



BOREFEAS PONDS

**OFF-LIMITS FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY,
THIS GATEWAY TO THE HIGH PEAKS IS POISED TO
BECOME PUBLIC LAND**

**BY ELIZABETH FOLWELL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARL HEILMAN II**

The view from
Third Pond includes
the North River
Mountains, Cheney Cobble
and Allen Mountain.

WHOSE WOODS THESE ARE I THINK I KNOW.

As I write in late March, the 20,758-acre Boreas Ponds tract belongs to the Adirondack Chapter of the Nature Conservancy (TNC). By the time this magazine reaches you, this glorious gateway to the High Peaks Wilderness may be yours, the newest piece of the Forest Preserve. How and when public access will be permitted has yet to be determined, but hikers, paddlers, campers, hunters and fisherfolk are eager to explore what has been off-limits for more than a century.

Whose woods these were begins in the late 19th century, when G. R. Finch acquired virgin timberland west of Elk Lake. The tract became legendary, closely guarded by the long-time owner, Finch, Pruyn and Company—and with good reason. There were rumors of a beautiful skein of waterways ringed by jagged, trailless peaks and tales of brook trout, whitetails and epic weekends for company brass. Getting past the first gate off Blue Ridge Road was a privilege, and penetrating the distant heart—seven miles in—to see the place was an honor bestowed on only a few.

So we felt lucky, appropriately privileged, as we gathered on a cloud-cluttered August day last year, a group led by Mike Carr, Connie Prickett and Sophie McClelland from the TNC's Adirondack Chapter. After twisting, turning dirt roads we were at the put-in, a gravelly ramp upstream of a small dam. Though we were the only people for miles, we launched quietly, spoke in whispers and paddled our canoes with stealth that was almost comical.

Stroke, stroke, stroke, the first of the three Boreas Ponds was nondescript and barely differentiated from its brothers. Dark trees marched to the shoreline, no inviting beaches or swimming rocks in sight. The woods pinched in, then rolled back like a theater curtain, and BAM!—a heart-stopping vista exploded before us. The foreground crags rose abruptly out of nothing but water, and distant peaks—Marcy, Dix, Haystack, Gothics, Skylight, Basin, Sawteeth and Saddleback—tumbled toward the horizon. Not to be outdone by terrestrial splendors, the vast sky brightened and filled itself with deepening blue and racing white. Our responses: “Whoa,” “Wow” and pure joy. Finally someone had the presence of mind to string together some words: “This is National Park quality” and “Makes me think of how I felt the first time I saw the Yosemite Valley.” The spell broken, we chattered like we had just been let out of church.

The view drew us in closer to that rugged scene, where mountains beyond mountains revealed themselves. We passed Elephant Rock, a tall erratic erupting like a sea stack



and crowned by ferns and trees. In less than an hour we reached the ponds' end, then returned, our flotilla fanning out to trace the liquid contours.

That paddle was just the magnificent first course of a full day's tasting menu. Bumping along a sandy road, we stopped to gawk at moose tracks, so many it looked like a square-dancing herd had congregated there. Then it was on to White Lily Pond, whose trail had more moose evidence in bent-down branches and dangling strips of striped-maple bark. No wonder it's also called moosewood.

In the 1890s this cabin was a lumber camp, home to about 40 lumberjacks, plus cook, cook's helper, barn boss, blacksmith and "road monkeys" who prepared the winter roads for huge sleds that took logs to stream banks for the spring river drives.

On our way back to the gate, we hiked through mixed hardwoods to pay homage to a skyscraper white pine that had been a very big tree long before these ponds, streams and mountains were named.

WHAT WE WITNESSED THAT DAY seemed quintessentially wild. But had we been here in 1936 or 1896, the sights, sounds and smells would have been far different—the crash of falling trees, clomp of hooves, clank of chains, the perfume of fresh-cut balsam and reek of sweat. These woods had been logged twice and the pristine flows we saw were impoundments.

Dams on Boreas River and LaBier Brook were built in 1889 to ensure abundant water for river drives, and softwood cut-

ting by Finch, Pruyn started in 1891. Between 1892–1897 more than 40 million board feet of spruce and fir sawlogs were cut, according to Richard Nason, a retired Finch woodlands superintendent. (To put that number in perspective, a typical 2,000-square-foot home uses 16,000 board feet of lumber, so that output would yield 2,500 new homes.) This was accomplished by just manpower and horsepower, with a crew of 40 loggers and 20-some horses.

The ancient log cabin we passed six miles in was built in the 1830s, according to Nason. Repurposed as a lumber camp, Nason said it started as a structure vital to the old Port Henry to Sacketts Harbor road, which demanded that pastures and shelters be located every 10 miles. This clearing

West of Elk Lake, White Lily Pond is 16 acres and its outlet flows into the Boreas River. Facing page: The rugged uplands, wetlands and mixed forest of the Boreas tract are prime moose habitat.



once held barns, a blacksmith shop and other outbuildings, but only the cabin remains today, home to a hunting club with a lease that expires in the next few years.

The image of 19th-century logging might conjure up miles of stumps and a bleak, barren terrain, but the Boreas parcel was treated with respect. Company woodlands—stretching from North Hudson and Newcomb to Blue Mountain and Olmstedville—were extremely productive. To protect that resource, in 1910 Finch hired one of the first professional foresters in the country. Howard Churchill began a systematic inventory of vast acreage, documenting softwood and hardwood stands, wetlands, streams and slopes in meticulous detail; today his maps of the Boreas tract remain valuable for showing old roads, clearings and the variety of habitats here.

In 1937 logging resumed at Boreas Ponds, this time for softwood pulp to supply the Finch paper mill in Glens Falls. Woods work still depended on muscle power. The cut lasted until 1949, and during the war, crews of Finns, Russians and French-Canadians augmented the Americans. They worked from mid-May through March, got paid after nine months in the woods, and some even signed on for the river drive.

Trucking pulpwood to the mill was a breakthrough more than a decade in the future; floating logs was the method of the day. The downstream trip from the Boreas to the Hudson took two to three weeks, with an army of cooks and helpers setting up camp along the way to feed the river drivers. Again, this tract was extremely productive, providing about 100,000 cords of pulp; if arranged in a single cord the stack would be 75 miles high.

From 1950 on, Finch leased portions of the Boreas tract to hunting clubs and used the property for recreation and corporate retreats. In 2007 the privately held firm was at a crossroads: significant investment was needed to modernize the mill and the old model requiring paper companies to own the resource base no longer held true. The land went up for sale.

