

# SUSQUEHANNOCK HIKER

Newsletter of the Susquehannock Trail Club

On Foot in Potter County.....God's Country

PO Box 643, Coudersport, PA 16915 [www.stc-hike.org](http://www.stc-hike.org) [info@stc-hike.org](mailto:info@stc-hike.org)

The purposes of the STC are to build and maintain trails, aid in the conservation of wetlands and wildlife and promote good fellowship through the medium of hiking and nature study.

Fall 2025



Photo by Dave Hajzus

## Morgan Hollow Shelter Completed

The Susquehannock Trail Club is pleased to announce the completion of its 2025 lean to style trail shelter, the Morgan Hollow Shelter, at STS mile 36.8. This makes the ninth lean-to style shelter on the Susquehannock Trail System, with the CCC Dynamite House at mile 10.7 making a tenth site for camping and shelter on the 84 mile STS.

Mark Kelly and Doug Wetherbee did all the construction work with help from Doug's grandson Luke Staudenmeier.

Backpackers on the Donut Hole Trail will be interested to note that this is the second STS shelter located on the 8-mile stretch where the STS and DHT run concurrently, so this shelter serves both trails. The shelter is located on the east side of the bridge known as "Ted's Truss," named for Sproul forester Ted Ligenza. North-central Pennsylvania is currently in drought conditions, as seen in the photo, with Young Woman's Creek at all-time low flow.

## President's Message

Wanda Shirk



Working in the woods one September afternoon, I heard the honking of geese in the distance and was reminded of Rachel Field's 1934 poem, "Something Told the Wild Geese":

*Something told the wild geese  
It was time to go  
Though the fields lay golden  
Something whispered, "snow."  
Leaves were green and stirring,  
Berries, luster-glossed,  
But beneath warm feathers  
Something whispered, "Frost."*

*All the sagging orchards  
Steamed with amber spice,  
But each wild breast stiffened  
At remembered ice.  
Something told the wild geese  
It was time to fly.  
Summer sun was on their wings,  
Winter in their cry.*

Weather prognosticators are instigating rumors of a colder and snowier winter ahead for our part of the planet, but many great autumn days of hiking remain for "three-season" hikers. Streams are especially low right now, making this a great time to take on any trail sections with "wet-crossings" where rock-hops will be challenging again after snow-melt in the spring. At this time of year, we also take stock of our successes and weaknesses in the year's trail work on the STS.

On the accomplishment side, the new Morgan Hollow shelter leads the list, with credit to Mark Kelly, Doug Wetherbee, and Doug's 13 year old grandson Luke Staudenmeier, who with his dad also just completed the entire STS circuit hike. Luke has learned some construction skills assisting with shelters, but Mark says he was especially useful as "entertainment," keeping the men smiling.

Our trail maintenance team has also been highlighted by excellent blow-down clearance on most sections of the trail, thanks especially to Dave Hajzus, Ron Heath, Chad Rugh, Tod Twichell, and Doug Wetherbee. Larry Holtzapple has buzzed about as usual, clearing trail heads and parking areas and running a weedwhacker here and there. Dave, Ron, Doug, and Bill Boyd have taken the DR mower to a number of the mowable sections of trail. Larry, Ron, and Doug have replaced bridges over Yochum Run and Stony Run that had washed away in the Hurricane Debby flooding of August '24. Joe Allis and Doug put a new roof on the CCC Dynamite Magazine shelter, and Joe refurbished several trail benches. Many other maintainers simply did what they signed up to do and kept their sections cleared.

All that said, 2025 was perhaps not a banner year on the STS, and we have to be honest about where we have not kept up with the southern part of the trail. For three previous years, Abe Peachy and his crew of Mennonite volunteers did a great deal of work for us, and we missed them this year. Hammersley hikers are reporting that it is badly overgrown, and Scoval-Osborne (mile 43) and Stony Run (mile 65) were, shall we say, "under-served." Mowing in most places did not get done until late season. The Cross Fork Creek bridge in mile 19 did not get replaced. Next year... !

Fixing "the Hammer" will be our top priority in 2025. We are putting in an application for a week-long PA Outdoor Corps adult crew of six workers, and we are, as the term goes, "cautiously optimistic" about improvements in that ten mile stretch where most of our "golden agers" can no longer hike a brush cutter five miles in and five miles out and work for a few hours in the middle. Stay tuned!

## Trail Report

By Bill Boyd



The Susquehannock Trail Club had yet another enjoyable and productive year. All 24 maintenance sections plus the two crossover trails are covered by approximately 32 plus dedicated maintainers. This includes some spouses, and sometimes someone will bring along a "crew". Of course, there is a downside to this as there is for most things in life -and that's the inevitable illnesses and miscellaneous absences. So, what happens sometimes during the peak growing season, the foliage tends to get a bit ahead of us. We've often said, "it's a trail and not a walk in the park". But no one likes to fight through briar patches, wet ferns and nettles. So, we unapologetically do our best - and if anyone ever takes the notion to join our ranks, they would be most welcome. The STS has been labelled as "the Gold Standard of PA trails", and we strive to uphold that standard.

