

# 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 LIFETIME MEMBERS

David B Franceski – The Beacon, Union Dale, PA  
Nancy Wottrich & Bruce McNaught, New Milford, PA

## NEW MEMBERS

Jeanette Augustyn, Montrose, PA  
Brian Carpenter, Moosic, PA  
Katherine Harasta, Endicott, NY  
Mark Hughes, Hawley, PA  
Brian Opieski, Malvern, PA  
Gerald Schwartzrauber, Archbald, PA  
Peter Shambo, Endicott, NY  
Roy Taetzsch, Princeton, NJ  
Timothy J Tell, Susquehanna, PA  
Constance Tellep, Clifford Twp, PA

## RENEWING MEMBERS

Bonnie Alco, Waverly, PA  
Robert & Jessica Aumack, Keyport, NJ  
Eileen & Bruce Baessler, Montrose, PA  
Senator Lisa Baker, Dallas, PA  
Tony & Linda Baroni, New Milford, PA  
Jon F Bauer, Rose Valley, PA  
Roberta Brentano, Scranton, PA  
Ivan & Elaine Burman, Thompson, PA  
Mary J Butler, Little Meadows, PA  
Norma & Chris Chacona, Susquehanna, PA  
Paul Covert, Madison Twp, PA  
Alfred Defeo, Starlight, PA  
Bill & Connie Dempsey, Clifford Twp, PA  
Stephen & Renee Drobish, Dresher, PA  
David & Heather Elgena, Thompson, PA  
Barbara Erhard, Roaring Brook Twp, PA  
Daniel & Tracy Fenton, Union Dale, PA  
Edward J Fortuna, Taylor, PA  
Judy Gretzula, Carbondale, PA  
Kim and Shirley Griffiths, Clifford Twp, PA  
Michael Hapstak, Scranton, PA  
Wayne & Joanne Harz, Pleasant Mt, PA  
David Heim, Hawley, PA  
Dave & Patty Hopkins, Union Dale, PA  
Erin Hubert, Clarks Summit, PA  
Peggy Jordan, Union Dale, PA  
Ed Juersvich, Union Dale, PA  
Audrey Kase, Great Bend, PA  
Joe & Lynn Kovacic, Allison Park, PA  
Delores Kownaski, South Windsor, CT  
James Kulp, Lancaster, PA  
Linda & George Leber, Thompson, PA  
Gary Lippi, Carbondale, PA  
Ken & Leslie Maas, Dalton, PA  
Richard A Maiolatesi, Peckville, PA  
Sandra Major, Brackney, PA  
Judith Marsh, South Gibson, PA  
Mike McCambridge, Thornhurst, PA  
Bernie McGurl, Scranton, PA  
Barbara & Michael McMonagle, Green Lane, PA  
Joe & Harriet Moore, Gladwyne, PA  
John and Carol Neary, Olyphant, PA  
Cheryl Nolan, Union Dale, PA  
Mary Ellen & Howard Nusbaum, New York, NY  
Jim O'Pecko, Forest City, PA  
Chrissy Phillips, Scott Twp, PA  
John Price, Carbondale, PA  
Carl and Mary Pucul, Vandling, PA  
Cathy & Ron Refice, Clarks Summit, PA  
Patricia Richter, Waymart, PA  
Mr & Mrs Fred Rose, S Abington Twp, PA  
Ronald A. Schmidt, Scranton, PA  
Judith & Michael Senio, Penfield, NY  
John & Susan Sheerin, Peckville, PA  
Kathleen & Robert Shostek, Clifford Twp, PA  
Len Sowinski, Scott Township, PA



## Bridging the Gap for Communities and Resources

On July 14th, 2022, the Rail-Trail Council held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the debut of the Stevens Point Bridge. This pedestrian bridge was funded in part by the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program that is provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Economic and Community Development, the Doppler Grant that is provided by the National Rails to Trails Conservancy, and the membership funds that are donated each year to the Rail-Trail Council.

