



MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 11 Issue 6

November/December 2000

MTC Web Address

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

Mantra of the Month

- Never give up. Keep your thoughts and your mind always on the goal.

— Thomas Bradley
(American Politician)

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Increased participation in Race events

by Jerry Agin

The Fifth Annual IKEA-Montour Trail Half Marathon and 5K Run and Walk took place in good running weather on Saturday, September 9.

Over 1,050 people participated, a huge increase over any previous year. The registration was so heavy that we ran out of T-shirts, and had to order extras to mail to the people who didn't receive a shirt on race day.

Three events were offered. The most popular was the half marathon, a footrace of 13.1 miles. About 660 registered, and 598 finished. Next most popular was the 5K race (3.1 miles), with about 300 registrants and 272 finishers.

For the non-competitive, there was also an untimed Walk of 5 kilometers (3.1 miles). About 100 people signed up for the walk.

Winners of the Half Marathon were James Hommes and Laura Hruby, who finished in 1:11:56 and 1:27:43, respectively. Each took home an IKEA gift certificate good for \$500. The 5K race was won by David Hackworth and Sandi Fischer, in 15:59 and 17:56. They took home \$150 gift certificates. Runners in second through fifth place in each race received lesser gift certificates. 120 medals were awarded for first, second, and third place performances in age group categories.

New this year was a team competition. This event was cobbled together at the last minute, and most runners heard about the competition only a few days before the race. Nonetheless, 5 teams signed up for the half marathon and 3 teams for the 5K. Each team consisted of 4 runners. Team scores were computed by adding up the number of minutes and seconds a runner trailed his or her age group leader. This made it attractive for runners of all ages and both sexes to compete as a team.

Winners of the half marathon team competition were the "Tuesday Night

Continued on page 6...

Rib Cook-off brings tasty rewards to trail

by John Hooton

For the fifth straight year MTC volunteers have staffed (don't even think to say "manned") the beer booths at the Allegheny County Rib Cook-Off. Core workers, men and women alike, pitch in each year. In so doing, we "do well by doing good" for the Trail. We may work without direct pay, but an occasional thirst quencher and inside

jokes among the workers make the time fly along. We have many repeat workers, year after year, and it is not unheard of for requests not to leave a booth when an initial shift is over.

Rib lovers have long known to reserve Labor Day weekend for South Park's performance arena.

Sizable crowds, chicken, ribs, corn, delicious berry desserts, amply audible guitars and sun come together in a final salute to summer. Even occasional, yet sincere rain is a part of the experience. All this to help Mon-Yough Recreational Council (MYREC) fund its community service

Continued on page 5...



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
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For information: 412-831-2030
For administration and business: 412-257-2328

Newsletter Editor Deborah Hoerster

Circulation Manager Joan Schweiger

Trail Talk

from the Editor's Desk

Hi Folks,

First, I'd like to inform everyone that I have a new e-mail address. It is: Trailtalk@aol.com. Give it a try!

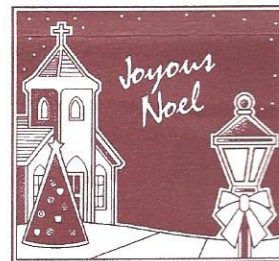
With that out of the way, I'd like to know if anyone has noticed that we have a new beaver family? Their home is very close to mile 3.0, at the Trail access area where people feed the ducks. You can get a better view by following the well-worn footpath to the water's edge. This is by far, their best dam to date. Let's all hope they have better luck with the weather at their new location!

In keeping up with Trail information, I've had several complaints about people not leashing their dogs while on the Trail. It is not a matter of fearing the bite – everybody says their dog won't bite – but fear of the animal darting in front of you, as you bike or run. This can cause quite a serious accident. Please be considerate of others' concerns, and leash your dog! (Also, pick up its poop.)

Finally, as this issue closes another year, I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. Be good to yourselves, your families, and each other. Shower those you meet with goodwill and happiness. Remember, smiles are contagious and worth sharing!

Happy Holidays!

Debby



Newsletter Deadline

All articles for the Jan./Feb. Trail-Letter will be due **no later than** December 2, 2000. Please see Page 2 for submitting correspondence. Thank you.

