2002 IKEA/ Montour Trail ½ Marathon and 5K Run & Walk Could Set Record Attendance

Early projections indicate that this could be a record year for the IKEA - Montour Trail ½ Marathon and 5K Run and Walk. The 7th Annual event takes place on September 14th, starting at the IKEA Parking lot in Robinson Town Center. The event is a prime fundraiser for the Trail. It is encouraging that even in the face of the economic downturn our sponsors continue to support us. IKEA, the originator of the event, is hosting it for the 7th year. Our other returning sponsors are: Elite Runners & Walkers, Robinson Town Center, Computer Associates, Eagle Therapy, Kaufmann’s, Ohio Valley Hospital, Ventana Hills, Burgh’s Pizza & Wing Pub and Meteo Minerals. In addition, we have several new sponsors: Adelphia, The Mall at Robinson and Dick’s Sporting Goods. Coca-Cola Company will again be providing Dasani Water, Powerade and cups.

Emergency services will be provided by Northwest EMS, REMS, and Valley EMS. Police from Findlay, Moon, North Fayette, and Robinson Townships will also be present. The Salvation Army will be there to assist our volunteers. This fine support by all the EMS units and the police from all of the municipalities make this event possible. Seeing the coordination between all of the Police Departments and EMS units in covering the event is impressive; they do a great job.

Another long-time supporter of the event, Interstate Communications, provides a repeater and walkie-talkies to enable communications between the Montour trail volunteers.

The IKEA parking lot is the center for post-race activities for the event. Music, refreshments, Golden Harvest Bread and fresh fruit will be served to our participants. In addition, the awards ceremony will be take place there after each event and a raffle will be held with some great prizes. Just in case walkers or runners can’t get the kinks out of those tired muscles afterwards, Eagle Physical Therapy will be there to help!

The courses for the walk and the races are very scenic. The trail runs parallel to Montour Creek and is heavily forested in many areas. The Trail is really a natural linear park. So sign-up and come on out. Enjoy the event and support the trail!

See www.mountour.org for more details.

Jesse Forquer
Trail Talk
from the Editor's Desk

By the time you read this, chances are summer will be unofficially over. Labor Day, part of that last long weekend that along with Memorial Day weekend frames the summer season, will never come any earlier than it does this year. And if your calendar is anything like mine, September 2nd will be the last "free" day for some time to come.

I have beheld the organizational skills of others, seen their color-coded, computer-produced wall calendars noting Jimmy's hockey schedule, Jenny's dance schedule, James Sr.'s dentist appointment, Mom's fall business trip...all wedged in via small fonts, often coded with initials and acronyms that the best cryptographer in the world couldn't crack.

Labor Day not only signals the end of summer, but the height of over-scheduling. Work obligations that often relax a bit over the summer suddenly start pouring in. All manner of classes—both collegiate and otherwise—resume in full force. And if you have children, well, they seem to be constantly on the go.

Even at the Montour Trail, we swing back into high gear. After a relatively calm summer, we have the Allegheny County Rib Cook-off, the IKEA/Montour Trail 1/2 Marathon and 5K Run, and our annual dinner meeting all in the next few weeks. That's in addition to the many other activities getting squeezed in before winter hits us.

So, when filling in your calendars, please remember your Trail. Find a new color font to ink us in so you don't miss out on the many wonderful activities we have arranged for you that are previewed throughout the Trail letter.

Astrid

Calendar of Events

Allegheny County Rib Cook-Off— August 30 – 31, Sept. 1 – 2 (See article on page 3 for more information)

"That Dam Ride" and "Tour de Confluence"— Sept. 7-8 (See article on page 4 for more information)

IKEA Marathon— Sept. 14 (See article on page 1 for more information)

MTC Board Meeting— Sept. 16

MTC Board Meeting— Oct. 21

Looking ahead...

MTC Annual Dinner Meeting— Nov. 21

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.
**Labor Day Weekend Rib Cook-Off Beer Servers Help Build New Trail!**

Labor Day weekend means good times and good eating to the hundreds of our Montour Trail volunteers who turn out each year to serve as beer bartenders. Trail fellowship also figures as a reason why we go back year after year to get soggy feet in often frenzied activity; it’s all a part of a day’s work!

