



The Official Publication of the Montour Trail Council

MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 24 Issue 5

September-October 2013

Valley Brook Bridge #1 Ribbon Cutting photos by Dennis Sims

It was a beautiful early autumn day for the grand opening of the Montour Trail's Valley Brook Bridge #1 on Saturday, September 14. The event started at 11:00 a.m. and was held in the parking lot of the Peters Township Sanitary Authority adjacent to the bridge on Valley Brook Road. Thank you to the Authority for allowing us to use the lot for the event.

In addition to short presentations by government, agency and MTC officials, progress on nearby trail projects was covered as was some history of the Trail in Peters Township.



Recipients of customized bicycles from the "My Bike" program of Variety, the Children's Charity, officially inaugurated the bridge after the ribbon cutting (right)

Participating in the ribbon cutting (left) are from left to right: Bob Lewis, Peters Twp. Council; Tom Prezel, VP Montour Trail; Harlan Shober, Washington County Commissioner; Larry Maggi, Washington County Commissioner; State Senator Matt Smith, Diana Irey Vaughan, Washington County Commissioner; State Representative John Maher, Tom Sexton, Rails to Trails

Conservancy Northeast Director. Out of picture: Lauren Imgrund, DCNR Director of Recreation and Conservation and Mark Imgrund, President of the Peters Twp. Friends of the Montour Trail.



Inside this issue:

The 18th Half-Marathon Report by Bruce Barron

Near-perfect weather resulted in very fast times at the 18th running of the Montour Trail – UPMC Urgent Care at Robinson half-marathon, 5K run and walk on September 7. Justin Taylor won the men's half-marathon with the fastest time in eight years; Gina Bartolacci sped to the women's title. Matt Burbin and Jamie Morgenstern took the male and female 5k, respectively. Despite a late planning start, 1,000 registrants made the effort worthwhile. Along with UPMC Urgent Care, sponsors included Elite Runners and Walkers, The Mall at Robinson, Dick's Sporting Goods, and NEWALTA.



The women winners of the half-marathon are pictured to the left. From left to right: 4th place Katherine Reinhart, 3rd place Liz Aquino, and 1st place Gina Bartolacci. Photo by Dale Main. The top three female and male finishers from the half-marathon and 5K can be found on page 5.

Valley Brook #1 Opens The 18th Half-Marathon	1
Prez Sez	2
Boggs and Hammocks	3
MTC Volunteer: Doug Ettinger Marcellus Gas Volunteers	4
Enlow Parking Improvements Looking for Pictures	5
Montour History- How Many Tunnels	6
New Members Race Results	7
Members Picnic	8

Visit the Montour Trail Web Site at:
www.montourtrail.org

To Converse, join the Yahoo Group at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Montour-Trail/info> or

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/43518292159/>



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dennis Pfeiffer	President
Tom Prezel	Vice President
Deb Esia	Treasurer
Bruce Barron	Secretary
<i>Bruce Barron</i>	<i>2011-2013</i>
<i>Dave Oyler</i>	<i>2011-2013</i>
<i>Tom Prezel</i>	<i>2011-2013</i>
<i>Dennis Sims</i>	<i>2011-2013</i>
<i>Ned Williams</i>	<i>2011-2013</i>
<i>Jan Carey</i>	<i>2012-2014</i>
<i>Mark Imgrund</i>	<i>2012-2014</i>
<i>Dennis Pfeiffer</i>	<i>2012-2014</i>
<i>Tim Thomassy</i>	<i>2012-2014</i>
<i>Deb Esia</i>	<i>2013-2015</i>
<i>Chuck Hughey</i>	<i>2013-2015</i>
<i>Denis Kane</i>	<i>2013-2015</i>
<i>Tim Killmeyer</i>	<i>2013-2015</i>
<i>Gil McGurl</i>	<i>2013-2015</i>
<i>Don Thobaben</i>	<i>2013-2015</i>

THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

is published bi-monthly January through December. All correspondence should be addressed to:

MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Suite 3

**304 Hickman Street
Bridgeville, PA 15017**

Or E-mail to:

newsletter@montourtrail.org

All other trail correspondence should be addressed:

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL

Suite #3

**304 Hickman Street
Bridgeville, PA 15017**

**MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
PHONE NUMBER 412-257-3011**

NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL TEAM

Dennis Sims, managing editor

Troy Bogdan
Mark Imgrund

Tim Killmeyer
Dennis Pfeiffer

The Prez Sez

I extend greetings to the members, friends and supporters of the Montour Trail. We are very appreciative of your support of the Montour Trail. Please let us know how we may better serve you, the organization and/or the general trail using public. Please send any comments, ideas or suggestions to our attention via email to MTCoffice@montourtrail.org. or call the office at 412-257-3011.