COMMENTS/NEWS

Your opinion means a lot to us. Send your Comments or news info. to: Montour Trail-Letter 33 Sterling Dr. Coraopolis, PA 15108 Or e-mail to: Trailtalk@aol.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 2000

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December 2000

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Calendar of Events

* Veterans Day – Nov. 11, 2000

* Thanksgiving Day – Nov. 23, 2000



* Montour Run Watershed Association's Stream Walk – Oct. 28 & Nov. 4 – to locate the worst discharges from abandoned mines into Montour Run. Volunteers are needed. For more information, call (412) 787-2376.

* IKEA Christmas Tree Sale – Dec. 7, 8, 9, & 10. See page 5 for more details.

* First day of winter – Dec. 21, 2000

* Merry Christmas! - Dec. 25, 2000



Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

- ◆ **MTC Board Meeting**, every third Monday of the month - 6:00 pm at Chartiers Valley High School, in the faculty lounge. Turn left off of the- Kirwan Heights exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go under the Interstate, and the school is on your left. Call Dennis at 412- 262-3748 for more information or to get on the agenda.
- ◆ **Cecil Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, every fourth Tuesday of the month - at the Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, at 7:00 pm. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.
 - Work & Clean-up party**, every third Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Storage shed at Hendersonville. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.
- ◆ **Moon/Robinson Events:**
 - Friends of the Trail meeting**, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 pm., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the communities of Moon and Robinson are encouraged to attend. Call 412-859-3020 for more information.
 - Work & Clean-up party**, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Call 412-262-3748 for 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 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 Dennis Pfeiffer

Greetings to Montour Trail Council members and friends. I hope your summer went well and included numerous adventures on the Montour Trail.

The summer has been a busy one for the Montour Trail Council and its many volunteers. We are very fortunate in having such a great group. The huge success of the Montour Trail is a direct result of the teamwork and dedication of these individuals. Please join me in thanking them with special recognition for the following major accomplishments:

- The six (6) friends groups who maintain the finished sections and when necessary construct new trail;
- The Rib Cook Off volunteers and its overall coordinator, John Hooton;
- The Montour/ IKEA Race Committee and the race director, Jerry Agin;
- The South Hills trail blazing crew and their leader, Paul McKeown;
- The Quicksilver Bridge Crew and their leaders, Dick Quasey, Jack Peth, and Ned Williams;
- The MTC Washington & Allegheny County Design & Engineering coordinators and their leaders, Ed Taylor

for Washington County, and Dave Wright for Allegheny County.

Another item that I wanted to mention were the three goals accomplished by the Public Relations Committee. A new trail map has been produced and the Montour Trail Web site has been redesigned superbly by Jerry Agin. The third goal of creating a new brochure was much more involved, but is now nearing completion. With the majority of the input from Bruce Barron and Bill Metzger, a new eight page brochure has been designed. The brochure expertly tells the Montour Trail story and will be the basis for a capital fund raising campaign. Why the need for a capital campaign? Well, the Montour Trail has been very fortunate in receiving membership funds for general maintenance and various grants for trail development. (TEA21 and ISTEA federal grants are now being used for the design mentioned above. Also DCNR, Allegheny County RAD and foundation grants have previously been awarded to the Montour Trail.) However, we have been unable to obtain funding for critical capital main-

tenance and some other miscellaneous items. This is due to the grants being designated for development only. Some of the capital maintenance items needed are maintenance garages, a dedicated tractor for cutting grass, a one ton dump truck, etc. The committee headed by Bruce Barron will in the near future be setting up meetings with companies and foundations to tell our story and explain our needs. Our experience has been that personal contacts within these companies and organizations is very helpful, especially in scheduling meetings with the designated decision makers. Your help as members will be appreciated in this major undertaking. We will be contacting you for your input.

Finally, I would like to invite everyone to the Montour Trail annual dinner meeting at the Findlay Activity Center on November 5. An interesting and fun-filled evening is planned. Two well known (deceased) comedians will be presented in a rather unique trail vehicle! I hope to see you there.

Happy Trails!

