



## Construction Nearing Completion on the Taylor Bridge in Bethel Park by Tom Prezel

There was a loud cheer from the crowd of over 100 people when the J.R. Taylor Memorial Bridge structure was seated on its abutments on June 22, 2011 in Bethel Park.

On Friday, June 17 at 7:00 a.m., Clifton Road was closed and assembly of the bridge structure on the road surface began immediately. The lower section of the bridge and several of the trusses were put together by the end of the day. On Saturday, over 50 volunteer ironworkers continued the assembly and by the end of the day the entire structure was completed. On Wednesday morning, a 500 ton crane was installed next to the completed bridge structure. The bridge was then picked up and placed on the concrete abutments. It was a great day for the Taylor family, Century Steel Erectors, Mingo Creek Construction, Bethel Park, and The Montour Trail.

Mingo Creek Construction then continued the construction process to prepare for laying the bridge deck. Official opening of the bridge is expected to occur in September.

The bridge will complete the 2.7-mile Bethel Park branch of the Montour Trail, which has its northern terminus near Irishtown and Logan Roads, and connects with the Arrowhead Trail and the main line of the Montour Trail in Peters Township.

### Inside this issue:

J. R. Taylor Bridge Cliff Mine Trailhead	1
Prez Sez	2
Southview Rail with Trail	3
Peters Friends Tails for Trails	4
Tour the Montour UPMC Urgent Care 1/2 Marathon	5
Montour History- Westland Mine #2	6
New Members REI Trail Summit	7
Entry Form the Tour the Montour	8

## Cliff Mine Trailhead Nearly Complete

The newly refurbished Cliff Mine Road Trailhead was opened just in time for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. The project was a joint effort between the Allegheny County Department of Public Works and Lindy Paving. Lindy was using the Trailhead as an operations base while they paved Allegheny County roads in the area and upon completion of the paving operation, the access area was then refurbished. During the refurbishing, the following was accomplished:



- 1) Cut down the trees for the new vehicle access from Cliff Mine Road
- 2) Grubbed & filled voids in cleared area with bobcat
- 3) Removed stumps with dozer
- 4) Removed about two feet of dirt so a sub-base could be placed
- 5) Surveyed slopes for drainage plan. (A husband and

- wife team from Trumbull performed this item.)
- 6) Laid crushed concrete sub-base and rolled
- 7) Laid asphalt milling for the base and rolled
- 7) Cut in new trail between the pavilion and the stream with a Gradall.
- 8) Laid crushed concrete sub-base and asphalt milling base and rolled for new trail.

A big thanks to Allegheny County and their project manager Bill Bottorff for making all of this long awaited work to happen. Also a big thanks to Dave Wright who designed the new trail head along with some initial help from volunteer professional engineer Chuck Davis. There are now 50 designated parking areas including spaces for handicapped parking. Western Allegheny County Municipal Authority will install a fountain and supply the water at no cost to the trail. Airport Area Friends have been installing split-rail fence.

Visit the Montour Trail Web Site at:

[www.montourtrail.org](http://www.montourtrail.org)

To Converse, join the Yahoo Group at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Montour-Trail/>



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## The Prez Sez

### Bethel Draws a Crowd – Again

With last October's J. R. Taylor Bridge groundbreaking standing out as Montour's splashiest ever, we probably should have expected strong continuing public interest as construction of the bridge got underway by crews with Mingo Creek Construction. And indeed, as their abutments rose this spring on either side of busy Clifton Road, folks were paying attention. But the June limelight that for five days shone upon Montour had an intensity that was entirely unprecedented.

The plan all along had been to close Clifton Road for two weeks, which was how long we thought it would take to assemble and hoist the bridge. But when the road was closed on Friday June 17, Century Steel Erectors (owned by the Taylor family) jumped on assembling the bridge floor beams with multiple crews and cranes. The next day, Saturday, fifty-some ironworkers came out and worked all day as volunteers. In a display of what is unquestionably the most concentrated effort of professionals volunteering their services in the history of Montour, they finished assembling the entire two hundred foot long bridge structure in a single day.

