



TRAIL-LETTER

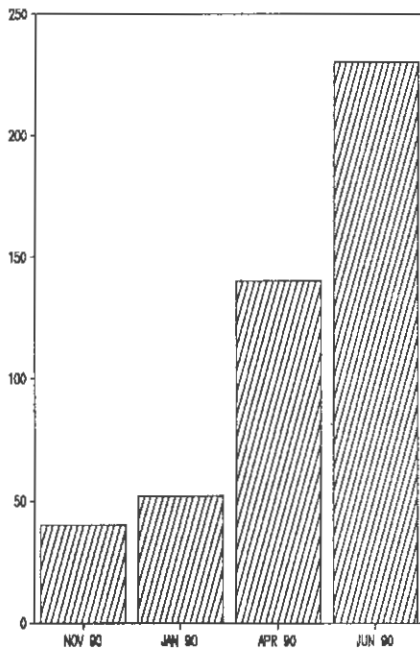
A bi-monthly publication of the Montour Trail Council
VOLUME 1 ***SUMMER-1990 ***** ISSUE #3**

RIGHT-OF-WAY MONITORS SOUGHT

Larry Ridenour, chairman of the Government Liaison Committee, is looking for volunteers amongst the membership to keep an eye and ear out for any construction projects that may involve the Right-Of-Way. Recently, a bridge re-construction project on Route 19 in Peters Township consumed a portion of the Right-Of-Way. Fortunately, it is not a serious setback as there is still room under the bridge for the trail, but it could have been serious if there had not been a roadway already in place. It is this type of situation we need to be aware of before the earth starts to move. These volunteers will need to patrol the trail periodically looking for encroachments, survey crews, etc, and to attend local council/commissioner meetings. Any activity that appears to threaten the Right-Of-Way will need to be brought to Larry's attention immediately. Contact Larry if you wish to avail yourself to this type of work. Larry's work phone number is 355-5872

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH CONTINUES

As of the Walk-a-thon, the membership of the MTC has soared to 230 ! The membership has quadrupled since the January meeting when the count stood at 52.



TRAIL COUNCIL SETS \$1 MILLION FUND DEVELOPMENT GOAL FOR NEXT 12 MONTHS

With the submission of our 501 (c)(3) application, by Dick Wilson, Fund Development Chairman, the way is cleared for us to begin to major fund raising activities. When the 501 (c)(3) is approved, it will give us tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service and provide greater incentives for donors. The necessary funds are expected to be raised through a combination of foundation grants, gifts from corporations and individuals, and funding from government agencies. We have set a goal of raising one million dollars by the summer of 1991 from these sources.

It is expected that the option to purchase the available portions of the Right-of-Way will cost at least \$100,000. While the cost of the Right-of-Way acquisition is presently unknown, an appraisal is presently being conducted. Modifying the seventy bridges and tunnels will cost at least another 1.3 million dollars. Construction of the Montour Trail Pathway and access facilities is roughly estimated at one million dollars.

We need to be in a position this summer to purchase the option to acquire the Right-of-Way and, we also have to show to the Public Utility Commission that we have the financial base to assume responsibility for the bridges that once carried the Montour Railroad traffic. So it is clear that major fund raising will be a multi-year activity.

WALK-A-THON ENJOYED BY ALL

The first Montour Trail Walk-a-thon was held Sunday, June 10 on the Arrowhead Trail in Peters Township. The route of the 10 mile Walk began and ended at Shelter #3 in Peterswood Park and covered portions of the Right-of-Way using the developed Arrowhead Trail and the undeveloped portions of the Trail through Library Junction up to Brush Run Road and into Bethel Park at Limestone Drive.

About 35 people took part in the walk which began at 8:30 AM and ended around 2:00 PM. The Trail Council received around \$1000 in pledges, including \$250 from Christen Rice, a girl scout from Bethel Park. Several of the scouts earned merit badges through their participation in the event.

A special thanks to Girl Scout Troop #943 and Boy Scout Troop #168 from Bethel Park for their help and fund raising efforts. Special thanks also go to the following for their help in organizing and running the event:

Paul and Dottie Mitsdarfer for manning the water station at Brush Run Road, printing and distributing of maps and descriptions of event, and a multitude of other tasks.

Dave Wright for arranging E.M.S. services and providing walking talkies.

Jack and Georgette Swisher for the registration, prizes and much more.

Dennis Sims and Steve Schotting for monitoring the trail.

Joe Morgovlich for donating beverages and coolers/

Dave Lutes for T-shirts sales.

