

The MILEPOST

Mon/Yough Trail Council's Yough River Trail Newsletter

Editor: Terry Vota

October 2024

Volume 33, Issue 2

From the President

By Rich Kundman

Presidential ramblings from my computer desk.

If you are using the Boston Trail and you happen to bump into me, I usually ask if you are a member. If not, this is how I respond.

First the monies that you send us is gratefully accepted and makes up about two fifths of our yearly expenditures.

Secondly, we rely on foundation grants for our equipment purchases and other large expenditures. One of the questions they ask is "how much community support does your organization have". When we tell them we have over 550 paying members it helps to get them to open their checkbooks and send us the monies we asked for.

Finally, the best part is, we send you a card that says "thank you" for your donation and does not ask you for more money. There is nothing I hate more than an organization that first asks for money, sends a thank you and then asks for more money, right after thanking you! You will not hear from us again until next year. So, there you have it folks, my sales pitch to signup new members. The joke around the maintenance building is if you are not a member, whatever you do, don't talk to Rich!

If you have been on the trail this summer you have probably seen our new 6 passenger, 4-wheel drive, 8-foot bed, white Ford 350 pickup. I am so truly grateful to all of you who have become members, your support has helped to make our new truck purchase possible. Soon, you will see the decals on the new pickups' doors. Jim, our graphic designer, always does a fantastic job for all of our new vehicles! To distinguish it from the other vehicles we have nicknamed it the Trail Six Pack.

Finally, the shipping containers, are a work in progress. Both roofs are done and they are sporting a primary coat all around. Next comes the finished coat and a coat of paint on the inside. There is always

so much going on at the Boston Trail!

May your bike wheels always be upright with a smooth path under them, a cool breeze at your back and a pleasant sunny day to enjoy while you're riding. Until next time, Rich

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.



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 www.thebostontrail.com for access.

MYTC Appreciation Day Yough-n-Roll “Party-on-the-Trail”

By Ken Medved, Candace Cook and Kathy Banfield

The 30th “Yough n’ Roll” played host to well over 130 riders, for their choice of a 20 or 40 mile ride along the Youghiogheny River. A Family Fun Ride offered a shorter version for the less experienced or those with young children. The riders were caressed by the healthy and beautiful Youghiogheny River with a canopy of tree lines and the curious wildlife. This portion of our trail stewardship has some of the most abundant wildlife selections that you’ll see on any “rail trail” in Western Pennsylvania.



Congratulations to ALL the riders who participated and took advantage of the well -stocked rest stops and their volunteer hosts! We hope you’ll spread the word and be back next **September 13th, 2025**.

Then, Appreciation Day and “Party-on-the-Trail”!

Oh my goodness ...I think we’re on to something! If you missed it, the old Pittsburgh Penguins radio & TV announcer Mike Lange would’ve said ...
“Shame on you, for six weeks!”



The 30th annual “Yough n’ Roll” and latest edition; “Party on the Trail” keeps on getting better!!! Ask around. Is there a better party on the Great Allegheny Passage? I really don’t think so. That’s why everyone keeps

coming back. From the local and regional artists, the state and regional exhibitors, our local police and fire departments, bicycle groups, historical society, our

riders & guests and especially... OUR VOLUNTEERS!



With another beautiful day blessed by sunshine and blue skies, there was no limit to the fun and smiling faces. Thanks to our creative minded team member, Candace Cook, the families that brought all the excited children had a blast getting their faces painted, having custom



made balloons of their choice along with bubbles and a “chalk full” of FUN!!!

Of course none of this happens without the dedication and commitment of

our volunteers (on and behind the scenes) and the “Yough n’ Roll / Party on the Trail” committee. Without reservation, these folks are one of the biggest “parts” of the party: Kathy & Tim Banfield, Rich Kundman & Candace Cook, Mark Place, Joanna Stewart and Rose Lavelle. Along with the MYTC Board, there are dozens more that make this event shine and we can all bask in their enthusiastic glow! You know who you are ... and you should be proud ... you’re part of something that’s timeless & special...The Great Allegheny Passage!



What a superb Yough-n-Roll & Party on the Trail.

Lots and lots of balloons were blown up by local students with Kailin’s leadership-the balloons just about demanded that everyone was to have a fun time. The raffle table was full of donated items from a beautiful mosaic necklace from Rachel Sagar to a big Santa pillow and lots of lottery tickets. Once again, Rose and Matt

did a stand-up job. John Warhold began early with the 50/50 and finished strong- thanks John and Rick. For the first time,



the Wheel of Fortune was so busy, we ran out of all the prizes- thanks for your help, Carol. Cheryl, a new volunteer, had the children making hats and cards and glasses. Rachel and Carol helped to distribute the free



helmets that were given to us by UPMC Children's Hospital. The children did a great job supplying us with bubbles

and more bubbles. Ellen made some super balloon animals and if your animal popped, she made you another one.

Our banner on the train showed all of the sponsors who also made the day possible. We are grateful to McKeesport Hospital, Levin Furniture and our local business, TBI Contracting.