“Although borrowing \$110 million to purchase all 161,000 acres of the former Finch lands was daunting, we just had to take this chance,” said Mike Carr, executive director of TNC’s Adirondack Chapter, based in Keene Valley. The group assessed the potential to keep key lands in production yet closed to development, as well as add other important parcels to the Forest Preserve and protect habitat for threatened species such as Bicknell’s thrush. According to Carr, “When we made this bet in 2007 the economy appeared strong and our board and our staff were wrapping up the 104,000-acre Domtar deal near Lyon Mountain on the heels of the International Paper Lakes project, which included Round, Bog and Clear Lakes near Little Tupper. Timber markets were changing and huge commercial timberland owners were divesting. It really felt like now or never.”

AS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN corporate landowner and New York State, TNC has been a driving force in increasing public access for the Essex Chain of Lakes, between Indian Lake and Newcomb, and the McIntyre parcels on the western border of the High Peaks Wilderness. These recent purchases continue



Classified Information

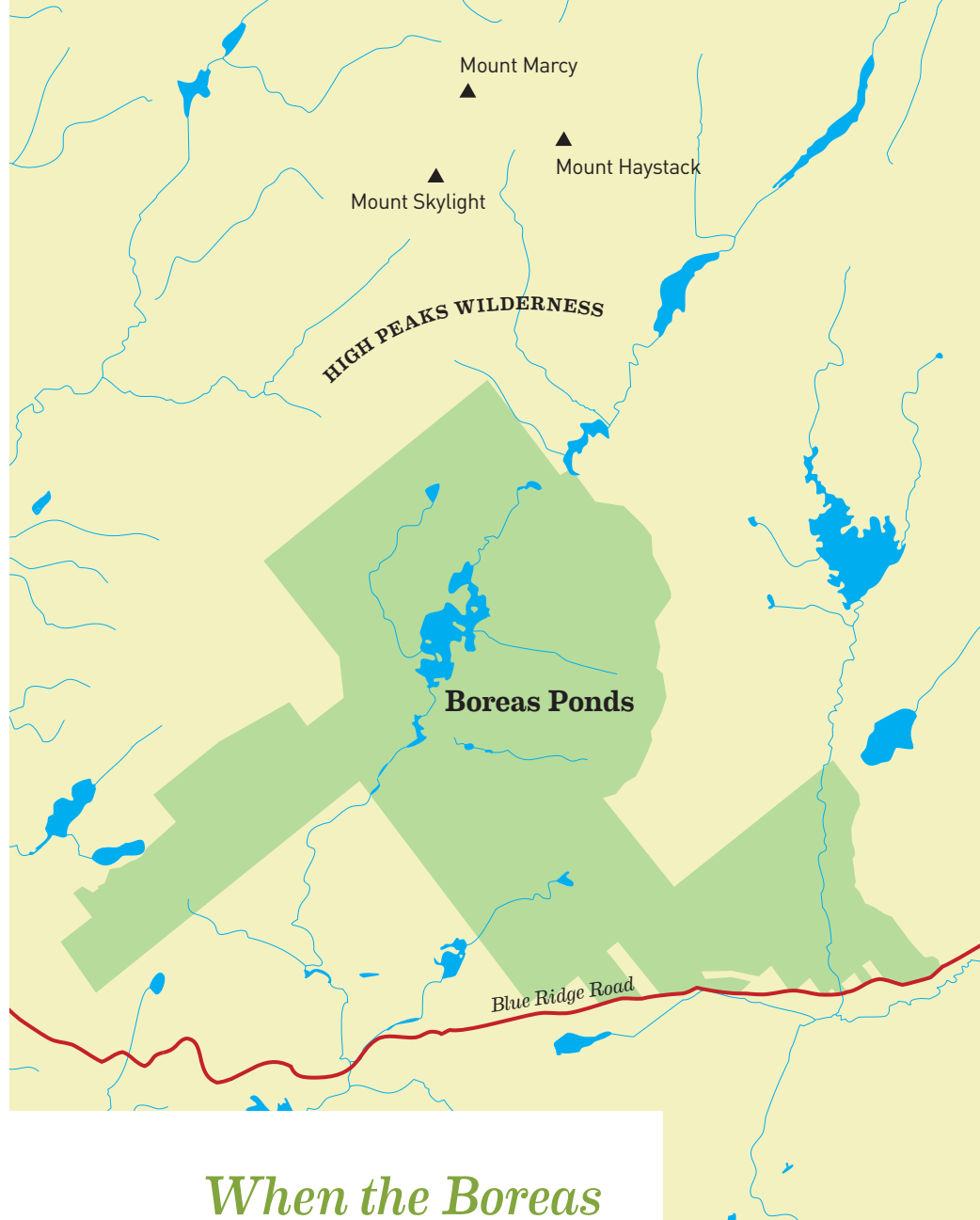
In the Adirondack Park, New York’s public land is the Forest Preserve, which the state constitution says will be “forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, ... nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed.” Beyond this legal protection, tracts have special classifications that guide recreational use and resource management.

Wilderness Areas are places “where man is only a visitor.” These large, remote parcels are off-limits to motorized vehicles and bicycles.

Wild Forest Areas are less remote than Wilderness and are intended for more intensive use. Bicycles and snowmobiles are allowed.

Primitive Areas are essentially Wilderness but contain structures and other manmade features; adjacent private land may trigger this classification.

The classification for Boreas Ponds will be decided by the DEC and Adirondack Park Agency; leading up to a unit management plan, there will be public information sessions and opportunities to express opinions on wilderness, wild forest or primitive designation.



When the Boreas tract joins adjacent High Peaks and Dix Mountain Wilderness Areas as Forest Preserve, it will create a patch of public land larger than Rocky Mountain National Park.

a tradition that began in the 1970s, when the group acquired Santononi Preserve and Lake Lila. All have become prime recreation destinations.

“Since the Nature Conservancy has owned the [Boreas] property for nine years we’ve had a chance to see its really special parts,” said communications director Connie Prickett. “There’s so much more to discover on a tract of this size.”

“There’s great potential access to the High Peaks. Allen Mountain—with a round-trip hike now more than 18 miles—certainly seems very close to this land. Cheney Cobble, which is nearby and already state land, has a rocky summit and offers a great view,” she said. “I have been eyeing Ragged Mountain for a few years and I got up to an outlook and the views were amazing. You look across Hoffman



Elephant Rock, a giant erratic, rises from a slough between Second and Third Boreas Ponds.

Notch Wilderness and it sweeps all the way around to the fire tower on Blue. That’s an opportunity for a short hike with a big reward. Moose Mountain has open ledges and looks interesting too.”

