

WINTER 2010

Brushwhacker

The Mid State Trail Featured in a Local Newspaper

by Ed Lawrence

Forty years of rugged beauty was the rocking headline of the Williamsport Sun-Gazette's lead article on the Mid State Trail for their November 1st outdoors section. The two articles that followed,



written and researched by the papers own Jessica Welshans, along with some enticing photos supplied by Scott Adams, provided readers with an excellent introduction into

the many wondrous features of the MST. Welshans picked up on a press release sent out to some two dozen newspapers about the MST's storied anniversary and did a robust job of fleshing out the story. Her articles emphasized that the trail is remote yet accessible, talked about the importance of volunteers and stressed the pivotal role private landowners play in maintaining the continuity of the trail. These rugged truths are essential facets of the MST that can never be overstated or reiterated too often and serve to add an even greater shine to its substantial beauty.

Time for MSTA Membership Renewals

By Scott Adams

This is a friendly reminder that memberships in the Mid State Trail Association are coming due. A membership in the MSTA now runs a full calendar year. Individual and family memberships are good from January 1st to December

31st. We hope that by using a calendar year it will be easy for everyone to remember when to renew their membership.

Membership in Mid State Trail Association, individual or family, is still only ten dollars. We also offer a Lifetime membership option. Lifetime memberships are currently two hundred dollars. All membership monies go to supporting the Mid State Trail.

Your current membership status can be determined by looking at the mailing label on this newsletter. If you see 'PD' in the lower right-hand corner of the address label, this indicates that your membership is 'Past Due' and has expired.

If you've already paid your membership for the 2010 year, or you are a lifetime member, thank you very much for your continued support. If you have not renewed your membership, you can simply send a check or money order (made out to the 'Mid State Trail Association') for \$10 to: MSTA, PO Box 885, Huntingdon, PA 16652. Please indicate if this is an individual or family membership.

The Home Depot's 2009 Building Healthy Communities Grant Program

by Ed Lawrence

The Mid State Trail Association has applied for a grant, to buy tools, from The Home Depot's 2009 Building Healthy Communities Grant Program. This grant program covers a range of possible projects including trails and greenways. It is a competitive grant program so only selected projects will be funded and it is impossible to know how many projects have been submitted for funding. The pay out would be made in Home Depot gift cards so, should the MSTA receive a grant, all tools would come from The Home Depot.



State College Region Trail Care 2009

by Thomas Thwaites

The first job for this year's trail care was to rebuild the second footbridge in Greens Valley, Bald Eagle Forest, as a 20 foot span. Last year we got the twist out of it caused by erosion of the cutbank on one side of the run. The erosion on the outside of the bend will continue and it will eventually drop one end of the bridge into the run. Already the end of the bridge rested on only a handful of roots. This promised to be a lengthy procedure as the bridge is located about 1.5 kilo-

meters from the end of Stillhouse Hollow Road and all tools and materials would have to be carried that far.

The dates for this Trail Care were September 18th, 19th and 20th so I decided the best place for the crew to camp was the group area at Poe Paddy State Park. I got our fee waiver

application in early January, if I recall but when I checked in August I got only a blank stare. I think they lost the application but they covered well and soon it was approved.

In April a bridge used by the Greenwood spur in back of Camp Reynard was damaged by a flood on Detweiler Run and its repair was added to Trail Care for the weekend. This bridge was built of locally grown materials by members of the camp but we had used it since the early 1970's. This bridge is in Rothrock Forest.

Next came a report that the campground at Poe Paddy would be closed after Labor Day due to state budget problems. Where could we camp then? Three possibilities were all in Rothrock Forest: Greenwood Furnace, Penn

Roosevelt and at a bend in the Bear Meadows Road. By then it was too late to get a fee waiver so Greenwood would cost us about \$400, Penn Roosevelt \$300 but the bend on Bear Meadows Road (campsite #4) would be free although it would need a porta potty. It would also be on the small side.

The weekend of September 18th, 19th, and 20th was a home game (Temple) and this produced lots of problems. It would be next to impossible to cross US 322 on Saturday. After the game all restaurants for about 75 miles around State College would be filled to capacity or above. If we camped in Rothrock we couldn't get to Stillhouse Hollow Road or back again at the end of the day due to heavy traffic on 322. There was also the problem of how we could get the word out at this late date and only a handful had notified me they were coming. We might well lose half the potential turnout. This crisis was averted when it was decided to keep Poe Paddy open through September.