Pow Wow – highlight of Cecil Indian Summer Festival

by Dennis Sims

The 13th annual Indian Summer Festival at Cecil Park was held under cloudy skies and the threat of rain the entire weekend, but it did not stop the festivities. The highlight of this year's festival was the Native American Indian Coalition of Pennsylvania Pow Wow held during the festival. They had a sacred circle where they told stories and held dances and played music. Attendees could even see several teepees.

During the opening ceremonies, Steve Wasik was honored for his contributions to Cecil Park before retiring. He cleared the area between the creek and the Trail to provide more room for activity. Anyone crossing one of the four bridges over Millers Run, was sure to have seen his hand-

painted wooden signs calling the area, "Sanctuary". Now, its official name is, "Steve Wasik's Sanctuary," which is proudly displayed on a sign erected on one of the bridges, welcoming you to the area.

The Cecil Friends were also in attendance, passing on information and answering questions asked by the attendees. Annemarie O'Toole's wild-flower bouquet from the Trail was a big hit. Many of the festival goers wanted to buy it. Included in the bouquet were asters, goldenrod, snake-root, milkweed, bull thistle, multi-flora rose hips, grasses, and boughs of pine all gathered in an hour or so before setting up the display.

Many thanks to those who manned



Cecil Friends' President, Dennis Sims, has fun as a scarecrow at the MTC information booth during the Indian Summer Festival.

our MTC booth: Annemarie O'Toole, Bill Palmer, Dennis Sims, and last but not least, trail ambassador and inspector, Hoyt Hall, who spent the entire weekend visiting with everyone who stopped by.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Membership Chairman

Jerry Agin

Raymond Bachner
Bernardi family
Curtis S. Campbell, Sr
Thomas F. Crawford
John Davis
Sally Dawson
Allen Flippo
Charles L. Foley
Linda & Jerry Francis
Lois S. Hohman
Bob Hudak & Elaine
Davis
Margaretha M. Ivkovic
Peg Kester
Shank Lakhavani
Eileen B. Livingston
Denny & Kelly Long
Frank A. Lowe
The Lupia family
Mary M. Myer
John E. Nadzam
Iris & Marty Nahemow
Eve Porsching

Albrecht Powell
Len Rowic
Ronald R. Rubenfield
Anna Sekelik
Joseph M. Shaffer
William Snyder
Marvin Sowers
Harry Thompson
Raymond Trageser
Joanne Tyzenhouse
Dr. William Urbanek
Valley Electric
Robert Welsh
Frank M. Zlotkowski

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

Donna M. Panazzi
Charles L. Foley

Thank You!

Rib Cook-off...

...continued from Page 1

needs in the McKeesport and surrounding areas. The Trail benefits from a most welcome \$4,500 contribution from Sharon Stepanovich, MYREC director in appreciation of our services.

So to those who helped at the booths and those who helped as customers at the booths, we say "thanks" and come again next year.

Trees for sale that fund the Trail

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.

Once again, MTC will be volunteering to sell IKEA's beautiful Christmas trees in their parking lot on December 7, 8, 9, & 10.

For a small fee, your tree will be wrapped in netting by our volunteers. Money from this wrapping goes directly to the MTC for trail maintenance.

Help is needed for all four days (2 to 3 hour shifts). If you are interested, 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 (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.

Panhandle Trail ribbon-cutting— first segment in Colliers, W.VA

A new two-lane bridge to Colliers Way and a three-mile recreational trail near it were both officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 13 in Colliers, West Virginia. State and local officials, and residents celebrated the opening of the three-mile stretch of recreational trail starting near Harmon Creek Road and extending to just below the bridge. This is the first segment of the proposed Panhandle Trail.

The volunteer Panhandle Trail Association, headed by Larry Droppleman of Weirton, in coordination with the city of Weirton's rail-trail committee, plan for the 29-mile trail to extend from there into Washington County, PA, ultimately connecting to the Montour Trail in McDonald.

