



The Official Publication of the Montour Trail Council

# MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

*Celebrating 30 Years*

Volume 30 Issue 3

May-June 2019

## The Originals: Jack Swisher by Bruce Barron

Of the seven original board members we've featured thus far, Jack Swisher is the third who was already using the trail right-of-way before the Montour Trail Council was born.

But the other two were runners. Jack, somewhat more daring, was tackling the bumpy ballast surface alongside the abandoned rail line on a mountain bike.



Jack installing plates in preparation of welding railing posts to them. Airport Area Summer 1993.

"I was riding some back roads in Washington County and discovered the Montour," said Jack, who lives in South Fayette. "Like a lot of trail people, I enjoyed railroads and wondered where the lines went. It was a rough ride with all the heavy ballast, but it was neat to ride on a railroad track."

After that, Jack's incorporation into the Montour Trail Council is a textbook example of how a fledgling organization can recruit talent. He became a member of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, which provided its local mailing list to Stan Sattinger and Dino Angelici when they were looking for supporters.

"I got something in the mail, so I went to a meeting at [fellow original] Tim Killmeyer's church in Robinson Township," Jack recalled. "I thought the trail idea sounded interesting but didn't stand a snowball's chance in hell of coming to fruition. But I figured, why not give it a try?"

Jack's skepticism derived from the apparent lack of powerful people driving the project. "A lot of trails were being developed by governments at that time, but here was a group of private citizens—some very smart ones, but no corporate executive types who could get people to write big checks, just a bunch of ordinary Joes. But that's one of the things I've enjoyed about the Montour Trail Council. It has shown what a group of dedicated people can do." *Continued on page 4.*

### Inside this issue:

Jack Swisher Western Garage	1
The Prez Sez	2
Friends Groups	3
Paul Mitsdarfer Obituary Airport Friends Work Party The Doors Final Takedown	4
Tour the Montour Raffle Go Green Bethel Park Centrail Trail	5
Montour RR History: Library Viaduct	6
New Members Trail Patrol	7
30th Anniversary Beltway Construction	8

Visit the Montour Trail Web Site at:  
[www.montourtrail.org](http://www.montourtrail.org)  
To converse go to:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/43518292159>

or

<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Montour-Trail/info>

## Montour Trail Council Western Corridor Garage Update by Dennis Pfeiffer

### Pre-Construction Meeting with North Fayette Township, April 10, 2019



This is how the garage looked on 4/29 with the outside structural work completed.

I am happy to report that after 15 years of searching and 5 years of planning pre-construction meeting for the MTC's Western Corridor garage was held on April 10, 2019 at the future garage site. A big thank you to volunteer and former contractor Mark Blum for spending the week of April 1 through April 5 in preparing the garage site as you see shown behind the meeting attendees above. Also, a big thank you to a volunteer for helping with the detailed planning for the building. Finally, a thank you to Dave Wright our project engineer who designed and prepared the site plan.

The pre-construction meeting went well and we thank both our contractor C.B. Structures and North Fayette officials in taking time from their busy days to attend the meeting. North Fayette Township has been very supportive of the garage over the last five years and have expertly led us through the process. *Continues on page 4*



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## Locally Grown

A celebration on May 10 marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1869 completion of the transcontinental railroad. Coming as the Civil War's divisions between North and South were just starting to heal, the Golden Spike marked the beginning of the joining of the continent's East and West that would prove, in the long run, to unify America and allow it to become the nation it has. The sesquicentennial event in Utah made a special effort to highlight those Chinese and Irish railroad workers who had performed much of the very long and difficult physical labor it took to get the 1,800 mile railroad done.

Two days earlier, the route for an east-west transcontinental trail system had been announced by the Rails to Trails Conservancy. By conceptually stringing together existing trails, about half of the proposed route can be said to be done, although everyone agrees that finishing it will take a long time. Nevertheless, it's a good start on a big nationwide trail. From Washington DC, the route is to follow the C&O, the Great Allegheny Passage, the Montour and Panhandle Trails, continue on into Ohio and thence westward, ultimately to Washington State.

