



MONTour TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 10 Issue 1

Jan/Feb 1999

Special Issue

- This issue of the Trail-Letter is dedicated to the memory of Don Bert, MTC board member representing the Cecil area.

Mantra of the Month

- There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

Edith Wharton

Inside this issue:

Prez Sez	4
Montour Trail Opening	4
MTC at Lindenwood	4
Want Ads	5
Snowball Golf	5
ATA Conference	7
Alliance Clean-up	8

Don's footprints

By Dennis Sims

Don Bert began his journey on the Montour Trail when he was named the Trail Representative for Cecil Township. Don was on the Cecil Township Parks and Recreation board and was quite excited about the potential recreational opportunity that a trail connecting the many township parks could bring. He would later be appointed to the Montour Trail Council Board of Directors.

Cecil Township would be home to the first section of the Montour Trail to be completed and Don spent many hours helping to see it completed. As a retired steelworker, he had many skills to lend to the

volunteers building the Trail. The Saturday the trail opened, Don was a proud man carrying the Colors up the ramp from Cecil Park to the Trail Head as a member of the American Legion Color Guard.

Following the completion of the trail, he would help organize the first Friends group to support the section. An unselfish man, he would not accept the presidency of the Cecil Friends as he rightfully deserved. In reality, Don and I served as co-presidents of the Friends. I would preside over the meetings while he would organ-

ize the work parties.

(Continued on page 6)



Don Bert, as a member of the American Legion Color Guard in Cecil Township, proudly rolls the flag after the Cecil Trail opening ceremony is completed.

Trail Monitor Patrols

The Trail Monitor Patrol Group held its first meeting on Thursday evening, Oct. 29, 1998 at Trail Blazers bike shop in Robinson Township. Approximately 15 Trail Monitors attended representing every section of the Trail.

The meeting was led by

Bill Morphy with the assistance of Dennis Pfeiffer, Vice President of the MTC. The purpose of the meeting was to formally organize a group of volunteers, who are frequent Trail users, to enhance the personal safety and to instill the feeling of a safe atmosphere on the Trail. This Patrol group will be

under the direct supervision of the MTC. Bill Morphy or Jesse Forquer, who is responsible for the development of this program by recruiting regular Trail users, will be the main contact people in cases of non emergency situations. Bill will then report to the MTC board.

(Continued on page 6)



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dick Quasey	President
Dennis Pfeiffer	Vice President
Bruce Barron	Secretary
Judy Thompson	Treasurer
William Morphy	
Mary Jeanne Krob	
John Hooton	
Deborah Hoerster	
Jack Swisher	
Stan Sattinger	
Paul McKeown	
Bob Boyce	
Ford Shankle	
Peter Kohnke	
Frank Keppel	
Pete Merther	
Stan Siranovich	

THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER is published bi-monthly January through December. All correspondence should be addressed to:

MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER
33 STERLING DRIVE
CORAOPOLIS, PA 15108

Or E-mail to: debho@juno.com

All other trail correspondence should be addressed:

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL PHONE NUMBERS:

For information: 412-831-2030

For administration and
business: 412-257-2328

Newsletter Editor Deborah Hoerster

Circulation Manager Joan Schweiger

Trail Talk

from the Editor's Desk

Who says lightning never strikes twice in the same spot? Mile marker 1 on the Montour Trail must be the exception. For the second time in 4 months, a tree fell across the Trail at the exact location where the first incident took place as noted in the Sept./Oct. issue of this newsletter.

This time the tree cutters were Myrna and Harold (Bing) Huwe, both of whom are members of the Trail Monitor Patrol Group.

After coming upon the fallen tree during her daily walk, Myrna unsuccessfully tried to summon the Trail Monitors for assistance. Luckily, her husband came to the rescue and the two proceeded to chop the tree and remove it from the Trail.

It must have been a sacred tree, for no sooner did they start to chop, they were joined by Reverend Gary Smith, of the Church of the Nazarene in Moon Township and also a Trail Monitor. Closely following were Father Tim and Sister Melanie, both of St. Joseph's Church in Coraopolis. Together they all chipped in and cleared the way for lots of unsuspecting Trail users that day.