We are in our eighth year of service to Mon-Yough Recreation Council which sponsors the Cook-Off and it has been a most happy arrangement. MY-REC, as it is known, provides much-needed recreation and cultural programs for Allegheny county communities that really need them, and the Cook-Off is their principal fund-raiser. The Montour Trail in turn receives a nice $4,500 contribution from MY-REC for helping out and we have a good time doing it.

Ribs, chicken, kid-games, circus acts and souvenirs along with a ton of live music (and the beer mentioned above) bring families to South Park stadium in great numbers to join the fun. Every “ribateur,” as these food vendors are often called, enters into a competition for bragging rights as to who is “Number One” in taste and popularity. In candor, we’re dealing with a circus atmosphere here: As one grizzled Qu’er said, “Do you think I am going to announce that I WASN’T the best?” In any case, it is a lot of fun, and we have a successful event that makes people forget that the former “County Fair” went bust years ago and cost the taxpayers money. This Rib Cook-Off makes money for the county and its police, so we should all be delighted.

Back to MTC’s part: We open at 4 PM on Friday, August 30, and 11 AM on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Closing hours are still being set as we go to press, but generally are to 10 or 10:30 PM, except Labor Day Monday which closes earlier, about 9 PM. Day captains will have final information shortly.

Because of the holiday falling so early this year, we are un-

(Continued on page 6)

**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 November / December Trail-Letter will be due no later than October 1, 2002

**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 MTC Offices, 304 Hickman St., Suite 3, Bridgeville, PA. 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 Kohne 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 Mckeeown at 412-835-692.

- **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.
Time Again for “That Dam Ride”

The fourth annual “That Dam Ride” will be held this September 7 and 8. Here’s your chance for a great weekend where you’ll meet new friends and enjoy old ones. You may bike from either Boston (70 miles) or Connellsville (30 miles) to Confluence along the packed-limestone Youghiogheny River Trail. The trail is mostly level, and described by Travel and Leisure Magazine as “one of the nineteen most beautiful trails in the world.”

Camping is at the Youghiogheny Dam or you can camp indoors at the fire hall or church. Your gear is delivered both ways by truck to and from the campground. If you need a tent, the Boy Scouts will lend you one for a small donation, and even set it up.

Included are Saturday rest stops at Cedar Creek Park, Connellsville and Ohiopyle. Sunday rest stops are at Connellsville and Cedar Creek Park. Lunch both days will be in Connellsville. Dinner is in Confluence Saturday, with entertainment and prize drawings after. The National Park Service will provide music and stories of railroading. You’ll even get a commemorative T-shirt, and a continental breakfast Sunday morning.

This year, we have added a third option for those who want to join in the fun, but with a shorter ride. The “Tour de Confluence” will be hosted by Larry Walsh who writes a bicycling column for the Post Gazette. He will conduct a leisurely bike tour of the Confluence area with a 4 mile or 12 mile choice. You get the tour, dinner, camping, T-shirt, entertainment, one rest stop, and a prize drawing.

For more info and a registration form, visit www.thatdamride.org, or call 412-462-5328. That Dam Ride is coordinated by the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area.

Mike Bilesik

New Benches for the Trail

On a hot summer day like we’ve had so many of this year, a bench to rest and cool off at can come as a welcome relief. Thanks to the efforts of Keith Williams, age 17, of Washington, PA, trail users between Champion and McDonald in Washington County now have five new benches available for stops to cool sweaty brows and rest tired legs.

Keith, a member of Boy Scout Troop 1022 of Washington, PA, was searching for a suitable community service project to complete the requirements to attain the rank of Eagle Scout. His father Ned, a member of the Montour Trail Council board of directors, suggested Keith consider a project to benefit the trail. Given the trail’s non-profit status, its all-volunteer work force, and its appeal to thousands of users, this seemed a logical choice. After considering several possible trail projects, Keith chose to place benches along the section of trail between mile post 12 and 17, a section of trail which was completed and connected to the first twelve miles of finished trail just last fall. The trail there is largely rural with few existing amenities.

Keith consulted with the Trail Council and received the authorization of his scoutmaster, Dr. Bob Evans, to proceed with the project. During the spring he visited county parks and other locations to gather ideas for the best design for the benches. He drew up the plans and materials list and purchased the materials. He organized a small work party and logically built one bench first, then modified the design to improve upon it. He then organized (and fed!) a large group of some 12 friends and fellow scouts to complete the benches at his home. He arranged to have the benches transported to the trail, arranged to have the Montour Trail tractor and auger available to dig holes, and on a typically hot July 13 with the help of 4 adults and 7 or 8 friends and fellow scouts he completed the installation of the benches. One of the benches was in use the same afternoon before the cement was dry!

