Burgh's Pizza & Wings Run / Walk Day on the Montour Trail - It's Family Party Time Again

What a successful and enjoyable way to help build the Montour Trail. Burgh's Pizza and Wing Pub in Bridgeville set a high standard for serious fun last April in the first year of its 10K Run and 1 Mile Walk... and the committee wants to "Double the Fun" this year.

The race was a good time last year, with cash prizes, official timing, a warm-up for the Pittsburgh Marathon, water stations, the "spooky" challenge of a semi-darkened 600-foot National Tunnel to negotiate, a disc jockey to keep you pumped, great food and the "beverage of your choice." On top of all the good times and fun: We cleared $7,000 for the Trail and Cecil Park.

This year's event will be even better. The cash prizes have been doubled and will extend into more age groups. Sunday, April 21, is the date to mark on your calendars. There's no increase in entry fees, and we're back with the 2002 edition of the popular running shorts in our race package (maybe your brother-in-law borrowed last year's and never brought them back). Plus, this year we called in advance and have ordered a sunny day.

Good news travels fast, and everything good has been said about the event. So, we are very optimistic about many more participants getting on board this year. Come back, you veterans, and bring your friends. We all need the exercise and the Trail needs to get built.

Check the enclosure in this issue of the Trail-Letter for your chance to join in all the fun and support the Montour Trail.

John Hooton
Trail Talk
from the Editor’s Desk

A warm hello to all our members!

Introductions are in order, I suppose. Debby bade you fond farewell in the last Trail-Letter, and now is my chance to greet you with a hello from your new Trail-Letter editor. The Montour Trail Council has graciously asked me to step into Debby’s shoes. By way of introduction, I have been an award-winning writer for nearly two decades, including working several years as a journalist for a daily newspaper. I have experience in public relations, advertising, corporate communications and editing. I also have been an active volunteer in the Bethel Park community.

I say these things not to boast, but out of respect for the MTC and its membership. This group has high expectations for itself, and I am not foreign to such attitudes. No doubt, at some point, your new editors will err in our efforts to bring you the best newsletter we can offer, but hopefully our oversights will be few and far between.

Change is often difficult, but it does have its rewards. Certainly, we are open to suggestion, so now is the best time to contact us (and, speaking of changes, please make note of the new post and e-mail addresses in our contact information). If you have requests or recommendations, we would love to hear from you.

Debby raised your expectations with her excellent work these past few years. While I cannot claim to be the same as Debby, I certainly shall strive to maintain her standards. Thanks to all who have helped in this transition, and thanks to all our MTC readership for making me feel welcome.

Hoping this will be the start of a beautiful friendship,

Astrid

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Calendar of Events

The Allegheny Trail Alliance
World Wide Conference
March 1-2

MTC Board Meeting
March 18

Champion Trail Opening Ceremonies
April 12

look for more information on this event on our

MTC Board Meeting
April 15

Burgh’s Pizza & Wing Pub 10K Run
April 21

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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.
IKEA Christmas Tree sale nets over $2,000 for MTC

For the fifth year in a row, a group of hearty Montour Trail supporters volunteered to help staff the IKEA Christmas Tree Sale. The sale was held December 6-9, 2001, in the always windy IKEA parking lot at Robinson Town Centre. The Trail profits when tree customers choose to have their tree put through a wrapper machine (powered by human force), and pay the Trail $3 for the service. The wrapper machine is very high-tech - completely powered by human force - and volunteers will tell you that some of those wide trees take lots of human force.

The Trail gained $2,114 through the effort this year... You do the math; that is a lot of tree wrapping. Thank you to all those who volunteered. Many did duplicate shifts and the Saturday crew withstood an all day rainstorm.

Special thanks go out to John Hooton, Peg Kester, Carl Palka, John Wasco, Ned Williams, Debby Hoerster, Meg Hoerster, Jesse Forquer, Diane Forquer, Gayle Seymour, Tim Killmeyer Barbara Rudolph, Barb Tunador, Dennis Pfeiffer, Pete Merther, Dick O'Neill, Amy Reichmann, Kevin McDermott, Leslie McDermott, Roger McElhaney, Joe Nugent, Marcia Nugent, Joe Atria, Gara Kramer, Laura Nagel, Tim Lang, Matt Hufnagel, Matt Karg, Bill Barnes, Art Harding, Sheila Harding, Bruce Barron, Eileen Beucher, Angie Young, Mike Forbeck, and anyone else we may have inadvertently left out.

Judy Thompson

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 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 Kohneke 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 Mckeeon 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 Wasco at 724-796-3781, or Joe Seibel at 724-693-2523.

