



MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 11 Issue 2

March/April 2000

MTC Web Address

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

Mantra of the Month

- The thing always happens that you really believe in; and the belief in a thing makes it happen.

—Frank Lloyd Wright

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Upcoming construction projects for the Montour Trail

by Dick Quasey

VOLUNTEER ALERT!!!

Trail construction efforts will soon be focused on the following projects. Some work can commence soon after the snow cover disappears and more when frost leaves the ground.

1. Boggs Run (Mile 11.5) to Champion (US22 - Mile 12.1) : Clearing, fencing, trash removal, signage, surfacing.
2. Champion (Mile 12.1 to 13.2) : Surfacing, signage.
3. Champion (Mile 13.2) to PA 980 at Quicksilver (Mile 14.5) : Gate installation, signage, clearing, fencing, surfacing.
4. Quicksilver Bridge (Mile 14.5) : Bridge decking, metal work, painting, fencing, landscaping, signage.
5. McDonald Trestle Bridge (Mile 17.0 to 17.7) : Clearing, painting, signage.
6. Primrose (Mile 17.7 to 18.2) : Clearing, gate installation, signage)
7. Cecil (adjacent to PA 980 near PA 50) : Parking

lot development - clearing, fencing, signage, gate installation.

8. Large (PA 51) to Clairton (PA 837) : Clearing, culvert placements, ditching, trail head development (clearing and grubbing, signage, gate placement, fencing, surfacing).

All interested volunteers are needed and most welcome!

Contact Dick Quasey at 412/859-6864 (EMAIL – MT_QUAZ@juno.com), or Paul McKeown at 412/835-6692 (EMAIL – mckeownp@libcom.com).

IKEA-Montour Race planning begins

By Jerry Agin

Planning has commenced for the Fifth Annual IKEA-Montour Trail 1/2 Marathon and 5K Run and Walk. The races will take place on Saturday, September 9, 2000.

This event is a major fundraiser for the Trail. A critical activity in preparation for it is finding corporate sponsors who can

donate money, services, or materials in exchange for publicity.

If you know of a potential sponsor, please call Ann Ruth at 412-882-0306.

If you'd like to volunteer to help out in any other way, please call Jerry Agin at 412-343-1425.





MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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For administration and business: 412-257-2328

Newsletter Editor Deborah Hoerster

Circulation Manager Joan Schweiger

Trail Talk

from the Editor's Desk

Happy Spring to All!

As you already know, the MTC has a new President, Dennis Pfeiffer. Dennis has been a dedicated, hard-working trail advocate for many years. His devotion to the Trail and its construction is widely-known and respected trail-wide. He is a hard worker and very particular, especially when it comes to grass cutting and all other manicuring tasks of the Trail for special events, such as the IKEA/Montour 1/2 Marathon and 5K Walk/Run. All the Moon/Rob and North Fayette/Findlay volunteers know this and pay special attention to these matters, just for him. If not, he would do it all himself without complaint. I guess special people deserve special attention!

As we wish Dennis much success in his new post, we also say "many thanks" to Dick Quasey, our previous president, for his outstanding work and dedication, not only during his term as Prez, but also for his many prior years of trail service. (I'm sure we'll continue to sing the chorus of the Irish song, "It's Me Old Bone-shaker," per Dick's tradition on St. Patrick's Day!).

In accordance with the new President's request, I will be highlighting some trail-users' life-changing stories in upcoming issues. Know any? Send them to me. "Inquiring people want to know!"

Debby



Newsletter Deadline

All articles for the May/June Trail-Letter will be due **no later than** April 1, 2000.

Please see Page 2 for submitting correspondence. Thank you.

COMMENTS/NEWS

Your opinion means 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.

March 2000

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
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Calendar of Events**April 2000**

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	

* St Patrick's Day – **March 17, 2000**



* Happy Easter! – **Sunday, April 23, 2000**



* First Day of Spring – **March 20, 2000**

* Penny Day – **Saturday, May 13, 2000** from 9 am. to 3 pm., miles 0 thru 4. See page 5 for more information.

* National Trail Day – **June 3, 2000.** See next issue for more information.

Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

- ◆ **MTC Board Meeting**, every third Monday of the month - **6:00 pm** 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 Dennis at 412- 262-3748 for more information or to get on the agenda.
- ◆ **Cecil Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every fourth 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 412-257-2553 for more information.
- ◆ **Moon/Robinson Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at **7:00 pm.**, 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 am**. Call 412-262-3748 for meeting place and time.
- ◆ **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 Saturdays 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.
- ◆ **MacDonald 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 Dennis Pfeiffer

*Above and below me hovers the beautiful.
I am surrounded by it. I am immersed in it.
In my youth, I am aware of it. And in my
old age, I shall walk quietly the beautiful
trail.*

Navajo Chant



Hello, a sincere welcome to the "beautiful" Montour Trail. This welcome extends to all of the new and existing members of the Montour Trail Council and friends. The Montour Trail Council, as you are aware, recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. Much effort has been spent in the last ten years by our volunteers, Municipalities, Counties, public officials, and friends to build and maintain a spectacular trail. We keep hearing stories of how the presence of this valuable regional asset has actually changed peoples lives. (I am not kidding.) In fact, Debby Hoerster, our superb newsletter editor, will be interviewing some of these individuals in the coming months. But as the Carpenters' old song says, "We Have Only Just Begun."

This year promises to be one of the most exciting ones ever in our quest to complete the 54 mile Montour Trail system. Our previous President, Dick Quasey, has successfully been able to lead us and move the Montour

Trail Council construction projects in a fast forward mode. Dick's and many of our volunteers' significant efforts will be bearing fruit this year.

A 130 foot bridge has just been painted and will be erected over Rt. 980 at the Quicksilver golf course. The trail will be extended from its current end at mile 11.5 to the Quicksilver Bridge at mile 14.6. The bridge on the other end will connect to the existing trail that ends at mile 17.6 near the McDonald 980 foot long trestle. Thus a full 17.6 miles of continuous trail will be opened from mile 0 at Moon Township/Montour Road to the McDonald trestle.

A second mile of trail on the Bethel Park spur will be completed from Clifton to Irishtown Road. There then will more than seven miles of continuous trail from Irishtown Road to Rt 19. (Four of the miles are the Peters Township Arrowhead Trail. Note: The mile in between the Bethel Park spur and the Arrowhead is usable, but will lack the final trail surface.)

Two miles of trail from Rt. 51 in Jefferson Hills to Rt. 837 in Clairton will be completed. Construction of two small 15 foot bridges will be a part of this new beautiful section. (We will assist the Sportsman club with their annual stocking of Peters Creek, which parallels the trail.) This section is from mile 45.5 to 47.5 in Clair-

ton.

Engineering and design is underway for most of the remaining unfinished sections in Allegheny County from mile 37.5 through 42.5. The start of construction will be dependent on the receiving enhancement funding.

On Friday, February 11 we received exciting news from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC). Three of the four MTC construction projects in Washington County, were approved by the SPC. The fourth was passed onto the State for enhancement funding. Engineering and design for these projects should be complete by summer. Construction of one of these projects should start in the fall. The completion of these four projects in 2001 will provide a completed trail from Rt. 980 / Rt. 50 at mile 22.3 to Rt. 19 at mile 33.0 in Peters Township.

As noted above, this year will provide additional trail miles in many new areas. The year 2000 will provide significant progress in completing the "beautiful" Montour Trail.

Enjoy the Trail!

(Editor's note: I want everyone to know that I did not coerce Dennis to pay this editor such a "superb" compliment, but it is so-o-o very much appreciated!)

Penny Day planning

The Moon/Rob. Friends of the Trail are already planning their 5th Annual Penny Day to be held on Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Created by our own Tim Killmeyer, it is known to be a major "fun"draiser in this trail section, spanning miles 0 thru 4. If you would like to join in the fun and volunteer your help, call Debby Hoerster at 412-859-3917, or Tom McIlvain at 412-937-7982.

Start saving those pennies to win some "fab" prizes, and watch for more details of this event in our next issue!

The "Yokatomactrek" returns!

The Y2K Trek Ride will take place from Saturday June 17, to Saturday June 24, 2000. Ride the ATA trails from McKeesport to Meyersdale, and the C&O Canal towpath from Cumberland to Washington, DC, a total of about 300 miles.

