



# MONTour TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 13 Issue 3

May / June 2002

## For your consideration

Thinking is the one thing no one has ever been able to tax.

— Charles Kettering

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**Special Insert**  
**MTC 2001**  
**Annual Report**

## MTC Web Address

Visit the Montour Trail web-site at:  
[www.montourtrail.org](http://www.montourtrail.org)

## Boggs to Quicksilver Trail Segment Binds Allegheny and Washington Counties



*Washington County Commissioner J. Bracken Burns unveils one side of the sign welcoming trail users to Washington County.*

The threat of rain did not dampen the spirits of the 95 people who participated in "A Ceremony Joining Two Counties," on Friday, April 12.

And any fears about the weather were soon allayed as scattered rain drops gave way to bright sunshine, and the crowd of MTC supporters, trail users, bicycle-mounted police officers from McDonald and Findley police departments, and various local and state dignitaries came together in celebration of a project three-years in the making.

The western section spur connecting Boggs Road in Allegheny County to Quicksilver in Washington County completed a nearly 18-mile-long stretch of

trail from Moon Township to McDonald. While the spur was finished in December, the opening ceremonies and ribbon cutting was held off until spring. Those who were in attendance were not disappointed with the celebration that was put together in record time by a committee headed by former MTC president Dick Quasey and board member Joe Seibel.

The event took place at the Allegheny-Washington County border, and included speeches by officials from Washington County and State Senator Tim Murphy. As Washington County Commissioner, J. Bracken Burns, summed up so well: "It's a great day in Allegheny County, it's a great day in Washington County, and it's a great day on the border." Others who voiced support for Western Pennsylvania's trail systems in addition to Murphy and Burns were Representative Victor Lescovitz, Representative John Pippy, and Washington County Commissioner John Bevec. Staff members spoke on behalf of Senator Jack Wagner and Washington County Commissioner Diana Irely.

Dick Quasey gave a summary of the history of constructing the western section of the trail, thanking several people in the audience for their help. MTC President Peter Kohnke also recognized the volunteers, "To all those are here and are not, your efforts are sincerely appreciated."

WQED's Ted Sohler kept the event moving smoothly as Master of Ceremonies, and the Montour Valley Post 7714, Veterans of Foreign

*(Continued on page 8)*



# THE MONTOUR TRAIL

## MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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newsletter@montourtrail.org

All other trail correspondence should be  
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business: 412-257-3011  
Fax: 412-257-3016

Newsletter Editor	Astrid Cook
Circulation Manager	Joan Schweiger

## Trail Talk

*from the Editor's Desk*

*How is the Montour Trail like the Great Wall of China?*

No, that is not the lead-in to a joke. However, since I recently had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to stand upon the Great Wall and behold its magnificence, I wondered what drove the ancient empire to build such a structure. Which led me to contemplate how an abandoned railway is turned into a multi-purpose trail for all to use.

Of course, the differences between the Great Wall and the Montour Trail are obvious, not the least being that no one has ever seen our precious Trail from the moon. The Great Wall was built with the blood of those forced into constructing it, whereas the only thing that soaks our trail is the sweat of many volunteers and the joggers that use it. And unfortunately, I am forced to admit that while the majority of people on the planet have at least heard mention of the Great Wall, there are still some people in southwestern Pennsylvania who remain oblivious to our Trail.

Despite the obvious differences, there are similarities between the two. Each path was conceived in disbelief. Can't you just hear the emperor's brother? You want to build what?!?! Yet years later (in the case of the Wall, it was hundreds, whereas with our Trail, it is closer to a dozen), progress was tangible and people who walked along did so in awe at the magnificence of what a few forward-thinking people had accomplished.

Sure, the importance of a nearly 18-mile-long stretch of uninterrupted Trail may pale in comparison to the grand scheme of the Great Wall. However, for us in Washington and Allegheny counties, the fact that the trail has grown so long in a relatively short period of time is miraculous in a microcosmic sort of way.

So, the next time you walk along our marvelous Montour Trail, take a moment to appreciate the historical and architectural significance of where you are. Most of us never will walk on the Great Wall of China, but you needn't go half way around the world to appreciate the wonder of what ingenuity and hard work can achieve in shaping the world around us.

*Enjoy the spring. Enjoy your Trail*

*Astrid*



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.





