



MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 14 Issue 5

September/October 2003

For your consideration

To be a great champion you must believe you are the best. If you're not, pretend you are.

Muhammad Ali

Inside this issue:

IKEA—Montour Trail Half-Marathon and 5K Walk / 5K Run Preview	1
Trail Talk MTC Contact Information	2
Friends' Meetings and Work Parties Events Calendar Help Wanted	3
Construction Report: Painting Bridges at Papp and Glass Roads	4
More on the IKEA Race: Help Wanted Meet Ellen Douglas, PR Liaison at IKEA	5
Allegheny County Rib Cook-Off "Trestlefest" at Hand First Ever "Tour the Montour" Bike Ride	6
President's Message Welcome New Members Membership Information	7
Trail Map Meet Our Newest Board Member	8

MTC Web Address

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

IKEA 8th Annual Event Off and Running

The 8th Annual IKEA – Montour Trail / Half Marathon and 5K Run/5K Walk will be held on Saturday, September 13, 2003. This year's event has many new and exciting changes in store.

New this year is our Race Registrar, Laura Orr. Laura has taken on this job from our long time registrar and previous race director Jerry Agin. Jerry has been on the race committee for many years and is one of the trail founders. The Montour Trail has been very fortunate to have the talented services of Jerry Agin who has graciously and unselfishly give his time not only to the Montour Trail but also to many worthy causes over several years. Jerry will be working with Laura in the transition this year. We understand that Jerry hopes to be a participant in next year's race! Our thanks go out to Jerry for all of his hard work and dedication to the trail. Jerry, you will be missed!

Laura is a graduate of Robert Morris with a degree in Communication Management and has additional training, and a career interest, in Event Planning. She, her husband Bill and their two dogs live in Imperial and are avid trail users. Bill is a

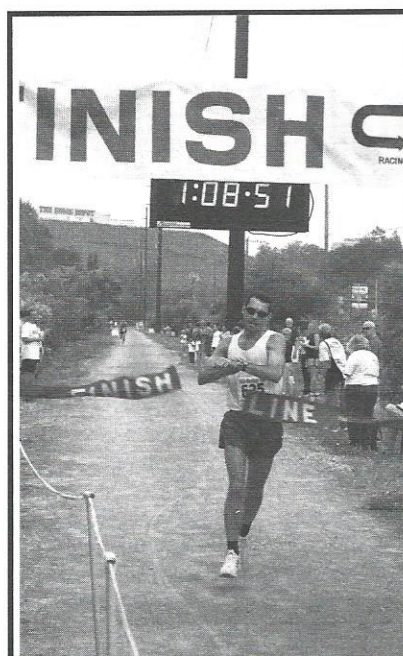
competitive athlete in running and cycling events so Laura has attended her share of races as a spectator

including the last three half-marathons. Laura is also volunteering her time as a member of the Cystic Fibrosis 65 Roses Charity Bike Event committee. This year Laura has decided to take a more active role by volunteering for the registrar position for the Montour Trail.

Even more exciting: This year's event will be our first with the new "ChampionChip" timing system. Mark Courtney and Runner's High will again be providing the timing services while helping to acclimate our race with the new timing system. This new space-age

technology employs a system where a runner wears a computer chip on his/her shoe. As the chip crosses over a set of special mats at the finish line, the chip sends a unique identification number to antennas in the mats. The time and number are then recorded in

(Continued on page 4)



Andrew Herr wins last year's IKEA / Montour Trail ½ Marathon and 5K Walk/Run with a time of 1:08:51.

More on the IKEA Half-Marathon Inside you'll find...

A help-wanted list (how you can participate in putting on this year's race)..... p. 5


Meet IKEA's PR Director..... p. 5



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 **THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER**
is published bi-monthly January through
December. All correspondence should be
addressed to:

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Bridgeville, PA 15017
Or E-mail to:
newsletter@montourtrail.org

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PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

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For administration and
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Fax: 412-257-3016

Newsletter Editor	Astrid Cook
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Trail Talk

from the Editor's Desk

Fall seems to have snuck up on me all too quickly. I don't know where the summer went. The new hammock in the back yard was enjoyed only two afternoons. The berry bushes bought in May languished in the garage instead of taking seed. My front lawn never did get completely weeded.