Comments & News
Your opinion means a lot to us. Send your comments or news information to:
Montour Trail-Letter
304 Hickman Street
Bridgeville, PA 15107
or E-mail to: newsletter@montourtrail.org

Newsletter Deadline
All articles for the May/June Trail-Letter will be due no later than April 1, 2002
Taking your bike on the bus to the Montour Trail

Port Authority of Allegheny County has equipped the buses on select routes with bike racks enabling their patrons to transport their bikes while they ride the bus. The program, called “Ride, Rack, Roll,” offers bikers the opportunity to bus to and from many of the area’s recreational trails. Of particular interest, the 21A Coraopolis buses have these racks and have a stop near milepost zero of the Montour Trail.

This past summer, I tried out this service on a Sunday and engaged in a unique day trip. My trip began at South Hills Village near my home, where I transported my bike by Port Authority light rail to Downtown. I then took the 21A Coraopolis bus to milepost zero of the Montour Trail. From there, I rode my bike back to Bethel Park, a distance of about 40 miles.

The most complicated part this kind of trip was learning the cycling route. At this time, the Montour Trail has a lot of segments yet to be built between Coraopolis and Bethel Park. A few undeveloped Montour Trail segments are relatively safe to travel on with a fat tire bike. Most, however, have some hazardous conditions. There are missing bridges and bridges that are closed to trail users because they do not have a deck on them yet. (For safety’s sake, please stay off the closed bridges.)

Fortunately, there are ways that all of these undeveloped segments can be bypassed via roadways. One word of advice about the bypasses: They are very hilly in comparison to the trail right of way, and you should be conditioned for them or you will be walking a lot.

Anyone who is considering riding from Coraopolis to Bethel Park should first try individual segments on different days so that the route is familiar and the demands of such a trip are understood. Alternatively, consider waiting until 2003 when most of the trail between Coraopolis and Bethel Park will be completed. Don’t forget that carrying a good tool kit is a necessity on any bike ride where you travel beyond your ability to walk back home.

Thanks to the “Ride, Rack, Roll” program, transporting my bike on public transit was the easiest part of my adventure. However, there are some key things to keep in mind. Using the bike rack on the buses is not intuitive, and the bus driver is not permitted to leave the bus to help you install your bike in the rack. The Port Authority offers a brochure directing how to use the bike rack; this will help you greatly the first time around. Also, the bike rack on the buses only holds two bikes. Finally, be sure to get a schedule for whichever bus you intend to ride, or you may end up waiting a long time. On Sundays, the 21A Coraopolis runs as infrequently as every 2 hours.

If you are not a regular Port Authority Transit user, you need to be aware of a few quirks involving their operations. If you are riding towards downtown Pittsburgh, you pay when you board the bus or light rail. If you are riding away from downtown Pittsburgh, you do not pay until you exit. If your trip involves a connection between light rail and bus or between two buses, you can buy a transfer for the second part of your trip, but you must buy it when you pay for your first fare. The driver is not permitted to sell it to you later. And, as in most cities, you must have exact change.

For more information about bypasses around unfinished sections of the trail, see our Web page at www.montourtrail.org. Further information concerning Port Authority Transit can be found at www.portauthority.org (click on Ride Rack Roll).

Paul McKeown

Airport Multimodal Corridor Project Needs MTC Input

Some auspicious guests joined us during our December board meeting to entertain members’ impressions on how the Montour Trail can be utilized as part of a larger multimodal corridor project that would stretch from Pittsburgh to the Pittsburgh International Airport.

Representatives of the Airport Multimodal Corridor Major Investment Study have been seeking public input at a limited number of venues. The fact that they took the time to make themselves available at one of our meetings bodes well for considering the Trail in any new transportation development.

One of the first priorities of the Study sponsors is to assess the corridor’s transportation needs. Since a large portion of the Trail lies in this corridor, MTC input is critical. Transportation needs across this area range from high-speed Maglev proposals to improving bike trails to solving the riddle of getting around the West End Circle.

The Study moves on from previous studies and will try to break new ground (no pun intended) by advancing transportation possibilities for all sectors of the public. Visitors, conventiongoers and residents. The Port Authority of Allegheny County is one of the main sponsors of the study, and they offer more information on their Web site along with a comment form for the public to give feedback to their plans.

All members are encouraged to let the Study sponsors know that we appreciate their willingness to work with us, and we hope they will further the efforts of the MTC by improving our Trail in the years to come.

Information and a comment form are available online at www.RideGold.com.

