

# 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.

## NEW MEMBERS—WELCOME!

Dale Degraw, Morristown, NJ  
 Allen & Nancy Koberlein, Honesdale, PA  
 Dave Ilene Tim Kohlun, Glastonbury, CT  
 Chris & Renee Palmer, Honesdale, PA  
 Debbie Stover, Warminster, PA  
 James Slocum, Susquehanna, PA

## LIFETIME MEMBERS

Bob & Karen Taylor, Union Dale, PA

## RENEWING MEMBERS

Harry, Barb & David Albert, Hallstead, PA  
 Louise Anderson, Carbondale, PA  
 Raymond Archibald, Scranton, PA  
 Roger & Rosemary Baldwin, Easton, MD  
 Bruce & Eileen Baessler, Montrose, PA  
 Andrew Baron, Joan Carey, LaPlume, PA  
 Sophie Bartkus, Thompson, PA  
 Janet & Paul Bendyk, Herrick Center, PA  
 Deb Bertha, Roaring Brook Twp, PA  
 John Blodnikar, Browndale, PA  
 Todd & Colleen Bobrovcan, Union Dale, PA  
 Alice Breig, Waverly, PA  
 Chas Browne, Binghamton, NY  
 Stephen Bruno, Hallstead, PA  
 William & Alice Burrell, Carbondale, PA  
 Patricia Cembalest, Clarks Summit, PA  
 Will Chamberlin Kathryn Lesoine, Dalton PA  
 Francis Chesnick, Utica, NY  
 James Clayton, Thompson, PA  
 David & Carol Clemens, Hallstead, PA  
 Donna Cole, Binghamton, NY  
 Nancy Connolly, Clarks Summit, PA  
 Norman Coyle, Lake Ariel, PA  
 Matt Davis Family, Bridgeville, DE  
 Robert & Janet Decker, Montrose, PA  
 Reverend David Delzell, Union Dale, PA  
 Joe Dolce, Thompson, PA  
 Richard & Rita DeMaria, Gwynedd Valley, PA  
 Dr Lewis and Cathy Druffner, Avoca, PA  
 M/M Dixon Earley, Camp Hill, PA  
 Barbara Erhard, Roaring Brook Twp, PA  
 Bill & Barbara Feduchak, Blakely, PA  
 Mary Felley, Dalton, PA  
 Peter Franke, Souderton, PA  
 Linda Fried, Teaneck, NJ  
 Esther Friedmann, Clarks Summit, PA  
 Tom Frost, Jr., Nicholson, PA  
 Julie & Stephen Gall, Susquehanna, PA  
 Alan Graham, Pleasant Mt, PA  
 John C. Haas, Villanova, PA  
 David Haase, Esther Schwalb, Brooklyn, NY  
 Dan Hanlon, Pleasant Mt, PA  
 Jackie Hart, Brackney, PA  
 Joe & Lorraine Healey, Laflin, PA



**The Rail-Trail Council is looking for new members. You know it's a great place to walk, run and bike, but do your neighbors and friends? Please spread the word on trail activities, pass along your newsletter. Can you use extra newsletters to leave at work or at the gym? Brochures are free and have a great map inside. Can you put up posters of trail activities? Bring a friend along to one of our Discover the D&H Tours. Come to a Rail-Trail meeting. Volunteer with a friend to assist with the D&H Distance Run or any other activities. New members are the best way for us to succeed as a viable organization.**

## Discover the D&H Calendar

Events scheduled to date are below. If you would like any special group activities or are interested in leading a nature walk, fitness walk, a running or walking group, please call the RT office.

### TUESDAY, JUNE 9

Wildflower Walk with Jane Frye, 6 PM, Forest City Trailhead

### SATURDAY, JUNE 27

Panther Bluff Hike, 9 AM, Simpson Trailhead

### SUNDAY, JULY 12

Bike ride with New Milford Bike Shop, 9 AM, Forest City Trailhead

## C A L E N D A R

**THURSDAY, MARCH 26**  
 Rail-Trail Dinner/  
 Meeting, 6/7 PM,  
 Ben-Mar Restaurant,  
 Carbondale

**THURSDAY, APRIL 23**  
 Rail-Trail Dinner/  
 Meeting, 6/7 PM,  
 Beacon Restaurant,  
 Union Dale

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25**  
 D&H Trash Pick-up,  
 9 AM, Herrick Center  
 and other locations TBA

