

The MILEPOST

Mon/Yough Trail Council's Yough River Trail Newsletter

Editor: Terry Vota

October 2023

Volume 32, Issue 2

From the President

By Rich Kundman

In my last newsletter report, I wrote about the changes I have seen since my last term as president in 2017. Well, the changes just keep on coming. I wrote about how we would get as many as 12 volunteers showing up on a Saturday morning to do maintenance. Now we are getting even more so that we can send out 3 different work crews at a time. Since April, we have 4 new volunteers that have been showing up regularly. So, thanks to the new volunteers. I know I sound like a broken record but we can always use more. What is great about having this number of people showing up is that we can finally do some proactive maintenance instead of reactive maintenance, which we have been doing for years.

As I type this, we just finished our Yough-n-Roll bike ride and our Party on the Trail events; both were very successful. You can read more about them inside the newsletter.

As far as the changes I hope to see in the future, some have already come true. John Eisenbarth finished the walls in the Visitors Center and I installed new lighting to brighten up the place. If you haven't been there for a while, stop to see the changes and pick up that T-shirt you were thinking of buying the last time you were there.

I finally got around to displaying the old sickle arm mower that volunteers thirty years ago used to keep the weeds along the trail cut back. It sits in front of the maintenance building to the left of the sign. The joke going around the crew room is that John Warhold got to use a different color of paint, other than the yellow, silver or brown that he had been use to using on his different



paint jobs. So, thank you, John for the nice bright red paint on the old side arm.

Well, we erected the canopy between the storage containers behind the maintenance building but getting them painted is still an on-going project. Hopefully, by the next newsletter, I can report that we got them painted. At least we now have someplace to park the side arm tractor and get it out of the weather.

I saved what I think is the best change for last, WE GOT A NEW (to us) BACKHOE!!!! Mark Place found a John Deer backhoe at a dealer ship on route 51 with a little more than 700 working hours. You can read more about it in Marks' report.

So, what's left? Oh yeah, finding the funding for a new or slightly used crew cab, full bed, four-wheel drive pickup truck. This will replace one of our forty-year-old, rusted out pickup trucks. I'll let you know how that goes next time.

Thanks for all of your support!

Trail Regulations

Please respect the following trail regulations

- Wheelchairs built specifically for mobility disabilities permitted
- Maximum bicycle speed is 15 MPH
- E-Bikes are limited to 750 Watt (1 HP) and must have fully operating pedals
- No internal combustion powered vehicles
- Bicycle unloaded weight limit is 100 lbs.
- Bicycles limited to 36" wide

If you notice people on Quads, motorcycles or dirt bikes, please notify local Police or Game Officers, who regularly patrol.

MYTC Appreciation Day

Yough-n-Roll

"Party-on-the-Trail"

By Ken Medved, Candace Cook and Kathy Banfield

Thanks Mom

MOTHER NATURE...that is. Once again she blessed the MYTC with a little TLC, providing mild sunshiny conditions for the 29th annual Yough-n-Roll / Party on the Trail. With nearly perfect weather our dedicated core of hardworking volunteers, setup, put on, then packed up for

next year without a hitch. Starting the day, over 140 bicyclists took to the trail for their choice of a 20 or 40 mile ride along the banks of the Youghiogheny



river. A Family Fun Ride offered a shorter version for the less experienced or those with young children. All the riders were treated to the volunteer manned, fully stocked rest stops along the way, where they could enjoy some fruits, drinks and other energy provisions. One rider of note and the first one in the parking lot at 6:30 AM was Bob Zoppetti, a veteran of many previous MYTC rides. At 91 years old, Bob would be doing the 40 miler...sans electric assistance! Noteworthy and amazing, hats off to Bob! After the ride it was time to "get this Party started"!!! New this year, the MYTC and guests welcomed the Mon Valley Academy for the Arts: Fife & Drum Regiment. Marching in cadence with full



Civil War era dress, they entertained the crowd with a rendition from 19th century music manuals highlighted by the Star-

Spangled Banner. As the young group marched off, one could detect the aroma of our nearly famous FREE Hot Dogs being grilled. Over 350 of them! Lining the trail were various booths from our local first responders and

historical society to state and regional exhibitors. All providing expertise, information and giveaways to all interested parties.

The Red Lantern Bike Shop was on hand for minor adjustments and repairs while collecting used bicycles for less fortunate individuals.

A bright and cheery children's area had balloon and face painting artists. Giant bubbles bounced



above the pavement chalk drawings to the free "spin-to-win" wheel. Bicycle safety advice was offered along with free youth helmets, lights, bells and more fun stuff for the kids. The MYTC sponsored an information booth and membership drive hosted by our president also with gift basket and 50/50 raffles. As we continue year to year, season to season, we encourage YOU to get involved and invest a couple hours by VOLUNTEERING.

