



The Official Publication of the Montour Trail Council

MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 17 Issue 3

JUNE/JULY 2006

For your consideration

A journey of a thousand miles
begins with one step.

Confucious

Inside this issue:

Burgh Run Results Inspired Endowments	1
More Endowments	2
Friends Meeting Notices	3
President's Message Volunteers Spruce Up Trail	4
Cecil Friends Eagle Scouts Earth Day Cleanup	5
Montour Historical Society Bridge Painting	5
Trail Store Goodies	7

MTC Web Address
Visit the Montour Trail
web-site at:
www.montourtrail.org

Picture Perfect Running of Burgh's 10K

Pennsylvania weather certainly knows how to get your attention! Thunder and rain at 5 a.m. Sunday, April 23 and you think, "Last year snow and this year a washout?" Not so! An absolutely gorgeous day in Cecil Park greeted our 301 runners at the 10 a.m. start time and the 162 registered 2-Mile walkers for their event that followed. With spectators and volunteers, we once again exceeded 500 people to support this excellent trail fundraiser. We were pleased to welcome and recognize Congressman Tim Murphy for his federal trail grant in 2005 and as a participant in this year's run. He was greeted here by Burgh's owners Dan, Frank and Tom Daily. A "Power Group!"



Congressman Tim Murphy with Burgh's Pizza owners Dan, Frank and Tom Daily at the 6th Annual Burgh's 10K Race..

The winner in the men's division, David Gramlich of Beaver Falls, bested the old event record by more than 1 minute at 31:04, followed by Josh Simpson at 31:34 and Ryan Bender at 31:38. The previous record was 32:15 in 2002.

For the women, Katie Aerni won at 38:06, Zosia Bornik took second place at 40:44 and Paula Bennett was third at 42:00. Both men and women received the same prize money of \$300, \$200 and \$100 respectively.

Continued on page 3

TRAIL VISION INSPIRES ENDOWMENT DONORS

Meet our early Endowment Fund donors. Each has a somewhat different personal reason for giving to our perpetual Fund, but all have a clear view of its lasting benefits.

Jack Peth is a retired industrial construction estimator with a genuine flair for bridge abutments. With specs in hand, he headed a crew in 2000 to seat and erect the Trail bridge across busy PA 980 near Quicksilver Golf Course north of McDonald.

With his assertive voice giving clear instructions to all his work mates, the 150-foot-long project went through without a hitch. Upon reflection, as we get closer to having the trail completed, Jack sees the continuing need for its maintenance. "Man-hours, materials and equipment will be needed forever," Jack acknowledges. "Grant dollars and the like are hard to come by for that purpose. We either maintain and improve or fall back." Jack was the first volunteer to step forward in donating to our Fund and we appreciate his help!

Dennis Pfeiffer completes a three-year stint as MTC President in December 2006. (He also served one year as president in 2000.) From his earliest days as a member of the MTC, Dennis

Continued on page 2



Jack Peth



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ENDOWMENT DONORS

(Continued from Page 1)

has been involved in almost every phase of trail projects. His soft voice and ability to bring diverse interests together have been keys to the successful grants received and miles of Trail built during his tenure.

Dennis got hooked on trail building in 1989 at a Moon Township supervisors meeting. "Create a 55-mile hike/bike Trail from the residue of the deceased Montour Railroad? Fantastic!" he thought, and he's been at it ever since. He, too, sees the Endowment Fund as a "great way to help preserve this western Pennsylvania treasure into the future." Well said, Dennis!

John Hooton and wife Berenice learned of the Montour Trail in 1989 on a B&B weekend, but the seed took a while to germinate. Stan and Gerry Sattinger, also guests at the same place, spoke of the idea with enthusiasm. "55 miles and 40 bridges?"

Fantasy on the ground, if not pie-in-the-sky," thought John. However, doing grunt work paving the Cecil section in 1992 convinced him that it could be done, and he has served the MTC since then in fund-raising and public promotions. "Creating an asset out of a liability intrigues us both," say Berenice and John. They get great satisfaction from creating and developing their trailside garden at Hendersonville as well.

We invite each of you to review your finances and your charitable priorities. We'd like to see this fund grow and grow. Call John Hooton at 724- 942-0115, to inquire further.



Dennis Pfeiffer



John and Berenice Hooton

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.

Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

MTC Board Meeting,

every third Monday of the month - 6:00 p.m. at 304 Hickman St., Suite 3, Bridgeville, PA. Turn right off of the Bridgeville exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go straight at next light and make left turn onto Hickman St. just after the Post Office. Call Peter at 412-854-1835 for more information or to get on the agenda.