Choose camping or indoor accommodations. Baggage will be carried in a van to the next night's destination. Daily rides of about 40 miles, with overnights planned in or near Connellsville, Rockwood, Cumberland, Little Orleans, Williamsport, Harper's Ferry, Leesburg, and Georgetown.

Trip size is limited. For more information send an email to Ned Williams at ned@washtool.com.

A more complete description of the trip, including detailed itinerary, costs, and photos from the 1999 Yokatomactrek will soon appear on the Allegheny Trail Alliance website at atatrail.org.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership Chairman

Jerry Agin

Berch-Norton Family
George Biles
Deborah S. Britzki
Harold Burens
William B. Ellis
Ms. Terri M. Flynn
Dennis Funtal
Christopher Geraci &
Family
Gavin Geraci & Family
Barry Gottlieb
Mary Lee (Quasey) &
Richard L. Gowell
Jeffrey Hennion
Mr. And Mrs. James C.
Hooton
Sharon Houpt
Luana N. Johnson
Alfred E. Kutschbach, Jr.
Rosemary Mitsch

Timothy Reid
Paul L. Ricker
Cecelia Schott
Patrick Stabile
Leslie Stone
Trowel & Error Garden
Club
John W. Viehman
Barbara C. Wagner
Mark J. Wisniewski
John & Susan Zanardelli

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

Stanton W. Bockoven, Jr
Doug Ettinger
Bob Gambone
Mary Lee (Quasey) & Richard
L. Gowell
Jeffrey Hennion
Charles S. Smithers
Robert Taranto
E. Steven White

LEADERS CIRCLE

Anonymous
John & Berenice Hooton
Dennis Pfeiffer
Timothy Reid

Thank You!

Stock donations welcome

The Montour Trail Council has the ability to receive stock gifts from any benefactor who may wish to take advantage of a tax write-off by donating stock

which has appreciated in value. The donor will get the full value of the stock as a charitable donation and save the capital gains tax as well.

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 (daytime) _____ (evening) _____

E-MAIL _____

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, or Combined Federal Campaign Contributor Choice option #9308, where you work.

Let there be light!

The Findlay Township Board of Commissioners decided to take on the job of lighting the Enlow Tunnel - an old Montour Railroad tunnel, 576 feet in length, located near mile 7.0 on the Montour Trail.

Findlay Township Manager, Gary Klingman, attended the Montour Trail Council's (MTC) board meeting on Monday evening, January 17, and gave multiple reasons for this decision. Two of the cited reasons given were: in response to the requests of community trail-users for better visibility in the tunnel, and sight-enhancement for the runners of the annual IKEA/Montour 1/2 Marathon. Lighting would also provide definition to trail edges, so that users would know how far from the center they can stray.

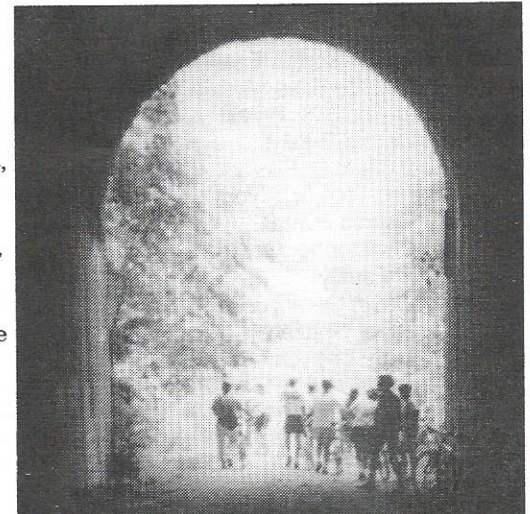
Findlay Township, in conjunction with Duquesne Light Co., will spearhead the acquisition of lighting and its installation. The MTC will pro-

vide all necessary rights-of-way/easements for proper location of poles and support equipment. With this arrangement in place, Findlay then asked the Montour Trail Council to sign an agreement, assuring the MTC that the Montour Trail Council would not be responsible for any operational costs, maintenance, or repairs.

After perusal and discussion on the terms and wording of the agreement, modifications were suggested, and the MTC now awaits Findlay's response to those modifications.

