

LAKE PLACID NEWS

ROTARY CLUB NEWS: Tony Goodwin receives 'Service Above Self' award



Tony Goodwin (Photo provided)

In June 2018, the Rotary Club of Lake Placid awarded Tony Goodwin the “Service Above Self” award. This is an annual award given to a non-Rotarian who exemplifies community service.

Goodwin spent all of his childhood summers in Keene Valley. He became a 46er at age 11 and started doing serious trail work with his father at age 16. After graduating from Williams College, he served two years in the U.S. Army followed by two years of teaching in New Hampshire. After those years away, Goodwin moved to the Adirondacks for good in 1976. He earned a master’s degree in history while also helping with the 1980 Olympics: first as director of the nordic ski patrol for the Olympic cross-country events and later as the venue manager for cross-country and biathlon.

In 1986, Goodwin joined a group of local cross-country skiers who thought there was great potential for both local skiers and visitors if some old ski trails could be linked up to create a true town-to-town ski route. The group became the Adirondack Ski Touring Council. That first season, ASTC created a trail linking Keene and Lake Placid. At that time the legendary Herman “Jackrabbit” Johannsen died in his native Norway at age 111. Jackrabbit had lived in Lake Placid until 1928 before moving to Canada, where he became a major force in the development of Canadian skiing. While in Lake Placid, he had often skied on some of the same routes that ASTC was seeking to develop. It’s been called the Jackrabbit Trail ever since.

The original vision was a trail all the way to Tupper Lake, and the next goal was to connect Lake Placid to Saranac Lake. That happened in 1987 with the reopening of the old road past McKenzie Pond and out to McKenzie Pond Road. The next year, connections across the Peninsula and Fawn Ridge further improved the trail. While the original goal of getting to Tupper Lake is still blocked by the lack of a unit management plan for the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest, ASTC did build a section of trail from Lake Clear to the Paul Smiths VIC in 1994.

ASTC began to seek out other traditional cross-country ski trails that could use more winter maintenance. This led to “adopting” the Connery Pond-to-

Whiteface Landing, Whales Tail, Wright Peak and Hayes Brook trails, among others.

After nearly 30 years as executive director of ASTC, Goodwin has turned leadership over to Josh Wilson of the Barkeater Trails Alliance. BETA created about 50 miles of new mountain bike trails with a young and energized group of volunteers. The two organizations are now combined under the BETA name, and skiing is an integral part of what the organization does.

Reflecting on his career as a local trail builder, Goodwin said he drew much satisfaction in seeing others out enjoying the trails that he had created.

The Rotary Club of Lake Placid meets on Thursday mornings at 7:20 a.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott. All are welcome. For more information, visit www.rotarylakeplacid.com.