Twenty-one other businesses were also sponsors. We really appreciate your support.



WYEP and WESA radio were very gracious promoting us with on air and on the website.

I know Ken thanked many folks in his article. I'd like to add that Ken did an absolutely amazing job.

All of this to say, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you All.

Boston Visitor Center

By Donna Warhold – Visitor Center Chairman

Thank you to all who supported the Boston visitors Center. We enjoy all who stop in whether to just chat or to make a purchase. We have been open most of the



season and will be open till Halloween and reopen the weekend of the 5K / ½ Marathon in the Spring. Stop to in see the new designs we will have in the Spring.

Our t-shirts are locally designed and you will not find them anywhere else on the trail.

We were able to donate over 60 "used" bicycles to Red Lantern Bicycles for refurbishment and donation to needy individuals.

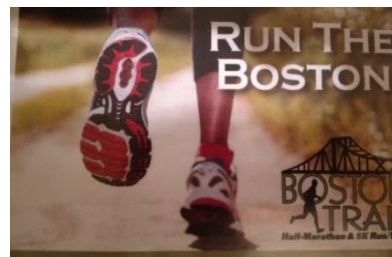
A special shout out to all our staff volunteers.

Save the Date

Saturday April 12, 2025

Boston Trail ½ Marathon & 5K Run/Walk

As noted above, the ½ Marathon & 5K Run/Walk date for 2025 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.

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

After a very wet 2023 this year's drought gave us close to a 2-month reprieve from weekly mowing. Our terrific mowing teams started mowing in late March and resumed their efforts about 3 weeks ago. Our various mowing sheds have made mowing much more productive as we are not moving equipment every week. Two heavier duty riding mowers were donated by trail supporters allowing us to put two light duty units in the reserve fleet reducing maintenance hours. After over 15 years in service the Ferris zero turn used at the campground needed some heavy repair work and new hydraulic hoses. The total repair cost was about 6% of a new unit and the operators report it is performing better than ever. We hope to get another commercial zero turn in the budget in the next year. Removing standing dead trees is a regular safety project. We also work on keeping our 100+ drains and culverts clear.

Work continues on the additional storage and covered parking at the shop. Our two new 15x20' event tents are being stored in one of the sea cans.

We continue to work hard keeping some of our antique fleet breakdown free, while vigilantly maintaining the newer equipment to maximize its life. Our Winter maintenance program really helps prevent breakdowns.

The big story this Summer was the delivery of our brand new 2024 Ford F350 crew cab now known as the **Volunteer 6 Pack** as it



carries 6 at a time. Volunteer Jim Armstrong is finishing up the details on the graphics shown in draft here to acknowledge our supporters for the project and of course our logo.

If you are on the trail on the South end you will note that Steve P. and various helpers have installed several of the tables donated by Sheetz just past the SST near the fountain. Once we get the umbrellas mounted, they will be a nice addition in that area.

Another milestone this year is the repainting of the historic boxcar at the Boston Visitor's Center. Minor work is also being done on the roof. The contractor will clean and prep the metal before applying special paint.

Weather permitting the work should be completed in the next couple of weeks for a fresh new look.

Your trail has been blessed this year with a great group of maintenance volunteers. Almost weekly we receive kudos from trail users across the country and around the world saying how great the trail looks and is maintained. With the support of the membership, these are the folks that make that happen.

Help wanted. While you may associate the work that our all-volunteer maintenance team does between April



and November there is a lot of work required to service that equipment. Each Fall and Winter we service this equipment so it is ready to go in the Spring. Whether you are available every Saturday or just here and there please consider joining our 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

Glad to have you on board as new members of the Mon/Yough Trail Council-Welcome!

Mark Rutherford
Thomas G. Hannah
Joanna Hohman
Butch Derkas
Boro of Lincoln
Mark Gitomer
Scott Lawrence
Linda Nato
M Sussman
Judy Wertheimer
Mark Gitomer
Leigh Wood

Melissa Dodge
Mary Matich
David Beringer
Marian Peck
Al Donalson
Debra Kratzenberg
Barbara Moore
Manan Peck
Don & Linda Schmidt
Kevin & Ginger Ulmar
Arthur Bisig
Keith Frid

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

The Old Blythedale Store

by Joseph DeChicchis

The village of Blythedale, that very interesting coal patch along the GAP Trail at ~MP 118, owes its vitality through the decades to places with deep ties to the Italian-Americans and African-Americans who lived there. In earlier issues, Terry Vota has described the WMBU hall, the baseball field, and the Off Shore Club (a.k.a., the juke joint), and he mentioned the first president of the WMBU, Francesco “Frank” Vitori. Shortly after arriving in the USA, in 1901, Francesco decided that Blythedale needed an alternative to the “company store” run by the coal mine. The success of his independent store provided capital for building a larger store building, founding the WMBU, making many personal loans to local residents, and even



helping to finance the establishment of the African-Americans’ Ebenezer Church (which will be described in a future article). Francesco began his business in Blythedale by

purchasing a typical coal patch house, still standing today across the Trail from the Ebenezer Church, to which he added an addition that housed his grocery store and butcher shop. The 1910 Census indicates that Francesco owned this property free of any mortgage and that he was self-employed. The monochrome photo shows how the house with attached store looked circa 1916, behind his wife and five of his children. To the left of his home, Francesco also established a larger store in a building with a basement that served as an icehouse, where winter Youghiogheny River ice was stored and then used to keep meats and milk cold in summer. Emma Saccani is shown cutting meat next to the old wooden icebox during the 1970’s. This store sold deli meats and other grocery items into the 1970s, and it was also the Blythedale Post Office for many years before World War II.