Many thanks to our tree cutters for their kindness and cooperative spirit, for this is what makes the Trail and its users so special.

See you on those wintry trails!

Debby



Newsletter Deadline

All articles for the
March/April Trail-Letter
will be due **no later than**
February 5, 1999.

Please see Page 2 for
submitting correspondence.
Thank you.

COMMENTS/NEWS

Your opinions mean a lot to us. Send your comments or news info. to:
Montour Trail-Letter
33 Sterling Dr.
Coraopolis, PA 15108
Or e-mail to:
debho@juno.com

Thanks!

The Montour Trail Council is an *all volunteer* organization founded in 1989 to convert the abandoned Montour Railroad right of way and the abandoned Peters Creek Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad into a fifty-five mile recreational trail for non-motorized activity regardless of physical ability or financial wherewithal.

January 1999

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 1999

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

Calendar of Events

- * Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA) will hold a members' conference on January 29 & 30, 1999 at St. Joseph's Center in Greensburg, PA. Registration starts a 4:00 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 29. Questions? Call 724-537-6900. See page 7 for more information on this very important event.

- * February 14 – Happy Valentine's Day!



- * The 2nd International Greenways and Rails-to-Trails Conference to be held in **Pittsburgh** on **June 22, 1999**.

Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

- ♦ **MTC Board Meeting**, every **third Monday** of the month - at Chartiers Valley High School, in the faculty lounge. Turn left off of the- Kirwan Heights exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go under the Interstate, and the school is on your left. Call Dick at 412- 859-6864 for more information or to get on the agenda.
- ♦ **Cecil Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **first Tuesday** of the month - at the Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, at **7:30 pm**. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.
 - Work & Clean-up party**, every **third Saturday** of the month - **9:00 am**. Meet at the Storage shed at Hendersonville. Call 412-221-6406 for more information.
- ♦ **Moon/Robinson Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **Thursday** before the second Saturday of the month at **7:00 pm.**, at the All Occasion Catering party room near the intersection of Silver Lane and Clever Rd. in Robinson Twp. Anyone from the communities near Moon and Robinson are encouraged to attend. Call 412-859-3020 for more information.
 - Work & Clean-up party**, every **second Saturday** of the month - **9:00 am**. Meet at North Star Petroleum (formerly Robinson Petroleum). Call 412-262-3748 for more information.
- ♦ **Findlay/North Fayette Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail**, call Don at 724-899-3695 or Pete at 412-788-4136 for more information.
 - Work & Clean-up party**, every **fourth Saturday** of the month - **9:00 am**. Meet at the Enlow Ballfield. Call 412-788-4136 for more information.
- ♦ **Bethel Park Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **first Tuesday** of the month at **7:30 pm** in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. For various committee meetings (such as fundraising) contact Peter Kohnke at 412-854-1835 for more information.
 - Work & Clean-up party**, every **second and fourth Saturday** of the month - **8:30 am**. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.
- ♦ **South Hills Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail Work & Clean-up party**, last **Saturday** of every month. For more information call Dr. Joe Rudolph at 412-653-4900.
- ♦ **McDonald Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail Work & Clean-up party**, tentatively held on the **first Saturday** of every month. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

...and the PREZ sez...

by Dick Quasey

Only one mile of trail was constructed this year and that was in South Park Township – a very small amount compared to previous years and to what remains to be finished (25 miles). MTC, however, has not been idle.

Environmental certification necessary for State and Federal funded projects was finally obtained after four years of effort. A coal stripping agreement was entered into with Amerikohl to remove coal within the Trail right-of-way from Boggs Run to US 22. That work is now

underway and should be completed by May of this year and providing MTC with a trail base (requiring surface material) from Boggs Run through the Champion property (approximately 2 miles).

Most important was the substantial and successful effort to obtain State and Federal funds which will cover a large portion of the cost of constructing the rest of the Trail. MTC is now able to proceed with project planning, engineering, and the administration of construction contracts relating to nearly all remain-

ing trail construction work.

The 1999 goal is to finish at least 10 more miles of trail – befitting MTC's 10th anniversary.

