



The Official Publication of the Montour Trail Council

MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 25 Issue 2

March-April 2014

Valley Brook Bridge #2 Construction Update by Mark Imgrund

The second part of a two-phase project, to more safely connect the Montour Trail in Peters Township to the Arrowhead Trail section, is approaching the starting gate. As this article is being written, the final touches are being put on a Valley Brook Bridge #2 bid package by WEC



*The location of the Valley Brook 2 Bridge adjacent to the current at-grade-crossing.
Dennis Sims Photo*

Engineers, who have been working since last summer on preliminary engineering, preparation of bid documents, and securing all approvals necessary for beginning construction.

It is always chancy to predict exactly when construction will begin on a project that is still awaiting regulatory approvals, so I won't speculate any more than to say that we will advertise the project for bid within a couple of weeks from receiving our one remaining approval. To borrow from the TV weatherman's bag of tricks, let's just say there's a 80% chance of the project going out to bid before you receive your next newsletter. The bid will be for doing the final design work, and then the actual construction.

structure and lifting it into place on its abutments will require closing Valley Brook Road to vehicular traffic for a few days, that part of the project cannot be completed until after PennDOT's active Route 19 – Valley Brook Road intersection project is completed. As we currently understand that project's construction schedule, this would likely mean our bridge project couldn't be completed until sometime in spring 2015.

If the "weather prediction" is right, construction on the bridge abutments should be complete by the end of the 2014 construction season. Unfortunately, since assembling the bridge

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Now here comes some bad news. The improved connection that the recently-completed Valley Brook Bridge #1 project implemented will have to be put on hold during this project. Valley Brook Bridge #1 will be closed for a period of several months to allow for the safe construction of the new bridge. Trail detours will be posted on-line and on the ground when the time approaches. As they say, the temporary inconvenience will make way for a permanent -and far better improvement.

Mile "0 Trail Head" to Close for Extended Periods

The Mile "0 Trail Head" will be closed for extended periods in 2014. At mile 0.3 there is a "Superfund" cleanup project that as of this writing is to commence near April 14. This is a federally mandated project under the jurisdiction of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The hazardous material is underground and when the contractor starts digging below the surface there is a very real possibility of toxic materials being released into the air. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE do heed all of the numerous warning signs when the Mile "0" trailhead and trail in that area are closed.

The Montour Trail Council has been and will continue to work very closely with all of the entities involved. This is a very serious cleanup and should not be taken lightly. The contractor hired is Remedial Construction Services out of Houston Texas. As mentioned previously the work is to start near April 14 and the end date will be somewhere near the end of October. Please help us and the contractor by cooperating fully with the closings.

We just had a meeting on March 13 with the engineering and overall project manager. He said they are waiting for the final go ahead from the EPA. **Continues on page 5**

Visit the Montour Trail Web Site at:
www.montourtrail.org

To Converse, join the Yahoo Group at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Montour-Trail/info> or

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/43518292159/>



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Prez says:

I extend greetings to the members, friends and supporters of the Montour Trail. We are very appreciative of your support of the Montour Trail. Please email or call us directly with your questions or suggestions on improving the trail at MTCoffice@montourtrail.org or 412-257-3011.

As mentioned in a previous article, we may have four active construction projects in 2014. These projects of course are the Library Viaduct, the Pleasant Street extension, the Coraopolis and Neville Island extensions and the VB#2 bridge in Peters Township. While there is an enormous amount of work with each of these projects, the completion of these projects will bring the main line trail to about 98% complete. Thus after 25 years of planning and construction, there will only be a little over one mile of main line trail to complete.

As these projects near completion, MTC will be evolving to toward more of a maintenance mode and this will allow the MTC to concentrate more on improving the users knowledge along the trail and improving access to amenities. The Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) is already at that point.

The GAP, as you all know, was completed last year. The Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA) members who built, maintain and manage the trail have moved almost 100% now into the mode of maintenance, improving user knowledge, providing easier access to amenities and performing nationwide marketing. Three MTC board members sit on the ATA board and thus we have seen this evolving transition up close over the last few years.

The ATA is in the process of a major project to improve signage along the trail and installing permanent mile markers. In addition, the ATA has been very successful with the Trail Town Program. This program was launched in 2007 through the Progress Fund and continues to improve trail users knowledge of the town's amenities, makes the towns more trail user friendly and helps local businesses connect to the trail users.