The maintenance sections vary from around 1 1/4 miles to over 6 miles. We would like to split some of the longer sections. Two sections which are about the most troublesome are the two parts of the Hammersley Wild Area trail (STS). They are split almost evenly at 5

miles at the Hammersley "pool", with hikes in from Cross Fork and McConnell Road. The problem is they are difficult to access with hills at either end, and our aging membership has a task of carrying tools such as brush cutters for 5 miles. Many of us had our time doing this a "few" years ago, so we're always on the lookout for some younger help. The trail through the Hammersley is a good one when it is kept clear, and the Hammersley itself is a scenic and historic place. There are many tales to be told about the old logging days, and many campers enjoy an overnighter listening to the coyotes yapping and the owls talking to each other. Then there is the warm apple pie found by a cold campfire in the morning - whoa, don't ask me to explain that one - maybe Ida Red or Granny Smith from the logging days.

We may have now ended our shelter-building program, with nine of them erected over the past nine years. We priced the first one with a contractor, and they quoted about \$8000 (for ONE). Whoa, we did the nine of them for about the same amount, less than \$800 each. We even rebuilt one of them after some very careless campers built the fire close to the shelter rather than in the large steel fire-ring which we provided. The fire got away and burned the shelter to the ground, and some of the surrounding forest.

NOTE: with this dry spell we are having, please be super careful with fires - best not have any at all.

And then there are our bridges - they took a big hit with the last flood. One of our main ones, across Cross Fork Creek, is now downstream about 100 yards lodged in a pile of debris. Rather than trying to rehab that one, we are (tentatively) planning a new one. And we still don't know where the Yochum Run bridge ended up - that one was a single large hemlock log which probably floated very well. We do plan to bridge some of the smaller streams when we can get to it.

When you read this, we will be closing in on, if not past, 1900 hours of trail maintenance, so our club has been rather busy out there. But if you see a trail problem, please report it to someone in the club and we will do our best to remedy it. Blowdowns are constant, so there are almost always some of those. And if you believe in the work of the STC/STS please lend your support if and when possible. Thank you and Happy Trails.

## Wild Boy Adventure

By Janet Smith and Wanda Shirk

On a warm, sunny day in September, four STC members ventured out into the woods for a backpack adventure. At the Williams' farm parking area, the first three were approached by the Purple Lizard Maps travel team, who discussed maps, trail head locations, and a possible future visit to a STC meeting. The hikers then traveled to the Rock Ridge Road trail head. As the three hiked down the trail, they were joined by the fourth hiker. As they approached the peaceful setting of the Wild Boy Shelter, which was built in an area recently weed-whacked and open. The four hikers – Susie Gribble, Barb Miller, Wanda Shirk, and Janet Smith – settled into their home for the night.

Wild Boy Run was trickling even with the dry conditions of the past month. Trees were shedding their colorful leaves, and the slight cool breeze brought the awareness that fall was around the corner.

Barb set up a tent in the clearing, Wanda hung her hammock in the shelter, and Janet and Susie rolled out sleeping bags on the shelter floor as twilight came on. Carefully and attentively a campfire was lit and a few marshmallows were consumed. Stories, ideas, and the day's events were shared around the fire.

In the morning three hikers continued south to East Fork Rd. and one returned to her car. As the group was about to leave the shelter just before 8 in the morning, two trail-runners came past and stopped briefly to say that they were doing a 5 mile out-and-back run from the Prouty to the forestry road south of the shelter at about mile 68. Later they were seen again on the return part of their jog. There had been speculation about how many people use the trail that never are counted or even estimated, and this young couple was an example of that kind of trail user.

Later, on the Stony Run Trail, the group encountered a circuit hiker, Matt, from the Pittsburgh area. He said he had seen elk, including a bull elk, south of East Fork Rd., where it was noted that hikers often see elk in the fall.

The Saturday morning hike of 4.5 miles took about 3.5 hours, 8-11:30, from the Wild Boy shelter to the Williams parking area on East Fork Rd. It included two significant ascents and corresponding descents. Along the way, Wanda's folding Corona saw came out several times as the "make-trail-maintenance-part-of-your-hike" crew stopped to clear numerous fallen tree limbs that had blocked the trail. The fourth hiker returned to the group and met the others as they descended to the Williams' farm. A great time was enjoyed by all.



