

BRUSHWHACKER

Autumn 2004

Somewhat regular publication of the Mid State Trail Association



Notice of Election of Officers

Officers will be elected at the first meeting of 2005 tentatively scheduled for early February. The offices to be voted are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same individual. The term of office shall be two years. If you wish to run for one of these offices please contact the Association. Tom Thwaites will chair the nominating committee.

New By Laws Proposed

The MSTA proposed by laws will be discussed and voted on at the Winter meeting. Some minor wording has to be worked out and the full proposal will be published in the Winter 2005 Brushwhacker. In the new by laws officers will be elected at the first meeting of the calendar year in which elections are due. Term of office will be two years.

Keystone Trails Association Trail Crew and Care on the Mid State Trail

Trail Crew

June 8 to 12, 2005. MST Southern Extension, Crew Leader John Stein

June 15 to 19, 2005. MST Northern Extension, Crew Leader Pete Fleszar.

Trail Care

November 2005, MST Everett Region, camp at Woy Bridge Campground, Leader John Stein

Contacts: KTA trail crew, Joe Healey, 93 Cedarwood Drive, Laflin, PA 18702, email jnlhealey@aol.com and Keystone Trails Association at www.kta-hike.org or info@kta-hike.org

John Stein 717.533.3679

Hiker Alert

Alan Seeger Natural Area. The big footbridge over Detwiler Run became a victim of the Ivan flood when a giant tulip tree fell and smashed the main section. The nature trail is now effectively blocked at that point. The large size of the tulip tree, and the fact that it is in the Natural Area, precludes having civilian volunteers attempt to remove it. Rothrock District Forester Gary Rutherford said that this important and much visited area will be repaired. However, because DCNR's first priority is re-opening and repairing damaged forest roads, it may be "several weeks" before his crews can get to the bridge and trail.

Jean Aron

Mid State Trail and Lower Trail, Blair County

A 4-mile stretch of Lower Trail, east of Williamsburg, PA was severely damaged by floodwaters of the Ivan Storm on Sept. 18, forcing indefinite closing of that section of trail. Since the Mid State Trail runs concurrently with the Lower Trail thru-hikers may have some

continued on back

The *Winter meeting of the MSTA* will be in early February of 2005. Officers will be elected at this meeting. Details and nominations will be published in the Winter newsletter.. B

Minutes of the Autumn meeting of the Mid State Trail Association

September 11, 2004 at Little Pine State Park

The Mid State Trail Association was founded in 1982. Our bylaws state: The purpose of this organization shall be the completion and preservation of the Mid State Hiking Trail System. To this end the MSTA will: Supervise, coordinate, and carry out trail work. Ensure that maps and guides are available for the hiking public. Enter into agreements with private landowners and public land managers to provide for the trail. Take such other actions as may be appropriate to further the purpose of the organization.

Adopted September 30, 1984

Elections are held every other year at the fall meeting. Current officers, elected for two year term until fall 2004:

Tom Kelliher, President,
kelliher@goucher.edu
410.931.2946

Rich Lange,
Vice President,
r-lange@suscom.net
570.753.3647

Jean Aron
Secretary/Treasurer shorthiker@aol.com,
814.466.9260

This newsletter is published approximately once each season and distributed to members of the MSTA. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editors encourage submission reflecting all viewpoints for publication, but reserve the right to edit for reasons of space or to prevent violent confrontation. You are encouraged to submit your material by email, disc, or CD. Newsletter editor, Mike Cosgrove, 610.449.4612 midstatetrail AT DOMAIN snip.net

MSTA web site
<http://phoenix.goucher.edu/MSTA/>

Mid State Trail Association
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Boalsburg, PA 16827

To join the MSTA please send your name, and address, with dues to the MSTA. Dues are \$10.00 per family per calendar year or portion thereof. Please indicate if you would like to oversee a part of Pennsylvania's wildest trail. ☺

Treasurer's Report.

Current report appears below

Bank accounts.

We decided to wait until the new treasurer was in place before evaluating where best to place our financial resources.

Region reports.

State College: Heavy brush growth present on Jackson Trail and on Broad Mountain. Bald Eagle Forestry staff are tearing down our volunteer signs as they encounter them.