Speaking of the Trail Town program, there is good news relative to the Montour Trail. At the MTC's February 17 board meeting, Will Prince was one of our special invited guests. Will Prince is the Trail Town program manager. Will said that the program is expanding into Allegheny County and the Montour Trail Council will be asked to participate in an evaluation of the entire Montour Trail. This evaluation will include recommending possible Trail Town programs along the Montour Trail. We are anxiously looking to participate in this process. The kickoff meeting for Allegheny County is scheduled for March 19 in West Homestead.

The other special invited guest at the board meeting was Tom Sexton. Tom is the Northeast Regional Director of the Rails to Trails Conservancy. In case you had not heard, Tom reported that this year's Greenway Sojourn with 300 riders is already sold out! We are proud to report that for the first time, the six day Sojourn will be held on the Montour Trail for two of those days (June 22 & 23). After discussing the sojourn in some detail, Tom stressed the importance of letting the public know the impact of trails in general. Also in particular, Tom elaborated on the economic impact to the area that 300 sojourners have doing a six day ride.

Happy trails!

Dennis Pfeiffer

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 Dennis at 412-262-3748 for more information or to get on the agenda.

Airport Area Friends: (MP 0 to MP 12.6 and the 6.3 mile

Airport Connector) The Airport Area Friends of the Trail meet every second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Forest Grove Fire Hall, 2044 Ewings Mill Road, Robinson Township, PA 15108. New volunteers are always welcomed. Contact Phyllis McChesney at 412-264-6303 for more information. Numerous Saturday "work parties" are held during the season. Please call 412-262-3748 to lend a hand at the work parties.

Fort Cherry Friends: (MP 12.6 to MP 20.7)

Friends of the Trail meeting: Second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the McDonald Trail Station, 160 S. McDonald Street, McDonald, PA 15057 (adjacent to the Panhandle Trail). Work and cleanup parties will be scheduled as needed. For more information contact Tim Thomassy, 724-926-4617 or Chuck Hughey, 724-926-9436.

Cecil Friends: (MP 20.7 to MP 28.5)

Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Monday 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 (with the exception of November and December) meet at the MTC Offices. Work and cleanup parties are scheduled as needed. Call 412-496-4308 for more information, or email densimwx@comcast.net

Peters Township Friends: (MP 28.5 to 30.4, Library Jct to near MP 35 and part of the Bethel Branch)

Friends of the Trail Meeting, first non-holiday Monday of the month at Peters Township Community Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. For more information on work and cleanup parties, please contact Jim Robbins at 724-941-6132, or for monthly meetings, Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at markimgrund@gmail.com

Bethel Park Friends: (The 2.75 mile Bethel Branch and a short piece of main line trail around MP 35).

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. Work and cleanup 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: (MP 35.4 to 46.3)

Meeting second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at South Park Township Community Room, located behind the Township Building at 2675 Brownsville Road, South Park, 15129. Work and cleanup parties scheduled and advertised as needed. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler@verizon.net, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@comcast.net

The Montour Railroad Historical Society:

For more information send email to mrhs@montourrr.com.

Adirondack Shelter at Boggs Campsite by Peter Merther

Through the effort of Scout Jacob Welsh, age 15, and members of Troop 486 of Hopewell Township, a 12'x10' Adirondack shelter was constructed at the Boggs Campsite area. The shelter was constructed over a few weekends this past fall. This shelter has greatly added to the amenities at the Boggs campsite. A picture of the shelter and the scout responsible for the project is shown below.



Scout Welsh is the great nephew of Ken Gregory, the architect and curator of the garden and campsite at the Boggs trail head.

Kudos to all involved and a great job!

Tails for Trails #10



Tails for Trails X Annual Walk
(Rain or Shine)
Saturday, June 7, 2014 from 8:30 to 12:00

The Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail proudly announce the return of the Tails for Trails 5K Fun Dog Walk on National Trails Day, Saturday, June 7, 2012. The Walk will bark off at 9:00 a.m. from the Kurnick (National) Trailhead and head east to the turn-around at the Tandem Connection where there will

be treats waiting the walkers and dogs. Back at the start there will be several vendors featuring pet related products. As always, there will be Frank Ludwin grilling hot dogs to perfection along with beverages and sweets for the participants when they return. Along with the walk, there will be a Chinese Auction and door prizes for the participants.

It's hard to believe the Cecil Friends have been conducting this fundraiser for 10 years and have raised nearly \$20,000 for trail improvements in Cecil Township.

