A Busy Summer for Construction  Along the Montour
by Gil McGurl

Two major projects and several smaller, yet significant ones are expected along the Montour Trail this summer.

New bridges will be constructed over Morganza Road and Georgetown Road. These will eliminate two of the most dangerous at-road-crossings along the trail. The timing of this project is uncertain but should begin this summer and probably extend into early 2011. Funding for the design was provided by Pennsylvania DCNR and construction funding will come through PENNDOT from Transportation Enhancement funds and from the Local Share Account grant award (funded through casino proceeds). Minor detours are expected during this work but the trail will remain open.

Reconstruction work will commence from McDonald to North Star Road. This is a multi-year volunteer based project funded by Pennsylvania DCNR. This year, new drainage will be installed near North Star Road to eliminate erosion problems that have occurred during heavy rain events. In addition, improved drainage and new surfacing will be installed from the Panhandle Connector ramp to Quicksilver. Additional work is also expected at several points between Quicksilver and North Star road where erosion problems exist. This portion of the work may happen in either 2010 or 2011. Volunteers are needed for some of the work on this project. Most work is performed during the week and the greatest need for help occurs when new surface is being placed on the trail. Work is anticipated to start this spring when ground conditions become favorable. The trail will remain open during this work, but please be careful near the construction work.

Resurfacing of the trail from Cliff Mine Road to Enlow Tunnel is anticipated this year. Timing of this work is uncertain because personnel and equipment provided by Findlay Township are expected to perform much of the work and this must be accomplished when they have time available. Funding for this project is from the MTC trail maintenance budget. (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 55 mile recreational trail for non-motorized activity regardless of physical ability or financial wherewithal.

The Prez Sez

Making Trails

Got up early the morning of the big snow and went out to discover a new world. What was so striking about it was that there were no paths, none at all. All the paved walks, driveways, sidewalks, even to a large extent the streets, had been utterly erased. Something as simple as a snowflake had undone all of the little routes by which we’d got around, and gleefully presented the challenge of making new ones. If you wanted to go anywhere, you had better pull on your tallest boots, and be prepared for the effort of having each footfall sink to your knees. Every step was, in a very real sense, trailblazing. What lay underneath, be it grass, asphalt, gravel, or concrete, made no difference whatsoever.

So, headed out to explore the neighborhood, and after a little while, came out of the deep untrodden snow to plod the somewhat easier going in the streets. Unlike the Ides of March ’93, a trickle of motorists had kept asserting their determination to re-establish the main streets. That morning began the parade of pedestrians walking along the roads, begetting a whole new way of looking at shared pathways, of vastly different travelers edging around each other in the same space. One of the good things to come out of this storm is that motorists just might remember that, at least for a while, they did have a heightened sense of the presence and actions of pedestrians.

The morning presented the uncommon opportunity for a town dweller to experience an extraordinary natural beauty accompanied by a deeply enveloping silence. But of course eventually our own nature arises; we become unable to not feel like we have things to do and places to be. That meant re-establishing connections to roads and destinations. Time to get out the shovel and go to work.

In a day full of surprises, one of them was discovering how closely shoveling a sidewalk resembles building a rail trail. Parallel to the busy road, there lay a century old transportation corridor, waiting to be uncovered and made usable again. All it needed was a willing volunteer with a simple tool and the resolve to see the job to completion. Of course a corridor can’t just end at a property line, so I cleared the sidewalks of my aging neighbors, too. It took all day, but pedestrians were then able to get out of the slushy street for a whole block. As long as their pathway got re-shoveled every day . . .

If you want to know why it’s so hard to get money for trails, to find ways to build trails, and to keep trails opened and in good shape, look no further than that stretch of sidewalk - every neighborhood has one - which was never touched after the storm. Because it was hard enough just to open up and maintain the streets. Because crews and budgets are always stretched. Because everyone was busy and had a lot of other more important things to deal with that week. Because the needs of those on foot, though modest, get lost in the much larger picture of the whole transportation and highway system.

We’re fortunate to have a network of hidden corridors before us, and the chance to get out and open them up for those who, for many reasons, travel by foot.