Dennis and Debbie DePalma for registration.

Ann Ruth for the initial organization and obtaining the shelter.

Larry and Barbara Ridenour for manning the water station at the Hike 'n' Bike.

Hike 'n' Bike for providing the space for the water station and brochure distribution.

I hope I did not leave anyone out. A special thanks to everyone who came out and participated; you made it a great a time and a success for the Council.

Dino

HONORED WALKERS

The following participants in the Walk-a-thon are honored for their pledges of over \$50.

\$50 to \$100

Larry and Sandra Swiech
Lois Ludwig

Over \$100

The Harter Family
Philip Abromats
Anne Marie Geraud
Dan & Karen Grazier

Over \$200

Cristen Rice

COALITION OF ENDORSING ORGANIZATIONS

(endorsement letters received to date)

Citizen Care, Inc. /Robinson Developmental Center
Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen Ltd.

Holy Trinity Church Parent Teacher Guild

Washington Area Senior Citizens Center, Inc.

Central Chartiers Valley Chamber of Commerce

Sto-Rox Focus on Renewal

Pennsylvania Arabian Horse Association, Inc.

Holy Trinity Young at Heart

Canonsburg General Hospital

Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels, Inc.

Airport Area Chamber of Commerce

Robinson Township Historical Society

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Pennsylvania Chapter, Sierra Club

The Mon Valley Progress Council, Inc.

Explorers Club of Pittsburgh

Blind Outdoor Leisure Development

Washington County Medical Society

Rotary Club of Moon Township

Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Western Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation

Washington County History and Landmarks

Foundation

MONTOUR TRAIL PICNIC

On Sunday, July 29, 1990, the Montour Trail Council has reserved Shelter #2 at Peterswood Park in Peters Township from 1:00 P.M. to dark for a great day of sun and fun on the Trail. So bring your road bike, mountain bike, runnin' or walkin' shoes, kids, dogs, station wagon, recliner, suntan lotion and a covered dish for an old fashioned good time. This is your chance to get out and use Trail with your fellow members and to keep your enthusiasm up for the work that lies ahead. Peterswood Park is a beautiful facility adjacent to the Arrowhead Trail, with plenty of space to relax. The Council will provide beverages, hot dogs on the grill, corn on the cob, volleyball, and possibly some live music. There are grills at the shelter if you want to do your own cooking.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Suggestions for covered dish: Salad, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Deviled Eggs, Macaroni Salad, Fruit Salad, Chips, Dips and Desserts, as well as condiments. Be creative, the Council will supply the Tums !!

The picnic will be held rain or shine. Please RSVP with Dino by Tuesday, July 24, 1990 if you plan to attend. Also, advise Dino if you plan on bringing a covered dish. Contact Dino at 931-6651.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE FORMED

Marshall Fausold has been selected to chair the Community Relations Committee. This committee has been formed to provide answers to questions that may develop with neighbors along the Trail. If concerns do develop, this committee will hear those concerned people. If anyone becomes aware of any concerns, we ask them contact the Montour Trail Council. If you wish to help out with this group contact Marshall or the Council.

ENGINEERS WANTED FOR BRIDGE INSPECTIONS

Dave Wright, chairman of the Right-of-Way Committee is looking for professional engineers who specialize in structural engineering to help conduct cursory inspections of the over seventy bridges and tunnels that are along the trail. The Council would like to have these inspections done within the year. If you have the necessary credentials or if you know an engineer who would like to volunteer for the task, please contact Dave Wright at 355-6645 (w) or 746-2517 (h).

GROUP CONTACT COMMITTEE STILL LOOKING FOR LEADS

Tim Killmeyer, Contacts Committee Chairman, is continuing his lookout 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 for 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 that we maybe able to enter.

LETTER WRITING WORKS

Hats off to our Washington County membership. Your letter writing to the county commissioners has broken the ice for the Council to make a presentation to them. Your letters have raised their curiosity about the project and they are now seeking additional information about the project.

AYH HIKING GUIDE TO WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels is offering its Hiking Guide to Western Pennsylvania for \$7 a copy. This 290 page, soft cover book includes a broad range of trails from urban trails in and near Pittsburgh, to the remote and rugged trails of Northern Pennsylvania. Descriptions of over 2000 miles of trails has been gathered from the input of dozens of the most experienced hikers in the area. The cost of this guide is \$7 plus 95 cents for postage and 42 cents for Pennsylvania sales tax for a total of \$8.37. Dealer rates and club discounts are available for the asking. Make your check payable to the "Pittsburgh AYH" and mail to:

AYH Books
6300 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Proceeds from the sale of this book benefit hostel development.

