Montour Run Stream Bank Project completed

by Stan Sattinger

The end of June marked the successful completion of the Montour Run Stream Bank Stabilization Project, conducted by the Montour Run Watershed Association with the cooperation and support of the MTC.

Temporarily using portions of the Airport-area section of the Trail as a hauling road, the construction subcontractor, BKG Inc., trucked 1,600 tons of carbonate rip-rap rock material to twelve different sites along the main trunk of Montour Run. Using a backhoe to place this heavy material, BKG built up rock linings that will protect the heavily eroded stream banks against further scouring due to high-velocity flows of storm water during future heavy rains.

These protective linings should eliminate or greatly retard the undercutting that has been threatening portions of the Trail in recent years. The reductions in siltation that will occur in future years will be beneficial to aquatic life in the stream and will also help reduce losses in the depth of the flow channel, helping to cut down on the severity of flash flooding.

A total of 1460 lineal feet of stabilizing rock layers were installed, up substantially from the 830 lineal feet originally proposed, and this work was performed within the original budget. Credit for the extension of the length of rock layers goes to BKG for having performed in an excellent manner at a low contract price.

Much of the detailed technical work of surveying and mapping the stabilization sites, applying for agency permits, calculating material quantities, and preparing bidding docu-

Continued on page 6...

Fort Cherry Friends’ Trail clearing nearly complete

by John Wasco

The newly formed Fort Cherry Friends of the Montour Trail has been hard at work this spring and summer clearing a heavily wooded section of trail south of the McDonald Trestle. Nearly every Saturday since April 7 and now Tuesday and Thursday evenings as well, a small but dedicated group of trail grubbers have shown up with saws, loppers, trimmers and lots of determination to clear this mile and a half section of trail in Mt. Pleasant Township of Washington County from the trestle to Penny Lane in Primrose. In spite of several cases of poison ivy, a few insect bites, and one flat tire, the initial clearing work is nearly complete. Now the work requiring heavier equipment to pull tree stumps and cut the heaviest brush looms.

In the near future the section of trail from the Route 22 overpass to the Quicksilver Bridge will be complete and a continuous section of trail from Mile 0 to

Continued on page 5...
Hi All,

Let me fantasize with you a bit. I am a firm believer in forethought. I want to know what’s at the end of the road before I get there, or eliminate problems before they happen. For example, if it was decided to replace the existing bridge over Montour Creek at the intersection of Park Manor Boulevard and Montour Run Road, wouldn’t it be a wonderful undertaking if the MTC and the developer could jointly reconfigure our Trail's path to travel under the bridge, along the creek to the other side (at little or no cost to the MTC, of course)? This would totally eliminate trail-users crossing a very busy intersection that promises to become even busier once the Robinson Mall opens.

Still, there are other means of applying greater safety measures at this intersection such as, crosswalk lines painted on the roadway, separate turning lanes, and better pedestrian crossing signals. But, in my opinion, no matter how many safety measures are applied to this area, the former suggestion reigns premier.

Progress is fine. Development, (even when it disturbs our peaceful visuals of greenspace), is also fine, especially when accomplished with the total picture in mind. How’s that for a fantasy?

Happy Trails,

Debby
Calendar of Events

* Allegheny County Rib Cook-Off – August 31, Sept. 1, 2, & 3, 2001 at Rib Park. To volunteer, call John Hooton at (W) 412-257-4101, or (H) 724-942-0115.


* IKEA/Montour Trail 1/2 Marathon and 5K Run & Walk – September 8, 2001. To participate, apply online at http://www.montourtrail.org/race. To volunteer, call 412-343-4294 and leave a message, or send email to: race@montourtrail.org.

* That Dam Ride to Confluence – September 8 & 9, 2001. For more information or to register call 412-462-5328, or e-mail to: info@thatdamride.org. You can also register from the Web site at: 222.thatdamride.org


* MTC Annual Dinner Meeting – November 11, 2001. See page 5 for more information.

