



# SUSQUEHANNOCK HIKER

Winter 2020

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.

## The STC Winter Frolic



Photo by Curt Weinhold

**Dinner & Meeting** The annual STC winter awards and recognition dinner and program will be held on Wednesday, February 12, at 5 p.m., preceded by a social hour starting at 4 p.m., at the Susquehannock Lodge on Route 6. Meal entrees are choice of salmon or prime rib; reservations due by **Jan 31st**.

### Evening Program

Following dinner and the club meeting Tim Morey, DCNR Natural Resource Specialist for Potter and Tioga County state parks. will present "Dark Night Skies of Cherry Springs" an explanation of how light pollution impacts more than night sky viewing and additionally, highlight the past, present and future of dark skies at our nearby international dark sky park that is attracting ever-increasing numbers of visitors to our area.

Photo by Curt Weinhold





Photo by Tim Morey

## Annual STC Christmas Meeting and Party

Saturday, December 14, 2019

by Lois Morey

With temps in the mid to upper 30's, it had rained most of the day. For the club members coming from the Coudersport area, it had already changed over to ice and snow, making travel more difficult, but they still came. As they drove into the driveway, members and guests were welcomed by the sight of the large lighted Christmas Star on the 2-story garage and the garland and rope lights on the porch railing. It was the annual club meeting and Christmas party once again being hosted by the club secretary Lois Morey. Each room had been beautifully decorated to reflect the Christmas spirit with poinsettias and nature the main themes in the living room.

The large center kitchen island soon became laden with delicious-looking casseroles and other food dishes. A large ham had been prepared as well as punch and hot coffee. Assorted desserts including a large cookie tray covered another section of counter. After grace was said, everyone lined up to fill their plates and then found a place to sit and enjoy their meal. There was a total of 27 filling the kitchen, dining and living room areas with not much room to spare.

Following the delicious meal, a very short business meeting was presided over by President Wanda Shirk, then it was Party Time with the gift exchange. One by one, numbers are drawn from a wooden bowl with #1 choosing the first gift from under the Christmas tree. When #2 is called, that person can "steal" the first opened gift or choose another unopened gift marked for man, woman, or either, accordingly. And so on it goes, at times getting quite entertaining, especially if a really nice gift gets "stolen". It's all in fun, of course, and we all have a great time.

For the conclusion of the evening, Christmas song sheets are passed out and we sing a variety of themed songs.

Sounds like a fun evening, doesn't it? It is and it's an annual activity the club has been doing for most of its 50+ year history. If you have never attended one of our Christmas parties, you should plan on it, if at all possible. In the 14 years that I have lived here in this renovated old farmhouse, I have hosted 11 of the parties. I have truly enjoyed every one of these years, but with each passing year it gets harder and it's time for me to step down due to some health issues. We are currently looking at finding another location for next year.

May this New Year 2020 be filled with blessings of love, peace and joy. Happy Trails to all!

## 2019 Trail Care

By Bill Boyd

From the last day of June, 2019, to the 1st day of August, we spent a lot of our time constructing the Gravel Lick Shelter. This one is placed along the Gravel Lick Trail, at around Mile-60. This should give hikers and backpackers a welcome camping or resting spot after the climb out of Cross Fork, then a downhill into the Hammersley, followed by the long, but gradual, hike up to McConnell Road.

June 30 found us constructing the four base corners, which are laid up with "as large as we can handle" field stones. Then comes the base framing of 2x6's, and the floor, this time of 1.5" hemlock. On this trip we also got the back wall and one end wall framed up - our framing is all rough-sawed full-size 2x4 hemlock.

Prior to July 22-23, time was spent hauling the metal roofing, and the boards for the siding - this time electing to use board-n-batten style for the siding. The battens were ripped and everything was trimmed square on one end, the reason being we use a battery operated saw at the site, and this pretrimming saves some battery power.

On July 22-23 we put up the other end wall, built the front overhang, put up rafters and the tin roofing. We had leftover D-siding from the last shelter, so we used that for the back wall, and got a start on the board-n-batten siding on the other walls. Later we returned and finished the siding, and did a few more little projects to finish up. All told we had 224 hours on this project, with the following workers taking part: Mark Kelly, Larry Holtzapple, Doug Wetherbee, John Zimmer, Allen (Buzz) Russell, Valorie Patillo, David Utchel, Bill Boyd.