Monday and Tuesday saw the last few bolts placed, everything carefully tightened and checked, and some touch-up painting. Wednesday morning, June 22, the 500-ton crane was brought in and set up. It looked like a battleship sailing in with its flotilla of support vessels. In addition to the crane itself, there were six tractor trailer loads of counterweights, lifting gear, hook blocks, and other gargantuan parts. Again it was unique: Montour will probably never again need a crane that big, not for anything we can foresee. A dozen ironworkers finessed everything into a smooth unit. The crane setup went so well that they were ready by mid-day. With the next day's weather looking poorer, Century decided to go ahead with the lift Wednesday after lunch.

To take advantage of the opportunity for good publicity, Montour had put out a media release, but there was a scramble with the sudden update in the schedule. Century had also put out their own press release. As a result, the media descended on Clifton Road in an unprecedented sweep. There was also a large crowd of neighbors, trail users, and the general public gathered across the road to watch the lift. And the Taylor family was there to watch J. R.'s memorial follow him into the sky. On that day the whole crowd was hushed by such an emotional moment for a man who was so well loved by his family, his friends, and his community. We have never had anything like it on any other Montour project.

Veteran crane operator Craig Roberts made the lift so smoothly that the bridge hardly looked like it was moving, yet it was sitting up there on its pads in a mere twenty minutes. The applause was commensurate and sustained. We got several very well-written newspaper articles, some 'Patch' e-newspaper pieces, and even made the noon and six o'clock TV news. Clearly, this was seen as a big local story. And rightly so; this bridge means a lot to the Taylors, to Bethel Park, and to the Montour Trail.

The reason this story is so compelling is the partnership that made it happen. The final result is so much greater than the sum of what was put into it, and will remain as a strikingly visible testament to those partners for many years. Come the opening festivities in September, we will be severely challenged to express adequate gratitude to all those who made it possible. An effort, certainly, worth making.

*Ned Williams*

## Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

### MTC Board Meeting:

Every third Monday of the month - 6:00 p.m. at 304 Hickman St., Suite 3, Bridgeville, PA. Turn right off of the Bridgeville exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go straight at next light and make left turn onto Hickman St. just after the Post Office. Call Ned at 724-225-9856 for more information or to get on the agenda.

### Cecil Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. From May-August, meetings are held at the Kurnick Access area along the trail off Cecil Henderson Road; other months (with the exception of November and December) meet at the MTC Offices. Work and cleanup parties are scheduled as needed. Call 412-496-4308 for more information, or email [densimwx@comcast.net](mailto:densimwx@comcast.net)

### Airport Area Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, the Wednesday before the second Saturday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Forest Grove Fire Department. Anyone from the Airport Area is encouraged to attend. Call 412 264-6303 for more information. Work and cleanup party, every second Saturday of the month - 9:00 a.m. Call 412 262-3748 for more information and location.

### Bethel Park Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. Work and cleanup party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 8:30 a.m. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

### South Hills Friends:

Meeting second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at South Park Township Community Room, located behind the Township Building at 2675 Brownsville Road, South Park, 15129. Work and cleanup parties scheduled and advertised as needed. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, [davidoyler@verizon.net](mailto:davidoyler@verizon.net), or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, [mckeownp@comcast.net](mailto:mckeownp@comcast.net)

### Fort Cherry Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Bldg., Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. Work and cleanup parties, scheduled as needed. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

### Peters Township Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, first non-holiday Monday of the month at Peters Township Parks and Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. For more information on work and cleanup parties, please contact Jim Robbins at 724-941-6132, or for monthly meetings, Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at [markimgrund@comcast.net](mailto:markimgrund@comcast.net).

### The Montour Railroad Historical Society:

The newest Friends group. For more information send email to [mrhs@montourr.com](mailto:mrhs@montourr.com).

## Westland to Southview Rail with Trail Update by Gil McGurl

Last fall, the MTC announced an agreement with Markwest to lease the Westland Branch to Markwest so that they could install a private railroad siding to service their Houston plant and connect with the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railroad near Southview. That agreement required the construction of a parallel trail on the Westland Branch. The agreement allowed Markwest a period of time to determine if all the needed permits could be gotten and to determine if there were any property encroachments. In May, Markwest agreed that the conditions had been met and activated the agreement.