A key element of the story is to recognize the value of the local trail groups, who long ago had taken the initiative to conceive of and then build their trails. Especially vital are the people who have worked hard for many years to wrestle these trails into actual physical completion on the ground. It's important that a specific recognition of these folks - like that of the railroad workers - be a part of the wider public conversation. So this is a chance for everyone active with Montour to stop and offer appreciation to those who have laid the foundations of the trail before us, and even more to those who continue work to keep it in such good condition.

In response to those people who saw the news about the proposed big trail system, and express that they want to do something to help, there is a clear and simple answer: "Support your local trail." Memberships, donations, and contributions made directly to the Montour Trail Council are what keep the trail going. Even more important are the gifts of time and talent that, carefully woven together, are working to maintain the trail in fine condition into the years and decades ahead. Keeping our bridges and tunnels, miles of mainline and branch trail, and the amenities all in good shape clearly requires a lot of money and talent, almost all of which comes from local people who appreciate the trail's value to the community, the region, and beyond.

Even though a common observation is that life in general seems exceptionally busy these days, it is still true that we all make time for those things we consider to be important. The Montour Trail has grown and remains healthy only because people believe it to be important enough that they make time in their lives to do what they can to help out. Right now, the Friends Groups are focused on spring cleanup, grass mowing, and early season repairs, all to groom the trail for the multitudes of summer users. Also, the complex issues of operating and managing the trail require a lot of attention year round. The Montour Trail thrives due to its good fortune of so many people to whom it's important. They've figured out what they can do; devoted whatever time they have, be it minutes or hours to the task; and stayed with it for as long as it took. And sometimes, they've picked up the next thing.

With Montour being located between the Great Allegheny Passage and the Panhandle, we are no strangers to the benefits of a connected long distance trail system. Just last week, I talked with two guys from Australia who were on the Montour finishing up a bike trip from Boston, Mass. And this isn't really so unusual; as you all know we get lots of travelers. After all, this is Pittsburgh, which got its start as this country's gateway to the west. The people of this region have always played pivotal roles in big sweeping national initiatives, and played them well. The real news is that we don't have to wait decades and go halfway across the country to a completion ceremony. Right now the many, many good hands of all you Montour folks are each holding a fine bag of golden crushed limestone. Thank you for being so determined to keep such a strong grip on it! Your firm hand, and the gold, are both needed.

*Ned Williams*

## 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 the Montour Trail Office 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 "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 6:30 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 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 (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 and varying locations during warmer weather at 7:00 p.m. Work and cleanup parties on the first Friday and third Saturday of every month at 8:30 a.m. For more information, please call Jim Robbins at 724-941-6132. For monthly meetings contact Wayne Pfrimmer at 724-747-9766 or by email at waynepfrimmer@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 Caucus Room behind the 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 46.6)

Meeting second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at South Park Township Community Room or the Township Library located at the Township Building at 2675 Brownsville Road, South Park, 15129. Work and cleanup parties on the second Saturday of the month. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler1950@gmail.com, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@comcast.net

### The Montour Railroad Historical Society:

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

### Westland Friends: (Westland Branch)

Meeting is second Thursday of the month at 11:00 AM at Paneras Restaurant in Bridgeville located on Route 50. Work and cleanup parties meet at the Galati Trailhead on Southview Road and will be announced. For more information contact Doug Ettinger at 412-302-1993 or dougettinger@verizon.net.

## Airport Area Friends of the Montour Trail

The Airport Area Friends Group of the Montour Trail invites you to visit our trail area from mile 0 in Moon Twp., continuing through Robinson Twp., North Fayette Twp., and Findlay Twp. up to the county line at mile 12.6. Soon we will be able to officially welcome you to Coraopolis with the addition of 8/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile of trail connecting mile 0 to Montour Street in Coraopolis.

We have a strong core of dedicated volunteers. In 2018 they gave over 2,000 hours of their time on trail maintenance, community outreach and fostering relationships with our neighboring communities. Trail maintenance includes mowing grass, trimming, pruning trees, removing downed trees, weed and brush control, as well as resurfacing the trail, filling in potholes, painting gates, staining benches, repairing split rail, and many other projects accomplished over the season. **We always need more volunteers!** The Airport Area is known for their "fun" work parties. Please see the listing provided in the newsletter under Friends Meeting and Work Parties for our contact information.