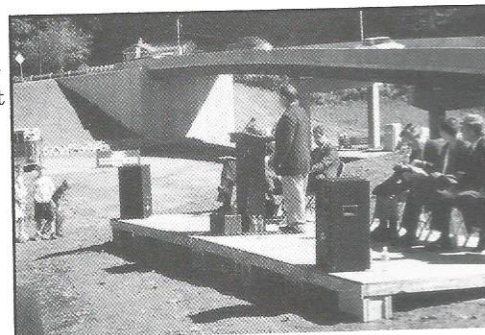
The project was funded by a \$58,000 grant from the Federal Highway Administration and administered by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, and received matching funds from the city park board and from the sale of ballast, crushed rock from the former railbed, approved by the West Virginia Rail Authority, which owns the property.

Weirton Mayor, Dean Harris, said response to the trail has been so positive that the city has found there isn't enough parking space at the trail's starting point to accommodate all of the users.

After the dedication ceremonies, (attended by several Montour Trail Representatives and ATA President, Linda Boxx), the group headed towards PA for a ride on the Montour Trail with State Representatives, Rick Geist, who is head of the Department of Transportation, John Pippy, and Jere Strittmatter, with his daughter, Kristen, as well as Eric Bugaille, Asst. to Rick Geist, Andy Baechle, Washington County Parks & Recreation, George Stark, Columbia Gas, Dennis Pfeiffer, MTC President, Ned Williams, Bill Metzger, Debby Hoerster, MTC members, and Tom & Monica Mantle, owners of TRM Cycles in Pittsburgh, PA.

From there they progressed to the Eliza Furnace Trail for a ride with Mayor Murphy.

It was a wonderful day and a great way to highlight some beautiful trails — especially, the Montour!



Dave Cline, a Weirton councilman, credits trail's development to Weirton & Washington County officials, state Rail Authority, Norfolk Southern Railroad Co., rail-trail committee and Panhandle Trail Association, at the Ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the Panhandle Trail.



The group ride, which started in the Marriott Hotel's parking lot on Montour Run Road across from the Trail, hosted State Representative, Rick Geist. It was his first introduction to the beautiful Montour Trail!

Increased participation...

...continued from page 1

Crew", consisting of Jim Hommes, John Caskey, Brian Caskey, and Mark Hunkele. The 5K team competition was won by the "Boyce Buddies", with Pat McClintock, Jake Lopez, Leslie Dinsmore, and Bridget Kotar.

Complete race results were mailed to all participants. They may also be viewed on the Runner's High website, <http://www.runhigh.com>.

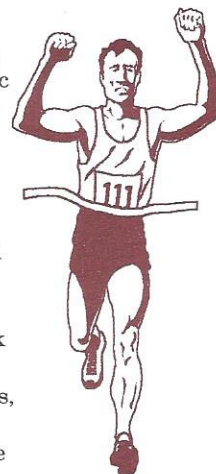
Fourteen different businesses provided race sponsorship, which was a major factor in the race's success. The main sponsor was IKEA, who

provided the prizes and the venue. Other companies contributed cash or goods and services. A complete list of the sponsors and their logos may be seen on our web site at <http://www.montourtrail.org/race>.

Over 100 volunteers worked to put on this race. Traffic control was handled by the police departments of Robinson, Moon, Findlay, and North Fayette townships, and ambulance service was provided by Mercy Mobile Care, Robinson EMS, and Valley. Boy Scout Troop 830, Boy Scout Troop 306, and North Fayette Parks and Recreation worked the water stops. IKEA store personnel helped out with many areas including parking, signage, and registration. And lots of individuals, many of them Trail Council

members, helped out with trail preparation, communications, packet stuffing, registration, refreshments, buses, finish line, timing, and traffic control.

In the end, the race generated over \$8000 for maintenance and expansion of the Montour Trail. We wish to thank all the runners, walkers, sponsors, and volunteers who helped make the race such a success. See you all next year!



Meet the Quicksilver Bridge Crew

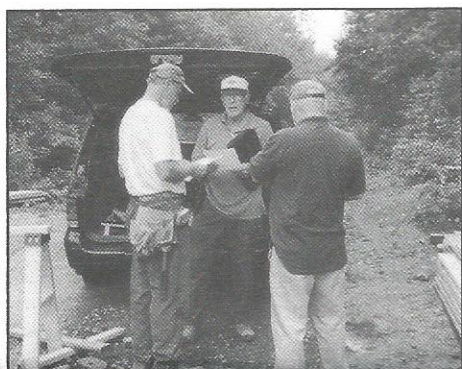
(Pictured below are just a few of our volunteers.)