What used to be a void over the Starrucca Creek and diverted trail users onto the busy roadway on State Route 1009, is now home to a beautiful bridge that keeps trail users on the trail for outdoor recreation and active transportation. Whether you are walking or biking to another community such as Susquehanna, PA for work or resources, or enjoying a recreational outing on the trail, you can now be assured that your access will be uninterrupted for the entire length of the D&H Trail aside for road crossings.

The outward appearance of this simplistic and industrial, yet beautiful, bridge may bely the amount of funding, coordination and many project partners it took to finally get to installation day. The Rail-Trail Council is often the only grant funded agency in Susquehanna County for awards from State and Federal agencies for outdoor recreation, and it takes a lot of administration to make these dreams a reality. From cultivating the vision, getting the design, writing the grant, administering the awarded funds, finding the matching funds, coordinating the engineers with project partners, and tying this project to other projects along the trail; projects like this require the full-time attention of a non-profit organization like the Rail-Trail Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. It is truly our pleasure to be the hands and feet of our members to renew Northeastern Pennsylvania's historic pathways as recreational trails for all to enjoy. We look forward to completing our trail for the service of our outdoor recreation users!

*Pictured left to right front row: Bernie McGurl, DCED Paul Macknosky, Susquehanna County Commissioner Judy Herschel, National Rails to Trails Conservancy Tom Sexton, Senator Lisa Baker, Lynn Conrad, Valerie Senese, Jim O'Pecko. Rest of picture: LaBella Associates, Rail Trail Board Members, Phillip Pass Jr., EMHR Cain Chamberlain, DCNR Christine Dettore, Susquehanna County Soil & Conservation.*

# More on the Village of Brandt



*In the last RTC newsletter, we highlighted the Brandt Chair Factory and the start of Stickley Furniture, but there were many other notable businesses in the area.*

Harmony Centre was a village founded before the Civil War by Henry W. Brandt and Jacob Schlager. It was “well-located for manufacturing purposes, being on the Erie Railroad and the D&H.” Note on the map the railroad is indicated as the Jefferson RR (of the D&H). This location along the Starrucca Creek proved important to many businesses requiring water or waterpower. As business partners, they owned or financed many of the businesses in the Centre. One of the largest early businesses started by Henry Brandt was a tannery, which relied on stream water-power to produce leather for shoes, saddles and harnesses.

Another notable early business was the acid factory, operated by Angus Smith (1817–1915), a pioneer wood acid manufacturer. His was the first wood acid factory in America in Conklin Forks, near Binghamton. His second factory was in Brandt and his third in Starrucca. He is buried in the Brandt Cemetery. It was noted that the Brandt acid factory closed in 1904 due to lack of wood. Both the tannery and wood acid business relied on a steady supply of trees.

Along with stately homes, the village had a store: ‘Kessler & Brandt Dealers in Groceries, Hardware, Dry Goods and Notions.’ Brandt also had a ‘modern and commodious schoolhouse,’ a hat factory, a post office, a boarding house and two steam sawmills.

The Presbyterian Church in Brandt was built in 1874, with direction and financial assistance from the Brandt and Schlager families. Both families attended the First Presbyterian Church in Susquehanna, and later broke away and built a new church in Brandt.

Two prominent businesses were the brick factory and the tile & pottery factory which relied on the clay deposits found in the area and along the Starrucca Creek.

“Less than one-half mile from the chair factory, down the stream, is located the brick yards where 25,000 brick are made daily during the brick-making season. About the same distance upstream from the village is located the tile and brick works, which is the newest industry in the village. The clay deposits on the Brandt lands are the richest to be found anywhere. The mountains are filled with it and the pits at the tile works show that the clay bed is more than thirty feet thick. The supply is virtually inexhaustible and the men at the head of the brick-making enterprise have material for one of the largest plants in the world. The clay is free from sand and is fine enough when taken from the pits for use in the manufacture of all kinds of pottery. The Messrs. Brandt and Kessler, who own these industries, are pushing, enterprising gentlemen, and these industries, now in their infancy, will, we predict, within a few years attract the attention of the world by the superior quality of the ware made at Brandt tile and pottery works.”

—*The Tri-Weekly*, Carbondale Oct. 1890.