Registration forms are available at several location on and near the trail and on the web at www.montourtrail.org. The registration fee is the same as last year \$10 for one dog and \$16 for two dogs if you register by May 19, afterwards it will be \$12 a dog.

The 14th Annual Burgh's Pizza and Wing Pub 10K/5K Run and 2 Mile Walk (Borrowed from the Burgh website.)



The 14th Annual Burgh's Pizza & Wing Pub 10K / 5K Runs and 2 Mile Fun Walk for family, friends and fun benefiting the Montour Trail will be held on Sunday April 27, 2014. To date, we have donated \$270,000.00 to the ongoing maintenance and development of the Trail here in Western Pennsylvania. The success of this event

goes to the great group of volunteers from local businesses, Montour Trail Council members, Cecil Township Parks & Rec Committee, Cecil Police Department, South Bridge EMS, Burgh's team members and especially the Race Committee members. In addition to our volunteers, local business partners and customers making monetary donations. Special thanks to our Corporate Partners (\$2500 monetary donation): DeBlasio Beverage, Cintas - The uniform company and Wilson-McGinley Distributing for their ongoing support.

Event Start Times:

5K Run 9:15 a.m.

10K Run 10:00 a.m.

2-Mile Walk 10:15 a.m.

Post Race Awards Celebration approximately 11:15 am.

Race day registration opens at 8:15 a.m. and closes 15 minutes prior to each event.

On line registration is available via the link below with the best registration fees. In addition, all on-line registrants will earn a chance in our drawing to win an HD-TV donated by Bridgeville Appliance.

For additional event information on this family fun event click the official web site link!

[The official race website](#)

You can view the 13th annual official race results at:

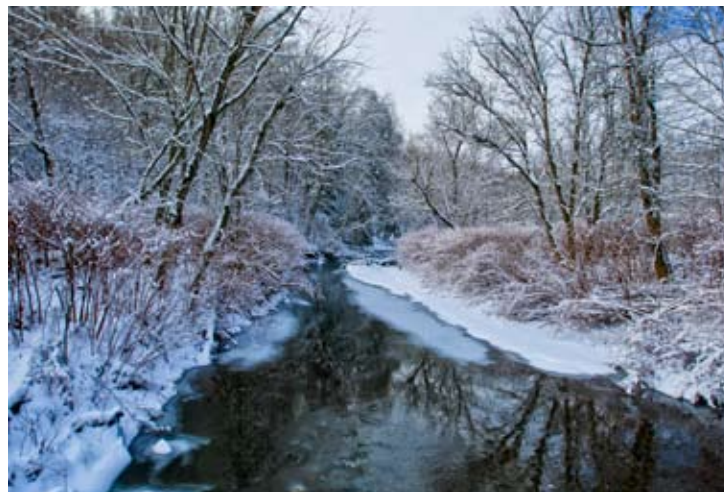
www.runhigh.com

If you are interested in sponsorship or volunteering for our 14th Annual event please send an email to info@bpwp.net.

Race photos available for viewing on our Burgh's facebook page...like us there and follow us on Twitter.

Our First Photo Contest Winner

Congratulations to our first Bi-Monthly MTC Photo Contest winner, Rocky Raco, for his photograph of a stream near the Montour Trail Connector to the Panhandle Trail. It was not an easy group to judge and it came down to about 3 or 4 photos with some good debate between the judges. Rocky's eventually floated to the top and it can be seen in glorious color along with the other submissions simply by clicking on the link at the Montour Trail homepage: www.montourtrail.org. Thanks to all who contributed and we hope you will continue to send us your photos! The second round is now open for submissions. Just go to the link on our homepage to enter or see the article in this newsletter.



Enter Our Bi-Monthly Photo Contest

Everyone is invited to submit one photo between each newsletter. Content, composition, and artistic expression will be taken into account. Subjects might include, but are not limited to, trail users, flora and fauna, exercise equipment, pets, trail structures and the like. The trail should be included in the shot but is not absolutely necessary. Photos must be taken on the Montour Trail. Photos from other trails will not be considered.

The winner of each bi-monthly contest will receive Montour Trail accoutrements worth thousands of pennies and selected just for them. But of course, what are a few baubles compared to the inestimable feeling of accomplishment you will receive from knowing that your photographic skills have finally received the recognition they deserve? Winners will also have their photo published (with their name) in the Montour Trail Newsletter for all to adore and admire! What could be better than that?