Cecil Events:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. From May-August, meetings are held at the Kurnick Access area along the trail off Cecil-Henderson Road; other months meet at the MTC Offices, Call 412-257-2553 for more information. Work & Clean-up party, every third Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. (Subject to change; check information boards.) Meet at the Kurnick Access Area Garage. Call 412-257-2553 for more info.

Airport Area Events

Friends of the Trail meeting, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the communities of 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 a.m. Call 412-262-3748 for more information and location.

Bethel Park Events:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the

month at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. For Clifton Road Bridge Committee meetings, contact Peter Kohnke at 412-854-1835 for more information.

Work & Clean-up party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 8:30 a.m. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

South Hills Friends of the Trail

Meeting first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Jefferson Hills Borough Building. Work and cleanup parties the first Saturday of the month. All volunteers are welcome. For more information, call David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler@verizon.net, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@adelphia.net

Fort Cherry Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Bldg., Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. Work & Clean-up parties, scheduled as needed. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

Peters Township Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, first non-holiday Monday of the month at Peters Township Parks and Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. For more information on Work & Clean-up parties, please contact Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at mcimgrund@adelphia.net.

EVERYONE'S A WINNER ON BURGH'S RUN AND WALK

(Continued from Page 1)



Runners and walkers in the Sixth Annual Burgh's Pizza Run, shown here crossing the new Muse-Bishop Road bridge in Cecil Township, enjoyed a near picture-perfect day.

Congratulations to all winners and participants. In addition, thanks to Mark Courtney of Runner's High timing service for providing current and historical race data and PM DJ Pete Massella for his fun mix of music for all attendees. There are really too many sponsors to mention, but suffice it to say they give Burgh's event a superior quality unmatched anywhere else in the area.

If you attended the event, drop into Burgh's in Bridgeville to see if your picture is on the wall. You'll find a table waiting. Also, if you are learning about this or other Montour Trail events for the first time by reading this article, there will be many more coming up this year. Check our website at www.montourtrail.org.



David Gramlich (left) of Beaver Falls came in first in the men's division with a record-breaking time of 31:04, besting the old record by more than a minute.



Katie Aerni (right) took top honors in the women's division with a time of 38:06.

And the Prez sez...

Hello to the members and friends of the Montour Trail.

This is the second issue from the Montour Trail Council's new newsletter editorial team. Thanks are in order for new managing editor Dennis Sims and the team, and also to vice president Mark Imgrund for playing a key role in organizing the editorial team. We hope you enjoy this and future issues from this talented group of volunteers.

Saturday, April 29 was a very clear, warm, and sunny day. Perfect weather for a walk, run, or bicycle ride on our beloved Montour Trail. This beautiful weather, however, did not deter a dedicated group of new board members and presenters from spending much of the day in a training session at our Bridgeville office. Board member Stan Sattinger led this effort to provide good historical and background information for our four new board members.

Ned Williams, chairman of the Engineering and Construction Committee, delivered an interesting and very detailed presentation on Montour Trail construction phases. Forty-three (43) miles of trail are now complete on the main line and the Bethel Branch. I was amazed that it took thirty (30) construction phases to produce this completed mileage. This is surely a testimony to the success and perseverance of the Montour Trail Council.

Thanks to Stan Sattinger on leading the efforts for this meeting and to our four new board members (Charlie Beaumariage, Gil McGurl, Karen Robbins, Phyllis McChesney) for taking time from their busy schedules to participate.

Happy Trails

Dennis Pfeiffer, President

75 Deloitte and Touche Volunteers Help Spruce Up Trail

On Friday June 9, 75 volunteers from the accounting firm of Deloitte and Touche came to work on the Montour Trail, assisted by seven Montour Trail members. They met at Old Beaver Grade Road at 9:30 a.m. had breakfast courtesy of the company and went to work on the trail, repairing some of the last damage caused by Hurricane Ivan.

Work included placing new mile markers, repaired and installed split rail fence, planting trees and bushes at Mile 0, improving trail heads at Hassam Road and Old Beaver Grade, cut grass, and repaired the mural at Beaver Grade.

According to MTC President Dennis Pfeiffer, "Mark Imgrund did a great job with crew #1 installing the new mile markers and Stan Sattinger did a beautiful job with crew #3 in planting seven trees and twelve bushes near Mile 0.

"Charlie Beaumariage did a great job with crew #4 under most difficult conditions at Hassam Road. Charlie's crew installed approach fencing at the Hassam Road bridge, repaired safety ties adjacent to the bridge railing



Deloitte and Touche trail volunteer crew # 5 builds a planting area at Old Beaver Grade trail head.



