

# The MILEPOST

Mon/Yough Trail Council's Yough River Trail Newsletter

Editor: Terry Vota

October 2019

Volume 28, Issue 2

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

**Note: Don't forget the Trail Banquet, Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Election on November 9.**

## From the President

By Mark Place (412) 877-0050  
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As we approach the end of another Mon/Yough Trail Council year I again find myself **Giving Thanks** for so many reasons. We live in a challenging world and are blasted 24x7 with noise and tragedy around our country and the world. Let's look at good news for a change.

I am thankful to our ~500 members and their generous financial support. It costs a great deal of money to maintain our ~15 miles of the GAP. Membership dues represent a substantial portion of our budget. I would be remiss not thanking foundations and individuals that support major projects like our new dump truck that would otherwise be out of reach financially.

We should also be especially thankful for the 40+ members who work on the trail weekly, staff the Visitor's Center, produce the newsletter, manage social media and a host of other activities required to support what is by all accounts a world class section of trail. The Visitor's Center reports that we have had trail users from 40 states and 11 foreign countries this year. They see, and benefit, from the work of these volunteers on a daily basis. It will be my great pleasure as President to recognize some of the best trail volunteers anywhere at our annual banquet November 9<sup>th</sup>. I hope you will consider attending this year to meet these volunteers.

I will close by Giving Thanks to some new trail friends introduced to us by volunteer John Warhold. We just completed an Eagle Scout candidate project at the Queen Aliquippa campground at the ~122.8 mile marker with a young man named A.J. The project was a

complete overhaul and upgrade of what was an ugly, dirty and hot 40' shipping container that is critical to our maintenance of the campground area. This turned into



a pretty major project and definitely more than the typical Eagle Scout project.

AJ, with support from his troop, his father Rick and especially two other troop leaders Joe and Walt who stepped up to the plate; finagled, cajoled, negotiated

and earned funds to complete the project in partnership with MYTC. Once AJ developed his budget it was clear that the project would need support from MYTC. We added some funds and supplies like wood



chips and then AJ took care of the all-important volunteer hours to complete the project. The project included pressure washing, new shelving, new skylights, over 50 vents, a total of 3 coats of special paint, a special roof sealer, and some

much needed landscaping. As an Eagle Scout and former Scoutmaster, I am thankful that Scouting is still training young adults for their life ahead and that there are parents still finding value in leading our young adults. Next time you are on the trail walking, running or riding, swing by the campground and I think you will be as pleased as we are with the results.

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

By Kathie Fawcett



The Half Marathon & 5K Race was held on Saturday, April 20, 2019. A beautiful and sunny day with the high of 68 degrees. We had a total of 435 that registered for the race. 203 for the Half Marathon and 232 for the 5K. We made a total profit of \$15,000.00 this year, thanks in part from our very generous sponsors, as well as, their time in supporting our cause.

To all of the volunteers who helped out this year's race, we at the Mon/Yough Trail Council can't thank you enough for your time for this important fundraiser.

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, April 18, 2020**, which will be our 10<sup>th</sup> year for the Half Marathon & 5K Race. Hopefully, everyone can come out and either help or just to come out and have a great time. Think Spring!!

### Half Marathon and 5K Race Sponsors

**Allegheny Health Network/Jefferson Hospital  
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Pozzuto's Auto Service

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GNC – White Oak

Warhold Plumbing and HVAC

Giant Eagle - White Oak

Bour Associates

Road ID

NUGO Nutrition

The Embroidery People

Greenock VFC

Southeast Regional EMS

Elizabeth Township Police Department

## Yough 'n' Roll / Membership Trail Appreciation Day

By Kathy Banfield

On Saturday, June 15, the Mon/Yough Trail Council held their 26th Yough-n-Roll Bike Ride and Trail Appreciation Day. It was a beautiful day and we had a nice turnout. There were a lot of riders that stopped by for our Trail Appreciation celebration and we served a record 200 hot dogs!

There were 20 or 40 mile trail rides. The 20 mile ride turned around at Sutersville, and the 40 mile ride turned around at Cedar Creek. There were rest stops with drinks and snacks at Dravo Cemetery and Cedar Creek. Lunch was provided at the end of the ride. We would like to thank all the participants and volunteers that help support the ride. The proceeds provide maintenance funds for the Boston to Westmoreland County portion of the GAP.

### A BIG THANK YOU to our sponsors for their support:

McKeesport Hospital Foundation

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## Boston Visitor Center

By Marei Burnfield

Hello trail friends!

