



Volume 18 Issue 2

Rails to Trails of Central PA Inc.

March/April 2013

## WINTER



“Winter days can be quite beautiful.”, as you can see from this photo taken by Phil Hoffman. There is no need to stay indoors when a beautiful snow covered trail is calling your name to come leave your tracks in the snow.

### OUR SYMPATHIES:



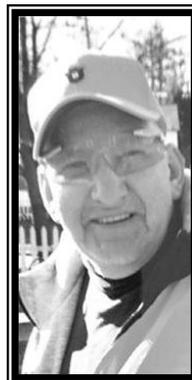
Friday January 25<sup>th</sup> Rails to Trails lost a great friend. Bill Taafe. Bill was a long-time member, board member for the past 10 years, (and had just been re-elected to another three year term) and supporter of our yearly fundraiser.

Bill was a young, active seventy year old man who lived life to the fullest. In the summer you would find him riding his bike, leading group rides or you might find him out on his motorcycle. In the winter, if there was snow, you would find him on the ski slopes skiing. Bill loved the outdoors and all the seasons Pennsylvania had to offer. He was also an individual with the most positive up-beat personality. Any time I asked Bill, “How are you doing?” His response was always, “Any better and I couldn’t stand it!” He never seemed to be down.

Bill always gave to his community. He was the owner of Spokes-n-Skis. The past 10 years he sponsored the first and second prize for our yearly raffle, he led the yearly possum ride on the trail, he sponsored the Spokes-n-Skis bike team and rode the MS 150 Keystone Country Ride. Sharon

O’Keiff, manager of the National MS Society Keystone Branch that Bill and the Spokes-n-Skis bike team had raised over \$50,000.00 over the past 4 years.

Bill was a devoted family man and grandfather; he married his wife Mary Jane forty five years ago. They raised two children; a daughter Christine and husband Michael and a son William and wife Julie and had three beautiful grandchildren.



On February 11<sup>th</sup> Rails to Trails lost another longtime friend, member and volunteer. Dave Plummer lost his battle with cancer. Dave and his wife have been active members of Rails to Trails for nearly 20 years.

Dave is survived by his wife Joan, three children, four step children, and many grandchildren. Dave was a devoted family man. He graduated from Altoona High School in 1962; following graduation, he managed Herb’s Kentucky Fried Chicken for many years. His obituary states; “His great joy though came from his service at Penn State Altoona as a maintenance man in the dormitories. He loved Penn State and he loved the many students he served.” That was the type of man Dave was; he enjoyed people.

Dave and his wife Joan could be found along the trail throughout the year. They were one of the “regulars”. Dave was a great ambassador for rail trails especially the Lower Trail. He loved the outdoors life, was always active and greeted people with a friendly “Hello” with a smile on his face. His obituary stated it so well: “David’s sickness and suffering spanned 14 years, but he survived through his sensational love for his family, exceptional ability to find serenity and passionate dedication to his love for life”. His philosophy was; “The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time.”

With the passing of these two fine men, we can all take a lesson. Enjoy life, always be positive, give back to your community, be there for your family and friends and always live your life to the fullest!

These men will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

## BOARD VACANCY:

Bill Taaffe's passing has left a vacancy on the Rails to Trails Board of Directors. In accordance with our by-laws a Board vacancy shall be filled by a special election presided over by the president. A special election will be held at the May Board meeting. Nominations shall be accepted from the floor preceding the election. The term of the replacement Board member will be consistent with the term ending date of the member whose seat is being filled.

## SPRING CREEK CANYON:

*By Bob Richers*

One of the best kept secrets of the Lower Trail is the availability of accessible quality fishing. The water quality in the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River has greatly improved with mandated improvements to watershed waste water treatment plants. Industries like Appleton Paper have worked to make discharges more environmentally acceptable which further improves the water quality.

I really enjoy discovering new places to ride my bike. In



Center County the trail between the Benner Run and Bellefonte fish Hatcheries is such a trail. This area known as the Spring Creek Canyon was officially

dedicated on September 2011. This natural jewel is part of an 1827 acre tract of the former PA Department of Corrections land that was transferred to various state and local agencies for public recreation. It is very surprising to find such a beautiful secluded trail hidden in a forested canyon, yet minutes away from the hustle and bustle of State College.