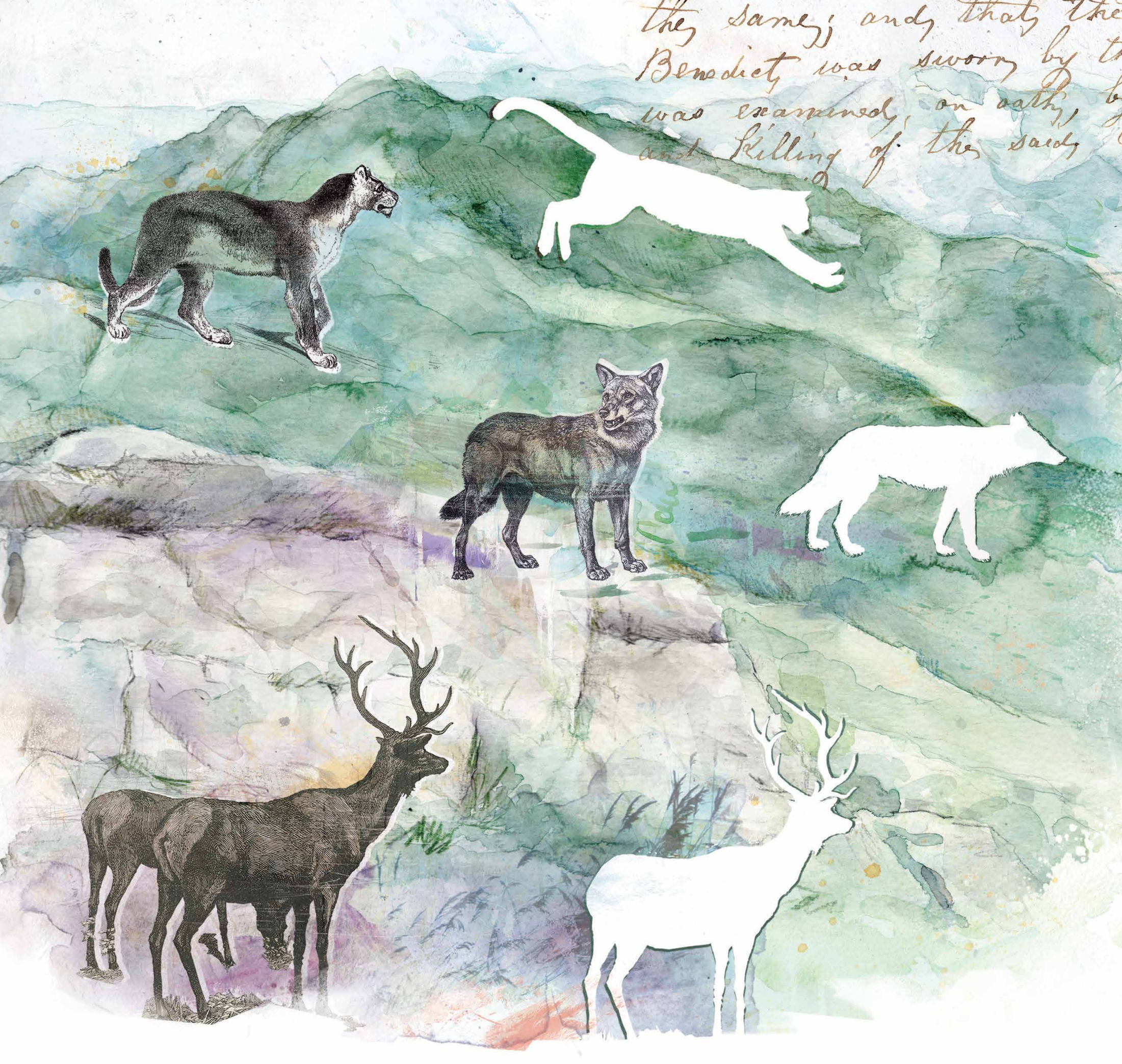
She continued, “Hiking along Snyder Brook is really beautiful; it’s a cold mountain stream with cool rock formations and cascades. On a warm day you just feel the temperature difference.” She also mused about White Lily Pond: “It’s so very peaceful, not so much a paddling opportunity but just a tranquil spot.”

While more than 91,000 acres have been sold by TNC to remain commercial forestland, New York has been accumulating Finch parcels since 2012. In fiscal year 2016–17

the Environmental Protection Fund is at an all-time high, \$300 million. Once the \$14.5 million Boreas deal is inked, the Department of Environmental Conservation begins the long process of planning for public access. This entails looking at existing roads, parking areas, put-ins, clearings and fishing spots as well as determining where primitive campsites, new trails, signage and other amenities should be built. These decisions are just a piece of the puzzle; the parcel may be designated as wilderness, primitive, wild forest or a combination (see “Classified Information,” page 43).

Preserving this special place is a tremendous legacy, and as Governor Andrew Cuomo said when he first laid eyes on Boreas Ponds, “You couldn’t really paint this place. Nature has a better brush.” 🌿

the same; and that thereupon
Benedict was sworn by the said
was examined, on oath, by us
and killing of the said Panther,



Vanishing Acts

SOME ADIRONDACK
CREATURES ARE
GONE FOREVER.
OTHERS ARE BACK.
THE STORIES BEHIND
THE RISE AND FALL
OF OUR MOOSE, ELK,
WOLF, PANTHER,
BEAVER AND LYNX

by ELIZABETH FOLWELL
illustrations by JANICE KUN



BEAVER WERE ALREADY RARE IN THE ADIRONDACKS IN THE 1840s THANKS TO TWO CENTURIES OF INTENSE INTERNATIONAL TRADING; THE FELTED FUR WAS SHAPED INTO MEN'S AND WOMEN'S HATS THAT WERE POPULAR IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA.

WHAT DO WE KNOW AND HOW DO WE KNOW IT?

For a naturalist documenting the Adirondacks in the 19th century, that job was as vast as the wilderness itself and systematic scientific inquiry was nearly as mysterious. Scrutinizing millions of acres to enumerate elusive creatures meant boots on the ground and also contact with hunters, guides and far-flung settlers for their impressions and experiences. Some men were unimpeachable sources of information, while others passed along nuggets of truth embedded in the bedrock of handed-down beliefs, tall tales and wild guesses.

The quest to tally New York's resources began in the 1830s, when the state looked border to border to find coal and mineral wealth; as part of this monumental inventory, mammals, reptiles, birds and fish were described in detail. It was an exercise in hope and wonder, a reconnaissance mission to learn the entire empire of the Empire State. James DeKay—born in Portugal, educated in Scotland as an M.D. and possessing a most curious and analytical mind—was selected to compile the report that measured the living, breathing assets of the territory. Though he briefly enjoyed the limelight for his advocacy of port wine as treatment for cholera and served as a ship's physician on a voyage to Turkey, by the 1830s he was deeply engaged in studying the natural world. As a biologist operating on the verge of a new national appreciation for all things wild, he counted more than 1,100 species and discovered 95 new ones.

The five-volume *Natural History of New-York* was published in 1842 at a staggering cost to taxpayers, more than \$130,000—or about \$3.8 million today. The mammals section fills an oversize leather-bound book with peculiar, cramped engravings showing bats and whales and panthers. A 200-page introduction by Governor William Seward (yes, that Seward, who advocated purchasing Alaska when he was Secretary of State under President Andrew Johnson) summarizes New York's history while establishing the governor and his research team as visionaries. One sentence mentions DeKay in the same breath as John James Audubon.

