

OLEAN TIMES HERALD

Serving Olean, N.Y., area since 1860

Monday, July 13, 2009

75 cents

► Twin Tiers

Wellsville resident takes readers through the woods in new book

WARREN, Pa. — In "The Way of the Woods: Journeys Through American Forests," Linda Underhill explores some of America's most extraordinary forests, from proposed wilderness in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF), to the old-growth groves of Cook Forest State Park, to the ancient rainforests of Washington's Olympic Peninsula.

Pittsburgh native Ms. Underhill, a resident of Wellsville, N.Y., and currently a visiting professor of English at Gettysburg College, spent several years visiting important forest areas from coast to coast in preparation for writing "The Way of the Woods," recently published by Oregon State University Press.

For her chapter on the ANF, titled "Going Wild," Ms. Underhill augmented her research with a hiking trip with Kirk Johnson, executive director for Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW) into the proposed addition to the

Hickory Creek Wilderness Area in southern Warren County. FAW is a Warren-based non-profit organization seeking permanent protection for select portions of the ANF.



The proposed addition to the Hickory Creek Wilderness is a 1,780-acre area that encompasses the headwaters of East Hickory Creek, a state-designated Wilderness Trout Stream, and it contains a two-mile segment of the popular Tanbark Trail. It was first proposed for wilderness designation as part of the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act in 1974 by former Pennsylvania Senators Hugh Scott and Richard Schweiker.

In total, FAW has proposed that 54,460 acres of the ANF be designated as wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964 in their Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest, published in 2003. During the U.S. Forest Service's recent-

ly completed Forest Plan revision, more than 6,800 of a total of 8,200 public comments specifically advocated for the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal.

"Skillfully weaving together scientific fact and philosophical reflection on the value of forests to the human spirit, "The Way of the Woods" is an eloquent plea for the protection of forests," said Lorraine Anderson, editor of "Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry About Nature."

"Underhill's writing is clear, crisp literary journalism, moving with an understated grace as she covers specific types of forests, from rainforests to urban woodlands to the threatened hemlocks of Appalachia," said Keith Goetzman, senior editor at the Utne Reader.

"The Way of the Woods" is available through the publisher, via online booksellers such as Amazon.com and BN.com, and at bookstores. Ms. Underhill is also the author of "The Unequal Hours: Moments of Being in the Natural World," published in 1999 by University of Georgia Press.