



# AZURE MOUNTAIN NEWS

## What the Log Books Tell Us

The log books in the Azure Mt. tower's cab reveal much about the thoughts and feelings of climbers. They are full of joy, satisfaction, humor, and sometimes sadness; in that way, they span the human condition. Herewith a representative sample from the past few years:

- *This is cool!!! But it shakes in the wind so GOODBYE!*
- *This was my first hike with my eventual husband several years ago, and today, our first hike with our son, 6 months old.*
- *I write to say I climbed the whole mountain. [Written by a 9-year-old.]*
- *The view is breathtaking and the peacefulness frightening.*
- *I'm very, very proud of my accomplishment, being 600 pounds. I'm trying to lose weight but it's challenging. Thanks for the support.*
- *I can't wait to bring my girlfriend up to propose to her. We have been through a lot and if I get her up here, we will make it forever.*
- *Dustin, of all the memories I have with you, my favorite is here: Azure. I figure this is as close as I can get to speaking with you. You had one of the kindest hearts I've ever seen. I still wonder at all the great things you would have accomplished, all the lives you would have affected. Even though you're gone, you still change people's lives. A good heart never dies. Love you, little brother. Oh, is my jeep up there?*
- *It's a lot different from New Jersey.*
- *Didn't die. Good day.*
- *Thank you for the beautiful view, Mother Nature and Azure Mountain Friends.*

## Incredible, Amazing, Rewarding....

**Edited excerpts from our 2022 stewards' final reports**



'On the mountain keeping watch'

Every time, my journey to the top of Azure Mountain provided different experiences. I never knew who I was going to see: One of my high school teachers, with whom it was nice to catch up and talk about things outside of school; a man named Dave, who works for the DEC and told me about his career and gave me advice on stewarding and how important it is to have someone on the mountain keeping watch over it.

It was neat to look at the adjacent mountain and see the clouds start to come over. I could see a wall of rain coming from miles away.

Everything about this opportunity was absolutely incredible. Thank you very much for allowing me to experience all the amazing things this mountain has to offer.

Joey Abrantes, Massena High School / Norwich University

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[AzureMountain.org](http://AzureMountain.org)



#### 'Azure in a different light'

I learned more about the local flora and fauna than I had previously known. I also learned which peaks you see when you look out onto the landscape below and across. I conveyed this newfound knowledge to several hikers.

One hiker asked if the blueberries on the summit were edible. Another asked about the snake population on the mountain; I had never thought about that! Vultures rode the updrafts every time I was a steward; I explained to a couple of hikers how they and falcons differ.

My time as a steward was extremely rewarding. I thank the Azure Mountain Friends for allowing me to experience Azure in a different light and share my knowledge with others.

Brooke Goddard, 2022 NuMed Azure Mountain Steward, St. Regis Falls Central School / SUNY Canton



#### 'This beautiful world'

This scholarship opened my eyes to my own self-discovery. My moments on Azure were peaceful and enjoyable. It amazes me how many people and lessons we can miss if we don't push ourselves to explore this beautiful world.

One of my favorite parts was being up in the tower and seeing the falcons soar above the trees, diving every so often without so much as a flap of their wings, just floating in such a beautiful and precise motion.

The cloud cover was another thing that amazed me; the shapes and sizes of those pillows in the sky were just so impressive.

I learned that pushing myself to do more adventures like this will give me some fantastic memories to look back on. You go up

knowing very little and come down with new snippets of information every time, no matter if you're a hiker or a steward. I hope that I can one day be as informative to others when I hike so that they will want to continue hiking across the world and find a hunger for learning and understanding our society and world a little better.

Charlotte Powell, Colton-Pierrepont / SUNY Potsdam

#### 'Memorable moments'

I encountered many wild animals in their natural habitat and observed how they live in the wild. I observed that even though Azure Mountain isn't the tallest in the Adirondacks, the weather can still change in an instant.

I enjoyed every single conversation I had. I learned about people and where they're from, and information about the Adirondacks I'd never known before. Overall, this experience was one of the best in my life. It teaches so much and brings so many memorable moments as well.

Peyton Snell, Parishville-Hopkinton / SUNY Potsdam  
(Steward in 2021 and 2022)



#### 'People should care'

Stewarding allowed me to connect with absolute strangers while looking over a beautiful view. One hiker climbed for her son, who was in a terrible car accident. He was a very lively boy before the accident and now he was paralyzed.

Another was 80 years old. She had been a professional ballerina but had injured herself. She told me her life story.

I also saw how people genuinely care about the environment. I talked with multiple hikers about how people should care about what they leave behind.

I am very thankful to the scholarship committee for this opportunity.

