

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 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.

Summer 2022



Photo by Lois Morey

SUMMER CAMPOREE 2022

The Susquehannock Trail Club's annual camporee will once again be held at Ole Bull State Park. Mark your calendar for Thursday, August 11, through Sunday, August 14.

The park has generously granted us free camping at sites 49, 51, 55, 60, 61, and 64, all sites with electricity, so come early if you want to get your pick of a site for a camper. There is always plenty of space for everyone who wants to pitch a tent.

Friday's agenda has the usual options. For those interested in volunteering for some trail work on the southern half of the STS, we will have loppers, brushcutters, and other tools on hand, and you can join a crew for a hike with a purpose, maybe as simple as walking in front of a trail mower to be sure the path is clear of rocks or limbs.

On Saturday we will set up a hike to the Scoval Branch Shelter and on to Osborne Branch Trail to see

some of the sidehill work done by Abe Peachy (see page 2). This valley features three or four beaver dams and will take us out to the lovely intersection with the Donut Hole Trail at Porter Branch, where you can see the site of our next STS bridge project.

On either or both days, everyone is welcome just to enjoy relaxing at the park, perhaps taking a swim in Kettle Creek and sunbathing on the sandy beach, or perhaps exploring the trails around the park.

Saturday night's business will be kept short so we can hear this year from Brook Lenker, the new executive director of Keystone Trails Association as we hear what KTA is doing around the state. This is our first visit from a KTA executive director, and Brook is quite an interesting and energetic leader, so we are enthused about his coming.

Evening campfires are always part of the camaraderie and camping pleasure. Hope to see you in the park for Camporee 2022!

President's Message

Wanda Shirk

The Miracle Worker !

If "The Miracle Worker" is a title that rings a bell, it would be the reference to Anne Sullivan, who taught blind-deaf Helen Keller to understand, read, and talk. However, we had another kind of "Miracle Worker" on the STS in May. His name is Abraham Peachy.

You'll recall from our last newsletter that a group called CASP – Conservative Anabaptist Service Project – had offered to send us a crew of half-a-dozen young Mennonite volunteers for four weeks for the month of May. The half dozen didn't materialize, but we got one young man, age 29, 6'3" tall, quiet, cheerful, and hard-working, and it is safe to say that he did the work of six people: Pick the six best and fittest geezers from any of our meetings this year! (We recently established that the age of our average meeting attendee is over 70. Yikes! How time flies!)

Some days Abe took a chain saw or a brushcutter for workouts on long, remote trail sections, but primarily he spent about three days a week doing sidehill work from May 2 to May 28 – widening and leveling narrowed "goat-path" trail with a big foresters' hoe, a "McLeod" tool. He did back-breaking, physically demanding, exhausting, manual labor hour after hour – with a cheerful heart and a smile.

"Abe is an absolute workhorse. I encountered his work for the better part of two days. I got some pictures for you. As a hiker, I was grateful to have those sections nice and wide." So wrote Chad Rugh, the second week of June. Chad, age 37 and a history teacher at Austin High School, is the youngest member of our Advisory Board. (Oldest advisory board member Tom Fitzgerald is 85 this year.) Chad completed his first backpacking trip of the STS circuit in early June this year; blisters had curtailed an attempt he had made previously.

See Chad's pictures of Abe's sidehill work. Seriously, it is amazing! Six days' work was on the Scoval-Osborne Branch section (miles 43-44). Another week Abe camped in the Hammersley and worked on the sidehill stretch just past mile marker 54 on the Hammersley pool approach trail.

On a hillside section a tenth-mile before the pool, a spring way up on the hill sent water down the hillside over a wide area, washing away dirt so the trail below was about 30 yards of loose rocks and mud. I remarked to Abe, when we hiked in there, that it would be nice someday to climb the hill, find the spring, and ditch it so the water would be channeled into one stream rather than eroding the whole hillside. To my surprise, when I returned 4 days later, Abe the Engineer had done it! An angled channel now sends the water from the spring down to a little waterfall – "Abe's Water Filling Station,"

I'd call it – just above the trail. Abe then dug the channel, so the water goes under a humongous flat rock that he placed as a bridge over the water.

Chad wrote, "I also got some pictures of his work on the spring by the pool. Wow! He basically created a little fountain. As you can see in my pictures, it's a perfect bottle-filling spot. There was plenty of rain during my hike, and so far, everything is holding up."

Abe attended a Mennonite church in Wellsboro on weekends, where he recruited another young man, Alan Leister, who took off work and helped Abe with sidehill labor for two days.

I wish we could show you a picture of Abe, but he is a humble man, and one of his requirements before coming was that there could be no pictures or video of him, or he would not be able to come. We cannot show you the Miracle Worker, only some of his work.

We would love to have Abe – and Alan – and more like them back next year, or any time. Enough praise and appreciation cannot be heaped on these hard-working volunteers.



Hammersley Filling Station

Photo by Chad Rugh



Hammersley Waterfall

Photo by Chad Rugh

Trail Report Spring 2022

By Bill Boyd

Well, you know what they say about the "best laid plans" - I guess it is that they don't always come to fruition. First of all, due to circumstances unknown to us, our half-dozen CASP crew dwindled to just one member. But that one, Abe Peachy, certainly put his mark on the STS. He did a considerable amount of benching (trail leveling) along Osborne Branch, the Quarry Trail, and Hammersley Trail. Our President, Wanda Shirk, worked with him on some sections, and he also had a fellow Mennonite along for a couple of those days. Abe also removed quite a number of blowdowns from several trail sections and assisted with the placement of two bridges in Stony Run. He mostly camped at Ole Bull State Park, at the Scoval Branch shelter, and in the Hammersley Wild Area. The club provided his food for the four weeks that he was here. So, thanks to Abe, hikers will find much better hiking conditions along some sections of the STS.

As for the Bolich Run shelter project, that's still on hold. Quite a bit of work was done on the approach road (Camp Lane), but it seems that this stretch is mostly muck, with no real base, so anytime a heavy vehicle drives in, it creates bad ruts. This is true mostly if it has been a wet spell. But we haven't given up - we may not be able to get materials by using a trailer, so we may need to resort to just using our pickup trucks. In the meantime, we've located another site for a shelter - this one at Ford Hollow, which is about Mile-75, on the northbound side of the loop. As soon as we can work out the details and get the site approved, this may be our next shelter project.

Apparently, the hours for the first quarter of 2022 were omitted from the Spring newsletter - that stands at 263 hours as of the end of March. Since then, the hours have increased considerably - up to 980 by the end of May - and June is shaping up to be even busier. The mowing usually begins in June, and each year we are finding more sections which can be mowed with our walk-behind mower. This machine cuts about a two-foot swath, so a pass in and out gives hikers a nice wide footpath - this, along with lopping both sides of the trail, should help cut down on tick exposure.

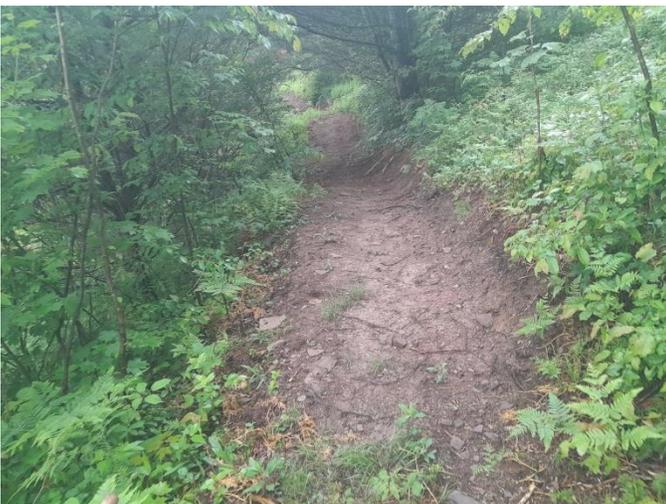
So, our maintainers have been busy, and we are also very appreciative of our "maintainers-at-large", those who have no assigned section, but who regularly step up to help where needed. Some of our maintainers come long distances to work on their section, but they can't be expected to come every time a tree falls, and they do fall. So, it's very helpful to have some local help step up. As a team, we keep working at maintaining our "Gold-Standard Trail", as one hiker put it. Happy Trails to all - don't step on the snakes and don't scare the bears.



Hammersley Sidehill Upgrade Photo by Chad Rugh



Osborne Branch Sidehill Work Photo by Chad Rugh



Osborne Branch Sidehill Work Photo by Chad Rugh

A 50 YEAR HISTORY OF STC CAMPOREES, Part 4

By Lois Morey

This is the fourth and final article in this series. I have written a summary of all the summer camporees held since the idea was conceived and the first one held in 1971 at what was known as the Baker Campground near Galeton. If you missed Part 1, it can be found on our website www.stc-hike.org in the 2021 Fall issue of the newsletter; Part 2 is in the 2022 Winter issue, and Part 3 is in the 2022 Spring issue.

Twenty members met once again at Ole Bull State Park for the 45th Camporee in August 2015 for a weather perfect weekend. Two productive days on the trail and three nice evenings around the campfire at one of the nicest state parks there is – can't get much better than this! (The late) John Eastlake, one of our long-time club members and retired forester from Williamsport, gave a very nice PowerPoint presentation of the CCC program in Pennsylvania.