Of course, having two children to chase after probably kept me from some of these more "important" tasks. When I wasn't being my nine-year-old's personal private chauffeur (as soon as there was a lull in her schedule, she immediately wished for school to begin again), I was chasing after my infant son, who—not unlike the weeds in the front yard—seemed to take charge of his environment overnight and was suddenly into everything in the blink of an eye.

Merely keeping up with all my volunteer obligations has been a challenge. Although I no longer get paid for my various jobs, I still take my work seriously. Which is why when it came to my attention that some important information about the September 13 IKEA/Montour Trail Half-Marathon and 5K Run/5K Walk had inadvertently been omitted from the last Trail Letter, I went out of my way to make sure this newsletter went to press early enough to cover that event.

So, if you're thinking, "Hey, didn't we just get a Trail Letter?", you aren't imagining things. And please remember these circumstances if the wait for the November-December Trail Letter seems a bit longer than usual.

Of course, I am far from the only MTC volunteer who is struggling to fit 25-hours' worth of work into a 24-hour day (we *never* sleep at the Montour Trail!). Seriously, as the seasons change so do our work efforts. We aren't less busy in the winter, but the weather makes major Trail work difficult. Thus, we are taking advantage of seasonable conditions. Everyone is engaged in race preparation, Trail openings (major festivities are expected at the upcoming McDonald "Trestlefest"), area events (Rib Cook-Off time again), organizing new friends groups, and many other activities.

It's no wonder we've had so little time for leisure!

Yet, ultimately, the Montour Trail is all about leisure time. We are building and maintaining the Trail so that the television may be turned off, the Game Boy may sleep silently in its case, the hubbub may be silenced for a bit. Autumn is, perhaps, the loveliest time to enjoy the Trail. So, slow down, take a few deep breaths, meditate a moment, and then go for a stroll, ride or jog down our lovely and peaceful Trail. It's leisurely activity at its finest. Even when the kids and the dog join you!

Happy Trails!

Astrid

Newsletter Deadline

All articles for the November / December Trail-Letter
will be due **no later than** October 1, 2003

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.

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**. From May-August, meetings are held at the Kurnick Access area along the trail off Cecil-Henderson Road; other months meet at the MTC Offices. Call 412-257-2553 for more information. **Work & Clean-up party**, every **third Saturday** of the month - **9:00 am**. (Subject to change; check information boards.) Meet at the Storage shed at Hendersonville. Call 412-257-2553 for more info.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆◆ **Peters Township Events:**
Friends of the Trail Meeting, will meet September 2 and then the first **Monday** of the month **beginning October 2003** at Peters Township Parks and Recreation Community Room at 7:00 pm. For more information on **Work & Clean-up parties**, please contact Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at mcimgrund@adelphia.net.

September 2003

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				

October 2003

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

Allegheny County Rib Cook-off — September 1

"Trestlefest" — September 6

IKEA/MTC Half-Marathon and 5K Run/Walk—September 13

MTC Board Meeting—September 15

"Tour the Montour" Bike Ride—September 27

MTC Board Meeting — October 20

HELP WANTED! Real Estate Volunteer

We are looking for some help with some real estate items in Washington County. This help could involve researching property ownership, having appraisals performed and working land purchase or easement agreements. If you are interested or have questions, please call Dennis Pfeiffer at 412-762-4857.

Painting Bridges: Papp Road And Glass Road Bridges

Cecil Township Supervisors had previously asked us to provide more overhead clearance for trucks to pass under the trail bridges over Papp Road and Glass Hill Road. While our contractor added height to the abutments, our volunteers cleaned and painted the

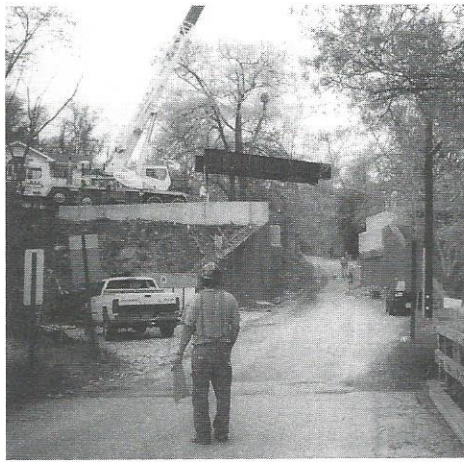


Photo by John Hooton
Atlas Railroad Construction Co. lifted the old spans on to higher abutments on May 7th.

steel spans in the short time when they were on the ground. We did not need ladders to reach the deck plate girders. We simply spread plastic sheets on the ground to collect rust and paint chips. Weavertown Environmental Group donated their services to write a work plan and test the ground for lead paint. Adjacent property owner Bob Mikulski and Township Code Enforcement Officer Don Hindman offered helpful suggestions.