Our thanks go out to Keith for his efforts. His persistence, organization, and hard work will benefit trail users for many years to come.

John Wasco
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

Carol Alisesky  
Victoria Campbell  
Joseph A Cevarr  
Beth Conboy  
Paul Culan  
Jon Depoe  
David & Sandra Dudich  
Jan Garland  
Thomas & Bernice German  
Carsten Henkel  
John A Hredszak  
Jan & Mike Hutchinson  
Barbara Johnstone  
Dr. T. M. Katz  
Mr. & Mrs. James Keene  
Cathy & Charlie Krajewski

Elaine Kurtanich  
Jim Kurtanich  
Carolyn A. Lake  
Howard Mattison  
Charles Mills & Sally Fleming  
Steve & Lisa Moss  
Penn Glen Oil  
Marcy Ratkovich  
Alan Schorr  
Nancy Verbos  
Jim Wise

Membership Chairman - Jerry Agin

Annual Dinner on November 17  
"Build Community"

Mark your calendar for the MTC Annual Dinner Meeting to be held November 17, 2002 at Al's Cafe on McMurray Road, Bethel Park.

The evening will be a celebration of another sensational year of trail expansion, community volunteers/supporters, election of new board members and special awards. We will also be featuring David Dionne, Anne Arundel County Trail Superintendent in Maryland, who will be speaking on the topic of "Building the Community into the Trail." Mr. Dionne inspired us at the 2001 ATA conference when he spoke about his successful trail management methods. We want you to be a part of this evening and experience the "wrap-up" of the year and the "kick-off" to another great year of trail building.

It is always wonderful to see community support at the annual dinner and to see the community volunteers being recognized for their dedication to the trail. A brochure with more details and reservation information will be sent to MTC members in October. Hope to see you on November 17th!

For early reservations, suggestions and/or questions contact Amy Riechman at 330-926-9298 or amyruechman@hotmail.com.

Amy Riechman

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.

☐ STUDENT / SENIORS $15
☐ INDIVIDUAL $25
☐ FAMILY $35
☐ SUPPORTING $50
☐ SUSTAINING $100
☐ BENEFACOR $250
☐ LEADERS CIRCLE $500 + up

☐ I wish to become a member of the Montour Trail Council. (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 11865
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0865

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.
Montour Run Valley Spared!

Earlier this summer the Multimodal Airport Corridor project team identified the portion of the Montour Run Valley extending from Coraopolis to Park- way West as one of several candidate locations for a new four-lane highway and/or a light rail line. Notices were promptly sent out by the MTC, the Hollow Oak and Trust, the WPW Bike Club, and the Montour Run Watershed Association, notifying their members of a series of public meetings on the Corridor Project to be held in July.

All members were urged to speak out about their concerns over undesirable impacts on the Montour Trail and Montour Run’s aquatic and land resources if the Valley were selected as the site for this Corridor.

We understand that the Corridor study group has now focused its continuing technical work on the Parkway Widening Highway Corridor and three transit alternatives, Ohio Valley - Neville Island Fixed Guideway, Robinson Corridor and West Busway Extension to Parkway West to Airport. The reaction of the public at the July meetings. Hats off to those of you who attended a meeting or in other ways made your opinions known!

As stated previously in our letter to you, the Montour Trail Council (MTC) is very proud to have a continued excellent working relationship with the Airport Multimodal studies six sponsors: The Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC), Southwest Planning Commission (SPC), Allegheny County, City of Pittsburgh, the Airport Authority of Allegheny County and PennDot. In fact, we were invited and have participated in two of the executive sessions held earlier. The MTC recognizes the importance of efficient multimodal transportation and public participation as part of the process. As requested, we will continue to be a participant in the planning process. However, the MTC will always feel strongly that the Montour Trail and the surrounding Montour Greenway should be protected for generations to come.

