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MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

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Groundbreaking Held for J.R. Taylor Bridge in Bethel Park by Tom Prezel



J.R. TAYLOR MEMORIAL BRIDGE

It was a beautiful, sunny day in Bethel Park when the Montour Trail Council held the groundbreaking ceremony for the J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge, on Saturday, October 16. A crowd of 200 people were present for the ceremony.

The "Help Bridge the Gap" sign that has stood on Clifton Road, near McMurray Road in Bethel Park for a decade, won't be there much longer. The long-awaited bridge intended to carry the Montour Trail over Clifton Road will soon be taking shape.

Bethel Park, the Montour Trail Council, and the Taylor family have been raising money to build a bridge for the last six years. This event was cause for celebration by J.R. Taylor's friends and loved ones, who brought this town together for a loving purpose. With this handsome bridge, the Montour Trail will fill a missing link, and J.R. Taylor's friends and family will find a reason to smile.

J.R. Taylor was an ironworker for his family's business, Century Steel Erectors, until he died in a 2004 accident. His company and the Taylor family have devoted themselves to furthering the completion of this bridge project in his memory.

The event speakers represented the many parties who have helped to assemble the funds for this approximately \$1.1 million bridge project. They included U.S. Congressman Tim Murphy, State Senator John Pippy, State Representative Matt Smith, Allegheny County Councilman Vince Gastgeb Bethel Park Councilman Jim Hannan, and Pat Taylor, the mother of J.R. Taylor, for whom the bridge is named. The Master of Ceremony was Peter Kohnke, the President of the Friends of the Montour Trail in Bethel Park. *continues on page 4*

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Montour Trail Receives Marcellus Money by Mark Imgrund

In early 2009, the Montour Trail Council was contacted by a few of the companies leasing Marcellus gas rights in southwestern Pennsylvania about leasing the gas rights under the trail in Washington County. The MTC Board, after carefully considering the matter and evaluating the best course of action for the trail and our users, decided that if we could be guaranteed that there would be zero negative impact on the trail, we should pursue the matter. Two of the companies who approached us were selected to negotiate with and investigate the possibilities further.

An ad hoc committee, comprised of Charlie Beaumariage, Mark Imgrund, Dave Oyler, and Peter Kohnke, performed considerable research regarding many factors, and recommended Range Resources as the best choice for the MTC. After more than a year of negotiating, consulting with attorneys, and making certain that the leases included absolutely no surface rights that might impact the trail, earlier this year the board unanimously voted to lease Marcellus gas rights under 180+ acres of the MTC's property in Washington County. Signing the lease was the first step, at which time Range Resources had to do several months work of title searches to establish those parcels where the MTC held the appropriate gas rights.

In October, the MTC received the first check from this lease, what is commonly referred to as the "bonus", but which is really a 5-year paid-up lease payment, in the amount of \$511,000.00. The MTC board has already voted to appropriate \$50,000.00 of this to the trail endowment fund, and with several upcoming trail construction projects that are likely to be in need of capital funds, is holding the rest in reserve. Future board actions will determine where the rest of this money can best be spent to leverage our grant dollars and make the most positive impact to trail users.

In coming years, it is expected that portions of trail property (several thousand feet below the surface) will become part of future Marcellus drilling units. If the resulting wells are as productive as those already drilled have been, the MTC stands to share in gas royalties which could easily amount to several times the initial payment we've already received. The board is aware of some recent concerns being leveled at the Marcellus gas industry in southwestern Pennsylvania, but is confident that the MTC's negotiated lease protects the interests of our trail while providing considerable financial support for future trail construction and maintenance activities.

Visit the Montour Trail Web
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www.montourtrail.org

To Converse, join the Yahoo
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[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/
Montour-Trail/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Montour-Trail/)



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The Annual Meeting

The Montour Trail Council held its 21st Annual Meeting and Dinner on Saturday, November 13 at the Cecil #3 Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall. There were about 70 members in attendance who enjoyed a buffet dinner catered by the Burgh's Pizza and Wings. The business part of the meeting consisted of the election of the new board members. Ned Williams and Dennis Sims are returning for another 3 years and Bruce Barron returns after a long absence. Dave Oyler returns after the mandatory one year rest period, and Tom Perzel will bring a fresh view to the Board as the newbie.

REI store managers, Ron Rodriguez of the South Side store and Paul Lovgren, of the Settlers Ridge store, presented a check for \$5000 that was put towards the resurfacing of the Cecil Section of the Trail between Hendersonville and the National Tunnel.



