

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.

Winter 2026



Club members celebrate at December meeting: Wayne Baumann, Penny Weinhold, Paul Fedalen, Curt Weinhold, Joe Allis, Barb Allis, John Zimmer, Alice Buchanan, Jayne Fitzgerald, Gary Buchanan, Janet Smith, Barb Miller, Bill Boyd, Lois Morey, Jay Stuckey, Wanda Shirk.

STC IS KTA 2025 CLUB OF THE YEAR!

The Susquehannock Trail Club won "**2025 Club of the Year**" honors from the Keystone Trails Association at KTA's annual awards program, held this year on December 6 at the Ned Smith Center for Nature in Mifflinburg.

Outstanding trail maintenance and the completion of a tenth trail shelter on the 84 mile STS got the attention of the awards committee, along with construction of several bridges in the past few years, but the STC scored high on other criteria for the award as well. In the category of trail promotion, the STC's excellent website, FarOut guide, and newsletters stood out, and the hike program was noted. The committee also recognized the STC for extensive presence in local events such as its water station for the God's Country Marathon, its participation in the annual Galeton July 4th parade, and tabling at the Kettle Creek Outdoor Show and various spring and fall festivals in Galeton and Coudersport.

President's Message

By Wanda Shirk



LIVING THE GOOD LIFE

Ah yes... another January! Long, quiet, dark winter nights. Moments looking into a fireplace or gazing out across a snowy landscape. The end of one year; the beginning of a new one. Do these times inspire reflection on life, how it is unfolding, how our choices influence it, and what a good life is?

Psychologists who have posed the question "What is a good life?" to thousands of people say the answers fall into three basic categories.

For some, the good life is *a happy life* – one that is basically pleasant, comfortable, satisfying, sometimes fun, and containing more joy than sadness.

For some, the good life is *a meaningful life* – one that is grounded in purpose and connection, that involves making the world a little better and feeling like one has made a difference.

For some, the good life is one that they consider *a "psychologically rich" life* – one that has variety and complexity and perhaps adventure. It contains interesting and novel experiences, and it produces personal growth from new insights and shifting perspectives.

Presumably we all want all those aspects of a good life, but when we give thought to what we will value

most in the long run, we can make choices that result for each of us in our own best life.

You can live all these best possible lives with the STS and the STC!

Connection to nature is often a component of *a happy life*. When we think of the demands of modern life, the slow computers and incessant texts and emails and news stories and time pressures and sometimes difficult people... and... well, let's not go on with that. How about a day in the forest, a walk on a friendly footpath, the sounds of a stream or birds or rustling leaves? Now that's a good day, and now I'm talking about a happy life, a good life!

For a *meaningful life*, STC members can plug into many satisfying ways to make our world a little better. Take a pair of loppers on your walk, or maybe a chain saw if you can! Make a difference on the trail. Spend a day at an STC booth at an event answering questions, or lead a hike to introduce newbies to the trail. Cook up a good dish for the club's monthly lunch so others are glad they came. My personal favorite days of 2025 were days when I took a brushcutter for long hikes on the STS and cleared barberry, briars, or a meadow of tall brush. I went home tired but feeling wonderfully satisfied, reflecting on a job well done. Among the many ways to serve and volunteer in our rural world, participation with STC activities and trail improvement is a true community service. Be a do-gooder, not a do-nothing!

As for a *rich life* of new experiences, anyone's first circuit of the STS is rich with all kinds of learning and adventure, and it's only the beginning. We could spend forever just exploring the trails of the Susquehannock State Forest, or we can use our experience here as a springboard to jump off to other wonderful trails of the Keystone State, the Appalachian Trail corridor, or National Parks USA! There's so much to learn that enriches, deepens, and expands our lives.

