



Cayuga Trails Club, Inc.

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December, 2017

Dear Member,

After months of thoughtful study, your Executive Board in December unanimously passed changes to the dues structure for the club. I support the Board's decision wholeheartedly.

For the vast majority of members, the changes in dues amount to an increase of \$8 or \$10 a year. The Board feels this modest increase in dues is affordable, while helping support your club in its mission to "...enjoy, protect and preserve wild places and places of natural beauty..."

We have not had a dues increase in 19 years; since 1998, the costs of lumber, fasteners and rebar for puncheons and bridges have dramatically increased. The costs of trail tools like brush cutters, sledges, and chainsaws have also gone up. Printing and mailing costs have increased. The cost of gas and oil is up.

While expenses have increased, our income has declined. This is primarily due to our trails guide, which provided reliable income for many years, but is now out of print. Our income is also affected somewhat by the large number of Life Members, along with a downturn in donations. Although these income sources are wonderful when we have them, they are unpredictable.

Other Northeast outdoor organizations, notably the Adirondack Mountain Club, Appalachian Mountain Club, and Finger Lakes Trail Conference, have kept pace with inflation by increasing dues to \$40 per member, or more, while our basic membership rate remained unchanged.

In addition to a modest increase in dues, the Board elected to revise the method we use to pay for our newsletter, *Cayuga Trails*. Effective immediately, your dues will entitle you to a digital, color version of the newsletter delivered to your email inbox as soon as it is published, at no additional charge. We will continue to offer a paper version of the newsletter, in black & white, delivered via First Class Mail, but for this service there is now a \$20 charge to cover printing and mailing.

The Board is well aware that some members may find these increases difficult to fit into their budget. To accommodate these members, and assure they are not excluded, the Board instituted a new Limited Income Individual Membership of \$12. This includes a digital copy of the Newsletter via email.

I urge you to renew your membership today. If your budget allows it, a donation above and beyond your basic dues will go a long way in support of our mission.

Get out there!

Gary Mallow, President