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 412-854-1635 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 in the new Cecil Township Municipal Building located beside Cecil Park on Rt. 50. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.

  Work & Clean-up party, every third Saturday of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Storage shed at Hendersonville. Call 412-257-2553 for more information.

♦ 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 Mckown 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 party, (trail clearing from McDonald Trestle to Cecil Twp.) every Saturday this summer. Volunteers are needed. For more information, contact John Wasko at 724-796-3781, or Joe S. at 724-693-2523.
President Kohnke has been enjoying a well-earned vacation. The "Prez Sez" column will return in our next issue.

— Editor

...and the PREZ sez...

by Peter Kohnke

The Value of Membership

by Bruce Barron

The Montour Trail Council's board members don't have easy jobs—the monthly meetings are longer than those of any nonprofit board I've ever known, and the additional time expectations between meetings are substantial. But in one sense we are spoiled: we don't have to work hard to maintain our membership.

Many organizations offer special gifts to get people to join. They hire telemarketing firms to persuade members to keep contributing. Or they do aggressive recruiting to make up for annual attrition as half their previous members choose not to renew.

The Montour Trail Council board has discussed those approaches and decided against them. We do have plenty of attractive paraphernalia available for those who are interested—such as hats, key chains, shirts, and cups bearing our logo—but we haven't wanted to take on the logistical demands and added cost of mailing them out as premiums. We felt telemarketing would leave the wrong taste in too many people's mouths. Even handing out "please become a member" flyers to trail users seemed a little too pushy to some.

Despite the lack of aggressive methods, and even though this excellent newsletter is virtually the only special benefit we offer, we have 800 members and a yearly renewal rate of over 85 percent.

This solid grass-roots support covers our standard yearly operating expenses and enables our volunteer board members to focus on other concerns rather than membership recruitment. It also greatly strengthens our case every time we ask for funding from any government agency, private foundation, or corporate sponsor.

While the board is deeply appreciative of our faithful members, however, we also recognize that 800 families represent a relatively small fraction of our thousands of frequent trail users. In addition to continuing your own support, you can help us by reminding other users that we are not a branch of government, and that there is a direct connection between how many $25 and $35 contributions we receive each year and our ability to resurface worn-down trail sections or repair benches.

Continued growth in membership would also keep the board from feeling the need for other less subtle reminders, such as donation boxes with recommended "user fees."

We would welcome your suggestions of other ways in which we can make your membership more valuable, so you are never tempted to join the ranks of the Montour Trail freeloaders. In the meantime, we commit ourselves to continuing to send you this informative, timely newsletter six times a year, to efficient use of funds, and to never taking this wonderful members for granted.

Thank you!

Georgetown Bridge update

by Dick Quasey

The "Off-the-Trail-Gang" (most of the same people responsible for the Quicksilver Bridge construction) has cleaned the abutments and set concrete forms. On Saturday, August 11, reinforcing will be set. Concrete might be placed the following Saturday, the 18th. Specific arrangements have to be made and a firm date has to be set beforehand to assure traffic control and the availability of special equipment. Removal of forms will immediately follow.

Reinstallation of the bridge structure might occur in late August if arrangements with the erector, PADOT, and Cecil Township are completed by then.

Status of TEA 21 Project – Phase 1

(McDonald Trestle Bridge to Chartiers Creek)

by Dick Quasey

In early August the design drawings were approved and now the completion of all of the construction documents (drawings, specifications and contract conditions) is expected in mid-September. PADOT approval of these documents ought to be given by late October. Advertising for bids then could occur in early November and receipt of bids in mid-December.

With the award of a construction contract for Phase 1 in early January, construction should actually start in late February.
Welcome New Members

Membership Chairman: Jerry Agin
Irving & Janet Selsley
C. Simmons
Russell C. Sovek
Guy Troy
Mike Valoski
Fred & Cissy Volk

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.