### May 2002

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

### Calendar of Events

"Penny Day" with Airport Corridor Friends - May 11

MTC Board Meeting - May 20

### June 2002

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

National Trail Day - June 1

MTC Board Meeting - June 17

### Comments & News

Your opinion means a lot to us. Send your comments or news information to:  
 Montour Trail-Letter  
 304 Hickman Street  
 Bridgeville, PA 15107  
 or E-mail to: [newsletter@montourtrail.org](mailto:newsletter@montourtrail.org)

### Newsletter Deadline

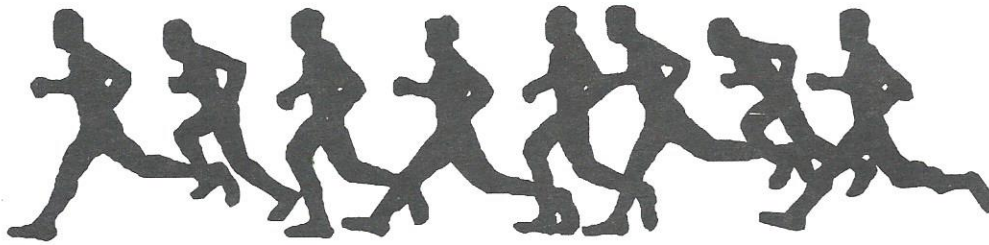
All articles for the July / August Trail-Letter will be due **no later than** June 1, 2002

## Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

- ◆ **MTC Board Meeting**, every **third Monday** of the month - **6:00 pm** 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 pm** in the MTC Offices, 304 Hickman St., Suite 3, Bridgeville, PA. 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 more information and location.
- ◆ **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 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 am**. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.
- ◆ **South Hills Trailblazing:**  
**Friends of the Trail Work & Clean-up party**, last **Saturday** of every month. All volunteers are welcome. For more information call Paul Mckeown at 412-835-6692.
- ◆ **Fort Cherry Events:**  
**Friends of the Trail Meeting**, first **Wednesday** of the month at McDonald Borough Bldg., Council chambers at **7:00 pm**. **Work & Clean-up parties**, scheduled as needed. For more information, contact John Wasko at 724-796-3781, or Joe Seibel at 724-693-2523.



## Getting Ready for IKEA/ Montour Trail Half Marathon and 5K Run / Walk



The IKEA/ Montour Trail ½ Marathon and 5k Run / Walk draws over 1000 participants. This year's event is scheduled for September 14th. The event draws entrants not only from Allegheny County but from surrounding counties, states and foreign countries. It is a major fund raising event for the Trail.

The race takes place in the Airport Corridor area of the trail starting at IKEA's parking lot in Robinson Town Center and proceeding down Park Manor Boulevard before turning onto the trail. In mid-September the foliage along the trail is particularly beautiful. The raffle and awards ceremony is held at IKEA's lot after the events.

With the downturn in business following September 11<sup>th</sup> sponsorship for this year's event could be particularly challenging. We could use some help with recruitment of new sponsors and donors for the raffle and volunteers to help with this event. Please direct any information concerning these matters to by sending e-mail to [jjforquer@adelphia.net](mailto:jjforquer@adelphia.net) or calling 412-999-8553.

*Jess Forquer / Race Director*

## EMAIL LIST CONTINUES TO G R O W

In the first year of operation, our email discussion group has grown to over 200 subscribers.

The group was set up as a way for trail users to communicate with each other and with the Board of Directors. The past few months have seen an interesting discussion about trash on the trail, help for a leader putting together a group ride, requests for volunteers, announcements of events both on the Montour Trail and on other trails, and many general questions about the trail (usually with follow-up answers). The volume of mail on the group is not large – it averages about 5 messages a week. Some weeks it will be quiet, then an interesting question may generate a flurry of discussion.

If you'd like to subscribe, simply send a blank email to [Montour-Trail-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Montour-Trail-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). Yahoo will email you a request to confirm your subscription. Reply to that message, and you'll receive a "Welcome to Montour-Trail" message that indicates you've subscribed! The process takes less than five minutes to complete.

Join us!

*Jerry Agin*

### Lost and Found:

A green backpack with a leather bottom was lost on the Trail near the I-79 bridge at Neville Island around the middle of March. If you picked up the backpack or have any information about it, please call the Trail office at 412-831-2030.

## RADical!

Montour Trail Council is pleased to announce that we are a 2002 recipient of a \$70,000.00 grant from the Allegheny Regional Asset District. Of this amount, \$10,000.00 will fund the removal of the former Montour Railroad span over Stewart Road in South Park Township. PennDOT is expected to remove the abutments to provide better sight distance for an at-grade crossing by the trail of the road. The other \$60,000.00 will fund installing a bituminous wearing course on the flood-prone 2.0-mile section between the Mon-Fayette Expressway park-and-ride lot at SR 51 and North State Street (SR 837) in Clairton.

By the end of this year, the 1 percent county sales tax, paid by residents of and visitors to Allegheny County, will have resulted in a cumulative \$1 billion investment in the region. The impact of that investment is substantial.

The Allegheny Regional Asset District distributes the proceeds from half of the sales tax to the region's public libraries and parks, major regional facilities, and cultural and arts organizations.