Simply put, we have been experiencing a wonderful season at the Boston Trailhead Visitor Center. Our dedicated volunteers have generously increased their staffing hours, which has allowed us to welcome and assist many more folks from near and far to the GAP. The additional hours have assisted with an increase in merchandise sales. Thank you to the many guests and friends who have purchased and support the ongoing maintenance of the trail through these sales.

If you've had an opportunity to stop in this season, you may have noticed the framed railroad stock certificates behind the counter. Our thanks to member, John Warhold, who donated these to the center. Thanks also to member, Rich Carl, who thoughtfully donated various matted prints of beautiful photos he'd taken while enjoying the trail. These prints are available at the center for a \$25.00 donation.

As of September 9, 2019, our visitor journal at the center indicates that we have welcomed guests from 40 states and 11 countries. The season is not over but we have already surpassed the total recorded last season. It is always exciting and interesting to spend time with the wonderful people you meet while volunteering there. Weather permitting, we intend on closing for the season on Saturday, November 2, 2019.

Keep in mind, it is never too early to purchase trail merchandise as a Christmas gift!

**Trail riders have reported that the Boston Visitor Center has the "best variety of shirts on the trail".**

Enjoy the scents and sights of Autumn along the trail.

## Red Lantern Bike Shop

By Gary Sedlacek

Red Lantern Bike Shop is a community initiative bike shop that runs out of a re-purposed shipping container at 420 Braddock Avenue, in Braddock.

We take a proactive approach to connecting bicycles to individuals who have limited access to obtaining them. Our vision is one of refurbishing and redistributing bicycles into under-served populations.

The Red Lantern, which operates with a team of volunteers, provides bicycle repairs and free bikes to children in the community. The bike shop provides free

repairs for adult and children's bicycles, charging only for parts. Additionally, part of the mission of the shop is to provide free bikes to kids whose families may not be able to afford a new bike. Volunteers collect children's bicycles, fix them, and distribute them to families with children. We are only open on Saturday mornings.

During the summer, we have Free Kid Bike Giveaways on the 1st Sunday of the month from 9am-11am. They



are first come first serve. They are mostly small bikes which means they will fit small children (around 10 and under). An adult and child must be present to receive a bike. We safety check and fit all bicycles.

To expand the free resources provided by the bike shop, the Red Lantern partnered with the Braddock Carnegie Library to provide a space that is open 24/7 for bike repairs. The outdoor space provides access to an air pump and other tools that are required for bike repairs.

In addition to the work done at the shop in Braddock, the Red Lantern staff has held a number of "pop-up" bicycle repair events in McKeesport, Clairton, and Homestead. During these events the mechanics tackle a variety of bicycle repairs.



This summer, the Red Lantern Bike Shop provided helmets along with a bike to children through a partnership with the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD)'s Chronic Disease Prevention Program and Traffic Safety Education Project. Funding is provided by the PA Department of Health.

The Red Lantern Bike Shop distributes hundreds of children's bicycles each year - saving them from a landfill or scrap yard. We are open and can receive bike donations on Saturdays from 10am-12pm. Please don't leave them in front of the shop when we are closed.

For more information on the Red Lantern Bike Shop or to volunteer, check out its website or Facebook page.

Editor's Note: MYTC members have supported this effort by collecting 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand bikes at the Maintenance and Visitor Centers' and donating them to Red Lantern.

# West Newton Cemetery

## WELL WORTH A STOP ALONG THE YOUGH RIVER TRAIL

By Bob Cupp

Note: This is an edited version of the article. The complete article, with more photos, will be on our website!

For many Yough River Valley residents, West Newton Cemetery is a well-known landmark. Unfortunately, most Yough River Trail/GAP users from other places are unaware that such a remarkable piece of local history exists so near the trail. The cemetery's main entrance is on Vernon Drive, southwest of the Arthur



H. King West Newton Trail Access. But there's another (walking) entrance just south of the trail parking area; you can park your bike here and walk along the trail a very short distance south,

toward Cedar Creek Park, to the entrance.

During the 1850's, West Newton was growing fast and needed a cemetery to meet the burial needs of all religions. A two-acre, non-denominational, cemetery was founded in 1852 and officially dedicated on August 13, 1853. Over the years, the cemetery has expanded to now include 75 acres, 30 of which are reserved for future development. It's managed by the nonprofit West Newton Cemetery Association.

Welcoming as many as 8,000 visitors a year, the cemetery has become a tourist attraction. In addition to visiting the final resting places of their loved ones, they come to see the ornate tomb stones, impressive mausoleums and historic Civil War cannon. Donated to the cemetery in 1896, the cannon are strategically placed on a lofty knoll. Beautiful scenery can be enjoyed in every direction throughout the grounds.