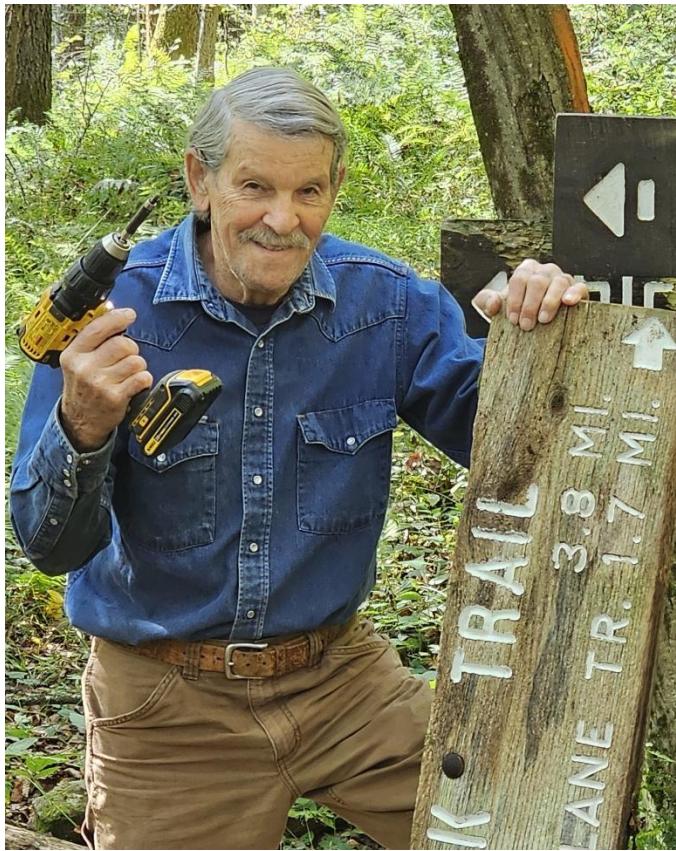
For most of us, a good life is more than personal comfort, pleasure, and ease. A good life involves the generosity and joy of *doing good* and *being good*. It's character and it's kindness.

The STC was KTA's 2025 Club of the Year because we have so many active, cheerful, productive volunteers who show up for everything from trail maintenance to manning a water station for the God's Country Marathon, people who shuttle hikers or maintain a website or manage a member data base or our assortment of tools! Thank you, every one of you, for your generosity of time, spirit, and membership in 2026 to make the coming year another great one for our club and our trail.

You'll find yourself living *the good life*!

Trail Report

By Bill Boyd



We've come a long way since that time we decided that the STS should have a shelter for hikers and back-packers. Our first thought was who do we get to build one for us. Looking around, we found a contractor in upstate NY who would put up a really nice looking one for us - then we saw the price - \$7500 plus trucking, or maybe around \$8000. There must have been some signs of disappointment in our little group - we probably said Oh-oh, this isn't going to work - not with about \$80 in our treasury!.

After much further discussion we decided that we could probably build one ourselves - and we've never looked back. Turns out we have plenty of people with the know-how and ambition to handle jobs like this. In fact they looked forward to it - we ended up with around 25 people involved one way or another.

Now to find some logs - we did a good bit of looking, but couldn't seem to find any suitable and

accessible ones. Then we find out our club secretary, Lois Morey, has a woodlot with about the right-sized pine trees, which she would donate. We had access to some (amateur) logging equipment, a Kubota, big trailer, small trailers, saws, and trucks. So the STC logging crew got busy, felling, limbing and cutting to length and logs we could use.

Then came the skidding out to the 18' trailer. and hauling around 20 miles west, to MINA, where our friend Karl Altenhein had just resurrected a 1926 Ireland sawmill. Karl sawed for gas money only, and he probably needed it. The mill was powered with a 100HP Twin-Cities gasoline engine - part of our entertainment was hearing that thing run.

We had Karl slab the logs on three sides, so that they would lay up flat and give us a flat wall inside - that done they were hauled to my ranch here on Summit Road in Hebron Twp. Over the winter they were cut to size, and sorted to see how they would fit.

In the Spring of 2016 the shelter work finally got under way. Using the big trailer we hauled a batch of the logs, first to Rt. 144 toward Cross Fork, up Osborne Road, to Shepherd Road, right on that , to a well road, left on that down to the pipeline, left on that down to the shelter site at Scoval Branch.



Suspension Bridge Rehabbed over Cross Fork Creek

By Wanda Shirk



The STS crosses the meandering Cross Fork Creek twice. For nearly five decades the first crossing, at mile 19.75, was unbridged. Hikers often removed socks and boots and waded in knee- or even thigh-high water. A log bridge placed in 2015 washed out in 2024, and replacing it is high on the priority list of the trails team in 2026.