Astrid Cook
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
Bruce D. Carnahan
David R Bologna
James M Bradley
Debbie Bredel
Mr & Mrs David W Coate
Astrid Cook
Edgar Emmerling
Judith A. Fritz
Groceries Plus More
Stephen G Kobly
John M Kozak
Kirk Littlewood
Virginia Matthews
Gary Moore
Ronald G. Paine
Allen E. Potter
Harvey J Shipley
David B. Torrey
Mary Tucker
Mark & Francine Vollmer

BENEFACTORS
Ronald L. Henry
Dennis Pfeiffer
Mary Tucker
Paul T. McKeown
John & Sandy Newman
E. Steven White
Doug Ettinger
Peter Stangert
Bob Gambone
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffry M. Kessel
PNC Charitable Trust
Roy Wei & Mary Shaw
Judy & Tom Thompson
Rotary Club of Bridgeville

Membership Chairman - Jerry Agin

DDI & PNC Advisors support Montour Trail

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Boggs-Quicksilver section this spring.

With headquarters in Collier Township, DDI helps companies achieve superior business performance by assisting them in the selection and development of their employees.

In December, the Montour Trail was awarded a $20,000 grant by PNC Advisors from the James McCandless Charitable Trust. The grant will enable the MTC to replace its aging dump truck and carry out repair and construction activities more effectively.

Thank you, DDI and PNC, for valuing the Montour Trail so highly.

Bruce Barron

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.
CONSTRUCTION REPORT
Boggs to Quicksilver brings nearly 18 miles of continuous trail

This past December 17, the paving of the Trail surface was completed at Champion (US 22 & PA 980). The result was a continuous section of the Montour Trail nearly 18 miles long stretching from PA 51 in Moon Township in Allegheny County (Mile 0) to Noblestown Town Road in Washington County (Mile 17.5). This event marked the finish of a two year effort of Trail construction covering 3 1/2 miles beginning at Boggs Station (Mile 11, Bugay Drive) to the junction of PA 980 and Quicksilver Road (Mile 14.5).

A brief history of the events which brought about this achievement:

Fall 1999 to March 2000 – Mackin Engineering Company produced construction drawings and specifications in the fall of 1999 for a bridge across PA 980 at Quicksilver. Field work started on the project with the surveying, layout and excavation for the bridge abutments in March, 2000.

March/April 2000 – Findlay Township spread subgrade material provided by Allegheny County in placed a paved Trail surface from Bugay to the Findlay/North Fayette Township line in March and April.

May to August 2000 – The bridge abutments were constructed by MT volunteers in the spring and summer. The bridge structure was installed in mid August, 2000.

Spring and Summer 2001 – Beginning in 2001, Robinson Township (Washington County) graded the old railroad ballast the Quicksilver bridge north to the Champion Processing Company property. Aloe Mining supplied and placed more subgrade material from the south side of the Champion property to the Allegheny/Washington County line. During late summer Robinson Township placed trail surface material from Quicksilver to the County line. During the same period, Champion Processing, using Recmix, constructed a base for the Trail across it’s property. Then Anthony Coal and Construction assisted by spreading a portion of subgrade material.

Fall 2001 – In the final phase, North Fayette finished the remaining subgrade and placed the trail surface from US 22 to the County line.

Thus it was that 3 1/2 miles of the Montour Trail were completed with the generous volunteered assistance of three Townships, Champion Processing and three other businesses and more than 40 Montour Trail Volunteers. Their achievement will be formally recognized at an opening ceremony scheduled for Friday, the 12th of April. Details to follow.

For more information on the ceremony marking the Boggs to Quicksilver segment of the trail, please go to our Web site at www.montourtrail.org.

Dick Quasey

Looking for a Few Good Volunteers

The Montour Trail Council needs talented Volunteers to keep our organization vital and growing. Can you fill the jobs below? Maybe you know someone else who can.

MTC Fund Developer

As most of our members are aware, the Montour Trail Council has an excellent record in raising funds from foundations and state agencies. However, as our membership has grown and our trail lengthened, our needs continue to expand in kind. Thus, we have decided to launch a search for a Fund Developer who would agree to serve in a volunteer capacity (i.e. without compensation). The ultimate goal of the MTC Fund Developer will be to establish an endowment fund that will help ensure maintenance and improvement costs of our organization and the Montour Trail system will be covered for the indefinite future. Job expectations en route to this goal include requesting and preparing all necessary grant applications, making personal contacts weekly that could lead to material donations, appealing to corporations and foundations for funds, conducting capital campaigns, and attending monthly MTC Board Meetings to give progress reports.

The ideal candidate or candidates – a volunteer Fund Development committee is acceptable – will have the interpersonal and communication skills (both written and oral), along with the dedication and commitment such a role entails. Previous grant writing or fund raising experience preferred.