Our own Audubon, minus the sketchbook, traipsed from Lake Pleasant to Old Forge and the Saranacs with geologist Ebenezer Emmons and guide Lewis Elijah Benedict in 1840.

Benedict—whose Penobscot father, Sabael, was the name-sake of Indian Lake—was already well-known as a guide; he showed David Henderson a piece of iron in 1826 that launched the mine at Adirondac. Emmons was a superb escort as well: In 1836 he had christened the Adirondacks for what he deemed a long-gone Indian group. He ventured to the headwaters of the Raquette River, baptizing two pretty lakes and a small river for his wife and daughters—Janet, Catherine and Marion—the last name the only one that stuck. Mount Marcy was his discovery, and he was among the first to look upon the lakes and peaks as a place where the world-weary could escape urban chaos.

DeKay took copious notes, collected specimens for later study and gathered local wisdom, seeking out those who had actually encountered the animals he never witnessed. His findings mixed value judgments—a lynx, for instance, was “timid and easily killed”—with notations that ring with authority despite questionable facts: beavers, he commented with breezy confidence, can hop like kangaroos and eat fish.

Carnivores were of special interest because they posed direct threats to settlers and livestock and competed—unfairly, it appears—for venison. DeKay's “common American wolf [*Canis lupus occidentalis*]” was a true villain, “their ravages among deer are so great that they destroy five to one killed by man” according to “intelligent hunters.” These reddish to gray or black canines measured 36 to 48 inches from nose to base of tail. “Our wolf is equally voracious and cowardly, flying before man,” asserted DeKay.

By the time DeKay was on the trail, bounties were already a powerful incentive to remove wolves from the state, netting as much as \$30 to the person who presented skull and skin to a local justice and town supervisor. Though this predator had been found throughout the colony as early as 1640, two centuries later the range had retreated to St. Lawrence and adjacent Adirondack counties.

The northern panther, according to DeKay, had once lurked downstate as well as in

The Brown's Tract Guides' Association was active in the central Adirondacks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The group advocated for fair woods wages, supported game laws and promoted moose and elk restoration, as this undated poster indicates.

POSTER FROM THE ADIRONDACK MUSEUM

the mountains, but by the 1840s it was most numerous in Herkimer, Hamilton and St. Lawrence Counties. Dutch settlers believed this tawny cat to be a true lion, and DeKay solemnly stated specimens were as much as 10 feet long, including tail. One male shot near Fourth Lake, displayed at a museum in Utica, was reportedly an astonishing 11 feet three inches, or stretching from bumper to bumper of a new VW bug. (Sadly, that museum, along with its spectacular cat, disappeared a long time ago.)

“An animal of undoubted strength and ferocity,” wrote DeKay, “uniformly cowardly,” retreated from man and was not prone to attack. Emmons chimed in that tales of cougar depredation were fictitious and “they have not destroyed a single man or child.” Nonetheless, panthers were seen as pure trouble to homesteaders; bounties paid by county and state encouraged their wholesale slaughter. Their guide, Benedict, was also a bounty hunter, and his name shows up in Hamilton County records for killing a panther in Wells.

The lynx was “not uncommon” in the North Country, according to DeKay. Oversize paws helped it prey on varying hares and “sometimes lambs and pigs.” There were no bounties on lynx, though their beautiful spotted pelts brought three or four dollars at a time when a buck was equal to \$27 today.

“The beaver, whose skins once formed so important an article of commerce to this state, as to have been incorporated into the armorial bearings of the old colony,” DeKay wrote,

“is now nearly extirpated within its limits.” No wonder: from the dawn of New Netherlands, tens of thousands of beaver were taken every year until the supply ran out. Thanks to the international fur trade, this huge rodent was the first mammal to fade unequivocally from the Adirondack forests.

DeKay's party, searching between the Hudson and St. Lawrence in 1841, found a few scattered individuals on the Cedar and Indian Rivers and Tupper Lake. Stick dams and log houses were no longer signs of active beaver colonies: “so much harassed by hunters it has ceased making dams” and instead burrowed, incognito, into mud banks. That behavior change is plausible, though DeKay's statement that “it advances on land by a series of successive leaps of 10 or 12 feet, in which it is powerfully assisted by its tail, which it brings down with a resound-

DON'T SHOOT!

There is no open season on
MOOSE, ELK or MEN.

Both Moose and Elk have been liberated in this vicinity, and the woods are full of Men.

The killing of a Moose or an Elk is a misdemeanor, and the penalty for such killing is

\$350.00

and imprisonment for not less than three months nor more than one year.

All Sportsmen and Hunters are cautioned against shooting before knowing what they are shooting at.

Report all Violations to the
BROWN'S TRACT GUIDES' ASS'N.

ing noise” smacks of a wily old pioneer pulling the gullible expert’s chain.

Elk—also known as American stag and wapiti—was uncommon. DeKay called it the “most stupid of the deer kind” despite its noble appearance and offered that it brayed “like an ass.” It was possible, he allowed, that elk might be mistaken for moose.

Moose were the unquestioned monarchs of the Adirondack woods, not just majestic but delicious. “They are yet numerous in the unsettled portions of the state, in the Counties of Essex, Hamilton, Franklin, Lewis and Warren,” DeKay said. The population around Raquette Lake was on the rebound because of the “gradual removal of the Indians,” who, he felt, profligately used moosehide for moccasins and snowshoe webbing. DeKay gave an explanation for the name of Raquette Lake that honored a local moose/snowshoe connection. He also opined that moose could be easily domesticated and broken to the plow, harking back to the old Dutch name for them, wild forest oxen.

IF THE LAST ADIRONDACK moose appeared in the sights of your rifle, would you kill it? In 1861 the question was answered with a resounding yes.

But that attitude was coming under fire. In 1855 S. H. Hammond’s *Wild Northern Scenes* had proposed constitutional protection for the forests; an op-ed for *The New York Times* nine years later suggested that the Adirondacks become a “Central Park for the world.” Henry David Thoreau wrote admiringly of our own wilderness, and calls for preserving the Adirondacks came from photographer Seneca

Ray Stoddard and surveyor Verplanck Colvin. The impetus was more than saving watersheds and trees, but the residents therein.

Four decades after DeKay’s survey, Clinton Hart Merriam wrote *The Mammals of the Adirondack Region*. For key megafauna, so much had changed. While chronicling the demise of moose and elk and predicting the extermination of wolf, mountain lion and beaver, Merriam’s book repeated hearsay from DeKay, quoted letters from gentleman hunters and offered fun facts such as panther meat is “very fine eating” and ingesting beaver testicles could cure “gout, mania, dizziness, poor vision and retention of afterbirth.”