The Airport Area Friends Group has developed strong relationships over the years with companies and organizations in our area. Last year we were fortunate to have three separate corporate work parties where employees volunteer their time and skills to assist with trail maintenance. This takes much planning and mobilization by the Airport Friends but the efforts are always worth it. In the last ten

years we have had fifteen Boy Scouts obtain the rank of Eagle Scout for their trail project.

Our area also includes two significant locales. The Airport Connector is a 6.3 mile connection to the Pittsburgh International Airport. The campsite at the Boggs trailhead, located at mile 11.5, with its beautiful and colorful gardens is a peaceful stop for cyclists and walkers to enjoy.

In 2019, the Airport Area Friends will focus on two projects that have been on the Montour Trail Council's wish list for many years and are now coming into a reality. The Coraopolis Trail Connection will involve grading the right-of-way, placing a millings sub base, installing 3,850 feet of infiltration ditches and gate and signage installation. Follow the progress of the Connection in upcoming newsletters.

The Montour Trail Council has made great progress in building the Western Corridor Garage that is located near trail mile 6. Upon completion, sometime this fall, the Airport Area Friends will be able to move a large amount of equipment and material from four locations to this centrally located garage.

The current officers are Phyllis McChesney-President, Mark Modispacher- Vice-President, Dennis Pfeiffer- Treasurer and Pete Merther- Secretary.

Stop by and say hello to our members at one of our trailhead meet and greets throughout the summer months!



## Jack Swisher Continues From Page 1 The Last Takedown by J. Peter Merther

Then an accountant at Westinghouse, where he worked for 23 years, Jack became the Council's first treasurer and served as president in 1994. Impressively, he didn't settle for offering intellectual labor; he also became a trained welder specifically to construct gates and bridge railings along the trail. His instructor was early Cecil Township trail volunteer Don Berty.

"The work of accountants is intangible," said Jack, an amateur handyman who built his own house with help from his father-in-law, a professional bricklayer. "When you build gates for a section of trail or put railings on a bridge, you can see the results. It's a nice feeling."

Indeed, Jack can still view his work product whenever he rides the Cecil segment of the Montour Trail, which opened in 1992. He went on to perform welding and installation on bridges along the trail's Airport Area section.

Jack retains especially positive memories of two early fundraising endeavors. In the mid-1990s, the Montour Trail Council negotiated an arrangement with sponsors of the annual Allegheny County Rib Cookoff to provide volunteers who would pour and serve beer in exchange for a financial contribution. Jack coordinated volunteer recruitment for the event. "The first year was a real hassle," he stated, "and I spent a lot of hours on the phone. After that, we had to turn people away because everyone who did it had so much fun at the festival."

Jack was also a lead volunteer for the early years of the Montour Trail half-marathon, arriving by 5:00 a.m. on race day to set up the water stations and race signage.

Ironically considering his profession, the only thing Jack disliked about his Montour Trail volunteer work was filing tax returns. Normally, charitable organizations hire a specialist in nonprofit accounting for this task, but Jack painstakingly mastered IRS regulations for tax-exempt entities and filed the returns himself for the first several years, saving the MTC thousands of dollars.

Now retired and enjoying time with grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Jack expressed deep appreciation for the many people who have kept the Montour Trail Council flourishing for 30 years. "When we started, we were all working so hard that sometimes we would wonder who would ever replace us if we left," he said. "But others have come along and filled the gap, for which I am very grateful."

## Save the Dates

**Friday, July 26:** Twilight Trail Walk in Peters Twp.

**Saturday, September 21:** Tour the Montour begins at mile zero near Coraopolis

**Sunday, November 17:** 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Dinner at St. Joan of Arc Church in Library



On March 25, 2019, Bill Capp and his ageless crew took down for the final time the wood panels on the West portal of the National Tunnel. These were put up to help protect the tunnel from the harsh winters that caused ice build-up. The east portal this year had the permanent doors for the closure saving time and back aches for the crew. The tunnel portals for the coming seasons will have the plastic strips so users will be able to go through for the winter.

