Montour Trail begins to benefit local economy

by Tim Killmeyer

Ask any of the local sporting goods shops and bicycle shops and they will tell you - sales of bicycles, bicycle related equipment and running equipment are booming; and it is largely do to the numbers of people using the Montour Trail since was built. Now we have the opening of a business that would not be if not for the construction of the Trail.

The Imperial Bike Rental shop opened on Memorial Day weekend of this year. It is located halfway between Miles 8 & 9 on the Trail, about 100 yards downstream of the future Findlay Community center and Museum. With a variety of bicycles for any age member of the family, and a repair section offering parts and accessories.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 SEE "RENTALS"

Trail Council promotes more Trail in Washington County

by Judy Thompson

The Montour Trail Council sponsored a breakfast for Washington County public officials at the Quicksilver Golf Club on July 23. Guests included Washington County Commissioners Diana Ivey and J. Bracken Burns, supervisors from Robinson, Smith, and Peters Townships, and Borough representatives from Burgettstown, McDonald, and Midway. State Senators J. Barry Stout and D. Michael Fischer sent members of their staffs.

Montour Trail Council Board members shared background about the Trail and plans for completion this year of a three mile segment from Noblestown Rd. just outside of McDonald to State Route 980 near the entrance to Quicksilver. The new "Panhandle Trail" from Carnegie to Weirton was also discussed. The event gave the Trail Council an opportunity to provide some history of and to extol the virtues of the Trail while getting acquainted with the communities that are Trail neighbors.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 SEE BIG PICTURE

Pittsburgh to D.C. master plan in the works

by Dick Quasey

In June the physical features of the Montour Trail were explored and evaluated by Mackin Engineering (RIDC Park West). The Allegheny Trail Alliance, on behalf of its members, has contracted with Mackin to produce a Master Plan for the development of a contiguous hiking/biking trail from Pittsburgh to Washington D.C. and beyond.

This Master Plan will identify the steps necessary to complete the interstate project, make forecast regarding construction costs, and...
Editor's Observations

Slow but steady wins the race; A penny saved is a penny earned; A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; Remember the Alamo! These are the kinds of maxims that come to mind when thinking about the work of the MTC this year (well, maybe not the last one, but I always liked that one). We have built some trail this year. The grand openings might have to wait until next Spring, but the segments are ready for your enjoyment. Our fundraising committee has raised more than 4/5 of the amount needed to match our ISTEA money and the preliminary studies have been completed that will enable us to start spending that ISTEA money. The contracts to begin the South Park segment has been put out to bid and work could start anytime soon. A gazebo rest stop has been donated and moved to the Trail and a our first major outside event (the IKEA 1/2 Marathon) is scheduled for early September and should bring us some much needed publicity. Our local Friends of the Trail groups have proved their dedication by dealing with everything from fallen trees and busted up bridges to major washouts of whole sections of trail.

And it's all done by volunteers! If you couldn't find the time to give us at least one day this year, please consider looking at your 1997 calendars and setting aside a day for us next year.

For those of you that helped us at the Rib Cook-Off this year, you should know that the money that we receive from it this year will go to buy surface material for the new Robinson, Washington County segment. Whenever you use it you will be riding or walking on the fruit of your labor this past Labor Day weekend.

On a personal note, it has become increasingly clear over the past few weeks, that as much as I hate to say it, it might be time for me to pass on the baton of editor to another dedicated trail person. I will do it as long as necessary, but if there is someone out there who thinks they might like to give it a go, call my MTC voice mailbox at 257-2328. When I started I was a computer illiterate and had never used any publishing software, but in two months I put the newsletter into the form you are holding now. Whoever takes it over would be free to put in any form they wish. If you like this format, I can give you the blank pages on a diskette. PLEASE HELP!

T.M. D.

OW

ING!

Tim

Letters

THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER welcomes all questions and comments. Please send all correspondence to the address on the left.

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.
- **MTC Board Meeting**, every third Monday of the month - Second floor of Chartiers Valley High School, in the Library. 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 Marshall at 531-8628 for more information or to get on the agenda.

- **Cecil Friends of the Trail meeting**, every first Tuesday of the month - in the Boy Scout room at the Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, 7:30. Call 221-6406.

- **Work & Clean-up party**, Cecil segment, every third Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Kernick Tract parking area. Call 221-6406 for more information.

- **Moon/Robinson Friends of the Trail meeting**, Every Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00. At All Occasion Catering party room near the intersection of Silver Lane and Clever Rd.s in Robinson Twp. Anyone from the communities near Moon and Robinson are encouraged to attend. Call 859-3020 for more information.

- **Work & Clean-up party**, Moon/Robinson segment, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at North Star Petroleum (Formerly Robinson Petroleum). Call 262-3748 for more information.

- **Findlay/ North Fayette Friends of the Trail** Call Don at 899-3695 for more information.

