For your consideration

It’s not so important who starts the game but who finishes it.

John Wooden

The Official Publication of the Montour Trail Council

Montour Trail-Letter

Volume 18 Issue 4

Function at the Junction: A Grand Day For All
by Stan Sattinger

We couldn’t have been blessed with a more beautiful day! Only hours prior to the start of the Saturday, June 9 McDonald festivities, soggy and uncomfortable weather gave way to sunshine and crystal-clear air, heightening the enjoyment of all who attended the joint opening festival of two new trail sections. Being celebrated was the connection of two key recreational trails in a unique cruciform configuration: the Montour Trail and the Panhandle Trail would not just connect, but would literally cross each other. A 0.7-mile section of new trail completed this spring by the MTC, extended the total length of the Montour-Panhandle Connector to 1.2 miles, and a new 6.5-mile section of the Panhandle Trail linking McDonald to Joffre was completed by Washington County Parks and Recreation.

The joint opening ceremony began with the singing of our national anthem by vocalist Kayla McQuillan. Ned Williams then introduced Master of Ceremonies Dave Crawley of KDKA-TV, who in turn called on Pennsylvania Representative Jesse White and Washington County Commissioners Larry Maggi, Bracken Burns, and Diana Irey for their comments. Mark Tallarico, Executive Director of the Washington County Tourism Promotion Agency, presented checks for construction grants to the

(continues on page 4)

The Ikea-Montour Trail ½ Marathon, 5K Run and 5K Fun Walk from a Volunteer’s Perspective
by Laura Orr, Race Director

To you, the runner, the 12th Annual Ikea-Montour Trail ½ Marathon, 5K Run and 5K Fun Walk will be held on Saturday, September 8, 2007. For the race volunteers, the race activities begin months before, preparing the trail surface, creating the flyers, ordering t-shirts, the all important port-a-johns, updating the web-site, and setting up the Fee-Free Online Registration with Active.com and then all of a sudden….it’s the week before the race and much is still left to do.

Typically Tuesday night is spent putting together the participant race packets, counting and sorting t-shirts. Wednesday and Thursday volunteers avail themselves for the evening to be at Ikea offering participants the opportunity for pre-registered packet pick-up and late registration to help alleviate the race day lines for those who choose not to take advantage of the Fee-Free On-line Registration powered by Active.com.

Then it’s Race Day. Its 4:30 a.m. at Ikea, and Jennifer Murdock of Ikea and several volunteers are already hard at work. Water and sports drinks are being loaded onto the trail truck along with tables and other supplies to be placed at water stops along the race course.

In the tent area, tables are brought out from the store, race packets and t-shirts are arranged for the morning’s registration. Signs are being hung, the parking signs are placed, and as more volunteers arrive, assignments are handed out – initial activity will be registration at Ikea, but we also have volunteers on the trail for split timers, turn-around points, road crossings, water tables, finish line, and timing chip collection.

(continues on page 4)
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.

**The Prez Sez**

Passing the Baton

This newsletter contains our 2006 annual report. We’re one issue later than usual, and you can blame it on the changing of the guard to a new administration (i.e. – me). We’ll do better next year, I promise.

I wanted to devote the few words of this column to another changing of the guard that has occurred seamlessly behind the scenes. Jerry Agin, who has been our membership chair since the Montour Trail Council came into existence in 1989, has passed on his duties to a new volunteer, Bernadette Albertson.

Jerry is one of the original founding fathers of the MTC, the group who had the vision back then to start the ball rolling, for what is now an unquestionable regional recreational asset for the region’s populace and visitors to our area. Jerry has devoted thousands of hours to the Montour Trail since it was founded 18 years ago. As its membership chair, a past IKEA Race Director, and in countless other ways, I want to thank him for all that he’s done for the organization. He is moving on to devote more time and energy into his other interests and pursuits, but he remains as our membership database architect and consultant, and he has done a great job in transferring his responsibilities to Bernadette.

Bernie Albertson is a recent member of the MTC who responded to a past newsletter article seeking a talented individual who could take over the duties of our membership chair. In her e-mail to me expressing her interest in helping with the Trail she enjoys so much, she confessed that her talents with a shovel and similar tools were somewhat lacking, but she was fully comfortable with computers, keyboards, and the suite of Microsoft Office tools that are used in managing our membership database. Although we have no further evidence that Bernie is “shovel-challenged”, we do know that she was able to quickly learn the job from Jerry and hit the ground running. We’re confident the membership duties are in good hands.