Photo by Curt Weinhold

Other than the Gravel Lick trail shelter project, work was done on 18 of the STS sections (we've since renumbered the sections), along with the WBT and EFT, our two crossover trails. Some clearing was also done on the

Mount Brodhead Trail System, a part of which connects to the STS.

The footbridge on the EFT was widened so the DR mower could cross to mow about a mile of woods road. The Ole Bull kiosk was cleaned and tidied up as was the D-Mag shelter (the former CCC dynamite shed), At Camporee time in August we cleared trails both north and south of Ole Bull State Park, including Ole Bull Trail, Ole Mountain Trail, Impson Hollow, Spook Hollow and Big Spring area, for a total of 118 hours.

Bill Boyd mowing along the Ridge Trail



Photo by Curt Weinhold

Some other highlights - the Williams Farm sign was refurbished, and Lyman Run footbridge was repaired. Spook Hollow and Wild Boy shelters both had their new signs put up. A great many blowdowns were removed, lots of nettles and briars were brushcut, blazes repainted, some sections mowed, laurel trimmed, and limbs lopped - all the usual trail clearing chores.

As a sort of wrap-up we placed benches at two of the vistas, Little Lyman and Boone Run. These are 8' maple logs that were milled flat with our Alaskan Mill. These will be good for those leaf-peepers who would like to sit a spell and enjoy the views. But it doesn't necessarily have to be at leaf-peeping time - any time spent at a vista is time well-spent. In our immediate area there are about 8 vistas you should check out, within about a 2-hour time period - but you should take much longer. They are all on the DCNR map - gives one a little insight to the 265,000 acre Susquehannock State Forest. We are so fortunate.

## Trail Maintainers for 2020

From Reg. Box @ Mile-0 –

To - Thompson Rd. 2.76 miles - Curt & Penny Weinhold

Lyman Run Rd. 3.91 - Joe Allis

Sunken Br. Rd. 4.22 - Doug Wetherbee

Rt. 44 2.84 - John Eastlake

Short Run Rd. 5.74 - Mark Kelly

Rt. 44 @ Ole Bull 7.13 - Lowell & Barb Luft

12-Mile Rd. 4.06 - Jack Buckwalter

12-Mile Rd. @ Yng Wmn's Crk. 6.51 - Charles Kern

Greenlick Rd. 3.57 - Charles Hager

Shephard Rd. 5.96 - Dave Cardellino

Cross Fork 3.22 - John Zimmer

McConnell Rd. 10.0 - Chris Bell

East Fork Rd. @ Wms. Farm 4.35 - Gary Buchanan

Haul Rd. @ Old Stove Site 3.75 - Wanda Shirk

Wild Boy Rd. 2.08 - Jeff Nolt

Prouty Lick Rd. 3.0 - Pat Childs

Hockney Junction 1.24 - Tod Twichell

Rt. 44 @ Patterson Pk. 2.81 - Brian McCusker

Sunken Br. Rd. 2.25 - Bill Boyd

Reg. Box Mile 85.0 - 4.37 - Chad Rugh

West Branch Crossover Trail 5.7 miles - needs maintainer

East Fork Crossover Trail 8.3 miles - needs maintainer

**Note** - parts of both of these trails can be mowed with the DR Mower. And they can be worked in shorter sections.

**Note:** Some sections are quite short, while others are quite long - if you can, please consider lending a hand to some of those with the longer sections. Also, maintainers are urged to get to your sections as soon as it is safe, and remove what debris you can, and report any that you need help with. Then periodically go through your section to keep it in decent condition. The club has most of the tools/materials you might need.

Contact Bill Boyd ([billboydsts@gmail.com](mailto:billboydsts@gmail.com))

## Bigfoot Sightings

by Lowell & Barb Luft, of York, PA.

. Hoping to see Bigfoot this year? You may not have to travel very far. According to Bigfoot Field Researchers Org., Pennsylvania is the third most likely state for a Bigfoot sighting, at 1340, after Wash., with 2032, and Calif. at 1697

The org. claims to have "the only collection of Bigfoot reports from across North America that have actually been investigated by researchers to determine credibility"..

The Travel Channel produced a list of the eight states with the best chance of spotting Sasquatch by poring over 23,000 sightings across the country. the remaining five states are: Mich.-1131, New York - 1068, Ohio - 1042, Ore., 1009, and Tex. - 806.

