

Rail-Trail News

The Rail-Trail Council of Northeast Pennsylvania is dedicated to renewing Northeast Pennsylvania's historic pathways as recreational trails for all to enjoy.

Discover the D&H Rail-Trail Tours

Wednesday, May 23, 6 PM. Union Dale Trailhead, next to Cable's Store. Wildflower hike with Jane Frye.

Saturday, June 2, 9 AM–1 PM. National Trails Day Celebration. Forest City Trailhead. Bike rides: 9 AM. Dog walk: 9:30 AM. Hike to 'special places' of the area: 10:30 AM.

Wednesday, June 20, 6 PM. Forest City Trailhead. "Walk for Your Health—A Yoga Focus" with Ed Golecki, approximately 2 mile walk.

Sunday, July 8, 9 AM. Forest City Trailhead. Simple bike repairs followed by bike ride. Sponsored by New Milford Bike Shop. Various mileages.

Wednesday, July 25, 6 PM. Forest City Trailhead. Family bike night—all ages, kids please! Sponsored by Cedar Bike Shop. Helmet check!

Saturday, August 4, 8 AM. Forest City Old Home Week Coal Cracker Run (2 & 5 mile). Benefits Forest City Cross County Team.

Sunday, August 12, 9 AM. Forest City Trailhead. "Explore the D&H" ride to Union Dale, 16 miles or more. Sponsored by Cedar Bike Shop. "What to Check Before You Ride."

Wednesday, August 22, 6 PM. Forest City Trailhead. Bike ride, quick pace, 20-mile total. What's cadence?

Sunday, September 9, 10 AM. Forest City Trailhead. Free bike rentals and guided rides (with reservations) sponsored by Northeast Sports, Honesdale. An event for Lackawanna County Advocates for Nutrition & Activity. Hand-in your passports!

Sunday September 30. Benefit bike ride for the Little Sisters of Poor & the Holy Family Residence Centennial Celebration. Chairpersons: Bill & Carol Burke. Details TBA. For more information: Jo Ann at 343-4065 x3144.

Saturday, October 6, 9 AM. Beyond the D&H. Loop bike trip on O&W. Mountain Bike suggested, Forest City Trailhead

Wednesday, October 17, 6 PM. Forest City Trailhead. Family Bike Night—all ages, kids please!

Info: 785-7245 / www.nepa-rail-trails.org



Discover the D&H!

From May through October, a series of group bike rides and hikes have been scheduled along the newly resurfaced 10-mile section of the D&H Trail. The series has been planned by Rail-Trails and the United Way of Susquehanna County to introduce residents to the pleasures of the trail. The group rides and hikes will be led by RT volunteers. Special topics will be covered, including history, ecology, bike safety and repairs, and healthy lifestyles. (See schedule at left.)



Rolling Thunder

Our trail had rails for about one hundred years. For nearly eighty of those, the coal fired steam engines of the Erie and D&H, among the most powerful ever built, thundered along the line.

Now, more than fifty years have passed since the last D&H steamer went to scrap. While we are well reminded of the "Age of Steam" at places like Steamtown and on excursion railroads, only old timers may claim to have seen the steam giants in true operation. Sadly, there isn't a child in America today who has thrilled to the sight of a 500-ton iron horse

NEW MEMBERS

Katy Berry, Mattituck, NY
Daniel & Debra Thompson, Clarks Summit, PA
Florence Brown, Scranton, PA
MaryAnn Warren, New Milford, PA
Leon Swackhamer, Montrose, PA
Karl Mousley, Norristown, PA
Caroline Seamans, Fleetville, PA
Jon Bauer, Rose Valley, PA
Ed Staback, Eynon, PA
Ray Telnock, Hallstead, PA
Christine Elder, Carbondale, PA
Hendrick Manufacturing Co., Carbondale, PA