We want to thank all the members that stepped up to help. Thanks to Renee and Carol Stephens who did a wonderful job fitting the bike helmets for the children. Mike and Susi Bertoty were awesome at the (bike)\



Wheel of Fortune game. Thanks to members Carol Janesko, Kathy Banfield, Rose Lavelle, Joanna Haneman, Jim Shea, Linda Vota, Rachel Sager, and Zak's for their donations to the basket raffle. There are so many more volunteers that

helped with parking, race refreshments at Cedar Creek, Dravo and Twele, tent setup, tent teardown etc etc. Sorry that we could not list all!

Bike Pgh donated bike lights and Children's Hospital donated bike helmets. We are all dedicated to safe biking for children and adults. We'd love to meet ya sometime soon, at a meeting or on the trail before next year's event:

Saturday, September 14th 2024...and don't forget to thank mom.

MYTC Appreciation Day Support

Participants

Red Lantern Bicycles
Elizabeth Township Historical Society
Rivers of Steel History Center
Allegheny Land Trust
Ricardo Solis, recycled artwork
Garden Club of McKeesport
Elizabeth Township Fire, Police & Public Works Departments
Southeast Regional EMS
Pennsylvania Game Commission
Council of the Three Rivers American Indian Center, Inc.
little boston inn
Mon Valley Academy for the Arts
Antonio's Pizzeria
Christina P.- face painting
Mon Valley Independent

Sponsors

Levin Furniture
McKeesport Hospital Foundation
Bekavac Funeral Home
Betsy Shoppes & Bistro
Big's Sanitation
Carriage Inn
Robert Duchin & Associates
Gilbert Funeral Home
R.C. Walter and Sons Hardware
Rich's Parkside Den
Vegely Welding Inc.
Driscoll and Sons Café
UPMC Children's Hospital
Zak's Bicycle Shop
Grand Central Pizza
Marci & Jeff Suggars
Warhold Mechanicals
Howell Craft

Donors

Rachel Sager, Sager Mosaics
Washington Wild Things
little boston inn
Country Custard Cottage
Get Up & Ride
Joe Hill – Smart Signs
Herr's Chips

Individual Support

Marilyn P.
C. Janesko
M. Suggars
Ellen H.
MYTC Members

MEDIA SPONSORS

90.5  91.3
 

Boston Visitor Center

By Donna Warhold – Visitor Center Chairman

The Visitor Center has been open most of the season. We have a great volunteer staff. There is always room for more volunteers. We are there to answer questions or to buy a drink or t-shirt. Our t-shirts are locally designed you will not find them anywhere else on the trail. We love to have visitors from near and far We have had them from as far away as Japan and as close as Boston.

We were able to donate 27 "used" bicycles to Red Lantern Bicycles for refurbishment and donation to needy individuals.

A shout out to our staff. Bill, Betsy, Jeff and Diane, Terri, Terry and Linda, Tom, Ron, Renee and Carol, John, Donna and of course Joanna our treasurer. We had 563.25 volunteer hours so far this year!

We hope to remain open until the end of October.

Save the Date

Saturday April 13, 2024

Boston Trail ½ Marathon & 5K Run/Walk



As noted above, the ½ Marathon & 5K Run/Walk date for 2024 has been established. If you want to volunteer, we are always looking for people to

help with setting up, parking cars, handling refreshments and cleaning up after the race.

Contact Rose Lavelle at roselavelle312@gmail.com.

100% of the proceeds help in maintaining and improving the trail. Please come and help support this important fundraiser so that we can continue in making this trail the best that it can be.



To register, go to www.runsignup.com or for more information go to www.thebostontrail.com.

Trail Maintenance Update

By Mark Place-Chair

The story this season has been mow, trim, clear overhead, and sides, then repeat again. Our terrific mowing and trimming teams have been mowing without a break since late March, early April. We now stage mowing and trimming equipment at 5 locations along our 15 miles saving a great deal of travel time. Thanks to our friends from the Steel Valley Trail Council, we were able to add a secure 20' shipping container at the Sutersville trail head this year for equipment storage.

Work continues on the additional storage and covered parking at the shop. We hope to get at least the insides of the two 20' containers painted and set up in the next month before the weather breaks.

We continue to work hard keeping some of our antique fleet breakdown free, while vigilantly maintaining the newer equipment to maximize its life. Next month we will start on our annual preventative maintenance work so equipment is serviced and ready to go in the Spring.

The big story this year is the acquisition of a new to us 2010 John Deere 310J full size 4WD backhoe to replace our 1970 Case. The unit we were lucky to find had almost all our wish list features and very low hours. We



have been training several folks on it and using it pretty much every week. It is more powerful, has an enclosed cab for the operator and so far, has been working great. Jim Armstrong, one of our Saturday volunteers, recognized the supporters that made the acquisition possible through some great graphics on the

machine unveiled at the Party on the Trail.

