

# The MILEPOST

Mon/Yough Trail Council's Yough River Trail Newsletter

Editor: Terry Vota

October 2018

Volume 27, Issue 2

*One of the greatest gifts that you can give is your time.....*

**Note: The Banquet Reservation Form and the Board of Directors Election Ballot is included on Page 6 in this Newsletter!**

## From the President By Mark Place (412) 877-0050

I want to start this message by promising that as your president I will never tweet...ever. I dread reading or listening to the news these days between world conflicts, natural disasters, and election news. So, let me share something better, THANKS and PRIDE.

This year has been challenging, but we have met those challenges and have made great progress on some key issues. I want to share some of the things that I am THANKFUL for and to share how PROUD I am of our all-volunteer organization.

Every week we continue to express thanks for the \$50,000 grant that we received from the Trail Volunteer Fund (TVF) of the Pittsburgh Foundation. The new Ford F550 dump truck has been a huge help this season since being put in service and is being used every week. Please take a look at this custom spec truck when you see us on the trail. Thank you again Mary, Roy and the TVF.

Mother Nature has not been kind to us this year. We have been dealing with flooding, major slides, minor slides, clogged drains, hundreds of trees and branches down, trail erosion and the list goes on. Our volunteer trail maintenance crew has been superb in getting the issues dealt with in near record time. Much of the first responder work has occurred on weekdays. Extra THANKS to Rich, Bill, Charlie, Tim, two Johns, Al and others that could put extra hours in week after week to keep the trail open. Also, thanks to the other trail groups that offered help during the 2-day trail closing after the really major slide. Elizabeth Township Police and Greenock VFC for their support, Allegheny Trail Alliance for help with communications, Regional Trail

Corporation for emergency funding to help with cleanup costs and the list goes on.

Our Visitor Center in Boston was damaged after heavy rain caused a retaining wall to collapse behind us. Thanks especially to Bill, Rich, Marei and Rich, our neighbor, for a rapid emergency repair and limiting the effect on operation of the visitor's center over a holiday weekend. Again, many hands were out to help.

We have a great group of volunteers and I look forward to recognizing many for exceptional service at our Annual Meeting dinner on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. I hope you will attend.

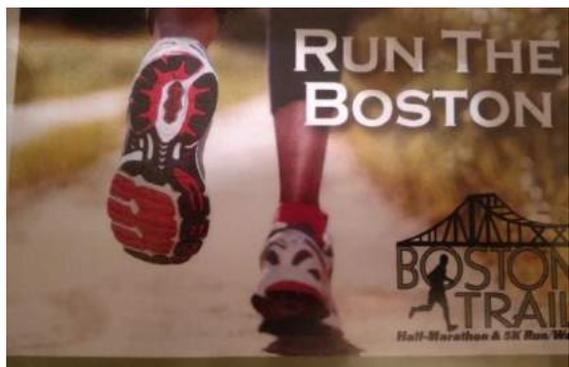
I am really proud not only of the work accomplished on the trail so far, but of many other activities and initiatives that we are working on as a team.

We had another successful ½ Marathon-5K and the annual Yough N Roll ride thanks to Kathie Fawcett and Kathy Banfield's leadership. We are now able to accept credit cards for sales at the Visitor's Center and for membership and donations thanks to Marei, Tim, Eileen, John and Adam for making that happen. We are well on our way to a new and improved web site that will load faster, work well with any web enabled device and allow the use of credit cards as noted above. We are also working to improve our relationships, cooperation, and communications with other trail groups, trail users and local businesses along the trail. We are expanding community outreach to get the word out that the trail is open for not only biking, but also walking and running and about any non-motorized activity. If you would like us to do a presentation for a group that you are involved in, please let me know. And since you are reading this, thanks for another great issue of *The Mile Post* by Terry and Linda.

**MYTC PROUD**, Mark

## Boston Trail Half Marathon and 5K Run/Walk

By Kathie Fawcett



On April 21<sup>st</sup> the Mon/Yough Trail Council held their eighth annual half-marathon and 5k run/walk fundraiser. Weather was picture perfect for this

year's race with lows in the mid-50's at the start and ending in the low 70's. This year's event had 457 individuals between the half-marathon and 5k. Thank you to both **Allegheny Health Network Jefferson Hospital & Pennsylvania American Water** which both provided support in donations and volunteers. Also, thank you to all of our sponsors. Events like this race help to ensure individuals can stay healthy by the continued usage of the trail.