RENEWING MEMBERS, JAN–APRIL 2007

Barbara Remington, Thompson, PA
Ed Taylor, Westbrook, ME
Alan Gillick, Dickson City, PA
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kavanagh, King of Prussia, PA
Frank & Donna Prybeck, Susquehanna, PA
Fred Wenz, Ambler, PA
Robert & Terrilyn Segerstrom, Thompson, PA
John McGlinchey, Levittown, PA
Joe & Ann Cherney, Starlight, PA
Judy Obert, Greentown, PA
George & Gerry Krooss, Poyntelle, PA
Gary Treven, Bloomsburg, PA
Susan Shontz, Thompson, PA
William Polny, Wapwallopen, PA
Dorrance & Susan Belin, Waverly, PA
Joyce Hatala, Fleetville, PA
Jim & Carol Kline, Douglassville, PA
Christina Fehlner, Moscow, PA
Liz Krivda, New Paltz, NY
Richard Lane, Woodbridge, NJ
Beverly Rainforth, Binghamton, NY
Louis & Linda Kwiatek, Starrucca, PA
Fred DeSanto, Pittston, PA
Tillie & John Quinn, Randolph, NJ
George Morris, Clarks Summit, PA
Felix & Mary Prezelski, Forest City, PA
Ethel & Bob Breuche, Union Dale, PA
Tom & Kathy Chesnick, Carbondale, PA
Don & Lois Todd, Forest City, PA
Denise & Peter Vauter, East Stroudsburg, PA
Alphonse Chesnick, Kearny, NJ
John & Sandra Kugler, Springtown, PA
Tim & Gwen Proctor, Union Dale, PA
Robert Kramer, Equinunk, PA
Ed & Cindy Allen, Clarks Summit, PA
Donna Caputo, Clifford, PA
Marvyn & Ginny Raphaelson, Lake Harmony, PA
James & Anna Prawdzik, Deptford, NJ
Chuck & Nancy Rood, Hillsborough, NJ
Ralph Grambo, Poyntelle, PA
Eugene Gallagher, Clarks Summit, PA

hauling a 5,000-ton train at full throttle.

Yet what do little children call a train? And why?

Modern Diesels may be said to hum, or to roar, or to purr. But they do not make the sound by which kids call them. So strong was the imprint of the steamer that fifty years after its passing, little children still cry “Mommy! Daddy! *Choo-choo!*”

People who study such matters tell us that steam locomotives are *anthropomorphic*. This is a fancy way of saying that the steamers stay in our memory because *they remind us of ourselves*. The typical steamer had a round “face,” with a headlight for a nose, running lights for ears and a cowcatcher for a beard. Its churning rods suggest the arm movement of a runner, and the choo-choo sound is akin to the panting of that runner. On a deeper level, one might say that the huffing steamers always seemed to be working hard, just like the people who lived along the Rail-Trail one hundred years ago.

The trail began its railroading life in 1870 as the Jefferson Branch of the Erie, which was one of the largest railroads in America. Over its life, the Erie ran thousands of steam locomotives on its many routes. As a general freight hauler, during any given year it had dozens of different locomotive types on the rails, each matched to a particular hauling need. Jefferson Branch, with some of the steepest grades in the east, demanded power. The 8-drive-wheel “Berkshire” type, weighing over 200 tons, was called the “Thirty-three hundred” along our trail, after the numerical series Erie used for the type. Even larger was the 10-drive-wheel “Forty-two hundred,” called a decapod.

The D&H was essentially a coal road during the steam era, and it faced the daunting task of hauling “a mile of coal” over Ararat summit. During the 1920’s and 30’s, “Consolidation” steamers did much of this work. It took five of these 8-drive-wheel beasts to get a typical 100-car coal train over Ararat (although one of the five, “the Forest City kicker,” dropped off after the worst of the grade was conquered). Supplementing the Consolidations, and used largely for pusher service on our Rail-Trail, the “Sixteen hundred” series featured 16 drive wheels configured in two sets that were hinged to enable the locomotive to get around curves.

Then, late in the steam age (in 1940), came the legendary “Challengers.” The D&H numbered them, and folks along the trail therefore called them, “Fifteen hundreds.” Somehow, these 12-drive-wheel giants managed to look sleek, and indeed beautiful, while weighing in at over 300 tons and producing nearly 300 pounds of steam pressure per cylinder square inch. They represented the apex of development of the steam locomotive; while a few other steamers (on other roads) were marginally larger, none was more elegant, or more memorable.

They are gone now. They won’t be back. So we invite you to go to trailside on some quiet evening. Find a place where the air is still. Close your eyes. Listen.

Listen for the jingle, the rumble and the roar.

By RTC member, Mark C. Walsh

C	A	L	E	N	D	A	R
MAY 24	JUNE 28	JULY 26	AUG 2, 3, 4				
Rail-Trail	Rail-Trail	Rail-Trail	Forest City				
Dinner/Meeting,	Dinner/Meeting,	Dinner/Meeting,	Old Home Week.				
6/7 PM,	6/7 PM,	6/7 PM, MJ’s	Rail-Trail				
Candlelight Inn,	Gibney’s	Café, Rte 371 at	booth featuring				
Route 374,	Restaurant,	Belmont Corners,	blueberries &				
Herrick	Rte 6, Waymart	Pleasant Mount	ice cream!				



