The MILEP®ST

Mon Yough Trail Council's Yough River Trail Newsletter

May 2016

Volume 25, Issue 1

Always find time for the things that make you feel happy to be alive!

- Anonymous



"Allegheny Health Network's Jefferson Hospital

was proud to be the presenting sponsor again this year, at the 6th annual Boston Trail Half Marathon and 5K Run/Walk on April 16," stated Louise Urban, President and CEO. "Jefferson Hospital plays an important role in the health and wellness of many people every day at the hospital. It's an honor for the hospital to take an active role in the community for an event that encourages physical fitness, fun and exercise and promotes an excellent recreational facility in our region."





By Bob Cupp Saturday. April 16, was a perfect day at MYTC's annual Boston Trail Half-Marathon and 5K Run/Walk. The sky was blue and temperature

was perfect. (Well, perhaps the runners would have preferred it to be a little cooler.) The white Trillium were in full bloom on the hillside behind our MP 23 water stop. Surrounded by nature's beauty, it was a lovely setting for both runners and volunteers.

Water stop volunteers were also at Peddler's Village and Dravo Cemetery. Our team of volunteers had the perfect job. We couldn't have felt more appreciated. As the runners paused for a refreshing drink of water or gator aid, they often expressed their gratitude. "Thanks for being here today; we couldn't do it without you," was heard repeatedly.

Linda Fetchen and Randy Hough, a volunteer from Jefferson Hospital, along with his entire family, are long-time, water stop volunteers who know how to have a good time while they work!





We extend a special thank you to our sponsors:

AHN/Jefferson Hospital

Jim Shorkey Family Auto Group Levin Furniture The Elizabeth Companies Carriage Inn Pozzuto Auto - White Oak Rich's Parkside Den The UPS Store - White Oak **Trailside Treasures** Vista Metals Basic Carbide **Fawcett Trucking** PA American Water **Bour Associates** Team Brunazzi Events Road ID **NUGO Nutrition** The Embroidery People Greenock VFC Elizabeth Township EMS Elizabeth Township Police Department











Boston Trail ½ Marathon and 5K 2016By Donna Bour

When planning a foot race in mid-April – or any outdoor event at that time of year – we are always biting our nails as the date approaches. Not because there are concerns about the event itself; that always goes smoothly thanks to the efforts of so many wonderful volunteers and the folks at Jefferson Hospital who play a big part in the success of this race. No, it is our love/hate relationship with Mother Nature that wreaks havoc in those weeks leading up to the event. It seems we have had it all – sun and warmth, cold and rain, cold and sideways rain, hail. This year Mother Nature blessed us with an absolutely perfect day (even though yours truly had numb fingers and was wrapped in a blanket early on!). The temperature at the start was ideal for runners and it never got too hot – even towards the very end. And the sun and blue sky added to the happy, festive atmosphere that always seems to surround this race.

As a loyal MYTC member, avid cyclist, and regular trail user, I have been helping the Board plan this event for many years and it is truly a labor of love. I ride a lot of trails and each time I come back to our beloved GAP I realize how blessed we are to have this regional asset, and I'm grateful to all of the people who keep it that way for the rest of us. This race has become a regional favorite and a very popular early spring race. It attracts the serious runner – many preparing for the Pittsburgh Marathon – and those just wanting to enjoy the camaraderie of walking and running while helping to support the all-volunteer MYTC in their efforts to maintain the trail. The flat, crushed limestone surface is perfect for those wanting to achieve stride and speed and even more perfect for those who may not be regular runners or are new to the sport.

Thank you to all of the runners and walkers who came out that day and to all of the volunteers who helped make it a successful event. As the one who manages registration and fields the inquiries and comments from participants, I can say that feedback is always positive and enthusiastic. Many say it is one of their favorite races, and they look forward to coming back year after year. Hold that thought! We'll see you in 2017.