Ned Williams
**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 Ned at 724-225-9856 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 (with the exception of November and December) meet at the MTC Offices. Work and cleanup parties are scheduled as needed. Call 412-264-6303 for more information, or email densimwx@comcast.net.

**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, Robinson, North Fayette, and Findlay is encouraged to attend. Call 412 264-6303 for more information. Work and cleanup party, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. Call 412 262-3748 for more information and location.

**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. Work and cleanup party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. Call Bob O’Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

**South Hills Friends:**
Meeting second Wednesday 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.

**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.

**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.

**The Montour Railroad Historical Society:**
The newest Friends group. For more information send email to mrhs@montourrr.com.

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**The 5th Annual 5k Race/Walk for the J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge**

The Bethel Park Friends of the Montour Trail Council will hold its 5th Annual JR Taylor Memorial Bridge 5K Race/Walk on Saturday, May 29, 2010. This is a 5K race/walk along the Bethel Branch of the Montour Trail. The race/walk begins across the street from Washington Elementary School on Clifton Road by Al’s Café with a turnaround near Brush Run Road. The finish line is just beyond the starting point. The race/walk begins at 8:30 a.m.

The top 3 finishers in each age category will receive awards. Special awards this year will be given to the finishers that break the course record which is 17:07 for the men and 20:02 for the women. Snacks and refreshments will be served after the race along with a Chinese Auction. Race day registration will begin at 7:30 a.m. in the Washington Elementary School parking lot at 515 Clifton Road in Bethel Park and parking will be in the rear unpaved portion of Al’s Café parking lot.

All pre-registered participants will receive a t-shirt, and a raffle ticket for a Chinese Auction. Pre-registered participants may pick up their registration packets on Friday, May 28 between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. in the Washington School parking lot.

Those registered by May 15 are guaranteed a t-shirt.

Proceeds from the event go to the construction fund for the J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge. Registration forms are available at the message boards along the trail. Online registration for the race is available at www.runhigh.com. To have registration forms mailed to you, contact Cyndee Welsh at 412-835-0522 or cyndee5011@verizon.net. For any questions, please contact Cyndee, or Phil Ehrman at 412-576-9318 or pehrman@corporateairllc.com.

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**Tails for Trails VI**

Calling all canines, the Cecil Friends will once again host Tails for Trails, a 5K fun walk on the Cecil Section of the Montour Trail, featuring the National Tunnel. The event takes place on Saturday, June 5 from 8:30 a.m. until Noon. This year’s event will be the 6th Walk and over the past 5 years, the event has grown from 40 dogs to over 100 dogs. The festivities are held at the Kurnick (National) Access Area on Cecil Henderson Road, which is also the location of the Montour Trail Garage at milepost 25.5. The event raises funds for maintenance of the Cecil Section of the Trail as well as funds for rehabilitating the National Tunnel. Last year’s event raised over $4000.

Besides the walk which begins at 9:00 a.m., there will be vendor tables featuring pet related items, tables for Chinese auction items and we will have the fabulous Frank Ludwin hot dogs and all their trimmings. The Montour Railroad Historical Society will have a table displaying the railroad history. Candy Verduce will be back this year to take professional portraits of your dog. She asks that you come early if you want a portrait so your pet can look its best. *Continues on page 4*
**Trail Construction** continues from page 1

Allegheny County is planning a significant repaving project near Cliff Mine Road. As part of this project, the parking lot at Cliff Mine will be used as a staging area for the contractor and parking in that area will be severely restricted during the project. In return for that inconvenience, the Cliff Mine Road parking lot will be reconfigured, upgraded and improved to allow separation of the Trail from the parking area. Timing and impact are uncertain as of the writing of this article.

Allegheny County is also doing some work near Schmidt’s Tavern during which they will replace a small bridge on the Trail. The trail will remain open but the temporary bypass will be narrower than the trail so please be careful.

Allegheny Energy is doing some construction work near Limestone Road in Bethel Park during the period of March thru June. This section of trail right-of-way is owned by Allegheny Energy. The trail may be closed during working hours when active work is underway. Allegheny Energy is working cooperatively with the MTC to minimize impacts on trail users and hopes to have the Trail open after work and on weekends.