**SATURDAY, MAY 23**  
 Trail-Tenders Program  
 1 PM, Union Dale  
 Methodist Church

**THURSDAY, MAY 28**  
 Rail-Trail Dinner/  
 Meeting, 6/7 PM,  
 Candlelight Inn,  
 Herrick Center

Rodger & Mary Heaton, Davidsonville, MD  
 William & Mary Hodnik, Binghamton, NY  
 David & Nadine Hogan, Binghamton, NY  
 Lothar Holbert, Susquehanna, PA  
 Ned & Sylvia Holteen, Ft. Washington, PA  
 Alan & Arline Hoover, Duryea, PA  
 Roger Homeyer, Hamlin, PA  
 Dave & Joann Horner, Ambler, PA  
 James Houlihan, Archbald, PA  
 Joe & Catherine Jerin, Mayfield, PA  
 Jim & Verna Johnson, Pompton Plains, NJ  
 William Kaufman, Carbondale, PA  
 Bill Keller, S. Abington Twp, PA  
 George Kelly, Germantown, MD  
 Nancy Kelly, South Gibson, PA  
 Don & Elizabeth Korinda, S. Abington Twp., PA  
 Julia Laird, Dunmore, PA  
 Sheldon Langer, Lackawaxen, PA  
 Alma Lavin, Carbondale, PA  
 Jack Lee, Scranton, PA  
 Shirley Leslie, White Mills, PA  
 Jerry & Vicky Lewondowski, Union Dale, PA  
 Richard Maiolatesi, Peckville PA  
 John Marx, Scranton, PA  
 John McKinnon, Scranton, PA  
 Patrick McMahon, One Point, Scranton, PA  
 Barbara & Mike McMonagle, Green Lane, PA  
 Debbie & Jack McNamara, Union Dale, PA  
 Jack Meade, Pittston, PA  
 Keith Miller, Trappe, PA  
 Robert Morgan, West Pittston, PA  
 Karl Mousley, Norristown, PA  
 Andy & Donna Nikish, Schwanksville PA  
 Pat & Joe Narcisco, Thompson, PA  
 Howard & Mary Ellen Nusbaum, NY, NY  
 Jeffrey O'Hara, Carbondale, PA  
 Patricia O'Hara, Union Dale, PA  
 Lou Orehek, Vandling, PA  
 Nancy & Geoffrey Paine, NY, NY  
 Edward & Gladys Pantzar, Vandling, PA  
 Joyce & Mike Petronchak, Eynon, PA  
 Frank & Donna Prybeck, Susquehanna, PA  
 Marvyn & Ginny Raphaelson, Lake Harmony, PA  
 Tom Rasimas, Avoca, PA  
 Paula Roos, Honesdale, PA  
 Bob & Sue Sanderson, Limekiln, PA  
 Tom & Cathy Schuyler, Easton, PA  
 Roger & Maryanne Steedle, Linwood, PA  
 Robert & Terry Segerstrom, Thompson, PA  
 Andrew Shamro, Uniondale, PA  
 Jay & Fran Smith, Salem, NJ  
 Joseph & Kathleen Sterchak, Collegeville, PA  
 Richard & Gretchen Storck, Montrose, PA  
 Robert Strong, Susquehanna, PA  
 Lorraine Swader, Blakely, PA  
 Ray & Lou Swingle, Uniondale, PA  
 John Thomas, Dickson City, PA  
 Jane & John Tighe, Prospect Park PA  
 Ed Timinkas, Mechanicsburg, PA  
 Joan Tully, Thompson, PA  
 Anthony & Janet Tvaryanas, Uniondale, PA  
 van den Hengel Family, Springville, PA  
 George Wagner, Avoca, PA  
 Charles & Ann Walker, Archbald, PA  
 Mark Walsh, Highland Lakes, NJ  
 Charles H. Welles, Scranton, PA  
 Donald Welsch, Scranton, PA  
 Mark Whalen, Binghamton, NY  
 Jeffrey Wheeler, Susan Matous, Susquehanna, PA  
 Donald & Roberta Whitney, Edmond, OK  
 Thomas J. & Patricia A. Williamson, Union Dale, PA  
 Arthur & Joann Wilson, Jermyn, PA  
 Howie & Karen Wyandt, Union Dale, PA  
 James Yeich, New Milford, PA  
 Bob & Maggie Young, Madison Twp, PA