The second crossing of Cross Fork Creek, three-quarters of a mile later at 20.5, is deeper and wider, after a tributary called Little Lyman Run merges with Cross Fork Creek at mile 19.85. A suspension bridge constructed in 2001 eliminated the fording problem at 20.5 for hikers, but over time the boards deteriorated. At some places, a foot or a leg could go through the walkway if hikers didn't step carefully.

Joe Allis replaced all the boards and steps on this bridge on Nov. 19. The club paid for the lumber and hardware, at a cost of \$520.75 for materials.

For this, we thank Joe most heartily, but we also thank all the donors whose financial gifts to the trail make projects like this possible.



D-Mag Re-Roofed

By Wanda Shirk



Long-time trail maintainer Jeff Raisch at the Dynamite House

Much of the work done on the trail goes unnoticed. Once a trunk has been cleared, few hikers notice, but they would have noticed the obstacle if they had had to climb over, under, through, or around it. Even less likely to be noticed is roof-repair or replacement, but Joe Allis and Doug Wetherbee took the initiative, time, and labor to fix the roof on the CCC Dynamite House Shelter last fall. Also known as the "D-Mag" -- short for Dynamite Magazine, to save syllables for speaking or letters for typing -- the historical, 1930s brick dynamite storage building was made into the first trail shelter on the STS and remains the only shelter not in the 3-sided lean-to style. A decade ago, Joe replaced the dangerously heavy metal door on the D-Mag and built the steps and porch to make the building a usable shelter.

Many find the windowless building claustrophobic if the door is shut, and it's a dark place that never exactly warms up. Nevertheless, it gets use. One November night two trail runners stopped with the expectation of using the shelter for a few hours sleep. They found it already full, with four bodies tightly packing the interior to capacity. The trail runners set up their tiny tents outside to try to get some rest, but the weather was both cold and wet outside. They could not sleep, so after a couple hours they packed up at "Oh-Dark-Thirty" and made their way almost three miles further to the Cherry Springs Shelter at mile 13.3.

It's surprising the amount of use the shelters can get even in November -- but not surprising how much they are appreciated!

STC Plans 2026 Agenda

By Wanda Shirk

Pennsylvania has 26 footpaths of 25 or more miles in length. Most have no trail shelters for backpackers. Over the past decade the STS has joined the Appalachian Trail and the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail in development of shelter facilities for a backpacker-friendly trail. The Morgan Hollow Shelter beside "Ted's Truss" at Young Woman's Creek, STS mile 36.8, built in August 2025, made the tenth shelter on the 84 mile STS. That crowning achievement warranted selection of the STC as KTA's "Club of the Year."

The STC continues to have trail improvement objectives for 2026 -- and beyond. 2026 plans include the following:

Our own "Mark & Doug Construction Team" is taking a break from shelters and weighing options for a new bridge over Cross Fork Creek at mile 19.7. The log bridge built there a decade ago washed out in Hurricane Debby on August 9, 2024. Bill Boyd, Dave Hajzus, and Janet Smith have explored the area to consider an optimal site, perhaps involving a few yards of trail relocation. Stay tuned for updates! After three years of volunteer help by a Mennonite youth group, with substantial treadway improvements on Scoval Branch and the Hammersley Trail in 2022, 2023, and 2024, we missed the strength of youth in 2025 and so applied for the PA Outdoor Corps for projects in 2025. Applications accepted, we expect six young adults ages 18-25 to work on miles 56-57 in the Hammersley for treadway improvement from May 4-7. Chris Bell, our section maintainer for the Hammersley for the past decade, has already been making preparations so we can maximize the time with the Outdoor Corps. The club took advantage of December holiday sale prices at our local Stihl dealership to purchase an additional brushcutter and other equipment, to the tune of about \$1000, to prepare for this major project of treadway widening and leveling in our most remote trail section.

A different team from the PA Outdoor Corps is slated to come for four days sometime between Nov. 12 and 18, for construction projects to be announced later, depending partly on what our own bridge crews get done over the summer.



Camporee 2026

By Janet Smith

The STC is bringing back their Camporee – Meeting – Trail Work -- Hikes and a great time during the 2nd weekend in August. Mark your calendars! Save these dates – August 6th Thursday thru August 9th Sunday at the Ole Bull State Park.