Then there was the problem of lumber for the two bridges. Most lumber yards stock 20 foot treated lumber only in the spring when people are building decks. In Lezzer Lumber I found a supplier who had a stockpile of 2x12x20 but no 2x6x20! We would have to rip a 2x12x20 from end to end to get the boards needed for the handrail and truss. I placed my order with Lezzer and drew detailed maps of where the lumber was to be delivered.

On the way to Poe Paddy early Friday afternoon I drove down Stillhouse Hollow Road to check on the lumber delivery there. As I passed the corner of Boy Scout land I noticed a pile of lumber and wondered what the scouts might be building. It soon dawned on me this was our lumber - misdelivered. I loaded the smaller pieces into my car and drove to the MST where we would have to start carrying them. This left the 20 footers

on the scout land. They were too heavy for me to handle. On the way back I encountered Curt Ashenfelter. With the two of us we got the 20 footers on my roof rack and one piece at a time we got them to the trail head. Had my car gone into the Cash for Clunkers program this would not have been possible. It took about 3 hours. I tried hard not to think about where the other shipment of lumber might be but I didn't have time to go looking for it.

Meanwhile we ran into a member of the Stillhouse Hollow Lodge who volunteered his buddies back at camp to help carry the lumber to the bridge site. We drove to the camp and the two gentlemen there readily agreed to give it a try. They carried a 20 footer as far as the road bridge over Greens Valley Run but didn't know where to go from there so they left it. Every bit helps. Curt and I headed for Poe Paddy to set up camp and cook supper.

The final turnout reached 17 but they weren't all there Friday night. Sylvia Grisez recalled how for years my aluminum Sigg pots had waked up Trail Care. No matter how hard I tried to handle the pots quietly they always made an infernal din. These pots were left over from the days of Colin Fletcher. Saturday morning I took my pots over to Sylvia's tent and made the usual racket with them, resulting in a peal of laughter from within.

For years Mary Pitzer was KTA's fire meister. Ed Beck even made her a certificate appropriately singed around the edges to that effect. I brought several 4x4 scraps of locust and oak for Mary's campfires. By Sunday morning all that remained of them were a couple of twisted steel bolts. One of the 4x4s had been a sign post in an earlier incarnation.

Several participants came Saturday morning and we headed for Stillhouse Hollow to get some work done. We put the 20 footer to be ripped on top of three 6x6s and Rich Scanlon performed this operation very quickly. We finished carrying lumber and tools to the work site. Tom Bastian suggested that instead of trying to dismantle the old bridge we should scab the 20 footers on over the 16 footers. We proceeded to do this



while Pete Fleszar and some others brushwacked farther upstream. They got almost to the Horse Path Trail. There was very little wood left to carry out. The first users were three scouts and two adults who could almost keep them in sight. Many times you work all day and never see anybody using the trail.

Rather than try to shoe horn into overcrowded restaurants we ordered some pizzas from Original Italian Pizza in Milroy. We could reach it without having to cross US 322. Mary Pitzer agreed to drive there and she had a stray blanket in her car we used to wrap around the pizzas to keep them warm. No other campers noticed our pizzas so we didn't have a chance to pretend they were delivered from Milroy. The drive takes nearly an hour so the pizzas would always be free.

Sunday we broke camp before leaving as nobody wanted to make the trip back to Poe Paddy later in the day. We got off a few minutes after eight and the temperature was still only 5 degrees C. Outbound traffic on 322 was still heavy but we got across and drove to Camp Reynard on Bear Meadows Road. The gate was open and the camp occupied. They hadn't seen any lumber and it promised to be a short day. With Dennis Rager we were standing on the spot where I had put the X for the lumber delivery map. People were sent to nearby camps and the Alan Seeger Ranger Station.

Soon the lumber was found lying on the ground in front of another camp over on Beidleheimer Road. It had been there Friday and Saturday nights. When I checked it against the order every stick was still there. There has been an unexpected outbreak of honesty in Rothrock forest. We quickly moved the lumber to the work site only to discover that despite a drop in water level the run was nearly 4 feet wider than when I measured it with a tape last August. By moving a couple meters down stream we found a spot where our 20 footers would work. We cut the rhododendron and installed the last two 6x6s as abutments. The bridge was assembled in place which meant several people had to stand in the stream.