The annual report mentions the important role volunteerism plays in the ongoing success of the Montour Trail, but we have limited opportunities to thank all of them for their contributions. In a small way, let me address this limitation by expressing a big “THANK YOU!” to both Jerry Agin and Bernadette Albertson, on behalf of all the fellow members and volunteers of the Montour Trail Council.

Mark
**Friends’ Meetings and Work Parties**

**MTC Board Meeting,**  
every third Monday of the month - 6:00 p.m. 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 Mark at 724-941-6351 for more information or to get on the agenda.

**Cecil Friends:**  
Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. From May-August, meetings are held at the Kurnick Access area along the trail off Cecil Henderson Road; other months meet at the MTC Offices. Work and cleanup parties are scheduled as needed. Call 412-496-4308 for more information.

**Airport Area Friends**  
Friends of the Trail meeting, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the communities of Moon and Robinson is encouraged to attend. Call 412-859-3020 for more information.  
Work and cleanup party, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. Call 412-262-3748 for more information.

**South Hills Friends of the Trail**  
Meeting first Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Jefferson Hills Borough Building. Work and cleanup parties scheduled and advertised as needed. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler@verizon.net, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@comcast.net

**Bethel Park Friends:**  
Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. 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.

**Peters Township Friends:**  
Friends of the Trail Meeting, first non-holiday Monday of the month at Peters Township Parks and Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. For more information on work and cleanup parties, please contact Jim Robbins at 724-941-6132, or for monthly meetings, Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at markimgrund@comcast.net.

**Fort Cherry Friends:**  
Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Bldg., Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. Work and cleanup parties scheduled as needed. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

**Trail Dust from the Desk of the Editor**

**Good-Bye Old Friend**

Shortly after the Cecil Friends were chartered, past MTC President Marshall Fausold donated his Toyota truck to the Montour Trail Council and it was based at the Hendersonville storage space with the Cecil Friends. Upon receipt of the Truck, the bed of the pickup and cap were removed, and a wooden bed with removal sides was constructed and installed by Dan Jones and John Hooton. The oversized mud flaps were provided by Dan who was scrounging around the Bridgeville Rest Area on I-79.

The truck was kept at Hendersonville for a short time before it found a new home in Cecil Friend-Hoyt Hall’s carport. Hoyt would wash and wax and do minor maintenance to the truck. He kept the truck like it was his. And if you were going to use the truck, Hoyt would keep your personal vehicle as a deposit!. With the completion of the “Burgh Garage” at Kurnicks and home improvements at Hoyt’s, the truck found a new home in the garage.

The truck saw much use by the Cecil Friends and the other Friends groups in the South Hills and it made an annual appearance at the Ikea-Montour Trail 1/2 Marathon. It took its share of abuse as well. Several times it had railroad ties or tree limbs put through the back windows during trail expansion projects, but its adopted father (Hoyt) would make the repairs.

This past winter it was determined that the vehicle was no longer road worthy, and it would require a considerable amount of work and expense to make it such. Outgoing President Dennis Pfeiffer donated his truck to the Trail Council as a replacement, allowing the Toyota to be retired.

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The deadline for submission of articles to the next Trail-letter is September 8 and the last issue of 2007 will have a deadline of November 10.

**Dennis**
Function at the Junction continues from page 1

Connecter and the McDonald Trail Station. Charlie Beaumariage, the MTC’s Construction Manager for the Connecter, acknowledged the efforts of all Connector project volunteers. The Function also proved to be an excellent venue for the presentation of a check for the $26,000 proceeds from the 2007 Burgh Race by sponsor Frank Daily of Burgh’s Pizza and Wing. Following these proceedings, there occurred not just one, but two ribbon-cuttings supervised by Emcee Crawley.

Function-goers found a number of attractions arrayed along the Panhandle Trail adjoining the Junction, ranging from pony rides and a petting zoo to a display of the McDonald Volunteer Fire Department’s ladder truck. Balloon-twisting clowns Rainbow and Clipper made their way around the crowd, seeking youngsters who might possibly also be interested in having their faces painted. Following an hour’s entertainment by the Country Cloggers, the group Steel Town gave forth with soft rock music. Five food vendors offered delectables ranging from ribs and sausages to salads and cookies, and two dozen civic, conservation, and recreation organizations staffed booths and displays for information exchange. A marked departure from previous MTC trail opening festivals was the frequent arrival of festival-goers by bicycle; a total of 25 people participated in the organized rides that had been advertised in conjunction with the event.

We are grateful for the support of our sponsors – those firms and organizations that made sizeable financial and in-kind contributions to help us cover our festival costs: Coca-Cola Bottling, Pepsi Roadhouse, Alex Paris Contracting, Allied Waste Imperial Landfill, Green’s Taxi Service, Hi-View True Value Hardware, and Quicksilver Golf Club. Other contributors included Dennis Pfeiffer, Ferguson Water Works, the McDonald Police Department, Mary Jean Povero, and the Washington County Tourism Promotion Bureau.