The Great PA Cleanup

Volunteers picked up tons of trash, car parts, household goods and many items long discarded on two sections of the D&H Rail-Trail as part of the Great PA Cleanup! A one-mile section of trail along the Susquehanna River, north of Lanesboro, took the assistance of a skidster and a trailer to haul the trash to the road. Thanks to volunteers and especially Dave DeLeon with a skidster and Bryan Bendock with a trailer. We couldn't have done it without that equipment.

The trail just north of the Forest City Trailhead was also cleaned of old trash with the help of numerous, hardworking volunteers. A 20 cubic yard container was filled; old tires were removed as part of the PA Cleanup and scrap metal went to recycling. Thanks to Nick Cost, mayor of Forest City for arranging the dumpster.

And thanks to all the volunteers and our local PA DOT, a difficult task was accomplished.

- Ken & Leslie Maas, Dalton, PA
- Dennis Favello, Union Dale, PA
- Henry & Shirley Tusar, Forest City, PA
- Matt & Rachel Swierzewski, Sellersville, PA
- Thomas & Patricia Williamson, Union Dale, PA
- Bill & Alice Burrell, Carbondale, PA
- Ed Giombetti, Jessup, PA
- John Morris & Family, Simpson, PA
- Thomas & Carol Chesnick, Vandling, PA
- Thomas Miranda, Pleasant Mount, PA
- Joan Peters, Kingsley, PA
- John Blodnikar, Browndale, PA
- Tom Frost Jr., Nicholson, PA
- Jean & Bob Swenson, Philadelphia, PA
- Louise Anderson, Carbondale, PA
- Catherine DeRichie, Simpson, PA
- William Burke, Moscow, PA
- Joseph & Marie Dragwa, Simpson, PA
- Kirk & Helen Newsom, Union Dale, PA
- Robert Burshnick, Forest City, PA
- Jim Kasten, Hallstead, PA
- Roy & Vee Pauli, Scranton, PA
- Ed Michalski, Archbald, PA
- Tom DeMatteo, Moscow, PA
- Shirley Leslie, White Mills, PA
- Tri-County Sportmen's Assoc., Simpson, PA
- Pike County Sno-Runners, Greentown, PA
- John, Susan & Melissa Short, Waymart, PA
- David & Heather Elegena, Landenberg, PA

NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

Ray & Kelly Felins, Moscow, PA

DONATIONS

Louis Orehek, Vandling, PA

John Haas, Villanova, PA

In honor of Diana Junior, Forest City

Membership Renewal Form

Please renew! The date on the mailing label on the reverse indicates when your membership expires.

- Lifetime/Founding \$500
- Patron/Sponsor \$250
- Club/Organization \$100
- Family \$25
- Individual \$15
- Senior/Student \$10
- Donation for Memorial Tree Fund.
- Call me to discuss a corporate donation.
- Our group would like a slide presentation.
- I am available for trail cleanups.
- I am available to water trees.
- Send me a **new** RTC brochure.

NAME

PHONE NUMBER

STREET ADDRESS

E-MAIL ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Make checks payable to **Rail-Trail Council of Northeast PA**

P.O. Box 123, Forest City, PA 18421-0123 Phone: 570-785-7245 E mail: tcrcrail@epix.net

Forest City Reforested!

Forty-four trees and 28 shrubs were planted as part of a grant from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Urban & Community Forestry Program to beautify the trail in the Forest City area. Since many trees were removed with the installation of the new sewer line in this area, the Lackawanna River Sewer Basin Authority provided matching funds to secure replacement trees. The grant requires a 100% match in funds or matching services. In the fall, 28 trees and 28 shrubs were planted. Work continued in the spring with community volunteers and the Hubbard Bike Club planting 16 bareroot trees. Bareroot trees were ordered in mass from upstate NY for many communities in NEPA. This large order (over 800 trees) helps cut cost on shipping. The trees are quite large and easy to handle and plant with volunteers. Watering is key to survival on bareroots and volunteers are being sought to help with watering throughout the summer.

Included in the spring planting, were 6 oak trees that will be a memorial to local soldiers lost in Iraq. A plaque will be installed and a dedication will take place in the fall. Thanks to the many folks who donated to this Memorial Tree Fund, started by the Hubbard group. A fall bareroot planting will also take place, and anyone interested in ordering trees can contact the office.



Rail-Trail Council of Northeast PA
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