The first users were a young couple who turned up just as the decking started to go on. They turned back but we yelled we would get them across. With only a couple of boards in place they made their way across. This bridge was damaged back in April and we got it replaced in September. Yes, Trail Care is a rapid response team!

MSTA Flashback

By Scott Adams

Here is a chance to reminisce and learn more about the Mid State Trail and the Mid State Trail Association. The MSTA has been producing newsletters since its inception, using these newsletters to inform its members on the state of the trail and other news pertinent to the MSTA. Here is a reprint of a 'Plans & Progress' article originally published in April 1986 edition of the 'MSTA News'.

"A vista on Oregon Hill cut on Nov. 3, 1985, although aligned and cut in a 'wet fog', turned out 'as right as rain'. It looks straight north to Gillespie Point and the Pine Creek Canyon and is a nice addition to the Mid State Trail.

The area to be covered by future Map 207, north of R.B Winter Park, is laced with very many trails, which need to be followed out. In order to maintain standards on our map series, a number of exploratory trips will need to be necessary. Several were done last fall. More will take place this spring. Get in touch with Tom Thwaites if you'd like to go exploring."

State of the Treasury

by Kirk Bucynski

As of December 18th, 2009: Money Market Checking Account \$10,651.10, CDs: \$10,454.53 and \$18,091.49 and Yellow Bridge Account \$7,217.99.

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CONTACT THE MID STATE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

For additional information about the Mid State Trail Association, the Mid State Trail, or any articles written in this newsletter, please send all inquiries (via postal or electronic mail) to:

Mid State Trail Association
PO Box 885
Huntingdon, PA 16652
info@hike-mst.org

PRESIDENT

Ed Lawrence
president@hike-mst.org

VICE-PRESIDENT

Tom Kelliher
vicepresident@hike-mst.org

SECRETARY

Scott Adams
secretary@hike-mst.org

TREASURER

Kirk Bucynski
treasurer@hike-mst.org

REGIONAL MANAGERS

Deb Dunkle - Everett Region
everett@hike-mst.org

Thomas Thwaites - State College Region
statecollege@hike-mst.org

Joe Healey - Woolrich Region
woolrich@hike-mst.org

Peter Fleszar - Tioga Region
tioga@hike-mst.org

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.

In The Regions....

State College Region

by Tom Thwaites

Eagle Trail

For over 30 years the Eagle Trail has connected the Mid State on Long Mountain with Seven Mountains (Boy Scout) Camp. In recent years it became overgrown during nearby logging operations and the trail head in Seven Mountains Camp vanished among evergreens. In September the trail was re-flagged and on October 4th it was reopened by a crew from the Orion operation on campus just in time for the heavy wet snow of October 16th, which brought down branches and logs. The trail has since been reblazed yellow (in part), some blow downs have been removed and a trail sign was installed at the trail head along a camp road.

Mountains Camp vanished among evergreens. In September the trail was re-flagged and on October 4th it was reopened by a crew from the



Poe Paddy Relocation

In November this relocation was approved by the Bureau of Forestry. The John E. Fry Trail will be abandoned and the main MST will return to Dry Hollow Trail where it was originally. This will add 800 meters of road walking to the trail and the trail register will be moved closer to Big Poe Road where we hope the bear who has taken a dislike to it will leave it alone. We hope this work can be done in conjunction with the March 19-21 Trail Care.

Woolrich Region

by Joe Healey

After many years of service maintaining a section of the MST in the Woolrich Region, Allan and Ann Grundstrom are hanging up their loppers. I would

like to thank them for being overseers for all those years. With volunteers like them, it's no wonder the Mid State Trail is in such good shape. Thanks again for all your hard work. A new overseer for the MST is Diane Buscarini, who will be maintaining a section from Ashworth Road to the parking lot on Route 414 in Blackwell.