Each year on Memorial Day weekend, Yough School District students, West Newton VFW Post 7812, West Newton Moose and other community volunteers place full-size American flags along the cemetery's roadways. The event also features a parade on Memorial Day. This inspirational tradition was initiated in 1994 to honor military veterans.

At each military veteran's funeral, a flag is presented to a family member. Usually, the family will donate the flag and purchase a metal mast and marker with

the veteran's name placed on the mast. It is then flown as part of the "Avenue of Flags." In 1994, 75



flags were flown. Twenty years later, this patriotic remembrance had become so popular that nearly 400 flags were displayed. What an

inspirational site to behold, and a perfect reminder of the men and women who served their country.

### Cemetery Notables and Points of Interest

- 1. Charles Sheppard** - A stage coach agent - the first person buried at the West Newton Cemetery in 1852.
- 2. Zinc Markers** - Also known as "white bronze" as a marketing ploy, these grey or pale-blue grave markers were sold from the 1870's to early 1910's.
- 3. Darr Mine Disaster** - On December 19, 1907, a mine explosion killed 239 miners in nearby Van Meter. This was the worst disaster in Pennsylvania mining history. 22 of the miners are buried here.
- 4. Suter Mausoleum** - This site is the family grave of Eli Suter. He came as a German immigrant, worked hard and eventually founded nearby Sutersville.
- 5. Cannon** - These military weapons were cast in 1849, but never fired. They arrived in West Newton in 1896 and are 3 of 100 surviving today.
- 6. Jones Mausoleum** - William B. Jones, a Welsh immigrant, opened his brewery along the Yough in 1907. Originally known as 'Eureka Gold Crown Beer,' it was changed to reflect his nickname, Stoney's Beer
- 7. Ralph Calcagni** - This is the burial site of a former Pittsburgh Steeler. He died at the young age of 26 after an exhibition game in August, 1948.
- 8. Immigrants** - This section of the cemetery is dedicated to a large population of local immigrants who lived and worked in the West Newton area.
- 9. War Memorial** - This memorial was added to the cemetery in 1949 in remembrance of World War II.
- 10. Chapel** - This chapel was built circa 1905. It was renovated and rededicated in 1978.

West Newton Cemetery is a quiet, peaceful place to take a step back in time and enjoy the tranquil surroundings. Maybe you'll even learn a little local history while you're here. Then get back on your bike and head on up the trail.

## Trail Maintenance Update

By Tim Banfield

### Volunteer Fund helps MYTC Volunteers keep Trail in Shape

MYTC is benefiting again from a donation by the Trail Volunteer Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation. In March the fund awarded a \$2,800 grant to cover two loads of “fines” along with a tractor blade and portable generator to be used by volunteers on the trail.

After a period of heavy rains in spring and early summer, MYTC had opportunity to use the fines to repair a number of locations that washed out from these storms. In the accompanying photo, MYTC’s F550 dump truck, acquired with a previous grant from the



Trail Volunteer Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation, is shown hauling “fines” spread by volunteer Greg Farrar.

Our crew also took on repairing the well at Dravo. It took a month but was completed in house by volunteers to save the high cost of a well driller.



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 and keeping

all the equipment in working order at MYTC’s shop.

## Regular Work Sessions



MYTC holds regular work sessions during good weather on **Saturday, meeting at 8:00 AM**, at the end of Locust Grove Road along the trail in Greenock, about 2

miles upriver from the Boston Bridge.

## Please welcome our newest members!

By Eileen Lenart, Membership Chairman

“Thank You” to all our members who have renewed their membership for the 2019 season. Your continued support is needed and appreciated. To our newest members listed below; “Thank You” for your financial support. Remember the weekend and daily maintenance crews always have an on-going need for VOLUNTEERS. They meet every Saturday at 8AM at the maintenance shed to work on maintaining and improving the trail. Consider volunteering a few hours every week or month.

In the list below, the asterisk (\*\*) indicates that these new members paid 2019 dues via Pay Pal and that they did not include a house address. Other new members who paid via Pay Pal did include a valid mailing address. Member(s) with an asterisk can call 412-678-6829 and leave a valid address or when paying 2020 dues include a valid mailing address on the renewal form. In the future MYTC will have the capability to use email as well as “snail-mail” to distribute the Milepost. So be sure you include a valid email address and a house address on the 2020 membership renewal form.