When we're out camping at one of shelter build-sites, we keep hoping our own Susquatch will come along with his woman and the kids and tell some great stories - they're always welcome at our campfires

## In the Blink of an Eye

By Dave McMillan

After 60+ years of walking, hiking and backing, in groups and alone it finally happened. On Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> my morning walk turned sour when I slipped and twisted my leg badly enough to break it in two places. While I'm embarrassed that such a thing would happen less than 100 yards into the woods along our driveway, I'm extremely grateful it didn't happen many miles back in the woods. I'm also grateful I had means to phone for help, an option not available on most of the STS.

I guarantee you that this will not scare me off hiking and venturing off into the woods, but, rest assured I will take better care to follow some basic safety rules. Some of which I admit to getting casual about.

For starters, let someone know where you are going and when you will be back. (I could have laid there for hours but for the phone)

Even on short hikes carry at least a minimum first aid kit and emergency shelter. (A single space blanket would have been wonderful)

A whistle weighs barely an ounce and is so much louder than one can yell. (One hangs on every one of my packs, but I didn't have one in my pocket.)

There are so many more, we all can make a list. Make the list and follow it. I know I will.

And to borrow a friend's words;" Watch your step and don't do anything stupid".

## Trail Benches

By Bill Boyd

Having seeing the ads for the Alaskan Chainsaw Mills, and discussing them a few times, we decided to give one a try. We had put in several log bridges, and our method of flattening them to make a walkway was to cut a chainsaw kerf every few inches, and then chisel out the wood in between. This resulted in fairly good walkway, a little rough-hewn, but we figured that wasn't all bad - better than a slick surface.

These mills promised a flat surface for the length of a log, but of course rough-cut, not slick like a planed surface. So we ordered one, which came in about the last of Jan. of this year. In early Feb. I rigged it up on my firewood saw, a Husky 257, and tried it out on a hard maple log about 12" in diameter. These mills can be set for whatever depth (thickness) you wish to cut - I set this one to take about a 2-3" slab off. I managed to flatten the length of an 8' log, but it was probably the toughest chainsawing I'd ever done.

Now, backing up a bit, I should mention a couple of things. First of all I figured it wasn't going to be easy, as they had made a few suggestions on how these mills worked and how best to use them. Two main items were stressed - a saw with lots of HP, and a ripping chain, neither of which we had. My thinking was I would do some experimenting with what we had at the time, and if all went OK, we might consider a larger saw, and definitely a ripping chain.

The March STC meeting was to be at my place on the 9th, so I planned a show-n-tell with the mill, to any of the crew who were interested. I did explain that I wasn't planning to cut very far, as I knew how tough going it was. Of the 26 people who showed up for the meeting, about half were spectators, so we sawed into another hard maple log for a short distance just so they could see how it operated. This time the mill was rigged on a Stihl 270, which has a little more power, but still not nearly enough.

A couple of weeks later the ripping chain we had ordered from Granberg came. It was put on the Stihl, and I finished ripping the maple log without too much trouble. In the meantime I had dropped a Poplar tree that I wanted to remove, and it turned out to have about an 18' butt log nice and straight. As most know Poplar is kind of a soft wood, so I managed to rip a slab off from it with relative ease. A couple of things I haven't yet mentioned - you need a straight-edge fastened to the top of the log, which gives you a flat cut. Also the chain gets pretty hot, so it needs a good bit of extra oil. They have an auto-oiler which you can add to the mill set-up. And a ripping chain is a specialty item - the cutters have no angle, instead being filed straight across, and the cutters are also of a special design.

As for the two maple benches, in mid-October, Larry Holtzapple, Doug Wetherbee and I placed them at Little

Lyman Vista and Boone Run Vista. They were set on cross-pieces of course, to put them at a decent seating height. We also have plans to place more benches at some of the vistas, and also along the STS at some sites where hikers may wish to take a rest stop. So the mill may get a good workout in 2020. As for a larger saw, we haven't quite decided on that yet - they are quite pricey, and also much heavier, something to consider when toting them a mile or two. We do have a chainsaw backpack, so that may work well for the toting part. We'll see - lots of plans for 2020.