On the Arrowhead section of the Trail, Peters Township is planning to replace the tunnel at Bebout Road with a bridge. This work will require a detour and the exact route of the detour is not currently known. Timing of the project is also not definite but will begin sometime this year.

The MTC received a funding commitment from the Regional Asset District for construction of the Airport Extension. The MTC is working with the airport staff to develop an approach that is best for both the Trail and the airport. We are unsure whether this work will be performed in 2010 or in 2011, but keep looking at the newsletter for updates on this project.

The bridge over Piney Fork in South Park is scheduled to be placed during March. After it is in place, volunteer effort will be required to construct the deck on the bridge so that we can complete the DCNR effort for this part of the project. Planning for the remainder of the project will be undertaken this summer but the next stage is not anticipated to begin this year.

The JR Taylor Bridge in Bethel Park over Clifton Road is an Allegheny County project that is in the final stages of design approval. It is sincerely hoped that this project will reach the construction stage this year. During construction, detours are anticipated near Clifton Road.

**Tails for Trail 6** continues from page 3

Last year we moved the event from the sunny grassy area near the parking lot, eastward on the trail into the shade behind the garage which was appreciated by the attendees. The mounds that were created years ago adjacent to the Trail have been removed to provide a wide venue along either side of the Trail.

The registration fee remains the same as last year, one dog $10, two dogs $16, and after May 17, it will be $12 a dog. Hope to see you and your dog on National Trails Day. Registration forms will be available on the trail, at local businesses or at www.montourtrail.org/event/tailswalk.htm

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**Spotlight On Volunteers!**

by Phyllis McChesney

We are fortunate to have so many great volunteers who willingly give their time and energy working on projects that benefit the Montour Trail. Some prefer to work behind the scenes while others work on projects that a trail user may see every day. Let me introduce you to Joyce Hufnagel and Patrick Flood - two volunteers who do not know each other, have completely different tasks, but each share a strong commitment to give back to their community and have chosen to volunteer for the Montour Trail.

The membership database is our main network to track donor records, event sponsor information for the annual report and to keep volunteer information current. Joyce Hufnagel volunteers in our Bridgeville office and enters membership, donor and sponsor communication. This includes preparing and printing acknowledgement letters and labels, updating email addresses, PayPal membership payments and other information that requires documentation. She does this one night a week after working all day at her job with GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. Joyce has been a volunteer for over two years and donates about eighty hours a year to this project. Joyce recently received a $500 GSK Give Program grant that is available to employees who volunteer a minimum of fifty hours a year. She designated the Montour Trail Council as the recipient of the grant.

Patrick Flood, a Bethel Park resident, is the project manager for the X1 crane restoration with the Montour Railroad Historical Society. The X1 crane can be seen off Valleybrook Road in the West Peters section of the trail. Patrick has been a volunteer for over two years, and along with his fellow volunteers, has logged countless hours working on this project. As the Project Manager, he is involved with all aspects of the restoration. This includes asking donors for materials, as well as hands-on-tasks, such as rust removal, sealing, painting and the rehabilitation of the onboard machinery. Patrick also took advantage of a program offered by his employer and received a $750 grant from The Verizon Foundation for his volunteer activities. Patrick estimates that the restoration of the X1 is about twenty percent complete. This grant will be used by the Montour Railroad Historical Society to purchase materials for the restoration process.

Two volunteers for the Montour Trail with each a different interest. However, both took the time to research grants available from their employer, log their hours and complete usually a simple process to apply for a grant. The Montour Trail Council salutes Joyce and Patrick for their dedication and service.

If you are a volunteer, please consider checking with your employer as to grants offered for community service.
Snow
Continues from Page 1.

going up and down the drifts. The winters of 1993-1994 and 1995-1996 also brought remarkable snowfall to the trail as well, leaving it to the x-c skiers.

Trail users may wonder why the trail and trailheads haven’t been cleared. Although it might be possible to plow the trailheads, plowing over 40 miles of trail would be a monumental task. In addition the job would be complicated by the soft, easily damaged, crushed limestone trail surface and by the large numbers of trees lying across the trail. In Cecil, a volunteer did plow out a small section of the Kurnick Access parking area to provide access for those dedicated trail users.