Receipts indicate many loads of brick and tile were sent via the railroad to Scranton. Today, clay deposits can still be found on the banks of the Starrucca Creek. Brandt brick pieces can be found in the stream and along the banks! Old brick kiln remains can also be found in the woods surrounding the trail.

Just downstream from the village of Brandt were numerous stone quarries, which provided bluestone for the Starrucca Viaduct, built by the Erie Railroad in 1848. A makeshift railroad hauled the stone from the quarry to the construction site about 3 miles downstream. Just before the bridge crossing the Starrucca Creek, remains of the track are visible. The old bridge abutment for the creek crossing of the makeshift railroad can be seen looking on the downstream side of the trail bridge.

The Rail-Trail Council will be installing a historical sign detailing the remarkable history of Brandt along the D&H Rail-Trail, near the site of the former railroad station, following trail improvements in the Fall.

# Trail Ambassador Program

We are planning our first trail ambassador get together for this October and we are looking for more ambassadors and sponsors. Initially, these get togethers will highlight the communities and offerings along the D&H Trail, starting in our Trail Town of Forest City, and working north towards Lanesboro and Susquehanna. Ambassadors will be equipped to know where the recommended places to eat are, nearby bike shops, other events, places to stay, available businesses, and things to do based on the needs of the visitors of the trail.

If you would like to sign up as an ambassador to share your unique experiences with others in a way that suits your abilities, please register by calling or emailing our office. If you would like to include your business in this program, please reach out to us about available sponsorships that suit the needs of your business, we have plenty of ways for you to be involved!

Rail-Trail Council / 570.679.9300 / nepatrails@gmail.com

# D&H Rail-Trail Challenges



## Kick-off September 11

Plan to join the Rail-Trail Council at the Forest City Trailhead for a fun day on the D&H on Sunday September 11th. We are beginning our D&H Challenge series with group bike rides, walks and a kid's bike race. Sponsors for the

event will have their logos displayed along the trail with mile markers, from Forest City to Union Dale & beyond. We will not be holding the ½ marathon or 5K this year but invite runners to use the marked course anytime during the month.

Group walks and bikes will begin at 10 AM and different mileage options will be available. The kid's bike race, a 2-mile or a 5-mile will begin at 11 AM for kids ages 5–15. Prizes will be awarded in various age groups.

Please register at [GetMeRegistered.com/DHChallenges](http://GetMeRegistered.com/DHChallenges). This is a fund-raising event and a celebration of the trail. You can choose to order a Challenge tee shirt as well. After your run, bike or walk, stay for food and music from 12–3 PM. Bring a lawn chair and BYO beverage. Please

continue to accrue trail mileage from September 11–October 9. Use any app to measure mileage and enter into 'Get Your Tail on the Trail' to keep track and get a nifty prize! Open a free account at [www.tailonthetrail.org/chapters/northeast-pennsylvania](http://www.tailonthetrail.org/chapters/northeast-pennsylvania).



Watch for more details on Facebook at Rail-Trail Council, or [www.neparailtrails.org](http://www.neparailtrails.org), or call the RTC office 570.679.9300.

# Building Health Series

Being outside is as important as brushing your teeth. Whether you are out in your garden, mowing the lawn, walking, or running...notice how much better you feel when you are involved in the outdoor activity and then when you are done...really check in with yourself. You will probably notice that you forgot about any upsets and that your overall being is in a better place, a more positive place. Being outside offers this opportunity every single time and by making this a continual habit you are building a healthy body and a healthy mind. It's so easy and free, all you need is a little commitment, some motivation, and a place to start. Please consider our weekly and monthly events on 38 miles of trail.

## WALKING MONDAYS

10 am, Union Dale Trailhead.

## BIKING WEDNESDAY

4:30 pm, Forest City Trailhead (August), Union Dale Trailhead (September), Simpson/Morse Ave Trailhead (October).

## SECOND SATURDAY TRAIL YOGA/MINDFULNESS/MEDITATION

10 am, Union Dale Trailhead.

## FULL MOON WALK

Every full moon, Union Dale Trailhead.