Design and environmental studies have been underway since last fall. Brush was cleared along the Westland Branch so that geotechnical drilling could be performed along with environmental studies. Recently, brush clearing and drilling have been underway adjacent to the trail near Southview. By the time you read this, brush clearing and drilling will have been performed between Galati Road and the bridge over Southview Road.

Markwest had originally hoped to have the rail line operational in 2011, but delays in environmental permitting now make that unattainable. The current target completion is relatively early in 2012 for the rail line and somewhat later in 2012 for the adjacent trail.

Current schedules call for the first construction to begin between the ramp at Galati Road and the Southview bridge, possibly as early as August of this year. In this area, the rail line will run parallel with the existing trail. Our agreement with Markwest requires that the mainline trail be kept open during construction. To do this, Markwest will construct a bypass beginning near the top of the ramp east of the Galati Road Trailhead. The bypass will turn left toward Southview Road, cross that road and then run along the route of an old connection between the Montour Railroad and the many railroads that preceded the W&LE including Norfolk Southern, Pittsburgh and West Virginia and the Wabash. The Galati Road trailhead will be enlarged during this work and may be closed part of the time.

When we know the precise dates for the work between Galati and Southview Roads, we will post that information on the MTC website and we will also post the information on the Yahoo group. We ask that all of our trail users proceed carefully near the construction site. We know that many of you will be curious about the specifics of the work, but please do not enter the active construction area. Markwest will ensure that the operation is conducted safely and MTC personnel will verify the safety with respect to our trail users.

## Help Wanted

**Volunteer Coordinator** - We are seeking a coordinator to help us identify volunteer interests, skills, and talents in order to help with the many ongoing projects and events of the Montour Trail Council.

If you are interested in learning more about the position, please contact Phyllis McChesney at 412 264-6303 or at [phyll45283@aol.com](mailto:phyll45283@aol.com).

## Friends of the Montour Trail in Peters Township by Mark Imgrund

The Friends of the Montour Trail in Peters Township (aka the Peters Friends) is the group responsible for the approximately 3-<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> miles of trail in Peters Township that is *not* part of Arrowhead Trail. The group was founded and chartered on September 2, 2003 - soon after the MTC board of directors identified the need for a local Friends group in the Peters area of the Trail. The group's organizational meeting was held at the Venetia Community Room on July 20, 2003. The biggest challenge then, and one of the group's continuing challenges, is educating the local community about the need for a Friends group due to the differences between operating and maintaining these two sister trails, both providing recreation and enjoyment to the community.

The members who make up the core of the Peters Friends today include Officers Paul Everson, Mark Imgrund, Sue Headley, Jim Robbins, and Karen Robbins, and members Charlie Beaumariage, Jason Firewicz, Tina Imgrund, Craig Robbins, Jane Robbins, Kermit Hartland, John Hooton, Jessie Knapp, Peter Kohnke, Dave Maxwell, Gil McGurl, Noreen McGurl, Mark Mendelsohn, John Murphy, Sandy Murphy, Chris Nagoda, Wayne Pfrimmer, Jack Shoup and Bill Zinn. If we've inadvertently forgotten somebody, please accept our preemptive apologies; our "records" are our memories, and they are less than perfect. Members hail from several local communities, including Bethel Park, Mt. Lebanon, North Strabane, Peters, and Upper St. Clair. It should be clear that if you want to get involved with volunteer work on the Peters section of the Montour Trail, there is absolutely no residency requirement!



*Peters Friends' group portrait from the annual picnic.*

Since the Arrowhead Trail existed before the Montour Trail Council was founded, local residents often assume that all of the Montour Trail within the borders of Peters Township is built and operated with their local tax dollars. The township did have the foresight to purchase the entire right-of-way within the township borders shortly after it was abandoned by the Montour Railroad in 1984, and has built the Arrowhead trail on about 3-<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles of that corridor, leaving the remainder for the MTC to deal with. To that end, Peters Township entered into a 30-year lease agreement with the MTC in 2002 to build, maintain, and operate the trail on township property. All along, Peters Township staff, citizen boards and elected officials have been extremely supportive of efforts to build and maintain the trail within their borders.