You are invited as MTC members to two significant events in the coming months. First is the MTC member "thank you" picnic that is free to all members on October 5 at trail mile "0". Secondly is the annual member dinner meeting that will be held on November 17 at St. Joan of Arc's Donremy Pavilion in South Park Township. Please see details of these great member events elsewhere in this newsletter.

I hope your summer has gone well and you have enjoyed many thousands of miles on the sixty-three (63) mile Montour Trail system this season. It has certainly been an eventful summer. This is especially true due to the trail-wide flooding that occurred in July. Since the flooding, volunteer crews have been working trail wide and most of the repairs should be completed soon.

Speaking of volunteer work parties, I was out on an Airport Area Friends work party on Saturday, August 17. I am amazed how complementary trail users are with most of them saying "Thanks for your volunteer efforts. We do appreciate your hard work." Right after a couple complementary comments from trail users, Montour Trail Council member Jim Quasey jogged up to us.

Jim was elated to read the article in the last issue that the plaque honoring his father Dick Quasey was found and re-secured near the McDonald viaduct. That got me to thinking that a lot of the new MTC members may have not known one of the MTC's truly dedicated volunteers. It has now been over ten years since Dick passed away on September 4, 2003. Thus I wanted to share here some interesting items about Dick Quasey for our new members and to remind our long time members of a truly great volunteer.

Dick was involved with many facets of the MTC including construction and was president in 1998 and 1999. Dick had been heavily involved with construction and helping organize the local friends groups in both the Airport Area and the Fort Cherry. He was so well liked in these areas that plaques honoring Dick were placed in both areas.

Richard Lee Quasey an eagle scout himself was a resident of Robinson Township starting in 1960 and founded scout troops in both Sewickley and Robinson Township. He graduated from Cornell University in 1948 with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering. He served in the U.S. Marines reserves and was called to active duty in Korea in 1951 & 1952. He was a volunteer fireman as the Forest Grove Volunteer Fire Department. He retired from Dravo and was the former director of international marketing.

Dick was a true inspiration and mentor to many of us MTC volunteers. His wife Mary sent us a letter on September 26, 2003. In that letter she said that Dick's final email to his children was a photo of the last concrete panel (complete with American Flag) going up on the McDonald viaduct. Dick was the MTC supervisor on that McDonald viaduct project. The grand opening of the McDonald viaduct and trail in that section was on September 6, 2003, which was just two days after his passing.

Happy Trails
Dennis Pfeiffer

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 Dennis at 412-262-3748 for more information or to get on the agenda.

Cecil Friends: (MP 20.7 to MP 28.5)

Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Monday 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: (MP 0 to MP 12.6 and the 6.3 mile

Airport Connector) The Airport Area Friends of the Trail meet every second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Forest Grove Fire Hall, 2044 Ewings Mill Road, Robinson Township, PA 15108. New volunteers are always welcomed. Contact Phyllis McChesney at 412-264-6303 for more information. Numerous Saturday "work parties" are held during the season. Please call 412-262-3748 to lend a hand at the work parties.

Bethel Park Friends: (The 2.75 mile Bethel Branch and a short piece of main line trail around MP 35).

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: (MP 35.4 to 46.3)

Meeting second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at South Park Township Community Room, located behind the Township Building at 2675 Brownsville Road, South Park, 15129. 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: (MP 12.6 to MP 20.7)

Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Building, 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: (MP 28.5 to 30.4, Libray Jct to near MP 35 and part of the Bethel Branch)

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:

For more information send email to mrhs@montourrr.com.

Hammock Time

story and photo by Pete Merther

You can now swing yourself to sleep at the Boggs Campsite. All you need is yourself and a hammock. With the effort by Ken Gregory, Airport Area Friend, (Ken was featured in the January-February newsletter volunteer story), there are now three (3) sets of posts to



attach your hammock and peacefully put yourself to sleep (see photo above). In addition to the three (3) sets of hammock posts, Ken has built another camping area next to the other one. (below)



These sites have been used and Ken can attest to their use. In one of his travels a couple was cooking breakfast. You should travel to the Boggs campsite and see the effort Ken has put into this area.

Deadline for submitting articles to the next Montour Trail-letter is November 15, 2013 which is expected to be mailed around December 7, 2013.

Trail volunteer feature: Doug Ettinger by Bruce Barron

It's a good sign when Doug Ettinger is helping the MTC

Doug Ettinger of Mt. Lebanon is one of the many Pittsburgh-area residents who, without the Montour Trail and other rails-to-trails



projects in the region, probably wouldn't be biking at all.

