



SUSQUEHANNOCK HIKER

Fall 2018 / Winter 2019

On Foot in Potter County...God's Country



PO Box 643 • Coudersport, PA 16915 • www.stc-hike.org • info@stc-hike.org

The purposes of the STC are to build and maintain trails, aid in the conservation of wetlands and wildlife, and promote good fellowship through the medium of hiking and nature study.

2019 Winter Frolic and Awards Dinner



The STC *Winter Frolic and Awards Dinner* will be held at the Susquehannock Lodge on Rt. 6 east of Denton Hill on Wednesday, February 6. The lodge capacity is 51, and reservations will be taken on a first-come basis, with a waiting list after the limit is reached. That is always a possibility, due to the excellent reputation for Ed Szymanik's culinary skills and the popularity of our annual program, so making reservations in a timely fashion is advisable. Non-members are welcome for an extra ten bucks, for which you get a membership! 🍷

When: Wednesday, February 6, 2019

Where: Susquehannock Lodge, Ulysses, PA

Cost: Members:.....20.00
Non-members:30.00

Entrée: Prime rib or salmon

Sides: Baked potato, vegetable, and dessert

RSVP: January 30, 2019

Membership renewals are also due at this time. Please promptly return your membership renewal form, dues renewal (if applicable), and frolic reservations.

Trail Maintenance Rundown

By Bill Boyd

As usual, our trail care kicked off in January of 2018, with just a few hours on the books clearing and grooming the trails for cross country skiing. February saw the hours pick up slightly and even more-so in March. During the first quarter of the year, we had crews clearing Green Timber Hollow, Porter Branch, Hogback Trail, and the 10 mile stretch from Ole Bull to Young Woman's Creek.

By the time April came into view, trail care swung into high gear with our annual *Spring around the Trails* event. During this time, work was done at the dynamite shed (re-purposing it into a trail shelter, which we refer to as D-Mag, short for Dynamite magazine). Clearing was done on Italian Hollow, Bobsled Hollow, Game Refuge, Plantation, Hribar Route, Long Hollow, Gravel Lick, Fish, B&S, Ewing, Crooks, Lieb Run, Tower, and Jacob Hollow trails. All this work totaled 314 hours.

During May the trails were cleared from Short Run Road to Ole Bull, from Lyman Run Road to Sunken Branch, through the entire Hammersley Wild Area, and along Ridge Trail. We also cleared and improved an old haul road to our proposed shelter site in Wild Boy Run. May added another 178 hours to the log books.

June was another big month for trail care. In April the club had purchased a DR Field & Brush mower, and by June we were finding more and more places where we could use it. The DR mower saved a significant time weed whacking and brush cutting. Places where the trail follows old woods road or railroad grade are ideal for mowing including nearly the entire East Fork Crossover Trail (EFT), the upper and lower ends of the West Branch Crossover Trail (WBT), as well as many short sections of the main trail system. One of our club members, who wishes to remain anonymous, also bought a DR and generously uses it on the STS. That gives us two DR mowers and two Swisher mowers we have at our disposal. With this power equipment, one would think the STS would be a *walk in the park*, and some sections are; however, many places are still not much more than deer-path and not suitable for mowing. The list of places worked on in June is quite lengthy, so suffice to say we amassed 375 hours for the month.

The 375 hours logged in June, included some time spent on the early stages of building the Wild Boy shelter, which had been approved and the site cleared.

July was quite busy, with work done on EFT, Quarry, Stony Run, Whiteline, Fish, Splashdam, Hribar Route, Crooks trails, and the Webber Trail at the Lumberman's Museum, where Bob Webber's cabin had been relocated to. We added another 162 hours to the books in July.

In August we made use of the mowers again while crews mowed the Frazier Farm Trail, parts of the EFT, and several access points near road crossings. With our annual Camporee at Ole Bull taking place August 9-12, we mostly did trail care nearby. Some of the areas addressed during this weekend were Big Spring Colony, Spook Hollow, Italian Hollow, and Hammersley Wild Area.

With such a wet season we had a chore keeping the access road to the Wild Boy shelter site passable for our construction crews. It is blessed with many quite deep diversion ditches which cause problems where our front or rear bumpers would occasionally drag. Don't worry though, this access road is only for our construction and maintenance crews, the general public cannot drive in as the road is gated off. We added another 213 hours in August.

By mid-September the woods had finally dried out enough we were finally able to get back into the shelter site and finish the Wild Boy shelter. Over three consecutive days where we were able to camp overnight at the construction site, we were able to frame and side it, erect the roof, and finish up several minor miscellaneous details. The overnight camping turned out to be my favorite part of the project because we were able to share stories, some of which I think might be true, over the campfire.