Three major trail building projects in Peters have followed this agreement. The section of the Bethel Branch between Brush Run Road and the Bethel Park line was completed in 2003, the section of the main line from Library Junction (behind the horse farm) eastward towards Library Trestle was finished in 2005, and two projects to complete three bridges and 1.9 miles of trail on the western section between Cecil Township and Valleybrook Road were completed in 2008. As these sections were completed, the Peters Friends have provided the volunteer maintenance and improvement projects that keep these sections of trail looking nice.

In addition to on-going maintenance of the trail, the Peters Friends coordinate scout projects along the trail, staff an information booth at Peters Community Day, and hold two annual fundraisers. The group's signature event, attracting nearly 500 participants yearly, is the popular Twilight Trail Walk held on the last Friday in July. Their Penny Day fundraiser is held in the beginning of October. Peters Friends volunteers also staff the metric century rest stop near Valleybrook Road for the MTC's Tour the Montour bike ride in September.

Two major construction projects stand in the way of completing the Montour Trail in Peters Township. The first, nearing the start of final design, is a bridge crossing Brush Run Creek at Peters Sanitary Authority with a short amount of trail to reduce the current gap in the trail to a safer at-grade crossing. The last piece will be construction of a trail bridge (Valleybrook Bridge #2) to eliminate even that crossing further down the road. Money raised by the Peters Friends that does not go toward ongoing maintenance expenses will be used to supplement and match grant monies that we have or hope to have in the future.

Additional volunteers are always welcome! Monthly meetings are held on the first non-holiday Monday of the month, either in the Peters Community & Recreation Center or outside, during the summer months, at Farmhouse Coffee next to the trail. During the non-winter months, work parties are organized by Jim Robbins on the third Saturday of the month, with other work parties called as needed. You can join the Peters Friends Yahoo! Group ([groups.yahoo.com/group/PetersFriends](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PetersFriends)) if you want to be informed of upcoming work parties or trail events in Peters. See the information elsewhere in this newsletter for meeting or work party contact information.

## Tails for Trails VII

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Tails for Trails Fun Dog Walk was held on Saturday, June 4 under sunny skies with low humidity and pleasant temperatures. These meteorological parameters brought many walkers to the Kurnick Plot that morning and as a result, the Cecil Friends met their goal of 100 dogs. New this year to the event was the placement of vendors. This would have taken place last year, but thunderstorms chased the event into the Trail Garage. The vendors were moved to the wide area east of the garage so they could be in shade for the entire event rather than the area near the parking lot which sits in sunshine. This new location really pleased the our vendors and many of our "veterans" felt this was the best event ever.

The event raised just over \$5000 which will be put towards trail maintenance and towards funding improvements to the National Tunnel. The Cecil Friends thank our Title Sponsors: Bedners Farm and Greenhouse and Black Box. Corporate Sponsors: Range Resources and Precious Paws. Supporting Sponsors: Capstone Grill, Taylor Pet Loss Center, Angel Ridge, Ameriprise Financial, Beinhauer Peaceful Pastures, Quality Quick Printing, Bridgeville Appliance, Chartiers Custom Pet Cremation, Coleman Mitchell, Fox's Pizza Den, Joe Stewart Contracting, MarkWest, Miller Centrifugal, Glenn Schillo, Attorney at Law, Smith Butz, LLC, Warchol Funeral Home and Serenity Day Spa and Salon. There were many others who provided Chinese Auction items and Door Prizes. There are too many to list here, but we thank them for their donations.

We look forward to seeing everybody next year on the first Saturday in June (June 2, 2012) for TFT VIII on National Trails Day.

## Tour the Montour “Looking Fine at 9” This September by Sam Hvifelt, Tour Director

The 9th Annual Tour the Montour will be taking place on Saturday, September 24, 2011. Mark your calendars, save the date, and prepare to participate in Western Pennsylvania’s best autumn trail ride around – The Tour the Montour!