Benefactors

Gwen & Jeff Steigerwalt

Leaders Circle

Hugh & Eliza Nevin

Fort Cherry Friends...

...continued from page 1

Mile 17 at Noblestown Road will be open. Further in the future not too long, we hope the McDonald Trestle will be rehabilitated and opened to trail use. And when the first riders cross that newly opened trestle they will find a lovely wooded section of trail waiting for them, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Fort Cherry Friends.

MTC’s Annual Dinner Meeting

The Montour Trail Council’s Annual Dinner Meeting will be held at the Activities Center in Findlay Township on Sunday, November 11, 2001 at 5:00 p.m. Brochures containing more information on the event, as well as the voting ballot, will be mailed to all members.

Please remember to return your ballot and registration form (with payment) by the date specified in the brochure. If you need further information on the event, please call Judy Thompson at 412-922-1702. Hope to see you there!

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/SENIORS $15
- INDIVIDUAL $25
- FAMILY $35
- SUPPORTING $50
- SUSTAINING $100
- BENEFACCTOR $250
- LEADERS CIRCLE $500 + 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 (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 toll-free, 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.
Cecil Township happenings

by Dennis Sims

The annual Indian Summer Festival at Cecil Park will be held the final weekend of September. Festivities begin Friday evening, September 28 and will last until Sunday, September 30. Lots of arts and craft exhibits, and plenty of food will be available. Be sure to stop by the main refreshment stand next to the ball field; Cecil Friends' Frank Ludwin is planning to do some of the cooking. You won't be sorry. Also, just up the pathway towards the parking lot, you will find the Cecil Friends representing the Montour Trail as they proudly do year after year.

After several months of inactivity last fall and over the winter, the Cecil Friends have gotten their act back together and have been busy working on the Trail. A special thank you goes to Frank Ludwin who has been operating the equipment to remove trees, grading parking areas and drilling holes for signposts and fence posts. Also, thank you to Dan Jones for his diligent grass mowing. The old Ford tractor, which powers the mower, will only behave for him. He knows just the right words of kindness.

The Friends also have a new meeting place — the caucus room of the new Cecil Township Municipal Building, which is adjacent to Cecil Park. Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

Trail users can also look forward to bulletin boards at Kernicks and the Cecil Park entrance area to let them know about trail events. Steve Dristas, son of Bo and Joan Dristas who are active Cecil Friends, will be constructing them as part of his Eagle Scout project. He also is planning a memorial garden in memory of Don Berty, deceased former president of Cecil Friends.

The Friends are gearing up to take on the start of a major project. The National Tunnel, which takes the Trail under Klinger Road experiences lots of water drips inside during rainy periods. The drips are signs of saturated soil on the outside of the concrete liner. The problem is to find a way to detour the water and stop the dripping. So far there has been only some spalling of the concrete but it is sure to get worse, if steps are not taken to correct it. The first plan of action is to attempt to clean out the drain holes that are about 12 feet above the floor of the tunnel. That could prove to be an interesting project. Stay tuned.

Montour Stream Bank...

...continued from page 1

ments was performed by Allegheny County Engineer and MTC Board Member Dave Wright, with help from Pete Merther of the Findlay/North Fayette Friends. In addition to these individuals, the Watershed Association is grateful to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Mining and Reclamation, for having funded this work under a $62,000 Watershed Restoration and Partnership Act grant.

Montour Trail Orientation Workshop

A Trail Orientation Workshop will be offered to MTC board members on September 22, 2001. All other interested members may attend.

The purpose of this session is to familiarize the newest board members with the Montour Trail organization. It will include: highlights of its history; funding and financial status; review property ownership; status of Trail development; and future activities and goals. If a tour of the Trail is warranted thereafter, arrangements will be made for another time.

If you plan to attend this workshop, which will extend from morning until early afternoon, call Ned Williams to reserve. Make sure to give him your phone number or email address so that you can be notified as to the exact times and location of this session. If there are too many people for the MTC office to accommodate, arrangements will be made at a nearby establishment.