"The race does not always go to the swift, but to the ones that keep on running" -Anonymous







Trail News from the President's Computer Desk

Why in the world is that guy in bike riding clothes pushing his bike into the river? I was wondering if anyone who looks at my picture in the newsletter was thinking this. IF you were, here is



the answer. Most bike journeys begin and end at a body of water. Think of a cross country bike ride from California to New Jersey. One bike riding tradition is to dip your back wheel into the body of water you are leaving (the Pacific) and your front wheel into the body of water you encounter at

your final destination (the Atlantic). So what is the water I am dipping my front wheel into? It was the Potomac River in Washington D.C. in July 2012, the consummation of my ride from the point of the three rivers in Pittsburgh to the end of the C & O Canal in D. C. It was the ride of a lifetime: six days of good company, good food, and great riding. In fact, I enjoyed it so much that a group of my friends and I are doing it again this coming September. I will fill you in on how it goes in the next newsletter.

Compared to last spring we have been blessed with a mild spring, at least as far as the amount of rain so far this year. It seemed like last year all it did was rain every other day and we would have 3 or 4 trees down on the trail every week to contend with. We have been fortunate to have enough dry weather that we groomed most sections of the trail and removed all the trees that have fallen. Let us hope the rest of the year is a good one for enjoying the trail and maintaining it.

In the last newsletter, I wrote about how great it would be to recruit 20 new volunteers to help work on the trail. Thanks to Ken, Ed, Rick, Tony, Rich, Kathie, Jack, James, Mike, and Bev, we are now half way there. These are the members who answered my call for new volunteers and have been coming out 1 or more times a month to help keep our trail the world class destination that it is. So a hearty thank you to these ten people and of course to all our regulars who have been working on the trail forever. So for all you who love the trail and have been thinking of coming out to help, just show

up on any Saturday morning (8:00 AM) at the Greenock maintenance building. Hopefully I can report in the next newsletter that we have 10 more volunteers signed up to work on the trail.

As for our ditch digging efforts, we cleaned out a total of 1.3 miles of drainage ditches, some of which were blocked so badly that water was running over the trail. We are now in the process of awarding a contract to grade and seed those areas along the trail where some of the fill from the ditches was spread. Again I will keep you posted as to our ditch digging progress.

So when you see me on the trail, stop and say hello. I always like to hear from our trail users. Please tell me what you think of Your Trail. Rich Kundman - President MYTC (724-747-5894)

Union Sewer Pipe Works at Dead Man's Hollow – Bob Cupp

The Union Sewer Pipe Works was one of several industries located at what is now known as "Dead Man's Hollow" at YRT Mile 18 (one mile north of Boston). Others included the Bowman Brick Works, the Soles Brick Works, oil and gas wells, a coal mine and a stone quarry.

The tracks in the foreground led from the banks of the Youghiogheny River where the clay was mined, then into the main building where the clay was molded into pipes. The round buildings to the right are the kilns where the pipe shapes were baked. The kilns' foundations remain visible from the trail. Some of the product can be seen waiting to be loaded. (Photo Courtesy of Pat Trimble.) Source: The Great Allegheny Passage Companion by Bill Metzgar



Yough 'n' Roll

MYTC 25th Anniversary Celebration Membership Appreciation Day

Save the Date – June 18, 2016

Come and celebrate with us! The Mon/Yough Trail Council has been around for 25 years. 25 years ago there was no Yough River Trail or Great Allegheny Passage. But there was a group of volunteers who had a dream. They created the Mon/Yough Trail Council and started work building our trail. Rails were removed, ballast was leveled and bridges were built. So come and celebrate with us on June 18 from 11:00 to 1:00. Hot dogs, fruit, snacks and refreshments will be served at the Boston Trailhead and Queen Aliquippa Campground at Dravo Cemetery. Volunteers will staff the Visitor Center which is stocked with a variety of t-shirts and trail information.

The twenty-third annual Yough 'n' Roll will also be held on June 18th, 2016. The ride at your own pace event will take place along the Youghiogheny River Trail portion of the Great Allegheny Passage from Boston, PA to Smithton, PA. Come and join us to support your trail volunteers and enjoy a ride on the trail! This year's ride continues 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 consists of a choice of a 40-mile ride to Smithton and return or a 20-mile ride to Sutersville and return. Rest stops are manned by MYTC volunteers. Pre-register to receive an event T-shirt.

