The Rail-Trail Council of Northeast Pennsylvania is dedicated to renewing Northeast Pennsylvania’s historic pathways as recreational trails for all to enjoy.

New Lifetime Members
Kathy Bertelino & Richard Chesi, Union Dale, PA
Vincent Giampapa MD, Canadensis, PA

New Members
Stephen Bott, Thompson, PA
Christine Chesnick, Endicott, NY
Mitchell & Connie Cohen, Clarks Summit, PA
Bruce Campbell, Lancaster, PA
Linda & Randy Evans, Greenfield Twp, PA
Greater Forest City Business Alliance
Nina Nesky, New Milford, PA

Renewing Members
Bruce Adams, Lancaster, PA
Bruce & Eileen Baessler, Montrose, PA
Joseph A. Blaskiewicz, Honesdale, PA
Dale, PA
Vincent Giampapa MD, Canadensis, PA
Stephen Bott, Thompson, PA
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Mitchell & Connie Cohen, Clarks Summit, PA
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The Trail Town Festival will be held again on August 3rd, 4th, and 5th. This is a week-end long event that celebrates Forest City as our first ‘Trail Town’ on the D&H Rail-Trail. The Rail-Trail Council is actively working with FC businesses, the Borough and school district to bring more attention and usage to the trail as well as the encouraging trail users to visit historic Forest City. The RTC is working on signage from trail to town and town to trail—which is only 2 blocks from Main Street. The entire schedule of events is inside.

Trail events will feature the Coal Cracker Race on the D&H at 9 AM. The race is a ¼ marathon or a 2 mile run. It is organized by and benefits the Forest City Cross-Country Team. The registration form can be found on dhdistancerun.com or call the office for a form. Register day of race starting at 8 AM.

A bike ride for all levels will begin at 11 AM starting at the FC Trailhead. Ride with a group if you’d like and hear about the mining and railroad history.

New this year will be a historical bus tour of the trail at 1 PM. This is geared towards our long-time supporters and seniors who may not be able to get out walking or biking. We’ll have available, a handicap accessible bus as well as a small school bus. Please RSVP to the RT office if you’d like to see the trail and talk about its history.

Forest City Trail Town Festival

July 2019
Volume 27, Number 2

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C A L E N D A R

AUGUST 22
RTC Picnic/Meeting, Lake Idlewild Pavilion.
5/6 PM (Note: 1 hour earlier)

SEPTEMBER 26
RTC Dinner/Meeting, RTC Office, Cables Store
Building, 6/7 PM
The Agnes Flood and the D&H Rail-Trail
The floods in 1972 from tropical storm Agnes devastated Wilkes-Barre and the Wyoming Valley. It disrupted rail operations through the Northeast. Particularly hard hit was the Erie Lackawanna line from Buffalo through the Southern Tier of New York. Normally, Erie Lackawanna trains would run from Buffalo over Southern Tier rails to Binghamton, then south down EL tracks over the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct to Scranton. However, due to bridges damaged by flooding west of Owego, NY, EL trains were diverted over alternate routes.

Eastbound EL trains from Buffalo were sent over the Penn Central route to Syracuse and Albany. Eventually these trains were then routed down what was then the Penn Division of the competing Delaware and Hudson Railway, today’s D&H Rail-Trail.

While this routing was unusual, the route from Lanesboro over Ararat to Carbondale was originally constructed by the Erie as the Jefferson Railroad. The trackage was purchased outright by the Delaware and Hudson Railway in 1955 and after the merger of the Erie with the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western in 1960, EL traffic used the Lackawanna route to Scranton. Richard J. Allen, Sr., a D&H trainman known as Richie by his fellow rail workers, reports being involved in several EL train movements that were redirected from Erie Lackawanna rails over the Delaware & Hudson route to Carbondale because of the Agnes floods.

Normally based out of Binghamton, Dick Allen, as most of us know him, was first called to run a regular D&H train to its destination of Mechanicville Rail Yard, near Albany. On June 26, 1972, he and a train crew were then bused to Syracuse, New York to bring Erie Lackawanna Train TCS4 to Mohawk Yard in Schenectady, NY. Train TCS4 was a trailer-train that originated in Chicago and headed to Scranton with EL engines 3309 and 3632 and 103 cars. At Mohawk, the engines were run around the train and a new crew brought it down the D&H route to Nineveh Junction in New York and onto Penn Division rails down through Jefferson Junction and over Ararat to Carbondale. Proceeding through the Mid-Valley, the train then ran back onto Erie Lackawanna home rails to its Scranton destination.

On June 27th, Erie Lackawanna train HF 97 had come west over the Starrucca Viaduct on EL tracks as far as Jeff Junction with engines 3612 and 3610 and 105 cars but could not proceed further west due to the flooding along the Southern Tier route. Allen and a D&H crew were sent to Jeff Junction to pick up the train and take it to Mohawk Yard in Schenectady. At Jeff Junction, a set of power there first pulled the train south on the D&H tracks, then cut off. Allen and the crew had to take the two EL engines off what had been the front of the train and move them to what had been the rear of the train next to the caboose. The result was that EL caboose 895 sat right next to the power all the way back to Mohawk, which was very unusual for that time.

