camping as almost the entire chapter went to Lake George to celebrate the wedding of our son, Chris, to Kayla Dier. Not only that, Barb and Sean McHale's son, also named Christopher, was married to Dana around the same time. Congratulations to both couples. Are there campers in their futures?



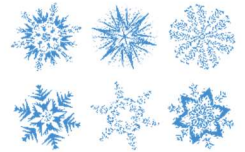
Chris & Kayla Wittmeyer



Only time will tell.



## NCHA/FCRV Hank Nathan Scholarship 2025



### NCHA/FCRV Hank Nathan Scholarship 2025 Is Now Open

By Stan & Fran Vozar, NCHA/FCRV Hank Nathan Scholarship Directors

We are excited to announce that once again we are offering scholarships to our members of NCHA/FCRV as well as their children and guardians. Complete details are explained in the application portal listed below. Applications can only be requested and accepted through this web portal: <https://fcrv.org/hank-nathan-ncha-fcrv-scholarship/>

This year's scholarship is non-competitive. So, If you follow the guidelines and meet our expectations, you could receive up to \$4,000. We are happy and excited to offer scholarships of this nature because of the generous donations from past and present members of NCHA/FCRV. So, spread the news to all FCRV members. After you receive the application and review each section, you may email [v16281@yahoo.com](mailto:v16281@yahoo.com) for questions or clarification. Title it "Scholarship Questions". Be sure to check future Camping Today issues for updates and helpful information.

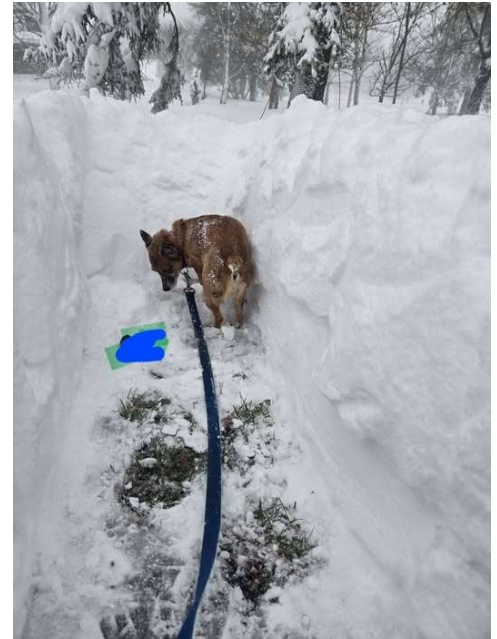
➡ Please note there are no changes to the application process for the NYSA scholarship. ⬅



Some people continue to wonder if climate change is really a thing. Well, as campers and people who enjoy the outdoors, most of us have noticed hotter, drier summers. For the first time in your editor's memory, we had wildfires in New York and New Jersey. We are accustomed to hearing about such fires out west, not here in our own backyard. Then there's the winters. Our Great Lakes are still warm, and all that open water, combined with cold winds blowing across them leads to situations such as what you see on the next page.



This is from NYSA State President Sean and Barb McHale, who live at the eastern end of Lake Ontario.



This one is from NYSA State Secretary Kathy Collier, who lives with her husband and poor little Skittles, one very confused chihuahua, in East Aurora, inland and east of Lake Erie.



And this is my house, where we had over 2 feet of snow, and are looking forward (?) to more later today. We live in Hamburg, south of Buffalo, and on the eastern shores of Lake Erie.

So, although we do not have a Legislative Chairman for the New York State Association, you are encouraged to pay attention to legislation in your communities, and whenever possible, vote in favor of measures that will protect the environment from damage and outright destruction. Every little bit helps. Or as our old mascot, Woodsy Owl used to say, "Every Litter Bit Hurts"



## STATE CAMPOUT

The annual NYSA Spring State Campout will be a celebration of all things “western”, like “Yellowstone” and line dancing and flapjacks and food! If you don’t get the Yellowstone reference, we are NOT talking about the national park. Catch up with Kevin Costner’s TV show on demand and see what the fuss is all about. Then come to the Spring State campout and don’t forget your cowboy boots. Plans for this weekend include hospitality on Friday night, our pancake breakfast on Saturday, then our usual scholarship meeting, audit of the state books, and other business which keeps us going. The weekend will include games, both indoors and out, shared meals, and conservation activities. As always we ask members to bring sports equipment where possible. Saturday dinner will be prepared by our State President Sean McHale; Sunday dinner will be potluck, with each family bringing a meal to share. Monday, as always, will include a continental breakfast, coffee, and we’ll head home from there. As always, you are asked to bring your own utensils to every meal, your own coffee cup for tea or coffee, and your imagination to create an outstanding Conservation poster. Deadline for Poster entries will be Sunday at 3 pm. Carol will bring supplies to



make posters.