Camping is FREE. The club has reserved 10 sites in camping area #1. Sites #'s 46-48-49-50-51-53-63-64-66 & 67 in a central location. A view of the area can be seen on the State Parks website. View camping map for Ole Bull State Park. Sites will have electric access, picnic tables, modern restrooms/hot showers close by and plenty of space for tents. There is a beach area for swimming, Kettle Creek along side for fishing and a few hikes & trail work (for those interested) will be planned.

A meeting will be held Saturday @ 2:00 with a dish to pass will follow.

Bring your smiles, bring your hiking boots, or just a comfy chair to share your time, stories and make new memories.

Info: Park is located 18 miles south of Galeton – 8 miles north of Cross Fork.

Please contact one of the following for a tentative head count by July:

Angela Jackson	angelamjackson83@gmail.com
Barb Miller	barbmill@fastmail.com
Janet Smith	jsmith2202@verizon.net
Pat Childs	childs4@roadrunner.com
Susie Gribble	4everurfaithful@gmail.com

Hike Report

Friday Oct 10, Lyman Lake State Park

By Pat Childs



Pat, Wayne and Elizabeth

(Photo by Pat Childs)

We started at Rock Run road at 10 am under a chilly sunny sky. Pat, Elizabeth Kapoor, and Wayne Bauman walked the nicely mowed (by Doug Weatherbee) flat area of the Beehive Trail through a clear cut done Many years ago.

The colors were great and with little wind we hiked on comfortably to intersect with the Wildcat Trail. Turning onto it we started our decent through hemlocks and a forest of mature trees. We encountered an area cut by park personnel. Looked like they were felling dead or dying beech to prevent them from falling on the trail and creating a problem. Half way down we began to see water in Wildboy Run creek. Nice moving water sounds!

Back to Rock Run Rd we turned right onto the Spur Line Trail back to Lyman Run Rd near the campground. We crossed the road and started our way back to the Dam along the Lake trail. It wound through Hemlocks and followed the stream.

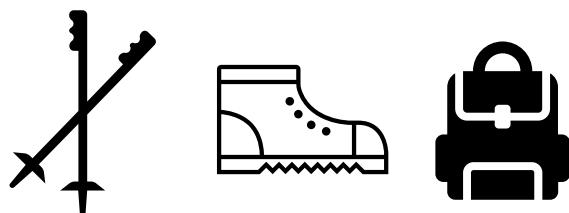


Photo by Pat Childs

We found some great rocks to sun on and just soak in the quiet unbroken only by the stream noises. Journeying on, we paused at the stream crossing (no Bridge) and decided to keep our boots dry. Turning right we followed a connector trail to the road and back to the picnic area near the parking lot. Great way to end the hike--- having lunch with fellow club members!



Photo by Pat Childs



STC MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Lois Morey, Corresponding and Membership Secretary

It's that time of year once again when your yearly regular membership dues are due, unless you have already paid them in advance. Please complete the renewal form, making note of any changes so that my records are kept up to date. Those of you who are life members on the 5-year payment plan, it's time to make that payment. If you have any questions regarding your membership, regardless of which category you have, feel free to reach out to me at loismorey46@gmail.com. **Please note that receipts will only be sent for donations over \$20 unless otherwise requested.** As always, prompt payment is greatly appreciated as well as getting your reservations in for the **Celebration and Recognition Dinner** well before the due date to ensure you have a seat! Otherwise, your name will be on a waiting list.

MARCH 14 at Susquehannock Lodge: Speaker will be George Conrad, president of the Standing Stone Trail Club. He will tell us all about the Standing Stone Trail and the "Thousand Steps."

Welcome New Members

Regular Memberships:

- Timothy Brown, Waverly, NY
- Nicole Buning, Waverly, NY
- George Conrad, Huntingdon, PA

- Terry & Elva Holtzapple, Coudersport, PA
- Edrienne Su, Albany, NY
- Matthew Wilson, Duncannon, PA

New Life Members:

- Tim & Leigh Williams, Waterford, PA

New Circuit Hiker Award Recipients

1356 Aisling O'Connell, Baltimore, MD
1357 Evan Farley, Baltimore, MD
1358 Leslie Cordova, Farmington Hills, MI
1359 Jeff Enterkin, Farmington Hills, MI
1360 Jeff Zabel, Farmington Hills, MI

1361 Sam Savage, Woodbine, MD
1362 Robert S. Kurtz, Pittsburgh, PA
1363 Misty Nielsen, Stevenson, MD
1364 Leigh "Feathers" Williams, Waterford, PA
1365 Tim "Squatch" Williams, Waterford, PA