We offer a variety of ride distances ranging from the family-friendly 6 mile ride to the hard core Metric Century (62 miles) distance. This will be our second year to test the stamina of the daring souls who attempt the King/Queen of the Mountain Challenge ! All riders have the option to be timed individually up a 7/10ths of a mile hill (Hassam Rd - closed to traffic, not part of the main Trail Ride). At an average of an 8% grade, the man and woman with the fastest times will truly be the “King” and “Queen” of the Mountain and will receive a special bicycling jersey for their effort ! NEWS FLASH: *This year’s Challenge will be timed with 21st century, computer chip technology instead of a 19th century stopwatch!*

Lunch will again be sponsored at Brothers Grimm Restaurant at Mile 3 on your way back to your cars. We’ll be adding some new options to the lunch menu and will be sure to have enough variety to suit the longer distance riders this year.

As with prior years, the ride will be starting at Mile “0” in Coraopolis. Trail mile “0” is located at Route 51 and Montour Road, just off of I-79 and the Coraopolis Bridge that connects to Neville Island. Parking areas will be made around Mile “0” for the event. Look for our parking volunteers on the morning of ride day to guide you into the parking area.

Registration begins at 7:00 a.m. with staggered start times for each ride distance. The Metric Century riders depart at 7:45 a.m., the long distance (44 mile) riders leave at 8:15 a.m. the middle distance riders (15 and 24 miles) leave at 8:30 a.m., and the Family Riders (6 miles) leave at 9:00 a.m. Pre-register before Sept 9, 2011 and you are guaranteed one of our world famous, limited edition Tour the Montour Ride T-shirts !! *Remember, only pre-registered riders are guaranteed a T-shirt !*

Entry fees are \$25 for individuals, \$45 for the Family Rate (up to 4 members), and all kids under 12 are only \$5 until September 9. Ride day registration is \$30 for individuals, \$50 for the Family Rate, and kids under 12 are still only \$5.

Trail patrol and SAG assistance will be available along the course. Rest stops will be stationed at miles 7.5 (Enlow Ballfield where riders will be reminded that free ice cream cones are available to all participants, courtesy of The Enlow Station at the five-point intersection), 11.5 (Boggs Rd), 21.5 (Galati Rd) and the 31 mile turnaround. Fruit, snacks, and beverages will be provided at each rest stop to keep the riders going. We will also have some history signs up along the ride pointing out little interesting facts about the trail, the Montour Railroad and the history of the area.

Please note that helmets are mandatory for all riders. For the safety of the other participants, headphones will not be permitted on the ride.

On your way back on the ride, be sure to stop and enjoy some lunch, drinks, chair massages and other goodies back at Brothers Grimm at Mile 3. As always, we have some valuable and different raffle prizes to give away and all registered participants are eligible.

Registration forms and more information are available at [www.montourtrail.org](http://www.montourtrail.org), by calling 412-257-3011, by email at [thetour@montourtrail.org](mailto:thetour@montourtrail.org), or you can register online at [www.Race360.com](http://www.Race360.com) (event 15908). A form is also available on the back page of the newsletter for your convenience. All proceeds benefit the maintenance and expansion of the Montour Trail. We hope to see everyone on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup> for a fantastic day of biking, catching up with friends and family, and outdoor fun .

## The 16<sup>th</sup> Montour Trail Half Marathon by Bill Orr, Race Director

The 16<sup>th</sup> running of the Montour Trail Half Marathon, 5K Run and 5K Fun Walk will have a new look this year. The 9/10/11 event has a new home at the Mall at Robinson. This year



the race starts will take place near the Macy’s entrance of the Mall at Robinson. 5K Fun Walk participants will be transported by bus to the walk start, which remains at Hassam Road, leaving the Macy’s lot at 7:45 a.m.