TRM CYCLES DONATES PROCEEDS OF POKER RIDE TO TRAIL

TRM Cycles of Mount Lebanon recently held a poker ride whose route followed the Montour Trail. The ride was named The MONTOUR which stood for Miles of Nice Touring On Unusual Roads. Five riders rode in this event and \$50 dollars was raised. A poker ride is where a rider gets a poker chip at each of four stops, and then turns in the chips for cards at the end of the ride, The highest poker hand then wins a prize. There will be a "Tour de Montour" in the fall. Details will follow later.

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 Route. 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.

Trips to the trails along the Youghiogheny River and to the Montour Railroad are planned at this time. Further details regarding this event should becoming forth shortly.

CONCEPT PLAN ISSUED

The long awaited concept plan describing the trail project in detail has been published. 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. This concept plan will also be included with any applications to area foundations for grant money.

MUNICIPALITIES BEGIN TO ENDORSE TRAIL PROJECT

Through the hard work of Larry Ridenour, Government Liaison Chairman and his visits this spring to all 12 municipalities along the Right-of-Way, we have begun to receive letters of endorsement. or resolutions endorsing our cause. Peters Township, the home of Arrowhead Trail, became the first municipality to endorse the project in March. Robinson Township and Bethel Park in Allegheny County have also sent in their endorsement letters.

NOTE FROM PRESIDENT

Over the short life of our organization, we have been passing major milestones at a great rate. Last month, for instance, we issued our Concept Plan, held our walk-a-thon and submitted our application for 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status. When we stop and take inventory of the things this team has accomplished in less than a year's time, it is truly dizzying. Yet, at this time, I sense a momentary slackening of our pace.

My initial reaction is to be concerned about this perceived lull. But upon further thought, I view this as an opportunity for us to catch our breaths in preparation for the long haul that awaits us. Soon, we will be issuing a large number of grant proposals to foundations, and we will be entering into negotiation with the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad to acquire the available portion of the Montour Right-of-way. We can expect to become involved in many meetings with municipalities over the details of the right-of-way use as a trail. We will be developing plans for the repair and maintenance of over seventy bridges and tunnels. There will also be a general mushrooming of the administrative tasks that will require our attention.

So this may indeed be a good time for us all to pause and reflect on the in-roads we have made and the things we will yet need to achieve in support of our dream. We need to be mindful of the different kinds of contributions that each of us has made in his own way to the benefit of all. With these thoughts in mind, I'll be looking forward to being with all of you at our July 29 picnic.

Stan

FOREST GROVE SPORTSMEN CLUB UPDATE

by Tim Killmeyer

On June 19, Stan Sattinger, Marshall Fausold, and Tim Killmeyer met with three board members of the Forest Grove Sportsmen Club. The talk centered on the media perceived conflict of interest arising from the fact that the Right-of-Way bisects Club property and runs parallel to a 35 year old rifle range for 150 yards. The meeting was very amicable with both sides agreeing the Trail would be a fine way of preserving the sylvan naturalness of the Montour Run Valley. Club members offered several alternate routes through their property that the Montour Trail Board would take under consideration during the coming months. Stay tuned.

TRAIL COUNCIL SAYS THANKS

The Montour Trail Council wishes to say thanks to the following individuals for their contributions in constructing our display booth:

Jack Swisher for constructing our display.

Joe Aiken of Mr. Signs for making the banner with our logo.

Michael Riedinger for producing the clear plastic sign containing our logo on the display.

Bill Metzger for the fine photography on the display.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

September 24: Tentative date for general membership meeting. Time, place and events to be announced.

October 12-14: Pennsylvania Chapter of the Rails-to-Trail Conservancy fall conference at Linden Hall.

**THE MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL P.O. BOX 11866 PITTSBURGH, PA 15228-0866
PHONE : 412 - 831 - 2030**

PRESIDENT: Stan Sattinger **VICE PRESIDENT:** Dino Angelici
SECRETARY: Peter Kohnke **TREASURER:** Jack Swisher
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Dennis Sims

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1990 Jerry Agin, Peter Kohnke, Bill Metzger, Dave Wright
1990-1991 Dino Angelici, Larry Ridenour, Dennis Sims, Jack Swisher
1990-1992 Tim Killmeyer, Paul Mitsdarfer, Stan Sattinger, George Schmidt