Funding for the backhoe purchase was provided by the Trail Volunteer Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation, The Mary E. Cole Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation, the Donald R. Baker Family, the E. R. Crawford Trust Fund, and other Mon/Yough Trail Council supporters.

Your trail has been blessed again this year with a great

group of maintenance volunteers. We are pleased to welcome several new members to the team this year, each with a passion for the trail and much needed skills. Almost weekly we receive kudos from trail users from across the country and the world in person or online saying how great the trail looks and is maintained. These are the folks that make that happen.

Help wanted. While you may associate the work that our all-volunteer maintenance team does with the crews that you meet on the trail between April and November there is a lot of work required to service that equipment. Each Fall and Winter we service all this equipment so that it is ready to go in the Spring. Whether you are available every Saturday or just a Saturday here and there please consider joining our mechanical maintenance team.



Stop down any Saturday morning between 7 and 8, or give me a call at 412-877-0050, or email at mplace@johnplaceinc.com.

Membership News

Candace and Rich  *CoChairpersons*

A very special WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS since March. Glad to have you on board!

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Bob Stayduhar | Jim Michaelson |
| Cheryl Richards and Kurt Pelisari | Jeff Boyer |
| Theresa Sable | Roberta Simonsen |
| Jim Shea | April Ball |
| David Trayhan | Kenneth Harman |
| Kyle Fragassi | Stanley M. Stein |
| Henry Paiste | Mark Rivardo |
| David and JoAnn Hartos | Denise McCormick |
| Joann Petrina | Judy Randall |
| Mary Zupan | Robert Hawk |
| Harvey and Georgina Senger | Francesco Curcio |

As members, we count on you to vote for the MYTC officers each Fall and hope you will join us for our annual banquet in November

If you would like to receive the newsletter and other correspondence from us by EMAIL, please let us know: mytcmembership@gmail.com

Trail Time-Travel

By Joanna Haneman

The Boston Trailhead is likely familiar to the readers of newsletter. As it marks the beginning of the consistently wooded part of the GAP Trail, it is a favorite starting point for a trail jaunt.

We know it well – the ballfield, the bridge, the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie (P&LE) boxcar next to the Visitor's Center...

Yet how often do we stop to picture what this area looked like 100 years ago?

Imagine you are standing at the Boston Trailhead sign, and are suddenly transported back in time. What might be happening around you?

First of all, you better step back – you are standing where P&LE rail cars are rumbling by, transporting tons of coal between the mines along the Youghiogheny

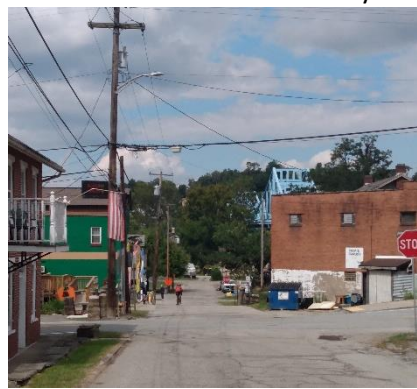


Photo Credit-Elizabeth Township Historical Society

sheer tonnage of the goods it transported and the resulting economic impact.

River to the mills in Pittsburgh. This railroad company received the nickname "The Little Giant" along its main line because of the

Across the tracks from where you stand, you notice



travelers waiting at the Boston Train Station. They are waiting for one of the several daily passenger trains that service the P&LE line, providing service to Pittsburgh and points west, as

well as connecting to the major metro areas in the Northeast.

You are at a grade crossing of the tracks, recently renamed Donner Street from Lovedale Road.

Automobiles and the local trolley pass you, heading up Donner Street and crossing the Youghiogheny River to Versailles via the original Boston Bridge, an iron cantilever through-truss bridge with two lanes of traffic. There are residences and businesses dotting the road

leading to the bridge, including a rumored speakeasy. Turning your attention to the Youghiogheny River, you observe that the river traffic looks quite different. Barges are being loaded with coal from the local W. H. Brown & Sons mine. The barges share the river with small canoes, rowed by locals who use them to get from riverside town to riverside town if they can't afford the train.

Across the river in Versailles, there are derricks dotting the hilly landscape between houses – these gas wells have popped up over the last several years as residents hope to heat their homes using the accessed gas. Turning around, you look down Donner Street and discover you recognize some of the buildings. Beyond the Boston Train Station are several residences. The Betsy Shoppe & Bistro is the home of Civil War veteran and Justice of the Peace, William Larimer Douglass. He lives there with his second wife, Ella Floyd. He is a skilled Civil Engineer and Vice President of the Boston Bridge Company, planning the building of a new bridge. Across the street from the Douglass home are two properties owned by Alexander G. Kessel, a pharmacist, originally from Jeanette, who graduated from Pitt's School of Pharmacy in 1918. Kessel operates Kessel's Drug from the brick building at the corner of Donner and Smithfield Streets. He lives in one half of the two story frame house next door (now 'little boston inn'), with his wife Mary and children Leonard and Louise. Further down the road, across Smithfield Street are the Marybell Pierce Home (still standing), and the Boston Coal Company Store, run by the aforementioned W. H. Brown & Sons Company (no longer exists).