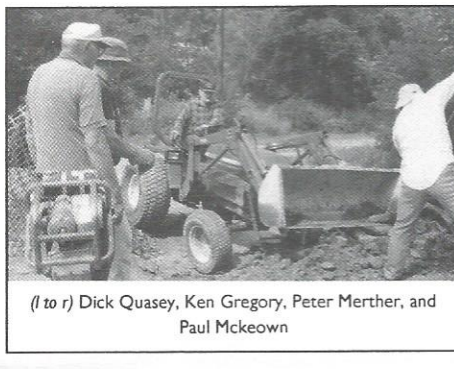
(l to r) Ken Gregory and Mitch Cholewinski



(l to r) George Gerben, Tom Kaveney, and Ken Gregory



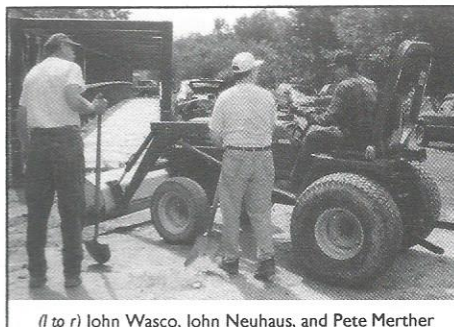
(l to r) John Wasco, Dick Quasey, and Ray Johnston



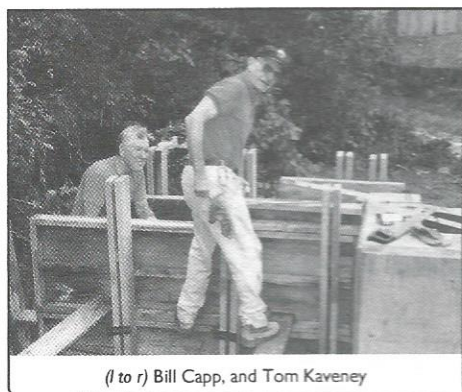
(l to r) Dick Quasey, Ken Gregory, Peter Merther, and Paul McKeown



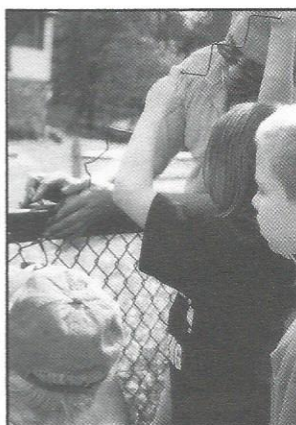
(l to r) Dave Wright, Unidentified Man, Ned Williams, Dick Jones (Mackin Engineering Co.), Ed Taylor, and Todd Carroll (Mackin Engineering Co.)



(l to r) John Wasco, John Neuhaus, and Pete Merther



(l to r) Bill Capp, and Tom Kaveney



(l to r) Ned Williams, Jay Atkinson, with daughter, Sabrina, and son, Jeremy

The Montour Trail Council is very proud of the volunteers who gave so freely of their time and talents to construct and aid in the placement of the Quicksilver Bridge in Washington County. This monumental achievement proves that great things can be accomplished with concentrated effort, hard work, and dedication toward a common goal. Herein is a listing of these much appreciated individuals.

Those working every Wed. and/or Sat. from April 1 – August 9, 2000:

Jack Peth, Dick Quasey, George Gerben, Tom Kaveney, Mitch Cholewinski, Ken Gregory, Ed Ritter, Jerry Bates, Ed Taylor, Pete Merther, John Wasco, Bill Sulkosky, Jay Atkinson, Bill Capp.

Frequent Volunteers:

Ned Williams, John Neuhaus, Dave Wright, Ray Johnston, Andy Glaid, Marshall Fausold, John Hooton, Paul McKeown, Dick Kiser, Stu Young, Dennis Pfeiffer, Hal Hoover, Mark Imgrund, Milt & Drew Danver.