John Shaver from Airport Area Friends inspects the new Old Beaver Grade trail head shrubs with Deloitte and Touche volunteers.

and repainted three "offset" trail gates.

"John Shaver, of the Airport Area Friends, did a great job with crew # 5 at Old Beaver Grade Road. This large crew re-established the parklet area by installing two picnic tables, a bench, new split rail, two large planting areas, twelve bushes and other numerous plants. In addition, the mural on the abutment under Montour Run Road was restored.

"Tim Killmeyer had (as he put it) the great crew #8. This crew did a great job installing numerous sections of split rail fencing upstream from Old Beaver Grade Road. The fencing was installed adjacent to the trail in this hardest hit Hurricane Ivan flooded section.

"Finally special thanks are in order to: Phyllis McChesney who coordinated our overall efforts with Deloitte & Touche, Frank Keppel who provided special planning input, Thursday setup help and Friday afternoon tear down help and Pete Merther who provided Thursday setup help and Friday afternoon tear down help."



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL

2005 ANNUAL REPORT

Five steps to making southwestern Pennsylvania healthier and more attractive:



On October 15, the Council opened the new Muse-Bishop Road bridge, which soars above the reconstructed roadway in Cecil Township.

ible achievement in just 12 months

- Built our own garage in Cecil to house our six maintenance vehicles and other equipment

2. Celebrate the Trail and thank its helpers

- Celebrations in 2005 recognized the reopening of 10 miles of hurricane-ravaged trail, the opening of the new Muse-Bishop bridge, and the opening of new mileage in Peters.
- Moon, Robinson, North Fayette, and Findlay Townships received special recognition for their significant contributions to flood repair.
- PENNDOT, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, and the Allegheny Regional Asset District provided federal, state, and county support.
- The Washington County Tourist Promotion Agency provided a second grant to aid completion of the Montour-Panhandle connection
- U.S. Senator Rick Santorum and Congressman Tim Murphy spearheaded energetic advocacy for the Montour Trail, leading to federal appropriations of \$2 million toward remaining construction projects!

1. Build, maintain, and re-build the Montour Trail

In 2005 we:

- Constructed 1.7 miles of trail connecting the Arrowhead Trail in Peters to Lindenbrooke Apartments near Route 88 in Library
- Built a new 190 foot-long bridge to carry the Trail over Muse-Bishop Road in Cecil, replacing the 1913 railroad bridge that was deemed unsafe for vehicle traffic beneath
- Rebuilt the former railroad bridge over Robinson Run, on the connector beneath the McDonald Trestle, near where the Montour and Panhandle Trails intersect.
- Repaired and reopened the first 10 miles of trail along Montour Run that were devastated by Hurricane Ivan in September 2004—an incred-



Photos by Ned Williams

On June 25, Washington County Commissioner Bracken Burns and U.S. Congressman Tim Murphy helped the Council officially open its new, attractively shaded mileage in Peters Township.

3. Use the Trail

- As the completed mileage grows, so does the Montour Trail's popularity among bikers, walkers, and strollers. Big crowds are especially noticeable on sunny weekends along the Trail's most suburban

2.

segments—in Moon, Robinson, Findlay, Bethel Park, and Peters.

- Residents of Lindenbrooke Apartments, where nearly 1,000 people live, have been particularly excited to have one of the prettiest, most wooded sections of the Montour Trail literally by their driveway.
- Connections to the Trail from nearby landowners continue to increase. Developers of new residential communities in Peters and North Fayette have included, as a project amenity, paved pathways permitting homebuyers to access the Trail directly. A direct connection from the RIDC West business park to the Trail is nearing completion.

4. Promote the Trail with special events

- Our two biggest annual events, the IKEA half-marathon, 5-kilometer run and walk in September and the Burgh's Run in April, were smashing successes again, drawing 1,500 participants and raising over \$40,000 for the Trail.
- The "Tour the Montour" ride in September attracted 154 riders and netted over \$7,000 for the Trail.
- Outback Steakhouse in Robinson introduced an innovative fundraiser that combined a scavenger hunt (or a "walkabout" in Australian parlance), Trail hike, and dinner. Outback donated the food and prizes, so all proceeds from the 133 tickets sold went straight to the Trail.
- The third annual Twilight Trail Walk, held in July on the Arrowhead Trail in cooperation with Peters Township, drew over 400 people for an evening of jazz music, refreshments, and an illuminated trail stroll.
- Many other events conducted by individual Trail Friends groups highlighted the Trail's value to each community through which it passes.

