

SUSQUEHANNOCK HIKER

Newsletter of the Susquehannock Trail Club

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

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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 2023



Driving home on Rt 44 after a thunderstorm

Photo by Curt Weinhold

President's Message

Wanda Shirk



Photo by Joe Allis

A fourth memorial bench was placed on the STS this summer -- this one at mile 27.7, at the vista on what we call "East Ole Mountain," up the hill across from Ole Bull State Park. Like the other three benches, it was crafted by advisory board member and STC "Big Shoes" Lifetime Achievement honoree Joe Allis, who has also engineered multiple bridges and signs for the STS.

Previously placed benches honor memories of Greg Vincent (at the mile 2.7 vista), Wil and Betty Ahn (at the Ahn Trail intersection, mile 3.1), and Chris Baumann (just off Lyman Run Rd., at mile 6.7).

Ryan Fairbank died three days before his 45th birthday this year, of brain cancer. He suffered more in life than most of us can possibly imagine. Paralyzed from the waist down after a traumatic spinal injury in his twenties, Ryan endured multiple surgeries and struggled mightily before being able to walk again. Multiple lumbar spinal discs had been ruptured, and Ryan was soon diagnosed with Cauda Equina Syndrome. He became addicted to opioid pain medication but went off it cold turkey. As time went on, he was diagnosed with gynecomastia (more surgeries) and then with a severe case of lumbar-sacral Adhesive Arachnoiditis, an incurable neuro-inflammatory disease which causes extreme pain and a host of other neurological symptoms, resulting in

constant exhaustion, weakness, bladder dysfunction, blurred vision and hearing loss... and the list goes on. It is the most painful chronic condition a human body can endure.

Ryan worked at Coudersport's Cole Memorial Hospital, in housekeeping. After he grew weaker, a special half-time job was created for him as a caregiver and special "activities director" in the Long Term Care unit. He was loved and appreciated for his kindness and empathy with residents; he understood pain and limitations. He endured bravely as he continued to work. Sometimes even standing for five minutes became almost impossible. He suffered extreme, chronic pain in his back and legs, and severe nerve damage.

At home, Ryan read, meditated, and practiced yoga to deal with his pain. He was also devoted to his wife Keri, their daughter Kiersten, and their son Kole.

Ryan loved nature and the outdoors and had one big bucket list item when he was 40: to be an STS circuit hiker. Many circuit hikers have struggled on parts of the trail, but undoubtedly none more than Ryan. However, he backpacked the loop and achieved his goal, in spite of the days of pain. He loved nights in the shelters where he stayed. No one was ever more proud to have finished the trail.

Ryan was an inspiration to those who were privileged to know him.

Brave. Strong. Kind. May we all face life's challenges, and its inevitable end, as courageously as Ryan did.



Photo by Keri Fairbank

Trail Report Fall 2023

By Bill Boyd

It certainly was a busy summer for our maintainers, who amassed around 882 hours during June, July and August. Much of that time was spent mowing, weedwacking and brushcutting - and by June the trails really need it. As usual we found a few new sections of the trail which can be mowed, and as many of us seem to favor running the DR or Swisher mower, the more places we can mow the better. Also, it leaves a really nice trail for hikers.

In early June we placed a memorial bench in honor of the late Greg Vincent. Greg was a Canadian and an avid hiker, who brought many of his hiker friends to Potter County each year to hike the STS. The bench was made by our Master Craftsman, Joe Allis, and was placed at the vista along the Ridge Trail, along with a small picnic table. Some time was spent at the Bolich Run shelter, doing some finishing touches and mowing the site. This is the first shelter that includes a couple of bunks, and we are getting good reports about those. So now we are hoping to put bunks in the other shelters.

Some new signs have been placed and some of the older ones refurbished. We now have all of the tools needed to produce our trail signs, such as a small planer, router, templates, etc. And recently we were given some of the excess boards from the sawmill at the Lumber Museum (Thank You). If need be we can also mill some boards off a log with our Alaskan Mill.

I have previously mentioned the terrific blowdown area on the Hartman Trail. Well, as it is an old RR grade, we decided we would see if we could mow it this year - so after mowing and clearing from 12-Mile Road on down through Spook Hollow and the Big Spring area, we went off Big Spring Road onto the approach trail to the old grade. We found that it was very mowable, except when we came to last year's blowdown area. We had to remove a few step-overs that were left and widen some other spots so the mower could pass. But then we managed to mow it to where it becomes the Rattlesnake Trail, turns uphill and becomes more trail-like.

At Camporee time in early August, we did a good bit of trail mowing - we had the club's DR and Swisher and one of our members' personal DR, so we managed to mow quite a few of the trail sections mostly down in that area (Ole Bull State Park). In July we donated picnic

table #11 to the park - this is just our "Thank You" to the park in return for the use of 5-6 sites for the camporee. These are the standard 8' heavy-duty tables.

So now we are looking forward to some nice Fall weather and even more trail care.

Maintainers for 2023 (changes)

(TO)

Hungry Hollow Rd. - 4.00 - Tim Kain
Ole Bull S. P. - 3.20 - John & Jan Halter
Shephard Rd. - 6.00 - Jim Petit
Hammersley Pool - 4.70 - Craig Warner
Wild Boy Rd. - 2.10 - Bob Hayes
Rock Ridge Rd. - 0.80 - Pat Childs
Prouty Lick Rd. - 2.20 - Dave Hajzus

East Fork Crossover Tr.

EFT Sec #1 - Junc. Rd. - 2.40 - Dave Hajzus
EFT Sec. #2 - East Fork Rd. - 2.50 - Maintainer Needed
EFT Sec. #3 - Rock Ridge Rd. - 2.60 - Tod Twichell

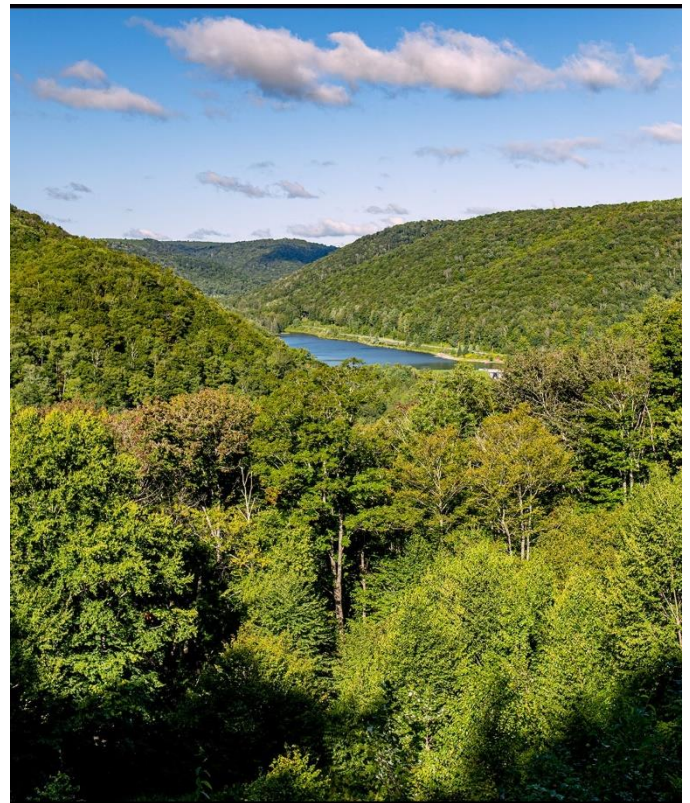


Photo by Curt Weinhold
Lyman Lake

STC Participates in Local Festivals and Events

By Lois Morey, Event Chairman

It's been another great year for sharing information about our club and trail with the general public. Throughout the warmer months our local area has various festivals where we are invited to set up our canopy and table laden with trail guides, maps, brochures, club patches and stickers, and other items relating to our 84-mile hiking trail. A large map of the trail is also displayed that helps draw attention to our booth showing locations of all the shelters and lots of other information. It is a great conversation starter!