We were going to put the pulley used for the raising of the panels into the Montour Trail time capsule but Joe Lodge had other ideas

The contractor has now started the process of measuring for the doors on the west end and we hope these will be completed for this winter

## Earth Day Activities in the Airport Area by Phyllis McChesney

For the third year in a row, employees from the Allegheny County Airport Authority volunteered their time to participate in Earth Day activities with the Airport Area Friends of the Montour Trail. This year the focus was on readying the Boggs Trailhead and Campsite for the summer season. Kevin Gurchak, Vice President, Sustainability and Natural Resources, recruited seventeen employees many of whom were return volunteers from the prior years.

Under the leadership of Airport Area Friends members Ken Gregory, Jim Stauber, Pete Merther, Ed Bashioum, and Mark Modispacher, the volunteers were divided into groups and accomplished a number of tasks on our "to do" list. These tasks

included raking the entire area and removing downed tree branches, spreading mulch and top soil, painting the entry gates and parking



stops, staining benches, repairing the potholes in the entry area and parking lot, and replacing broken split rails and posts.

Kudos to the Allegheny County Airport Authority volunteers who are a hardworking, good-humored, cool gang of people! And you know what – they said they would be back next year!

## Municipality Of Bethel Park Rededication Of Simmons Park And Announcement Of New “Central Bethel Park Trail” by Bill Volbers

On Saturday, May 4, 2019, the Municipality Of Bethel Park and The Montour Trail Council announced that they are working together to make a new trail in Bethel Park, to be named The Central Bethel Park Trail. The course of the trail will be more or less along the former Montour Railroad right-of-way and is a component of the Long-Range Plan for recreation in Bethel Park!

The Central Bethel Park Trail is part of the blue-print for mobility in the community which may include striping of the roads in the BP Industrial Park, for example, and connecting properties along the trail through the sidewalk program, over the next few years.

This is good news for all of us, because proximity to trails has become the second most sought-after community amenity that home-buyers look for and trails are also proven to increase real estate values!

Will the new Central Bethel Park Trail be ready for use in 2019? Or in 2020? Not entirely! But with help from new Volunteers among everyone reading this story, it will be done SOONER THAN LATER! To inquire about becoming a Volunteer, visit our web site at [montourtrail.org](http://montourtrail.org) or call Peter Kohnke at (412)854-1835.

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## Western Garage Continues From Page 1

Construction started April 9 and as of April 29, 2019 the garage outside structural work was completed. The plumber is almost complete with installing the water line, sewer line and indoor plumbing for the bathroom. Finally, the electrician is working with West Penn power in bringing electricity to the site.

## Pre-Construction Meeting with North Fayette Township, April 10, 2019



Left to Right – Tim Williams C.B. Structures,  
**From North Fayette Township** - Dave Lodovico Interim Township Manager, Gary Hamilton Building Code & Fire Official, Michael W Saville Building Code Official, Mike Jones C.B. Structures, Dave Wright MTC Project Engineer

## Tour the Montour Raffle Sales Begin



Announcing the 17th Annual Tour the Montour to be held Saturday, September 21, 2019. Once again, the Tour will start at mile 0 and will conclude with a great lunch and great door prizes at the Forest Grove Sportsmen's Club. More info at [www.montourtrail.org](http://www.montourtrail.org).

And we are announcing the Tour Raffles. Tandem is again donating a bike. Seven Springs has provided a 2 Nite Stay for 2 people. Including breakfast. Pro Bikes and Run has donated an Escape 3 and has included a Cannondale helmet, t-shirt, 2 water bottles and 2 water bottle cages and a kickstand.

And, new this year, Aerotech has provided a Pittsburgh-themed “Win a Kit”. It includes a bike jersey, bike shorts, socks, gloves and hat. The kit is available in female / male styles.

We will be at trailside selling the tickets most weekends. Tickets are priced at \$5.00 apiece or 3 for \$10.00. All proceeds go to the Montour Trail.

Registration for the Tour is now open online at: <https://www.BikeReg.com/tour-the-montour-trail-ride>.

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## Go Green with Email Delivery of Your Newsletter by Deb Thompson

Too much paper lying around the house? Too much stuff in your mailbox? Or do you just want to be a better eco-warrior? Well, one thing you can do is opt to receive your Montour Trail newsletter by email. If you're getting the newsletter by snail mail, it's likely because either: a) we don't have your email address, b) you've expressed a preference for hard copy delivery, or c) you've opted out of email by clicking the link at the bottom of one of our emails.