Call now. Ned can be reached at:
(W) 724-225-7470, Ext. 221 or (H) 724-225-9856.

Guidance provided by Project Officer Lou DiLiasio and Project Advisor John Davidson was also very much appreciated.
Development adjacent to the Montour Trail

by Dennis Pfieffer

The townships in the Western part of Allegheny County are experiencing tremendous growth. The building of retail, office complexes, and housing continues to occur at a rapid pace. Some of this development is now occurring adjacent to the Montour Trail.

Last year the Montour Trail Council (MTC) was fortunate to purchase the first 7.3 miles of the underlying trail right-of-way from the defunct Montour Railroad. This right-of-way is for the most part 60 ft. wide. While 60 ft. leaves plenty of room for the trail, it unfortunately does not allow the MTC to preserve the entire corridor as green space.

The MTC has received numerous questions recently relative to a couple of adjacent developments. One is a Costco store in Robinson Township and the other is a housing development off Hassam Road in Moon Township. MTC representatives have met with the developers at both sites to gather information about their particular projects.

The Costco development is adjacent to the trail at mile 4.1 near Park Manor Boulevard to the "Volunteer" bridge at about mile 3.9. The property has been cleared from the road leading to Kaufmann's towards the trail leaving a thin line of trees on the hillside cut above the Montour Run stream. A review of the plans with the contractor shows the cleared area nearest the trail by the "Volunteer" bridge is to become a water retention basin. In a meeting with the developer, he stated they are considering setting aside a significant portion of property East of this development as a conservation area. Robinson Township also mentioned the possibility of the developer creating this conservation area.

The second development is for housing in Moon Township off Hassam Road, and is far less obtrusive than the Costco development. This development itself is not adjacent to the trail, but on top of Hassam Road towards Montour Street Extension in Moon Township. Visible to trail users are only two 40 ft. wide tree clearings. The first is at mile 1.4 at Hassam Road and the second is near mile 1.0. The first cut is for a sewer connection under the trail at mile 1.4. The second cut near mile 1.0 is for a new and very interesting forward thinking concept for a housing development in Moon Township. The developer via a walking trail has agreed to connect the housing plan to the Montour Trail.

The Montour Trail Council has highly encouraged these types of connections with most developers, and was pleasantly surprised when the developer decided to make this connection at his own expense.

The MTC will continue to monitor these projects and present updates as appropriate.

A possible South Park connection

According to an article in the Tribune-Review by Susan K. Schmeichel, it was reported that Republican councilman from Bethel Park, Vince Gastgeb, would like to see a partnership between Allegheny County and the Montour Trail Council as a way of enhancing walking trails through the county's South Park. Linking the Montour Trail—which runs near the park's southern border—with the wooded areas of South Park would eliminate walking the present path alongside the many cars and bikes on Corrigan Drive. If the all-volunteer crews from the Montour Trail become involved, Mr. Gastgeb said, "I think we'll see a nicer track to walk on." However, since the MTC is volunteer-driven, board member Paul McKeown pointed out that lack of manpower could be a problem. "We can't hire a bunch of new people," he said. Still, partnership between the two entities would definitely benefit the MTC. "The county owns most of our trails, McKeown said. "They have been very gracious and their engineers have worked with us on the Montour Trail within Allegheny County."

Excerpts from Tribune-Review 8-9-'01
Montour Trail Map

Updated version

by Dennis Pfeiffer

The new updated 2001 version of the Montour Trail map is now available at a Montour Trail head near you. A big thanks to National City Bank for again donating funds this year to cover the entire cost of printing 25,000 maps.

Thanks also to Mr. James Steigerwald, Vice President at National City Bank in Moon Township for supporting our request for funds.

Help Wanted

The Montour Trail Council is in need of a new editor for this Trail-Letter.

Anyone interested in this all-volunteer position, please call Debby at 412-859-3917, or send email to:

Trailtalk@aol.com.

Thank you!