### Sponsors

#### Allegheny Health Network/Jefferson Hospital

Pennsylvania American Water

The Elizabeth Companies

The UPS Store – White Oak

Northwest Savings Bank – Elizabeth Branch

Pozzuto's Auto Service

Flowers With Imagination

Fleet Feet Sports

Bour Associates

Road ID

Elizabeth Township Police Dept

Southeast Regional EMS

Levin Furniture

Fawcett Trucking

Grand Central Pizza

Butler's Golf Course

NUGO Nutrition

Giant Eagle - White Oak

The Embroidery People

Greenock VFC

Eat'nPark

Next year's race will be held on **Saturday, April 20, 2019**. Information as well as sign up will begin sometime in October. We look forward to seeing everyone next April! Happy Trails ☺

## Yough 'n' Roll / GAP 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Membership Appreciation Day

By Kathy Banfield

The Great Allegheny Passage was started 40 years ago. 40 years ago there was no Yough River Trail or Great Allegheny Passage. But there was a group of volunteers who had a dream that created the Great Allegheny Passage. A celebration was held on June 9 with free hot dogs, snacks and refreshments at the Boston Trailhead.

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual Yough 'n' Roll was also held on June 9th, 2018. The ride at your own pace event took place along the Youghiogheny River Trail portion of the Great Allegheny Passage from Boston to Smithton. This year's ride continued to be one of Mon/Yough Trail Council's most successful fundraising events, raising thousands for its mission of sustaining maintenance and operation of the trail.

The event consisted of a choice of a 40-mile ride to Smithton and return or a 20-mile ride to Sutersville and return. Rest stops were manned by MYTC volunteers.



# Boston Visitor Center

By Marei Burnfield

## Weather versus Volunteers



As many of you may be aware, the wet 2018 trail season has proved quite challenging for **volunteers** on our maintenance crew. As if that weren't enough, the visitor center at the

Boston Trailhead was also presented with extraordinary weather related events this season. After a brief torrential rainstorm on the evening of July 2, 2018, the large retaining wall behind the center collapsed, damaging the back side of the center



and moving it forward 4 inches. Despite being closed for a week, until being properly inspected by a structural engineer and deemed safe to occupy, **volunteers** stepped up immediately to assist with temporarily setting up shop under a canopy along the trail over the busy 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. The wall is scheduled to be replaced by the owner after we close for the season.

In early September, the rains continued and on September 10, 2018, the Youghiogheny River covered the parking lot at the trailhead, cresting just inches away from the ramp at the visitor center. Once again,



**volunteers** sprang into action, moving items in anticipation of the predicted flood. I can sincerely attest that the rain, and all the extras that have accompanied it this year, have not dampened the **volunteer** spirit here, nor have they dampened the spirit of our guests. As of September 7, 2018, we

have had the opportunity to welcome wonderful folks from 36 states and 11 countries. This being possible thanks to an increase in **volunteers** willing to staff the center. Weather permitting, the Boston Trailhead Visitor Center will remain open until November 4, 2018. Enjoy the remainder of the season!

# GC Murphy Warehouse

By Terry Vota

From Boston Bridge, if you decide to take the "LOOP" through Versailles instead of the GAP trail to McKeesport, notice the very large building spanning from 28<sup>th</sup> street to past 31<sup>st</sup> street.

**SAFETY NOTE:** If you take the "LOOP", the tracks on that side of the river are "active train tracks".



The large building is between the trail and the river. Magic Creations currently occupies the structure but "back in the day", it was the main warehouse and distribution center for GC Murphy

Company. After several smaller warehouses in the McKeesport area could not handle the distribution load, 15 acres of land was purchased along the B&O Railroad in 1941 and the warehouse opened in December. Due to an expansion of stores, an addition was added in 1963. When GC Murphy was in its prime with over 500



GC Murphy Warehouse ~1963

stores in 22 states, over 400 employees were at this location.



Magic Creations ~2018

For those that never set foot in a "five and dime", GC Murphy was a McKeesport-based company started with its first store in

1906 in McKeesport and locally had stores throughout the Youghiogheny and Monongahela River valleys. They initially catered to small coal mining and steel mill towns. Locally, there were stores in McKeesport, Elizabeth, West Newton, Versailles, Monessen, Clairton, Belle Vernon, Irwin, Brownsville, and Uniontown. Although they were poised to compete with K-Mart and Walmart (and even opened several large Murphy Marts locally in Pleasant Hills, Bethel Park, Greensburg and Mt Pleasant ) they were susceptible to a buyout and for many competitive reasons, GC Murphy was sold to AMES in 1985, business went steadily down, stores were closed and the warehouse was closed in 1992.

# MYTC Volunteers Battle Mother Nature in Summer 2018

By Tim Banfield

Mother Nature has not been kind to the trail in 2018. In June major rainstorms caused a landslide near GAP Mile 123. This slide was more than MYTC volunteers could handle so reinforcements were called in from Jim Fawcett Trucking to clear the mess. An over-the-road detour was required during the trail restoration activities. Fortunately this detour was only required for less than a week.