By far, the top of the upper flanges was the most deteriorated part of each bridge. The railroad ties covered this area, trapping water and making it inaccessible for painting. We hammered off the layered rust on both bridges. Joe Stewart loaned us his air compressor, sand blaster and truck so we could clean the rust off the Papp Road Bridge.

We power-brushed the other areas and applied primer and surface paint with rollers and brushes. Weaver-town disposed of the rust and paint chips that we collected. Thanks to Dick Quasey for the opportunity to carry out this project. Thanks to Ned Williams, Dennis Pfeiffer, Dennis Simms and Hoyt Hall for helping to make the two bridges look better and last longer.

Dave Wright

IKEA/MTC Half-Marathon on Fast Track

(Continued from page 1)

the finish line computers. As a result, no chutes are needed, there are no backups at the finish line, and the results tabulation is practically instant. This new system will put our event in the company of races such as the UPMC Pittsburgh Marathon and the Great Race.

Another exciting update to this year's event is that our title sponsor, IKEA, has increased the prize amounts for the overall race finishers in both the Half-Marathon and the 5K Run categories.

The Mall at Robinson has significantly increased their sponsorship contribution this year. In addition, Robinson Town Center and Elite Runners and Walkers have also increased their cash sponsorship contributions. Dick's Sporting Goods is with us again this year as a cash sponsor and provides 1,000 dollars in gift certificates for the raffle. Computer Associates continues to support the event, as it has for several years. In addition to CA's cash sponsorship, they usually field at least 10 entrants. Ohio Valley Hospital and Eagle Therapy are also cash sponsors again this year.

No1 Cochran has become a cash sponsor this year and will be at the IKEA lot to see off the participants and show off some of their new vehicles. And A.J. Meyers & Son will be providing bussing for our competitors at a substantially discounted rate. For the third year, Coca Cola will be providing all of the sports drinks and bottled water as a donation.

The race committee and IKEA would like to extend a hearty welcome to another new sponsor, the North Park Clubhouse, who has agreed to provide this year's event with post-race food. Our participants will be delighted with this enhancement!

The continued growth and betterment of the IKEA Race is a success story for the Montour Trail. It also presents a growing set of challenges to the race committee and race day volunteers. Our need for volunteers is an unending task. Anyone who is able to donate a few hours of his or her time would be welcomed with appreciation. Please contact Jess Forquer at JJForquer@adelphia.net or call 412-859-3737 (please call before 10:00 p.m.). We particularly need people to help with recruiting. (See more on our "Help Wanted" needs at right.)

Jess Forquer and Laura Orr

IKEA PR Director Loves Promoting Montour Trail

Ellen Douglas says IKEA-Pittsburgh's sponsorship of the annual Montour Trail/IKEA race, schedule this year for September 13, was one reason why she decided to become IKEA's Public Relations Liaison in April. We grabbed Ellen between meetings and asked her to share her thoughts about her work, the race, and the Montour Trail.



Q: What did you know about the race before joining IKEA?

Ellen: I knew the race happened every year and I had been meaning to participate, last year-in fact, I had the brochure in my hand-but I didn't run. I need to be more physically fit, and this job should help to make sure I participate this year. It's such a great trail for races, walking, running or biking – and thinking too! It's so relaxing to be around nature and just take it in.

Q: Have you run any distance races previously?

Ellen: I have run two 5-kilometer races. Most recently I ran one with my colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh's Osteoporosis Prevention and Treatment Center, where I worked before coming to IKEA.

Q: Is distance running good for people with osteoporosis?

Ellen: It can be. Persons who have a family history of osteoporosis or who have osteopenia (the stage before full osteoporosis) can build up their bone density through high-impact exercise. Of course, people should check with their own doctor before they run or do any kind of exercise.

Q: What attracts you to the Montour Trail?

Ellen: The Montour Trail combines two areas in which I'd like to improve my commitment: environmental awareness and staying physically fit. I've just gotten a bike and look forward to riding the trail myself.

In addition, distance races like the Montour Trail/IKEA race encourage us to set goals-something many of us don't do enough despite our best intentions. Whether it's learning to play an instrument, taking a trip, or

completing a half-marathon or 5K race, all of us need to have goals to achieve. I know from my own running that it's a great feeling to cross the finish line, whether in 20th place or last place.