Local lore occasionally cites anti-Italian discrimination as

the reason for the store’s creation; however, the motive



was more likely simple capitalism, for Francesco had some experience in banking before settling in Blythedale. Beyond the usual credit advances to store

customers, his ledgers attest to many important business and personal loans. In the 1920s, he also served as a policeman, a detective, and eventually the postmaster. Blythedale was a bustling coal patch with a population of nearly 2000 at times, and he seems to have been attracted by this mercantile opportunity. Francesco was sympathetic towards labor union organizers who often met at his store, which created some enemies. In 1931, the McKeesport Daily News (“Mystery Blast Destroys 2 Homes In Blythedale; Bombing Blamed”) described how a bomb destroyed Francesco’s third building, behind his main house, where a boarder was living, presumably in retaliation for that boarder’s pro-union picketing. Francesco’s wife was injured by the explosion.

In 1992, the property was divided, the original house-store going to Francesco’s granddaughter, and the free-standing store going to his grandson, who then built the block garage with an apartment above. The apartment was destroyed by a fire in 2022, and the final photo



shows the property as it looks today. Allegheny County is now considering the renovation of this fire-damaged and now abandoned historic store property, so we can expect future improvements.

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 16, 2024** - Butlers Golf Course Banquet Hall

5:00PM – 9:00PM

Reservation Deadline – November 8, 2024

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 16 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 2027 – Vote for 4

- Cathy Bartley**
Current Trail Monitor
Previous MYTC Board Member for 6 years
Provides current Trail Maintenance Support

- Ken Medved**
Current MYTC Vice President
Current MYTC Board Member
Current "Party-on-the-Trail" Event Coordinator

- Rose Lavelle**
Maintains Maintenance Volunteer Hours Log
Current MYTC Board Member
Previous MYTC ½ Marathon Chairman

- Terry Vota**
MYTC member for 10 years
Previous MYTC Board Member for 6 years
MYTC Newsletter Editor

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

Tim Banfield

Secretary

Mary Reid

Directors

2022-2024

Sarah Helzlsouer

Rose Lavelle

Ken Medved

Linda Vota

2023 - 2025

Richard Kundman

Adrian Marini

Mark Place

Mary Reid

David Ringler

2024 – 2026

Tim Banfield

Candace Cook

Kathie Fawcett

John Warhold

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

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.



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Mon/Yough Trail Council
PO Box 14
McKeesport, PA 15135
www.TheBostonTrail.com



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

The following businesses have generously supported the Mon/Yough Trail Council.

- | | |
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| Adam Inlay Web Design | Levin Furniture |
| Allegheny Health Network/Jefferson Hospital | Mary E. Cole Fund-Pittsburgh Foundation |
| Allegheny Land Trust | McKeesport Hospital Foundation |
| Allegheny Regional Asset District | NuGo Nutrition |
| American Water Charitable Foundation | Olympus Energy |
| Basic Carbide | PA American Water Company |
| Bekavac Funeral Home | Pozzuto Auto—White Oak |
| Big Twist | PNC Bank |
| Bour Associates | Port Vue Borough |
| Cardello Electric | Pribanic & Pribanic |
| Carriage Inn | Pro Waste |
| CFS Bank | R.C. Walter & Sons Hardware |
| Crawford Foundation | Rich's Parkside Den |
| Elizabeth Township | Road ID |
| Gary & Mary Anne Sedlacek Fund-Pittsburgh Foundation | Robert J. Duchin & Associates, Ltd. |
| G.C.Murphy Company Foundation | Sager Mosaics |
| Generation Stoneworks | Shaw Weil Associates |
| Giant Eagle – White Oak | Steel Strong Community FCU |
| Gilbert Funeral Home and Crematory | Steffan Industries |
| Grand Central Pizza | TBI Contracting |
| Highmark/AHN | The Betsy Shoppe |
| Howell Craft Inc. | The Embroidery People |
| 8 John Marine & Associates | The UPS Store—White Oak |
| Liberty Borough | Trail Volunteer Fund-Pittsburgh Foundation |
| Lincoln Borough | Travelers Insurance |
| Little Boston Inn | UPMC Children's Hospital |
| | Vegely Welding |
| | Warhold Plumbing, Heating & AC |
| | Zak's Bicycle Shop |