#### DONATIONS

In honor of Thom Frost, Nancy Ross



## Great PA Cleanup April 25

A D&H Rail-Trail trash pickup will take place April 25 from 9 AM until noon. Meet at Herrick Center along Route 374. Parking is available on the sides of the trail. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided. Other locations may be included. Please check the website [www.nepa-rail-trails.org](http://www.nepa-rail-trails.org) or call the Rail-Trail office at 785-7245. The cleanup is part of the Great American Cleanup sponsored by PA CleanWays. We could use your help!

## D&H Distance Run September 13

The first ½ marathon on the trail was such a great success, we are planning the 2nd annual run for September 13th, 9 AM from the Forest City Trailhead. This year we will limit the number of runners to the first 300 registrations. As soon as the new brochure and race registration form is available (target date June 1), you may register. Call the Rail-Trail office or visit NEPA Runner.



## Trail Tenders to Meet May 23

The Trail Tenders program provides the opportunity for hikers, bikers, equestrians and all trail enthusiasts to assist the Rail-Trail Council in monitoring, maintaining and enhancing the trails. The kick-off meeting last Fall attracted a fair amount of volunteers and a lot of new great ideas. We plan to introduce the program again and review the list of suggested activities and projects. Trail assessment forms have been developed and sections of trail can be 'adopted' for monitoring. Please visit the Trail Tender social networking site to see what's up on the trail and meet other tenders. A brochure is available if you'd like more information. Visit [www.ning.com](http://www.ning.com) and sign up. After you have received confirmation of your sign-up, search trail tenders. You'll see D H Trail Tenders—join the network.

**Saturday, May 23, 1 PM**  
**Union Dale Methodist Church Hall**

#### Trail Construction News

Updates to the D&H Phase II construction plans (Herrick to Thompson) continue. There is still hope to get the project out to bid by the end of 2009 for an early 2010 start.

# Rail-Trail Mascot Revealed!

A few months back, we found ourselves in a state of meander, along the D&H Trail just north of Herrick Center. The day was as autumnal as days get. The air was crisp, the sky a radiant blue. In all, it was a perfect Rail-Trail day. Rounding a bend, we came across Old Tom. He was idly munching on a patch of clover at trailside, and cocked one of his very long ears in our direction.

Before we continue with this tale, let us make clear that Old Tom is (and always was) a member of the species *Equus mulus*, a mule, and an unusual one at that. Old Tom, you see, is something of a specter. Yep, that's right. A ghost. Please set aside, at least for the moment, your disbelief. Even if you don't believe in ghosts, surely you believe in ghost stories. That's what this is—a ghost story. Furthermore, we're not asking you to believe in ghosts in general. For purposes of this story, belief in just one particular ghost will suffice. It began more than 100 years ago when Old Tom worked for an outfit named Z. Kregar & Bros. in an early anthracite colliery. Tom provided much of the muscle power at what was called the Railroad Street Breaker in Forest City. All of this is a matter of historical record; as Casey Stengel used to say, "you could look it up."

Old Tom died on October 6, 1888. Since then, he has been in heaven. You may have read that all dogs go to heaven. As far as we can determine, that is true.

What's more, all mules go to heaven, as a matter of most sacred theology. Having worked in the mines and the breakers, they deserve no less.

"Hay," Old Tom greeted us, using the term that is at once his favorite snack and his universal salutation.

We had known of Old Tom in history and in legend, and had spotted him at trailside twice before, but this was our first conversational encounter. We were initially a bit taken aback.

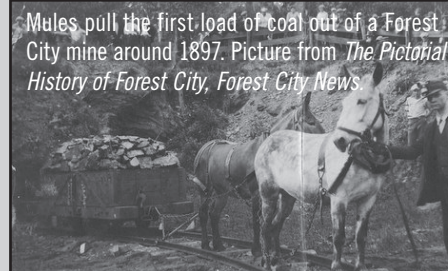
"Hello, Old Tom," we said, "please forgive my surprise. We didn't expect you to speak."

"Of course I speak. All celestial beings have the power of speech. Plenty of languages, too. Wanna hear me conjugate some Latin verbs?"