Q: How have you liked working with the Montour Trail Council?

Ellen: Your passion and commitment are evident, and I have been excited to become part of that. I was surprised to learn that the idea for this race originated with an IKEA employee. I've also seen the importance of volunteers in making an event like this one successful. Whatever passion people have - be it for trails or the environment, or whatever their interest, they need to donate some of their time to the cause they are passionate about.

Q: Do you have any ideas for the future of this race?

Ellen: I've been impressed to discover our customers drive from up to five hours away to visit IKEA, and you know that runners come from out of state for this race. So I'm in the process of discussing possibilities with the Hyatt Regency at the airport, to develop a package that would enable people to stay overnight, run the race, and shop at IKEA. There are huge possibilities for the Montour Trail/IKEA race to become even bigger and better and I'm glad to be part of it!

Help Wanted: You Can Join us in the Race

We still have a few needs that had not been met as of press time. Specifically, we need a Beverage and Food Manager and several people to act as Split Timers.

Beverage and Food Manager—One or more individuals to coordinate the serving of the food and beverages for the event. This volunteer position would involve preparation in ordering and coordination with the IKEA Kitchen to provide the food and drinks in the IKEA lot.

Split Timers Chief and Crew—One person and a group of volunteers are needed to wait at various points along the race route with stop watches and to call out to competitors their elapsed time as the runners go by. No "I'm not fit enough to race" excuses here! All bodies may apply; you need only have the ability to access the trail.

If you are willing to fill any of these positions or can help out in any other way, please contact Jess Forquer at JJForquer@adelphia.net or call 412-859-3737 (please call before 10:00 p.m.).

Variously compiled by Bruce Barron, Jess Forquer and Astrid Cook

Events News: "Trestlefest," Ribs and Biking

Time Again for Ribs and Beer

Has it been almost a year since we served and sloshed beer on behalf of the Trail at South Park? True, how true! Labor Day weekend comes EARLY this year, which makes the time move even more quickly.

We're referring, of course, to the Mon/Yough Recreation Association's big Rib Fest fund raiser held each year to support its charities in eastern Allegheny County communities like McKeesport, Rankin and West Newton.

How do Trail volunteers fit in? You Trail walkers and bikers, soccer Moms and Grandmoms, little league Dads and Granddads quickly learn to sling beer with the best of them. The faster the pace and the busier you all are, the more you all seem to enjoy the day. MYREC, as our host organization is best known, provides entertainment and "quality of life" programs for their many attendees, especially in summer evenings.

You volunteers can feel doubly good about your efforts because while you help MYREC, MYREC helps us: The Montour Trail Council receives a most welcome check for \$4,500 to help build and maintain your Trail. The Rib Cook Off is a good party, too, with 16 "Ribateurs" from the local area and across the country. Ribs, chicken, fresh lemonade, Sandhill Berries' goodies are always a hit. This year, the Flying Wallendas, Sumo wrestling and dozens of other attractions will make a fun day before or after your tour at the beer tap. And the soundstage offers Confederate Railroad, Blood Sweat and Tears, Johnny Angel and many other groups.

If you are a regular, please let us hear from you again and if you're new to the idea, please step forward. You'll have a great time and as always, we need your help and appreciate it

John Hooton



Volunteer Info:

Sign-up by day

To help **Friday**, call John Wasco (724-796-3781)

For **Saturday or Monday**, call John Hooton (412-257-4101 or 724-942-0115)

Sunday, call Dennis Pfeiffer (412-762-4857 or 412-262-3748)

Don't Forget to Attend the Montour Trail TrestleFest!!!

Celebrating the opening of the new 5-mile McDonald-to-Venice trail segment, bringing the total length of completed trail to 39 miles!!

Saturday, September 6, 12:00 noon – 5:00 pm, rain or shine, at the McDonald Viaduct just west of McDonald Borough off PA Route 980.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony; tethered hot-air balloon; live music; pony rides, petting zoo, and more for the kids; food booths; displays by community organizations and special-interest groups.

Organized bike rides to the TrestleFest from Coraopolis (contact Dennis Pfeiffer at 412-262-3748 or dennis.pfeiffer@pncbank.com) and Clairton (contact Ned Williams at 724-225-9856 or ned@washtool.com).

Join us as we celebrate this momentous occasion for the Trail!!

