



Volume 22 Issue 2

Rails to Trails of Central PA Inc.

March April 2017

## 2016 EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS:

*By Bob Richers*



In the last two years, there have been three Eagle Scout projects completed along the Lower Trail and another one at the Bell's Gap Trail. There are additional projects under construction and being planned along the trail that will be listed in the 2017 report.

**Nickolas Nale** from Troop 31 in Duncansville did an outstanding repair and stabilization of the leaning Pavilion #2 near the Flowing Spring trail head. The roof was replaced with new metal roofing and the porcupine chewed plywood truss plates were replaced with galvanized metal plates. The support posts were leveled and footers reinforced. The pavilion also received a new coat of paint.

The night I arrived to sign off on the finished project, the stone for the site was piled on the trail. The supplier had miscalculated the amount needed and I thought, "Lord you gave me a mountain". After using what was needed, there remained quite a pile. Thanks to Gary Patterson and friends the surplus stone was transported to the site of the Snyder pavilion which will hopefully be relocated this year.

**Hojin Ryoo** from Troop 375 in State College helped raise the money and install 12 i-beacon devices along the trail. These i-beacons will signal cell phones, which have the appropriate app, when approaching their location and a narrative on the specifics of that location can be accessed. We supplied the boxes that house the beacons. Tom Shafer helped engineer the project and Tom Fonda signed the application.

(There will be a more extensive article on this i-beacon project in upcoming newsletters)

**Elias Wood** from Troup 32 in Hollidaysburg developed a kayak launch at the Community Park in Williamsburg for the ARC of Blair County Kayak Fun Float. The project involved clearing brush and trees and adding shale and stone steps up the river bank to the Lower Trail. Although the project was not done for us specifically, I have listed it for it enhances the trail.

**Trenton Gonsler** from Troop 29 in Bellwood constructed a pavilion with a picnic table at the Bells Gap Trail. For his project,

he cleared brush and established a scenic overlook at the top of the trail, where the State Game Lands begins. This pavilion is another example of the trail enhancement done by Troop 29 for the Bells Gap Trail. Hopefully, when the controlling management for this region's State Game Commission changes, trails and projects will again expand into the game lands.

## SPRING GATHERING:



Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> everyone is invited to the Spring Gathering at the Mt. Etna trail head. We will once again be grilling hamburgers, hotdogs and kielbasa at **1 PM**. We will have the drawing for the raffle at about 2 pm. All we ask is that you bring your favorite salad or side dish to share with others and a drink for yourself. We supply the paper products, silverware and condiments.

This is always a wonderful afternoon event. It is a time for you to meet other trail users as well as trail volunteers and board members. Plan to come out and have a nice relaxing afternoon on the trail. If you hadn't yet sent your tickets in, you may bring them to the gathering. If you cannot come to the gathering, please mail them to Rails to Trails, PO Box 592, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648 with enough time for them to be received at the Post Office by May 5<sup>th</sup>. 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, or e-mail [rjsunbrook@verizon.net](mailto:rjsunbrook@verizon.net). Thank you!

A very special Thank You is extended to the businesses and organizations that make this raffle and gathering a success.

**Spokes-n-Skis:** Located at 315 S. Logan Blvd. Altoona, this shop along with Hoss's have been the longest sponsor and supporter of the Lower Trail. Bryan and Troy work with each and every customer no matter how young or old, beginner or expert, to make the outdoor experience the best it can be. They have all the gear you will need for cycling (on or off road), skiing and snowboarding. For more information please visit their website at [www.spokesnskis.com](http://www.spokesnskis.com) or phone at 814-941-3888

**Hoss's:** Hoss's Steak and Sea House has 36 locations throughout Pennsylvania and West Virginia. It was founded in 1983 by Willard Campbell with his first location in Altoona. Hoss' along with Spokes-n-Skis have supported Rails to Trails for well over 20 years. Hoss's is well known for supporting the communities

in which it is located. For more information please visit their website at; [www.hosss.com](http://www.hosss.com)

**Fairfield Farm Guest Cabin:** Located on 4646 Turnpike Road in Spruce Creek is a beautiful restored 1800's log cabin owned and operated by Mary Rogowski. Unlike a one room bed and breakfast, the cabin is your personal home away from home. It is fully furnished, heated, and air conditioned with complete kitchen facilities. Fairfield Farm Guest Cabin is located on a secluded 50 acre farm. The famous Pennsylvania fly fishing waters of Spruce Creek and the Little Juniata are within a mile of the cabin. It is located 25 miles from Penn State University and 15 miles from popular Raystown Lake and only about 10 minutes from the Lower Trail. For more information visit the website; [www.fairfieldfarmguestcabin.com](http://www.fairfieldfarmguestcabin.com) or call 814-632-9445.