All submissions will be added to the trail's photo album on its website and will be subject to use by the Montour Trail Council for publicity purposes.

So email your photo to mtcphotocontest@montourtrail.org. Please include your name and a brief description of where on the trail the picture was taken.

Volunteer Feature: Dave Borrebach

In the last eight issues of the MTC newsletter, we have featured relatively unsung heroes of the trail—people who have made major contributions to the trail's success by managing Friends groups, creating trailside gardens, and constructing and maintaining the trail itself. For this issue we will do something slightly different. Instead we will introduce a relatively new volunteer who has been inspired to invest his efforts in the Montour Trail by the example of those longtime volunteers who preceded him.

Dave Borrebach of Franklin Park started road biking about eight years ago and enjoyed it for a while, until “a truck mirror whistled just past my head one morning,” he recalled. His wife, Margaret, had heard about the Montour Trail, so one day they drove to Robinson Town Center and biked south from there.



“Our first ride took us through the Enlow Tunnel and I was hooked,” Dave said. Compared to his traffic-laden rides in the North Hills, Dave appreciated a level, well-maintained, non-motorized trail that offered varied, attractive scenery and access to stunning former railroad structures like the McDonald Viaduct.

Franklin Park is pretty far from the Montour Trail, so Dave and Margaret, MTC members since 2006, didn't plan on becoming volunteers as well. But on a training ride for a Great Allegheny Passage trip last year, he encountered MTC president Dennis Pfeiffer, brandishing tickets for the Tour the Montour bicycle raffle. A human resource consultant for Hay Group, Dave told Dennis that perhaps he could help with fundraising.

As not many people offer that service, Dennis promptly took up the offer. Since then, Dave has played a key role in developing grant proposals to reduce the funding shortfall on the Library Viaduct rehabilitation project, scheduled to begin construction later this year. A skilled writer, Dave has worked effectively alongside 20-year trail veterans to make our proposal language compelling and understandable for prospective funders who may not have extensive prior knowledge of the Montour Trail.

Since Dave specializes in helping organizations manage their human resources, we were especially interested in what he thought of the MTC in that regard. “I'm amazed that the MTC, with its size and complexity, runs entirely on volunteer support,” he said. “The organization manages multi-million-dollar construction projects and a nearly half-million-dollar annual operating budget without any staff—no paid executive director, no paid office support. Volunteers with diverse professional expertise work together in their own areas of interest, with powerful effect. And it's fun.”

“If you're not one of the hundreds of volunteers already working with the trail, I'd urge you to join us. You'll find a solid and down-to-earth organization, and you will make some new friends.”

We hope to benefit from Dave's experience even though, not having any staff, we are one organization that doesn't need help with its employment policies!

“Mile 0 Trail” Head Closing continues from page 1

Our uneducated guess at this time is that there is a 80% possibility that the project will start this year on April 14.

If the project starts as projected in April, the Mile “0” trail head will be more or less closed from May 27 through October 11, 2014. The Montour Trail website will be updated with the precise schedule as it is finalized. The tentative calendar is displayed below.

Thanks for your understanding and cooperation.

Preliminary Trail Closure Calendar
Breslube-Penn Superfund Site Remedial Construction

Legend:

	Trail expected to be open.
	Trail may be closed, depending of work schedule and specific remediation activities being conducted that day.
	Trail expected to be closed due to physical and potential chemical hazards.

Notes:

1. The remedial construction schedule is based on information available as of March 16, 2014 and several assumptions regarding mobilization date and construction task sequencing and durations. This schedule is subject to revision due to in-field project modifications, unforeseen circumstances, weather and ground conditions, and other factors beyond the control of the Breslube-Penn Performing Trust.

2. All trail openings on non-work days shall be made on a case-by-case basis with the approval of EPA.

Preliminary Trail Closure Calendar
Breslube-Penn Superfund Site Remedial Construction

Apr-14							May-14							Jun-14						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4					1	2	3							
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	1	2
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

Jul-14							Aug-14							Sep-14						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4						1	2							
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	1
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				

MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY

Where Can A Locomotive Get A Drink?

By Bryan Seip – President - Montour Railroad Historical Society

From the 1880's into the 1950's, steam locomotives ruled the Montour right-of-way and they were a thirsty lot. Needing places to replenish their tenders, water stations were spaced along the main line near coal mines and other locations where the locomotives often worked.