These matters are merely precautionary formalities and are sure to be resolved easily and quickly to the benefit of all concerned.

The MTC is very appreciative of the Township of Findlay's tremendous efforts in securing lighting for the Enlow Tunnel, and for their overall



Second International Trails & Greenways Conference sponsored a mobile classroom entitled, "Promoting Watershed Conservation through Trail Access." Here participants are shown walking their bikes through the Enlow Tunnel. (June '99)

backing for the Montour Trail in the last eight years. We applaud them, and offer our full support.

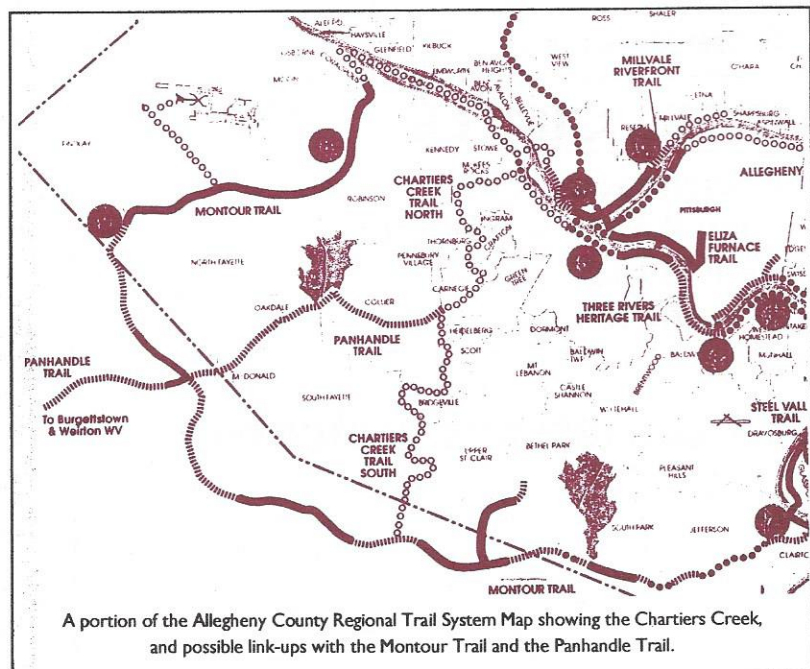
Chartiers Creek – a new trail & watershed plan

by Larry Ridenour

The first round of public meetings was held during the last week in January for the Lower Chartiers Creek Watershed Conservation Plan. The meetings were held in South Fayette Township and Carnegie Borough to gather opinions and ideas from residents of the watershed, and to present preliminary findings by the environmental consulting firm of Skelly & Loy. More than 130 people attended the meetings sponsored by a Steering Committee, made up of members from various local conservancies.

This study is similar to the one completed recently for the Montour Valley by the Hollow Oak Land Trust (HOLT), the Monour Valley Alliance

Continued on page 7...



A portion of the Allegheny County Regional Trail System Map showing the Chartiers Creek, and possible link-ups with the Montour Trail and the Panhandle Trail.

Thinking Panhandle Trail western connection

by Dave Wright

Now that the Panhandle Trail has been acquired 29 miles from near Carnegie to Weirton, and design and construction is underway, why not think of connections into Ohio? On January 18th, a group of Western Pennsylvania trail promoters ventured to Cadiz, Ohio to meet similar West Virginia and Ohio people to do just that.

Jim Deming, Director of the Ohio Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, led the meeting to discuss current trail development and future opportunities. The following projects are now underway:

(you'll probably need a map to follow this)

1. The trail running along the Ohio River from Benwood north through Wheeling is now being extended from the Pike Island Lock and Dam northward to the Belmont County line. A local group is also working to extend it through Wellsburg. The trail can use country roads around Fallensbee, and connect with the Panhandle Trail west of Colliers, WV.

2. The National Pike Trail Council is promoting trail development on the former B&O Railroad from Washington to Wheeling. The continuation of this line from Bellaire, south of Wheeling, into the countryside of southwestern Ohio is abandoned.