Event details can be found at the official race web site <http://www.mtchalfmarathon.com/> For those who like social media, you can follow the race on Facebook and Twitter with direct links to our web site. Trail members can receive a discount on the registration fee (\$5 for the ½ Marathon, \$3 for the 5K events) by registering online at [Race360.com/15682](http://Race360.com/15682) and using the promotion code ‘Trail’

We are beginning our push for volunteers. This event cannot happen without volunteer support from the Montour Trail Council and trail friends. Come and join the fun and help support the trail that you enjoy. Contact us at [race@MontourTrail.org](mailto:race@MontourTrail.org) or by phone 724-695-2638.

As of this writing, we are still looking for additional donated items to support the event. If you, or someone you know, can assist with any of the following items, please contact Bill Orr, Race Director. Your donation may be tax deductible and goes a long way to ensuring the success of the event.

We are looking for: Bottled Water, Sports Drinks, a Truck with a Lift Gate (for set up / break down) and Raffle prizes.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Montour Trail, and we look forward to seeing you at the Mall at Robinson bright and early on 9/10/11 for the UPMC Urgent Care – Montour Trail ½ Marathon, 5K Run and 5K Fun Walk presented by Elite Runners and Walkers, First Niagara Bank and Fed-Ex Ground.

## MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY

**What Goes Around Comes Around: The Reopening of Westland No. 2 Mine**

Bob Ciminel ©2011

*(This article does not express the views of the Montour Trail Council. The views and opinions expressed are those of the author and other railfans.)*

It was only a year ago that we covered the Westland mine and how its shutdown spelled the end of the Montour Railroad and the beginning of the Montour Trail ([Vol. 21, #4](#)). Earlier this year, we announced the rebirth of the Montour's Westland Branch to provide rail service to the Mark West natural gas processing plant on Route 519 between Houston and Westland ([Vol. 22, #1](#)). Suffice to say we were totally amazed this past June to learn that Mount Pleasant Township approved the necessary zoning changes to reopen the Westland No. 2 mine. It has indeed been an interesting year for the Montour Railroad fans and Montour Trail users.

Although the chain of ownership is extremely complicated, Wilson Creek Energy LLC (a subsidiary of Canadian-owned Corsa Coal Corporation) wants to mine and market the almost 110 million tons of high volatile bituminous coal remaining in the ground north and west of Westland. The project is called the *Pittsburgh-Kovalchik Underground Mine*. Mr. Joe Kovalchik, the scrap dealer from Indiana, PA, who saved the East Broad Top narrow gauge railroad in Orbisonia, PA, owns the former Westland No. 2 mine site. Although most of the reserves have too high a sulfur content for use as metallurgical coal for coking, about 14 million tons of recoverable low-sulfur coal does exist in the area to the west of Westland.

At this point we don't know if the new mine at Westland No. 2 will have any effect on the new Westland Branch, but railroad aficionados clearly see that moving coal by rail would be safer, cheaper, and have less environmental impact than the estimated 170 coal trucks per day rolling down Route 519 through Houston to reach I-79. A 100-ton capacity coal car can carry the same amount of coal as four tandem-axle coal trucks. It is about 80 miles by road between Westland and Wilson Creek's preparation plant in Somerset; however, that does not preclude shipping Westland coal to nearby preparation plants and power plants.

Given the numerous restrictions (18 at last count) Mount Pleasant Township placed on the new coal mine; it is not surprising that Wilson Creek Energy is exploring the possibility of constructing a spur from the new Westland Branch to the mine. Consolidation Coal constructed 6,000 feet of narrow-gauge track and built two trestles over Sabo Road and Route 519 to bring coal from Westland No. 2 to the tipple at Westland No. 1 for loading onto Montour Railroad trains and a trip to the Champion coal washer.