After the ride, hot dogs and refreshments will be provided as part of Membership Appreciation Day and our 25 Year Anniversary celebration.

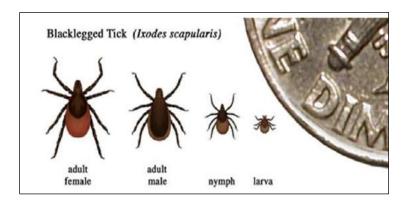
Registration brochures will be mailed to past participants. Brochures will also be available on the website. Walk-ups are welcome but are not guaranteed an event T-shirt. So please come join us on June 18th and enjoy a morning on our beautiful trail.

Precaution against ticks

Blacklegged ticks, which carry Lyme and other diseases, are now part of the "new normal" of the outdoors in southwestern Pennsylvania. With a few simple precautions, however, you can continue to enjoy the outdoors as much as ever.

- Walk in the middle of trails to minimize brushing against vegetation
- Use permethrin on clothing, or DEET on skin or clothing
- Wear long pants tucked into socks/boots and long sleeved shirts tucked into pants
- Right away after outdoor activities, wash your clothes at a high temperature or run them in a hot dryer for 10 minutes
- Right away after outdoor activities, check yourself, children and pets for ticks. If you find an embedded tick, remove it with a "Tick Twister" (available inexpensively online and at most veterinarians), or use fine-pointed tweezers to grab the tick as close to the skin as possible.
- Light colored clothing makes it easier to spot any ticks.
- Discuss options for year-round tick control for your dog with your veterinarian.
 Possibilities include a flea and tick collar, a spot-on repellant, and a systemic chewable tablet.

Adjusting your routine to include these precautions and you can enjoy the outdoors as much as ever.



"Reprinted from the Murrysville Trail Newsletter" – Murrysvilletrails.org

A Milestone By Bill Hall

"County Commissioners today approved a cooperation agreement with Fayette and Westmoreland counties to acquire land for a proposed Rails-to-Trails project. The counties will join in negotiations for acquisition of the 40.3 mile Youghiogheny Branch of the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad right-of-way between McKeesport and Connellsville, which is envisioned as being converted into a hiking and recreation trail."

So read the opening article sentence that appeared in the McKeesport Daily News, August 9, 1990.

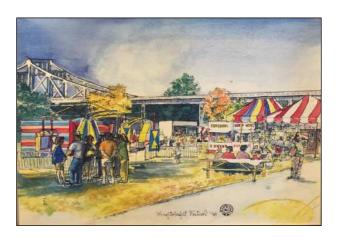


The following year, 1991, saw the formation of the Regional Trail Corporation, a three county joint effort whose primary mission was to acquire and develop the Youghiogheny River Trail North. In that same year the Mon/Yough Trail Council was organized. Its primary mission was to maintain the Allegheny County portion of the trail.

Everyone was anxious for the trail, but site prep was the reality those first two years. Once rails and ties were removed, volunteers confronted decades of discarded trash; countless tires, roofing shingles, refrigerators, washing machines, car parts – you name it, overgrown with vines and jaggers. Muddied, bloodied and exhausted, they did it! In the Spring of 1993, the first five miles of trail surface was laid down in the wooded section between Greenock and Buena Vista. And there

they were, those volunteers, on their bikes, right behind the paving machine!

Back then, volunteers not only gave of themselves, but also used their own tools and vehicles. The Trail Council needed to raise funds to purchase its own equipment, and so began a membership drive in 1991, and published a newsletter 'The Milepost' (note this edition is Volume 25). The Trail Council also initiated the Youghtoberfest, a fundraiser that evolved into a two-day Fall celebration at the Boston ball field attracting 5000 people annually. It was quite a spectacle with dignitaries, stage and entertainment, food and crafts, even helicopters and hot air balloons. Wow, was that work!