### MYTC Newest Members March 1 - July 31, 2019

1. Tom Antkowiak, Boston
2. James E. Armstrong, White Oak
3. Heather Caito, Pittsburgh
4. Carolyn Carter, Pay Pal \*\*
5. Richard and Alyssa Cholodofsky, N. Huntingdon
6. Sean P. Flaherty, Pay Pal\*\*
7. Vaughn Gilbert, Greenock
8. Louis Kushner, Pittsburgh
9. Larry Loar, White Oak
10. Sharon Lucas, Eliz Twp
11. Mike and Suzi O’Donnell, Irwin
12. Loretta Pasinski, McKeesport
13. Thomas Richey, Monroeville
14. Carol Sekura, W Mifflin
15. Douglas Skinner, White Oak
16. Tracey Small, Pittsburgh
17. George and Kathleen Street, Boston, Pa
18. Kevin Ulmer, Pay Pal \*\*
19. Frances Yarger, Pittsburgh
20. Warren Yeckel, Pay Pal \*\*

## Relocating the GAP Mile Posts

By Linda McKenna Boxx

In 2016 permanent mileposts were placed along the Great Allegheny Passage, replacing the temporary white vinyl markers that stood since 2005. The new mileposts were fashioned from reclaimed granite stone curbing from a very historic bridge in Massachusetts.

ATA had found Biz Reed of the Olde New England Granite Company who was salvaging the curbstones from the Longfellow Bridge which connects Boston to Cambridge. Biz was eager for a meaningful repurposing of the stone and worked with the ATA to secure enough for our project. The granite was shipped to Jones Stone and Marble Company in Greensburg to cut the stone to size, and carve and paint the numbers. Fisher Homebuilding of Somerset was hired for the installation.

Unfortunately, the mile-measuring by an independent contractor was very inaccurate. Most miles were 40-80 feet too long, some more than 100 feet, which threw the entire milepost system off. Overall a full mile and a half was lost due to the poor measuring. Many stepped in to help with a new measuring effort, from walking miles with a surveyor's wheel to biking with calibrated computers based on the two surveyed miles in West Newton.

A very conscientious professional surveying company, Urban Terrain, was hired to re-measure and Beetz Fisher was rehired to move the granite posts he had so carefully installed three years ago. The relocation is coming along well. When faulty Milepost 92 was lifted from the ground, Milepost 93 was put in its place, thereby regaining a full mile lost. Posts up to 129, near Dead Man's Hollow, have been relocated and checked for accuracy. Since there are a few possible realignments in the McKeesport area, we're holding off on moving the granite posts – so we don't have to move them again! Miles 130 to 148 will be marked with white vinyl posts (like the first set) and the granite posts will be covered to prevent confusion. Trail length: 148.8!

Like so many trail projects, this has taken many hands!

## Red and White Water Falls

By Terry Vota

If you are a frequent rider or walker on the MYTC section of the GAP, you have no doubt been past the "red waterfall" and the "white waterfall" near MP's 119-121. These are unique to Western PA due to the extensive coal mining done in our section of the Country. Abandoned mine drainage is the technical



this precipitates out as white residue.

term for this stained water and it is because water has come into contact with coal and the coal has iron pyrite in it. This reacts to form sulfuric acid and dissolved iron- thus the red or orange color. On occasion the mine drainage contains dissolved aluminum sulfate and



On occasion the mine drainage contains dissolved aluminum sulfate and this precipitates out as white residue.

At one time, an orange-colored stream was a sign of prosperity – a productive coal mine was operating nearby. The mine might have been productive but the stream was probably dying. Modern day coal mining operators take responsibility for reclamation and restoration, but past mining practices created today's environmental problem and the effort to fix is often extensive. But, it can be treated!

The water for the "red waterfall", near MP 119, is coming from the old Pittsburgh Coal's Ocean #2 mine. The water for the "white waterfall", near MP 121, is most likely coming from the old Charleston Mine (although the Painter/Stringtown Mines were nearby).

## Don't Forget !

- **Banquet and Annual Meeting**
- **Board of Directors Election Ballot**

**Saturday, November 9, 2019-5:00PM**

**Rock Run Inn at Butler's Golf Course**

## 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.

### 2019 Officers

#### President

Mark Place

#### Vice President

John Eisenbarth

#### Treasurer

Tim Banfield

#### Secretary

Mary Reid

### Directors

#### 2017 – 2019

Tim Banfield  
John Eisenbarth  
Kathie Fawcett  
Eileen Lenart  
Dave Ringler

#### 2018 - 2020

Cathy Bartley  
Marei Burnfield  
Bill Hall  
Mary Reid  
Charlie Smith

#### 2019 - 2021

Sarah Helzlsour  
Mark Place  
Linda Vota  
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](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.

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
------------------	--------------

- |                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| <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)

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

*The following businesses have generously supported the Mon/Yough Trail Council.  
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Trail Volunteer Fund of the Pittsburgh  
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