- **Work & Clean-up party**, Findlay/North Fayette segment, every fourth Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Enlow Ballfield. Call 695-2354 for more information.

- **Montour Trail Council Annual Meeting** - Date to be announced. Either Nov. 17 (1st choice) or 10th A separate mailing will be sent. New format this year will be a meeting with an optional dinner afterward at a local restaurant. This way we hope that more families can attend the meeting without having to spend beaucoup bucks for a dinner. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

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**Local volunteers restore Trail surface in Moon Township**

Pfieffer, Dick Quasey, Bob Boyce, Karen washed out sections of Trail near the Boyce, Ted Weidner, John Hooton, Janet Enlow Tunnel and along with the DeLost, and Dean Arlett. They all agree volunteers, deserves our thanks. • that a small dump truck would have

been a great asset in their work. (HINT, HINT)

**Besides being a six**

week nuisance to the daily Trail user, the section needed to be spruced up before the big IKEA 1/2 Marathon on Sept. 14. (If you receive this before the 14th, remember, the Trail will be closed from dawn to 11:00 A.M. on that day.)

The Findlay Township Road Crew has been working feverishly to patch the

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**On August 16 and 17 a group of dedicated Trail volunteers met to restore the washout that occurred on the Trail between Mile 4.5 and Mile 5 (the Kmart entrance to the Wickes entrance). Runoff from Montour Run Rd. During one of this year’s gully washers had eliminated most traces of the original surface material. The volunteers included: Dennis**
Cecil Friends of the Trail keeping Washington County covered

by Don Berty

The Cecil Friends of the Trail group will man a booth at the Cecil Twp. Indian Summer Festival in Cecil Park. The festival will be held on September 28 and 29 from 9 to 9 on Saturday and 9 to 7 on Sunday. The Friends have participated in the festival since its inception. They will be answering questions and passing out Trail literature as well as helping with the parking for the festival. Special Montour Trail walking Sticks will be available for sale by the Friends. All proceeds will go toward maintaining the Trail - so GET A STICK!

This past summer the Friends, under the guidance of Ed Dagnal, president of Pro Green Inc., applied Round Up to the Cecil portion of the Trail surface to kill the unwanted vegetation in the middle of the Trail. Ed donated the herbicide as he did last year when he also applied it. According to regular Trail users this is an ongoing (as well as expensive) problem that has to be dealt with.

Eagle Scout candidate helps Trail - gets closer to award

by Dave Carlson

During the week of July 22, 1996, Gregg Campbell of Boy Scout Troop 65, Mt. Lebanon, Pa. organized a volunteer group of scouts to perform remedial repairs to the steel bents of the Library Trestle in South Park Twp. This work was performed by Mr. Campbell as partial fulfillment of his requirements to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout.

Gregg organized and coordinated the work of ten scouts, who performed over 110 hours of combined volunteer service during this period. The scouts prepared the lower steel portions of six bridge piers using wire brushes and scrapers, then applied a rust inhibiting primer and paint, protecting the bridge piers from further deterioration. The first forty feet of each pier was prepared and painted.

Mr. Campbell's group did a very thorough and professional job and the Trail Council thanks them wholeheartedly.
Welcome New Members

- Gerald & Ann Bates
- John & Harriet Burress
- Gilda DeFerrari
- Dana & Terry Divelbliss
- Stephen D. Hansen
- Diana Irey
- Ray Johnston
- John H. Kunkel, Jr.
- David H. Pokorski
- Frank & Donna Sonnett
- Ron Virgi
- Charles T. Wright

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.

The Big Picture

Prioritize acquisition and construction activities for each of the ATA members and the ATA overall. Besides the Montour Trail Council other groups belonging to the ATA include the Three Rivers Heritage Trail, Youghiogheny River Trail (north and south), Steel Heritage Trail, and Allegheny Highlands Trail (Pa. and Md.).

Mackin will present its findings to all the groups at a meeting to be held on November 15. All interested persons are welcome to attend. Watch for more announcements about other details.

United Way Contributor Choice Program begins in September

The Montour Trail Council continues to be among the agencies that are approved to receive donations under the United Way Contributors Choice Option. This means that once again, when the United Way volunteer at your business or corporation comes around to solicit from you, you can direct that a certain percentage of your United Way contributions for the coming year go to the Montour Trail Council. Just list Contributor Choice Option #3308 on the form you will be asked to fill out.

In the past, gifts to the Montour Trail via Contributors Choice have amounted to several thousand dollars per year. Please remember the Montour Trail and request option #3308 during the upcoming United Way pledge campaign at your workplace this fall.

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
- BENEFACCTOR $250 + 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 (day time) (evening)

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:

MONTOURI 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 where you work.
HAVE YOU WONDERED...
HOW ARE OUR FINANCES MONTH TO MONTH?