Everett Region

by Deb Dunkle

MST and Tenley Park Trail Maintenance

On October 31st, participants in the MST and REI community service project met in Tenley Park, Everett for trail maintenance. After raining all week and cold temps, sunshine and cool temperatures greeted everyone with perfect conditions for trail work. After a quick REI breakfast and safety talk, 15 work groups (with Corona tools!) were ready to hit the trail. Rod Geist volunteered himself with a power saw. Jill, Emily and Chelsea volunteered to work on the trail's GPS maps. The work groups dispersed all over Tenley Park. Along with the students and mentor program there were a total of 54 volunteers.

Basic work crews were asked to widen the briars out on both sides of the trails. REI's Marcia and Sam took a group up Caro Stables old road and did extra work along the storage shed. They also worked between the ice ponds and had workers take down briars along the pond banks.

Harry Felton had two groups lowering the rock steps to ground level behind the pavilion for ease in mowing. George surprised everyone by taking his leaf blower and clearing off the paths. Three weeks later the paths are still open (hmm, maybe we should ask George to do the rest of the trails). At the top of Everett High trail, Harry's crew built a cairn designating where to turn down into the park. It was mentioned that a

couple of people got lost because of no visible signs indicating the turn.

Tammy and Kathy from REI took groups the entire length of the High Road and Low Road paths. These students cut out lots of briars, raked the stones into the middle area. Earlier in the day, chainsaw artists Tom Deremer and Mike Dodson cut out a dead tree along the Low Road and other trails.

Jonathan Chwatek and Jane Fagan' work crew of Jacob, Jessica, and Katherine Orceck followed the Freckles trail cleaning briars and stones. Jonathan and Jane put in a stretch of side trail for easier walking from the park into the school land. Jonathan made the day by securing a half log to cross over the creek.

Mike, John and crew worked on the upper section of the REI Teeter Trail and layered down a couple pavers creating more steps for an easier trail. Mike may check on logs or concrete blocks to further stabilize the steps area. Blue Triangle donated 4" x4" oak planks that are available for usage along the trail.

Kelly, Wendy, Rachel, Ally, Rachel and husband cleaned up the newest trail, the Jakester Trail. They started at the upper pavilion and worked the double paths join up in the woods and worked uphill. By the noon hour this group was wiped out and tired. During the next trail maintenance, this trail needs cleaned, starting at the top and working downward! Charley, George, Kelly, Josh, Will, Ryan and Matt went back and picked up 6 trash bags to clean up this new trail. At this point walking back past the sliding board, Jake was asked to do his trick: He zoomed up the slide steps and on commands run down the slide. He was zooming so fast that when he tried to put on the brakes he ended up doing a hand cartwheel (maybe front handspring) off the end of the sliding board...way to go Jake!

What a good job each and every crew member performed. With 54 volunteers for 4 hours yielded a total of 216 hours of work done along miles of trails in the park. A sparkling day yielded good fun, hard work, and trails to be proud of in Tenley Park.

Everett Hike From Aschom to Biddle Place

On Sunday, November 22, six local intrepid hikers started at Aschom and ended at Biddle Place south of Everett in a marathon 4 hour hike. The local hikers enjoyed a quick lunch break, vistas and kept moving to the end. The blazes petered out on the last mile, we bush-whacked down the last half mile- this is one place that will need work crew in 2010!

Miscellaneous Everett News

Scheduled trail maintenance on Monday November 28 did not go as planned. The Christmas festival scheduled a geocache in the park, so Jake and I drummed up some business downtown for hiker families to go up into the park and find the 4 different caches. We had a total of 44 people and awarded the 3 REI prizes at 4pm. The day was bitterly cold so went home, soaked in the hot tub and vegetated in front of the movie "Chronicles of Riddick" and another Greek feature movie of the "300". We finally warmed up and felt better!

Sunday, December 6, 2009 found Jonathan Chwatek and me investigating a relocation off one of the Pennsylvania Game Commission roads. We have delivered a proposal to the local PG Land Manager and hope to have PGC approval by work crews in June 2010.

Lastly, Mark your calendar for June 22 - 27, 2010 for the KTA Trail Crew Week in the MST Everett region. The

church ladies have graciously agreed to have the meals and they are already planning some surprises

Tioga Region

by Peter Fleszar

The 411 in Tioga

Kudos to Sarah and Ben Nevin from Blossburg, MST overseers in the Landrus/upper Babb Creek area, who were quoted at length recently in a feature from the Williamsport Sun-Gazette on the four decades of Mid State Trail. Big thanks to Ed Lawrence and Scott Adams for getting fine placement of our commemoration of this momentous occasion.