The trail is mostly level and has packed shale on an old access road. This 4.4 mile corridor beside Spring Creek offers a short ride, a beautiful hike along limestone bluffs, cross country skiing and also, like the Lower Trail, an easy ride along an excellent fishery. The catch and release limestone stream offers easy access and does not have the early trout season mobs.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries you would have found the landscape dotted with Iron furnaces, rolling mills and charcoal kilns. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the decline of the iron industries, the area was a place of quiet farms, mills and gristmills. And all along, Spring Creek flowed through the canyon. It was always a world-renowned trout fishery located in central Pennsylvania. But in 1982, the fishery received a major environmental assault. Trout were tested and found to contain unacceptable levels of the insecticides Kepone and Mirex which had worked up through the food chain.

The source of the pollution was traced to the thirty-two acre Nease chemical facility. The chemical plant, which manufactured various compounds, also contained concrete and earthen lagoons, a waste water spray field and an on-site drum storage area. It quickly became a super-fund clean up site. Sixteen miles of Spring Creek were declared catch and release only to ensure that contaminated trout were not consumed. In 2001, the levels of pollution had declined to an acceptable level but, as a precaution, the catch and release continues. As the site clean-up winds down at Nease, an on site vapor extraction system continues to operate.

Another source of pollution along Spring Creek was the effluents produced by the two state operated fish hatcheries. In 2009 and 2010 micro screen filtration systems were installed at both sites. Water recirculation was also added to reduce water usage.

The good news is that Spring Creek and the surrounding well fields' water quality continue to improve, so that clean water remains available for future generations. This beautiful, yet secluded trail is so close and just waiting for you to visit. For more information on Spring Creek Canyon visit [www.SpringCreekCanyon.com](http://www.SpringCreekCanyon.com)

## RAFFLE AND SPRING GATHERING:

You should have received your fifteen raffle tickets with this newsletter. If you did not, please let us know. Our prize providers this year are **Spokes & Skies** of Lakemont; **Hoss's Steak & Sea House** of Duncansville and **Moosewood Laser Creations** of Belleville. The drawing will once again take place during the **Spring Gathering**. Mark your calendar for **Sunday, May 5th**.

The raffle is our major fund raiser, which provides a large percentage of our annual operating budget. It is also a way for you to renew your membership. By returning your ticket stubs and money, you extend your membership by one year. This applies to all memberships, even if yours does not expire until January, 2014 for example. By selling the tickets, your expiration date would move to January, 2015. Or, if you do not wish to extend your membership, you may use the ticket sales to give a membership to someone else as a gift.

We understand that not all individuals feel comfortable participating in raffles, let alone fund raisers. If you do not wish to receive tickets, please let us know. If you did receive tickets and do not wish to participate, please accept our apology. You may either return the tickets or destroy them.

We are certainly grateful for every individual's support, either by renewing your membership as it expires, or by participating in this fund raiser. Tickets again this year are \$2.00 apiece. Ticket stubs and checks may be mailed to Rails-to-Trails, PO Box 592, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Vickie Brua at [vicbrua@atlanticbb.net](mailto:vicbrua@atlanticbb.net) or Jennifer Barefoot at 814-695-8521, e-mail at [rjsunbrook@verizon.net](mailto:rjsunbrook@verizon.net). Thank you!

**FUNDRAISING DINNER:**



Come support Rails to Trails in one of the easiest way to raise funds....EAT! Everyone has to eat, so why not eat at Hoss's, who will donate 20% of your bill's total to Rails to Trails. Hoss's has a

wonderful program that helps out many non-profit organizations such as ours and we are excited to team up with Hoss's Steak and Sea House. Please consider visiting the **Hoss's in Duncansville** on **Tuesday March 12<sup>th</sup>** to aid us in raising money to benefit Rails to Trails of Central Pennsylvania Inc. You may eat at the Hoss's anytime throughout the day. In years past, we have held this fund raiser in December, but the weather never seemed to co-operate. It is our hope that more people are able to help us out with this fundraiser. Plan to go out for lunch with some friends, or take the family out for dinner. We have also scheduled this to coincide with our regular monthly board meeting so if you have ever been curious about what goes on at our meetings, you can go out for dinner first and then just walk on over to Hoss's corporate offices and come to the REAR entrance at 7 PM.

