On September 8th the Rail-Trail Council hosted its 11th annual D&H Distance Run half-marathon and 5k. Around 300 runners registered for this event mostly locals, but a few traveling from New York, New Jersey and all the way from Maine! A cool sunny morning was gladly welcome for the 9 AM start. Just before the race started, WBRE’s Stefano DiPietro shared a few words as our celebrity starter. Runners were able to enjoy the newly improved trail from Forest City all the way to Union Dale and back. Congratulations to Justin Gagliardi from Peckville, who was our repeat winner with a time of only 1 hour and 21 minutes and to Melissa Knott from Smithtown New York, whom finished in 1 hour and 32 minutes. This is Rail-Trail’s major fundraiser and all proceeds are used for maintaining and developing the D&H Rail-Trail. Next year’s run will be on September 13th 2020.

D&H Distance Run raffle tickets are still available at our office. The drawing will take place at the RTC November 21st board meeting.

The committee would like to thank the 100 volunteers and local emergency services for bringing the enthusiasm and talent it takes to insure a well run event. We would also like to say “THANK YOU” to all our sponsors who contributed generously, many of whom have been with us since the beginning. To find other results from the race please visit https://results.chronotrack.com/event/results/event/event-53582.

October 2019

Volume 27, Number 3

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

NEW MEMBERS

Sean Bryk, Wilkes Barre, PA
Mark & Tammy Cykosky, Greentown, PA
Edward J Fortuna, Taylor, PA
Kate & Mark Moore, Susquehanna, PA
Joe Ruddy, Scranton, PA
Richard Schlautka, Forest City, PA
Jen & Nic Spiteri, Thompson, PA
Robert Van Tassel, Thompson, PA
Bob Terpak, Harrisburg, PA
Mary Tomaine, Carbondale, PA
Rob & Becky Townsend, Forest City, PA

RENEWING MEMBERS

Bonnie Alco, Waverly, PA
Senator Lisa Baker, Dallas, PA
Debbie & Gary Bates, Waymart, PA
Cheryl & Randall Blauvelt, Westwood, NJ
Jon F Bauer, Rose Valley, PA
Robert Burshnick, Forest City, PA
John Clemo, Union Dale, PA
Theresa J Cohen, Wellington, FL
Owen Conaghan Jr, Clifford Twp, PA
Clair M. Cook, Susquehanna, PA
Paul Covert, Madison Twp, PA
Frank R Currier, Thompson, PA
Alfred Defeo, Starlight, PA
Steve & Cindy Detwiler, Susquehanna, PA
David & Heather Elgena, Landenberg, PA
Alan & Mary Ellen Gillick, Clifford Twp, PA
Sylvia Holteen, Ambler, PA
Kenneth Hannington, Washington, DC
Wanda & Ed Juersivich, Union Dale, PA
Dan & Diane Kimberly, Susquehanna, PA
Donald & Elisabeth Kurinda, Midland, MI
Gary Lupi, Carbondale, PA
Carolyn T Loich, Nicholson, PA
Peter Macheska, Simpson, PA
Judith Marsh, Union Dale, PA
Charles & Mary Mead, Montrose, PA
Vic & Sharon Milani, Dickson City, PA
Dan & Judy Millet, Clarks Summit, PA
Joseph & Marjorie Pavlovich, Waymart, PA
Joyce & Michael Petrushak Jr, Evenson, PA
Chris Pezala, Carbondale, PA
William Polyn, Wapwallopen, PA
Tomas Ramirez, Washington, DC
Gerald T Schwarztrauber, Archbald, PA
Thomas & Catherine Schuyler, Easton, PA
Jim Slamas, Forest City, PA
Lance J Stange, Madison Twp, PA
Richard Storck, Endicott, NY
Ed Taylor, Westbrook, ME
Denise & Peter Vauter, Forest City, PA
Walt West, Warrington, PA
Donald & Roberta Whitney, Edmond, OK
Howard Zendle, Vestal, NY

DONATIONS

Rebecca Bennett, Montrose, PA
Cindy Klenk, in memory of Richard Ruggiero
Carolyn T Loich, Nicholson, PA (caboose)
Dr and Mrs Douglas Sheldon, Thompson, PA

2019 D&H Distance Run

Gold Sponsors

Honesdale National Bank
Imenergy Services
Lamar Advertising
Lopatofsky Auction, LLC
Spring Hill Foundation
WBRE/PA Live

Silver Sponsors

DTE Midstream, LLC
Gentex
Kost Tire & Auto Services
LaBella Associates
Linde Corporation
PEC/DCNR

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Gentex
Kost Tire & Auto Services
LaBella Associates
Linde Corporation
PEC/DCNR

C A L E N D A R

NOVEMBER 21
RTC Dinner/Meeting, RTC Office, Cables Store Bldg. 6/7 PM. RSVP for Turkey dinner.

DECEMBER 19
RTC Christmas Dinner/Meeting, Pettinato’s Restaurant, Carbondale. 6 PM. RSVP for dinner.

For up-to-date trail events and activities, please see and like our Facebook page. Plans are for XC skiing and snowshoe hikes.
The Vandling Subway

There was once a tunnel or ‘subway’ under Vandling that transported coal from the Gray Slope Mine to the Forest City Colliery for processing. Why a tunnel? Why not an overland track to Forest City?

The Gray Slope Mine, located on the east side of the Lackawanna River was owned by the Hillside Coal & Iron Company, an Erie Railroad company. The closest colliery for processing coal was the Forest City Colliery (where Turkey Hill and the U.S. Post Office are now). Nearby was the Clinton Colliery in Vandling, but it was owned and operated by a competitor, the D&H Railroad.