Raised north near Easton on the opposite side of Pennsylvania, Doug wandered along backcountry roads on his single-speed bicycle as a youth. When he came to the Pittsburgh area to work as a nuclear engineer at Westinghouse's Monroeville facility, "the roads had too much

traffic and no shoulders," so he relied on canoeing, hiking, and skiing to fulfill his avid outdoor interests.

Around 2004, as he was approaching retirement from Westinghouse, someone told Doug about the Montour Trail and he regained his biking interests—now on his son's 21-speed bike. On one of his trips he encountered a work party surfacing the trail near the Panhandle Trail connector in McDonald. "I thought it was interesting," Doug recalled, "and decided to come back the next day and help out."

Charlie Beaumariage, the Panhandle connector project manager, recruited Doug to join the trail's Engineering and Construction Committee, where he has helped to plan and execute numerous projects. Doug has also been responsible for training operators of trail maintenance equipment and tracking equipment usage. MTC leaders are familiar with the trail condition reports that Doug prepares after many of his rides. And, most recently, Doug spearheaded signage improvements to help bikers find their way from Peters Creek Road through Large, across Route 51, and into the park-and-ride lot where the trail resumes heading toward Clairton.

Doug believes that highly visible signage benefits the MTC, not just its users. "It's advertising," he points out. "I've talked with people in South Park who didn't even know there was a trail around there. Bring it to people's attention and you also generate greater interest from the people from whom we need easements [for further trail development]."

Once Doug got into long-distance biking, he was all in. He biked from the Point to Washington, D.C. four years before it was officially possible, with help from a Whitaker policeman who showed his group how to sneak through the unfinished section from the

Waterfront to Kennywood. He and a companion complete a week-long bicycle trip each year, taking photos and preparing presentations that they deliver at local libraries.

Doug says he got a deeper sense of the significance of the Montour Trail last year when he stopped two riders amply equipped with gear and asked where they had come from. It turned out that the two had flown to Pittsburgh from Seattle and Denver, then exited by bicycle onto the Airport Connector to begin their trek to Washington, D.C.

Although he admits that he hasn't appeared in any academic journals yet, Doug also has achieved an impressive work product as an amateur astrophysicist. You can find his series of hypotheses about Earth's development at www.ettingerjournals.com.

"We have a lot of different personalities," Doug says of his experience in Montour Trail planning and construction, "but they work well together for this wonderful mission of building a trail that links communities."

Marcellus Shale Coalition Volunteers

by Phyllis McChesney, photo by Joy Ruff.



Kudos to the Marcellus Shale Coalition for braving one of the hottest days in July (Friday, July 19) and volunteering their time for a grass cutting work party with the Airport Area Friends. All those involved pose for the obligatory photo before they started outside Brothers Grimm. Our thanks to Joy Ruff, Community Outreach Manager for coordinating the day and Katie Klaber, CEO of the Marcellus Shale Coalition for her assistance. A special thank you to Don Zuch and the volunteers from Hull & Associates, Inc., a member of the Marcellus Shale Coalition, for an informative talk on following safety precautions and for providing the work crew with gloves, goggles, and vests. It was a good day!

Enlow Parking Improvements photos and story By Pete Merther

On one of his many runs on the Montour Trail, Findlay Township Supervisor Tom Gallant ran into Dennis Pfeiffer on an Airport Area Friends work party. His comment to Pfeiffer was that something must be done about the appearance of the Enlow Ballfield trail head parking area. It was becoming an area filled with potholes and ponds of water. (See right below for "before" photo).

On June 13, Pfeiffer received a call from John O'Neal, Director of Public Works for the Township of Findlay, asking "Would the Montour Trail Council be interested in participating in a project to pave the Enlow Trail Head with asphalt"? O'Neal then sent a formal cost estimate of \$11,322 (\$7,222 for materials and \$4,100 for labor).

Pfeiffer placed a call to Findlay Township Manager Gary Klingman expressing an interest in participating with Findlay in the much needed project. Klingman was asked if Findlay Township would consider donating the labor costs for the project.

Klingman presented the project to the Findlay Township Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors approved the project and also voted to donate the labor costs. The cost estimate was submitted to the MTC board for consideration and the expenditure of \$7,500 was authorized for the project.

With the effort of Supervisor Gallant and the Findlay Township Public Works Department, the Enlow Ballfield trail head has been revitalized and has become an area where it is now a pleasure to park. (See right below for "after" photo).