While it is convenient to express progress in "trail miles" much time, money and effort must be directed to special projects like the McDonald and Library trestle bridges and the erection of bridges at Hendersonville and Quicksilver. Consequently, MTC must prepare to meet this growing responsibility and activity. TRAIL HO!

Montour Trail Opening in Bethel Park

By Tim Killmeyer

The people of this township have been waiting almost ten years for their dream to come true and on October 31, Halloween Day, it finally happened with no tricks involved. Approximately 100 people were treated to a rousing ceremony opening the first mile of the Montour

Trail in Bethel Park. Peter Kohnke, President of the Friends of the Montour Trail in Bethel Park, was all smiles as the hard work and dedication of his team of volunteers in that area was about to pay off.

After recognizing the Montour Trail

Council and the Friends of the Trail in Bethel Park, Peter introduced some of the honored guests who were in attendance, many of whom shared their thoughts and good wishes for the project. They included State Senator, Tim Murphy

Continued on page 7

MTC enjoys another Annual Dinner Meeting at Lindenwood

The Montour Trail Council (MTC) held its Annual Dinner Meeting on Sunday, October 25, 1998 at the Lindenwood Golf Club in McMurray, PA.

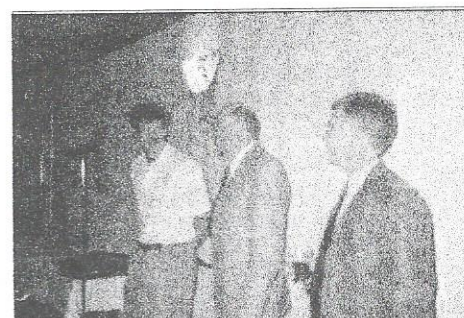
Guest speaker for the evening was Tom Sexton, Pennsylvania's Director of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC).

The buffet dinner was delicious, offering a variety of main entrees and sides from which to choose. The Lindenwood hostesses serving the buffet were extremely cordial and accommodating, making the dinner portion of the evening most enjoyable.

After dinner, the group assembled for the short business meeting conducted by MTC Vice President, Dennis Pfeiffer, in lieu of President, Dick Quasey, who although present, preferred to save his energy for introductions, a short speech and lively interjections, (having undergone open heart surgery a mere two and a half weeks prior).

Tom Sexton lavished high praise for the Montour Trail saying that it is the model for other trail building. He also stressed that this is the reason that PA is the host state for the 2nd International Greenways and Rails to Trails Conference to be held in Pittsburgh on June 22, 1999.

Thanks to all who attended the dinner this year and to those who did not, we say, "See you next year!"



MTC President, Dick Quasey (center), introduces guest speaker, Tom Sexton (left), Director, PA Office, Rails to Trails Conservancy, with MTC Vice President, Dennis Pfeiffer (right) enjoying the banter.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership Chairman

Jerry Agin

Lucille & Gilbert
Anderson
Mike Baylor
John Diviney
C John Fiore
Robert G Glass
Joseph & Louise Hall
Dan & Andrea Harkins
Pat Knoll
Grant & Laura Lindner
Jon R McAlister
Helen Moran
Charles Oleary
Edward J Potocar
Paul Rankin
Spencer & Rita Roberts
Robert Seifried
Bill Shimp
David Simpson

Joseph E Smith
Barbara Story
Bill & Sharon Sulkosky
John & Judith Turek
Richard S Urban
Mr & Mrs Tom Walsh &
family
Ron Warwick & Rita
Ross
Carolyn Wood
Jane N Wright

The Montour Trail Council would like to welcome these new members and thank them for their support. We would also like to thank all our members who have renewed their membership and remind all that a growing membership is one of the criteria foundations look for when we apply for grants.

BENEFACTORS

Thank You!

Paul Rankin

WANTED - Volunteers are needed to staff the MTC Phone Chain. Anyone interested in helping to phone information on upcoming events or work parties, please call Chairperson, Christine Bock at 412-833-0869.