More useful to modern readers, he recorded bounties by county for the decade prior to his book’s publication, showing where remnant populations of cougars and wolves were found. A man named E. L. Sheppard was responsible for deleting 28 mountain lions from Essex County, and Merriam observed, “since the state offered a bounty for their destruction so many more have been killed than have been born that they are well nay exterminated.” From 1871 to

1882 New York paid out \$920 in bounties for 46 mountain lions, with the majority killed in St. Lawrence County. Merriam estimated that more than 100 had been killed in the 24 years after 1860.

The wolf population was dwindling, Merriam felt, because it is “hard work to get a living here.” Subsisting on frogs, skunks and carrion, wolves are “always gaunt and hungry.” In the same breath, he also commented, “The wolf is one of the most cowardly and wary of our mammals. ... When opportunity affords he is one of the most destructive

On the back of these images, published by Hurst’s Stereoscopic Studies in 1870, the caption reads: “The Panther is now rarely seen in this State; it is occasionally met with in the deep woods and among the mountains of the northern parts, but like Moose and the Beaver, are either driven away or exterminated by the advance of civilization.”



STEREOSCOPIC IMAGE COURTESY OF TED COMSTOCK

WHAT MANY BELIEVE TO BE THE LAST MOOSE WAS KILLED NEAR RAQUETTE LAKE IN 1861. PRIZED FOR TAXIDERMY AND THE TABLE, AN 800-POUND BULL COULD DRESS OUT AT MORE THAN 400 POUNDS OF MEAT, INCLUDING STEAKS, ROASTS, TONGUE AND LIPS, WHICH WERE ESPECIALLY PRIZED.

and wasteful of brutes, always killing as much game as possible regardless of the condition of his appetite.” Merriam thought that the wolf’s disappearance was puzzling, not due to sport hunting or bounties, but a kind of leakage northward to Canada.


“That the American elk or wapiti was at one time common in the Adirondacks there is no question,” Merriam proclaimed. “A number of their antlers have been discovered, the most perfect of which I have seen is in the possession of Mr. John Constable. It was found in a bog on Third Lake of Fulton Chain in Herkimer County.” But elk were little more than a faint memory by 1880.



Though the passing of the last moose—shot in Raquette Lake—was mourned, warning signs were present a decade earlier, even as sportsmen like artist A. F. Tait and Governor Horatio Seymour took aim. At least one felt real remorse. North Country aristocrat John Constable, whose grandfather had engineered the three-million-acre Macomb Purchase, wrote in an 1851 letter to Merriam, “I must ever regret the part I have taken unwittingly in exterminating this noble animal from our forest. Were I younger, I would assist in reinstating them, as the plan is perfectly feasible.”

Beaver, scarce in DeKay’s day, were so impossible to find, Merriam explained, “few people know that they still exist here.” What was left were old ponds and place names.

AS INK WAS DRYING on the obituaries for iconic creatures, numerous attempts to restore them were launched by guides, a magazine publisher, wealthy landowners and New York State. Harry Radford, of *Forest and Stream* and *Woods and Waters*, was an ardent advocate for bringing them back, starting with moose in 1901 and beaver three years later. The state allocated \$500 for the rodent relocation and half a dozen from the West were released in the vicinity of Old Forge. More transplants followed. As quick as you can say “Beaver dam!” the eager pioneers multiplied. Tens of thousands today prove this the sole success story for any deliberate Adirondack reintroduction. (Continued on page 72)



Nils Edward Luderowski Architect
Keene Valley, New York / 518.576.4446 / www.luderowskiarchitect.com
RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN IN AN ADIRONDACK VERNACULAR

Visit our unique Gift Store We have local artists, pottery, jewelry, paintings, Adk-style furniture, mantels, countertops and much more.

Fully insured arborist landscape • tree care

Turn your trees into usable lumber!

Capital Sawmill can take down your trees and turn them into usable lumber at your location. We cut timbers and unique custom lumber to your specifications.
www.capitalsawmill.com • 518-479-0729 • 4119 US Route 20, Nassau, NY 12123

ADKSurveying.com



ADIRONDACK SURVEYING

APA SITE PLANS
BOUNDARY,
TOPOGRAPHIC,
SUBDIVISION,
and MORTGAGE
SURVEYS.

Call **518.946.7571**
Ralph Schissler, L.S. | Owner

HALL DESIGN GROUP



Buildings. Interiors.
www.halldesigngroup.com
Essex, NY 518-963-7620

J & J Brown
Garnet Studio

We offer a full range of custom-cut stones and jewelry, specializing in locally mined Adirondack garnet.

Over 30 years of stone cutting, gem setting and design experience.

518-251-3368
www.garnetstudio.net

68 Casserline Rd., North River, NY 12856

VANISHING ACTS

Continued from page 45

What many believed to be the last Adirondack wolf was shot at Brandreth Lake by guide Reuben Cary in 1893. The animal lives on, sort of, as a mournful taxidermy specimen on display at the Adirondack Museum, in Blue Mountain Lake. No bigger than an average Labrador, he seems more coyote than timber wolf. Considering the questions of what we know and how we know it, add another: Was *Canis lupus* ever here at all? What exactly was our native wolf?

Throughout most of the 20th century there was little interest in bringing back historic carnivores—that is, until the 1980s. Research, much of it carried out at the State University of New York's Adirondack Ecological Center, in Newcomb, examined the possibilities with a distinctly dispassionate, empirical slant. In 1981 SUNY College of Envi-

WHAT MANY BELIEVE TO BE THE LAST ADIRONDACK WOLF WAS SHOT AT BRANDRETH LAKE BY GUIDE REUBEN CARY IN 1893. BUT WAS CANIS LUPUS EVER HERE AT ALL? WHAT EXACTLY WAS OUR NATIVE WOLF?

ronmental Science and Forestry looked at transplanting mountain lions, but the preponderance of roads was a huge deterrent. Later that decade, dozens of Canada lynx from the Northwest Territories were shipped to Newcomb and set free, but within a year or two the radio-collared cats had fled (one was found in New Brunswick) or had been killed by cars hundreds of miles from the release site. In 1999 the national organization Defenders of Wildlife—after years of pro-wolf publicity—concluded a study that found gray wolf restoration was problematic due to development trends and also questioned if red wolf should be the reintroduced species instead.

Hoofed animals fared better. William C. Whitney was eager to reintroduce



MOONLIGHT MARINE
Custom Built Wood Kayaks
Sales and Service
Accepting commissions for Spring paddling
914-715-7245 www.moonlightmarine.net
moonlightmarinekayaks@gmail.com


"The most attractive option for boat and SUP storage."
—Cabin Life, June 2015

Dealer inquiries welcome

715-543-2006
Shop our online store!
www.LogKayakRack.com
Made in Manitowish Waters, WI

ADIRONDACK LIFE
Green Plaid Fleece Blanket

Double-weight blanket with embroidered logo.