Dennis Pfeiffer and Stan Sattinger

Allegheny County Rib Cook-Off serves up beer and helps Trail, continued

(Continued from page 3)

able to insure that the newsletter will precede this event. However, if you are reading this prior to the Labor Day weekend and you’d like to participate, the following MTC coordinators will be glad to help you help out as a beer bartender. John Hooton is the overall coordinator for the event; 412.257.4101(w), 724.942.0115(h). Friday captain: Mike Pucci; 412.804.6170 (w), 412.831.0483(h). Saturday captain: John Hooton, as above; Sunday captain: Dennis Pfeiffer: 412.762.4857(w), 412.262.3748. Monday captain: Frank Ludwin: 724.926.4025(h)

As you will see in other articles in this issue, the year 2002 is a big one for new Trail construction and the "unrestricted" dollars MTC gets from events like Rib Cook-Off are vital in covering the many expenses that grant money excludes. Join the fun and help the cause!

John Hooton
Montour Run to Have Trout Stocked

After years of closely monitoring stream conditions, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has decided to stock the lower main trunk of Montour Run with catchable trout annually beginning in the spring of 2003. The thousands of trout to be stocked by the state will join those added by the Forest Grove Sportsmen’s Club, which has been stocking Montour Run for more than a decade.

This increased support of Airport-area recreation is good news for tourism and recreation in the Montour Valley. The Valley will increasingly become a destination of choice among sports fishermen, and the Montour Trail is likely to see heightened use for accessing favored fishing spots along the stream. Stocking of the stream will also add leverage to local watershed protection efforts by enhancing Montour Run’s resource values.

The improvement in water conditions that convinced the Commission to begin stocking Montour Run is largely attributable to the Allegheny County Airport Authority’s switch to more environmentally benign deicing materials at Pittsburgh International Airport. The ethylene glycol and urea deicing agents used earlier drained into Montour Run and were unfriendly to aquatic life. Less harmful agents such as potassium acetate and sodium acetate were substituted beginning in 1997.

The Commission has decided to undertake stocking despite some remaining adverse conditions in the stream. Further habitat improvements that are needed to improve the survival rate of the trout include the treatment of abandoned mine drainage and shading of the stream to keep it from becoming too warm. Both of these needs are being addressed in current projects of the Montour Run Watershed Association with funding provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Stan Sattinger

Progress Being Made on Brush Run

Construction has begun on the Bethel Park Connector, the 3/4 mile long section in Peters Township between Brush Run Road and the Bethel Park Line. In order to keep costs down, we are using volunteers whenever we can, which means things take longer compared to paying a company to do the work.

The ramp is being built with extra material from a major storm water drainage program along Greenwald Drive in Bethel Park. Many tons of material have already been brought in. Alex Paris is the contractor on both the Drainage program and the ramp, and gave the Montour Trail Council a good price for the work so they could keep the haul distance relatively short and bring the fill in at their own pace. In the spring of 2003, the ramp is to be paved with asphalt, to protect it from erosion.

Frank Ludwin is leading the volunteer effort. Two cross-drains have already been replaced, and grading the trail is next. Pavement millings currently stored in the back of Al’s Cafe parking lot will then be placed, followed by the final crushed limestone surface.

This will all take some time, so people need to be patient. But when it is finished, we will have a brand new ramp at Brush Run Road as well as a nice trail section.

Peter Kohne

Help Wanted!

Needed: A few good photographs.

Are you handy with a camera? Are you a shutterbug with some time to spare? If so, the MTC needs you!

We are looking for one or more people to take photo assignments (for various MTC events along the Trail) and candid pictures. Professional experience is not necessary, but good photography skills are a must. Digital pictures are preferred, but print copies would be acceptable.

We need people along all sections of the Trail, so don’t be afraid to volunteer. This job can take up very little time: One or two good pictures a month is really all we need. If you have more time to commit, even better!

Even if you are only enthusiastic with little photography experience, we can offer tips on “good photojournalism” and head you in the right direction for newsworthy and captivating photos.

If you are interested in being an MTC photographer, please contact Astrid Cook at 412-418-0432 or by e-mail at newsletter@montourtrail.org.

Astrid Cook
It's United Way Time

Fall is when many of us update our benefits and donation packages. You can help us even more, if you make charitable donations through your work place. By requesting that all or part of your charitable United Way contribution go to the MTC, your United Way dollars go straight to a non-profit organization that is in your backyard.

Please remember us when you make your United Way selection for 2003 (see p. 4 for more details), by designating the MTC as your United Way Contributor Choice (option #3308) or your Combined Federal Campaign Contributor Choice (option #9308).

Your donation both to the United Way and the Montour Trail is appreciated!