If you opted out at some point, or think you might have, please send an email to [enews@montourTrail.org](mailto:enews@montourTrail.org) with your email address and name. The Federal CANSPAM law has strict rules for handling opt-outs, so we'll need to send you a “resubscribe” link to get you back on the list.

If you think you've just never sent us your email address, send an email to [MTCoOffice@montourTrail.org](mailto:MTCoOffice@montourTrail.org) asking to receive the newsletter by electronic delivery. Remember to include your full name.

If in doubt, send the email to [enews@montourTrail.org](mailto:enews@montourTrail.org) and we'll sort it out.

## MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY

## Library Viaduct – 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### By Bryan Seip - Montour Railroad Historical Society

One of the signature sights on the Montour Railroad and the current trail is the Library Viaduct, which is now a century old. At 506 feet, it was the second longest bridge on the railroad. Only the McDonald Viaduct was longer.



*A view out the door of a Montour caboose leading a train across the viaduct in 1975 shows the safety walkway on the right side. Gene P. Schaeffer photo.*

In 1918, the Montour Railroad started construction of a two mile segment of track, leaving the main line at the Milton Douglas farm in Peters Township (now the Empress Arabian horse farm). This track ran to the site of the Pittsburgh Coal Company's Montour Mine #10 along Brownsville Road in Library. To cross over the Piney Fork Creek valley at the bottom of the hill, which included Rt. 88 and interurban trolley tracks, a long bridge was needed.

The Library Viaduct consists of eleven spans, supported by ten bents, or vertical steel beam columns. It was erected in 1919 by the American Bridge Company. The spans were deck plate girders, with a timber deck. A deck plate bridge has its main girders built as large rectangular steel plates, with the decking resting entirely on top of the girders. Wooden deck timbers, which look like oversized railroad ties, supported the rails on the bridge. The viaduct had a safety walkway along its length and the sections over Rt. 88 and the trolley tracks were planked over and had chain link fencing attached to side railings to keep any chunks of coal that might fall off the loaded hoppers from dropping onto the traffic below.

While most bridges on the Montour Railroad had a single builder's plate affixed to the bridge, the Library Viaduct has four builder's plates facing over the road and the trolley line, a bit of century old advertising.

The last train over the viaduct ran in October, 1978. It was officially abandoned in 1979, along with the railroad's entire Library Branch to Snowden, and afterward the bridge sat idle for over 35 years.

The Montour Trail Council acquired the railroad right-of-way and started planning for its rehabilitation to open this missing segment along the Library section of the trail. The detour along Rt. 88 and Brownsville Road was a dangerous transition to reach the continuation of the trail near Stewart Road. Work was started in the spring of 2014 as trail volunteers cleared out the brush and trees growing under the bridge and contractors started dismantling the rails and timber bridge deck. A new concrete deck was poured, guard rails and fencing added and the bridge was opened to trail traffic in April, 2015. Additional construction was needed along the trail segment connecting the viaduct with Pleasant Street, with completion and the official trail dedication of the viaduct and trail segment occurring in the spring of 2017.



*This 1973 view shows Montour locomotives shoving a coal train over the viaduct. Houses along Helen Street are in the background. Gene P. Schaeffer photo.*

Coming down the steep grade from Library Junction, the viaduct was the first bridge on the Library Branch. After crossing the valley and curving behind the old school building, the railroad crossed over Pleasant Street and into the Montour Mine #10 complex. Steam engines were an impressive sight as they ventured out onto the tall, narrow bridge hauling a string of coal hoppers going to or from the mine.

In the final years of rail operations over the viaduct, rail cars were shoved ahead of the locomotives due to the poor condition of the roadbed on the branch. Thus the first view of a train shoving out onto the viaduct would be the caboose leading the way with the conductor standing on its platform acting as the eyes of the move.

The Montour Trail now uses the Library Branch line as its main trail, connecting with the Great Allegheny Passage trails at Clairton.