The flood drama continued on June 29th as Allen had already taken a D&H Extra from Binghamton north to Colonie, NY. At 11:20 P.M., he got a call to go to Mohawk Yard and take another Erie Lackawanna Train TCS4 from Schenectady down the D&H and over the Penn Division all the way to Green Ridge Yard in Scranton.

This and other rerouting continued for at least a month after the June 23rd floods. Through the eyes of one trainman, we can see that the hilly route of the Erie/D&H over which we now hike and bike had an important role to play in helping railroads cope with the disruption caused by the Agnes Floods in 1972. Written by Bert Prohaska, based upon a recorded interview with Richard J. Allen, Sr.

Photo: A fisherman at Brandt along the Starrucca Creek during a rail fan trip led by the famed D&H ALCO PA Units 17, 19, and 18. April 21, 1974. Photo by Richard J. Allen, Sr.

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**Membership Renewal Form**

Please renew! The date on the mailing label on the reverse indicates when your membership expires.

- [ ] Lifetime/Founding $500
- [ ] Patron/Sponsor $250
- [ ] Club/Organization $100
- [ ] Family $35
- [ ] Individual $20
- [ ] Senior/Student $15

- [ ] I am available for trail cleanups.
- [ ] Call me to discuss a corporate donation.
- [ ] I am interested in finding out more about the “Trail Tender” program.
- [ ] Send my newsletter electronically (instead of by mail) to: __________________________
- [ ] Send me a NEW brochure.
- [ ] I am willing to volunteer for the D&H Caboose restoration project
- [ ] I am enclosing a donation to be used towards the D&H Caboose restoration project

**NAME**

**PHONE NUMBER**

**STREET ADDRESS**

**E-MAIL ADDRESS**

**CITY**

**STATE**

**ZIP**

Please update your address here if necessary. Make checks payable to Rail-Trail Council of Northeast PA
P.O. Box 32, Union Dale PA 18470 / Phone: 570-679-9300 / E mail: trails@nep.net
Trail Updates

• The 20-mile trail Carbondale to Ararat is receiving a lot of trail users, now that the D&H connects to the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail. Additional amenities were recently installed along the Fell Township section of D&H such as trees, benches and picnic tables. Landscape improvements will begin soon on the Forest City Trailhead.

• The Union Dale section of D&H has had some drainage and surface work done. The Council has applied for grant funding to improve this 2-mile section of trail, which was resurfaced back in 2006. Hopefully we’ll hear this fall.

• Trail grading and drainage improvements continue in mid-sections of the D&H, around Thompson to Ararat, with plans to gate these sections. A culvert collapse at Sinkhole Swamp, took some time to clean out and re-establish flow. Thankfully only the ends had to be removed, with the center intact.

• The Endless Mountains Trail will also be receiving much needed drainage and trail grading, thanks to a grant from the Endless Mountains Heritage Region. Work is scheduled to begin in the fall.

Susquehanna Studio Open July 6–7

Susquehanna Studio will be open to the public on July 6th and 7th from 1 to 4. Three rooms will feature Peruvian Folk Art by Jeronimo Lozano, quilts by Union Dale quilt maker Becky Townsend, trout sculptures by Mark Chuck, and paintings by Elizabeth Stark and Robert Stark.

On Sunday afternoon there will be music by composer and singer Sara Trunzo and the Veriditas People’s Ensemble featuring Lou Rogai, Julian Rogai, Patrick McGee, and friends. There will be readings by Alison Armstrong and others.

Susquehanna Studio is free and open to the public. It is a smoke free and alcohol free arts center at 16 Lewis Lake Road in Downtown Union Dale. Bring a chair or a blanket depending on weather.

Meet RT Board Member Jon Burdick

If local history intrigues you or exploring the outdoors is on your bucket list Jon Burdick may be the guy for you. Jon, a resident of Oakland and new to the Rail-Trail board, is a true trail and outdoor enthusiast, a thorough local historian and a skilled nature photographer. It can be said with certainty that Jon “likes to keep busy.” These hobbies, he says, have “mushroomed” beyond what he had ever imagined for his retired life. When asked where this all began for Jon he recalls his “passions developed from tragedy.” Losing his wife in 2001 Jon knew he had to fill his time with positive activities so he took up photography. This new found hobby led him to craft fairs where he sold photos he had taken and also old ones he had been collecting of the area. There he’d meet so many locals and became intrigued by the stories they had of a time past. Those stories struck a chord with him and he began researching and diving into the regional history. This he says is always a “continuing process” and believes is important to “preserve it for future generations.” His avid interest in local history has landed him a seat on the board of the Historical Society of Montrose and Free Library Association. Jon says that becoming a Rail-Trail Council board member in April was “a dream” and has sparked his curiosity of coal mining history and the Gravity Railroad.