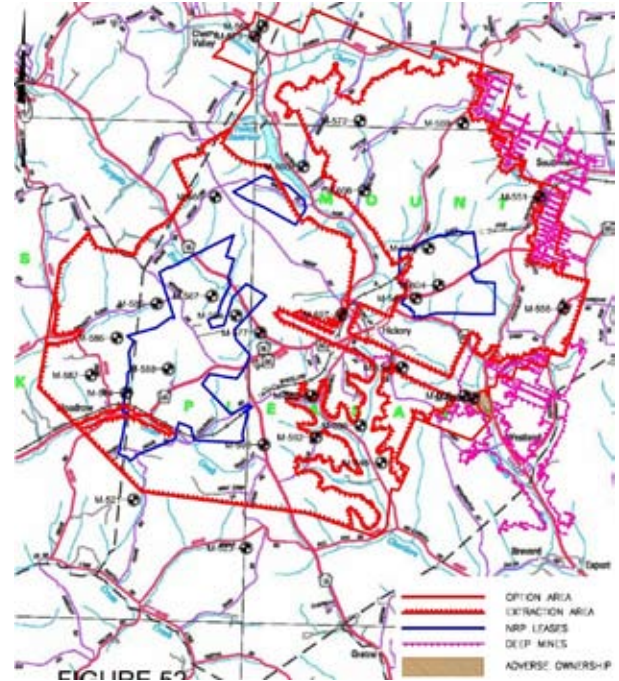
The Township's approval of the new mine is surprising for many reasons; the first being that it represents a complete about-face in attitudes toward mining at Westland. In 1979, township supervisors disapproved Consolidation Coal's request to re-zone 50 acres of land along Washington Avenue near Route 50 in Hickory to allow construction of a new shaft. Westland No. 2 had reached a point approximately 1/2 mile south of the proposed location for the new shaft and Consolidation wanted to create a new portal and fan to improve ventilation, reduce the travel time miners needed to reach the working face, and most importantly, provide an alternate escape route in the event of problems in the mine. The board of supervisors voted against the zoning change on the grounds that it might prove "*detrimental to the health, welfare and safety*" of the township residents (who obviously were not coal miners!). Within six years, Westland No. 2 was closed, sealed, and abandoned.

The new Westland No. 2 will be a room-and-pillar mine, which resembles a checkerboard pattern with large pillars of coal left to support the roof. Typically, after a room-and-pillar mine has advanced to its farthest extent the pillars are then removed using a method called retreat mining – basically, mining backwards. This will not be allowed at the new Westland mine. Wilson Creek believes that even without retreat mining they will be able to recover 65% of the available coal, over 71 million tons. With the current spot price of Northern Appalachian coal at \$78 per ton, the new Westland mine could bring in over \$5 billion in revenues.

It is reasonably certain that Wilson Creek will use the old Westland No. 2 drift entries to reach the coal seam. Pennsylvania's mining law requires that horizontal mine entries must be at an elevation equal to or greater than the coal seam being mined. At Westland No. 2, the Pittsburgh Seam is 1,010 feet above sea level and dips downward to the north and west on a 2% grade, ending almost 180 feet lower.

The Pittsburgh-Kovalchik project will encompass almost 12,000 acres. Restrictions on mining within 200 feet of Raccoon Creek and the Cherry Valley Reservoir, plus a required 200-foot barrier from adjacent underground mines (Montour No. 1, Morris and Westland No. 1), will take away about 3,000 acres of coal. Still, Wilson Energy believes there will be enough positive cash flow to make the project feasible.

Suffice to say that we Montour Railroad fans are waiting with bated breath for the completion of the new Westland Branch with the hope that we may once again hear the sound of diesel engines pulling coal trains up the grade from Westland to Gilmore Junction.



*Bob Ciminel is the founder of the Montour Railroad Yahoo group [http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour\\_rr/](http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/) There are currently 282 members from across the country. You are encouraged to join. There is a wealth of information about the Montour Railroad at this location and you can pose questions of its membership, from whom you are sure to get an answer.*

## Welcome New Members

*The Montour Trail Council welcomes these new members and thanks them for their support. We would also like to thank all our members who have recently renewed their membership and to remind all that a growing membership is one of the criteria foundations look for when we apply for grants.*