In 1994, additional trail development gave rise to the Yough & Roll bike ride held in early Summer. Initially, riders began on the trail in Boston, rode to Sutersville, across the bridge, snaking their way up and around to Lowber, down to the river and back through Sutersville. That was the 'short' option. I don't remember how far that was, but it was a grueling ride. I'm glad we kept the name!

Those were good days! That was the birth of the Youghiogheny River Trail North; that was the birth of the Mon/Yough Trail Council. With construction of several bridges (many done by volunteers) the trail was in place from Connellsville to Dead Man's Hollow by 1998, finding its way to McKees Point by 2010. This year the Regional Trail Corporation and the Mon/Yough Trail Council proudly celebrate their 25th Anniversary. Congratulations to the dedicated staff and volunteers!

The 3rd Annual J. Terrence Farrell Memorial Bike Ride

By Christine Farrel Zacharia

On Saturday, September 24th the McKeesport Hospital Foundation, along with the Farrell family, will be hosting the 3rd Annual J. Terrence Farrell Memorial Bike Ride. The ride takes place on the Mon Yough Trail, starting under the Boston Bridge, with a 7 1/2 mile ride to the Dravo Cemetery. The more experienced riders can continue on for 12 1/2 miles to Smithton Beach. Riders are expected to return to the Dravo Cemetery by 12 p.m., for a celebration, in honor of Mr. Farrell.

Riders that sign up before September 1, 2016 will be guaranteed a t-shirt and a discounted registration fee. Donations collected for this event will support many organizations and charities, that Attorney Farrell supported, in the McKeesport area. Please visit our Facebook Page 'Annual J. Terrence

Please visit our Facebook Page 'Annual J. Terrence Farrell Bike Ride'.

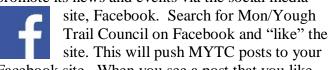
Any questions can be directed to Belinda O'Keson, event co-chairman, at <u>412-678-7126</u>.

See you on the trail!



Help MYTC to "Socialize"

It's easy to help the Mon/Yough Trail Council promote its news and events via the social media



Facebook site. When you see a post that you like, share it to spread the news to other Facebook users and to encourage them to" like" MYTC on Facebook to have updates forwarded to their pages.

There's no charge to share information on Facebook.

New Volunteers Spend Morning on Trail

Recently, a number of new volunteers turned out to lend a hand to Mon/Yough Trail Council by assisting with "Spring Cleaning" on the trail.



The volunteers pictured above that participated were Rich Linkhauer, Mike Carney, Beverly Ekaitis, Tony Indovina, and also Jimi Johnson (not shown).

MYTC holds regular work sessions on **Saturday** mornings, meeting at **08:00** 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. Additional activities are planned on the last Saturday of each month so mark your calendars and plan to come out and lend a hand.

The Three - Part I

Since 1990 there have been scores or more like over 100 plus volunteers making the Yough River Trail the treasure it is today. The faithful have gone about their work, resulting in the fine facility we experience today. They did it not for recognition, as they shied away from any fanfare except that of spotlighting the Yough Trail itself. There could be a story of each of those dedicated volunteers that did all that was necessary without recognition. And sadly their story will not be known and that is their wish. But there are three individuals who have given much, that something must be said.

Charlie Smith is one who unselfishly has done so much for the Yough Trail and for all the trails in the RTC. When maintenance must be done and manpower and equipment is scarce, along comes Charlie to dig in with planning, direction, machinery, and a following of volunteers that complete the tasks in a first class manner. No one individual can even attempt to accomplish what has been done over the years on the Yough Trail, but there always must be that individual who is a "mover and shaker". Charlie is one such individual who has helped and has done an outstanding job of making things happen for the benefit of the trail. Almost miraculously, tasks were completed in a timely manner and at an amazing low cost. The Yough River Trail has always been the best maintained 15 miles of scenic byway with many attractions from the very beginning when it was the first section opened for use. Since then other trails have used techniques developed here, and Charlie was always in the forefront of use and development. He has been known countless times to help other councils and trail leaders through their problems.