Made in New York.

Measures a generous 70" x 60".
GPF 16B \$74.95
For mail order please see insert card.
800-328-4461
www.adirondacklifestore.com

New York Paddlefest and Outdoor Expo!
America's Largest On-Water Canoe, Kayak & SUP Sale!
Two Great Shows!
Saratoga Springs, Apr. 30 & May 1 and Old Forge, May 20, 21, 22

Featuring Canoes, Kayaks, Paddleboards, Outdoor Gear, Bikes and Clothing for Outdoor Enthusiasts of All Ages!

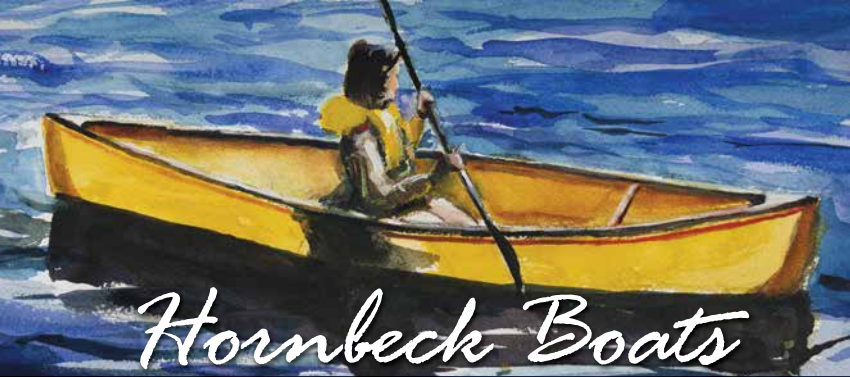


Test-paddle 100s of Models of Canoes, Kayaks and SUPs
More than 20 Leading Brands of Canoes, Kayaks & SUPs
Outdoor Gear, Clothing & Footwear Sale
www.KEENfootwear.com

Over 1,000 Canoes, Kayaks and Paddleboards on Sale
Presented by



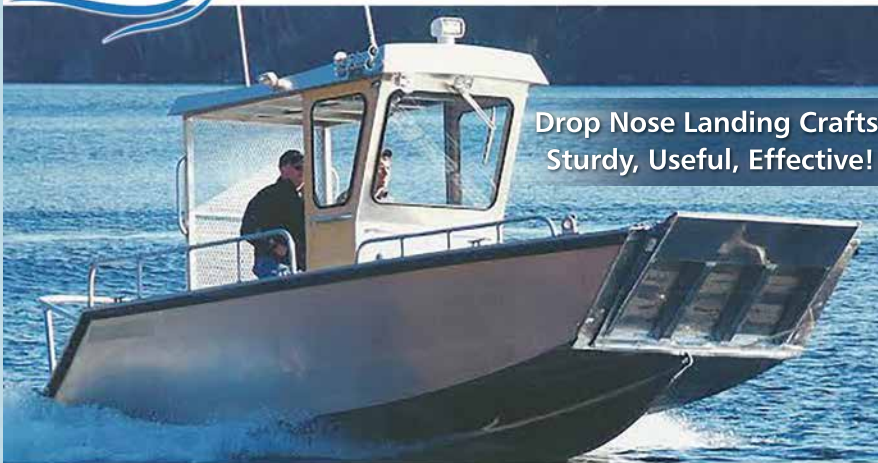
Mountainman Outdoor Supply Company
New York's Largest Canoe, Kayak and Paddleboard Dealer
www.MountainmanOutdoors.com



Hornbeck Boats
518-251-2764 www.hornbeckboats.com

Work Boat America

World classic aluminum work boats for all applications



Drop Nose Landing Crafts.
Sturdy, Useful, Effective!



315-783-6100
peter@workboatamerica.com

41444 NY State Route 12, Clayton, NY 13624

BIC ❖ WENONAH ❖ OLD TOWN ❖ SWIFT ❖ NORTHSTAR
34 YEARS OF OUTFITTING CANOERS, KAYAKERS AND CAMPERS

Full retail and rental shop featuring
canoes, kayaks, standup paddle
boards and paddling accessories.
On-site demos available.



RaquetteRiverOutfitters.com • rro@roadrunner.com
1754 State Route 30, Tupper Lake, NY • 518-359-3228
Summer retail/rental shop in Long Lake next to bridge • 518-624-2360