Thanks to you, RAD works here, helping to create a community that is vibrant, intelligent and healthy, a region that attracts new visitors and workers. For more information and links to asset web sites, visit RAD at [radworkshere.org](http://radworkshere.org).

*David Wright*



## Welcome New Members

*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.*

### NEW MEMBERS

Maryann Abruzzi  
Donald M Accamando  
Tim Aepfel  
AWIN Management Inc.  
Mahendra Bhalakia  
Junemarie J Brandt  
Bernadette Burton  
David Crane  
Daniel & Ann Debusschere  
Rod Diehl  
Jack Downie  
Richard Fincham  
Michael Finnerty  
Richard C. Gibson  
Larry D Gillham  
John Gombita  
Peter E. Grandillo, Jr  
Gretchen Herda  
Michael J. Hilterman  
Mickey Kalavsky  
Jeanne G. Kaufmann

Ron & Sue Lyscik  
Tom Mainwaring  
Jim McFarlane  
Stephen & Laurie Moraca  
Richard M. Nixon  
Jeff Palaima  
Jon & Dawn Ross  
Michael C Vudragovich  
George R. Watzlaf  
Chester & Julie Wojciechowicz

### BENEFACTORS

Robert Taranto  
Albrecht Powell  
Pete & Janet McGuire  
Stanton W. Bockoven, Jr  
William P. Gillespie,  
Pittsburgh Valve & Fitting Co  
Tim Baker

Membership Chairman - Jerry Agin



## MTC Shares Wisdom

"Tool Time for Trail Builders," the Allegheny Trail Alliance's March conference, included several workshop presentations by members of the Montour Trail Council.

Jerry Agin, the MTC's membership chairman, webmaster, and database manager, shared his expertise on keeping track of and communicating with members. MTC vice president Dennis Pfeiffer talked about carrying out major events on the trail, and Bruce Barron participated in a panel discussion on media relations.

The main conference presentation described tourism developments in Cumberland, Md., which stands to reap significant gains from its location as the southern terminus of the Allegheny Trail Alliance's mileage.



## 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.

<input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT / SENIORS	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> SUPPORTING	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINING	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> BENEFACTOR	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> LEADERS CIRCLE	\$500 + up

- ☐ I wish to become a member of the Montour Trail Council. (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.



## *The Prez Sez:* **What's Going to Happen to the Trail in 2002?**

One word answer: Plenty. Let me elaborate on that a bit.

### **Construction Work in Progress:**

– The Clairton to Large segment (about 2 miles) was partially built last year, and will be finished this year by our contractor, BKG Industries, after Allegheny County delivers additional milled asphalt pavement material. The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission paved a trail next to the shoulder of relocated Peters Creek Road last year to extend the trail to the entrance of the new park-and-ride lot near PA 51.

### **Construction Work starting in 2002:**

– The McDonald to the PA 50 segment (about 4 and 1/2 miles) is scheduled to start this summer. This includes the redecking of the McDonald Trestle, our signature structure.

– The Brush Run Road to Bethel Park segment (about 3/4 mile) on the Bethel Branch is also scheduled to start this summer. This includes rebuilding of the ramp at Brush Run Road.

### **Engineering Work in Progress**

– Mackin Engineering is doing the engineering of the two main line segments of the unbuilt trail in Peters Township. This consists of the segment from the Bethel Park line near Library to Library Junction (about 1 mile) and the US 19 to Chartiers Creek segment (about 2 miles). This last segment includes the rehabilitation of two bridges and replacement of three others.

– A&A Consulting is doing the engineering of some of the incomplete sections of trail in South Park Township (about 2 miles). This includes the redecking of the Library Trestle.

So this is going to be a busy year! As always, the volunteers could use help in guiding and monitoring the construction. Talk to any board member for more details.

### **2001 Annual Report**

You may have noticed this issue of the Trail-letter is a bit longer than usual. That is because we have included our annual report for 2001. While this information has always been available to those members who requested it, this marks the first time we will be taking that extra step to insure that our membership sees the inner workings of the Montour Trail Council.

A great deal of time and thought went into putting this report together for you. Our desire is to include such a report every year in the May / June Trail-letter. We hope you will find the report useful.

*Peter Kohnke, President*

## **Penny Day in the Airport Corridor Area May 11th**

The Moon/ Robinson Friends Group, also known as the Airport Corridor Friends of the Trail, will be conducting "Penny Day" on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Penny Day is a fund raising event run by the Airport Corridor Friends, that combines fundraising with a contest.

Trail-users bring bags of pennies to be weighed at two weighing areas operated by Airport Corridor Friends Volunteers. The donor name is recorded along with the weight of the donation. Those donors whose gift weighs the most are given prizes. Prizes consist of merchandise, gift certificates or in-kind gifts donated by local merchants. A list of the gifts and the businesses supporting this event will be posted along the trail prior to the event.