Judy Marshall and Bill Hall deserve many accolades for their efforts which extend to a very long and important string of activities over many years. Judy was the first line political activist and leader when the trail concept first arose. As a member of the Elizabeth Township Commissioners, she represented not only residents of her ward, but was spokesperson and promoter of the Yough River Trail. It was through her direct actions that had the trail completed from Boston to the Westmoreland County line. It would be years until the trail would have been connected, but through Judy's efforts, sometimes reasoning with the other commissioners and at others through coercion, but the trail was completed. Her efforts are the envy of the other trails who are currently struggling for completion. Judy was vital in the development of the Regional Trail Corporation as a member holding many offices and setting procedures.

Bill Hall has taken a fine newsletter "Milepost" and turned it into a great publication that is important to all MYTC members. Judy and Bill have worked tirelessly to make the Boston Trail a treasure. Their efforts in the form of dedication and downright sweat and tears make the Half Marathon and 5K the success that it is today. They have innovated and developed the event from the early days into a great attraction and also an important funding source that is critical for the trail's operation. They provide the brains, physical source and voice to leave the legacy we call "the Yough River Trail". Thank you and the 100 plus for a fine job well done.

By Dan Piesik

piesik@comcast.net

Note: There will be more of this type of article to follow which will highlight individuals and their selfless efforts on behalf of the trail. Please feel free to send in an outline of an individual's background for future publication.

Boston Brickyard – by Terry Vota

See the brick wall & pile of bricks at trail MP 19.5?

It may look like a collapsed old building now but it once was an extensive block-long Brickyard that was started back in 1885 by Kerr and Harper of Boston, PA. They produced a shale-type clay brick and in the early years, there were ~25 employees making almost 2,500,000 bricks a year.



The kilns in the background were at the Boston Brickyard. The house is the current Gilbert Funeral Home & Crematory

Later, in 1895, Mr. Harper bought out Mr. Kerr. According to local resident Mike Yurechko, his family bought the brickyard from Mr. Cassius Harper and they continued making bricks until the early 1960's. It was then sold to Catranel Construction, who made fireplace logs for a while, and then finally to the current owner.

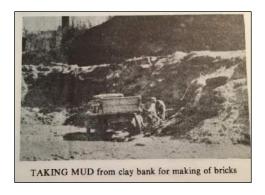
Typically bricks are made by either pressing the clay into molds or using an extrusion process and then cutting the clay into bricks with rotating knives. Boston Brickyard started with a hand mold process and then purchased a "monster" Monarch Molding machine around 1900. That press forced the clay down into molds. Workers would remove the soft bricks from the molds, send the bricks to the kiln and then place the molds back in the press.

Later the Brickyard "modernized" to the extrusion process. This process was more rapid but required tighter control of the clay paste. Regardless whether the bricks were extruded or molded, the final step was cooking the bricks in special kilns. As you can see from the picture, these old kilns

looked like beehives, which gave them their name, beehive kilns. These were rounded buildings that looked much like a ball cut in half. Remnants of these kilns were visible until recent demolition destroyed them. The original kilns were made of special bricks, to keep the high temperatures needed for curing the bricks. The kilns were originally coaland later gas-fired. Thousands of raw bricks were stacked in the kilns prior to the burn. The circular shape of the kiln was not a random design, the shape helped keep the hot air circulating inside the kiln. Once the fires were started, the temperature was kept at a low heat for several days. Controlling the curing process in the kiln was a real art. The fired color of clay bricks is influenced by the chemical and mineral content of the raw materials, the firing temperature, and the kiln atmosphere.

Local resident Ralph Gronlund remembers back in the early 1960's, hauling loads of brick every day by truck out to housing projects in Monroeville. He also remembers the brickyard using the rotating knife process to make bricks and vehicle tires were sometimes used to add a black color to the brick.