**Rothrock Outfitters:** Located at 418 Penn St. Huntingdon PA Rothrock Outfitters has been a longtime supporter of Rails to Trails. Tony, Joel and Paul established Rothrock Outfitters in 2000. It was named after the large state forest local to the shop; Rothrock Outfitters is centrally located for those exploring Rothrock State Forest, Raystown Lake, and the Juniata River watershed. They sell and rent kayaks and bikes. For more information visit their website at; [www.rothrockoutfitters.com](http://www.rothrockoutfitters.com) or phone at 814-643-7226

**Black Dog Café:** Located at 519 Allegheny Street Hollidaysburg, PA 16648, just next to the post office is a wonderful coffee shop known for their great baked goods and lunch menu. It is open mornings to midafternoon Monday thru Saturday. They also do catering. For more information and hours, visit their website at: [www.blackdoghollidaysburg.com](http://www.blackdoghollidaysburg.com) or phone, 814-695-5700

**Allegheny Creamery and Crepes:** Located at 505 Allegheny Street in Hollidaysburg, Kirk and Heather Seleme converted an old shoe repair shop in the historic district into a wonderful restaurant in 2009. It is open 7 days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner. For more information and hours, visit their website at: [www.alleghenycreperie.com](http://www.alleghenycreperie.com) or phone at 814-696-5055

**Field & Stream:** A nationally known outfitter with a local store located at 141 Sierra Drive, Altoona, Field and Stream has everything you could possibly need for your outdoor experience. For more information visit their website at; [www.fieldandstreamshop.com](http://www.fieldandstreamshop.com) or phone 814-693-5000.

**Holland Bros. Meats:** Located at 16627 Dunnings Highway, Duncansville, Hollands Bros Meats is a 4 generation owned and operated meat market. They offer exceptional meats, custom butchering, catering and online sales. For more information, visit their website at [www.hollandbros.net](http://www.hollandbros.net) or phone 814-695-5450.

Please remember these businesses and groups when you are purchasing things throughout the year. Without the support of these businesses, there would be no fundraiser or spring gathering.

### 20<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL JOHN HEALY 5K RACE:

The John Healy Memorial Race will be held on **Wednesday June 21<sup>st</sup> 6 PM** at the Williamsburg Trailhead. Member/past board member/past President Phil Sukenik organized this race 20 years ago and has organized and managed it each and every year and

has done a fantastic job. It is hard to believe that the race is now 20 years old. We are always in need of volunteers to make this race a success...we also need lots of runners to make it a success, so write down this date and plan to come participate or volunteer. Registration begins at 4:45 pm and the race begins at 6 pm. More information can be found on our website, [www.rttcpa.org](http://www.rttcpa.org). The registration form is also on the website.

### SPRING PROJECTS:

Habitat Care Work Parties. You may ask what this is. These work parties are part of the work of Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light, (paipl.us). Member Greg Williams has been leading work parties on the Lower Trail since last October. In the last 4 months, volunteers have been working removing invasive plants. This April, they will be planting approximately 180 native shrubs to replace the invasives that have already been removed. In May, volunteers led by Greg Williams, will be back working on the trail to remove more invasive plants that are crowding out native shrubs, choking trees and blocking the view of the river.

If you would like to volunteer to do this type of work, Greg is looking for you. Or if you have a youth group, a group of people that just like to work out in nature, these parties may be for you. Individuals who have been out on these work parties have found them to be educational as well as fun. To find out more about these work parties and/or be put on the contact list, please feel free to contact Greg at 215-242-0854 or email him at [wacmbok@aol.com](mailto:wacmbok@aol.com). Greg also leads work parties at Walnut Springs Park in State College.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

We are always in need of volunteers. We have a GREAT group of volunteers who keep the trail well maintained. Each year, due to individuals moving, illness, other obligations etc. we have a need to fill openings in our volunteer crew. We are currently in need of individuals who would be willing to weed-eat around benches. We have the equipment. If you might be interested, please contact Mike Panek at [mbp138@gmail.com](mailto:mbp138@gmail.com) or phone him at 814-569 7346. We are also looking for individuals who would like to work along with Hollidaysburg High School Seniors on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>. You do not need to be available all days. Whatever time you have to volunteer would be appreciated. Contact Ed Donahoe at [ejdonahoe@msn.com](mailto:ejdonahoe@msn.com).