As chairman, I want to extend my thanks to the Organizing Committee members and Host Organizations for this event as follows: Dennis Pfeiffer and Kevin Smith of the MTC; Ned Williams of the Panhandle Trail Association; Carol Bywaters, Rich Moreau, and Thom Saunders of the McDonald Area Redevelopment Association; Ray and Emma Johnston, Roger McElhaney, Dale Risker, and John Wasco of the Fort Cherry Friends of the Montour Trail; Tim Thomassy of the McDonald Borough Council; Lisa Cessna, Jeff Donahue, and Melanie Finney of the Washington County Planning Commission; and Mark Tallarico of the Washington County Tourism Promotion Agency.

Ikea 1/2 Marathon continues from page 1

6:00 a.m. – Runners are already arriving ready to register, and although we offer 10 weeks or more of pre-registration at a reduced rate including on-line registration powered by Active.com with no additional service fee this year, we will have about 250 additional participants walk up to register this morning. Our registration volunteers will be put to the test taking registrations, assigning bib numbers, t-shirts, and timing chips.

6:30 a.m. – Race Day Registration & packet pick-up opens to a crowd of anxious runners, and, our registration volunteers are put to the test taking registrations, assigning bib numbers, t-shirts, and timing chips. We have to get hundreds of runners ready for the day’s event. Amid the growing rumble of crowd noise, we do our best to provide direction, and keep everyone moving – Pre-registered participants check in here, Race day registration over there, Chips are distributed at table 3.

8:00 a.m. – The ½ Marathon Race begins and the crowd thins out, the remaining runners are warming up for the 5K Run which begins at 8:20 a.m. A short breather for the volunteers, then it’s clean up the morning mess to re-arrange everything for the post-race food, water, and awards ceremony.

No sooner are we set up, when bus loads of runners begin to return to Ikeas, some looking like they can’t take another step. We offer water, sports drinks, and fruit for re-hydration. Runners mull around stretching and recovering while everyone patiently waits for the results.

Then, the awards are given and raffle prizes are drawn, the crowd thins again. Runners and spectators take their leave after another fun & exciting race day, and the volunteers, we keep right on working. Now we have to clean up the ton of garbage left behind. Tables back to the store, race supplies packed away for another year.

Race day is a very long day, and it begins very early for the volunteer, but hearing a post-race thank you, or compliment on the race makes it all worth while. Will I come back next year? I’ll let you know after my nap.

Tour The Montour Celebrates Fifth Year! by Tim Killmeyer

This September, for the fifth straight year, bicyclists from all over will descend on Mile 0 of the Montour Trail near Coraopolis for a day of riding, food, prizes and fun for riders of all ages and abilities. The TTM Committee, chaired this year by Johanna (Sam) Hviffelt, has been working on the event for a few months now and is tweaking it ever so gently to help maintain it as one of the premier Fall bicycling events in the Tri-state area. In keeping with the Tour the Montour tradition, it will remain a fun ride, not a race, with different mileage plans for all skill levels. The premium T-shirt, guaranteed to all pre-registrants (see the registration form on page 8) also maintains the TTM tradition of a woodcut image of a vintage bicyclist. This year’s unusual shirt is sure to be in demand (see image). So mark your calendar now for September 22. Send in your registration form (or register online at www.montourtrail.org) and reserve yours today. See you in September!
Party on the Trail Wrap-up

Early Saturday morning on a bright and sunny June 2, 2007, registration began for the second J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge 5K Race. Over a hundred runners participated in the race that began and ended just south of Clifton Road at 8:30 a.m. Refreshments and snacks were provided after the race and the top three finishers in each age category received awards.

Following the race, the fourth annual Party on the Trail given by The Friends of the Montour Trail in Bethel Park began at 10:00 a.m. Over 300 walkers and bicyclists traveled part or all of the main line of the Montour Trail connected to the Bethel Branch, stopping at designated stations to get their passports punched, which earned them more tickets for the Chinese Auction. In addition to a scenic walk along the Montour Trail, there were activities at Washington School, which included a children’s train ride, fingerprint ID’s for the kids and a yoga class for the adults. Along the Washington School stretch of the Montour Trail, were a series of vendor tents, which ranged from children's clothing resale to health, fitness, the history of the Montour Trail and a Fun Run for the kids.

Lunch was provided by Brian’s Hardwood Hogs featuring his famous barbeque pulled pork sandwiches and special fruit smoothies blended by pedaling a bike. The Chinese Auction was your last stop for the day with over 30 prizes to choose from. It was a fun day to run, walk, ride, have some fun and win some prizes on the Montour Trail.

Tails Wag on the Trail

The Cecil Friends marked National Trails Day with their third annual Tails for Trails, a 5K fun walk with a four-legged friend on the Montour Trail in Cecil Township. Over eighty dogs registered for the walk along with their owners. The walk was started by Congressman Tim Murphy. Over $2000 was raised towards improving the National Tunnel. That money is expected to go towards paved the trail surface in the Tunnel this summer. Refreshments were available following the walk and a Chinese Auction was underway. The Canine Division of Air Search Rescue put on a demonstration after the walk using a Boy Scout as a victim to demonstrate the capabilities of their dogs in finding a victim

Thanks go to members of Peters Township Boy Scout Troop 1393 who assisted in setting up and maintaining the waste and water stations, dog handling, and parking. Thanks also to our Title Sponsor, Tracey Smith of Ameriprise Financial and Corporate Sponsor Vet Tech. On-site vendors, included our title and corporate sponsor, Great Dane and Golden Retriever Rescue, Pet Search, Doodie Deeds, Camp Bow-Wow, Candy’s Personal Photo Creations and Agnes Cline’s Animal Portraits. We also wish to thank Dog Watch of Greater Pittsburgh, Carriage Hill Kennels and Home Sweet Home Pet Sitting for advertising on the neckerchiefs given to each registered dog. And we cannot forget Frank Ludwin for providing the PA system and tunnel lighting, but most importantly for being our weiner-meister for the event.

Meet on the Montour Trail

As I started down the hill from Milepost 12 under US Route 22, I saw a yellow shirt rounding the bend in the distance. As I approached, I realized that I was not gaining on a solitary cyclist, but a pair on a tandem. Not only that, but they were towing a little trailer on the back. Obviously, these folks weren’t just out for the day, but were actually going somewhere! So I rang my bell to pass and when I pulled up beside them, I asked them where they were heading. “Washington D.C.” the lead rider shouted back. That’s when I noticed that the stoker (rear rider) was a young boy.

So, then I asked them, where they were from, thinking that they were from the Western Pennsylvania area, and they came back with the surprising answer: “Leesburg, Virginia.” WOW! I asked them how they got up here and they told me that they had rented a vehicle, loaded all their things into it and drove up here and dropped it off and that this was their first day on the road. I’m thinking “Man, the Montour is finally coming into its own. This man and his son represented the fruition of a dream some people started almost 20 years ago.

So, I waited for them to catch up and they introduced themselves as Rob and Jack Ramberg. (continues on page 7)
In the Days When the Montour Ran Like Clockwork

In the days before two-way radios and block signals, the Montour operated under what was called “Timetable and Train Order.” Passenger trains and some freight trains were listed on a timetable with their departure times at each station. For example, Montour Timetable No. 16, which was effective on April 25, 1915, listed three daily trains and two trains on Sunday operating in each direction between Montour Junction and Longview Junction (connection with the Pittsburgh and West Virginia Railway). There was no scheduled passenger service to or from Mifflin Junction. Eastward trains had odd numbers (3, 15, 151, 27 & 35) and westward trains carried even numbers (4, 12, 156, 6 & 14). Westbound trains were superior to eastbound trains, meaning a train traveling east had to clear the main track no less than five minutes before the nearest westbound train departed its last station. Fortunately, the Montour did not have eastward and westward trains running at the same time.

Train 3 operated between Montour Junction and Longview Junction; Train 151 ran between Montour Junction and Fife (located between Thompsonville and McMurray, near Trail Milepost 31); and Train 15 operated between Montour Junction and North Star. Westbound, Train 4 ran from Thompsonville to Montour Junction; Train 12 operated between North Star and Montour Junction; and Train 7 ran from Longview Junction to Montour Junction. The four Sunday trains (6, 14, 27 & 35) only operated between Montour Junction, North Star and Fife. (The station at Thompsonville allowed Montour passengers to connect with the Pittsburgh to Washington, PA interurban trolley.)

Every train crew member had to carry a current timetable and an “official” railroad watch. Remember, this was in the days before quartz movements and digital clocks. The standard railroad watch was a pocket watch and the rules governing the care of those watches were very strict. Here is an excerpt from Montour Timetable No. 40, effective at 12:01 a.m., Eastern Standard Time, on Sunday, August 4, 1940:

WATCH INSPECTOR

Pugh Bros., Gulf Bldg. and 409 Smithfield St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

WATCH INSPECTION

The watch, calendar month, that its performance may be noted and record made on watch inspection certificate and on watch comparison registration form signed by employee.