*Please pre-register for all events by calling 570-679-9300 or email [nepatrails@gmail.com](mailto:nepatrails@gmail.com).*

**During the month of September, we have our annual fundraiser...the Virtual Challenge, where you can challenge yourself and others. To register go to [www.getmeregistered.com/DHChallenge](http://www.getmeregistered.com/DHChallenge).**

## Membership Renewal Form

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

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime/Founding \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> I am available for trail cleanups.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron/Sponsor \$250    | <input type="checkbox"/> Call me to discuss a corporate donation.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club/Organization \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> I am interested in the Trail Ambassador Program.                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35             | <input type="checkbox"/> Send me a NEW brochure.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20         | <input type="checkbox"/> I am willing to volunteer for the D&H Caboose restoration project                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student \$15     | <input type="checkbox"/> 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: [nepatrails@gmail.com](mailto:nepatrails@gmail.com)

Mary Tourje, Union Dale, PA  
Carol Sherwood & Lewis Trelease, Windsor,  
NY  
Gary & Denise Treven, Bloomsburg, PA  
Edmund R Skarbez, Browndale, PA  
Michelle Smith, Covington Twp, PA  
Ed Taylor, Westbrook, ME  
John E Thomas, Dickson City, PA  
Anthony & Janet Tvaryanas, Union Dale, PA  
Joseph and Debra White, Susquehanna, PA  
Donald & Roberta Whitney, Edmond, OK  
Wilmington Glass Company, Wilmington, DE  
Karen Wyandt, Union Dale, PA  
Albert & Patsy Zedar, Honesdale, PA  
Howard Zendle, Vestal, NY

#### DONATIONS

##### **Caboose Restoration Donations:**

Gary Lippi, Carbondale, PA  
John Price, Carbondale, PA  
Ronald A. Schmidt, Scranton, PA  
John E Thomas, Dickson City, PA  
Mary Tourje, Union Dale, PA  
Michelle Smith, Covington Twp, PA  
Thomas & Susan Williams, South Abington  
Twp, PA

##### **Memorial Donations:**

In Memory of John Atkins – Nancy Ross,  
Union Dale, PA

##### **Other Donations:**

Eileen & Bruce Baessler, Montrose, PA  
David & Heather Elgena, Thompson, PA  
Marilyn & Bill Hiller, South Canaan, PA  
Mark Hughes, Hawley, PA  
Gene Litz, PA  
Mike McCambridge, Thornhurst, PA  
Bernie McGurl, Scranton, PA  
Debbie McNamara, Union Dale, PA  
Chrissy Phillips, Scott Twp, PA  
Judith & Michael Senio, Penfield, NY  
Michelle Smith, Covington Twp, PA  
O'Neil M. Williams, Philadelphia, PA  
Thomas & Susan Williams, South Abington  
Twp, PA  
Al & Patsy Zedar, Honesdale, PA

## David E. Christiansen 1945–2022

Rail-Trail Council has lost one of its founding members and first treasurer. Dave Christiansen passed away recently. Dave was Vice-President of Finance and Treasurer at the University of Scranton for over 20 years. He lent his expertise as advisor and treasurer as the newly formed Rail-Trail became incorporated as a non-profit. He served in that capacity for over 15 years and continued to be an active member and mentor. Dave also was a proud member of Elk Mountain's Ski Patrol playing an important role in training and refresher courses. Condolences to his wife Eva and daughters Kate and Margo.

## Northern D&H Commemoration Ride

Save the date for October 15th as we partner with the Endless Mountains Heritage Region to celebrate the completion of the trail from Steven's Point, PA to the New York Border. The event will be held trailside of our coming Trailhead in Stevens Point at the Olivia House located at 126 Rockwell Rd. We will be hosting a community bike ride for all ages, music, vendors, food, and more! Be sure to check out our website at [neparailtrails.org](http://neparailtrails.org) and our Facebook Page at Rail-Trail Council for coming details.

Rail-Trail Council of Northeast PA  
P.O. Box 32  
Union Dale PA 18470  
[trails@nep.net](mailto:trails@nep.net)  
[nepatrails@gmail.com](mailto:nepatrails@gmail.com)

### 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. Memberships for all receiving electronic newsletters will expire on December 31.

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 4  
Forest City PA

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED