



# TRAIL-LETTER

VOLUME 1 \*\*\*\*\* SPRING-SUMMER-1990 \*\*\*\*\* ISSUE #2

## **IMPORTANCE OF MAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

*The general membership meeting of the Montour Trail Council will be held on Monday, May 21, 1990 at the Holy Trinity Church at the corner of Rte. 60 and Beaver Grade Rd. in Robinson Twp., Allegheny County, will feature two speakers who are members of the MTC: Phil Hodge, who was instrumental in building a key bridge on the Illinois Prairie Path, and Gene Shaffer, who has a vast knowledge on the history of the Montour Railroad.*

*With summer fast approaching and this being the last formal meeting until fall, we would like to especially invite those of you who are interested in helping our committees and in attending functions where we will be trying to gain support for our coalition. Also persons with special skills or facilities who would like to volunteer their services to the Council will also be welcomed at this meeting.*

*For this project to succeed, we need help from our membership. You do not have to be an expert and will not need to give up large amounts of your free time. If you wish to help and cannot attend the meeting in person, please call Tom Fix at 831-2030.*

## **MEMBERSHIP IS GROWING**

*As of Earth Day, the membership of the MTC has reached 140!! The membership has nearly tripled since the January meeting when the count stood at 52.*

## **POLITICAL SUPPORT IS GROWING**

*A letter from U. S. Representative Doug Walgren was read into the record during the PUC hearings early in March in Pittsburgh supporting the activities of the Montour Trail Council. His office has also told the Council they will help in expediting the 501 (c) (3) request with the Internal Revenue Service to obtain our tax-exempt standing.*

*State Legislator Tom Murphy put the Council on the Agenda for budget hearings in Pittsburgh. He is also sponsoring a legislative breakfast and tour of the Montour right-of-way in early May for his fellow local legislators.*

*State Senator Mike Fisher of Upper St. Clair has written a letter to the Council offering his support and assistance.*

## **MTC TESTIFIES AT STATE HOUSE BUDGET HEARING**

*Largely through the intervention of Legislator Tom Murphy, we were given a last-minute opportunity to testify at the budget hearing of the Allegheny County Delegation of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in Pittsburgh on March 30. Our testimony was presented during the session on Initiative Funding to demonstrate that the Montour Trail Council should be considered among the other non-profit organizations eligible to receive state government funding. We submitted a budget request for \$150,000 for the coming year. While it is not realistic for us to expect the full amount requested, there is a good chance that we will be granted a sizable fraction of the request.*

## **FAVORABLE TESTIMONY ELICITED AT THE PUC HEARINGS**

*In early March and mid-April, members of the Council attended Public Utility Commission hearings regarding the*

abolition of rail/highway crossings of the abandoned Montour Railroad. Stan Sattinger, Dave Wright, and Dick Wilson were our representatives at the hearing and they felt there was a positive attitude toward the trail project in the testimony that was given. Many of the bridge-over-highway crossings appear to have been saved as the result of our testimony. However, it will be necessary for the Council to demonstrate to the PUC that we will have the financial base to maintain the bridges.

#### **CONCEPT PLAN ISSUED**

The long awaited concept plan describing the trail project in detail is ready for publication. The concept plan, in draft form, will be provided to the Allegheny and Washington County governments, as well as the community governments along the trail for their input.

#### **STATE CONFERENCE**

The Montour Trail Council will be assisting the State Chapter of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in setting up their annual fall conference. This meeting will be held October 12, 13, and 14 at Linden Hall near the intersection of Rte. 51 and I-70. The schedule is still tentative and incomplete at this time. Call Tom Dougherty, if you can give him assistance in carrying out this task. His phone number is 571-0613 during the evening.

#### **CORPORATE CONTACTS SOUGHT**

Tom Dougherty and Paul Mitsdarfer are looking for corporations in southwestern Pennsylvania that have an interest in supporting this trail project. We will be initially seeking letters of support that will be vitally needed in seeking funding by governmental agencies. Later, we will be seeking financial support from corporations. If you know of any corporations having such an interest, please contact Tom (571-0613) or Paul (941-8178) during the evening to let them know.

#### **GROUP CONTACT COMMITTEE LOOKING FOR HELP**

Tim Killmeyer, chairman of the Contacts Committee, is looking for groups to contact in the area of the Trail. He is looking for civic organizations and the like, that may be interested in joining our coalition to support the Trail. We need the endorsement of such groups to prepare grant proposals from foundations. If you know of any groups, such as little league teams, service organizations, etc; that may want to listen to our trail presentation, please call Tim at 787-1472. Also, be on the lookout for local fairs and carnivals.

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#### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**May 21:** General Membership Meeting. Details at the top of Newsletter.

**June 10:** Walkathon, Arrowhead Trail, Peters Township. Fund-raiser for the Council.

**July 29:** Membership Picnic at Peterswood Park (adjacent to the Arrowhead Trail), Peters Township.

**September 24:** Tentative date for general membership meeting.

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#### **THE MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL P.O. BOX 11866 PITTSBURGH, PA 15228-0866**

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