

FALL 2009

Brushwhacker

Mid State Trail 40th Anniversary Celebration

by Scott Adams

More than 40 people attended a party at Elk Creek Cafe + Aleworks on Sunday, July 12th to mark the 40th anniversary of the Mid State Trail. In attendance were members of the MSTA and



Keystone Trails Association, friends of the trail as well as others wanting to learn more about the trail. A cake was shared, door prizes were handed out, and the Elk Creek Cafe

tapped its newest beer offering, the Mid State Trail Nut Brown Ale. Tim Bowser, the owner of Elk Creek Cafe + Aleworks not only donated the use of his facility for this event but also gave a monetary donation to the MSTA. A good time was had by all.

Mid State Trail Gets National Spotlight

By Ed Lawrence

The MST received some national recognition recently as the featured trail in the summer issue of AMERICAN HIKER, the magazine of the American Hiking Society. With text by Scott Adams, map by Pete Fleszar and some great photos the MST graced a two page spread for the ON THE TRAIL section. The American Hiking Society is the only national organization dedicated to promoting and protecting the hiking experience.

Its signature event, National Trails Day, was selected by the Children in Nature Campaign as the best national outdoor event to connect children with the natural world. The AHS also sponsors the Volunteer Vacations program, where participants can spend a week helping to build and maintain hiking trails on public lands across the United States. Members of the American Hiking Society will now know that Pennsylvania has more to offer than simply a slice of the AT when it comes to a long distance hiking experience, that there is also "an old-fashioned wilderness footpath crossing through the heart of the Keystone state", the Mid State Trail.

MSTA Charter Members Celebrate Their Own Milestone

By Scott Adams

Mr. & Mrs. Gert Aron celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on August 15, 2009. The couple was married in 1959 at Danforth Chapel on the Iowa City campus of State Univ. of Iowa. They have lived in the State College area for 40 years, and are well known to many people.

Dr. Gert Aron is retired from PSU's Dept. of Civil Engineering where he was a Professor of Urban Hydrology from 1969 thru 1991. In retirement he has been a very active volunteer, especially with Habitat for Humanity, where his Small Projects committee has built many ramps for handicapped persons in the local area. He also serves with the Centre County Prison Society, the Harris Township Lions Club, Boalsburg Village Conservancy, and is Harris Twp. liaison with the SCB Water Authority. For the past 7 years he has

been involved in State College Community Theatre, acting roles in several plays at Boal Barn. At 82 he still plays tennis, and exercises with Silver Sneakers at a fitness club, and keeps a reasonably productive vegetable garden.

Mrs. Jean Aron, was leader of a Wednesday hiking group for University Women's Club for many years. In 1982 she wrote a local guide book, "The Short Hiker", which has been popular, with two later editions published, in 1994 and 1999. Her latest book – a small book of poems & nature notes, "Outside In", was published in May, 2009. From 1982 to 2008 Jean was Treasurer of Mid State Trail Association, and did a lot of trail clearing and blazing, as well as the major paperwork and map sales. In 1991 Jean was a founder of Ridge & Valley Outings Club, promoting outdoor activities for local residents & visitors of all ages. She has been active with ClearWater Conservancy, and Centre Co. League of Women Voters, and continues to hike with the Centre Region Senior Citizens on their "easy walks in the woods" on Tuesday mornings. In 2000 Jean was named a "Living Legend in Centre County".

The couple resides in Boalsburg.



In The Regions....

Everett Region

by Deb Dunkle

KTA Trail Crew Week a Success

Thank you to KTA work crews that completed lots of work along the southern sections near the Maryland border and also spending a day on the trail along Rt26 north of Everett during trail care third week of June 23-28, 2009.

Thanks goes to John Stein for coming up early and spending time with the landowners and scouting work access areas. The hard part of this wild trail is

getting the equipment up close enough without tiring out the workers before starting! I want to give special recognition to Ron Rhodes, George

Schubert, and Herb Brambley for assisting with prep work prior to workweek. Special thanks to Tom Thwaites for MST trail signs - the signs are really a final touch for each of the new relocations.

At the Tenley Park basecamp, the water line was graciously provided by the Gerald W Clark Well Drilling and homeowner Scott & Elisa College. This assured fresh water was available during trail care week. The Everett Area School District consented to open the men/women hot showers to the crew each evening. And last but not least, a heartfelt thanks to the Everett Church of the Brethren ladies, headed by sisters, Anna and Beverly Swindell, in preparing breakfast and evening meals for the workers. Their homemade goodies from jelly, pies, and biscuits were all enjoyed by the crew. One of the region landowners, Charles and SaraJane Williams joined us for supper and enjoyed the fireflies against the trees while warm breezes floated thru the pavilion.