CURRENT DESIGN ❖ EDDYLINE ❖ NECKY ❖ WERNER

Discover Ultra-light Paddling

Wee Lassie 10'6"
Impulse 13
Sportduo Tandem
Kayaks

www.slipstreamwatercraft.com 518.423.8827

VANISHING ACTS

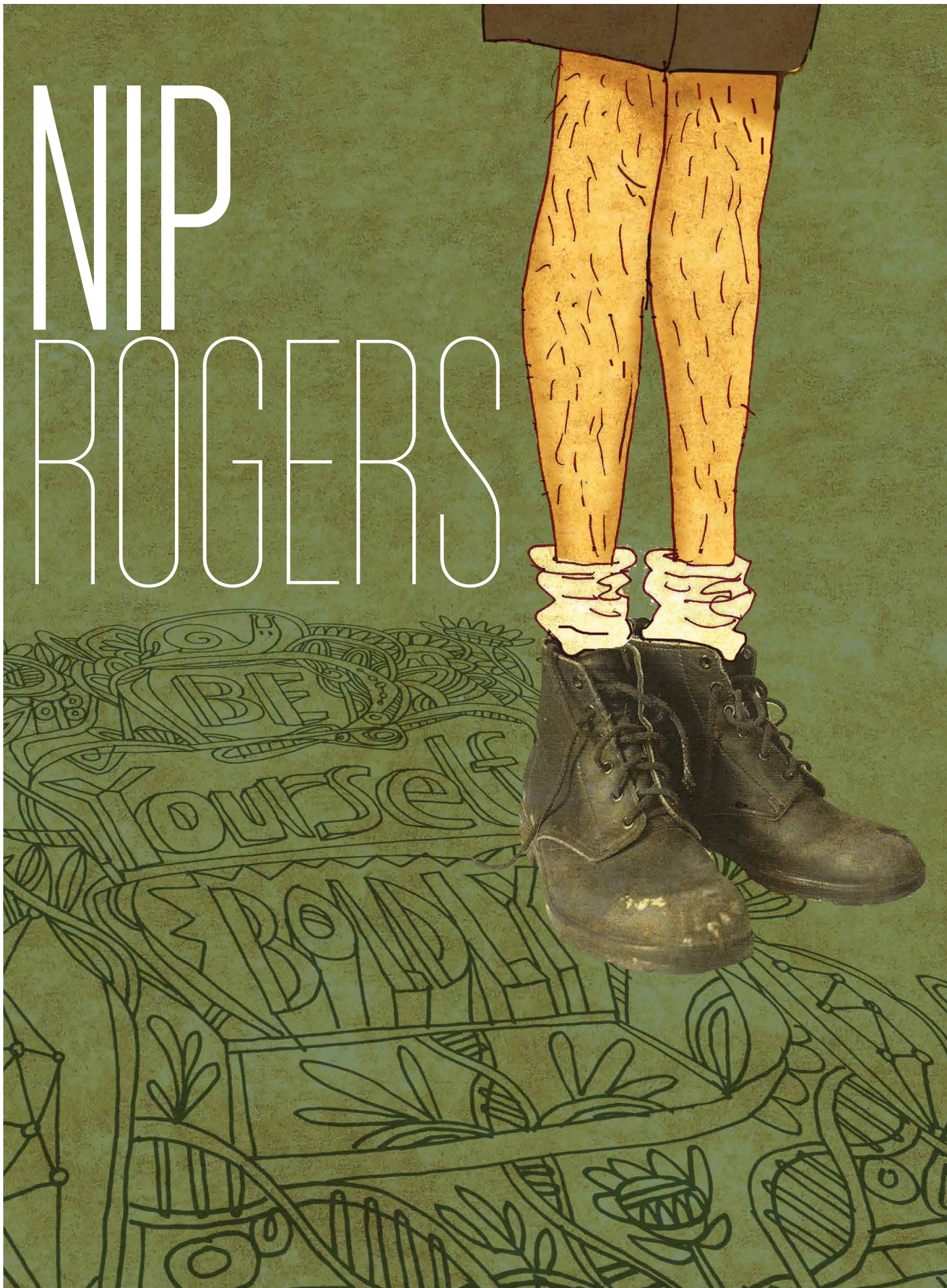
elk and gathered 17 cows and five bulls from a game farm in Massachusetts. The herd was packed into a railcar bound for Raquette Lake station, then loaded on a barge and ferried to the Forked Lake carry. Elk were released at Little Tupper Lake, Paul Smiths and elsewhere, with the widely dispersed herd numbering more than 200. But this habitat wasn't ideal for the deer that prefer high meadows, and they looked—at a distance—like especially robust whitetails. The scheme was futile, though in 2006 the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation raised the possibility of Adirondack elk again, citing the success of a program in Pennsylvania.

Starting with two pairs set free near the Opalescent River in the 1870s and continuing into the early 20th century, there were many efforts to return moose to their ancestral lands. Railroad magnate William Seward Webb had a vast fenced preserve at Nehasane and he let a handful of his personal moose escape onto state land. A dozen moose, equal numbers of cows and bulls, were set free at Big Moose Lake in a state-funded experiment in 1901.

Despite considerable investment, these haphazard experiments flopped. In the 1980s and '90s, the Department of Environmental Conservation proposed an active restoration program but public outcry over car/moose accidents helped table the idea.

Early-20th-century restoration attempts were propelled by good intentions but hampered by incomplete understanding of the natural world. Even the best information was flawed, as we see from the cool, scientific remove of modern times.

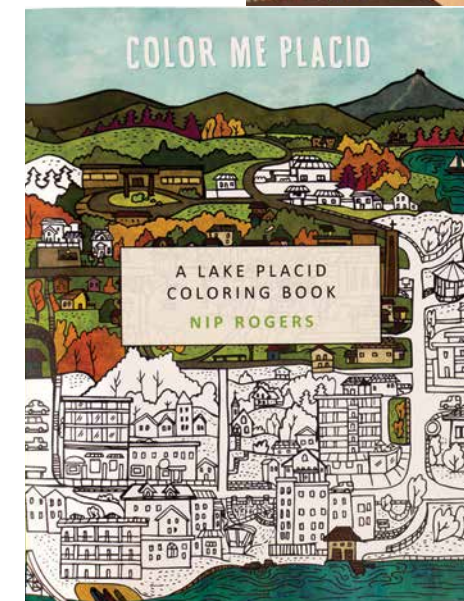
When the moose were primed to venture from New England westward they did, first bachelor bulls squeezed out of Vermont—forced to migrate by population pressure. The 21st-century landscape here welcomed them, an accidental atonement played out in hidden wetlands and second-growth forest replete with moosewood and other favorite browse. As nearly a thousand moose prove today, nature proceeds on its own schedule, relying on its own truth. 🌿



NIP ROGERS

The Lake Placid homecoming of an artist with a global perspective

BY ELIZABETH FOLWELL



Nip Rogers in his Lake Placid studio. Rogers's latest project, a 24-page coloring book, is inspired by his hometown.

NIP ROGERS SEES THINGS DIFFERENTLY. Maybe it's because he's six feet seven inches tall. Maybe it's because he's traveled the world—from his home in Lake Placid to Washington DC, Kenya, Malaysia, the Seychelles and back again. Maybe it's because his brain works in a certain way, one that now, at age 56, he understands completely.

"I'm dyslexic and I had a difficult time in school," he says. Lake Placid's school was all under one roof then, and "you started in the lower left corner with kindergarten and then moved through the building, ending up in the upper right for high school senior year," he explains. Reading was a struggle, since words were shapes to him, not organized collections of letters. His mother recognized that he had a real talent for art and enrolled him in Saturday classes taught by local painter Ed Schaber. "You learned to use a certain brush for clouds, how to do trees and how to blend colors. I had to relearn everything in art school," he laughs.

If the Rogers last name rings a bell, it should, or at least

radio call letters: Nip's parents, Jim and Keela, moved to Lake Placid in 1962 to work at WIRD and eventually purchased WNBZ. Jim was a town justice for 20 years, and Nip's brother, Jamie, served as mayor for one term. Nip's given name is Robert, for an uncle known as Skip.

With his older brother and sister, Kitty, out of the house, Nip says he felt like he was an only child as his high school years ended. His grades were so bad he had no vision of continuing his education. A plan loosely evolved. "I went

PHOTOGRAPH BY NAJMA PIRANI ROGERS. ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF NIP ROGERS

to basketball camps. My father saw a scholarship coming so he'd say, 'Don't do your chores, go outside and play basketball.' Because I'm so tall I started getting letters from colleges."

His main question for the coaches surprised them: Do you have an art school? George Washington University won out over other suitors. "I learned a lot about myself, being plopped in the middle of a thriving city after coming from Placid," he says.

He also began to understand how his brain works. "There are eight different kinds of intelligence, like visual-spatial, linguistic, mathematical and bodily-kinetic. My strengths are in spatial and body kinetics. The reason I did so well in basketball was my outside shooting, combining spatial and kinetics: How much power do I need to put on this ball to make it go in a certain arc and direction? I realized these things lined up perfectly for me; I went to school on a basketball scholarship for an art degree."

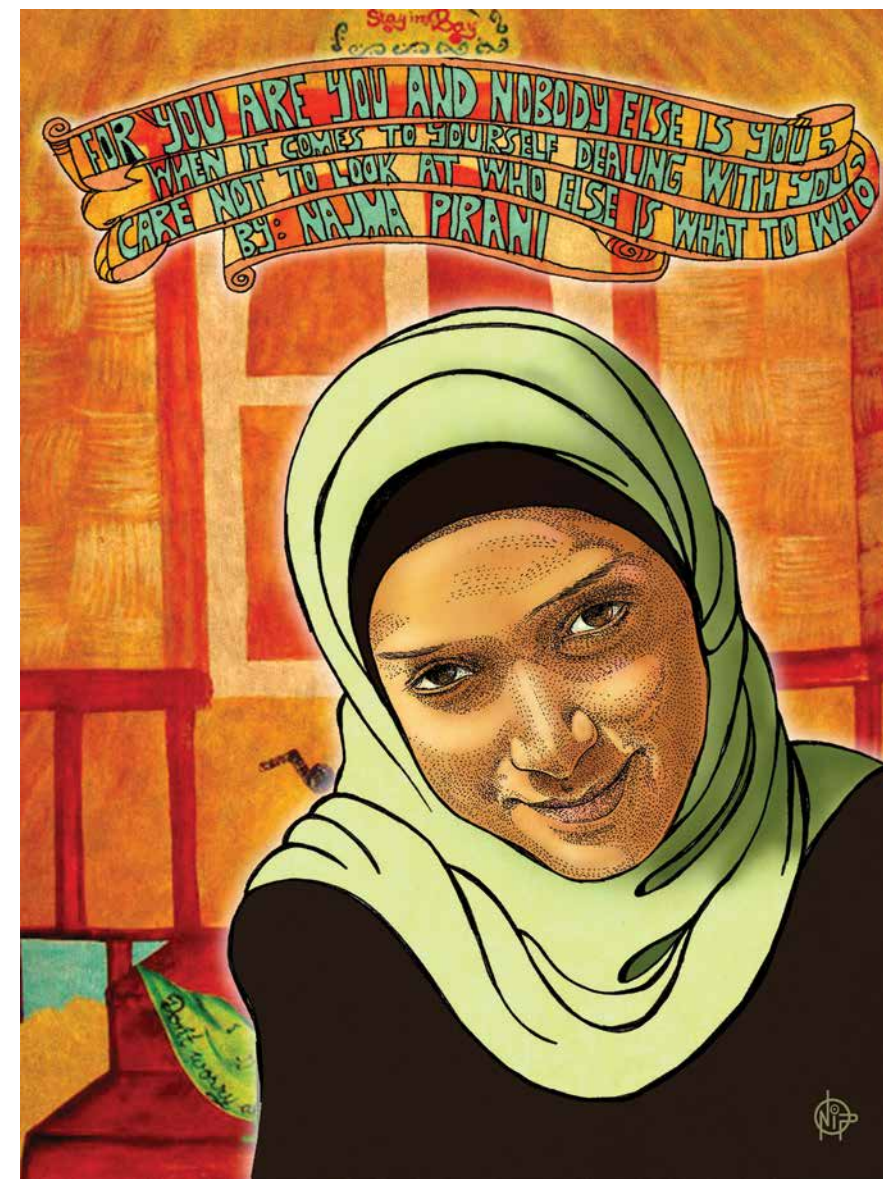
After earning his bachelor's degree, he returned to his hometown to teach art for grades seven through 12. But teaching wasn't a good fit then, so he returned to George

Living in the Seychelles, surrounded by palm trees, he drew the landscapes of home: the Adirondacks.

Washington for graduate school, working as a campus security guard and in the alumni relations office. There he created a map that showed all the buildings and pathways from a quirky overhead perspective, and the piece ended up on the cover of the school phone book, postcards and posters. When his graduate thesis was nearly done, his advisor suggested he pursue illustration as a career. He says this was his aha moment: "It hit me—this is perfect, this is how I think and express my thoughts. I never took notes, I made drawings in class for visual references."

In 1987 he began his illustrating career. Though he says it was "sink or swim," he was in Washington, a city with some 6,000 organizations that all needed art for annual reports, articles and logos. His accounts ranged from the United Auto Workers to a national amateur radio society to *Education Week*, a client he has to this day.

He got married, bought a townhouse, had children, took his portfolio to art directors in Manhattan and DC. He got a rep in Atlanta. He moved to Pennsylvania, continuing to freelance for a growing list of publications and nonprofits. Then the economy tanked, his marriage folded and in 2006



A portrait of Najma Pirani Rogers, from Nip's *Social Faceworking* exhibition.

he returned home to the Adirondacks to regroup. That's when he met Martha Swan and began working with the nonprofit organization she founded, John Brown Lives!, which is devoted to extending the abolitionist's philosophy to the modern social-justice, anti-slavery movement. He became involved with Reason2Smile, an international nonprofit that grew from his niece Keela's work at a rural school and orphanage in Kenya.

He also decided it was time to talk about his brain. He visited public schools to discuss with students the different ways we learn and how to capitalize on our own strengths and work through our struggles. Teaching is geared toward left-brain thinkers, he believes, so many fall behind and feel they're failures. School was where he could make connections with similar minds.

He began connecting with all kinds of artists across the

globe. That's how he developed two major exhibitions called *Social Faceworking*. One, at the Lake Placid Center for the Arts, included 19 Adirondack artists, people he wanted to get to know now that he was back in the region. The other was at Proctors Theater, in Schenectady, in 2011. Forty artists from all over the world submitted work, and Nip also made portraits of them. Among them was Najma Pirani, from Malaysia.

They had met online previously and were pen pals for three years. A Skype session clinched it for Nip: he was head over heels in love with her. He decided to go to Malaysia to meet her. Trying to convince her father that they should marry was probably the biggest challenge of his life.

The man never gave his blessing, so the couple moved to the Seychelles to wed.

But off the coast of Africa, surrounded by palm trees and sparkling beaches, Nip was drawing pictures of the Adirondacks, the landscape of home. The couple moved to Lake Placid in spring 2015.

Najma got a job at Lake Placid's Bookstore Plus, and last summer the adult coloring-book craze brought cases and cases of them into the shop. Nip saw an opportunity and created *Color Me Placid*, published in May this year.

That's not the only book in Nip's portfolio; he's begun a work that shows how he thinks through words and pictures, an exploration of the synergy among creativity, spirituality and expression. 🌿

To see Nip Rogers's work in person, A Point of View Gallery (518-578-5490, www.apointofviewgallery.com), in Lake Placid, is hosting a one-man show, A New Hello, October 7–November 4.

October Dance. Below: Map of Alabama highlighting the struggle for voting rights, commissioned by Teaching Tolerance.