Photo by Lois Morey

The 46th Camporee was yet another successful one in August 2016 with more trail work accomplished in the southern portion of our STS. Twenty-four members attended. Evening's presentation was by Linda Stager of nearby Tioga County. She gave an in-depth look at the entire 62 miles of the Rail-Trail, much of which runs through the PA Grand Canyon near Wellsboro.

By now this annual camporee was beginning to be better known amongst club members as a “workoree”, rather than a recreational weekend! None were complaining though. The 47th camporee brought 31 out for the weekend in August which was also the year we celebrated our 50th anniversary of STS and STC. It was a busy weekend for trail work (crews put in about 124 work hours in two days), but we also found time to sit around campfires, tell stories (some were true), relax and

just enjoy the weekend with friends. After another great picnic at the stone pavilion and the business meeting conducted by club president Wanda, we were treated to a very nice slide show of “Hidden Beauty of Pennsylvania” by Jeff Mitchell.



Photo by Lois Morey

The 48th Camporee August 2018 held once again at Ole Bull saw 19 members out for another great weekend of activities and trail care.



Photo by Lois Morey

Club members gathered at Ole Bull Park for the 49th Camporee in August 2019, with 29 in attendance. More trail care was done as well as the other normal activities. The guest presenter this time was Dr. Deb Nero, retired Cornell University genetics professor, gardener, and Executive VP of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. She presented a program about the FLT in nearby New York State.



Photo by Roxanne McMillan

We finally reach our 50th Anniversary of STC Camporees! Even with the Pandemic that year in 2020, our club still made the decision to schedule the annual event in August at Ole Bull and had 38 in attendance. Yes, we were concerned about the virus situation, but we felt that the safest place to be was in the wide-open spaces and fresh air. We still feel that way. Had a little excitement this time when one of our members (our club VP John Zimmer) was backing his camper onto a site and a rather large and attractive black phase timber rattlesnake was noticed already occupying the site!! Park personnel were summoned, the snake safely removed and relocated several miles away from the park. We were reassured this was a rare occurrence there in the park. It is even rare out on the trails but occasionally one is seen as was reported this year in several of the circuit hiker logs submitted by hikers. This weekend 13 volunteers amassed 77 hours of trail care work. The program was a PowerPoint presentation by Kristin Joivell of her solo backpack of the 327-mile Mid-State Trail which runs from Maryland to New York State.

weekend of fun and fellowship and to just enjoy the great outdoors here in Potter County as well as all the other great locations we traveled to for this event.



Photo by Lois Morey

If you have never attended one of our camporees, why not consider joining us this year. You will find details for the weekend in another article in this newsletter. If you do not wish to camp, plan on just the activities on Saturday and take in the dish-to-share picnic at the pavilion with a short business meeting following and then the evening program which is always a highlight of the weekend.



Photo by Lois Morey



Photo by Lois Morey

HAPPY HIKING to all of you, whether in the actual activity or just in memory.



Photo by Lois Morey



Photo by Lois Morey.

This sums up each of the camporees held over these 50 years. I hope you have enjoyed reading about them as much as I have in taking the time to research the club archives and past newsletter articles and write about them. A labor of love, perhaps, and has brought back many memories. After all, it was partly my idea in the beginning to get our hiking friends together for a

Community Involvement

By Wanda Shirk



Photo by Larry Holtzapple

Wanda Shirk, Mark Clark, Henry Fuller, Bill Boyd, John Zimmer, and Helen Bernhardt, along with behind-the-camera Larry Holtzapple, manned Mile 19 Water Station for the God's Country Marathon on June 4.

Mark brought a bowl of cut oranges for the runners; John brought donuts and pretzels for the water station attendees. Henry Fuller -- handy with his binoculars -- peered into the distance to get runner numbers we could compare to our list of names, and we cheered them on heartily, handing out cups of water and Gatorade, fruit, and energy gels. Bill brought the club's canopy and table, and the volunteers -- some with STC Trail Crew shirts -- assisted in the set-up and take-down.

The STC strives to show good citizenship by participating in many local events and with multiple community organizations whenever possible. Our club is an organization member of Friends of Lyman Run State Park and Friends of Ole Bull State Park. We have provided hike leaders and other support for Pennsylvania Lumber Museum events, and several of our members are board members of these groups. We have "tabled" with our club display, maps, and information at the Kettle Creek Outdoor Show, Coudersport's Maple Festival and Falling Leaves Festival, and miscellaneous events over the years from Genesee Old Home Day to the Galeton spring Wing Fest and the Fall Fast. Our July 2022 agenda includes tabling at the "Ness Fest," which

revolves around Coudersport's Eliot Ness Museum, tribute to the "Untouchables" of Al Capone history fame.