Clean water was needed to prevent scaling and rusting of boiler pipes on steam locomotives, thus a municipal supply or treated water was used in the tanks. Local water from streams or rivers held too many minerals and deposits from mine drainage to be used in the locomotive boilers.

Some of the water tank locations can still be spotted along the trail. They have four or more concrete footers for the tank legs, with another concrete square in the middle, where pipes fed in and out of the tank. Many Montour tanks fed a water column placed beside the tracks instead of the traditional tank spout.

Montour Junction (west of Trail mile 0): A water column sat beside the engine house bridge over Montour Run. The water came from both a municipal water supply and a well, so no tank was needed. Locomotives received water and sand at the engine house before moving to the coaling dock.

Imperial (Trail mile 8.5): The original terminus of the railroad in the 1880's, Imperial was home to the Montour's shops and engine servicing facilities until the Montour Junction complex was built in 1900.

Champion (Trail mile 12.5): Locomotives working the Champion preparation plant needed water while they switched the plant. A water column using the plant's water supply was available at the loading tippie.



Fife water tank stood along the main line in Peters Township. Concrete footers for the legs and center column can be found at the edge of the Trail at Mile 31.5. Photo courtesy Gene P. Schaeffer collection

McDonald (Trail mile 17.3): Near the west end of McDonald Viaduct, this steel tank was 24 feet in diameter with a 60,000 gallon capacity and fed from municipal water. Four concrete footers for the tank legs can be found surrounding the Dick Quasey Memorial. This water station was established in 1923 to alleviate yearly water shortage problems at Southview.

Southview (Trail mile 20.6): A steel tank sat north of the intersection of Primrose & Southview roads. Concrete footers can be found in the ditch on the west side of the trail. A locomotive servicing facility at near-by Montour Mine #1 was also supplied from this tank via an underground pipe to a water column.

Hills (Trail mile 29.8): Concrete footers can be found on the hillside outside the curve near the Valley Brook Road bridge. A 16 foot cypress wood tank with 35,000 gallon capacity was installed in 1917. Water was supplied from the coal company's filtration plant along Chartiers Creek. Water from the tank was piped under the transfer tracks and main line to a water column on the inside of the curve.

Fife (Trail mile 31.5): Along the paved Arrowhead Trail, footers for the legs and central pipes can be found at the edge of the trail. This was a steel tank, as seen in the accompanying photo. Around 1917, a locomotive terminal using this water station was planned, but was never built.

Library (Trail mile 36): A 10,000 gallon wooden tank built in 1921 was replaced by a 30,000 gallon steel tank with spout in 1931. Located behind the current Library Park & Ride lot, it sat beside the main line near the Montour #10 mine. It was used by locomotives switching the mine facilities and those travelling the Library Branch to Snowden.

Mifflin Junction in West Mifflin (not on the Trail): The eastern terminus of the Montour main line, where cars were interchanged with the Union RR, who also supplied a water column to service Montour locomotives.

By 1953, all the Montour's steam locomotives had been retired and diesel engines supplied the railroad's power. The water tanks along the line were subsequently retired and dismantled, leaving only their footprints to remind us of their history.

You can contact the Montour Railroad Yahoo group at http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/ There are currently 331 members from across the country. You are encouraged to join. There is a wealth of information about the Montour Railroad at this location and you can pose questions of its membership, from whom you are sure to get an answer. There is also much information at <http://www.montourrr.com>



Water columns similar to this one were used at several Montour locations rather than the more traditional tank spouts. Photo courtesy CatskillArchives.com

Welcome New Members

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

New Members

Cenkner Engineering

Marita Maloney

Benefactors

Dennis F. Carlin

Grant Franjione

David F. Hajnik & Debora B. Thompson

David Hall

Jay & Judy Shock Family

Leaders

Thomas Levine

John & Janet Swanson

Steve & Susan Wesmiller

In honor of Jeff & Laura Siefer by

Carolyn & Roy Yarrington

In memory of Carl Beltz by

Lorie Fuller

A donation was received for the Marshall Fausold Memorial Fund from

Sharon Newman



The winter of 2013-2014 once again provided the conditions for an icy display inside the National Tunnel. The ice at this point in the center of the Tunnel was over 3 feet thick and the stalagmites inside the west portal were over 6 feet tall. Photo by Dennis Sims

I want to help complete the Montour Trail!

I want to join the Montour Trail Council at this level:

<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$50
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<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$250
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