Average unrestricted income/month
(Membership dues, United Way, License Fees, Interest Income) $4800.00

Minimum monthly expenses
John Deere tractor payments 502.00
Legal expenses 3000.00
Potty or storage rental 325.00
Newsletter expenses 300.00
Telephone 60.00
Membership support 190.00
Other: Average trailbuilding, dues, taxes & maintenance expenses 2100.00

Total average expenses $6477.00
So, on average we spend more each month than we take in.

HOW CAN WE BUILD TRAIL THIS YEAR? YOU MIGHT WELL ASK.
HERE IS WHAT MONEY WE HAVE FOR TRAIL BUILDING

MONEY IN THE BANK
Fidelity Money Market Fund $207,775.00
PNC Money Market Fund (Legislative Initiative $)
7,500.00

EXPECTED INCOME THIS YEAR FOR BUILDING TRAIL

Keystone Grant (For South Park) $50,000.00
Keystone Grant (For Donaldson Property) 3,750.00
ARAD (1996) (For South Park) 45,000.00
ARAD (1997- not funded -only requested 75,000.00
ARAD=Allegheny Regional Assets District

TOTAL $389,025.00

BUT HERE IS MONEY WE HAVE COMMITTED TO SPEND (IN COMING YEAR?)

TO SUPPLEMENT MONTHLY BILL PAYING ($2000/MO.) $12,000.00

COMMITTED TO MATCHING
ISTEA Matching $140,000.00
Keystone Grant Matching 50,000.00

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
Hendersonville 1,800.00
Re-design of Park Manor Blvd 1,800.00
Parking lot Hassam Rd. (est. $1200, MTC pays 1/2) 600.00
South Park Section Contract 145,000.00
South Park Volunteer's Construction 7,500.00
Pan-handle Trail Partial Appraisal 1,500.00**
Storm damage 10,000.00

PROPERTY AQUISITION
Dick Corp. 25,000.00**
Pelesky and Cooper Properties 10,000.00**
Donaldson (50% from DEC, 50% MTC) 3,750.00**
Appraisal 1,000.00
Bethel Branch Appraisal 2,500.00

BRIDGE
IndustrialSteelBridge 4,200.00

TOTAL $416,650.00

**from hoped for 1997 ARAD money
Some of you may know Bill Metzger, the “Yoda” of Western PA Rail-Trails. You may also know that he has gamely suffered with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) for the past 17 years while he has work tirelessly to promote the rails-to-trails concept. (MTL editors note: Bill is a founding father of the Montour Trail Council, serving as a Board Member for the past 7 years, the last 3 as secretary, and has been our one man speakers bureau, delivering talks to countless groups on behalf of the MTC.) He is a walking encyclopedia of railroad information and draws people to the trail organizations with his genuine love of people, bicycling, and nature.

Bill’s condition has worsened over the past year. His doctor advised him of a new treatment for MS in Europe that could help him. Bill applied to the clinic in Germany and was accepted as a good candidate for the treatment. The three week regimen will cost him big bucks and isn’t covered under his medical insurance.

Dick Wilson, a local rail-trail giant in his own right, is organizing a fundraising dinner to help Bill pay his bills. His intention are not completely pure. The main focus of the event will be a “roast” for Bill Metzger. If you know Bill you have enjoyed his outrageous sense of humor and have probably been a victim of his rapier wit. It is suspected that Dick Wilson’s real reason for “roasting” Bill is to get even for all the bad lawyer jokes.

With “Smilin’ Bill” as the catalyst, it should be an outrageous evening you won’t want to miss. For more information call George Schmidt at 521-1538. See details below.

BILL METZGER ROAST
September 29, 1996
5:30 P.M., Casual Attire
SPECTRUM HALL, East Smithfield St, BOSTON, PA.
HONORARY CHAIRMEN

Donation: $20.00 per person through September 22nd
          $25.00 per person after September 22nd

NAME(S)__________________________

Number of people attending__________ at $20 / $25 each ______

additional donation ________

Total ______

Checks payable to: Friends of Bill Metzger
Send this form to:
Tim Banfield, c/o MYTC, P.O. Box 14, McKeesport, PA 15135
Elvis spotted on Montour Trail?

see page 12

The winning ticket will be drawn at the MTC's annual meeting in November, 1996.

Oakhurst, PA 15071
709 Dinmont Hill Road
C/o Jack Swieten
Montour Trail Council

The completed tickets along with a check made payable to the "Montour Trail Council" should be sent to:

Phone: ____________________
Address: ____________________

$3.00 per ticket or 2 for $5.00 - Please photocopy blank tickets for family, friends, and co-workers.

Montour Trail Council Bike Raffle

The winning ticket will be selected from a drawing at our annual meeting which will be held in the fall (see Calendar on page 3).

Oakhurst, PA 15071
709 Dinmont Hill Road
C/o Jack Swieten

Montour Trail Council is pleased to announce that Imperial Bike Rental has donated a bicycle which will be raffled to raise money.