Once the Wild Boy shelter was finished, September continued to offer favorable weather that enabled us to scout a location for our 2019 shelter. Once it was chosen, we obtained approval from DCNR on our location along the Gravel Lick Trail and were able to clear and mark the area. Hours totaled 126 for September.

October was far from a slack time, with 161 hours spent at Stony Run, Hartman, Cherry Run, Hogback, Rattlesnake, and Plantation Trails as well as the Hammersley and EFT.

Trail care slowed down during November and December, but we were able to get out and do some minor clearings during these months.

In total, we finished the year with 1640 hours, which is a couple of hundred hours over our 10-year average. These hours get reported to the KTA and DCNR. ¶

2019 Trail Care Planning

By Bill Boyd

The hiking community frequently asks *who maintains this trail?* The answer is *we do*; as this was one of the primary reasons the club was formed over 50 years ago. With the nearly 300 members scattered far and wide, we mostly depend on the local members for the regular maintenance. Currently we have divided the 85 miles into manageable sections and ask members to volunteer as primary maintainers for each section.

The basic responsibilities of the primary maintainer is to go out as early as feasible each Spring (what we call *Spring Around the Trails*) to do a Spring cleaning of their section. This spring cleaning usually consists of removing blow-downs, lopping limbs, or removing debris from the trail footpath. Later in the hiking season the primary maintainer is urged to go back through their section and weed whack or brush cut, refresh the blazing, or other routine maintenance. Some of our primary crews are not comfortable operating power equipment; in these cases, we ask they clear what they can and note the location of what they cannot and report back to our *Trail Master* what they need assistance with. We usually have enough experienced in many different aspects of trail care, whereby someone will gladly volunteer to assist and remedy the problem.

Over the years the club has acquired several tools for our trail crews to use. Currently we have weedwhackers, handheld brush-cutters, loppers, pruning saws, chainsaws as well as two heavy duty walk-behind brush cutters, two Swisher mowers, and a DR mower. These are like a push lawnmower on steroids. They are self-propelled, with 11-14 horsepower, big knobby tires, and easily chop briars, heavy weeds, small saplings, and the like. If one is not familiar with the power tools, we ask you schedule a time with one of our members who have experience with the machine you wish to use to receive some basic instruction on the operations of the machine. The club also has a trailer you can use to transport the power tools if you have a vehicle that can pull a small trailer, or we can load the power tools in a truck if you prefer.

Currently there are 16 maintenance sections of the main trail system, and each of the cross-over trails are their own maintenance section. Three of the sections do not currently have a primary maintainer. We urge each of you to consider adopting one of these open sections. The maintenance sections range from around 3 miles to just over 10 miles. These sections are as follows:

1. Northern Gateway – Thompson Road
Length: 2.8 miles
Primary Maintainers: Curt & Penny Weinhold
2. Thompson Road – Lyman Run Road
Length: 2.8 miles
Primary Maintainers: Joe & Barb Allis
3. **Lyman Run Road – Sunken Branch Road**
Length: 4 miles
Primary Maintainers: *Open*
4. Sunken Branch Road – PA RT 44
Length: 2.8 miles
Primary Maintainers: John Eastlake & Jeff Raisch
5. PA RT 44 – Short Run Road
Length: 5.7 miles
Primary Maintainers: Mark & Denise Kelly
6. Short Run Road – Ole Bull State Park
Length: 6 miles
Primary Maintainers: Lowell & Barb Luft
7. Ole Bull State Park – Twelve Mile Road
Length: 10.5 miles
Primary Maintainers: Charles Kern & Brian Schultz
8. Twelve Mile Road – Greenlick Road
Length: 3.6 miles
Primary Maintainers: Charles Hager & Co.
9. Greenlick Road – Shephard Road
Length: 6 miles
Primary Maintainers: Dave & Brenda Cardellino
10. Shephard Road – PA 144
Length: 3.2 miles
Primary Maintainer: John Zimmer
11. PA 144 – McConnel Road
Length: 10 miles
Primary Maintainer: Chris Bell
12. McConnell Road – East Fork Road
Length: 4.3 miles
Primary Maintainers: Gary & Alice Buchanan
13. East Fork Road – Wild Boy Road
Length: 5.7 miles
Primary Maintainer: Wanda Shirk
14. Wild Boy Road – Prouty Lick Road
Length: 2.7
Primary Maintainers: Pat Childs
15. **Prouty Lick Road – PA RT 44 (Patterson Park)**
Length: 4.5 miles
Primary Maintainers: *Open*
16. PA RT 44 (Patterson Park) – Northern Gateway
Length: 6.7 miles
Primary Maintainers: Bill Boyd
17. East Fork Crossover Trail
Length: 8.3 miles
Primary Maintainer: Jim Bowser
18. **West Branch Crossover Trail**
Length: 5.7 miles
Primary Maintainer: *Open*

Hiking the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail

By Wanda Shirk

The STS was my gateway drug. From the time that I hiked it, I was a trail addict. I needed more.