Fill your stomachs and support Rails-to-Trails at the same time. All you have to do is clip on the bottom right hand corner of this page and present it when ordering. Hoss's will then donate 20% of the sales for all coupons presented.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 13: Spring Trillium Walk** on the Lower Trail - Join Deb Tencer for an easy walk to view the spring spectacular of trilliums and Dutchman's breeches. Meet at 11 A.M. in the Water Street Flea Market parking lot, we will walk from there. Please join us for lunch afterward at a local eatery. Watch our Web page for any changes to the date of this walk due to the unpredictable time of wildflower blossoming. For more information contact Deb at naturehikergal@gmail.com

**SUNDAY, MAY 5: Spring Gathering 1 PM at the Mt. Etna Trailhead.** Once again we will be grilling hamburgers, hotdogs and kielbasa; you just bring your favorite salad/covered dish or desert. Following the lunch, we will draw the winners of this year's raffle.

**SATURDAY, MAY 11: Annual Terry Wentz Memorial Hike** at Canoe Creek State Park - This 4-mile moderate hike on Moore's Hill Trail honors former Canoe Creek State Park manager, the late Terry Wentz, who served on the Juniata Valley Audubon and Rails to Trails fo Central Pa. boards of directors for more than a decade. Meet at the Canoe Creek State Park Environmental Education Center at 2 P.M. Trip leader: Stan Kotala, 946-8840, ccwiba@keyconn.net.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12: 6 PM- the Annual John Healy**

**Memorial 5K race.** The race benefits the Lower Trail while remembering one of the trail's very dedicated volunteers who lost the battle with cancer.

The next newsletter will have the complete Spring Calendar of Events. If you'd like to schedule an event, or if you have questions about an event, please call Stan Kotala, Rails to Trails Event Coordinator at 814-946-8840, or email [ccwiba@keyconn.net](mailto:ccwiba@keyconn.net)

Remember: additional trail information can be found on our website: [www.rttcpa.org](http://www.rttcpa.org) or you may visit [www.transalleghenytrails.org](http://www.transalleghenytrails.org).

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

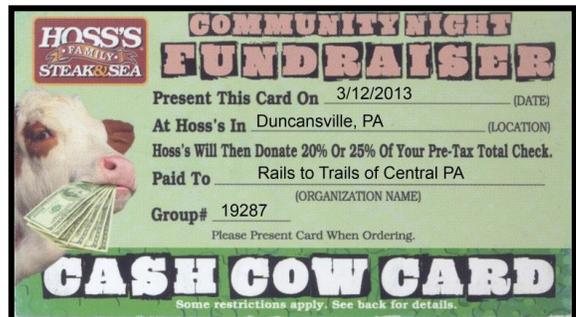
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: (\_\_\_\_)- \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ New Membership      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal  
\_\_\_\_\_ Individual                      \$15.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Family                              \$20.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting                        \$50.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Group                                \$75.00

I am interested in:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Horses                                      \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking  
\_\_\_\_\_ Heritage                                    \_\_\_\_\_ Bicycling  
\_\_\_\_\_ Nature Study                              \_\_\_\_\_ Jogging  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other

I would like to help by volunteering for:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:  
Rails-to-Trails of Central PA Inc.  
PO Box 592, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648  
(814)-832-2400



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Monthly Board Meeting**, 7 PM at the Hoss's Corporate Office in Duncansville, rear Entrance

**Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Monthly Board Meeting**, 7 PM at the Grannas Station.

**Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Spring Trillium Walk**, 11 AM at the Waterstreet Flea Market Parking Lot.

**Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Spring Gathering**, 1 PM at the Mt. Etna Trailhead.

**Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Terry Wentz Memorial Hike**, 2PM meet at the Terry Wentz Environmental Education Center at Canoe Creek State Park

**More details on all events on page 3 of the *Trekker* and on our Web site at [www.RTTCPA.org](http://www.RTTCPA.org)**

All are invited to the monthly meetings.

### KEEP YOUR ADDRESS CURRENT

This newsletter is mailed 3rd Class Bulk Mail. The Post Office will not forward 3rd Class Bulk Mail. If anything about your address changes, Route Number, Street Numbers, or Zip code, the Trail Trekker will not be forwarded to you. Please keep Rails-to-Trails informed of any address changes by using a post office change of address card or dropping us a note at the following address. Remember, if your mailing address is Highlighted, your membership is about to expire. Please renew quickly and continue to support Rails-to-Trails. Thank You!

Rails-to-Trails of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.

Post Office Box 592

Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-0592

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**[www.rttcpa.org](http://www.rttcpa.org)**



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