Photo by Larry Holtzapple



Photo by Doug Wetherbee

## STS Trail Names (Part one)

By Wanda Shirk and Tom Fitzgerald

The late great Tom Thwaites said that if we could do it over again, we'd use the word "footpaths" instead of "trails" for our hiking routes, since "trails" can be for horses, ATVs, snowmobiles, bicycles, and other kinds of motorized, non-motorized, or animal use. However, "trails" is the word we have. Most of our footpaths end with that word: the AT, BFT, and DHT, for example, being the Appalachian Trail, Black Forest Trail, Donut Hole Trail.

Interestingly, two of Pennsylvania's long-distance footpaths add the word "system," because they are composed of a linkage of previously existing logging roads, railroad grades, CCC fire trails, and other treadways through our forests. These two PA wilderness trails are the Thunder Swamp Trail System (TSTS) in northeastern Pennsylvania, and our own Susquehannock Trail System (STS).

One fellow I chatted with this year expressed his amazement at our Trail Master Bill Boyd's glib and easy knowledge of the STS trails. He said something to the effect that Bill would just rattle off trail names of STS sections as if everybody knew as well as he did where each trail was and what its features were.



Photo by Curt Weinhold

Some of these trails are named for the local geography, such as the Ridge Trail or Big Springs. Some are named for bits of history, such as Cherry Springs Fire Tower Trail, the two sides of Ole Bull State Park, the Three Stone Quarries Trail, the Wild Boy, and the Splash Dam Trail. Other sections remember railroads or take the names of local streams or hollows. Some are named for people in our club's history, such as the Fish, Scheibner, Kerr, and Hribar Trails. Sections with names like Jacobs, Impson,

Hartman, Morgan, and Porter are undoubtedly named after people, but people from generations past whom we never knew.



Photo by Curt Weinhold

On the list above, "Tower Trail" is in parentheses at mile 69 because we are gradually dropping that name, which can be confused with the Cherry Springs Fire Tower Trail. The elevation at mile 69 is low and not a site where it is likely that a fire tower or any other kind of tower was ever located, so we only guess that it was named for someone with a last name of Tower, as Fish Trail was named for Bill Fish, not for a fishing site. We intend to consider miles 68-69 all as Wild Boy Trail. "Ole Mountain" is also a recent designation to refer to the trail on the east side of Rt. 144, to distinguish from Ole Bull Trail on the west side with Ole Bull State Park.

Most trails in the STS loop were created long ago by railroads, loggers, or CCC workers building paths for fire-fighting access. When these existing trails were linked to form the STS, new trail was needed for connection in a few places. Four STS trail sections are named for people who were involved in creating those trail links: The **Fish Trail**, at mile 7, named for STS founder Bill Fish Jr.; the **Scheibner Trail** at mile 14, named for Veryl Scheibner; the **Kerr Trail**, at mile 76, named for Del Kerr, and the **Hribar Route**, at mile 78, named for Dick Hribar, the only one of these four to live into this century.

**William D. Fish, Jr.**, was editor of the Potter Enterprise and a tireless promoter of tourism in Potter County when he conceived the idea of the Susquehannock Trail System in the late 1960s. Bill was a charter member of PCRI – Potter County Recreation, Inc. – and used his platform as newspaper editor to publicize the initial idea of the trail. Bill was a Chamber of Commerce director, active

Rotary member, and a Pennsylvania Lumber Museum associate, and used his many contacts to interest people in his idea, including button-holing folks on the streets of Coudersport.

Bill and Jill (his wife), owned Deer Lick Camping Area. Bill became aware that outdoor recreation involved a lot more than hunting, fishing, and camping, when a lone long-distance bicyclist rode through Coudersport one day and someone, perhaps Bill himself, took his picture and printed it in the newspaper with the caption “What a Way to Go!”

Soon after that, Bill realized that human muscle-powered travel was a coming thing. In late 1966 or early 1967, he ran into Tom Fitzgerald on a street in Coudersport. Knowing that Tom worked for the local forest district, Bill asked Tom what he thought of developing a long hiking trail in Potter County and wondered if the Department of Forests and Waters (now DCNR) would go for the idea. Tom approved of the idea but wasn’t sure how his administrative superiors would feel about it.