Snowball Golf targets area charities

Bridgeville Rotary believes it's never too early to get started on golf season. Now in its eighth year, "Hickory Wintery Golf Classic" had its first "sell-out" crowd of 180 golfers last February. A nutty event to many, but fun for those willing to try it.



"Hickory Wintery" raised about \$16,000 for local charities last winter. The Montour Trail received \$750 as its share and

has been a beneficiary for each of the last five years, thanks to MTC's John Hooton, who is a member of the Rotary.

In addition to golf, hot bowls of chili, hot dogs, coffee, sweet rolls and pie round off the event, and half the players receive a prize of some kind.

So, if you're a duffer as well as a Trail buff, call John Hooton at 412-257-4101 to get further details on playing.

You play and everyone wins!

Yes, I want to help build the Montour Trail!

- ☐ I want to spread the word. Please send me additional flyers.
- ☐ I have written my Legislator and County Commissioners asking them to support the trail.
- ☐ My organization would like to provide a letter of endorsement.
- ☐ I know a group interested in a presentation.
- ☐ I wish to become a member of the Montour Trail Council.
- ☐ **STUDENT/SENIORS** \$15
- ☐ **INDIVIDUAL** \$25
- ☐ **FAMILY** \$35
- ☐ **SUPPORTING** \$50
- ☐ **SUSTAINING** \$100
- ☐ **BENEFACTOR** \$250
- ☐ **LEADERS CIRCLE** \$500 + up

(Membership is tax deductible)

- ☐ I wish to make an additional tax deductible contribution of \$ _____ to the Montour Trail Council to help make the Montour Trail a reality.

(Make your check payable to the Montour Trail Council)
NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (day time) _____ (evening) _____

By applying for membership in the Montour Trail Council, I indicate my support of its goals.

SIGNATURE _____

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling tollfree, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Please fill out this application and return it with your check to:

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

DON'T FORGET! The Montour Trail Council may be designated as your United Way Contributor Choice option #3308 where you work.

Trail Monitor (Continued from page 1)

Duties of the Trail Monitors will include:

- * Reporting any emergencies immediately to the local police or ambulance authority.
- * Reporting Trail deficiencies to the MTC on a timely basis.
- * Conduct themselves in a such a way to let Trail users know of their presence and that help is there if an emergency might occur.
- * Attempt to greet and make eye contact with everyone who passes so as to create a relationship between the MTC and the Trail users.
- * Represent the MTC accurately by keeping current with Trail

activities.

Their training will include MTC radio use and bicycle emergency repair. CPR and First Aid training may be added in the future.

Trail Monitors will have 2-way radios available to them, or they may use their own cellular phones, if they prefer, while on the Trail.

Handmade gold and maroon vests and armbands were distributed to the Trail Monitors that evening, and are to be worn while on the Trail.

With a lot of support from all the areas represented and the local police departments, the Trail Monitor Patrol Program will be a helpful addition to Trail security.

Many thanks to Trailblazers Bike Shop for the use of their

establishment and instructions to the Trail Monitors on how to change a flat bike tire. Trailblazers Bike Shop is located on 175 Beaver Grade Road and not only provides bikes and accessories, but also year round virtual golf. For more information, call owners, Rich Gennuso or Elton Robinett at 787-1877.



From left to right are Dennis Pfeiffer, Bill Morphy and Jesse Forquer modeling the new vests and armbands that all the Trail Monitors will be wearing on every section of the Montour Trail.

MTC WEB ADDRESS



Visit the Montour Trail web-site at: <http://trfn.clpgh.org/orgs/mtc/>

Footprints (Continued from page 1)

Many of our work days were spontaneous. We would pick up the phone and call around the membership and whoever was available would show up. Don would arrive fashionably late with his coffee mug, whose contents were always getting cold and would be tossed out later that morning. One summer, there was a container of hard pretzels in his pickup truck that must have lasted the entire summer. Every work party, he would pass this container among the volunteers. Those pretzels would serve as an appetizer for the warm lunch his wife, Joan would prepare. At the end of the day he would always tell everybody, "nice job, nice job."