Normally after a snow, trail users walk the entire width of the trail looking for the easiest path. As the trail thaws, portions are packed down to ice, which is slick and difficult to walk on, and which trail users then try to avoid. Just before the ice melts the trail is usually at its worst, icy across its entire width. It’s almost impassable to bicycles during these periods. This was the case after the December snows. On the other hand, the deep snows of February, coupled with the downed trees have reduced trail traffic (even the cross country skiers have been daunted by the number of trees across the trail) and trail users have generally packed down a single narrow path in most areas. The dedicated, die-hard trail user has not avoided the trail in the wake of the storm. Walking on Arrowhead; the single path described by Dave, snakes around, over and under the fallen trees, using the ditches on the side of the trail. In some cases, skiers and walkers have been sharing a common path because the depth of the snow made making a new ski track too much work.

Following the snow melt, the trails surface will be quite soft from the water being held in the limestone, it sometimes seem like mortar, and as it dries, it will record every bike, walker and animal that has been on it. Its good to avoid the trail until the surface dries, which usually takes 2 or 3 sunny, warm windy days.

Now that the snow is gone, volunteers have begun to attack the trees and branches and clear the trail in preparation for spring. We encourage trail users to contact the MTC or your local Friends group. We are always looking for volunteers to help the maintain the trail.
The Mighty “Mikes” of the Montour

This article describes the Mikado-type steam locomotives used on the Montour Railroad between 1916 and 1953. These engines operated over the entire line from Montour Junction to Mifflin Junction, as well as the Westland, Muse, and Library branches/spurs.

With the completion of the Mifflin Extension in 1914 and the onset of World War I, the Montour Railroad faced an impending operational challenge: it needed to move more coal in longer trains over its single-track, roller coaster right-of-way. The wartime demand for coal has already prompted the opening of new coal mines at Southview, Cowden, Hendersonville, and Hills, with additional mines, or major improvements to existing mines, planned for Boggs, McAdams, Muse, Westland, and Library.

Before 1915, the Montour relied on hand-me-down locomotives from the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railway and the Bessemer & Lake Erie Railroad. These engines, referred to as Consolidation-type locomotives, had two small wheels in front, known as a pilot or pony truck, and eight driving wheels (2-8-0). This wheel arrangement worked fine when moving forward because the pilot wheels would help guide the locomotive through curves, but it was not a good wheel arrangement for backing up. The yards at the new coal mines required locomotives to make frequent reverse moves when switching. The absence of turntables on the Montour meant that engines sometimes had to run in reverse for a considerable distance.

In the second decade of the Twentieth Century, a new locomotive came on the American railroad scene. It was called the Mikado (quickly shortened to “Mike” by those verbally perspicacious railroad men), and was named after a group of locomotives designed and built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia for the Nippon Railway of Japan in 1897. (Note: The locomotive’s name was based on Gilbert & Sullivan’s opera The Mikado, which premiered in 1895. Later, with the outbreak of World War II and the attack on Pearl Harbor the locomotive was given a more “American” name, the MacArthur, in honor of General Douglas MacArthur.)

The Mikado was essentially a 2-8-0 Consolidation with a small set of wheels, called a trailing truck, beneath the firebox and cab (2-8-2). The trailing truck offered two advantages. First, the locomotive could have a much larger firebox, which meant more steam, and second, it could operate at higher speeds in reverse because the trailing truck would lead the engine through curves. These two advantages offered a perfect fit for the Montour.

Beginning in 1915, the Montour placed orders for 16 Mikado-type locomotives with the American Locomotive Company. Given road numbers 20 through 35, these engines had 27-inch by 32-inch steam cylinders, eight 57-inch driving wheels, a boiler pressure of 185 pounds per square inch, and could exert 64,500 pounds of tractive effort. This was almost 70% more force than a Consolidation could apply. The Montour Mikes were ordered and delivered before the United States Railroad Administration took over control of the nation’s railroads in 1917 and thus did not have to comply with its standardization rules.