Workers included Bossman Joe Healey, Lorriane Healey, Tom Bastien, Rev Jack Timm, Joe Clark, Barb Weiman, Paul Breakbill, Chris Dunlap, Harold Schneider, Susan Higgins, Harry Felton, Bob Best, Pete Fleszar, Ed Lawrence, Kirk Bucynski, Kevin Busko, and Curt Ash-

enfelter. Jake Dunkle, the mighty jack russell pup, provided entertainment each evening flying around the pavilion at warp speed with his ears in aerodynamic position. Saturday evening entertainment came in two forms. First were the area kids as they tried out camping with their parents in the Great American Backyard Campout at the park. Second was a bluegrass trio of Dale, Liz and Mitch providing banjo pickin, as well as bass and guitar music until bedtime. Along with kids kicking up their heels to the banjo twang the bullfrogs and fireflies kept time with the music for a fun relaxing evening.

Sincere thanks to all the trail crew that helped out in every way to keep the path open!

State College Region

by Tom Thwaites

Bridge Troubles

Hikers travelling on the Greenwood Spur of the Mid State Trail need to be aware of some difficult stream crossings. Within the Alan Seeger Natural Area, you should avoid the longest bridge over Stone Creek. A new design is under engineering review.

The second bridge north of Stone Creek Road is unpassable. Recent reports indicate that a large log spanning Detweiler Run can assist hikers with this crossing.

Woolrich Region

by Joe Healey

Although there have been regular KTA Trail Cares in the other regions of the MST, the May 15-17 KTA Trail Care weekend was the first in quite a while for the Woolrich Region. There was a great turnout, thus quite a bit of much needed work was done - especially lots of brushcutting and painting. We camped at Ravensburg State Park and the new shower facilities were great. Those in attendance were Tom Bastian, Paul Brechbiel, Diane Buscarini, Joe Clark,

Jeff Clarke, Wayne Gross, Joe Healey, Lorraine Healey, Bruce Hollender, Woody Laudenslager, Ed Lawrence, Ginny Mussler, Martha Quigley, Tom Thwaites, Dave Walp and Phil Williams. I want to thank everyone who turned out. A total of 211 volunteer hours were tallied up for the weekend.

Also, I would like to welcome Donnie Breon to the group of tireless overseers in the Woolrich Region. Donnie lives in Jersey Shore and will be a big asset to the MST. Thanks, Donnie, for your willingness to help.

Tioga Region

by Peter Fleszar

Revised guide sections for the vicinity of the Route 6 crossing (north end of Section 18 and south end of Section 19) are now posted, supplementing the Temporary Maps T18 and T19. Revised guide sections, as well as Maps T18 and T19 are freely available for downloading at www.hike-mst.org.

State of the Treasury

by Kirk Bucynski

As of August 28th, 2009 - Money Market Checking Account \$12,222.22, CDs: \$18,001.13 and \$10,406.85 and Yellow Bridge Account \$7,208.93.



The Trail Challenged, We Persevered

by Daryl Warren

Of the six men who started this 34 mile backpacking trek from Penn Roosevelt State Park, only three finished: Brett Kennedy, Pete Boergermann, and myself, Daryl Warren. Thursday we camped out at PRSP - a zero day. Because our plan was to do 14.8 miles on Friday, we were on the trail early - 6:56 a.m. The first six miles of trail were in half-decent shape. After crossing under US Route 322 it was a different story. The trail maintenance was poor, as was the blazing. Many times we had to guess where the trail was, and sometimes we were right. Additionally, regular maintenance was probably done at some time in the distant past. The laurel became a man-eating menace, grabbing, poking and tripping. It started raining and with the brush at chest height and blocking the path, you can imagine how soaking wet we got, especially the leader (me).

Our destination campsite was at Panther Run, an intermittent stream. Non-existent stream would more properly describe it. Our plan B was to continue on to the next water source. Arriving at this rocky, swampy place, now 15.4 miles from our point of origin, we were faced with another rather heart-wrenching decision. Three guys would have to set up ground tents on the rocks or in the swamp while the other three swung comfortably in their hammock tents, OR, hike on to the next possible camping area. We opted for the second choice. Another 2.9 miles later we merrily skipped into Big Poe Valley State Park. THE PARK WAS CLOSED! Undaunted, we checked the water fountain and, voila, it worked. With not a park ranger in sight, or anybody else for that matter, we commandeered the pavilion. After 18.1 miles of backpacking, and darkness closing in, our freeze dried meals were scrumptious.

