

WELCOME TO THE LEVINE NATURE PRESERVE!

The ~177 acres of land that forms the LeVine Nature Preserve in the Town of Providence, New York has served as a place to understand and appreciate the natural world for generations. We hope you enjoy the ~3 miles of trails!

In an autobiography on his life, Dr LeVine wrote that he would leave the property to his boys hoping that it would serve as a “friend, companion, and source of solitude, reflection, contemplation, and contentment.” Now, this generous gift made by his family can provide these much needed values to everyone who visits and explores this truly special place.

What is Letterboxing?

Letterboxing is an old English tradition dating back to 1854 where people began leaving a self-addressed post card or note in a jar, hoping for them to be returned by mail by the next visitor. Today we've adapted this English tradition and put it to use on Saratoga PLAN's nature preserves and trails. Each preserve has a letterbox ranging in difficulty for participants and gives each type of adventurer an exciting opportunity to explore our preserves and have fun while doing so. When you find the letterbox, you can feel free to take a postcard, and mail it back to us with your comments about your journey. You can also take the stamp from within the letterbox and mark your PLAN Preserve Passport on the appropriate page. Once you have collected at least five stamps (or listed three species observed during each visit) stop by PLAN's offices in Saratoga Springs for a FREE Saratoga PLAN t-shirt!

We hope you enjoy your letterboxing experience on this preserve. Interspersed within the clues *in italics* are natural history observations and hiking information for those interested, for example:

The LeVine Nature Preserve has two beautiful, tumbling creeks that cross through it: Joby Creek and Cadman Creek. Exploring the east green loop trail as it runs alongside Cadman Creek, you can see the remains of an old mill foundation. This section of the east green loop trail also has two benches that serve as a great place to take a rest and enjoy the flowing water.

LETTERBOX CLUES FOR THE LEVINE NATURE PRESERVE

Whether you're walking, running, or skipping:

- 1. Start your journey at the trail head with the kiosk on your right; this is called the Taber Road trail.**

This trail was once actually a road used by local residents that connected Centerline Road with Fayville Road.

*Pay close attention to the left side of the trail just after you start walking: in spring, this depression fills with water to form a vernal pool. **Vernal pools** are seasonal habitats for critters like wood frogs, spring peepers and salamanders. Keep your eye out for others throughout the preserve.*

- 2. Continue straight on Taber Road trail for approximately 0.3 miles.**

Stop for a moment and listen. Can you hear a small woodland brook? You are now approaching Joby Creek.

- 3. Once you start to hear the creek, keep an eye out for yellow trail markers to your right.**

Don't forget to look left or you might miss a wonderful little grove of young pine trees.

- 4. Take a right, leaving Taber Road trail and enter onto the yellow trail. Follow this yellow trail, keeping an eye out for an old stone wall that will appear on your right.**

Stone walls were built in the past to mark property boundaries, divide fields, and separate animals and crops, but each wall is unique.

- 5. After a short walk, the stone wall on your right will end. Continue forward as the trees around you open up, watching for the remains of an old cellar hole that at one time had a house sitting on top of it!**

You may explore here, but please do not climb on the foundation stones, for your safety. The letterbox is nearby, but it is not in the cellar hole.

- 6. Look around. Do you see a picnic table? Nearby the table is an old well.**

This well once provided water for the people who lived in the house.

- 7. While standing at the well, look for a clump of 5-6 trees growing close together which seem to be watching over the well. Search here for the letterbox. Your treasure is close at hand!**

GREAT WORK!

We hope you enjoyed your letterboxing adventure at the LeVine Nature Preserve. If you'd like to continue exploring the trails at the Preserve, feel free to do so. Please make sure to return the letterbox as you found it before heading back out the way you came.

Thank you!

-Your Friends at Saratoga PLAN

The mission of Saratoga PLAN is to preserve the rural character, natural habitats and scenic beauty of Saratoga County so that these irreplaceable assets are accessible to all and survive for future generations. To learn more, please visit us at www.saratogaplan.org.

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