The Montour “Mikes” were stored and serviced at Montour Junction, with limited servicing available at Mifflin Junction. The facilities at Montour Junction included coal conveyors, a water tank, an ash pit for cleaning out fireboxes, and an engine house for flushing boilers and performing mechanical repairs. The location of the engine house at the end-of-track required the locomotives to face west at the end of their runs. This meant that the engines would have to run in reverse to North Star Junction to turn on the wye. Engines employed as helpers on the rear of coal trains westbound from Montour No. 4 mine often ran in reverse from Montour Junction to the mine before coupling onto the rear of their trains. Locomotives that worked the yard at Champion were also moving backwards a lot, particularly those hauling rock and slate from the coal washer out to the dumps west of Boggs Yard. The advantages of the Mike’s rear trailing truck were a necessity for the Montour.

The Montour in the days of steam looked a lot different than the Montour of the diesel age. Steam locomotives need coal and water, and water more often than coal. Consequently, the railroad had water tanks and water standpipes strategically located along the right-of-way. Water tanks were usually located at the foot of the major grades along the railroad.

Montour Trail users may find remnants of these tanks along the trail. These are typically concrete footers used to support the tanks. Heading west (railroad east) from Montour Junction, the first water tank was at the Imperial station (Trail Milepost 8.5). Locomotives serving the yard at Champion could obtain water from a standpipe located near the car dumper. The next mainline water tank was at the continues on page 7

Bob Ciminel is the founder of the Montour Railroad Yahoo group http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/ There are currently 283 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.
Welcome New Members

The Montour Trail Council welcomes these new members and thanks them for their support. We would also like to thank all our members who have recently renewed their membership and to remind all that a growing membership is one of the criteria foundations look for when we apply for grants.

New Members
Jeanne Creese
Lawrence Domenic
James Doperak
Larry Doperak
Susan Fox
Mary Macioce
Deborah Stahl

Jim Whipple & Josie Strong
Allan & Christine Williams

Benefactors
Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Broglie
Andrew & Ming Tung

Leader’s Circle
Wayne Balta

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 ✉️

Name ________________________________
Address __________________________________
Phone (Day) ____________________________
Phone (Evening) _________________________
Email ___________________________________

Mail to:
Montour Trail Council
Suite #3
304 Hickman Street
Bridgeville, PA 15017

The Montour Trail Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax-deductible. You may also be eligible for matching funds from your employer. A copy of the Montour Trail Council’s official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling (toll-free within Pennsylvania) 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Don’t Forget
The Montour Trail Council may be designated as your United Way Contributor Choice as option #3308.
### Burgh’s Pizza & Wing Pub 10th Annual 10K, 5K Run and 2 Mile Walk

**Benefits the Montour Trail**

**Sunday, April 25, 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRY FEES</th>
<th>Before April 11</th>
<th>After April 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10K or 5K run</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$27</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-Mile Walk</td>
<td>$22</td>
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<td>2-Mile Walk (under 12)</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both 5K and 10K Runs*</td>
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*only 45 min to complete 5K run and recover prior to 10K start

**Schedule**

- 5K Run: 9:15 a.m.
- 10K Run: 10:00 a.m.
- 2-Mile Walk: 10:15 a.m.

Make checks payable to:

BP&W 10K Montour Trail

*Please do NOT send cash.*

Mail to:

BP&W 10K Montour Trail

533 Washington Ave.

Bridgeville, PA 15017

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Please print

Name: __________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________

_____________________________________________

City:__________________________________________

State, Zip:_____________________________________

Age as of April 25, 2010: _____

Sex:   M   F

Event: 10K Run   5K Run   2-Mile Walk

Racing Shorts Size:

XS   S   M   L   XL

Based on availability, racing shorts may be purchased on Race Day.

Waiver: In consideration of 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 Burgh’s Pizza & Wing Pub 10K Run for Family, Friends & Fun to be held Sunday, April 25, 2010, Burgh’s Pizza & Wing Pub, The Montour Trail Council, other sponsoring organizations, businesses, or individuals as a result of any and all injuries suffered by me in that event. I attest and verify that I am an amateur and physically fit and have trained sufficiently for this event. I also release any photos that may involve myself.

Signature:

If under 18, parent or guardian must sign below:

_____________________________________________

Signature of parent or guardian