MTC Volunteer Manager

The MTC is an all-volunteer organization that presently maintains a member database of volunteer talents, interests and abilities. While some of our

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Montour Trail Council 2002 Officers

While few of our MTC board members are strangers, a new year has brought some changes to our organization. Now is a good chance to catch up on our officers.

President Peter Kohnke

Vice president under Dennis during 2000, he also was the first board secretary of the MTC, starting at the end of 1989, a position he held for 4 years. Peter has the rather dubious honor of being the only one who has held the office of three different officers of the MTC.

The Bethel Park spur is Peter’s favorite haunt, as that is where he lives. He also was a major reason why that section of the trail was built. Rarely is he on that segment of the trail without recognizing another trail user.

During 2002 Peter hopes to get the Phase 1 contract for trail construction, which includes the McDonald Trestle, as well as the Brush Run to Bethel Park line contract.

Vice President Dennis Pfeiffer

Past President of the MTC; our representative to the Allegheny Trail Association.

Dennis thinks the Bethel Park Spur is a very special “jewel” of a trail and that it is wonderful to have this linear greenway sandwiched in the heart of the Bethel Community. He also likes the Large to Clairton section, where he says “What’s great about this section is what you see in the scenery including the parallel Peters Creek. What’s also great is what you don’t see… The section is very tranquil, since there is no competition from crossroads, parallel roads or power poles.”

During 2002, Dennis looks forward to being a part of the ground breaking for the McDonald Trestle refurbishment. He believes the McDonald Trestle will be a spectacular addition to the Montour Trail.

A twenty-year Moon Township resident and 35-year employee of PNC Bank, Dennis is currently Data Communications Engineer at PNC Bank Data Center RIDC West. He looks forward to the day when all 55 miles of the Trail are complete.

Secretary Bruce Barron

Bruce Barron represented Congressman Rick Santorum at the Montour Trail Council’s first opening ceremony (in Cecil Township 10 years ago) and has been a trail supporter ever since. This will be his sixth year as board secretary.

Bruce especially likes having the Bethel Park and South Park trail sections within biking distance from his home.

During 2002, Bruce hopes to assist the MTC’s fundraising and public-relations activities this year while maintaining his production of 40 single-spaced pages a year of board meeting minutes.

Treasurer Mike Pucci

Mike has been an MTC volunteer for over five years and just completed his first year as a board member. He is the Treasurer for the local Bethel Park Friends’ group, a position he has held for 2 years.

He knows it is parochial, but the Bethel Spur is still his favorite section of the trail. However, he looks forward to the Library Junction to South Park section, and when the Library Trestle is complete, he will have another favorite section.

During 2002, Mike has taken on the Herculean task of establishing a reporting method for general expenses and capital expenditures that is relevant for the board to make decisions, along with a solid basis of systematic activity, construction and balance sheet reports that enhance the credibility of the MTC.

A 29-year veteran of AT&T, Mike is the District Operations Manager for AT&T Small and Large Business Customer Service Centers.

Still Looking for a Few Good Volunteers

(Continued from page 6)

members are currently active volunteers, many who have expressed a willingness to volunteer are underutilized while others are “wearing many hats” in an effort to meet multiple demands of the organization. We are now seeking a volunteer to act as Volunteer Manager who would be willing to serve in this role without compensation.

The MTC Volunteer Manager will be the primary coordinator/contact for new members and the MTC volunteer database administrator. Job duties may include staffing MTC events, identifying all potential volunteers and maximizing their involvement, working with the MTC database administrator to fill identified MTC needs and to promote the use of offered volunteered services to MTC committees and Friends’ Groups, nurturing/supporting volunteers, and encouraging all members to volunteer.

The ideal candidate will have outstanding personal skills, good organizational abilities, high levels of energy and enthusiasm, and the commitment and time available requisite to undertaking such a position.

All interested parties should contact the Montour Trail Council, specifying the position for which they would like to be considered and listing their previous volunteer/business experience related to the Fund Developer or Volunteer Manager position. For more information, please contact MTC Board member Stan Sattinger at 412-256-1327 or by e-mail to sattinge@aol.com

Stan Sattinger
DDI, PNC Advisors Support Montour Trail

Thanks to two strategic grants, the Montour Trail Council has been able to complete a new section of trail and improve its capacity to carry out essential trail maintenance.

Development Dimensions International (DDI) awarded the MTC a $2,500 contribution to assist with completion of the trail between the Boggs parking area and the Quicksilver Bridge. This is the most recent of several large gifts William Byham, chairman and CEO of DDI, has provided to the Montour Trail. DDI and Dr. Byham will be honored at the formal opening ceremony for the

(Continued on page 5)