5. Keep funding the Trail

None of steps 1-4 could happen without financial and volunteer

help from our growing number of supporters. In 2005:

- Trail membership surpassed 1,000
- Individual donations to the Trail exceeded \$73,000
- Over 6,430 hours of volunteer service were reported, with an estimated value of \$112,850
- In-kind donations totaled over \$25,000, much of it from Allegheny County and municipalities along the Trail
- The Montour Trail Endowment Fund, initiated to assist with perpetual maintenance of the Trail, attained a fund balance of \$56,000
- Popular support of the Trail helped us obtain thousands of dollars in event sponsorships plus major grants, including federal appropriations of \$2 million, to support remaining Trail construction projects

Thanks to all who make the Montour Trail possible! If you or someone you know has been inadvertently omitted from the following list of 2005 contributors, please contact us.



On September 16, the Council celebrated the reopening of miles 0 to 10 that were almost completely destroyed by Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

2005 CONTRIBUTORS

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With a little help from our Friends...

Cecil Friends Remodel Kurnick Parking Area

The construction of the Burgh Garage at the Kurnick Parking Area in Cecil Township consumed precious parking space. Now that Frank Ludwin has pretty much finished the inside, he and the Cecil Friends have landscaped the area and expanded the parking area.

The water fountain has been moved closer to the Trail, and a new split-rail fence separates the Trail from the parking area. There are now two rows of parking, one along the fence and the other along the creek, which will accommodate over 30 cars.

The Cecil Friends would like to see a picnic table and shelter placed at the far end of the parking lot by the crabapple tree. This could be an ideal Eagle Scout project.

With the completion of the garage, the Cecil Friends and the Montour Trail Council have vacated the Hendersonville storage area and moved their equipment into the new garage. The MTC has also moved its belongings from the temporary storage facility that has been generously provided by Collier Township to the Burgh Garage as well.

Eagle Scout trail projects include new Bat Boxes and Event Signs

Two current Eagle Scout projects are in the works to help out the Montour Trail.

The first of these projects is to rebuild the signs used at the IKEA trail events. By reassembling the rigid 'A' frame design, which presents both a storage and transportation problem, and attaching a chain to allow for flat storage, the new signs will be efficient to transport and assemble easily. This project has made several volunteers very happy!

Next is a series of four bat boxes – yes BAT HOTELS... These unobtrusive shelters will provide comfortable shelter for literally hundreds of our neighborhood bats. Good habitat for the bats also benefits our trail users, as the bats help to combat the local insect population.

We look forward to the introduction of these projects in late Spring/Early summer. Future newsletters will highlight these and other projects. We will also introduce the individuals behind their development.

EARTH DAY 2006 - A STEP FORWARD

Miles 0 to 12 of The Montour Trail have certainly seen their share of unique challenges during the past 18 months. If it wasn't the two hurricanes and the flooding and damage that resulted, it was the delay to complete the restoration of the trail after a water line installation.

But sometimes you just have to believe that things will work out for the best and that someone will step forward. Well, that someone has been the hundreds of volunteers who have given their money, time, and sweat to our beloved trail.

This past March the Airport Area Friends of the Montour Trail were contacted by management personnel at the Mall at Robinson. Beth Edwards, general manager of the mall, suggested that we meet and discuss an Earth Day on the Trail for various mall staff personnel, the Pennsylvania Army National Guard Group at the mall, and the Greater Pennsylvania Council of Union Carpenters Apprentice Training Center. After that meeting, plans for five separate projects were identified. The mall personnel took care of the planning for refreshments, lunches, and very cool "Earth Day on the Trail" t-shirts. The Airport Area Friends ordered over \$4,500 worth of lumber and supplies for the several different projects. Dave McGaffin of the Mall at Robinson designed the two shelters to be built; a 14' x 24' at Mile 0 and a 10' x 12' at Cliff Mine Parking Lot.

Thursday morning, April 20, at 8 a.m. sharp, 20 pickup trucks of different makes and colors pulled into the expanded parking area of Mile 0. Eighteen young men, tool belts strapped on and tool boxes in hand, filed in ready to build. Leading them was a Lead Carpenter Training Instructor – Ricky "O" Okraszewski. Also on board and providing logistical help, with his Bosch Tool truck packed with every conceivable tool known to mankind, was Kelly Jones. The apprentices

under Ricky "O's" firm direction quickly unloaded two thirds of a very full Montour Trail truck and broke into separate work groups. By about 10:00 all six of the main posts were cut, framed, and ready for the roof trusses. By 2:30 p.m. most of the roof was in place awaiting the shingles.