As your imagined time travel comes to an end, I invite a moment of appreciation for our current chapter of history: folks from across the region, country, and world enjoying this beautiful trail through a wooded valley that connects us with many other times, stories, and the constants of the hills and winding river.

Annual Day of Giving

Tuesday after Thanksgiving

How about donating to the trail?



We have a PayPal Account that can be used for on-line transactions. Go to our website at www.thebostontrail.com to access it.

Consider "Legacy Giving" to help maintain the Trail.

Annual Membership Meeting / Banquet

Your attendance is requested!

Maintaining Mon/Yough Trail Council's section of the Great Allegheny Passage along the Yough River requires membership support!

Come out to learn about this year's accomplishments.

Show your support and enjoy the evening on Saturday **November 11, 2023** - Butlers Golf Course Banquet Hall

5:00PM – 9:00PM

Reservation Deadline – November 3, 2023

Banquet Reservations:

Please make check payable and mail to:

Mon/Yough Trail Council
PO Box 14
McKeesport, PA 15135

Dinner Cost
\$20.00 per Person

Number Attending: _____ x \$20 / Person

Please complete the section below:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Guests _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Board of Directors Election

Saturday November 11 at Annual Meeting/Banquet

Ballots may be mailed if unable to attend –

Mon/Yough Trail Council
PO Box 14
McKeesport, PA 15135

Nominations

Class of 2026 – Vote for 4

- ☐ **Candace Cook**
Current Membership Co-Chairperson
Current MYTC Board Member
Current Party-on-the-Trail Co-Chairperson
- ☐ **John Warhold**
Current MYTC Board Member
MYTC Sign & Bench Painting volunteer for years
MYTC Campground Mowing volunteer for years
- ☐ **Tim Banfield**
MYTC member for 30+ years
Resident of Elizabeth Township for 20+ years
Previous MYTC Board Member / Officer
Maintenance Committee volunteer for many years
- ☐ **Kathie Fawcett**
MYTC member for 10 years
Previous MYTC Vice President
Previous ½ Marathon/5K Chair for 5 years
Previous MYTC Board Member for 5 years

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.

2022 Officers

President

Richard Kundman

Vice President

Ken Medved

Treasurer

Kathy Banfield

Secretary

Mary Reid

Directors

2021-2023

Kathy Banfield

Cathy Bartley

Candace Cook

John Warhold

2022 - 2024

Sarah Helzlsouer

Rose Lavelle

Ken Medved

Linda Vota

2023 – 2025

Richard Kundman

Adrian Marini

Mark Place

Mary Reid

David Ringler

Meetings

You are welcome to attend informative monthly meetings, held **7:00 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

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.

____ I would prefer to receive the newsletter by email.

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*

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

Adam Inlay Web Design
 Allegheny Health Network/Jefferson Hospital
 Allegheny Land Trust
 Allegheny Regional Asset District
 American Water Charitable Foundation
 Basic Carbide
 Bekavac Funeral Home
 BIG's Sanitation
 Bour Associates
 Carriage Inn
 Crawford Foundation
 Driscoll and Sons Café
 Gary and Mary Anne Sedlacek Fund of the Pittsburgh
 Foundation
 Generation Stoneworks
 Giant Eagle – White Oak
 Gilbert Funeral Home and Crematory
 Grand Central Pizza
 Highmark/AHN
 Howell Craft Inc.
 8 Olympus Energy
 Klingensmith Insurance Agency
 Levin Furniture

Mary E. Cole Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation
 McKeesport Hospital Foundation
 NuGo Nutrition
 PA American Water Company
 Oak Hill Dental
 Petkanics Charitable Fund
 Pozzuto Auto—White Oak
 R.C. Walter & Sons Hardware
 Rich's Parkside Den
 Road ID
 Robert C. Lucas, Attorney
 Robert J. Duchin & Associates, Ltd.
 Sager Mosaics
 Shaw Weil Associates
 Steffan Industries
 TBI Contracting
 The Betsy Shoppe
 The Elizabeth Companies
 The Embroidery People
 The UPS Store—White Oak
 Trail Volunteer Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation
 Travelers Insurance
 UPMC Children's Hospital
 Vegely Welding
 Warhold Plumbing, Heating & AC
 Zak's Bicycle Shop