Others that assisted:

Stever Schotting, Ted Weidner, Stan Sattinger, Andy Scrader, Frank Kappel, Tim Killmeyer, Hoyt Hall, Ford Shankle, Peter Kohnke, Joe Boward, Bernie Shaw, Greg Orient.

Traffic Control assistance on the day of bridge placement:

Connie & Garry Vargo, Virginia & Roger McElhaney, Ted Donnelly, Anna Sekelik, Earl Petrucci, Dave Wasco, Ed Williamson, Jason Krammer.

Many thanks to all of you!



(l to r) Jack Peth, Bill Sulkosky, Tim Killmeyer, Marshall Fausold, Peter Merther, and Dennis Pfeiffer



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA 15228-0866

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Do you know this man?

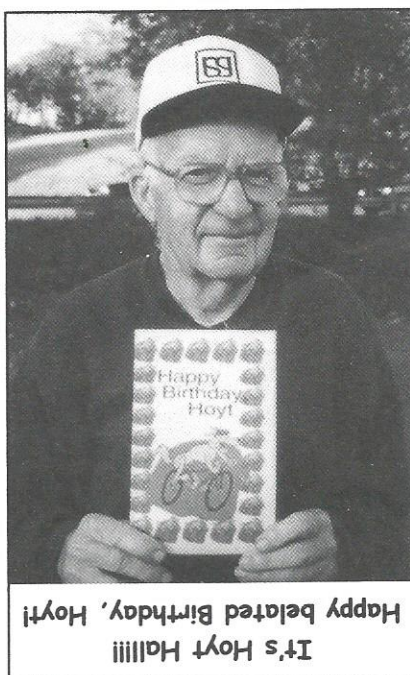
He recently celebrated his (?) birthday in October; is an MTC Board member from Cecil; & an avid Trail-user.

Our sources tell us that he has logged 2,506 miles of biking on the Montour Trail this year alone.

Outstanding!

Who is he?

(The answer is hidden under the picture at the right.)



PAGE 8

First Annual M & M Century Ride – a sweet trip

by Paul Mckeown

The first annual McKeesport & Meyersdale Century Ride took place this last summer on the weekend of July 15 & 16. This event was a first of its kind for this area. Bicyclists rode a relatively easy hundred miles on flat or downhill trails over two days.

Event participants received a lot for their \$99 entrance fee. Riders gathered in McKeesport, where they were provided garage parking for their cars. They and their bikes were transported to Meyersdale, and their camping gear was transported to Camp Carmel, a Baptist church camp located 8 miles north of Ohio-pyle, very close to the halfway point of the ride. Upon arrival in Meyersdale, participants were provided a pancake and sausage breakfast inside an historic train station. This delicious breakfast was served by the same organization that runs the Pennsylvania Maple Festival. It was the first of three great meals

and two snacks that riders received trail-side on each day of the ride.

Most of the first day's ride was on the Allegheny Highland Trail. This trail follows the Casselman River and its signature landmark is the Salisbury Viaduct, a 2000 foot long railroad trestle recently converted to trail use by the addition of a concrete deck and steel railings. Lunch was at a picnic shelter at the Army Corps of Engineers recreational area in Confluence, and dinner was served at Camp Carmel along the Yough River Trail.

Although most of the participants were caught in a 20 minute downpour near the end of the first day's ride, hot showers and a catered pasta dinner awaited them. The riders had Camp Carmel all to themselves, and the atmosphere around the campfire was celebratory. Riders slept in their own tents, or in two huge army



tents provided by ride sponsors. Riders in their own tents were spared from the snoring present in the army tents, but everyone heard the first one or two trains that passed by on the other side of the Yough river that night. In the morning, riders loaded their belongings on the truck, had breakfast at the campground, and headed out onto the trail. Lunch was served in a picnic shelter in Cedar Creek Park, and dinner was served at the end of the ride in McKeesport.

Riders rode at their own pace in small groups or by themselves. R & R Bike shop mechanics traveling by pickup truck on parallel roads shadowed the riders and helped with mechanical problems at the trailheads. (For information about the second annual M & M Century ride, consult the ATA web page or the Yough River Trail North web page in the Spring of 2001.)