A few of these events we participate in each year are the following: the Kettle Creek Valley Outdoor Show held in Cross Fork, the Potter-Tioga Maple Festival in Coudersport, The Eliot Ness Fest in Coudersport, Galeton Fall Festival, and the Falling Leaves Outdoor Show in Coudersport.

On May 6th of this year, I chaired the Maple Fest in Coudersport with the much-appreciated help from several dedicated club member volunteers. To all of you I wish to say thank you for all your help. This is one time that I honestly can say that I could not have done it without each one of you. From the setting up of the canopy and table that always needs extra hands-on deck to the end of the day when we tear down and pack up to head home. These tasks are as important as all the hours in between when we greet the visitors on the other side of the table. This is when we give them our undivided attention, answering their many various questions regarding the STS & STC. That day, for example, we had to tactfully tell many that, no, we are a hiking-only trail. Simply stated that means no ATV's, no snowmobiles, no motorized vehicles of any description, not even an e-bike, AND even no horses or bicycles! A foot path for hikers only has been our policy since the trail was formed in 1967. Sometimes we'll be surprised at the subjects that do come up. Even if we don't have all the answers, we share what we do know and learn from others along the way.

Fast forward to mid-July.....Eliot Ness Fest was held in Coudersport with long-time club member Gary Buchanan chairing. This fourth annual event goes back in time to the Roaring '20's when Eliot Ness, the famous

American crime-fighter, and his "Untouchable" federal agents, dedicated law enforcement and first responders, showed great bravery and integrity when Chicago area mob boss Al Capone shows up to take over the town. The event kicked off on Friday with a street performance to set the scene for a weekend of good guys vs. bad guys re-telling of the saga of Eliot Ness, who passed away in 1957 in Coudersport. Our club was given the opportunity to join in the fun by setting up our booth to share knowledge of our club and trail. Thanks go to Gary and all his helpers for another successful weekend!

This summer we once again volunteered to help with one of the water stations for the Annual God's Country Marathon along Route 6 between Galeton and Coudersport. This time we are not selling items but instead handing out cups of water and Gatorade to the runners as they pass by. Our canopy is set up with our large "Susquehannock Trail Club" banner prominently displayed.

For several years now STC members have participated in the annual Galeton Independence Day Parade held the first weekend of July during Red Suspender Weekend. What better time to advertise STS and STC to hundreds of people by putting our tool trailer in the parade towed by the truck driven by Bill Boyd, our current Trail Care Crew Leader and treasurer. This is followed by a group of "hikers" dressed in appropriate hiking attire with walking sticks. Bill always says the trailer is our "traveling billboard". Another great way of advertising!

At the time of this writing, two more festivals are scheduled for the last weekend of September: the Galeton Fall Festival and the Falling Leaves Outdoor Show in Coudersport. Both events draw hundreds of visitors just when the leaves are changing here in Potter County.

We've been participating in these events and festivals for several years now. Good PR is very important. It's not always about how much we sell, but rather how well we portray our 84-mile trail system in a way that allows visitors to walk away from our table feeling, "Wow! I'd like to see for myself what this trail is like and maybe even join their club!". Reminds me of that saying, "I'll have what they are having...."!

CASP CREW RETURNS

By Wanda Shirk

Dave Tosten is a Mennonite member of the STC, a camporee attender, and circuit hiker #1219. After completing -- and loving -- the STS loop, Dave put our club in touch with a service group called CASP -- Conservative Anabaptist Service Project. As things turned out, only one young man, Abe Peachy, was able to be recruited via CASP for a month of volunteering for trail work in 2022, but Abe came. He likes working and camping outside, with quiet hours in nature. Abe worked for four weeks on the STS in May 2022, and on a few days recruited a friend or two to help. Abe and his friends completed long stretches of sidehill trail widening and brushcutting. Abe also cleared blowdowns, fixed a muddy patch where a spring washed out trail on the Hammersley stretch, built a flat-rock bridge, and created a water-bottle filling station there. It has held up well on that improved trail section for the sixteen months since then.