General inspection will be made during the January and July periods.

Watches must be cleaned at least every eighteen months. If cleaned by other than the designated watch inspector, a signed statement showing watch number and date cleaned by a recognized watchman will be accepted.”

Bob Ciminel is the founder of the Montour Railroad Yahoo group (http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/). There are currently 175 members from across the country. You are encouraged to join. There is a wealth of information about the Montour Railroad at this location and you can pose questions of its membership, from whom you are sure to get an answer.

Still looking for a gift for a friend or a loved one. Then visit the Montour Trail Store at http://www.montour-trail.org/store/store.html or while you are out visiting your favorite stores, stop by Imagine Threads at 501 Valleybrook Rd. Ste 104 in McMurray to see the Montour Trail Items in person.
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
Janet Berbach
David & Lenore Buchta
Gini Chandler
Lyn & John Cost
Philip & Barbara Ehrman
Richard Hendricks
Wesley Hurst
Sam Hvitfelt
Don Isenstadt
Daryl Lacy
Mark Langenohl
Mike Massino
Brian Matijasic
Joseph Matthews
Stephen Menand
Gary Mikitin
Shannon & Michael Polo
Nancy Provil
Roberta Rapone
Mike Rogan
Travis Sezik
Gordon Terminal Service Co of Pennsylvania

Mark Shaffer
Jeff Siefer
Ron & Kristen Slavonic
Leigh Ann & Glenn Sobzack
Donald & Jackie Thobaben
Douglas & Miriam Weisz
John Patrick Welsh
Joseph A. Yerman
Jon W. Erdner
Paul & Dottie Mitsdarfer
Robert Randolph
Mark J. Smith
Lewis-Goetz & Company
Leslie J. Broglie
Giant Oaks Garden Club
Kathy Grant
Phyllis McChesney
Judy & Tom Thompson
J. A. Wunderlich, III

I want to help complete the Montour Trail!

I want to join the Montour Trail Council at this level:

- Student/Senior $15
- Individual $25
- Family $35
- Supporting $50
- Sustaining $100
- Benefactor $250
- Leader's Circle $500+

Make checks payable to the “Montour Trail Council”

Send me the newsletter by email [ ] mail [ ]

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________________
__________________________________
Phone (Day) ____________________________
Phone (Evening)__________________________
Email _________________________________

People You Meet continues from page 5

When I got to the Connector Parking area at the water treatment plant under the McDonald Viaduct, I noticed another bike leaning against the split-rail fence with some serious looking saddle bags on it.

Behind it was an RV with a gentleman readying another bike. As I was about to ask the woman in the cycling togs where they were headed, I noticed that the RV had an Indiana license plate. Turns out these folks had come in for the Rails-to-Trails Sojourn from Bloomington, Indiana. Their names were Ken and Katy Ratcliff and they left early so they could sample different trails in the area. After driving 400 miles in the RV the day before, they went right to Weirton and rode that end of the Panhandle. Today, they were going to cross the viaduct and run down to Cecil and back with another section in the works for the next day. After completing the Sojourn from Washington, D.C. to Pittsburgh, they were going to a big bike run in Minnesota.
5th Annual Fisher Scientific Tour the Montour Trail Ride  Saturday, September 22nd, 2007

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Name__________________________________
Address______________________________
City/State/Zip__________________________
Phone_______________________________
Email________________________________

Male/Female_______Age:__________
Additional Names:
Name_____________________M/F___Age__
Name_____________________M/F___Age__
Name_____________________M/F___Age__
Name_____________________M/F___Age__

Course:
6____ 12____ 24____ 44____
T-Shirt size: S__ M__ L__ XL__ XXL___

Entry Fee:
Single  $20 per person:__ x $20 =   _____
Family Rate (limit 4 members) $35   _____
Children 12 and under $5                 _____
Total Entry Fee                     _____

Please mail entry and checks payable to:
Montour Trail Council
P.O. Box 459
Imperial, PA 15126

All mailed entries must be post marked by September 14, 2007.

Waiver: in consideration for the acceptance of this entry, I waive for myself, my heirs and assigns, all rights and claims for damages which I might have against the Montour Trail Ride, to be held on Saturday, September 22, 2007; the Montour Trail Council, other sponsoring organizations, business, or individuals as a result of any and all injuries suffered by myself in that event. I also release any photos that may involve myself. (Must be signed by guardian if under the age of 18)

Signature: ________________________________
Minor name if under 18: ____________________