On April 23rd - 25th, 2010, hikers from all over PA and beyond will be returning to Wellsboro for the Keystone Trails Association spring meeting. Hike leaders to showcase the many special places in Tioga County are needed for this event, contact Jennie Borneman of Asaph Trail Club, jeb9835@yahoo.com - and all these hikers would appreciate the section overseers passing over their assigned territories before this event, so we show off well for this biennial gathering.

We will be holding a weekend Trail Care courtesy of KTA and the Corps of Engineers, the weekend of July 9-11, 2010 at the overflow camping zone on the left driving into Ives Run Recreation Area, Hammond Lake, PA 287 between Middlebury Center and Tioga. Daryl Warren's continuing his work to get permis-

sion from new landowners, so we'll likely have more than mowing to do. Mark your calendars now and plan to come out! Contact me tioga@hike-mst.org

Occasionally I'm asked how the connection beyond the NY State line is progressing. I have been participating in most meetings of Finger Lakes Trail Conference's "GET it in NY" committee, most excellently led by Mr. Pat Monahan of Corning who is now also the FLTC President. As of the close of the 2009 season, citing the quaint colonial units they still use, 4.4 miles complete from the main FLT at Moss Hill shelter, south to Wixon Rd. @ Meads Creek (north end of new branch trail), and 15.9 miles are complete - PA/NY border north to east end of Maple Street in Addison (south end of new branch trail). This makes a total of 20.3 miles complete, out of the projected 45 mile length of the new branch trail. It passes through Pinnacle State Park with 360 degree views, and two historic districts in Addison. The new branch passes Sunflower Acres private campground about seven miles north of the border, and enters the camping-legal McCarthy Hill State Forest around eleven miles north of the line. Hopefully maps will be available from FLTC's really neat print-on-demand system in spring 2010. <http://www.fingerlakestrail.org/>

Hikers Experience the Newer Sections of the MST

We've heard of a few folks finally getting out there and hiking our newest sections in Tioga Region, now that the guide is published and maps accessible online (<http://www.hike-mst.org/guide.html>). Nowadays in the new millennium, more than a few hikers post trip reports on numerous Internet forums. For those who love our footpaths, there's plenty of first-hand information out there, beyond our simple low-tech trail registers. Here's an Internet report from a couple of ladies who came down from NY State in May 2009, surely among the first to pass the section KTA Trail Care re-opened in the Elkhorn Valley in April:

"[We] met on Friday evening and hiked from the New York border down to Cowanesque Lake. At the (continued...)



In the Regions...

(Continued)

border, you do the first 3 miles on a dirt road but with a few nice views down into the valley. Then the trail goes around the lake on very nice terrain with some really pleasant views. We camped Friday night on the lake. Saturday we did 14 miles from Cowanesque Lake to Hammond Lake. This section of trail had a lot of variation. From a short road walk, to some dirt roads, to some woods, to some meadows, etc... It was very interesting and comfortable walking with less than 1500' of elevation gain for the entire day. Right around lunch time we found ourselves cresting the top of a mountain (hill!) and at a campground of sorts. So we had a picnic table and a bathroom for our break! Once we left that spot we crossed some fenced farmland and had two dogs, hackles up, come after us. The farmer rushed out to make sure the dogs behaved and was very nice telling us he wished more people would hike the trail. As we walked down his property, we came upon a small herd of cows and saw one of the funniest things... one of the cows was looking at us through a tire. When she got up to move away, she had the tire around her neck like a necklace. (Don't worry, she was in no danger!) We had a great day exploring the varied terrain but the last mile or so was a road walk that felt punishing! Spent Saturday night on Lake Hammond and watched a beautiful sunset right over the lake. Sunday morn-

ing we decided to take a car down the trail to Hills Creek State Park and then walk the 10 miles north back to Hammond Lake. Again, the trail meandered through varied terrain that was really very interesting and enjoyable."