"Er, probably not," we answered, our Latin being several decades to the left of rusty. "But how can this be heaven? This is the Rail-Trail."

"So you see it, in your human imperfection. But creatures of the beyond have been given the power to have heaven as they wish it. Look at this place! Blue sky, resplendent foliage, idyllic weather, lots of hay and clover and plenty of clear, cool water to drink! You poor humans, you fail to see it! This is heaven! And we mules, we helped make it."

"You helped make it?"



"Sure. Men cut the trees, but who cleared them away? We did all of the heavy

lifting, my man. Not only that, who dragged the rails into position so men could spike them into place? You think the rails got here by truck? There weren't any trucks, pal. In fact, there weren't any roads! And one section of rail, thirty-nine feet of it, weighed nearly 1800 pounds, too much for you, but short work for us. Let's see now. . . With a twitch of an ear and a nod of his head, Old Tom did the arithmetic and ". . . that's 240 tons of steel rail to the mile, not counting the plates and spikes.

And how about the ties at 190 pounds each, and just over 3,300 to the mile? And yes, don't forget about the ballast! More than a thousand tons per mile! Yeah, man, we built the Rail-Trail in the first place. Ah, this is heaven. Look at it! Open your eyes, and see it as it really is!"

"What do you intend to do in a couple of more months, when the snow flies?"

"I'm thinking, at the moment, Acapulco."

**Mark C. Walsh**

*Old Tom sightings should be reported to the Rail-Trail office at (570) 785-7245.*

## Membership Renewal Form

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

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime/Founding \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> I am available for trail cleanups.                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron/Sponsor \$250    | <input type="checkbox"/> Call me to discuss a corporate donation.                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club/Organization \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Send me a <b>new</b> RTC brochure.                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15         |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student \$10     | <input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in finding out more about the 'Trail Tender' program. |

NAME

PHONE NUMBER

STREET ADDRESS

E-MAIL ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Please update your address here if necessary. 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](mailto:tcrcrail@epix.net)



# The Mile Posts Along the Trail

Strolling along the trail you may have come across these white triangular concrete posts along the side of the trail. They are a ghost of the past when trains rolled through the area. Only a few of these remain long after the rails were pulled out, and the railroad line abandoned. The writing on the posts can sometimes be hard to read as the markings are weathered away.

This picture is a mile post near Ararat taken in early spring before the growth covers it up. Looking closer you can see a number "A158" written in black paint over a white base. In the background, another number that was carved into this post can still be made out. It is number "21" filled in with concrete many years ago.

Why are there two numbers? The answer is before this railroad line was known as the Delaware & Hudson's Pennsylvania Division, it was known as the Jefferson Branch of the Erie Railroad. This railroad was originally built around 1870 by the Jefferson Railroad company, directed by the Erie Railroad company. The D&H's charter in 1823 was a canal company and could not be permitted to build a railroad. The D&H did furnish the needed capital to the Jefferson Railroad Company so a railroad could be build from Carbondale to Lanesboro. This line connected with the Erie's line that runs over the Starrucca Viaduct and is still in use today. The numbers that you see in the posts that

were carved out and then later filled in reflect when this railroad was known as the Jefferson Branch of the Erie. The numbers reflect how many miles to the connection known as "Jefferson Junction" This junction connected with the Erie's mainline near the south side of the Starrucca Viaduct.

The agreement with the Erie lasted until 1953 when the D&H outright bought the line from the Erie and granted them trackage rights until 2015. By this time the D&H was no longer a canal company so the restriction of it owning or operating a railroad no longer existed. And, by this time the railroad was extended to connect to the D&H's main line that runs from Binghamton to Albany. The connection to this line is made at Ninevah. Then the D&H renumbered this railroad line by first filling in the old numbers and painting the posts white. Then they added their numbering system in black paint, which is what you see on the surface. These numbers reflect how many miles from that point to Albany, NY. This is why you see an "A" next to the numbers. So if you were standing next to this mile post along the trail, you would be 21 miles from Jefferson Junction, or 158 miles from Albany, NY.

These mile posts helped the engineer know where he was at any point along the railroad. In employee timetables, stations and other important items like cabins and call boxes are located by mile points along the railroad line. Today the few remaining posts along the trail are ghosts of when this area was a busy railroad and steam engines hammered up this line with carloads of coal mined from our region.

**Mike Guzzi**

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