Major Landslide



Cleared Trail

A short time later in June, more storms brought down trees in multiple locations including major tree falls near Boston and again near GAP Mile 123. MYTC volunteers cleared these tree falls to keep the trail open through Elizabeth Township. The good news there is no shortage of firewood at the campground.



Then as this issue goes to press, MYTC is recovering from the highest flooding in over 20 years on the Yough, which crested at 26.5 feet in Sutersville on September 10 and was the highest level since a crest of 28 feet in January 1996.

The parking lot at Boston trailhead flooded, however MYTC's visitor center and storage shed along with the rest room facilities escaped without any damage. A short section of trail in Boston also flooded for a day or two, requiring a detour on the Loop Trail along the opposite side of river.

In the aftermath of the flooding rains in September, which dropped an estimated 7 – 8 inches on the region, another mudslide near GAP Mile 123 plugged up a couple drains and led to mud and water overflowing the trail. MYTC volunteers were again in action before the rain had stopped to clear the trail and get the water channeled back into the drainage ditch. Special thanks to volunteers Al Berkheimer and John Eisenbarth for



dealing with this situation. Also between GAP Mile 128 and 129 near Deadman's Hollow, a 150-ft section along the paved trail collapsed, and while the trail at this location is passable to bikes and walkers, this problem will need future attention.

MYTC's new dump truck, acquired with a grant from the Trail Volunteer Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation, was quickly pressed into service and used to deal with all these situations.

Many volunteers helped deal with these problems in addition to doing all the normal maintenance such as mowing grass along the trail, at campground and parking lots along with keeping all the equipment in working order at MYTC's shop. In particular, MYTC wants to take this opportunity to recognize new



volunteers, Linda Grant, David Wiegel, James Ickes, Jake Ickes, Frank Lotito, and Chuck Piontek. In total, thirty volunteers have worked 1,363 hours from June through the middle of September.

# Please welcome our newest members!

By Eileen Lenart, Membership Chairman

NOV 2017 – AUG 2018

1. ANTHONY CAPRIOTTI, VERONA
2. GINNY DOBOS, N. VERSAILLES
3. JAKES ICKES, PITCAIRN
4. JAMES ICKES, ELIZABETH
5. FRANK LOTITO, PLUM
6. ADRIAN MARINI, ELIZABETH
7. MARION MAZZOCCO, IMPERIAL
8. KEN AND CINDY MEDVED, WHITE OAK
9. ROBERT AND MARYANNE MICKEY, TRAFFORD
10. PAT MINKUS, SOUTH PARK
11. JOE MYERS, MONROEVILLE
12. CHRIS AND SACHIKO HOWARD, PITTSBURGH
13. VALERIE SHAW, MCKEESPORT
14. JOHN AND PAM THOMPSON, NORTH HUNTINGDON
15. PAUL YURCHISO, ELIZABETH

We welcome the new members into the MYTC. Many of these new members immediately volunteered to help maintain the trail. They and our “old” volunteers were essential during the memorable rainy 2018 spring, summer and fall. The recent flood along the Yough River did devastating damage to homes along our part of the trail and to the trail. Fortunately our volunteers were out working the issues soon after the rain stopped and they kept the trail operational.

Thank You Volunteers!!!

Also, a sincere "thank you" to all those who have renewed their annual 2018 MYTC membership. We appreciate your faithfulness to the mission and vision of keeping the trail in the best possible condition.

## Regular Work Sessions on the Trail

MYTC holds regular work sessions during good weather on **Saturday mornings, meeting at 8:00** at the end of Locust Grove Road along the trail in Greenock, off of East Smithfield Street about 2 miles upriver from the Boston Bridge.



Many workers show up every Saturday to help. We could not survive without this heroic weekly effort. Volunteers help on trail maintenance projects, putting in hours of their time to cut grass along our nearly 15 miles of trail, open up drainage ditches, cut fallen trees, stack firewood, repair and maintain equipment, build shelters, install benches etc.

## “Stay-at-home vacation”

If you have not been able to take a vacation this summer, it is not too late! Wouldn't it be nice to visit areas with these great-sounding names?

Zorianna Bay

Rackowski's Island

Bachman Isle

Apache Springs

Red Waterfall

White Waterfall

Dead Man's Hollow

You really don't have to take an airplane or a cruise; trail veterans know that these areas are all along the MYTC section of the GAP.

Pull up Google Maps!