2. The Ohio and Erie Canal trail, now

open between E. 49th Street in Cuyahoga Heights near Cleveland and the Cuyahoga Falls line near Akron, is planned for extension to Zoar, about 10 miles north of New Philadelphia, Ohio. Harrison County, Ohio will be constructing trail from Bowerstown, about 20 miles southeast of Zoar, eastward to Jewett on former Wheeling and Lake Erie RR. roadbed, which closely parallels an active portion of the former Panhandle Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad (the same line as ours). The W&LE recently filed for abandonment of their line from near Jewett to Warrenton, Ohio (between Wheeling and Wellsburg, WV) on the Ohio River.

3. In Ohio, Ashtabula, Trumbull, Mahoning and Columbiana Counties are developing a greenway system from Ashtabula south through Warren, Niles, Leetonia and Lisbon to East Liverpool. Ten miles between Leetonia and Lisbon and ten miles from Western Reserve Road north through Canfield and Austintown to the Trumbull County Line are now under construction.

Jim Deming will prepare a detailed trail development status report for

presentation at our next meeting, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 16th at the Cadiz Public Library. To car-pool from the Ikea parking lot at 4:15 p.m., call Dave Wright at (412) 350-6645.



Chartiers Creek...

...continued from page 6

(MVA) and the Montour Trail Council (MTC). It will cover 140 square miles and extend from Canonsburg Lake in Peter's Township to the mouth of Chartiers Creek at McKees Rocks. Large portions of the Montour Trail and the Panhandle Trail lie within this watershed. Part of the planning project will study the feasibility of a trail route along the mainstream of Chartiers

Creek to connect downtown Pittsburgh with both the Montour and Panhandle Trails.

Because of abandoned mine drainage and overflow of municipal sewage into the streams during storms, Chartiers Creek is one of the most polluted watersheds in the state. Urban sprawl occurring in the middle region and headwaters of the watershed is another major threat. Simultaneously, there are great opportunities for greenways, trails, canoeing, wildlife habitat

Running & Walking Tips

Training for the UPMC/City of Pittsburgh Marathon

By Kevin J. Smith

(excerpted, with permission, from Kevin's column in The Monthly Post)

The date for the May 7, 2000 UPMC/City of Pittsburgh Marathon continues to inch closer. We, at Elite Runners & Walkers, sense that many of you who are going to participate, as in 1999, will be first or second timers. The following are a few helpful tips to consider:

— Above all, get out the door. If you are a morning runner, lay out your clothes the night before.

— Seek out some new venues to explore. Variety is good.

— Introduce an indoor cross training activity (i.e. stationary bike) to your regimen. Weather cannot be an excuse if you want to run well in May.

— Get the proper clothing. Technical clothing lets the vapor escape which keeps you dryer and warmer.

— Have at least 2 – 3 pairs of good running shoes. Rotate use.

Keep in mind that by running in the winter, your spring training times will be easier, since your fitness level will be better.

Remember – Stretch well, run fast!

Kevin Smith is the owner of Elite Runners & Walkers specialty running shop located on Rt. 60 in Robinson Township.

and an improved quality of life for all who live in or visit the area.

The Steering Committee welcomes the active involvement of any trail enthusiasts to the Council during the planning process and beyond. The next round of public meetings will be in early May, when the Draft Plan will be presented.

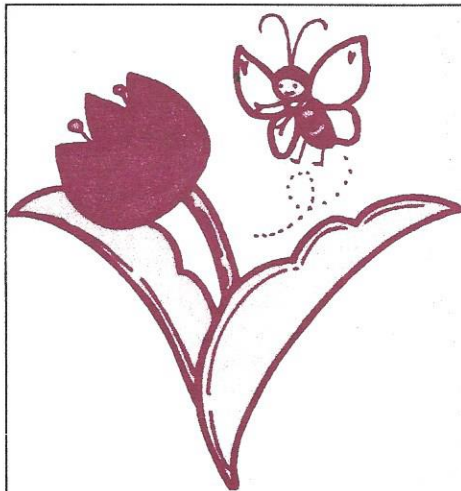
To get on the mailing list or for more information, contact Larry Ridenour, E-mail address: landesign@aol.com.



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B-z-z-z...Wake up! Spring has sprung!
(See the beauty of Spring on the Montour Trail.)

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