



# MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 9 Issue 6

Nov/Dec 1998

## Trail Tip o' the Month

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Be alert to any changes.
- Trust your instincts.

## Mantra of the Month

- Whatever you are by nature, keep to it; never desert your own line of talent.

Sydney Smith

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## A Hot Indian Summer Festival

By Dennis Sims

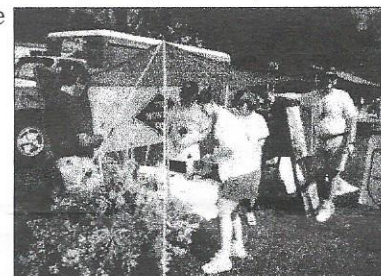
The 11th Annual Cecil Township Indian Summer Festival was held the last weekend of September at Cecil Park and as usual, the Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail were present. Armed with their display boards, they provided information about the progress of the Trail, and made new friends and contacts to enable the success of the Trail to continue.

The weather conditions were outstanding, in fact, too good for the end of September. With temperatures in the mid to upper 80s, the humidity high, and skies sunny, you could say it was Indian Summer. This year's

Indian Summer Festival was dedicated to Don Berty, Cecil Township's Trail Representative and a member of the Montour Trail Board of Directors. Don was unable to attend this year's Festival as he was home recovering from recent surgery. Don is also a member of the Cecil Township's Recreation and Park Commission and has been behind the success of the previous Indian Summer Festivals.

The Friends group had a new location this year at the Festival. They were located at the upper end of the park near the main concession stand next to the fine folks represent-

ing Canonsburg Hospital. Previous years, they were on the other side of the concession stand facing the third base line of the ball field. The most frequently asked questions



Pictured (L to R) are: Dave Hoerster, Hoyt Hall, Annemarie O'Toole, Joan Dristas, and Dennis Sims.

concerned the extension of the Cecil Section and the connection between Cecil and Peters.

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## Bethel Trail construction has begun

By Peter Kohnke

A \$33,000 contract has been given to Ellis Asphalt Paving of Canonsburg by the Montour Trail Council to construct a 0.92 mile section of trail in Bethel Park. The work has started and is presently ahead of schedule. The contract calls for completion by November 15, but a ceremony for the official

opening of this section is currently being planned for the end of October!

The section being constructed starts just south of Clifton Road, crosses Limestone Drive, and ends at the Peters Township line. In spite of the name of the contractor, the surface of the trail will be finely crushed

limestone, as it is on other completed parts of the Montour Trail. This provides a good surface for pedestrian and bicycle activities.

The funds for this construction come from the Allegheny County Regional Asset District by way of the Allegheny

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### MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Trail Talk

*from the Editor's Desk*

Ever since I was a little girl, my Dad always told me to "be observant." And it is still a sage comment today. Being observant means being alert to what is going on around you, paying careful attention to detail. When this is done, safety is assured and trouble is avoided. Let's keep our eyes and ears open while on the Trail for the safety of all as well as for tracking problems of all kinds.

Maybe with everyone watching (being observant), we can find out who is responsible for the porta-potty vandalism that has plagued the area near the 1.0 milepost of the Montour Trail. This vandal can't stand to see the porta-potty upright for more than a couple of days without knocking it over in the stealth of night. (It costs additional money every time "Mr. John" has to make an extra trip to right it and clean it.) And if this weren't bad enough, now this vandal has resorted to ripping them apart, as you can see in the picture.



We need your help to put an end to the capers of the "P.P.Ps." (Porta-Potty-Pushers, as I call them). Anyone having pertinent information regarding this matter, is asked to call the Moon or Robinson Police Depts. or contact an MTC board member or member of a Friend's group and they will forward the information to the proper authorities. Or you can e-mail the information to me and I will forward it also.

Remember, **BE OBSERVANT!**

*Debby*



### Newsletter Deadline

All articles for the Trail-Letter will be due **no later than** December 4, 1999. Please see Page 2 for submitting correspondence. Thank you.

### Have you noticed?

We have a new look! Your opinion means a lot to us. Send your comments to:  
Montour Trail-Letter  
33 Sterling Dr.  
Coraopolis, PA 15108  
Or e-mail to:  
[debho@juno.com](mailto: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.



**November 1998**

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					

**Calendar of Events****December 1998**

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		

**November:**

- \* Nov. 26, 1998 – Have a happy Thanksgiving Day!

**December:**

- \* Ikea Christmas Tree Sale will take place on Dec. 3, 4, 5, & 6. Volunteers are needed. See page 5.