Frank Ludwin, Charlie Beaumariage, Roger McElhany, Tom Perzel, Mark Imgrund were recognized for volunteering much of their

summer on the reconstruction of the Trail from the McDonald Viaduct to Quicksilver, including the parking area at Quicksilver. Frank received another dump truck to expedite the resurfacing work to haul the crushed limestone. Project Manager Bill Capp was recognized in absentia, as were the many other volunteers who spent time working on this much-needed project.



The entertainment for the evening was Tom Breiding of Peters Township who performed several of his songs that were written to tell the industrial history of the local region. He finished his performance with a sing-along to *The City of New Orleans*.

The Prez Sez will return in the next issue.

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 Ned at 724-225-9856 for more information or to get on the agenda.

Cecil Friends:

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

Airport Area Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the communities of Moon, Robinson, North Fayette, and Findlay is encouraged to attend. Call 412 264-6303 for more information. Work and cleanup party, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. Call 412 262-3748 for more information and location.

Bethel Park Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. Work and cleanup party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 8:30 a.m. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

South Hills Friends:

Meeting second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Jefferson Hills Borough Building. Work and cleanup parties scheduled and advertised as needed. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler@verizon.net, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@comcast.net

Fort Cherry Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Bldg., Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. Work and cleanup parties, scheduled as needed. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

Peters Township Friends:

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

The Montour Railroad Historical Society:

The newest Friends group. For more information send email to mrhs@montourrr.com.

Now you see it, Now you don't.



The Burnside Road Bridge in Cecil Township was the last Montour Railroad Bridge that the MTC was ordered to raze in the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission's order of 2001. The bridge, shown above (looking west) before demolition and with the project nearly complete (below) at the end of October, is on the undeveloped Muse Branch of the Montour Trail which is hoped to be a completed section of the trail some day. Stewart Contracting, Inc. of Cecil performed the work, and Mark Imgrund was the MTC project manager. Funding for the \$25,000 project came out of MTC general funds.



The next deadline for newsletter article submissions will be Monday, January 10 at midnight. Thanks!

Beginning with the January-February 2011 issue, the newsletter will be featuring the Friends Groups starting at mile 0 and heading for mile 46. First off, the Airport Friends.

J.R. Taylor Bridge continues from page 1

Montour Trail Council president Ned Williams expressed his appreciation for the assistance from many government bodies that has moved this project forward, but especially for the tireless efforts of the Taylor family members who have made bridging this gap their passion.

The bridge will complete the 2.7-mile Bethel Park branch of the Montour Trail, which has its northern terminus near Irishtown and Logan Roads, and connects with the Arrowhead Trail and the main line of the Montour Trail in Peters Township.

Actual bridge construction will begin later this fall, with an anticipated completion date of November 2011.

Pat Taylor concluded by inviting the assembled crowd to return when the bridge is completed next November by saying, "See you on the bridge!"



Groundbreaking Ceremony. Left to Right Jim Hannan, Peter Kohnke, Matt Smith, Vince Gastgeb, Pat Taylor, Tim Murphy, John Pippy, Ned Williams and Donn Taylor. Hidden in the scene is Mark Blum.

Scenes from the 15th Annual Ikea 1/2 Marathon, 5K and Walk



8th Annual Tour The Montour – What a Beautiful Day! by Sam Hvitfelt, Ride Director

For those of you who could join us, the Eight Annual Tour the Montour on Saturday, September 25, 2010 was a stunning day! The weather could not have been more perfect, with sunshine and warm temperatures, it was a joy to participate, cheer and volunteer. Kudos to all the brave souls who climbed to the top of the hill in our new King and Queen of the Mountain Challenge.

The 8th Annual Tour blew the doors off our prior attendance numbers – 475 participants (another record year – 2009's Tour had 333 participants)! Thanks to our wonderful group of volunteers and sponsors, riders were well-supported - from parking their car in the wee, dark hours of the morning to enjoying a tasty variety of lunch items after the ride (good luck finding another organized local bike ride that serves ribs and haluski). This was our first year hosting the lunch at Brothers Grimm at Mile 3 and it was a big hit! In fact, our sponsors Brothers Grimm, The Cooked Goose Catering Company, Original Shake and Twist, Mediterra Bakery and Anthony's Original Wholesale Produce kept everyone's energy levels up with their yummy food. Again this year, the Enlow Station ice cream shop provided free cones for riders who pedaled out to Mile 8 and beyond – a treat no other local ride can boast.

Tim Killmeyer's Collectors' Edition 8th Annual Tour T-shirts were extremely popular and SAFE this year !! To be sure, no rider sporting one of this year's shirts will have trouble being spotted on the trail or on the road – we want participants to be safe wherever they roam. Again, shirts were only guaranteed for pre-registered participants, so there is distinct benefit for registering before the deadline.