Note, that even though the Erie and D&H used the same railroad for transportation of coal and other materials, they were fierce competitors when it came to coal land property and mining. Thus, an Erie Railroad Company had to avoid its competitor’s lands and had to transport its coal underground in Vandling in order to reach Forest City.

A lokie engine (small locomotive) was used to carry the coal cars from the Gray Slope Mine, across the Lackawanna River and D&H/Erie Railroad. These bridge abutments can be seen on the trail about one mile south of the FC trailhead. One abutment is on the trail, the other on the river. The tracks headed towards Vandling in a northwest direction. Near Oak & Clinton Streets, the cars were disconnected from the lokie and then hauled through a tunnel underneath Vandling by means of a cable system, thus avoiding the competitor’s lands. The coal cars were then reconnected to a lokie engine, after they were above ground on the west side of Vandling and hauled to the breaker in Forest City.

The tunnel and tracks were also used by miners to get to work. Miners who worked at Gray Slope boarded empty cars near the intersection of Main Street (SR 171) and SR 247. From there they were hauled by lokie to the vicinity of the No. 2 shaft, west of Vandling. They switched trains here and boarded cars bound for the Gray Slope. These were cable-controlled: a giant steam-powered winch eased the cars through the tunnel emerging at the foot of Oak Street, then back on tracks leading to the bridge that crossed the railroad and river to the mine.

The Rail-Trail Council is developing a new sign that will explain this history at the bridge abutment along the D&H Rail-Trail. The sign is made possible with a grant from the Overlook Foundation. There was an older sign at this location funded by PA Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Program. Thanks to Mark Walsh, author of Primeval, for tunnel information and Mike Morosky for reviewing and editing sign text. Thanks to Peggy Brager of the Forest City Area Historical Society for photos.
**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.

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**Pennsylvania Environmental Council Award**

Lynn Conrad, Executive Director of the Rail-Trail Council will receive the 25th Annual Thomas P. Shelburne Environmental Leadership Award. The award is for more than 25 years of dedication to the mission of transforming the D&H Rail-Trail from an abandoned rail-bed to one of the premier trails in Pennsylvania. The award comes through the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) and the Northeast PA Environmental Partners, comprised of PA DCNR, PA DEP, PEC, PPL Corporation Proctor & Gamble and Wilkes University. The awards dinner takes place on October 24th at the Woodlands Inn in Wilkes-Barre. With this award, Ms. Conrad joins a special group of environmental leaders, as Bernie McGurl of the Lackawanna River Conservation Association and Arthur Watres of Lacawac Sanctuary.

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**THE STARRUCCA CREEK** again washed away part of the streambank along the D&H Rail-Trail just north of Brandt (north of SR 1009, Starrucca Creek Road). With the trail very close to the streambank, it was necessary to restore the bank to save the trail. Thanks to Moose Trax, LLC, for working out a design, applying for the necessary permits and quickly getting the project completed. The project included fencing and a gentle-sloped ramp off the trail down to the water’s edge for fishing access. This section of trail is slated to go out to bid for trail improvements in 2020.

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**THANKS TO ZACHARY CONS LA of BSA Troop 81** Susquehanna, who built and installed two picnic tables on the D&H in the Ararat area as part of his Eagle project.

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**Friends of the Trail**
- Dunkin Donuts
- Entercom Van
- Finch Hill Restaurant
- Fitzsimmons Insurance
- Greenfield Power Equipment, Inc
- Hendrick Manufacturing
- Hotel Anthracite
- Idelwild Ski Shop
- Kressock Insurance Agency
- Leeward Construction
- Masters Ready-Mix Concrete
- Marilyn MacDowall
- McGovern Insurance Agency, Inc
- Mahegan Sun Pocono
- Nikkis at the Ben Mar
- Pettinato’s Restaurant
- Petrosky’s Homemade Pierogies
- Price Chopper
- Shirley’s Family Diner
- The Beacon Grill
- Urban Electric
- Weis Markets

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**Bronze Sponsors**
- Carbondale YMCA
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- Colwell-Naegele Assoc, Inc
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- Lenox Propane
- National Running Center
- New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co, Inc
- Pioneer Construction Co., Inc
- Resource Environmental Management
- Scranton Running
- The Village of Four Seasons
- Wegmans

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**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
**Mountain View Garden Club Presented** the Rail-Trail Council with the Hometown Pride Award, at the Greater Forest City Business Alliance Fall Mixer at the FC Trailhead. *(above)* The award recognizes the RTC for the beautification of the D&H Rail-Trail which enhances the lives of people who live, work and play in the Endless Mountains region of NEPA. Mary Ann O’Pecko, Helen Newsom, JoAnn Hall, Mary Tomaine (president of MVGC), Lynn Conrad, Nancy Ross, Sally Roberts, Sheryl Brownlow, Bob Hunter.

**The Caboose Has Been Painted** with its original color—a barn red-maroon! *(left)* Thanks to Tom Feddock for his restoration work and Mel Seeley as paint volunteer. Plans are to install the windows (there are 18!) and have it weather-tight before winter. Next spring or as weather cooperates, the interior will be restored to original condition. Of course, we still need the historical stencil for the D&H and caboose number! Donations are appreciated!

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**When Does My Membership Expire?**

Your membership renewal date is to the right of your name on the mailing label, highlighted in yellow. To the extreme right is the mailing date. Effective 2019, memberships for all receiving electronic newsletters will expire on December 31.