Among the dozens of trails and hundreds of miles I have hiked by now, the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail (LHHT) is a favorite. I finally got around to hiking it just this past May, with my compadres Sue and Joanne, and we all agree that it's one of the best trails in Pennsylvania.

The LHHT starts in southwest PA at Ohiopyle State Park, which is arguably the best of our 121 state parks. From there, the trail goes northeast for 70 miles. Unlike the STS, it's a linear instead of a loop trail, requiring backpackers to get a shuttle from one end to another. However, the three of us were slackpacking, so we had no problem. Parking areas are large and conveniently located and spaced. The excellent trailheads, free maps, blazing, and trail maintenance are all pluses for the LHHT.

The unique thing about the Laurel Highlands Trail is that cement mile markers are placed every mile, standing about a foot high along the trail. It was always a pleasure to see the next mile marker, which we could usually anticipate coming across about every 25 minutes. The markers are engraved with each mile number, providing regular notice of progress and accomplishment.

Another feature unique to the LHHT is the regularity of shelter areas along the trail. The shelter areas are set back substantially from the trail, anywhere from a few hundred yards to a tenth of a mile or more. Each shelter area has five shelters, picnic tables, a water pump, and pit toilet facilities. Being close to the Pittsburgh population center, the LHHT receives substantially more foot traffic than the STS. Backpackers are allowed to camp only at shelter areas, and reservations are required.

Pennsylvania's southcentral and eastern trails are notoriously rocky: most Appalachian Trail hikers have heard the term "Rocksylvania." The STS and the Quehanna Trail are two favorite northcentral trails because most of our treadway is fairly nice dirt trail and not rocky. The LHHT also has mostly rock-free path. The woods understory is mostly pleasant and open, rarely obscured by brush and briars clogging the path or a hiker's view.

Like looking down on people? The most stupendous feature of the trail is the LHHT bridge over the six lanes of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The 10' wide, 184' long bridge for hikers and snowmobiles, completed in 2012, cost \$1.3

million! However, another of our favorite trail features on the LHHT was the many simple log bridges. Wet crossings never had to be feared. Boards or flattened logs provided sturdy footing even across some dry ditches.

Nature grants special favors to some trails. To the LHHT, it has granted two highlights. One is a section with spectacular views of the "Yoch" – Youghiogheny River. Another is a couple sections with humongous rocks and boulders that hikers marvel at as they wind through narrow passages. Unfortunately, the STS has no comparable features – though we do have the Hammersley Pool!

Between miles 6 and 8 of the LHHT, the trail has an elevation change from 1500' to 2400' – 900 feet that hikers definitely want to do in a SOBO (southbound) direction. Other than that stretch, most of the LHHT is fairly level for easy hiking, atop the "highlands" for which it is named.

Maintainers on the LHHT built one of the most fun things we ever saw on a trail. A large-diameter blowdown was cut into chunks that were made into chairs – with backs! One chunk about two feet high was set up as a table. It was cross-hatched to make a tic-tac-toe board on top. Then a skinny blowdown with a diameter of about three inches was sliced to make discs to play as "O"s on the board, and some of the discs were squared off to make the "X" discs. This was the most creative work with blowdowns that we have ever seen. What a way to bring smiles at a snack or lunch stop!

LHHT's woodland tic-tac-toe game



Photo submitted by Wanda Shirk

We hiked the trail over six fairly leisurely days. Except for the southernmost section with the steep hill, which we hiked together SOBO, we did "key exchange" hikes. I would park at the north end and hike south. Joanne and Sue parked at the south end and hiked north. We would meet in the middle daily, exchanging keys, and meet back at the Cobblestone Inn where we stayed.