And here's another Internet report from a couple of guys from Tennessee, in August 2009:

"Just got off the trail today. We had beautiful weather the whole time and really enjoyed ourselves. Did NY - Blackwell sobo. More southern portions were more scenic and well maintained. We especially like the Stony Fork area. The northernmost sections skirted around private land and were overgrown. Thankfully, the trail was very well blazed. Thanks to all the trail maintainers!!! We would have lost the trail many times if not for it being so well blazed (actually we did lose it many times, but were able to find it again by backtracking to the last blaze). [One area] was nearly unbearable. We got all cut-up trying to follow the trail (ripped my pants to shreds), and ended up bushwhacking back to the road and followed it all the way to [the highway]. Some portions in this section were chest high with blackberry thorns with no evidence of a trail. We did get about 3-4 cups of fresh blackberries for our efforts though. Our feet were constantly wet in the northern sections since we were always walking through knee-high grass that did not seem to dry out during the day. Regardless of the time of year you hike, if you plan to hike the MST bring pants. We were thankful for them many times even though they made us sweat. Between the high grass, thorns, stinging nettles, etc, pants are really a necessity. You will be bushwhacking at times. The road walks were hard on the feet, but gave us decent countryside views. We got tired of the road walks at times, enjoyed them other times. Other than that, the trail was in decent shape. Looking forward to the next section hike of the MST. We did use Wimbrough campsite, and were thankful for it since there is really no other option for this section. You have to do a bit of planning your campspots for this trail due to the amount of private land you skirt around, which I was not used to."

Joe Healey and crew (I think Lorraine Healey and Dave Walp) got out for some much appreciated DR mower work on the offending section, within days of this report. Thanks, Joe and crew! I need also to mention Daryl Warren who went out for numerous clipping and re-blazing trips during the summer season - you see the quality of blazing was especially noticed by the Tennessee folks who hike many of America's footpaths.

These two reports point out that our varied MST on the north end not only adds interest to hikers, but challenge to maintainers. I know on my own section in the far north that the mowing at Cowanesque Lake got ahead of me in 2009, with too many rainy weekends when I couldn't mow, but the grass and whatever else kept growing. Our Region is fortunate to have a DR mower in the regional gear cache. If it could be running more often, hikers would likely enjoy our northern reaches as much in August as they do in May. Surely some folks you know might have flexible schedules, and the interest and ability to take on a task that would be especially appreciated. The more who do, the easier for everyone, especially the hikers who we want to enjoy our efforts in every season. Any suggestions? Contact me tioga@hike-mst.org

MSTA LifeTime Members

Tom and Barbara Thwaites
 Jean and Gert Aron
 William and Shirley Gross
 John Stein
 Ed Lawrence
 Thomas Kelliher
 Thomas Bastian
 Rodney and Karen Hershberger
 Andrea Commaker
 Burgess Smith
 Harry Felton
 Debra Dunkle
 Kevin and Mary Busko
 Daniel Styer
 Marc and Pam Reese
 Betty Cambell
 Jan Unneberg



A History of the Mid State Trail - Introductions

by Scott Adams

Back in 1985, Dr. Thomas Thwaites, the “Father of the Mid State Trail”, had a series of articles published in the *Outdoor Gazette*. These articles described the history of the Mid State Trail, from its inception in 1969 up to the spring of 1985. I was given an opportunity to read these articles, with copies provided to me by Jean Aron as well as Tom Thwaites. The articles were quite interesting and I thought it would be beneficial to all if this information was in a more formal presentation than just copies of magazine pages. Since the history of the Mid State Trail did not end in 1985, I wanted to continue what Tom started and produce a more complete anthology on the history of the MST. I spoke with Jean and Tom, and they agreed that documenting the history of the Mid State Trail would be a good idea, and both agreed to assist me in this endeavor. My first interview with Tom occurred in August of 2009, at the site of the first trail cutting atop Tussey Mountain near the fire tower at Little Flat.

The writing of the history of the Mid State Trail is a work in progress. However, I thought I would share with you some of this history, in this article and in future newsletter articles. There is no set deadline of when this historical writing will be completed. As the trail continues to grow and mature, there will always be additional historical content to add to this compilation. The 40th year anniversary of the trail does seem to be a noteworthy landmark, not only for the age of the trail, but also because it was at this time that the MST was finally completed; blazed and hikeable across the center of Pennsylvania, from the Maryland to the New York state border. My intent is to document the history of the Mid State Trail during its first 40 years of existence.