Susie Gribble, Wanda Shirk and Barb Miller

Photo by Janet Smith

## Resuming the Camporee at Ole Bull S.P.

### Member interest input needed

By: Janet Smith

On a recent hike led by Janet Smith an impromptu discussion took place by hikers about the Camporees that had been held in the past and why it had been discontinued. One member who has now moved to the area permanently remembered many years ago attending and how much fun it was. Why had attendance dropped to the point it was discontinued? Several Ideas were discussed. The idea of a camporee was to have fun with fellow members and enjoy some trail hiking. Over time some folks felt hikes were replaced and trail work was the focus and many original campers were no longer able to camp. There are now new and younger members who might enjoy a Camporee if it was a fun weekend not a work weekend. It was decided to reach out to the members to see if there would be enough people interested in attending a Camporee in 2026.

A proposed format would allow for camping Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights allowing time to visit, socialize and enjoy the outdoors.

Plan: Includes the following

- Camp Thursday night
- Friday an optional trail workday
- Saturday a fun/social day - hike, swim & visit
- Saturday afternoon /evening -- with Dish to Pass meal and monthly meeting. NO SPEAKERS

If enough members wanted to attend for the day and drive home Sat. night, we could start our meal earlier to get them out of the mountains before dark.

We need your input:

- Would you attend?
- What ideas might you share on what made the camporees a success?
- We welcome and need your comments.

The following people were on the hike and would love to discuss ideas with anyone.

If you feel you would attend a Camporee in 2026 ( if dates work in your schedule),

please send an email and or ideas to Janet Smith or one of the following members.

Pat Childs 585-610-0715  
[childs4@roadrunner.com](mailto:childs4@roadrunner.com)

Angela Jackson 717-475-9694 after 5:00  
[angelamjackson83@gmail.com](mailto:angelamjackson83@gmail.com)

Barb Miller  
[barbmiller@fastmill.com](mailto:barbmiller@fastmill.com)

Susie Gribble  
[4everurfaithful@gmail.com](mailto:4everurfaithful@gmail.com)

Janet Smith 717-507-6608  
[jsmith2202@verizon.net](mailto:jsmith2202@verizon.net)

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## Christmas party!

**Saturday, December 20, PA Lumber Museum:**

- Christmas Buffet Dinner at noon.
- Bring your place setting and something tasty to share.
- STC monthly business discussions and meeting will be kept short.
- Bring a wrapped gift for our gift exchange game, labeled "man" or "woman" gender specific.
- Ideas? Nuts, fudge, soups, and other edibles are always enjoyed, or winter gear, gloves, socks or hiking/camping goodies. What would make YOU happy?
- Please note: This meeting will be on the THIRD Saturday of December rather than our usual second Saturday, due to other activity at the Lumber Museum ("Santa in the Shay") on the second Saturday.

## Hiking Program

By Pat Childs

The STC has REACTIVATED OUR CLUB LED HIKING PROGRAM. This will enable many hikers to have a safe hiking experience, spot cars for a linear hike, hike trails they aren't familiar with, ones they need to complete the STS circuit, build camaraderie with other club members, and possibly get new club members by inviting the public to join our hikes. We aim to offer 2 hikes a month, on weekdays or weekend. Begun in June, attendance has been excellent.

Hike leaders are needed to run the program. They will choose a trail, write a brief description to be sent to me, collect names of attendees, organize car placement and lead hikers along the trail.

We are all busy, so to allow leaders to wait until they know they have an available date, we created HIKERS and HIKE LEADERS group emails to which notices will be sent. They will also be posted on Facebook, the STC website, Google group, and the newspaper.

We NEED leaders and hikers. If you did not sign up for the email groups at a club meeting, please send your contact information to me. If anyone has a trail they would like to explore (STS or other) or circuit section they need, please let me know and we will find a leader for it.

Let's meet on the trail!

Pat at 585-610-0715 or [childs4@roadrunner.com](mailto:childs4@roadrunner.com)

2024 brought an enthusiastic response to our REACTIVATED CLUB LED HIKING PROGRAM.!

- No listed hike was cancelled due to the lack of hikers wishing to go.
- We had Hikes of 3-6 miles on a variety of terrains.
- 2025 has started with 3 hikes already completed.
- We need more hike leaders!
- Remember: It is important that you sign up with the leader the night before so the group does not leave without you.

COME JOIN THE FUN AS A HIKER OR HIKE LEADER.

## Recent Hikes

July 8, 2025, Todd Twitchell led a hike with 3 others starting at the intersection of the Sarah Jane and Empty Tank Trail and worked our way back to the intersection with the yellow-blazed Game Refuge Trail. Took that up the hill, across Rock Ridge Rd., where the blazes turned to red, and then down the other side. It was an easy hike being mostly downhill or level with one water crossing. We ended at Beaver Camp and drove back to Patterson. All the trails were very well maintained!! Great hike.