Bill suggested that the trail should be named after something locally prominent, and he proposed the name “Sinnemahoning Trail.” Tom thought it would be more appropriate to name the trail after the forest district, Susquehannock, since the trail would only be in the Sinnemahoning watershed for a few miles, being more largely in the Kettle Creek watershed.

Bill was always in a hurry, with the next newspaper deadline constantly staring him in the face, along with working on his camping area. However, he tried to help out with trail layout as much as he had time for. Forestry

workers Butch Davey and Tom Fitzgerald thought that instead of the usual 2”x6” orange blazes, the Fish Trail should have been marked by silhouettes of a backpacker with a hiking stick on a dead run!

Tom was trained by his Bureau of Forestry supervisor how to lay out new logging roads. There were certain places a road needed to go, and other places it was necessary to avoid. The process involved hanging flagging, then taking it down and moving it a few times until everything on the route worked out. Bill didn’t operate that way. With him, the first time through was the only time. Wherever he went was the final location. The Fish Trail might have joined the B&S trail at mile 8 in a different location, perhaps crossing into Lyman Run State Park behind the lake, if Tom and Butch Davey had laid out that section. As it is, the trail skirts the park and stays in the Susquehannock State Forest just south of the park’s border.

Bill Fish (July 21, 1920 – May 29, 1977) died of cancer at the age of 56. He enlisted in the U.S. Army-Air Force soon after the Pearl Harbor attack in December 1941 and served until the war’s end in August 1945, mostly stationed in England. He was STS circuit hiker #60, after starting his hikes and log on Jan. 21, 1967, and finishing on July 15, 1973, his log being submitted a week later and approved by Tom Fitzgerald, Bob Knowles, and Lewis Baker (circuit hiker #1, and father of our current club secretary Lois Morey). A sign near the forestry office at the start of the trail recognizes Bill’s initiatives in making the STS possible, and the name “Fish Trail” will continue to honor his memory forever.

**See the next issue for part 2**

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## **Newest Circuit Hiker Award Recipients**

1198 – Jeff Keenan, Clarence Center, NY  
1199 – Rachel Keenan, Clarence Center, NY  
1200 – Alaina Roberts, Clarence Center, NY  
1201 – Corrie Amick, Fairview, PA  
1202 – Sue Simpson, Lawrenceburg, IN

## **Donations this year**

We wish to express our gratitude for the many donations that will benefit club projects such as our shelters, bench building, and mile marker projects over past years and in 2020

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## **Welcome New Members**

Daniel Arbeider, Orefield, PA  
Doug Couture, Coudersport, PA  
Dennis Goodenough, Coudersport, PA  
James Harvey, Coudersport, PA  
Sarah Kovacs, Allentown, PA  
Gail Kessler, Latrobe, PA  
Debbie Ostrom, Roulette, PA  
James Ostrom, Roulette, PA  
Emily Shosh, Coudersport, PA

New Life Membership from Andrew Fish, Mechanicsburg, PA  
(Andrew is the grandson of William Delos Fish, Jr., who is remembered as the father of the Susquehannock Trail System).



Susquehannock Trail Club  
PO Box 643  
Coudersport PA 16915

## 2019/2020 Event Schedule

Monthly Meeting,	January 11, 2020 @ 5:00 PM,	Home of Gene & Myra Neeffe, Coudersport, PA
Monthly Meeting,	<b>Wednesday</b> , Feb. 12, 2020 @ 5:00 PM,	Susquehannock Lodge, Ulysses, PA
Monthly Meeting,	March 14, 2020 @ 5:00 PM,	Home of Bill Boyd, Coudersport, PA
Monthly Meeting,	April 11, 2020 @ 5:00 PM,	Home of Joe & Barb Allis, Galeton, PA
Monthly Meeting,	May 9, 2020 @ 5:00 PM,	Home of Donna Batterson, Coudersport, PA
Monthly Meeting,	June 13, 2020 @ 5:00 PM,	Lyman Run State Park, Galeton, PA
Independence Day Parade,	July 4, 2020 @ 11:00 AM,	Galeton, PA
Monthly Meeting & Picnic,	July 4, 2020 @ 12:30 PM,	Home of Lois Morey, Galeton, PA
Annual Camporee,	Aug 6-9, 2020,	Ole Bull State Park, Cross Fork, PA

Monthly meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month unless otherwise noted and begin at 5:00 PM with a dish-to-pass meal followed by the club meeting