This year, all on his own initiative, Abe came back for another month of volunteer trail work. Abe worked approximately 100 trail hours in August. For three days, he also recruited his dad, William (age 65), his younger brother Amos, and four other young men from their church. The men camped at the group camping area at Ole Bull State Park, and once again a fabulous amount of sidehill widening and leveling, brushcutting, blowdown clearing, and even "comfort station" cleaning at shelters was accomplished. The hard, manual labor of sidehill work was done mainly on Porter Branch (mile 43-44), Lieb Run going in to Cross Fork (mile 48-49), and the Elkhorn-Hammersley stretch (mile 54).

A September backpacker commented in our most recent circuit-hiker log on how impressed he was with the recently widened trail on Lieb Run and in the Hammersley, where the hiker also noted that many blowdowns had recently been cleared.

The STC is very grateful for the hundreds of volunteer hours donated by these young men. Abe also worked with our STC crew on August 10, the camporee-workoree day, and worked two days with Joe Thompson, who came down from Ithaca to work with Abe last year and again this year.

The club provided food for the volunteers. On most days Abe did his own cooking -- eggs for breakfast, PBJs or other sandwiches for lunch, and whatever fixin's we

handed Abe for his suppers -- but when his friends were here for several days we had a couple of our best STC cooks, John and Jan Halter, cater meals for the group at the park pavilion. Club vice president John Zimmer also worked with Abe for several days -- and took Abe home with him and fed him well.

The food costs were substantial for a group of hard-working young men, but we got the best of the bargain in terms of bang-for-the-buck from their labors. If you are among those who donated to the STC this year, know that your donation helped to fund a great crew of volunteers who contributed mightily to making the STS better than ever. Thank you!

The total trail hours add up as follows:

- Abe's work: 98.5 hours
- Abe's 6 friends on 3 days: 107.75 hours
- Abe's dad, William: 7.0 hours
- Joe Thompson: 11.0 hours

TOTAL 224.25 hours

Note that this also does not count the drive time from wherever they all live, which I think is about 2.5 or 3 hours each way to get to Ole Bull.

Jim Bowser's Memorial "Jim Bowser's Spirit Lives Here"



Photo by Dave McMillan

PAUL H. LENZ

March 29, 1938 Newark, N.J.
November 30, 2022 Cornwall, PA

By Janet Smith

Paul H. Lenz had always enjoyed the outdoors. Since childhood Paul took advantage of every opportunity to be outside. In his youth Paul was active and worked at a scout camp in New Jersey. As he aged, he became an avid hiker, explored biking and developed an interest in educational travel. His desire to explore and continue learning led to many adventures.

Paul became a teacher after graduating from Franklin & Marshall college in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He advanced his career with a Doctorate degree from Rutgers University and expanded his skills as a Health Scientist Administrator and researcher for the National Institute of Health (NIH). As a trained endocrinologist, Paul taught classes in cell biology, biochemistry, anatomy & physiology and endocrinology. He spent many hours giving knowledge to his students. After all the work in the classroom Paul realized his need to return to the outdoors as retirement approached.

Paul retired in 2000 after a satisfying 34-year career. He now had more time to explore his interests, new hobbies and search out a place to call home. In these years he developed a talent and enjoyment with photography. For this talent he earned and was awarded the "Master in Photography" in his camera club. By 2008 Paul settled in Cornwall, PA. where he was close to friends and nature. Over the years Paul hiked many trails in Pennsylvania and across the country. The Susquehanna Trail (STS) and the Appalachian Trail (AT) were just two of many that he completed with friends. His desire to keep moving led him to bike the Pine Creek trail and the Creeper trail to name a few. As he realized his hiking could not last forever Paul explored travel and adventure trips with "Road Scholar" also known as "Elder Hostel" in earlier years. He kept his sense of adventure and desire to learn. Paul explored areas like southeast Alaska on the west coast to the "Roosevelt Cottage" on Campobello Island, New Brunswick, Canada on the east coast. His desire to be outdoors, learn, enjoy new areas, and

explore continued throughout his lifetime. Paul's years of outdoor adventures provided him with developing close friendships in many areas.