Bailey Traynor , Brushton-Moira / SUNY Potsdam

## Congratulations to our 2023 Scholarship Winners

Say 'Hi'! Please introduce yourself if you meet them on the mountain: Jayden Dostie, Massena; Tristan LaVigne, Brushton-Moira; and Nicholas Snell, Parishville-Hopkinton.

### We Have (and Are) a Winner!

The national Forest Fire Lookout Association's New York chapter sponsors a monthly photo contest, with the winner published in its newsletter. That winner for June 2023 is Adrienne Kallner of Guilderland, N.Y., for her 2019 image from the Azure tower's cab, looking southeast across the St. Regis watershed toward the higher peaks of the central Adirondacks. Congratulations to Ms. Kellner, and thanks to her and FFLA-NY newsletter editor Laurie Rankin for permission to reprint.



### Here and There



Allen J. Tower Jr.

Once again, **Allen Tower Jr. and his Hopkinton company, NuMED, have provided for one summit steward** in 2023. Named to the NuMED Azure Mountain Stewardship this year is Nicholas Snell, a June graduate of Parishville-Hopkinton School who plans to continue his education at SUNY Potsdam. Nick is the younger brother of Peyton Snell, who split his stewarding duties between 2021 and 2022. Azure Mt. Friends extend their sincerest gratitude to Mr. Tower and NuMED for their continuing support of this program, and of AMF.

The former **Lamphere's store in Hopkinton is now Parkway Express**. The new owners continue to carry AMF merchandise (t-shirts, shoulder patches, interpretive guides, etc.), which is also available at Deer Valley Trails and online at our new and improved website: [azuremountain.org](http://azuremountain.org) (see accompanying story).

**Last year, AMF was awarded a \$3,600 matching grant**, toward a total project cost of \$4,000, from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund's Park and Trail Partnership Grants program for improvements to the fire tower's stairs and to develop and conduct an educational program with area schools. Plans for the stairs project continue to be formulated, while AMF is working with Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) education staff on a presentation incorporating such topics as trail etiquette and Leave No Trace. In the spring, a successful trial run was conducted at St. Regis Falls School.

 AZURE MOUNTAIN FRIENDS	This is to certify that:
Climbed	
<b>AZURE MOUNTAIN</b>	
Elevation 2,518' - 2 miles, Round Trip	
Fire Tower Interpreter	Date

**We need summit stewards, and volunteers to perform other tasks.** We can afford only so many scholarships, and the rest of us aren't getting any younger! C'mon, folks, step up (literally)! To learn more, visit [azuremountain.org](http://azuremountain.org), or contact AMF Chair Tom Ortmeyer, [tortmeye@gmail.com](mailto:tortmeye@gmail.com) or 315-244-3707. Thank you!

**Thank you Holly Chorba!** The painting, "Azure Mountain, Steps in Time" has a new home after a generous donation was made to the AMF. The late Ron Chorba was one of the founding members.

## Azure Mountain Friends

15 Lawrence Ave. Potsdam, NY 13676



I wish to support the work of Azure Mountain Friends – and become a friend of Azure Mountain!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Azure Mountain Friends and mail to:  
AMF, 15 Lawrence Ave. Potsdam, NY 13676. We thank  
you, but more important, Azure Mountain and its fire tower  
thank you for your support.



Visitors to the Friends' website, [azuremountain.org](http://azuremountain.org), during the past year or so may have encountered a broken link instead of a website or, since early this year, your browser may have loaded [azuremountain.org](http://azuremountain.org) but you found a very changed format.

Why? The hosting service that AMF had used for several years became unavailable, and AMF had to change providers. That put AMF at the bottom of a steep learning curve for implementing common website content and functions. Not the least of these roadblocks was site users' inability to make donations and acquire AMF merchandise (patches, t-shirts, guidebooks, etc.).

Thankfully, progress has been made: [azuremountain.org](http://azuremountain.org) again supports merchandise transactions through PayPal, and soon you should see "Donate" buttons. In the meantime, please direct questions or comments to [HikeAzure@gmail.com](mailto:HikeAzure@gmail.com). Thank you for your patience, and thank you for your support of Azure Mountain Friends!

--Tom Young, AMF Treasurer

**Did you know....?** Mike Richards was the last Azure Mountain Fire Observer. At the end of the 1978 fire season, he removed the phone, radio, batteries and binoculars and then locked up the Tower for the winter. Unfortunately, there wasn't another season as the state switched to aerial surveillance for fires. Since the establishment of an observation station at Azure Mountain, at least nine men were appointed observers over a sixty-four year period.

### AMF Gear Available Here



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