Woolrich: A new register is needed at Blackwell terminus.

Tioga: Progress is being made on the Babb Creek Route.

Everett: The section south of Everett should be kept open. Its use pattern is similar to that of other sections of the trail when they were first built. We need to publicize this section of the trail more. We should not rely on verbal agreements to changes with our written Game Commission agreements; all agreements should be in writing. The easement has been executed and forwarded to Charles Sloan for filing in Bedford. The new SGL 73 agreement is quite welcome.

Revised bylaws.

Please refer to the bylaws document included with this newsletter.

PENNDOT Highway Occupancy Agreement (HOA).

Current status is that DCNR is negotiating with PENNDOT. The Association authorized \$1,000 for Allan Fluke, esq. for a legal opinion. The Association plans to pass the opinion along to DCNR to use in their negotiations with PENNDOT.

Revision of volunteer maintenance signs.

We will revise the signs to include the revisions required by DCNR. Old signs should be replaced as they are encountered. KTA will pay for the new signs. As a courtesy, Forestry and Parks should be notified before we post signs.

Streamside cleanup workshop.

Joe Healey may be able to attend one of the workshops

Next meeting: Saturday night of the October Trail Care at 7:00 pm in the Everett Borough building.

MSTA Treasury Report Summary, End of 3rd Quarter, 2004

Beginning total monetary assets July 1,'04 ..	\$34,638.47
+3Q04 total income	\$ 1,281.26
-3Q04 total expenses	\$ 1,019.53
End balance.....	\$34,900.20

Bank balance 9/30/04.....	\$19,206.69
Bank Time Deposit value.....	\$15,639.23
Petty Cash.....	\$ 54.28
Ending total monetary assets Sept. 30,'04 =	\$ 34,900,20

Jean Aron, Treasurer

Mid State Trail Near Coburn and Poe Paddy

The articles and photographs on this page are reproduced with permission from *the Centre Daily Times*, State College, Pennsylvania. They appeared August 23, 2004.

Railroad gave birth to town of Coburn

by Rich Kerstetter
rkerstet@centredaily.com

On Feb. 11, 1853, a group of investors who wanted to build a railroad from Lewisburg to Spruce Creek met at Potter's Tavern.

The group which included George Boal, of Boalsburg; Moses Thompson, of Lemont; and Dr. Charles Coburn, of Aaronsburg envisioned the railroad as an outlet for the lumber, iron and agricultural products from the region between the Juniata River and West Branch of the Susquehanna River. Two months later, the group obtained a charter for the Lewisburg, Centre and Spruce Creek Railroad.

The Pennsylvania Railroad eventually took over the charter, changed the line's name to the Lewisburg and Tyrone Railroad, and planned a route through Brush Valley or perhaps Millheim, according to Guy Rachau's informative chapter "The Lewisburg, Centre and Spruce Creek Railroad" in "Glimpses of the Past: A Selected History of Penn Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania 1844-1994."

A company director, James P. Coburn pushed for a southerly route, however, and the first train, an excursion from Lewisburg to Spring Mills (Rising Spring or Rising Springs Station) finally puffed through The Forks on July 4, 1877.

As Rachau pointed out, the railroad gave birth to Coburn-- figuratively and literally, as the town at the confluence of Pine, Elk, and Penns Creeks eventually took the name of its railroad director benefactor.

That first train carried more than 1,200 passengers, Rachau wrote, "accompanied by bands from Freeburg and Lewisburg. They were met by local residents who provided dinner, games, music, dancing, a wedding and, of course, speeches."

Before the line from Lewisburg could be completed, however, the builders had to overcome a major obstacle in eastern Centre County: the mountains.

"Two tunnels, one on either side of the Ingleby station, solved the problem," Sara Phinney Kelley explained in "With Heart of Fire and Iron Nerve: Centre County's Railroads" published in conjunction with a Centre County Historical Society exhibit in 1999 and 2000. "The railroad brought tourists and travelers through the small towns of Penns Valley," Kelley wrote. "Hotels in Spring Mills and Penns Cave benefitted greatly from the boom."