## 2018 Banquet and Annual Meeting

**Saturday, November 10, 2018**  
**5:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

**Rock Run Inn at Butler's Golf Course**  
**800 Rock Run Road**  
**Elizabeth, PA 15037**

*Maintaining the Yough River Trail requires  
membership support!*

***Come out to learn about accomplishments  
from this past year!***

### Banquet

(Reservation deadline November 1, 2018)

**Note that the bridge at the Rock Run Road in Buena Vista may still be closed on November 10. You can reach Rock Run Road coming from Sutersville but not coming from Boston. The best alternative is to take Rt 48 to Rock Run Road.**

### **Banquet Reservations:**

*Please make checks payable and mail to: Mon/Yough Trail Council PO Box 14 McKeesport, PA 15135*

Dinner Cost: \$20.00 per Person

Number Attending: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20.00/Person      Total  
Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete the section below:*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guests \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Board of Directors Election

*Elections will be held at the annual  
membership meeting/banquet.*

*Nominations accepted prior to and at the  
banquet*

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### **BALLOT**

*Ballots may be mailed if unable to attend -  
Mon/Yough Trail Council PO Box 14 McKeesport, PA 15135  
Vote for no more than 4 candidates*

### Board of Directors Election – Nominations:

- Mark Place
- Sarah Helzlsour
- Linda Vota
- Terry Vota
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Please verify that "write in" candidates are willing to accept the nomination and are eligible to serve.

## Council Directory

### Mission Statement

In 1991, the Mon/Yough Trail Council (MYTC) was founded to promote the rail corridor conversion to public access trails along the Youghiogheny River. Today, MYTC remains a non-profit, 501(c)3, all volunteer Pennsylvania corporation dedicated to sustaining trail maintenance and operations in order to encourage multi-purpose recreational use.

### 2018 Officers

#### President

Mark Place

#### Vice President

John Eisenbarth

#### Treasurer

Tim Banfield

#### Secretary

Mary Reid

### Directors

#### 2016 – 2018

Rich Kundman  
Belinda O’Keson  
Mark Place  
Terry Vota

#### 2017 – 2019

Tim Banfield  
John Eisenbarth  
Kathie Fawcett  
Eileen Lenart  
Dave Ringler

#### 2018 - 2020

Cathy Bartley  
Marei Burnfield  
Bill Hall  
Mary Reid  
Charlie Smith

### Meetings

You are welcome to attend informative monthly meetings, held 6:30 pm, the second Thursday of each month at the Greenock Fire Hall, Elizabeth Township.

### Contact us:

#### MYTC

P.O. Box 14  
McKeesport, PA 15135

[www.TheBostonTrail.com](http://www.TheBostonTrail.com)

### Mission

To do our part to enhance the enjoyment of all who are, and will, have the experience of traveling the Rails-to-Trails journey by promoting and performing the maintenance, repairs, restoration and beautification of our portion of the Great Allegheny Passage.

## Membership Application

Yes, I want to be a member of the  
Mon Yough Trail Council

Membership Level	Contribution
------------------	--------------

- |                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General    | \$20  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate  | \$25  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | \$50  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate  | \$250 |

Please check here if renewal

In addition, I would like to contribute  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the MYTC.

Please print:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Required*

\_\_\_\_ I would like to be contacted to volunteer.

\_\_\_\_ I would like to receive a membership card.

Please make checks payable to and  
mail to:

MYTC Membership

P.O. Box 14

McKeesport, PA 15135

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**Mon/Yough Trail Council**  
**PO Box 14**  
**McKeesport, PA 15135**  
[www.TheBostonTrail.com](http://www.TheBostonTrail.com)



*Mon/Yough Trail Council's  
Yough River Trail Newsletter*

*The following businesses have generously supported the Mon/Yough Trail Council.  
Please show them your thanks by patronizing their businesses.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Adam Inlay Web Design   | Northwest Savings Bank-Elizabeth Branch           |
| Allegheny Health Network/Jefferson Hospital                   | NuGo Nutrition                                    |
| Allegheny Land Trust  | PA American Water Company                         |
| Allegheny Regional Asset District                             | Petkanics Charitable Fund                         |
| American Water Charitable Foundation                          | Pozzuto Auto—White Oak                            |
| Basic Carbide   | R.C. Walter & Sons Hardware                       |
| Bekavac Funeral Home  | Rich's Parkside Den                               |
| Bour Associates   | River City Junction                               |
| Carriage Inn  | Road ID   |
| Chevron Humankind Program                                     | Robert C. Lucas, Attorney                         |
| Crawford Foundation   | Shaw Weil Associates                              |
| Fawcett Trucking  | Steffan Industries                                |
| Gary and Mary Anne Sedlacek Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation | The Betsy Shoppe                                  |
| Gilbert Funeral Home and Crematory                            | The Elizabeth Companies                           |
| Howell Craft Inc.   | The Embroidery People                             |
| Jim Shorkey Family Auto Group                                 | The UPS Store—White Oak                           |
| Klingensmith Insurance Agency                                 | Trailside Treasures                               |
| Levin Furniture   | Trail Volunteer Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation |
| Mary E. Cole Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation                | Travelers Insurance                               |
| 8 McKeesport Hospital Foundation                              | Vista Metals                                      |
| Mueller Appraisal Services                                    | Yough Twister                                     |