So get rid of your excess change and help a great organization! Stop by and join in the fun. All money from this event goes toward local trail maintenance.

*Jesse Forquor*

## **Representative Pippy Helps with State Grant**

The Montour Trail Council has received a \$5,000 state grant to assist with acquisition of two greatly needed maintenance vehicles. The grant was obtained from the Department of Community and Economic Development through the assistance of State Representative John Pippy.

The Council's aging truck is not expected to last beyond this year. A new truck will be used to clear sections of trail under development, remove overgrowth and rubbish along the trail, and deliver materials for repair and resurfacing activities. In addition, the Council plans to obtain a tractor with a side-mounted brush hog, in order to carry out mowing along the trail right-of-way and to assist in other construction and repair activities.

Thank you, Representative Pippy and DCED, for your concern for keeping the Montour Trail in excellent condition!

*Bruce Barron*



## Land Conservation Alert

The Governor's 2002-03 budget proposes cutting the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund in half, with a retroactive cut of 25 percent for the current fiscal year. The Governor has already cut Growing Greener funding by \$50 million in the current fiscal year and calls for an additional \$50 million cut in 2002-03.

### What do the cuts mean?

Land trusts received \$8 million in Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Keystone and Growing Greener grants last year. The proposed cuts will ultimately eliminate half of this funding. Land trusts could see funding drop to \$4 million or lower while it is clear that demand is closer to \$40 million.

Keystone and Growing Greener also fund DCNR grants for municipal park acquisition and development, trails, river conservation planning and implementation, as well as State Park and Forest rehabilitation. Growing Greener funds many Department of Environmental Protection programs. All of these programs would see cuts.

The Governor's proposals do more than slash environmental funding in the short-term. A successful attack on the dedicated Keystone funding stream would set a horrible precedent. Keystone would no longer be viewed by policymakers as dedicated and permanent. It would become an annual budget target.

### Why single out conservation programs?

Very few programs received the depth of cutting that the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and Growing Greener did. It appears that the Administration

Program	Proposed Cuts Current Year	Proposed Cuts 2002-03 Year
Keystone Fund--DCNR Share	\$5 million	\$16 million
Keystone Fund--Total	\$7.5 million	\$25 million
Growing Greener--Total	\$50 million	\$50 million

judged that the conservation community would not put up much of a fight. Politically, it was an easy cut to make.

Here's your chance to prove the Administration wrong.

### Background

First, some history. The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act was signed into law in July. The Act directed 15 percent of the state's Real Estate Transfer Tax to the Keystone Fund, establishing a dedicated and permanent funding source for conservation and other programming. That November in a referendum, voters placed their own endorsement on the Keystone Fund, voting in favor of supplementing the newly created fund with \$50 million in bond revenues. This makes the Keystone Fund one of the few if not the only state program to receive overwhelming support by both legislature and referendum.

Growing Greener was Governor Ridge's answer to Heritage 21, a coalition seeking dedicated funding for a bundle of environmental programs. Governor Ridge opposed dedicated funding but made a clear commitment to the legislature and the people to fully fund his proposed Growing Greener through its 5-year life.

### Action Needed

Each of us – individually and as organizations – must remind our political leaders what the legislature and voters knew in 1993: Keystone was established as a dedicated funding stream so that conservation would be supported by the state. Keystone can only be undone with an act of the legislature. Our legislators must be told to protect the Keystone Act. Dedicated funding should also be continued for the state's Growing Greener program.

Please contact your state representatives and senators and ask them to:

- ☐ actively defend the Keystone Act and the Keystone Fund's dedicated funding stream—the 15% share of the Real Estate Transfer Tax.
- ☐ actively promote the creation of a permanent and dedicated funding source for Growing Greener.

We encourage you to meet face-to-face with your legislators. Go as an organization, go as individuals, but go. If you can't go in person, write or call and let your voice be heard.

If you have questions or concerns or need help identifying your local legislators, contact Andy Loza at (717) 230-8560 or [palta@earthlink.net](mailto:palta@earthlink.net)

Andy Loza







MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL  
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## Trail Links Counties

(Continued from page 1)

Wars added a sense of decorum by presenting the colors and leading the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Tim Killmeyer's Invocation asked God to bless both those who built the trail and all who would benefit from its use.

A two-sided sign was unveiled on the county border, welcoming trail users from Washington County to Allegheny County and vice versa. A red, white and blue ribbon was the cut into souvenir pieces by all the children in attendance, along with the event's speakers. Light refreshments served at the trail were followed by a reception at Quicksilver Golf Club, but by that time, the sun was inviting many in the audience to get on their bikes or take a hike along the newest addition to the Montour Trail.

Astrid Cook