If you're a trail addict like me, I highly recommend the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail to you! 🐾

Newsletter printed by the Welfare Hollow Publishing Group, New Florence, PA 15944

Welcome New Members

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Henry Bonson Millerton, PA | Alan Quimby Wellsboro, PA |
| Don Brubaker Lancaster, PA | Sharon Quimby Wellsboro, PA |
| Gary Leone Boiling Springs, PA | Cathy Staab Red Lion, PA |
| Gregg Lombardo Camp Hill, PA | Tim Staab Red Lion, PA |
| Zoe Metro Boiling Springs, PA | Jerry Vinciotti Plains, PA |
| Hugh Montgomery Lebanon, PA | |

Newest Circuit Hiker Award Recipients

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1161 Megan Tremaine Pittsford, NY | 1172 Karl Franzen Rockford, IL |
| 1162 Jennifer Yaros Stow, OH | 1173 Aloysius Franzen Rockford, IL |
| 1163 Chris Seubert Indian Head, MD | 1174 Erica Cora Anderson Roaring Branch, PA |
| 1164 Tina Toole Warren, PA | 1175 Jesse LuBera Roaring Branch, PA |
| 1165 Mike Toole Warren, PA | 1176 Gregg Lombardo Camp Hill, PA |
| 1166 Kostya Pokrovski Warren, PA | 1177 Kristin Joivell Huntingdon, PA |
| 1167 Kasia Dec Warren, PA | 1178 William Huber Zelienople, PA |
| 1168 David Lukes Stewartstown, PA | 1179 De'Anna Caligiuri Munhall, PA |
| 1169 Henry Bonson Millerton, PA | 1180 Daniel Kett Perkiomenville, PA |
| 1170 Enya Kent Chantilly, VA | 1181 Zoe Metro Boiling Springs, PA |
| 1171 Bryant Crouch Ohio | 1182 Andrew Goldfine Philadelphia, PA |

Trails End

In 2019, the STC lost a few dedicated members whose passing will be felt within the club for several years to come. We will fondly remember the following members as they frolic on idyllic trails beyond our current reach: ¶

- Bob Bernhardt
- Yvonne Parker
- Floyd Lounsbury
- Tom Schultz
- Dawn McManus

Endowment Fund Annual Contributions

The club's endowment fund received a \$5,000 matching grant from the Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers this year, thanks to \$5,000 in lifetime memberships and gifts to our club designated for the fund. At the 4% annual interest the endowment fund earns, this \$10,000 will earn \$400 a year for the club for future bridges, shelters, kiosks, and other trail improvements. ¶

2019 Pine Creek Canoe Trip

Each year the club has a canoe trip down the upper Pine Creek Valley - from Watrous to Ansonia. This is an easy 10 mile stretch that takes about 4 hours and is suitable for amateurs. We sometimes end up with an odd number of participants, so feel free to join. In April we begin watch for the river gage at Cedar Run to read around 2.5 feet, which translates to enough water on this stretch - any less and the boats drag bottom in spots - much more it could be a little dicey for beginners. ¶

Saturday in the Park

By Bill Morey

On Saturday, June 16, 2018, several club members joined in on the 100th anniversary of the "Genesee Park" during the annual Genesee Community Days in the little town in northern Potter County next to the PA/NYS border.

Bill Boyd arrived first with the trail club tool trailer (our traveling billboard). Bill and Lois Morey, Larry and Violeta Holtzapple, and Jayne Fitzgerald followed and helped setup our vendor stand.

Lois Morey accompanied Bill Boyd in our entry in the parade, traveling down Main Street, waving to spectators along the parade route. It was perfect weather for the celebration and parade, sunny and warm.

Later, additional members Donna Batterson, Wayne Baumann, John and Jan Halter also joined us to help at our table. We gave out brochures and trail information to the many interested visitors as well as selling a few items.

The day was spent walking around the park checking out the vintage car show and other events and vendors. Wayne and Bill took in the canoe launch dedication which was sponsored by the Genesee Headwaters Association.

A perfect day was spent in the park. ¶

Susquehannock Trail Club
 PO Box 643
 Coudersport PA 16915



2019 Event Schedule

When: January 12, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Gene & Myra Neefe's
 Coudersport, PA

When: February 6, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Winter Frolic
 Where: Susquehannock Lodge
 Coudersport, PA

When: March 9, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Bill Boyd's
 Coudersport, PA

When: April 6, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Joe & Barb Allis's
 Galeton, PA

When: May 11, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Donna Batterson's
 Coudersport, PA

When: June 8, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Lyman Run State Park
 Galeton, PA

When: July 6, 2019 @ 11:00 AM
 What: Independence Day Parade
 Where: Downtown Galeton
 Galeton, PA

When: July 6, 2019 @ Noonish
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Lois Morey's
 Galeton, PA

When: August 8-11, 2019
 What: Annual Camporee
 Where: Ole Bull State Park
 Cross Fork, PA

When: September 14, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Saulters' Preserve
 Coudersport, PA

When: October 12, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Wanda Shirk's
 Genesee, PA

When: November 9, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Monthly Meeting
 Where: Bill Boyd's
 Coudersport, PA

When: December 14, 2019 @ 5:00 PM
 What: Christmas Party
 Where: Lois Morey's
 Galeton, PA