Stations in Centre County were located at Axemann, Bellefonte, Centre Hall, Coburn, Dale Summit, Gregg Station, Ingleby, Lemont, Linden Hall, Oak Hall, Paddy Mountain, Penns Cave, Peru, Pleasant Gap, Rockview, Spring Mills (Rising Springs) and Zerby. The western section of the line had stations at Fairbrook, Loveville, Marengo, Musser, Pennsylvania Furnace and Scotia.

As highways improved, railroad traffic decreased. The Coburn station closed in the fall of 1959, Rachau reported, and the building was demolished three years later. Freight service continued sporadically until the section between Mifflinburg and Coburn was eventually abandoned.

The section from Coburn to Bellefonte remained in use until 1972, when Tropical Storm Agnes raged through central Pennsylvania, washing out track and damaging bridges.

"The Penn Central decided not to restore the line," Rachau wrote. "So ended 95 years of the Lewisburg and Tyrone Railroad, tying Coburn to the nation's markets."

127 Years Later, Coburn Tunnel in 2004

The rail trail running through Coburn Tunnel is now part of the Mid State Trail System. Shown here on a hike with Centre Regional Senior Citizens are Tom Thwaites of State College, and Jean Aron of Boalsburg. Thwaites is the Founder and Ex-President of Mid State Trail Association. Aron is the current Secretary/Treasurer.

*Photo taken on August 10, 2004 by
Tanya Slashev from CRCOG Senior
Center*



A train enters a railroad tunnel near Coburn in this postcard photo. The first train lumbered through coburn on July 4, 1877



tough slogging or detouring to make. What was once a finished Rail-trail/ bike path is now a washed-out, 4-ft. deep trench. Even some of the ballast under the path, dating from the former railroad bed, was washed out. Initial damage estimates were \$688,000, so obviously there will be no quick fix. Other parts of the Lower Trail were not as badly damaged, or have been spruced up again, and are quite passable. So all is not lost.

Photo Jean Aron

Large Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) on foot bridge in Alan Seeger Natural Area. The photo was taken about 4:30 pm on September 19, 2004, two days after the storm.



The following article is excerpted from the *Herald*, Martinsburg, Pennsylvania October 21, 2004

Mid State Trail Making Improvements

Mid State Hiking Trail is making improvements to its “wilderness footpath” in Bedford County.

John Stein, regional manager for the trail, has been in the area this week, clearing fallen trees and brush from parts of the trail.

Other persons helping with the trail are Charles and Jane Williams of Raystown Road, Hopewell Township; Ross and Mildred Smith of Loysburg; Bernard and Jane Hershberger and son Rodney and the William Greenawalt family, all of Snake Spring Valley; and representatives of Everett Borough and the State Game Commission.

Mr. Stein said these persons have been very cooperative with his efforts to open the trail through this area.

Mr. Stein said the Mid State Hiking Trail is the longest trail in Pennsylvania, stretching from the Maryland line south of Bedford to the New York line north of Wellsboro, 520 kilometers in all.

A recommended hike is to use a Game Commission path that crosses a ridge top parallel to Tussey Mountain from the footbridge in Loysburg Gap to the State Game Lands parking lot and Snake Spring Mountain. The hike also includes a climb to the peak in Loysburg Gap, which is a local attraction for church groups, Boy Scouts, and other hikers.

Mr. Stein is researching ownership of the swinging bridge across Yellow Creek in hopes of obtaining permission to replace the bridge with one that will be higher and safer. He said the Mid State Hiking Trail has engineers who could design a safe bridge and the trail association itself would be willing to acquire ownership and assume liability to relieve others of this responsibility. “We’re open to suggestions and criticisms,” he said.

Mid State Trail Bridge Project

John Stein

Although the Mid State Trail does not cross the Yellow Creek Bridge the MSTA is considering a project to construct a higher bridge which would serve hunters, fishermen, birders, and so on as well as hikers. Give us your ideas and suggestions. Donations are tax deductible; please mark donations for this project as “yellow creek project.” Contact John Stein, P.O. Box 9, Hershey, PA 17033-0009 or steinhike@cs.com

Mid State Trail Association

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