Beyond Potter County, the STC contributes to KTA and participates in Keystone Trails Association activities whenever possible.



STC president Wanda Shirk chatted with STS hiker Chas Wagner at the STC display at KTA's spring hiking weekend in Carlisle on April 30. Chas is an STC member from Glenshaw, PA

New Bridge Over Stony Run Tributary

Installed by Wanda Shirk, Gary Buchan, John Zimmer, Doug Wetherbee and Joe Allis



Welcome New Members

Regular Memberships:

- George Tenedios, WinField, PA
- Todd Smith, Conemaugh, PA
- Cole Smith, Conemaugh, PA
- Eamonn Connor, Southampton Township, NJ
- Kim Caris, Worthington, OH

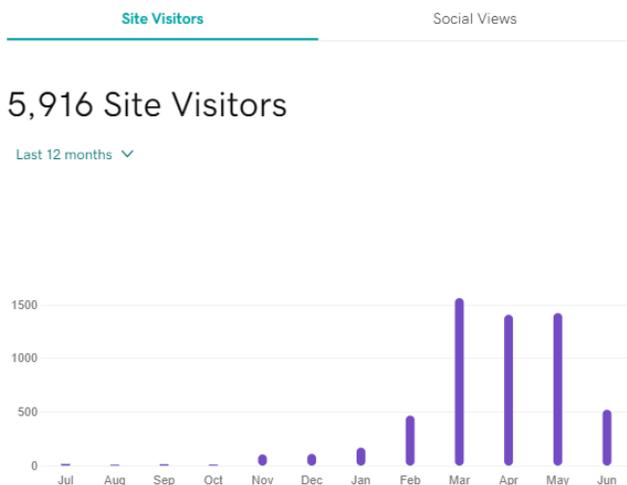
Family Life Membership:

New Circuit Hiker Award Recipients

STC Website Traffic

The FarOut guide was launched at nearly the same time we returned the current club website to the original web address. We saw a significant increase in traffic to the STC website that month as would be expected. What is encouraging is that we continue to see the increased traffic level. The graph below was copied on the 10th of the month so this month's total should be similar to the preceding months.

More traffic means more interest, which in turn likely means more hikers and more members



As a reminder, FarOut is the digital map and guide of the STS that was recently released by Atlas Guides. For more information see the prior 2 newsletters on the STS website. www.stc-hike.org

Kayak Tour for the STC

Jan and John Halter will be hosting a kayak tour for members of the STC on September 14th at 3:00 PM on Lyman Lake.

They have 7 singles and 1 tandem kayak available. Any individuals are welcome to bring their own boat, and this would increase our capacity beyond the 9 slots available. An after-tour picnic could be organized if desired.

Description: Join the FOLR (Friends of Lyman Run) kayak guides for a tour of Lyman Lake.

- Learn about plants, animals, and local history. Participants should be at least six years of age and physically able to paddle their own boat.
- No experience is required.
- Basic equipment will be available to each visitor: kayak, paddle, PFD, and whistle.
- There is no fee for this program.

Please arrive 15 minutes before start time for equipment outfitting.

A short instructional talk will be provided at the beginning of the tour.

Be prepared for conditions with proper clothing, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

A pair of binoculars (optional) would enhance your experience.

Meet at the pavilion beside Dagget Run.

Call or email to sign up by September 9th
570-439-1826 or halterranch@gmail.com

Detailed directions to meeting place for the September Meeting (see schedule on back page)

From the traffic light at the intersection where the FORMER SHEETZ is, it is 4.2 miles west to Ilene's driveway. At about 3 miles you enter a long sweeping right curve - when you reach the straightaway, there's a farmhouse and large barn on the left, open fields on the right. It's then a tight right turn to enter the drive, at the end of a small bridge. Signs say "McClatchie Hollow Lane", "PA Century Farm", and "Private Drive." Follow the drive to the right to the parking area.



Susquehannock Trail Club
PO Box 643
Coudersport PA 16915

2022 Event Schedule

Thursday – Sunday, August 11 – 14	CAMPOREE	Ole Bull State Park Campground Sites 49, 51, 55, 60, 61, & 64
Saturday August 13	Monthly Meeting	Ole Bull State Park Pavilion Dish to share meal followed by meeting Starts at 5:00 PM
Saturday, Sept 10	Monthly Meeting <u>Also</u> – An antique farm equipment display will run from 10am to 3pm on site	Home & Farm of Ilene Altenhein 18 McClatchie Hollow Lane, Mina, PA (See detailed direction on page 7) Dish to share meal followed by meeting Lunch & meeting starts at Noon
Saturday, October 8	Monthly Meeting	Lyman Run State Park Pavilion Dish to share meal followed by meeting Starts at Noon