We would like to thank Findlay Township for making the improvements and for their donation of the labor and equipment cost in the amount of approximately \$4100.

On July 23, Mr. Pfeiffer received the following reply from Mr. Klingman after complimenting the excellent work done by John O'Neal and the Findlay Township Publics Works Department :

Dennis:

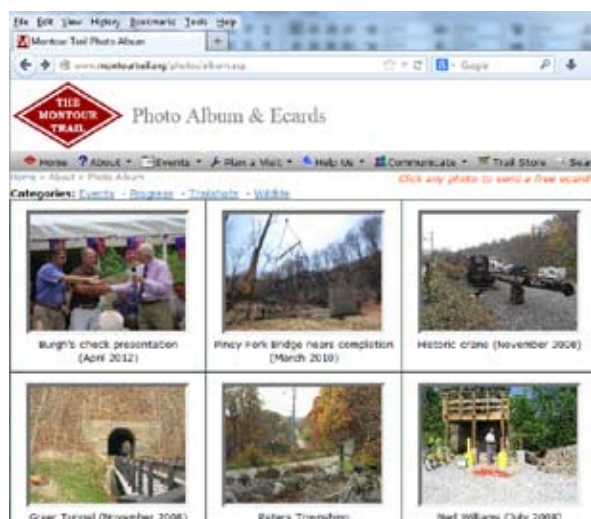
Our Thanks also to the Montour trail Council for their willingness to partner with us and share in the cost of this up-grade. There is no doubt that the improvement will benefit the trail users for years to come.

Gary Klingman



Webmaster Looking for Trail Photos

If you go to the Montour Trail Website (www.montourtrail.org) and follow: [Home](#) > [About](#) > [Photo Album](#) » takes you to a collection of photos taken over the past years. The collection includes trail events, points of interest along the trail and wildlife. Webmaster Deb Thompson would like to see a renewed interest in members and trail users posting interesting images that she can consider including in the album. Send your photos to webmaster@montourtrail.org and you just may see your picture on the internet.



MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY

How Many Tunnels? By Bryan Seip – President - Montour Railroad Historical Society

During the summer months, many Montour Trail patrons enjoy their brief respite from the sun and heat as they pass through the tunnels on the Trail. How many tunnels are there on the Montour? Let's count them up – Jeffreytown – Enlow – Peacock – McConnell – Bishop – National – Greer – that makes seven tunnels, right? Well, not exactly.

The first tunnel, at Trail mile 7.2, was actually the last one built and was known by two different names. The railroaders called it Jeffreytown for the settlement at the eastern portal, but it is also known as Enlow Tunnel, for the town located to the west. It was built in 1926 as part of a realignment project that eliminated several sharp curves on the Montour's main line. The original railroad followed Montour Run as it looped around the hillside. The tunnel eliminated about a half-mile of track and some sharp curves by burrowing under the hill for 575 feet. This tunnel is the only straight bore on the Montour.



A 1979 view shows a train in Peacock Cut. Originally bored as a tunnel, it was daylighted around 1918. Gene P. Schaeffer photo

The next tunnel was probably the first one to be built, but does not exist anymore. It was bored through the hillside at Peacock, at Trail mile 19.2. Part of the 1913 extension of the railroad, it had a wooden liner, a curved bore and was about 600 feet in length. This tunnel had numerous problems, including rock falls and water seepage, as the ground was unstable and very wet. After only a few years, around 1918, it was determined that the tunnel was too difficult to maintain and there had been too many blockages of railroad traffic, so it was daylighted, which means digging out the roof and making it an open cut through the hillside instead of a tunnel. As you travel through what is now Peacock Cut, you will notice that the hillside still stays very wet and rocks litter the ditches and occasionally roll out onto the trail surface. The Trail Council is still fighting a battle against Mother Nature.

At Mile 25.0 in Cecil Township, another tunnel was built in 1913. Bored through a hill on the McConnell farm, it was thus known as McConnell Tunnel. It was also called Bishop Tunnel, for the nearby community and a few years later,

when National #2 mine was opened nearby, it became more widely known as National Tunnel. Also built with a wooden liner, the concrete portals and liner were added in 1928. It has a curved bore and crests a hill inside its 623 foot length. Pulling trains over the hill inside the tunnel meant that engineers had to keep full power on their train while transiting the tunnel. Smoke, steam and later diesel fumes made it an unpleasant trip and the crews tried many solutions, like water-soaked bandanas over their noses, to help them breathe while inside the tunnel. Trains were often down to a few miles an hour going through the tunnel, so as you walk or ride this tunnel, try holding your breath and see how far you can make it.