Friday morning was quite hectic for the Airport Area Friends guiding the projects. Tim Killmeyer, Pete Merther, Dennis Pfeiffer, John Shaver and Jeff Williams headed up the split-rail and new gate location crews. Phyllis McChesney led the landscaping volunteers at the gazebo and Frank Keppel supported the Earth Day Project and watched over the two shelter building crews. Oh yes, the second shelter. A group made up of all Mall maintenance personnel took on the small shelter at Cliff Mine Parking Lot. All-in-all, about 48 volunteers were out in the Friday sunshine enjoying the day on the Trail.

The large shelter at Mile "0" was finished at 10:30 AM; the split

rail installation was completed with 15 sections installed; the gate crews successfully removed two gates and reinstalled them in a more user friendly fashion at mile .5 and Mile 1.

The Gazebo landscaping using brick edging and mulching went smoothly and looks fantastic. Finally, the small shelter build at



Cliff Mine Parking Lot. The Mall Group started strong and worked through the sunshine of the day and finished in the rain of early evening.

For those who volunteered and were involved with the Earth Day Projects, I say "Thank-You". I'll always remember it as the day when we stepped forward together and accomplished so much for those who cherish The Montour Trail.

Frank Keppel

MONTOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY TOUCHES UP RAILROAD BRIDGE

On Earth Day, 2006, five men from the Montour Railroad Historical Society met at the McClaren's Run Bridge (almost directly underneath the Parkway West and alongside Montour Run Road).

Our project was a restoration and a cleanup of the bridge which was originally built by the American Bridge Company of Ambridge in 1948. The paint crew, which consisted of Pete Steele and Gene Schaeffer, restored the original "MONTOUR RAILROAD" lettering on the bridge. The men masked out and repainted each letter while standing on ladders firmly planted in the creek bottom.

Stan Sattinger, Ken Caine and Troy Bogdan cleared overgrown brush and tree branches from the bridge and the stream bank to prevent future flooding, as well as cleaning up trash, flood debris dating back to Hurricane Ivan, and noxious weeds from the bridge area. A snake, who we named "Speedy," supervised the project while swimming in the creek below the bridge.

The average trail user may never notice the newly repainted letters on the side of the bridge (though we encourage you, while passing through, to stop and take a peek), but our work will help keep the "Montour Railroad" name alive for future generations.

This was a joint project of the Historical Society and the newly-formed Montour Railroad Historic Preservation Committee, chaired by Stan Sattinger. Those who may wish to volunteer for future preservation projects may contact Gene Schaeffer at GenePSchaeffer@hotmail.com.

Troy Bogdan



Gene Schaeffer paints a letter, Pete Steele watches his step off the ladder and Stan Sattinger cleans up brush.

MONTOUR RAILROAD SOCIETY GREAT WAY TO LEARN RAILROAD HISTORY

Back in 1994, shortly after moving to Atlanta, I came across a centerfold photograph in *Trains* magazine taken at Montour Junction by Gene P. Schaeffer. That was the start of a two-year correspondence about the Montour, which had been abandoned for about a decade. As a former Pittsburgh resident, the Montour and the Pennsylvania Railroad's Panhandle Division were literally in my backyard for most of my childhood and teenage years. When I moved back to the Burgh after a seven-year stint in the Navy, we eventually settled in Findlay Township, just up the hill from the Montour Interchange on the Parkway, and the Montour became a daily sight on my commute to and from work.

In December 2001, I created the Yahoo! special interest group, mon-tour_rr, and formed the Montour Railroad Historical Society. Gene Schaeffer and I were the only members, but we picked up four more in January 2002. Membership was sporadic at best; the Montour was not a well-known railroad. A 42-mile shortline hauling coal around the farmland south of Pittsburgh was not romantic, nor was it a technological pioneer; it just slugged it out day after day on light rail, steep

grades, sharp curves, and with switch engines to boot.

We kept the group alive and added members in dribbles until 2005 when the Montour Trail folks found our website. Our group currently has 120 members, and our message traffic averages about 150 postings a month. The web site contains a wealth of information about the history of the railroad, its route, and its customers.

Thankfully, the Montour Trail Council was able to acquire and save the Montour right-of-way. We Montour fans will always be grateful to the trail folks for preserving the few remaining pieces of our old friend.

Bob Ciminell



The Montour Railroad Historical Society remembers the trail's railroading past like this Montour Railroad coal train at Hendersonville.

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the trail!**



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a taste
of what
we have
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- ☐ 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.

<input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT / SENIORS	\$15
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- ☐ I wish to become a member of the Montour Trail Council.
(Membership is tax deductible)
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(Make your check payable to the Montour Trail Council)

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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:

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P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