Five of us set up our tents in the pavilion. Roger Maurais strung his Hennessey between two trees, where he contended with a long-lasting thunder storm that came blasting through at about 11 p.m. Bob Ulmer, our representative hiker from Elizabethtown, PA,

had been more and more troubled by his bad knees. His became so bad he could not descend without excruciating pain. Our progress was very, very slow. When we resumed hiking on Saturday morning Bob decided to walk the road instead of the trail. That turned out to be a wise decision because the trail was extremely difficult with many rock fields, steep descents and, of course, ascents. The course was, by far, the most difficult I have hiked. Oh, did I mention the rattlesnakes. A large black phase with about 10 buttons and a smaller yellow phase. Beautiful creatures.

Bob and Roger walked the road about four miles to the next state park - Poe Paddy State Park, where we caught up with them about noon. Bob could go no further. He was absolutely done. It was painful just to watch him hobble on level ground. Roger was having trouble with his feet and decided to opt out also. Because Bob had brought a friend with him from southern PA, he also said, "I'm leaving with Bob." They called the DCNR office and arranged a ride back to PRSP. Pete and Brett were right on the edge of calling it quits, but they had one motivating factor: Pride. Their cohorts back at Citizens National Bank in Wellsboro, PA, where they are employed, had chided them, saying, "You'll never finish the hike! You're both out of shape." So, we decided to push on, with one change. We'd finish the hike TODAY! No camping out near a plush, cool stream, and resting up for a short six-miler tomorrow. Nope. We'll get 'er done now! By my astute calculations, we had 11.2 miles to go. At my normal plodding pace we wouldn't be done until 7:40. That did not seem to be a deterrent, so off we went. With Brett in the lead we averaged 3.0 mph for the first four miles on a rails-to-trails section. After that the MST returned to character with it's climbing of rock fields, traversing rock fields, and descending rock fields. And in between there were rocks. The trail was wonderfully maintained from Poe Paddy to Hairy John's, except for a few short sections.

My car was parked at Hairy John's and was thankfully not vandalized. I'd been hiking over 34 miles for two days in wet socks and shoes and my feet were a mess. All of this may sound like we didn't appreciate the MST. NOT! We had a memorable time and I'd do it again in a heart beat, except it'll be on a section I haven't yet hiked.

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Mid State Trail Association runs from January 1st to December 31st. Individual and Family membership dues are \$10. Lifetime membership dues are \$200. Trail overseers are also needed for sections of the trail. Please contact one of the regional managers if you have interest becoming a trail overseer.

Trail Reroute Honors a True Woodsman

by Peter Fleszar

Back in 2002 if I recall right, I was afield in Martin Hill Wild Area a couple of times with my father-in-law Carl Cessna of Cessna Bros. Lumber. We had a thought to relocate MST off a dusty road and into a beautiful white pine stand then a laurel thicket to come onto the power line near the Wildcat Run crossing, between Martin Hill summit (MST's highest point) and SR 3005/Beans Cove Rd, in Everett Region, Southampton Township, Bedford County.

Carl Cessna passed away in October 2007 following a long fight with prostate cancer. Carl lived his life entirely within the highest reaches of Pennsylvania's Tiltrock Country. The woods were his

school, his vocation, and his recreation. Some may recall when he was well that he would lead hikes for what became known as SATC's "redbud weekends" and he also came out to clear and to scout parts of MST with me. Looking with his family and well-wishers through old photo albums showing him wading through blooming laurel on Martin Hill, I remembered this earlier idea, and suggested it to MSTA as a memorial project.

With much help from Krista Cessna and Deb Dunkle, KTA Trail Care in fall 2008, and finished up by KTA Trail Crew in June 2009, the Wildcat Run relocation passes through a pine plantation, a laurel thicket, a 1960's era burn between SR 3005/Beans Cove Rd and a power-line that forms the northeast border of Martin Hill Wild Area. The route passes the spring at the headwaters of Wildcat Run, substituting an additional welcome water source for a dusty roadwalk. Nearby sits "Deb's Throne," a large lunch

rock. Views to the southwest open from the laurel thicket over the burned area.

Cessna Bros. Lumber has supplied most of the lumber for MST's routed trail signs over the last few years. Now some of this locally sawn lumber forms a routed sign at the summit parking area on Beans Cove Road, welcoming MST hikers to the 1.6 kilometers now also named "Carl Cessna Trail."



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Postage
Here.

**Join us for our
next MSTA meeting
on October 24th in
Woolrich Park
Woolrich, PA**

www.hike-mst.org