Stan Sattinger

Inaugural "Tour the Montour" bike ride - September 27, 2003—Start 8:00 to 9:30AM

Mark your calendars! The inaugural "Tour the Montour" bike ride will be held Saturday, September 27th. Five different ride lengths are planned for this Montour Trail Council event. You will be able to choose from rides of 44, 24, 18, twelve or the family ride of six miles. A three or six mile walk is also planned. The rides and walks will be entirely on the Montour Trail.

The starting times will be between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.



The starting line will be at the beginning of the trail (Mile "0") at Route 51 and Montour Road. Participants will receive a "Tour the Montour" t-shirt, refreshments and tickets for prizes. A nominal fee of \$12 will be charged. This event is being organized to be fun for both the long

distance bicyclists and the entire family. Please come and join us for the inaugural "Tour the Montour" bike ride! Please see the registration form enclosed in the newsletter.

Dennis Pfeiffer

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

Elmer & Darlene Beachley
Tom Grayson
David Hiebert
John M. Kauer
Gary M. Lengyel
John Lubinski
Bob Neu
Raymond Perr
Gerry Petro
James N. Priola
Michael Rath
Bob & Betty Robison

William D. Russell
Rich & Diane Sahar
Priscilla Salvatore
Ralph Schmidt
Jeffrey & Christine Sicilia
Mike Silvestri
Cherie Stellfox

BENEFACTORS

Catherine Eagon
Jon W. Erdner

Membership Co-Chairs - Stefni and Jerry Agin

And the Prez sez...

For the last 11 years, federal transportation legislation has given a big boost to recreational trail development across the U.S. Congress has reserved approximately 2 percent of all transportation funding for "transportation enhancements" such as bike-pedestrian paths, rail-trails, historic railroad building restoration, and highway beautification. The Montour Trail Council has received over \$2 million of this money for trail development over the past decade.

As of this writing, a U.S. House committee has proposed removing this 2 percent enhancements category. While states could still decide to give some of their transportation money to trails, groups such as the Montour Trail Council would face a challenging tug-of-war with the well-financed highway lobby for available funds.

Knowing the financial challenges that lie ahead as we seek to complete our trail, we have also requested funding within the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act.

We encourage you to contact your U.S. Senators and Representative now to let them know that you support both continued funding for Transportation Enhancements as well as funding for the Montour Trail Council with the new TEA legislation.

Peter Kohnke

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.

- ☐ **STUDENT / SENIORS** \$15
- ☐ **INDIVIDUAL** \$25
- ☐ **FAMILY** \$35
- ☐ **SUPPORTING** \$50
- ☐ **SUSTAINING** \$100
- ☐ **BENEFACTOR** \$250
- ☐ **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:

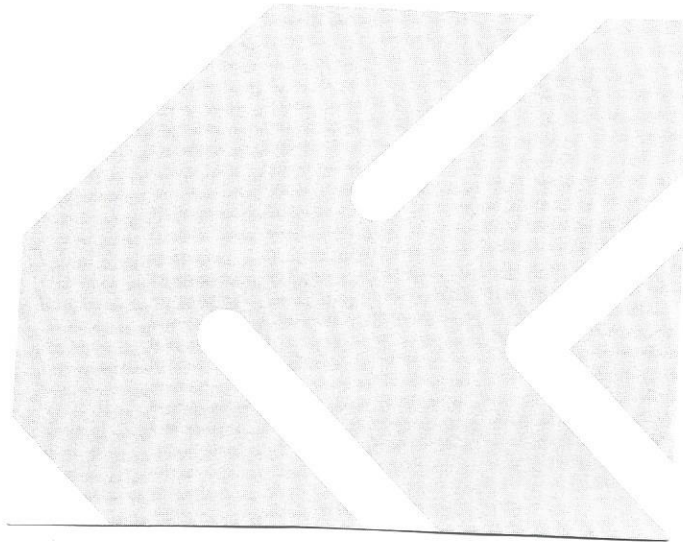
MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

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.



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PAGE 8

Changes on the Board

Mark Imgrund officially joined our board July 21. He replaces Amy Reichman who moved to Ohio last year and remains an active member but was no longer able to fill her board duties.

Mark is an avid bicyclist, recently became a (young) retired engineer, and is excited about the Montour Trail - the perfect board member. He has already put together a PowerPoint virtual tour of the entire mainline of the trail, and he has successfully organized a new Friends Group in Peters Township, where he lives.

We thank Amy for her good work and welcome Mark as our newest board member.

Peter Kohnke