## CONSERVATION

What’s this? No, it’s not snow on a branch

Information obtained from “The Resource”, the magazine of the Western New York Land Conservancy shares the following information.

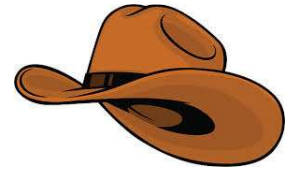


“This is Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA), and it is an invasive insect attacking the Hemlocks in our area. Presently found in Western New York, the HWA is attacking one of our only native coniferous tree species. It is essential for not only providing habitat for native and beneficial insects and animals, but also preventing erosion along the streams where it commonly grows. Infestation by Hemlock Woolly Adelgid can result in tree decline and death within a few years.

“Trees displaying early signs of infestation can be saved through treatment. The Land Conservancy of Western New

York recently received a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant to form an alliance with local partner organizations to monitor for and treat newly detected hemlock wool adelgid infestations at properties throughout western New York, and they are thrilled to do their part preventing the spread of HWA. Although you are less likely to spot HWA in the winter, when branches are covered in snow, it’s good to know the signs. You too can help prevent the spread of HWA. To learn more you are encouraged to visit the New York State DEC’s Woolly Adelgid page on its website: <https://dec.ny.gov>”





133 Cemetery Street, Frankfort, NY 13340  
 [Take Exit 30 on the NYS Thruway]

Camping Fee will be \$35/night for 30 amp service, and \$40/night for 50 amp service.

The Activity Fee of \$10 per person will be used to cover food costs.

Please send completed registration form and check **FOR FULL PAYMENT**, payable to NYSA/NCHA and mail to:

MIKE BURNS  
 PO BOX 51  
 NELLISTON, NY 13410



Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Adults: \_\_ M \_\_ F Youth: \_\_ M \_\_ F Teens: \_\_ M \_\_ F

Camping Fee: \$35/night for 30 amp; \$40/night for 50 amp; Activity fee: \$10 x \_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (total fee must be paid with registration)

District \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Deadline is May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**(Put it in the mail so it gets to Mike by 5/9/25)**

WHAT TO BRING FOR THIS RALLY: Your own full place settings for all group meals ♦ Snack for Friday Hospitality ♦ Meal to share for Sunday Night ♦ Sports or game equipment ♦ Ideas for Conservation Posters ♦ And don't forget your cowboy hats!

## [NYSA SCHOLARSHIPS](#)

NYSA of FCRV offers college scholarships to members, their children and legal dependents, and independent members; all of whom must pay NYSA dues and are current in their membership with FCRV. Must be a member for a minimum of one year. Scholarships are awarded for two and four year accredited institutions of higher learning. Scholarships are awarded at the annual state campout in May and may vary in amount of the award.

To apply, email me at [kathkev@roadrunner.com](mailto:kathkev@roadrunner.com) with the subject of "NYSA scholarship application". Include: your name, your/family FCRV membership name and number, and the date you/they joined. Also include your email address, phone contact info, and mailing address. I will send you an application that you print and return by USPS mail, with supporting documents. Applications must be received by May 1. Mail early.

Sincerely, Kathy Collier

## [For National Scholarship Info](#)

See the article on page 3 for updated information regarding the national Scholarship program.

## Important dates for 2025:

May 23-26: State Campout

Mar. 24 - 30: Retiree Rally  
in Dothan, Alabama

July 20-26: National  
Campvention, Lebanon, Tennessee

## Editor's Note:

The ESN is also now available on the FCRV website in the "Newsletters" section under New York.

**The ESN will now be published 3x per year.**

**The due dates will be as follows:**

**Summer Issue – June 15 (Published in July)**

**Spring Issue – March 15 (Published in April)**

**Holiday Issue – November 15 (Published Dec.)**

Please send reports via email whenever possible. Please try to submit articles near the due date, and Placing ESN first in the subject line of your message is always helpful. SEND ARTICLES, UPDATED ADDRESSES AND INFORMATION TO:

Patricia Wittmeyer

50 Victory Avenue

Hamburg, NY 14075

Email: [pwittmeyer175@gmail.com](mailto:pwittmeyer175@gmail.com)

**"Where Strangers Become Friends,  
and Friends Become Family"**