- \* The 2nd International Greenways and Rails-to-Trails Conference to be held in **Pittsburgh** on **June 22, 1999**.

**Friends' Meetings and Work Parties**

- ♦ **MTC Board Meeting**, every **third Monday** of the month - 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 Dick at 412- 859-6864 for more information or to get on the agenda.
- ♦ **Cecil Events:**
  - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **first Tuesday** of the month - at the Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, at **7:30 pm**. Call 412-221-6406 for more information.
  - Work & Clean-up party**, every **third Saturday** of the month - **9:00 am**. Meet at the Storage shed at Hendersonville. Call 412-221-6406 for more information.
- ♦ **Moon/Robinson Events:**
  - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **Thursday** before the second Saturday of the month at **7:00 pm.**, at the All Occasion Catering party room near the intersection of Silver Lane and Clever Rd. in Robinson Twp. Anyone from the communities near 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**. Meet at North Star Petroleum (formerly Robinson Petroleum). Call 412-262-3748 for more information.
- ♦ **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 Saturday** 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 Dick Quasey

## TRAIL SAFETY

Regrettably, no good thing can last forever. The Montour Trail Council and our affiliated Friends groups work hard to assure the safety of all trail users, but a recently reported assault -- the first serious incident in our six years of trail operation -- has led to renewed examination of the importance of trail safety.

One question dominates these discussions: What more can be done to assure the safety of every trail user?

- **Practice safety in numbers**

Local police departments advise walkers always to use a buddy system rather than walking alone.

- **Promote the Trail**

Increased use of the trail helps ensure its safety.

- **Report unfavorable conditions or questionable activity**

If you observe any potential hazards or unusual behavior around the trail, contact the local Friends group, a board member, or the MTC hotline. We are currently forming "trail monitor" teams to attend to such reports.

- **Comply with trail regulations, and encourage compliance by all trail users.**

We intend to do our part by eliminating hazardous condition (whether resulting from storms, natural growth, wear and tear, or other causes) and maintaining volunteer patrols. You can help us keep the trail safe by using it properly, responsibly, and often.

**Editor's Note:** At press time, Dick is at home recuperating from his recent open heart surgery to replace a leaky valve. He continues to make great progress daily. "Keep it up, Mr. Prez!"

MTC WEB  
ADDRESS



Visit the Montour Trail web-site at: <http://trfn.clpgh.org/orgs/mtc/>

## Bikers say: walkers must be safe too!

Last issue's article urging safer biking on the Trail provoked the biggest response we've had to any article in years. Happily, everyone recognized that our proposed solutions (e.g., signs reading "Surgeon General's warning: it is unsafe to pass on the right") were tongue-in-cheek. But beyond that, opinions diverged.

Several MTC members thanked us for asking bikers to be more careful. On the other hand, several pointed out that we shouldn't single out bikers as the problem, because walkers are often the cause of unsafe situations and accidents as well.

We agree. To complement our advice to bikers, here are the most important tips walkers should observe:

- ⇒ Always stay to the right, walking no more than two abreast. If you stop for any reason, move to the edge of the trail; don't dawdle in the middle.
- ⇒ Teach children not to drop items on the trail or stop suddenly.
- ⇒ Keep pets leashed at all times.

One avid biker responded, "What's the point of having the Trail if I can't ride fast enough to get a good workout?" We want to be sympathetic to this concern, but it is hard for the

trail to serve as both a comfortable experience for leisurely travelers and a superhighway for two-wheelers.

Generally, the trail should accommodate moderate biking speeds, but if you really want to keep a faster pace than that, the paved roads may be better suited for your purpose.

We are happy to discover that so many people read our newsletter carefully, and hope to continue this dialogue in the interest of making our trail as safe and enjoyable as possible for everyone.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership Chairman

Jerry Agin

Kass Ambrose  
Mary & Jim Carney  
Mary L. Condeluci  
Deb Cowden  
Gerri & George Cummins  
Dan W. Detar  
Jim & Kris Domino  
Sharon Eakes  
Jonathan Edwards  
John Falavolito  
Beth Ferry, VMD  
Marjorie & Dan Fritz  
Alex Kalenak  
William E. Killgallon, Jr  
James M. Kuzir  
Susan Lucarini  
Magnelli Family  
Robert Mandell  
Cherie Mezynski

Dr. & Mrs. Michael Mihok  
George P. Morin  
Mrs. Carl Musgrave  
Elaine Nakagawa  
Lori and George Palmieri  
Darci Lynn Reilly  
Diane Schmidt  
Steven Sternberger  
Stubenbort Family  
Ed Sweet

*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

**Mary Jeanne Krob**

**Thank You!**

### Festival *continued from page 1*

Others asked about the Panhandle Trail and the recent article in the Washington Observer-Reporter concerning the county's commissioners interest in picking up the responsibility for the bridges.