Dr. Tom Thwaites does a very good job describing the early years prior to the birth of the Mid State Trail. He goes

into detail on how the idea of a long distance hiking trail was conceived, as well as the difficulties it had in becoming more than an idea. It was through Tom’s formal involvement in 1967 with the Penn State Outings Club that created the momentum and persistence to finally begin the creation of the Mid State Trail. Without Tom’s involvement the Mid State Trail probably would never have sprang into existence. This fact, plus the fact that Tom has been involved with almost every aspect of the Mid State Trail over the past 40 years, that he has earned the endearing and honorable title of the “Father of the Mid State Trail”.

One thing that I found missing in Tom’s writings was more details about the “Father of the Mid State Trail”. How did he get interested in hiking? This was the first of many questions that I asked Tom during our interview.

Tom Thwaites got his first taste of hiking back during World War II. It was during this time that he had joined the Boy Scouts. Only a few weeks after joining, their Scout Master was drafted leaving the troop on their own for the rest of the war. Not knowing what Boy Scouts do, a “knowledgeable” young man stated that he thought Boy Scouts hiked; so that’s what they ended up doing.

Tom grew up in Madison Wisconsin and during this time there weren’t any trails to hike. So the Boy Scouts decided to hike on the roads. The national speed limit during the 1940s was only 35 miles per hour, making hiking on roads a little safer than doing so today. Not only that, but since most men were off fighting in the war, there wasn’t any traffic on the roads. It was through these “road walks” that Tom got his first taste of hiking.

During his undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin, Tom did not have many opportunities for hiking or backpacking. Later he attended graduate school at the University of Rochester, and there he would go backpacking with oth-

er students once or twice a year. The favorite hiking spot for these outings were the Adirondack Mountains. Tom said that one year a fellow student suggested that they go hiking in Pennsylvania for a change. They all looked at him in astonishment and said: “Carl, don’t you know, Pennsylvania is paved!” In 1959, Tom moved to Pennsylvania, taking a job at Penn State. He was quite relieved to discover that this statement was a bit exaggerated.

In the next article I will discuss how Dr. Tom Thwaites learned of Dr. Boon Sumantri and his idea of a Central Allegheny Trail and the proposed track of this future trail.



Geospatial Update

By Peter Fleszar

Thanks to Kevin Busko, Kirk Bucynski, Joe Clark, and Curt Ashenfelter for leading the charge on using the new fancy GPS unit some of us saw in operation at September's Woolrich meeting. Kevin arranged the training time in November, with the manufacturer's representative, and mentoring from someone else familiar with its operation. MSTA and the state have put a big chunk of change into this unit, which should prove helpful for keeping up with the ever-increasing demands for quality geospatial data.

The new color map covering the Everett Region is being compiled – we should have more to say at the Laurelton meeting about this. Based on previous user comments the contour interval is being reduced to 25 meters, so there will

be plenty of those near the roof of the MST. Any comments good or ill on the maps, anywhere at any time, should go to gis@hike-mst.org

Back Issues of the Brushwhacker Available Online

by Scott Adams

Are you missing an issue of the Brushwhacker? Perhaps it was misplaced, or even worse, eaten by the postal sorting machines? Fear not, as you can access back issues of the Mid State Trail Association's Brushwhacker newsletter on the MST website.

To download PDF copies of back issues, simply visit www.hike-mst.org. Click on the "News" link in the left-hand navigation menu, and you will be taken to the newsletter web page. Here you will find links to PDF copies of the newsletter,

going back to Fall 2001. You will also find other MST news posted here as well, including other news articles about the Mid State Trail and our projects.

Downloading the PDFs from the MST website and saving a copy to your computer will assure that your library is complete. Better yet, print off copies to display on your coffee table. No better way to entice your friends to join the MST then to inform them of all the things we do.

A limited supply of printed copies of the most recent newsletters are also available. To help cover the cost of the printing of these copies, as well as the cost of mailing them to you, we will need to charge a nominal fee. Inquires for printed copies of back issues should be sent to info@hike-mst.org.

www.hike-mst.org

Join us for our
next MSTA meeting
on January 23rd in
Laurelton, PA. See
you there.

Place
Postage
Here.

Mid State Trail Association
PO Box 885
Huntington, PA 16652