### New Members

Richard Adasiak  
 Aaron Barchowsky  
 Michelle Bruce  
 James E. Butler  
 Janis Carey  
 Barry Carlin  
 Al Cecchini Family  
 Stephen Chernicky  
 Philip Chimes  
 Bruce Cotugno  
 Joan Cucinotta  
 Jean Louis Dumaine  
 John Eddy  
 Robbie Gammack  
 Patricia Gilley  
 David Gould  
 Joyce & Donald Grace  
 Paul & Mary Lynn Gras  
 Bill Hartz  
 Paul Heckbert  
 Ralph Hertel  
 Lyndall Huggler  
 James & Sharon Kerna  
 Suzanne Kikel & John Stauffer  
 Donald Larizza  
 Lex Family  
 Iris & Jerry Liberatore  
 Paul Lougren

Ruth Ann Medenci  
 Jim & Gael Meehan  
 John Pifer  
 Dave Radion  
 Brian Redmond  
 Katelyn Rendulic  
 Kathy Ryan  
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 Sharon & Brenton Wilson

### Benefactors

Mr. & Mrs. Leslie J. Broglie  
 Ken Eltschlager  
 Francis Feld  
 Janet McKinney  
 Lawrence Sheets

### Leaders

David Oyler  
 J.A. Wunderlich

## REI and Montour Trail - Rails to Trails Summit, Don Thobaben reporting

The Montour Trail and REI held the first "Rails to Trails Summit" informational meeting at REI's Settlers Ridge store on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The event hosted by Paul Lovgren (REI store manager) and Peter Greninger (REI Outreach Specialist) allowed regional trail group to present literature and maps, promote trail events and discuss volunteer opportunities and trail membership.

Trail groups participating were "The Montour Trail Council", Ohio River Trail, Steel Valley Trail, Friends of the Riverfront, Wheeling Heritage/Brook Pioneer Trail, Mon-River Trail (Morgantown WV) and Indian River Trail (Somerset)

The event attracted several hundred trail users and resulted in 21 new Montour Trail memberships.

Thanks, to all the trail groups and volunteers that participated and REI for hosting the event.

## I want to help complete the Montour Trail!

### I want to join the Montour Trail Council at this level:

- Student/Senior \$15
- Individual \$25
- Family \$35
- Supporting \$50
- Sustaining \$100
- Benefactor \$250
- Leader's Circle \$500+

Make checks payable to the "Montour Trail Council"

Send me the newsletter by email  mail

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  
 Montour Trail Council  
 Suite #3  
 304 Hickman Street  
 Bridgeville, PA 15017

*The Montour Trail Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax-deductible. You may also be eligible for matching funds from your employer. A copy of the Montour Trail Council's official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling (toll-free within Pennsylvania) 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

Don't Forget  
 The Montour Trail Council may be designated as your United Way Contributor Choice as option #3308.



**MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL**  
 Suite #3  
 304 Hickman Street  
 Bridgeville, PA 15017

**Address Service Requested**

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 PERMIT NO. 2524

## The 2011 Tour the Montour Entry Form

### ENTRY FEES

#### Adult

Postmarked by September 9 \$25  
 Postmarked after September 9 \$30

#### Family Rate \*\*

Postmarked by September 9 \$35  
 Postmarked after September 9 \$40

#### Children Under 12

Postmarked by September 9 \$5  
 Postmarked after September 9 \$5

\*\*The Family Rate applies to the 6 and 12-mile courses only. Limit of 4 family members per family rate. Children under 12 pay \$5 when accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Make checks payable to:  
 Montour Trail Council  
 (Please do not sent cash.)

Mail to:  
 Tour the Montour  
 PO Box 459  
 Imperial, PA 15126

### Please print

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Male/Female: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional Names:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M/F: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M/F: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M/F: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M/F: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ M/F: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Distance: 6 12 24 44 Metric Century

T-Shirt Size:

S M L XL XXL

Waiver: in consideration for the acceptance of this entry, I waive for myself, my heirs and assigns, all rights and claims for damages which I might have against the Montour Trail Ride, to be held on Saturday, September 24, 2011; the Montour Trail Council, other sponsoring organizations, business, or individuals as a result of any and all injuries suffered by myself in that event. I also release any photos that may involve myself. (Must be signed by guardian if under the age of 18)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If under 18, parent or guardian must sign below:

Signature of parent or guardian

\_\_\_\_\_