Thanks to Hoyt Hall, Joan Dristas, Bill Palmer, Dave Lewis, Annemarie O'Toole and Dennis Sims for their time, Ms. O'Toole for the colorful decorations and Mr. Hall for the canopy.

### United Way

It's not too late!  
Choose the Montour Trail as recipient of your United Way contribution,  
Choice Option #3308  
at your workplace.

### Ikea Christmas Tree Sale

As we all know, Christmas is just around the corner and a happy tradition for most of us is the choice of a Christmas tree to adorn the house.

MTC is pleased to announce

that once again, we will be selling beautiful Christmas trees in the Ikea parking lot on December 3, 4, 5, & 6.

Volunteers are needed for all four days, especially Thurs. and Fri. (Dec. 3 & 4). Anyone interested in lending a helping hand, please call Judy Thompson at 412-922-1702

## 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 (day time) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

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 where you work.



## Third annual Montour-Ikea Race another success

By Marshall Fausold

The third running of the Half-Marathon and 5K Race and Walk was held under sunny skies along the Montour Trail on September 12. Four hundred twenty-seven runners finished the half-marathon course and one hundred eighty-one finished the 5K. A total for the walkers is not available.

The first places for the half-marathon went to Andrew Herr of Latrobe (1:11:11) and Cheryl Collins-Gatons of Greensburg (1:23:09). For the 5K, winners were Frank Bauder of Pittsburgh (15:11) and Cindy Grimm of Industry (19:36). Congratulations to them and all the finishers!

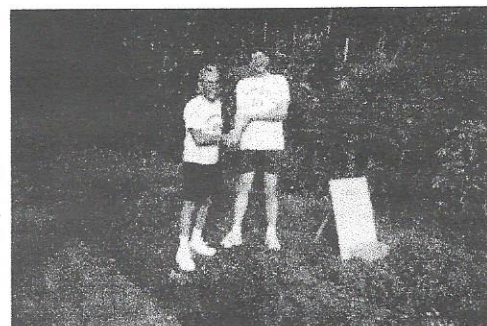
This year marked a change in the administration of the race, as IKEA wished to step back as the race organizer and assume a role less demanding of their personnel

time. The MTC regards the race as the premier public participation event focused on the Trail, and stepped forward to assume the leadership role. IKEA remained as the major sponsor, most importantly providing valuable awards for the winners.

Race organization proved to be a more complex undertaking than we had realized while IKEA had that role! Thanks to a host of our loyal (and overworked) trail volunteers, everything from course certification to distribution of water along the course got taken care of. Space doesn't permit listing of all those who helped - some rising before 5 AM to get things ready, or of all the other sponsors who contributed in different ways. Thanks to you all, it couldn't have been done without you.

Thanks also to the Townships along the route, and especially to their police and EMS forces who helped provide a safe race and reinforced the community aspects of our event.

We look forward to another great race in 1999!



First and second place finishers of the 5K Walk were John Turek (left) at 39:39-76 and John Falavolito (right) at 39:39-79. They clocked themselves, just for fun, even though it was not an officially timed event.

## Coraopolis Kiwanis Club presents Trail with check

John Peter Merther

"On August 18, 1998, the Montour Trail Council was invited by the Coraopolis Kiwanis Club to give a presentation of the Montour Trail to its assembly. This was made possible through the efforts of Don Behnke who is the Recording Secretary for the Coraopolis Kiwanis and a North Fayette/Findlay Friend of the Montour Trail.

Dick Quasey, MTC President, gave an eloquent account of the

creation of the Montour Trail and future plans for its continued growth. This was done through a slide presentation and the ATA's (Allegheny Trail Alliance) video of the Trail from Pittsburgh to Washington DC.

Most of the members were familiar with the Trail, asking questions and offering nostalgic memories of the Montour Railroad.

Thanks to the generosity of the

Kiwanis Club, a donation to the Trail in the amount of \$100 was graciously accepted by Dick Quasey.



(l to r) Pete Merther, Don Behnke, and Dick Quasey with \$100 check.

### Bethel Trail update

Continued from page 1

Land Trust, the Bethel Park Municipal Council, and a number of private donations. Some of this money was matched against the in-kind contributions by a large number of people and organizations that prepared the land.

The land is owned by Allegheny Power who has given the Montour

Trail Council an easement to build and operate a trail on it.