It takes a considerable amount of clay to make thousands of bricks every day. Early the brickyard was fortunate to haul clay locally from ~ ½ mile up the river near Schweitzer Road.



As this supply diminished, clay had to be hauled from White Oak and then even by rail from out-of-state, thus increasing costs. By the early-1960's, brickmaking in Boston came to an end!

Early 1900's Photos Courtesy Elizabeth Township Historical Society and Gilbert Funeral Home & Crematory

Newly Updated Visitor Center in Boston

If you get a chance, stop by the "newly updated visitor center" in Boston. Marei Burnfeld has led the effort to "spruce" up the inside. In addition to a US Map to track visitors, additional YRT and GAP t-shirts, guides, and hats are available.



Dravo Shelter is Progressing

John Eisenbarth is leading the effort to build the new shelter at Dravo. These are pictures of the progress – probably much more finished by now.

Although not finished, we do note that it is already being used by campers!

Funding for materials is provided by a grant from the Trail Volunteer Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation.

Stop by at Dravo & watch or maybe help!







"At least the lock isn't missing"!



Please welcome our newest members! October 2015 - March 2016

Dave Abel Jeannette

Bill & Cynthia Adams Monroeville

Rick Brahim North Huntingdon

Jerry & Nancy Davis Greensburg

Rick Hunt North Huntingdon

Joseph Keefe North Huntingdon

Joe Landefeld Allison Park

Maggie McCune North Huntingdon

We also wish to again extend a sincere thank you to the members who have generously renewed their membership for the 2016 season. Your continued support is appreciated!

Marei Burnfield, Membership Chair

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.

2016 Officers

President

Rich Kundman

Vice President

Mark Place

Treasurer

Linda Hippard

Secretary

Mary Reid

Directors

2014 - 2016

Cathy Bartley Bob Hoffman Judy Marshall Mary Reid Dave Ringler

2015 - 2017

Marei Burnfield Don Coleman Bill Hall Charlie Smith

2016 - 2018

Linda Hippard Rich Kundman Belinda O'Keson Mark Place Terry Vota

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

The Milepost is published by the Mon Yough Trail Council with the support of the RTC. Articles published include Council activities, trail development, local and regional information, and other items of related interest. The opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and may not represent the official positions of the Council. Reprint of the publication prohibited without express consent of the originating author and/or the Milepost. Copyright 2005. All rights reserved.

Membership Application

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

| Membership Level | Contribution |
|---|-------------------------------|
| □ General□ Associate□ Supporting□ Sustaining | \$20 \$25 \$50 \$100 |
| □ Corporate | \$250 |
| □ Please check here if renewal | |
| In addition, I would like to contribute \$ to the MYTC. | |
| Please print: Name | |
| Address | |
| l ———————————————————————————————————— | |
| Home Phone | |
| Cell Phone | |
| Email | |
| AgeOccupation | |
| Signature | |
| Required | |
| I would like to be contacted to volunteer. | |
| LI would like to receive a | 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's Yough River Trail Newsletter

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Please show them your thanks by patronizing their businesses.

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Allegheny Regional Asset District

American Water Charitable Foundation

Atlas Resources, L.P.

Basic Carbide

Bekavac Funeral Home

Big Bang Bicycles

Bour Associates

Carriage Inn

Chevron Humankind Program

Crawford Foundation

Fawcett Trucking

Gilbert Funeral Home and Crematory

Isbir Construction

Jefferson Hospital

Jim Shorkey Family Auto Group Klingensmith Insurance Agency

Levin Furniture

McKeesport Hospital Foundation

Mueller Appraisal Services

NuGo Nutrition

PA American Water Company

Pemberton's

Petkanics Charitable Fund

Pozzuto Auto-White Oak

R.C. Walter & Sons Hardware

Rich's Parkside Den

River City Junction

Road ID

Robert C. Lucas, Attorney

Shaw Weil Associates

Steffan Industries

The Betsy Shoppe

The Elizabeth Companies

The Embroidery People

The UPS Store—White Oak

Trailside Treasures

Vista Metals

Yough Twister