We cannot thank our generous sponsors enough – but we can certainly try. Many thanks for their financial support go out to our wonderful title sponsor Thermo Fisher Scientific, and our presenting sponsors Brothers Grimm, REI and WYEP 93.1FM. Additional and much needed support came from our sponsors Huntington Bank, Chairman of the Boards, Gordon's Terminal Service, Holy Trinity Knights of Columbus, Pittsburgh Bottle Shop, AeroTech Designs, Somma Funeral Home, Park West Supply, Signal Graphics, and Wojanis Hydraulic Supply. You'll find the names of all fantastic sponsors proudly emblazoned on our T-shirts.

Please don't forget to mark your calendars for the 9th Annual Tour the Montour on September 24, 2011 – the King and Queen of the Mountain Challenge will be back again next year if you are feeling up to it.

On behalf of the Tour The Montour Planning Crew (Linda D'Angelo, Tim Killmeyer, Dennis Pfeiffer, Don Thobaben, Charlie Beaumariage and Mark Imgrund), we'd like to thank all of the 8th Annual Tour's volunteers, sponsors and participants !! A special thanks goes out to Linda D'Angelo, who has been part of the backbone of this team for many years – Linda will be stepping down from the committee in 2011. For anyone interested in joining our merry throng in planning this event, we meet once per month starting in April up until the event – please be sure to let us know if you can help.

Thanks to all who rode, volunteered and sponsored the Tour the Montour this year. We'll see you all next September!

Riders Challenge Mountain and WIN!

As part of the Annual Tour the Montour Bicycle Ride, this year the organizers put together a new event - the first annual King and Queen of the Mountain Challenge. About a mile and a half into their ride on the trail, participants in the Tour were given a option to be timed up Hassam Road, a steep (8% average grade) 7/10 of a mile hill that goes up into Moon Township. Most of the riders tried it just to challenge themselves but a number of them were vying to win one of the King (or Queen) of the Mountain cycling jerseys designed by local bike clothing manufacturer, Aero Tech Designs (www.aerotechdesigns.com) of Coraopolis. The man and woman with the fastest times up the hill each won one of the custom jerseys made just for the event. The winner in the female division was Beth Currie of Laughlintown, PA with a time of 5:31:39. Brandon Pauls of Washington, PA was the King of the Mountain with a time of 4:24:60. Congratulations to all who conquered the mountain, no matter what your time. We hope to see you again next year!

The top 30 riders and their times are listed below.

Brandon Pauls	4:24:60	William Bradley	6:35:69
Mike Hollowniczky	4:51:54	David Disheroon	6:37:10
Bill Orr	4:59:34	David Jenkins	7:14:55
Sam Eaton	5:00:59	(Dave was 1st recumbent... no prize...just braggin' rights!)	
David Lewis	5:07:94	Edmund Nusser	7:27:91
Adam Bemis	5:09:27	Paul McKeown	7:27:91
Mike Stanton	5:22:72	Gabe Engel	7:45:10
Sean Kelly	5:27:48	Ned Williams	7:54:61
Beth Currie	5:31:39	Steve Westenzweig	8:31:55
Teresa Gallagher	5:37:91	Mike Spataro	8:38:68
Mike Helbling	5:37:92	Rich Blaskwicz	8:52:17
Bruce Hall	5:41:87	Barbara Richardson	10:40:35
Kelly Stenger	5:43:53	Frank Leppek	10:43:12
Barry Tucker	6:19:89	Dolly Stengel	10:52:73
Jay Carroll	6:23:61	Eldon Fryer	11:02:22
Dave Hurst	6:28:49		



Theresa Gallagher preparing to start the climb

MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY BY BOB CIMINEL COPYRIGHT 2010

Montour No. 9 Mine, McAdams, PA

Moving northwest on the Montour Trail (westward on the Montour Railroad) from Gilmore Junction (Trail Milepost 21.5), we pass Southview, Primrose, and across the McDonald Viaduct as we parallel PA Route 980 to McAdams (Trail Milepost 15.5), a cluster of former miners' houses that served the Pittsburgh Coal Company's Montour No. 9 mine.

The homes at McAdams are separated into two groups. One cluster is located where the Trail crosses Route 980; the second is farther south near the intersection of PA 980 and North Branch Road. According to an article in the Pittsburgh Press, written on May 19, 1931, "Montour No. 9 is a Pittsburgh Coal town. The mine is a large one. It is closed completely. There is a section of the town where the white miners live with their families. There is another section where Negroes live. Both sides of the town are without work. The company is trying to give work to all, a few days. The company store – the Federal Supply Company – is lending aid. Miners who have no work are allowed credit."