The final tunnel was bored through the ridge above Chartiers Creek at Trail mile 28.6. It also has a curved bore and was the shortest on the line at 235 feet. As with the others, it had a wood liner until concrete was added in 1922. A nearby tunnel had been previously bored through this ridge to carry the Pennsylvania Railroad and was called Bell Tunnel after the landowners of this area. Needing a different name, the Montour called their tunnel Greer, for another nearby landowner. The railroad now operating through Bell Tunnel actually calls their tunnel "Greer", as did some old topographic maps – a misnomer that adds to our tale. This is a tunnel with only one name, but seemingly with two locations.



Aaaah – fresh air. A train exits National tunnel, trailing a cloud of diesel exhaust. Gene P. Schaeffer photo

The answer to our original question, as Trail patrons know, is just three. But the tales and stories are as numerous as the number of coal trains that have passed through those tunnels in the past 100 years.

The Montour Railroad Historical Society, one of the Friends of the Montour Trail volunteer groups, is undertaking the placement of interpretive historic signs at various locations along the Trail.

You can contact the Montour Railroad Yahoo group at http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/ There are currently 329 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

Christopher Bartels
Brianna Butera
Eric Chipps
Jill Clary
Mary Diederich
Michael Hensler
Rolf Hilden
Jean Hollowood
Conrad Jooste
Sharon B. Juli
Dr. Hedwig M. Marwaha
Teresa Matuska
Gloria Mazzocco
Gene Snyder
Frank Sonnett
Colleen Spiegler
Lucy Strosser

Ursula's Alcove

David Witt

William Zumach

Benefactors

Don & Mary Hendrix
Daniel J. Hirsh
Iris & Jerry Liberatore
Dave & Veronica Mattson
Michael & Cynthia Mullins
John & Mary Jo Wasco

Leaders

Christopher Bartels
Janet McKinney
J.A. Wunderlich, III

UPMC Urgent Care-Montour Trail

1/2 Marathon, 5K Run and Fun Walk Results courtesy off www.runhigh.com

HALF MARATHON

PLACE	FINISHER	TIME
Open Men		
1	Justin Taylor, 23, Wexford, PA	1:10:36
2	Matt Robson, 30, Latrobe, PA	1:15:38
3	Tom Lipsie, 46, Indiana, PA	1:17:28
Open Women		
1	Gina Bartolacci, 25, Coraopolis, PA	1:23:43
2	Erica Maloney, 32, Verona, PA	1:25:27
3	Liz Aquino, 39, Harrison City, PA	1:26:34

5K RUN

PLACE	FINISHER	TIME
Open Men		
1	Matt Burbin, 20, Coraopolis, PA	17:02
2	Matt Cady, 27, Pittsburgh, PA	17:13
3	Brent Dragisich, 40, McDonald, PA	18:29
Open Women		
1	Jamie Morgenstern, 25, Pittsburgh, PA	18:00
2	Lisa Lucas, 47, Pittsburgh, PA	18:31
3	Leigh Ciofani, 30, Bridgeville, PA	20:34

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+

Make checks payable to the "Montour Trail Council"

Send me the newsletter by email ☐ mail ☐

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (Day) _____

Phone (Evening) _____

Email _____

Mail to:

Montour Trail Council
Suite #3 2nd Floor
304 Hickman Street
Bridgeville, PA 15017

The Montour Trail Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax-deductible. You may also be eligible for matching funds from your employer. A copy of the Montour Trail Council's official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling (toll-free within Pennsylvania) 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Don't Forget

The Montour Trail Council may be designated as your United Way Contributor Choice as option #3308.



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
Suite #3 2nd Floor
304 Hickman Street
Bridgeville, PA 15017

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PITTSBURGH, PA
PERMIT NO. 2524



MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL MEMBER PICNIC



When: Saturday, October 5, 2013 from 11:00 A.M. till 3:00 P.M.
Where – Montour Trail “Mile 0”.

The Montour Trail Council would like to thank all of its members with a “wrap up the season” picnic on October 5 at mile “0”.

This event from 11:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M. will be **free to all members**.

This event is just our way of thanking you for your support and help in building and maintaining the Montour Trail.

There will be hot dogs, hamburgers and some other tasty dishes for you.
There will be plenty of “liquid” refreshments to go along with the above mentioned foods.

Please feel free to take a ride or walk before, after or during the event.

Please do RSVP us so that we can plan appropriately.

RSVP to MTCoOffice@montourtrail.org. or call the office at 412-257-3011.

Note: There will be a small ceremony honoring the 20 years of open trail in this area.

We hope to see you at this picnic, and we are considering making this an annual event.