On the Trail there is plenty of thorny vegetation including berry bushes and the ever present multi-flora rose or as we call it "MFR." It

was inevitable that we would get scratched or scraped while encountering the vegetation or get wounded doing something. Don earned the "Purple Spike" for the blood he gave to building and maintaining the Trail.

He made walking sticks from selected roots of sumac trees that grow along the trail and sold them as fund-raisers for the Friends' group. Don also planted trees along the trail, including the Rose of Sharon trees between Ridgewood Drive and the company store in Montour.

Don's connection with the Township was beneficial to the Friends group and the Trail. If the Department of Public Works was in a slow period and we needed work done that was beyond our means, they would assist. They helped lay the surface on the Hendersonville East section,

and have rolled the trail and cleaned up slides and ditches. Without Don, this would have not been possible.

He was quite engaged with other activities besides the trail and the parks. He was a district commissioner of the Boy Scouts. This past spring he received the Silver Beaver, the highest award in scouting for his 50 years of service. Many of our Cecil Friends were recruited by Don from the American Legion where he served as the sergeant-of-arms at the Cecil Post.

Don's shoes will be impossible to fill but the prints they have left on the trail will remain indelible as a tribute to the sweat and blood given to constructing and maintaining the Cecil Section of the Montour Trail.

Don, you are deeply missed.

ATA to hold major Conference

You have been reading in the papers about the major funding coming to the rails-to-trails projects in Western Pennsylvania. Now learn the details of the plans and schedules to use that money to complete the Pittsburgh to Washington trail!

The Allegheny Trail Alliance will hold a members' conference on January 29 and 30, 1999 to bring everyone up to date on the truly momentous developments of 1998 and the shift in efforts from fund raising to construction over the next two years. The Montour Trail Council is an integral part of the ATA, and all our members have a vital stake in being informed. Here are the details:

- * The conference will be held at St. Joseph's Center in Greensburg, PA, with registration beginning at 4 PM Friday, January 29.
- * Dinner is at 6:00 p.m., with key-

note address at 7:30, followed by a social hour.

- * Saturday begins with breakfast (7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.) and includes a choice of several workshops and a general session, closing at 4 PM.

St. Joseph's Center is located on the north side of US Rt. 30, just east of Greensburg. Pass the Westmoreland Mall and a Toyota dealership on the right, get in the left lane and look for a large sign at the entrance drive. Turn left at the top of the drive.

Rates are as follows:

- * Entire conference (including Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch) is \$32.00.
- * Friday – dinner only is \$15;
- * Saturday – only is \$22.

Room accommodations at St. Jo-

seph's:

- * Dorm B - \$17 single,
\$12.50 double
- * Dorm C - \$23.50 single,
\$17.50 double

Separate registration forms are not available, so please provide the following information:

- * Name,
- * Trail Affiliation (Montour!)
- * Address
- * Phone number
- * Room preference (w/ roommate's name if applicable).

Mail (by January 13) with the appropriate check amount to:

- * ATA Conference
PO Box 186
Latrobe, PA 15650.

Questions? Call 724-537-6900.



By Marshall Fausold

Bethel *Continued from page 4*

and State Representatives John Maher and Ralph Kaiser, and Chairman of the Bethel Park Municipal Council, Tim Moury, who spoke on behalf of many of the council who were in attendance. Mayor Cliff Morton and representatives of Allegheny Power also had kind words for the latest trail effort.

In a surprise move for many in attendance, Senator Murphy presented the Montour Trail Council with a check for \$25,000 to keep the trail building momentum going in Bethel Park.

The newest section of trail begins on a hill near Al's Cafe with access from a ramp going down to the beginning of Clifton Rd. (Future plans call for a ramp on the other side of Clifton Rd. to continue the trail almost a mile to Logan Rd. A bridge is still in the dream stage.) It goes south across Limestone Dr. and ends at the municipal boundary with Peters Township. The 0.8 mile gap between here and the end of the Arrowhead Trail in Peters is also on

the drawing board and ready to move to final design.

The surface is the typical crushed limestone surface found on the other sections of the Montour Trail, but all agreed that it is more uniform and meets the edges better than any of the other sections.