His most recent activity he pursues almost daily is hiking; everywhere! If you were to take a short scroll through his Facebook page there is no doubt you’d be completely impressed with the amount of miles Jon has tracked this past year and the 65 lbs he has lost. He can usually be found with a small group of local friends, also Rail-Trail board members, as they’ll adventure all over our surrounding areas. When discussing these adventures Jon is always so enthusiastic making you wish you had joined him. Just recently Jon, Dana Rockwell and Craig Benson hiked the entire D&H Rail-Trail in four days, ten miles a day, laughing about the good time they all had. When asked what part of the trail does he enjoy the most he pondered a bit saying “it’s so hard to say, I guess a tie between the switch back trails of Buck’s Falls Ravine and the lower part of the trail below Stillwater Damn where the trail follows the Lackawanna River.” “Spontaneous” was a word Jon used often while we chatted about his almost daily outdoor explorations. He says “he really never knows where he’s going to end up or with whom, but he makes an effort each day to get outside.”

Jon is a great example of what we strive for as we maintain and improve our trails. We strive to preserve the history, to offer our community a chance to engage with nature and offer a place to be “spontaneous” each day, and we hope for the discovery of new hobbies and passions that “mushroom” into life pursuits and joys. We thank Jon for all of his hard work and feel lucky to have him on our Board.
**FOREST CITY TRAIL TOWN FESTIVAL**

**August 2–3–4, 2019**

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**Friday August 2nd**

6:30–8:30 PM Forest City Regional Homecoming Celebration, High School

9:00 PM Fireworks, Kennedy Park

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**Saturday August 3rd**

**TRAIL EVENTS**

9 AM **Coal Cracker Race** - 2 mile and quarter marathon. D&H Rail-Trail. Benefits FC XC Team.

Registration form on dhdistancerun.com

11 AM **Bike Rides** — Various mileages for all abilities on newly resurfaced D&H Rail-Trail. Ride on own or with leaders

1 PM **Historical Bus Tour of D&H Rail-Trail.** Forest City Trailhead, Please RSVP 679-9300. Railroad and mining history tour for seniors, disabled.

**MAIN STREET EVENTS**

10 AM – 4 PM **Main Street Vendors** – arts & crafts, food

1 PM – 4 PM **Kids events:** Paint-a-Truck, Bounce house, Pony rides, Touch-a-Truck

11 AM – 2 PM **Corn Hole Tournament** – Check-in 11 AM, Bags 12 PM

2 PM – 4 PM **Rick Priebe Music** – Lynnette’s Twirlers Demonstration

4 PM **Historical Bus Tour of D&H Rail-Trail.** Forest City Trailhead, Please RSVP 679-9300. Railroad and mining history tour for seniors, disabled.

5 PM – 7 PM **Red Dragon Karate Demonstration**

7:30 PM Live music

9 PM **Light Parade**

10 PM After Parade Party DG’s Bar & Grill

**FOREST CITY AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY EVENTS**

9 AM – 7 PM Museum is open, Corner of Main & Dundaff

11 AM – 12 PM Distinguished Citizens Awards Program

12 PM – 1 PM Kids Color Run

1 PM – 3 PM Kiddle Carnival, Museum basement

3 PM – 4 PM Forest City American Legion Post 100th Anniversary Celebration

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**Sunday August 4th**

9 AM – 12 PM Fishing Derby Kennedy Park

12 PM - 2 PM Chicken BBQ, Kennedy Park, Forest City Parks & Recreation

12 PM - 3 PM Pickle Ball Tournament, Kennedy Park, GFCBA

More information or to register:
gfcba13@gmail.com

Tickets available FC businesses
Caboose Restoration:
Full Speed Ahead

The restoration of D&H Caboose 35706 has begun! Remember, this is a pusher caboose that actually ran on our D&H. It was built during WWII in the Oneonta shops in 1942, specifically designed to be pushed against by the biggest steam (and later) diesel locomotives that the railroad owned. The D&H constructed 10 of these that were made from a pattern, so they probably assembled them like a kit at the Oneonta car shop, which if you think about it, was ahead of its time in using an assembly line to turn out the parts and build 10 cabooses, numbered 35700 to 35709. They probably were built over a period of 2 months, as the United States was at war, and coal from the Lackawanna and Wyoming Valleys was needed. (Thanks to Michael Eggleston for caboose information)

The tongue & groove wood siding has been purchased and routed and in now ready for primer. Tom Feddock, a local craftsman, is heading up the restoration, but always appreciates volunteers, like Mel Seeley who assisted in scraping off the grime, following some water-blasting. Primer is now being applied to the cleaned wheels and metal frame. The wooden frame materials are being cut and soon the siding will be primed and attached. Stop by to see the progress!