August 7, Janet Smith led a 3.9 mile STS hike from Thompson Rd to Lyman Run Rd via the Jacobs Trail. Janet Smith - leader, John Zimmer, Patricia Childs, Barb Miller, Curt & Penny Weinhold, Angela Jackson, Ron Hallett and Wayne Bauman. The weather was ideal for a summer hike through a canopy covered forest. The trail crossed over ATV trails with only 1 sighting noted. Wayne Bauman shared a "tree harvest" story involving Bill Boyd and himself about clearing fallen Cherry Trees and adding to the STC finances. A lunch at the memorial picnic table for "Gloria Dawn Boyd (McManus), Bill Boyd's sister, and bench for "Christine Bauman", Wayne Bauman's mother, was enjoyed by hikers. All seemed to have had an enjoyable time.



Photo by Curt Weinhold



## **STC Participates in Local Festivals and Events in 2025**

By Lois Morey,  
Corresponding and Membership Secretary

For many years several of our local club members have willingly stepped up to help share information about our club and trail with the general public at various festivals. We set up our canopy and table laden with trail guides, maps, brochures, club patches, stickers, and other items relating to our 84-mile hiking trail. A large map of the trail is also displayed that always draws attention to our booth showing locations of all the shelters and other information. It is a great conversation starter!

This season we participated in the Kettle Creek Valley Outdoor Show in Cross Fork, the Coudersport Maple Festival, Galetons's King of the Wing, Annual Fall Festival in Galeton, and Falling Leaves Outdoor Show in Coudersport. Club members staffed the water station at Mile 19 just west of Denton Hill during the 50th year anniversary of God's Country Marathon. We also took part in the Independence Day Parade during Galetons's Red Suspender Weekend festivities with the club's tool trailer, our "traveling billboard", a great way of advertising STS and STC.

The success of all these festivals and events relies completely on the dedication of our local members who are willing to volunteer their time and energy. From filling out the registration forms to putting together all the materials to be displayed, to setting up the table and canopy, and then sharing information, answering questions and taking care of sales....it is all required for the success of each endeavor.

To all of you who helped this year, I say thank you.

Those members include Gary Buchanan, Angela Jackson, John Zimmer, Janet Smith, Wayne Baumann, Dave Hajzus, Willis Sumer, Barry Fry, Wanda Shirk, Elizabeth Kapoor, Bill Boyd, Ron Heath, Helen Bernhardt, Henry Fuller, Gene Neefe and myself.

## **Welcome New Members**

Regular Memberships:

- Anthony Dubyk, New Milford, PA
- Dolly Lazorchak, Galeton, PA
- Sherry Zurlo, Galeton, PA
- Danielle Beimel & Larry Vandermark, Roulette, PA
- Kathy Jones, King of Prussia, PA
- Randall & Amy Caccia, Galeton, PA

New Life Members:

- Barry Fry from Longmont, CO

We now have 83 life members from Pennsylvania (with the most number), California, Connecticut, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, New York, Ohio, and Texas.

## **New Circuit Hiker Award Recipients**

- 1346 Victor Yang, Pittsburgh, PA
- 1347 Leah Davis, Christiana, PA
- 1348 Lori Szymanik, Ulysses, PA
- 1349 Brian Johnson, Port Matilda, PA
- 1350 Melissa Wohlsen, Lancaster, PA
- 1351 David Eshbaugh, Mayport, PA
- 1352 Ron Hallett, Coudersport, PA
- 1353 Karen Hallett, Coudersport, PA
- 1354 Dax Austin, Columbus, OH
- 1355 Richard Nelson, Coopersburg, PA



Photo By Dave Hajzus  
Wayne Baumann & Angela Jackson at Galeton Fall Fest



Susquehannock Trail Club  
PO Box 643  
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## 2025-2026 Event Schedule

**Monthly meetings start at noon with a dish to share meal followed by the club meeting, unless otherwise noted.**

Saturday, Oct 11	Monthly Meeting Dish to share meal followed by meeting.	PA Lumber Museum
Saturday, Nov 8	Monthly Meeting Dish to share meal followed by meeting.	PA Lumber Museum
Saturday, Dec 20	Christmas Party See details on page 5	PA Lumber Museum
Saturday, Jan 10	Monthly Meeting Dish to share meal followed by meeting.	PA Lumber Museum
Nate Confer, Susquehannock State Forest recreation & trails forester will join us to discuss his & our 2026 plans.		
Saturday, Feb 14	Monthly Meeting Dish to share meal followed by meeting.	PA Lumber Museum
Saturday, Mar 14	The annual dinner and program at 5:00 PM Details in the winter newsletter	Susquehannock Lodge