To complete the Bethel Park Spur of the Montour Trail, future projects are:

- trail construction on the 1.1 mile stretch between Clifton and Logan Roads
- ramps on both sides of Clifton Road
- a bridge over Clifton Road.

Also, the connecting piece of trail in Peters Township from the Bethel Park Municipal line to the completed Arrowhead Trail at Brush Run Road will need to be done.

These projects will be completed when funds become available.

For more information or to join the all-volunteer Montour Trail Council, please contact Peter Kohnke at 412-854-1835.



## Trail "Vols" serve beer, wade in to help Rib Cook-Off

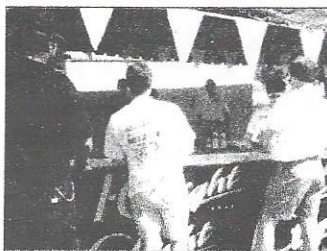
By John Hooton

If work can be fun, leave it to our volunteers to find it! For the fifth year the Montour Trail has recruited energetic hands from all over the area to serve as beer bartenders on behalf of the Mon-Yough Recreation and Cultural Council (MY-REC) to staff its chief fundraiser. Actually, all staffers at the Rib-Off (except police) are from various volunteer groups in the area, from band parents to cheerleaders.

And it becomes a fundraiser for us at the Trail. This year MTC workers staffed well over 600 "man-hours" on Labor Day weekend to help make the South Park stadium event a success. They often emerge tired and well "marinated" from beer splashings at the end of their shifts, yet enjoy working with each other, and knowing they are helping the Trail (which got a \$4,500 donation this year). Some of

our workers are "repeaters" and a few have worked each of the five years MTC has pitched in. A somewhat happy "problem" is that occasionally workers enjoy their first shift so much they want to stay over for the next.

MY-REC, itself a non-profit organization, serves 18 communities in often poorer sections of Allegheny County and offers 30 different free events such as Glenn Miller big band, Maureen Budway jazz, Mellon Jazz site, Caribbean music/food night



MTC volunteers at the beer booth were busily pouring suds, helping to quench thirsts over the hot Labor Day weekend.

and even ballet performances to people who would otherwise not have them available. Summer Wednesday nights in Riverfront Park in McKeesport are movie nights, complete with free popcorn! (There are no commercial movie theaters remaining in town.)

MY-REC created Rib Cook-Off as an event in 1987. Sharron Stepanovich, Executive Director of MY-REC, credits much of the event's success to the fact it is family and food oriented, and is again, non-profit. Measure its success by other "copy-cat" events (Butler, Westmoreland, etc.) that have popped up since, and by contrast are all for-profit.

Our volunteers are looking forward to next year and are glad to know they are helping the Trail and kindred MY-REC as well.

## MTC at Car Cruise

The second annual Car Cruise, held by the West Ridge Community Christian Church in North Fayette, took place at the Enlow ball field from 1-5 p.m. on October 10, 1998.

MTC was invited to return again this year. Pete Merther and Frank Keppel set up the Trail display boards and sold related articles at the event.

Due to coolness of the day, the turnout was less than expected. Those who did come out for the affair

had a great time checking out the classic cars and various displays of many organizations.

MTC was happy to be a participant in this endeavor, offering much Trail information, including volunteer activities, to those who stopped by.

## Meeting Addresses Montour Watershed Issues

By Stan Sattinger

At the second of four planned public meetings of the Montour Run Watershed Planning Project on September 28, residents explored issues affecting the future of the Pittsburgh International Airport area as a place to live and work. Breakout groups dealt with water, land, cultural, and biological resources as well as the economic impacts of tourism and recreation.

The attendees expressed concern that development that has occurred in the floodplains has caused increased frequency, duration, and intensity of flooding. They believe that the removal of forested stream-

bank buffers has had an adverse effect on water quality, and they are concerned about the possibility of future landslides as a consequence of disturbing steep slopes. They feel that publicly funded infrastructure is fostering urban sprawl and that the economic value of open space is not adequately reflected in economic development strategies for the area. They also believe that the Watershed's resources have not been fully utilized for educational purposes.

Gus Drizos of KCI Technologies, leader of the team of consultants who are preparing the River Conservation and Land Use Plan for the Mon-

tour Run Watershed, explained how many of the groups' concerns could be addressed by the adoption of a continuous greenway extending along Montour Run and its tributary streams and cutting across municipal boundaries. The greenway would protect resources that are especially vulnerable with present-day land-use practices. Future meetings will deal with ways in which the greenway concept could be implemented and the impacts that it would have on the area's residents and businesses.







MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL  
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you and yours  
for a  
safe and happy  
Holiday Season!



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