The mine entries for Montour No. 9 passed beneath the highway. As late as 1970, a huge slate pile still existed on the other side of Route 980. Robinson Coal Company reclaimed the former mine dump around 2002. The only surviving remnant of Montour No. 9 is a concrete abutment on the west side of the highway that marks the location of the mine entry.

The tippie and other surface structures for Montour No. 9 did not come on the scene until sometime after 1914 when the Montour Railroad completed the Mifflin Extension. Up until that time the area was known as the Shaw Mine and is still identified as such on topographic maps. Coal from the Shaw mines was shipped on the Pennsylvania Railroad Panhandle Division's Midway and Oakdale Branch, which connected to the Panhandle main line at Midway, PA on the Panhandle Trail 2.2 miles west of McDonald.

The M&O Branch was originally built by the Shaw Coal Company when it opened the Shaw mines. The Pittsburgh Coal Company took over the M&O Railroad in 1902 when it negotiated a 40-year lease with the Shaw Coal Company. The line became the Panhandle M&O Branch shortly thereafter.

The lease of the Shaw Mine was important enough to rate a column in the January 8, 1902 edition of the New York Times. "The property, which lies in the Pan Handle district, contains 4,200 acres of the finest thin vein Pittsburg seam coal and has five large shafts with a capacity of 1,000,000 tons a year. In addition to the mining property the Pittsburg Company also secured the Midway and Oakdale Railroad, a short line which connects the mine with the Pan Handle Road, and will give the large company an independent outlet for the general market."

As with other Pittsburgh Coal Company mines serviced by the PRR, coal shipments were soon diverted to the Coal Company's subsidiary, the Montour Railroad, as soon as the Mifflin Extension was completed.



When the new tippie was opened on the Montour Railroad, the Montour No. 9 mine began mining eastward into the farmlands on the other side of Route 980. Extensive workings existed, which necessitated a trestle across Donaldson Road to allow mine trains to transport coal from the northern sections of the mine to the tippie.

During its last year of operation (the mine closed in 1954), Montour No. 9 produced 244,828 tons of coal. As with most mines in southwestern PA at that time, coal was being phased out for home heating and the post-war economic downturn affected the majority of coal-consuming industries. With older mines, such as Montour No. 9, the distance between the working face and tippie made continued operations marginal at best.

This is the only photo of Montour No. 9 mine the author has been able to locate after an exhaustive search of over 4,400 images of coal mines and tipples. The view is toward the north with Route 980 on the right and the Montour Railroad main track on the left. The bridge in the background no longer exists.

Bob Ciminell is the founder of the Montour Railroad Yahoo group http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/ There are currently 300 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.

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

Joyce Alper
Gay Canough
John Chiotti
Marc & Barbara Harrold
Kermit Hartland
Peter Ivancic
Kathryn Klaber
Jose Oliveira
Siddharth Pant
Shawn & Karen Reed
Connie Scotti
John Shaffer
Lisa Tarr
Barbara & Edward Thimons
Kristina Watts
Michael Yoon

Benefactors

Richard & Patricia Barnes
Greg & Juliann Brzozowski
Marshall Fausold
Dennis J. Lesko
Irene & Keith McAllister
Pete & Janet McGuire
Gerard Myers
Gerald E. Rhine
John Wasco
Helge H. Wehmeier

Leaders

Aldo Angelo
John & Berenice Hooton
Wayne & Cindy Pfrimmer

New Rule Signs in Cecil



Grandon stands besides his new sign at the Kurnick Trailhead

Grandon Youghans is the latest Eagle Scout candidate to complete his project on the Cecil Section of the Montour Trail. Grandon is a member of BSA Troop 1369 from which several Eagle candidates completed their projects on the Trail. He is a sophomore at Canon McMillan High School and a resident of Cecil Township.

Grandon's project was to construct and install the framework for the new rule and map signs on the Cecil Section. The signs were installed at the Kurnick, McConnell, Ridgewood, Cecil Park and Galati Trailheads. These signs

replaced the rule signs that have stood in place since the Cecil Section was open in October, 1992.

Grandon had his materials donated by Allegheny Millwork and the sign inserts were purchased the Montour Trail Council. The frames were installed Halloween Weekend with the signs inserted the first weekend in November. Grandon will be one of six Eagle Scouts from his troop to be presented their rank of Eagle in a Court of Honor ceremony to be held on December 11.

I want to help complete the Montour Trail!

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Leader's Circle	\$500+

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and Happy
New Year