You can contact the Montour Railroad Yahoo group at [http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour\\_rr/](http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/) There are currently 355 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>





## I want to support the Montour Trail Council!

### Membership Level

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- ☐ Benefactor \$250 - \$499
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## 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

Craig S. Atkinson  
Kevin Bellanca  
Tara Bradley-Steck  
Todd Bush  
Richard Gasperini  
Jones Advertising, Inc.  
Christopher Karwowski  
Jon & Joan Kearns  
David Molinaro-Thompson  
Maggie Ocheltree

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Tony Pasquale  
Autumn Priddy  
John Ruffalo  
Carol Sekura  
Charles Westgate

### Benefactors

Dick & Annette Bryant  
Nancy Chauvet  
John & Eileen Kennon

## The Montour Trail Patrol

We are looking for a few good people interested in becoming Trail Patrols:

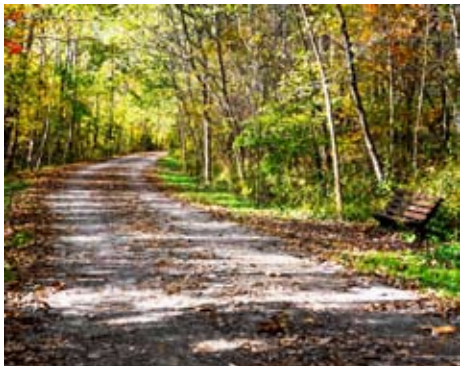
In 1998 the Montour Trail Council (MTC) recruited and organized a group of civilian patrols to patrol the Montour Trail. The clear mission of the volunteers engaged in the "Trail Monitor Patrol Program" then and now has been to provide help to trail users in case of emergencies. The trail monitors also serve to provide surveillance of the Montour Trail and its parking areas. If you wish to find out more about our Trail Program contact Jesse Forquer our Director of Trail Security at [jiforquer@comcast.net](mailto:jiforquer@comcast.net)



Walter Prescott is one of our best Bike Patrols and has been with us for several years.

## Paul Mitsdarfer (1939-2019)

Paul Mitsdarfer of Peters Township, who was featured in the March-April newsletter as one of the Montour Trail Council's original board members, died on April 28 after an extended illness.



Fellow original board members Tim Killmeyer and Peter Kohnke joined Paul's widow, Dottie, and other family members for a memorial service at Beinhauer

Funeral Home in Peters on May 10. The Beinhauer staff member who handled the service, Carrie Stewart of Scott Township, is a Montour Trail member and was deeply touched upon discovering that Paul

had helped to get the Montour Trail Council started. She looked up two scenic photographs that she had taken while biking on the trail last fall, had them enlarged and framed, and presented them to the Mitsdarfer family as her gift of appreciation. Our condolences to Dottie and the rest of Paul's family. One of the photos is displayed to the left.

We too will always remember him and his contributions.



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## **30th Anniversary Celebration!**

Hold the date for the Montour Trail Council's 30th anniversary celebration on Sunday, November 17 at St. Joan of Arc Church in South Park Township, just a few hundred feet from the trail's Library Viaduct. This special dinner and annual meeting will celebrate three decades of dedicated trail building and stewardship.

Montour Trail Council co-founder Stan Sattinger will be the keynote speaker, telling stories of the Council's early days and its achievements. More details about the event will be shared in the newsletter and on the website as they become available.

We have selected a Sunday with no Steelers game, so we hope that all Montour Trail fans will join us for a memorable evening on November 17.

## **Southern Beltway Construction**

Several locations along the Montour and Panhandle Trails will experience construction this summer associated with I-576. Just west of the Montour Viaduct, the construction of the connecting road to the expressway from 980 will cross the trail. Eventually, the trail will go through a tunnel under this road. This road will continue westward cross the Panhandle leading to the intersection of Fort Cherry and Noblestown Road. Construction continues just west of the McDonald Viaduct where the abutments to the large bridge crossing the Robinson Run Valley and the Panhandle Connector has some temporary run-arounds due to pier construction in the vicinity of the Rob Run Bridge.

The I-79 bridge that crosses the Trail and Cecil Henderson Road will be modified this summer to carry 6 lanes of traffic and that will result in a temporary shift of the trail and the building of a safety tunnel to allow trail users to travel beneath the bridges while construction takes place.