While this section could not have been completed without the herculean efforts of the Bethel Friends, many other people were involved in its successful completion. They include: —The Bethel Park Municipal Council who contributed \$10,000 in 1998 directly to the Montour Trail Council, authorized the Public Works department to remove debris and provide other assistance, and contributed pavement millings for use on the trail as a base.

—USA Waste, who accepted many tons of debris at no cost.

—Allegheny Land Trust, assisted by the Allegheny Regional Asset District, contributed \$23,000, Andy



Loza, Director.

—Allegheny County contributed pavement millings and Dave Wright's engineering time, thanks to the 3 County Commissioners, and Tom Donnetelli, Director of Public Works.

—Ellis Asphalt Paving, especially Tom Ellis, who did a great job of building the trail and Rick Ellis, Vice President.

—Terry Tischler and his family who supported him. Terry contributed many hours of backhoe and highlift time.

—The many people who made financial gifts and the cooperative neighbors along the trail.

—And especially Allegheny Power, who is the landowner of the right-of-way in Bethel and gave us a permanent recreation easement.

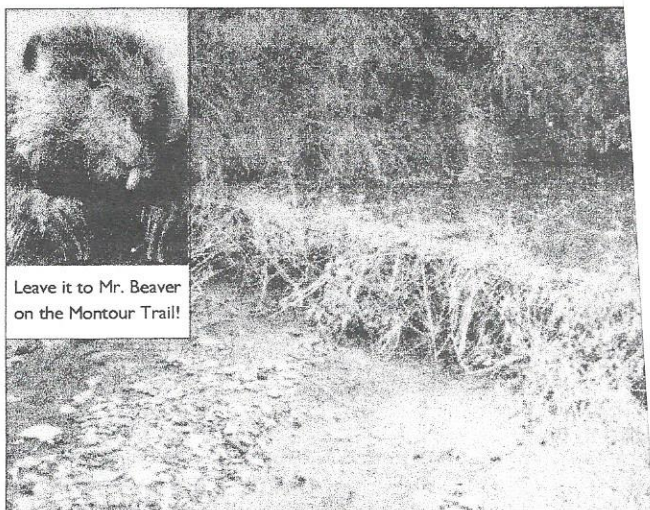
If you would like to help complete the Montour Trail in Bethel Park, feel free to attend one of the Friends meetings on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Bethel Park Municipal Building or call Peter Kohnke at 854-1835.



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA 15228-0866

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PITTSBURGH PA
PERMIT NO. 2524



Leave it to Mr. Beaver
on the Montour Trail!

This newly constructed beaver dam is just after the 7 mile marker beyond the western portal of the Enlow tunnel in Findlay Township. It's so impressive that it attracts visitors from all areas, eager to see the structure as well as a glimpse of Mr. Beaver.

23313-1044

PAGE 8



Airport crews reinforce Alliance Clean-up

By Stan Sattinger

An earlier issue of the Trail-Letter reported on the removal of trash from a wooded site off Hassam Road by Montour Valley Alliance and Duquesne Light volunteers as a local operation of the 1998 River Sweep. Allegheny County's Department of Aviation at Pittsburgh International Airport has recently reinforced this volunteer effort by completing a follow-up rubble removal that further improves the environmental health of the Montour Run Watershed.



According to Brad Penrod, Acting Director of Aviation, "It was clear to at least one Department of Aviation employee volunteering during the recent cleanup project that there was some large debris along Montour Run that could not be cleaned up by hand, no matter how many volunteers there were. In recognition of the tremendous time and effort put in by so many volunteers, and just as a good neighbor along Montour Run, the Department wanted to do its part to help out."

The Department of Aviation arranged for the necessary heavy equipment to complete the removal of approximately seven tri-axle truck loads of large debris, including illegally dumped appliances, large tires, and concrete rubble. "The Department of Aviation especially thanks the Montour Valley Alliance and the County Health Department staff for making it possible to make a more significant contribution to this volunteer environmental cleanup effort," added Kelly Fredericks, Deputy Director of Aviation and member of the Montour Run Watershed Planning Project Advisory Council.



The MTC is grateful for the Department's initiative, which has helped create more pleasant surroundings for users of the Trail.