

SCOTT THOMAS

TRAILS BY JOE TIERNEY

Joe Tierney oversees the construction and maintenance of the hiking trails in Lackawanna State Park in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Joe Tierney did not cut these trails for walking side-by-side.
Joe Tierney says a hike is a solitary trip.
The honeysuckle rubs against your sleeves.
The blazes point you forward or else you would be lost.
A cairn denotes the difference between a forest and a thought.
And flagging is the mark between a vision and an act.
When Joe solicits volunteers to help him clear the brush,
You say no. You have no time for anything but to move ahead in life.
Without his blazes gleaming, though, nailed to each tree,
You would not emerge from squalls.
If not for his rock armouring, the mud would suck you in.
These trails are designed by Joe to take you farther out,
Past starflower and brooklime deep in middle May,
And curve you back so gradually that you are not aware
Until you see the parking lot.
Go ahead. Go home.