Note of thanks from past-president Stan Sattinger

Dear Friends:

Looking back over the first four years of the Montour Trail Council’s growth, I continue to realize how critically timed our project was. Had we come along only three to six months later than we did, we may well have been too late to rescue the valuable and beautiful resource that once had been the Montour Railroad.

I also get a sense of the many key milestones that our Group has achieved—most notably the acquisition of 39 miles of right-of-way and the preservation, for safety’s sake, of most of its grade-separated highway crossings. Recalling our initial vision of completing the Montour Trail construction project in a three to five-year period, I realize how little we perceived of the incredible level of detail that is actually required to put a 55-mile rail-trail project into being. Our optimism has served us well by giving us a positive approach to the necessary tasks.

Most gratifying to me has been the rallying of an ever-increasing number of supporters to our project, ranging from dues-paying individuals and group members, to supportive elected officials and foundation directors, to construction and maintenance workers, to Trail Representatives and Directors. You, the Trail volunteers, have taken on this project as your own, and it is your enthusiastic commitment and willingness to sweat and put in long hours that are building the Montour Trail. Our Trail is living proof that citizen action does make a difference.

I know that Jack will lead the Trail Council to many further accomplishments. Please keep your dreams for the Trail alive, and nourish them by staying involved. I am truly grateful for the many things that you all have done to make this project a success, and my association with you has meant a great deal to me. Thanks.

Stan

Spring comes early to the Montour Trail

A springlike day in February made lots of people like Chuck and Kate Davis, on the Findlay section, put on their shades and take off their coats...

while the entrance to the National Tunnel in Cecil is still blocked by waist high piles of ice. At least the ice stalactites are gone!

Photos by T. Killmeyer

Bethel Update

by Peter Kohnke

The Bethel branch is proposed to start at the corner of Logan and Irishtown Roads, go past Washington School, cross over Clifton Road on a bridge, and continue on to connect with the Montour Trail in Peters Township. Despite having more homes closer to the trail than any other segment of equal length, there has been widespread support for the trail throughout the community.

After the Montour Railroad stopped running trains on it, the land was sold by the railroad to West Penn Power Co., who then placed a transmission line along it. The Montour Trail Council is negotiating with West Penn Power to find a mutually satisfying way for us to put down a trail. We will keep you informed.
Letters

Editor,

The rules signs, mile posts and crossing signs you see along the trail couldn’t have been built and put in place without the help of a lot of people and I’d like to take this opportunity to belatedly thank them. First, Paul Ostergaard did the design work on the chevron we use on the mile markers and rules signs. Once again, nice job Paul. Bev Krchmar and the gang at Alpha Screen Graphics printed the mile posts, rules signs and crossing arrows, A&H Equipment supplied the standard traffic signs. Andy Poole donated the space age plastic that covers the rules signs. Byron S. Rose, boy architect, generously donated use of his radial arm saw to do the special milling work on the rules signs. The neighborhood urchins Matt Friedhoff and Kevin Muck, were indispensable in helping me assemble the rules signs, as was Jim Bukovac. My neighbor Herb Haughin supplied much free labor and moral support. Jack Swisher was generous with some time on his radial arm saw also. There were quite a few guys on Tim Killmeyer’s construction gang who did a great job of putting the signs in place. I don’t know who you all were, but thanks gentlemen.

If you have any comments, criticisms, or just want to shoot the breeze about trail signs, give me a call. I welcome your input and will be more than happy to put you to work on the sign gang.

Bill Metzger

Donations over $250 must have receipt

According to the new tax rules enacted by the IRS, all claimed tax deductions from contributions over $250 to non-profit organizations must be accompanied by a receipt or other form of verification from the organization. It is the policy of the Montour Trail Council to acknowledge all gifts over $250 with a letter of thanks which includes the amount donated. If you have not received such a letter from us because of an oversight on our part, do not hesitate to call us at the number on the left, or call Nancy Reed at 921-0356.

Apology

The picture of the “hunter” which accompanied the article about hunters on the trail in the last issue of the TRAIL-LETTER was not meant to demean hunters or the sport of hunting in any way and I apologize if anyone was offended by the graphic which was only meant to draw attention to the article. Tim
MARCH 12 Work party, Robinson/Moon Townships, meet at Robinson Petroleum at 9:00am. Lunch provided. Call 262-3748 for more info.

MARCH 21 MTC Board Meeting, Second floor of 441 Smithfield St. across from Kaufmann's, 6:00pm. All MTC members are welcome to attend. Call Jack at 221-7708 for more info or to get on the agenda.

MARCH 26 Work party, Findlay/N. Fayette Townships, 9:00. Call 695-0134 for details.

MARCH 27 Mountain bike ride, Jefferson/S. Park area, 10:30am, approx. 2 hours. Call 384-3135 to confirm and to find out where to meet. Will be on and off the trail.

APRIL 9 Work party, N. Fayette/Findlay Townships, 9:00am. Call 695-0134 for more details.

APRIL 5 Cecil Friends of the Trail meeting, Cecil American Legion, 7:30. Call 221-6406 for details.

APRIL 16 Work party, Findlay/N. Fayette, 9:00. Call 695-0134 for meeting place. Lunch provided.

APRIL 18 MTC Board Meeting, see March for details.

APRIL 23 Trout Tournament, Moon/Robinson section of Montour Run Creek. See page 4 for details.

APRIL 24 Mountain bike ride in woods surrounding Moon and Robinson sections of trail. 10:30 at Robinson Petroleum Co. Bring water and plan on getting muddy. Call 787-1472 for more information.