1366 Steve Silberberg, Hull, MA
1367 Craig Richards, Plymouth MD
1368 Sherri Richardson, Melbourne, FL
1369 Sue Richards, Rockville, MD

STC LIFE MEMBERS

Clair Almeter (NY)	Ray Douglas	Joanne Heimer	Lowell/Barb Luft	Joy Olney	Gary/Ella Russell
Ilene Altenhein	Frank Eppinger (CT)	Samuel Hobbs (DE)	Dave/Pam Luthi	Rick/Carolyn Oyen (OH)	Karen Schenley (FL)
Wellis Balliet	Dave Errick	Bruce/Ruth Hollender	Thomas Lyon (CA)	Robert Peet	Mary Shannon
Jack Barnhart	Steve Erway	Art/Robin Huber	Dawn McManus	Ted Peet/Lee Wisel	Wanda Shirk
<i>Allen Berfield</i>	<i>Becky Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Larry/Viola Holtzapple</i>	<i>Michael Miklic</i>	<i>Tom Piasecki</i>	<i>Dave Singer</i>
<i>Jim Berger</i>	<i>Barry Fry</i>	<i>Jason/Tara Boyd Kemp</i>	<i>Lois Morey</i>	<i>Cyril Quatrone</i>	<i>Janet Smith</i>
Cindy Bower	Ed Graczyk/	Chris/Jackson Kemp (TX)	Kevin/Barbara Myer	Allan Reed	Tod Twichell
<i>Jim Bowser</i>	<i>Nancy Lounsbury</i>	<i>Charlie Kern</i>	<i>Joe/Nancy Nachtwey</i>	<i>Buck/Patty Roth</i>	<i>Tom Van Etten (NY)</i>
Bill Boyd	Dave/Dwina Hajzus	Rob Langgle	Alan/Georgette Nelson	Chad Rugh/	Tim/Leigh Williams
Pat Childs (NY)	Bill Hardam/	Janet Long	Jeff/Jo Nelson	April Castano	Glen/Karen Yasharian
Ben Cramer	Lorena Meuier	Beth Lounsbury	Wilfred Oliver (NY)	Allen "Buzz" Russell	John Zimmer*

We have life members from ten states: CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, OH, NY, PA, TX. Members listed above are from Pennsylvania unless otherwise noted.

The STC appreciates every one of our members, but we especially want to acknowledge and thank those who have made "forever" contributions. Life memberships: \$500 regular, \$400 senior, \$800 couple, \$600 senior couple. Life membership contributions fund the STC endowment fund, which pays 4% interest per year, so \$500 results in an annual distribution of \$20, more than paying the dues forever. Members listed in italics above are deceased but are "forever members," never forgotten. Please consider a life membership to the STC. *Legacy members have also included the STC in their will.

The STC also recognizes as life members our "Big Shoes" Lifetime Achievement Honorees: *Wil and Betty Ahn, Tom and Jayne Fitzgerald, Bob Knowles, Tom Leete, Dick Hribar, Bill Boyd, Joe and Barb Allis, Lois Morey, Curt and Penny Weinhold, and Bob and Helen Bernhard*



Susquehannock Trail Club
PO Box 643
Coudersport PA 16915

2026 Event Schedule

**Monthly meetings are on the second or third Saturday of each month.
Pot-luck lunch, followed by the club meeting, unless otherwise noted.
Bring a dish to share and your place setting.**



January 10	Lumber Museum	Trails forester Nate Confer will join our meeting.
February 21	Lumber Museum (third Saturday)	
March 14	Susquehannock Lodge, 5 p.m.	Celebration and Recognition Dinner
April 11	Brookland Retreat Center -	3 miles north of Rt. 6, next to Episcopal Church
May 16	Lumber Museum (third Saturday)	
June 13	Lyman Run State Park pavilion	
July 11	Lyman Run State Park pavilion	
Aug. 13-16	Camporee weekend -	Ole Bull State Park
Sept. 12	Lyman Run State Park pavilion	
Oct. 10	Lyman Run State Park pavilion	
Nov. 14	Lumber Museum	Report on 2nd Outdoor Corps workweek
Dec. 19	Lumber Museum (third Saturday)	Christmas party