There are no true words to describe the loss of this man. Paul enriched so many lives. He was the Rainbow after a shower. He is the Spring Flower who has faded and gone. He was a Rock and gave strength to many friends. He is so truly Missed. He is Gone but not Forgotten!



Photo by Janet Smith

Christmas Party / Monthly Meeting

This year's Christmas Party will be a luncheon gathering at Sweden Valley Methodist Church Community Bldg.

Location - Rt. 6, 4 miles east of Coudersport. Park and enter at the back of the building.

The party will begin at noon, on Sat. Dec 9 with a dish-to-share meal followed by a brief business meeting.

The usual gift exchange game will follow. To participate, bring a wrapped gift, labeled "man," "woman," or "either" in the range of \$5.00 - \$15.00, or perhaps homemade fudge, jam, jerky, or other treat or crafted item.

Phone Penny Weinhold (814) 274-9858 with questions.

Welcome New Members

Regular Memberships:

- Alfred Nyby, Culver, IN
- Audrey Oakley, Verona, NJ
- Nicole and Jennifer Ent, Galetton, PA
- Bonnie Franklin, Coudersport, PA
- Stephen Limeburner, Coudersport, PA
- Theresa Pierson, Coudersport, PA
- Alexander Pyles, Baltimore, MD
- Jessica Songster, Coudersport, PA
- Jennifer & Kenneth Baker, New Cumberland, PA
- Steven Frattare, Rochester, NY
- Bill Maher, Alexandria, VA
- Jim Delgrosso, Jr., Bethlehem, PA
- Richard Nelson, Coopersburg, PA

Life Membership:

-



Photo by Curt Weinhold

Little Lyman Run Vista

Winter Frolic Dinner / Monthly Meeting

In February we resume the Winter Frolic Dinner after an absence of the event for a couple of years due to COVID

The dinner and meeting will be held at the Susquehannock Lodge on Saturday, February 10

The featured speaker will be Mr. Ed McCrea, of Coudersport, President of North American Environmental Education Association. The program will be on his recent trip to Antarctica.

Details and a reservation form will be included in the winter newsletter. Remember to get your reservations in early as there is seating for only 51 at the lodge.

New Circuit Hiker Award Recipients

- 1300 William Maher, Jr., Alexandria, VA
- 1301 Keith D. Martin, Clifton Park, NY
- 1302 David Hooper, Clifton Park, NY
- 1303 Jeff Yurko, Clifton Park, NY

STC Camporee, August '23



Photo by Curt Weinhold

Guest speaker Thomas Keller, Furbearer Biologist, Pennsylvania Game Commission addresses the club members in the Ole Bull pavilion.



Photo by Curt Weinhold



Susquehannock Trail Club
PO Box 643
Coudersport PA 16915

2023 Event Schedule

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

Saturday, Nov 11	Monthly Meeting Dish to share meal followed by meeting.	Sweden Hill Church Intersection of Sweden Hill and Brookland Roads, Coudersport, PA
Saturday, Dec 9	Monthly Meeting / Christmas Party Dish to share meal followed by meeting & party See details in the newsletter	Sweden Valley Methodist Church Community Bldg., Rt. 6, 4 miles east of Coudersport
Saturday, Jan 13	Monthly Meeting Dish to share meal followed by meeting.	Lumber Museum PA Rt 6, Ulysses, PA
Saturday, Feb 10	Monthly Meeting & Winter Frolic Meal by Susquehannock Lodge followed by meeting See details in the newsletter	Susquehannock Lodge PA Rt 6, Ulysses, PA