MAY 3 Cecil Friends of the Trail meeting, Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, 7:30. Call 221-6406

HELP WANTED
As the trail becomes greater in length and the organization becomes larger, it is necessary for more people to take on some tasks to make the workload lighter for everyone involved. Please consider this list to see if you or someone you know might be able to spare a little time to make this trail become a reality a little faster. EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY.

- **Quartermaster/Supply coordinator**— Over the last two building seasons, we have accumulated many tools and building supplies (nails, bolts, lumber, fence posts, etc.). We have storage areas for these things, but we need someone to keep track of them so that we don’t over-order and so that the trailblazers know where to find them if they need them. You might also be responsible for finding the best prices and ordering new stock as needed.

- **Equipment coordinator/maintainer**— Would work closely with quartermaster in keeping our tractor, chainsaws, portable generators, brush whackers and other equipment in good working condition.

- **Public event display coordinator**— Person to keep track of our display booth and all its accouterments. Also could help schedule volunteers to man the displays.

- **Volunteer coordinator**— Would help us achieve matches between the tasks which need to be accomplished and our list of volunteers who are waiting to be called.

- **Phone chain person**— to help volunteer coordinator

- **Carpenter/Cabinetmaker**— to repair our wind damaged display booth.

- **Marketeer**— to prepare press releases, handle other media contacts, and distribute Trail user surveys.

- **People to supply** their local bike store, sport shop or other local businesses with trail brochures on a regular basis.

Please contact Jack Swisher at 221-7708 if you or anyone you know would be interested in helping us in these vital tasks.

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.
Forest Grove Sportsmen's Association to hold 5th Annual Trout Fishing Tournament at trail on Saturday, April 23

by Tim Killmeyer

The Forest Grove Sportsmen's Association has announced that their 5th annual Trout Fishing Tournament will take place on Saturday, April 23 at the Montour Run Creek in Robinson and Moon Townships. The club is located next to the trail on Hickman Rd. near where the trail crosses the bottom of Ewings Mill and Hassam Roads. Dennis Early, chairman of the tournament, says that cash prizes and trophies will be awarded to holders of the first through fifth largest fish. Prizes will also be awarded to the first through third place winners in the children's category.

According to Early, The Sportsmen's Association, which pays for the stocking of the creek out the club's treasury, has increased this years stocking to over 2,000 trout. Those who register before April 17, pay only $8.00, after that the registration fee is $10.00. The sportsmen are also offering a pancake breakfast in conjunction with the tournament. The breakfast starts at 5:00 am and costs $2.50 per person. For more information, call the sportsmen at 269-0942, and don't forget to tell them you heard it here.

Leash your pet!

Now that spring is in the air, it is time to remind people that one of the few trail rules is to leash all pets. There are many reasons for this rule. First, it protects your dog. Your dog may be the most lovable dog in the world, but if your's can run loose, so can everybody else's. We have already had reports of dog fights on the trail. Second is consideration for other trail users who prefer not to have dogs (even cute, cuddly ones like yours) approach them on the trail. Believe it or not, some people actually don't like dogs! Third, and some would say most important, is that it is easier to drag your dog off to the side of the trail if he/she starts to "make doo-doo" on the trail surface. The conscientious dog owner would make sure any stray droppings find themselves out of harms way.

Remember, your dog does not know whether or not he is on a leash, all he knows is that he is out with his master or mistress having a good time. He is not going to go home and mope around just because you did not take him off the leash. Please be considerate to your fellow trail users.
ATTENTION

The Montour Trail Council would like to gratefully acknowledge the recent donation of $1,100 for 1994 from Roy Wel and Mary Shaw following their 1993 donation of $1,000.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
☆ Jack L. Acker
☆ Mike Gambell
☆ John Funke
☆ Leslie Gottschalk
☆ Albert W. Pettit
☆ Joyce Waslosky
☆ John D. Wicker
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 they apply for grants.

Volunteer Profile: Meet Nile M. Douglas by Tim Killmeyer

Nile Douglas of Cecil became involved with the Montour Trail Council during one of its recruiting drives in that area and quickly became involved in the preparation and construction of the Cecil segment. He not only came out practically every Saturday during the Spring and Summer of '92 but also devoted many Sundays and weekdays to the project. He can still be found planting tree seedlings, cutting grass and doing other sorts of trail maintenance in the Cecil area. He is also a charter member and promoter of the Cecil Friends of the Trail group.

Nile, 69 this June, will be married 17 years this year to his wife, Audrey. He has two sons, Rick, a contractor, and Ronal, a riverboat captain. A native of Rock Cave, West Virginia, near Buckhannon in Upshure County, Nile came to Baden at the age of sixteen and eventually wound up working at United Dairy. After serving in Europe during WWII, he returned and found employment at the American Bridge Co. in Ambridge. He retired from there after 35 years, 29 of which he spent as a state certified safety inspector.

Among his various pursuits, he acquired a private pilot’s license which he used to stunt fly Stearman biplanes in local airshows in the late fifties and early sixties. He has also been active with the American Legion in various capacities since 1953 and custom builds trailers for tractors in his spare time.

So if you see Nile on the trail, give him a big HELLO and THANK YOU.

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 $5
☐ INDIVIDUAL $15
☐ FAMILY $25
☐ ORGANIZATION $50
☐ SUPPORTING $50
☐ SUSTAINING $100
☐ CORPORATE $250

(Membership is tax deductible)

By applying for membership in the Montour Trail Council, I indicate my support of its goals.

SIGNATURE

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 is available as a United Way donor option where you work.