

## Coin-Operated Series

*By Martini Man & Wisconsin Hiker*

This series was originally planted for the 2010 Great Lakes Gathering, the 8<sup>th</sup> annual gathering for our region. The theme of the event this year was "Changing the World, One Box at a Time" and included many stamps with images of coins from around the world. To compliment that theme, we created this series showing various coin-operated devices. Since the boxes could not be left in the park on a permanent basis, we brought them out to New York and placed them along a good hiking loop. Please replace all boxes carefully and securely so they are not discovered by muggles or animals - thanks!

**Starting Point:** The Pike Brook Road trailhead. Take Route 149 to Fort Ann then turn left (north) onto Route 4/22, and follow it until you reach Whitehall. Bear left on Route 22 for about 4.5 miles, and follow it through the lower end of Lake Champlain. Make a left turn on Route 6. Follow Route 6 toward Huletts Landing. After 2.7 miles, be prepared to take a left on Pike Brook Road. After 0.8-mile look for a large trailhead parking lot on the right.

**Time/Distance:** 5-7 hours depending on trail conditions, your hiking speed and how quickly you find the boxes & stamp in. Hike is approximately 7 miles with an elevation gain of 1,046 feet. It would be helpful to bring a trail map along. You can find a simple one here:  
<http://letterboxing.homestead.com/BlackMountainLoop.html>

**Terrain:** A variety of trail types (gravel, dirt, rocky) through mostly wooded areas. Some areas can be wet in spring or after rains.

### Clues:

Our series features 9 possible uses for coins. To keep you entertained while hiking, you can try to guess what those 9 things might be.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_

These clues will only refer to a box number, but you'll find the actual box title inside the logbooks. Note: If you are younger than us (and most of you are!), you might not understand some of the title references. Any color of ink is fine.

### Box #1

Hike along the wide trail/road until you reach a 3-way intersection. Head right to a tree with a warning sign near a rock barrier. Take a bearing of 65° and walk in 12 steps to a 3'-4' rock that is west of a tree that has roots reaching out to her nearby friend. The box is on the west side under some smaller rocks.

### Box #2

Go back to the intersection and continue on the main trail until you reach a gate. The hiking trail is to the right and at this point you are only 1.8 miles from the summit. Continue another .2 miles to another intersection. Take the trail at 300° and then start counting your money... oops, that should be start counting your STEPS! You'll need to count all the way to 150-160 steps until you reach a point where there are trees at the very edge of the trail on both sides of you. From here, take a bearing of 15° and then walk in ~25 steps to a large boulder. The box is in the cleft on the NE side.

**Box #3**

Continue on the main trail until you reach a wide stream crossing. (Shortly after the stream crossing there is a trail sign pointing right, so if you reach that, you went too far.) From the stream crossing, turn around and go back ~25 steps to a rock on the left. From the rock, take a bearing of 330° and walk in ~50 steps, crossing a cluster of rocks mid-way. The box is under a moss-covered angled rock shelter.

**Box #4**

Now comes the hard work! Back on the main trail, you'll begin a long slog up a rocky section, which may look like a stream when wet. Eventually you will reach a 10'-12' high white rock wall on your right, ~15' off the trail. (If you reach a large boulder on your left, you went too far.) The box is at the base of the wall, under a rock near the first black cable.

**Box #5**

Continue on until you reach the summit of Black Mountain. Enjoy the view here and you may also be able to hunt for another box in this area. After a break, it's time to head down the other side of the mountain. You'll see a sign indicating the next trail junction is 1 mile away. The trail down starts out fairly narrow and can be a bit overgrown. However, you'll get a nice view of some islands in Lake George! Eventually you will reach a very tall escarpment on the left, then a birch V-tree on the right. From the V-tree, take a bearing of 30° to a multi-trunk cluster (2 medium trunks and 6 small trunks). The box is in a rock nook behind the cluster. There is a good spot to stamp in just up the trail. It has a nice view of ponds below.

**Box #6**

Continue on to the trail intersection and head toward Black Mountain Pond only .3 miles away. Pass the large pond and a wide stream crossing with the small pond on the right. After the stream crossing, stop at the triple-trunk on the left. Take a bearing of 10° and walk to a cluster of 3 large rocks. The box is nestled between rocks 2&3.

**Box #7**

Pass Round Pond and continue to a trail intersection. Continue a bit further to a side trail on the right that leads to Lapland Pond. Take the side trail until you reach a bridge. From the near end of the bridge, take a bearing of 295° to an angled rock approximately 18 steps from the bridge. The box is behind the rock (please take extra care in replacing & recovering this box since it is near the trail).

**Box #8**

Return to the main trail and continue on to a rock-lined narrow stream crossing with a trail marker on a tree on the left side. Take 17 steps to a large tree on the left, then walk on a bearing of 160° until you reach the mid-point of some tumbled rocks. The box is under a rock on the left, adjacent to a flat fronted rock. A small rock covers the box. If you come to an open boggy area on the left and a bridge, you went too far.

**Box #9**

Continue on the main trail, crossing the bridge, until you reach an intersection. Head right to return to the parking lot. After you pass some buildings on your right, go down a small smooth rock slope, then stop. Take a bearing of 40° and walk in ~30 steps to a large boulder. The box is under the SW corner of the boulder.

Continue on the main trail until you reach your vehicle.

We hoped you enjoyed finding places to use your coins! How many did you correctly guess? We live quite a distance from here, so would really enjoy an email update to let us know how the boxes are doing. Thanks!