### TREE OF THE MONTH: WILLOW

*By Dave Despot*



The willow (*Salix*) genus is a large and diverse group of plants containing 300 or more species worldwide, primarily in the northern hemisphere. All willows are adapted to wetlands, moist bottomlands, riverbanks, or other areas with moist soils. While identifying a plant as a willow is not difficult, distinguishing between species can be problematic. Hybrids are common and identification characteristics are often less than clear cut.

The majority of willows have alternate leaves with leaf margins that may be toothed or entire. Leaves are typically long and

narrow or lance-shaped with short petioles. Twigs are flexible, round, and are often used to make wickerwork such as baskets, furniture, walls, and screens. Buds are appressed (held close to the twig), flat on the twig side and rounded on the outer side, and covered with a single bud scale. Black willow (*Salix nigra*) is a willow species common to most of the eastern United States. It can reach 50 feet in height. The trunks can get quite large and divide into multiple stems relatively close to the ground. The bark on black willow gets dark and deeply furrowed with age.

Salicylic acid, the pain-relieving ingredient in aspirin tablets, was first discovered in willow bark. Tincture of willow bark is still used today for treating aches, fevers, and various pains. Humans have always associated willow trees with the moon and the feminine. The scope of the willow includes activities that are meditative and receptive. The tree essence of white willow helps to make us aware of our deeper selves and has a spiritually cleansing effect. In Russia, willow branches are blessed in Orthodox churches on Palm Sunday and used as a substitute for palm fronds. In the Jewish tradition, the willow is one of four species used in the Feast of the Tabernacles to express thanks for the harvest.

**WILDFLOWER WATCH: LESSER CELANDINE:**

*By Bob Richers*

While bike riding on our newest rails to trails neighbor to the south last spring, the Huntingdon and Broadtop Trail in Bedford County, we noticed several large growths of what looked like Marsh Marigolds. After climbing down an embankment for closer pictures, the plants didn't seem quite right for marigolds. While the flowers of both plants were yellow and the leaves were similarly shaped, our mystery flower was later identified as Lesser celandine.



Lesser celandine and marsh Marigold are both members of the Butter Cup family. Celandine prefers growing in sandy flood plains and marigold is found in water logged sites. Celandine's yellow flowers have 8 to 12 glossy petals on a 1" flower while Marsh Marigold, also yellow, has 5 to 9 glossy petals on a 1" to 1 1/2" flower. Marigold is a native plant while Celandine is alien.

Lesser and Greater Celandine are listed as invasive plants by the Pennsylvania DCNR. It is a native plant from central Europe, North Africa and the Caucasus. The species is considered invasive and is found in 25 states in the USA. Like many of the other plants in the Butter Cup family, the plant is poisonous if ingested raw and potentially fatal to grazing live stock. It can displace native plants and has proved to be difficult to eradicate.

Lesser Celandine is also called Fig buttercup and Pilewort. It is an early emerging plant that takes advantage of the abundant sun light before the trees foliage. It grows in shaded wood lands and open areas. The plant spreadx mostly vegetatively but can also spread by floods and animals rooting. Celandine dies back in the

early summer and rests for 6 months. The remaining barren patches are susceptible to erosion.

Lesser Celandine is a hairless perennial, with dark green spirally-arranged cordate leaves. The flowers are symmetrical with three sepaloid tepals and 7 to 12 glossy tepals. The carpels and stamens are numerous. The fruit is a single fruited achene. It has small root tubers which can separate to form new plants. The tiny tubers resemble hemorrhoids thus early herbalists concluded that they would be useful in treating piles. These peculiar theories probably didn't result in many successful cures!

To access the Huntingdon and Broadtop Trail, take Route 26 south past Saxton to Riddlesburg. The trail head is on your right. The trail travels to Hopewell, where it follows several city blocks and then crosses Route 915 to a shared shale road going south to a camping area. At the end of the road, the trail is limestone dust for the last 5 miles. Currently, there is only one primitive restroom about halfway along the trail, (bring your own paper!). The trail, which is well worth visiting, is a little over 10 miles long. Enjoy!

**LOST:** Eyeglasses were lost at the Mt Etna trailhead on April 18. They were in a dark brown case. If found please call 814-693-1432.

A white gold and diamond heart necklace was lost April 22<sup>nd</sup> during the 5K Crossroads race from the Alfarata Trailhead. If found, call 627-2821, 386-4016 or 386-5454. Thank you.

**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:

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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday May 7 <sup>th</sup>	1 PM Spring Gathering and Raffle Drawing, Mt. Etna Trailhead
Tuesday May 9 <sup>th</sup>	Monthly Board Meeting 7 PM Grannas Station
May 16 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , & 18 <sup>th</sup>	Hollidaysburg High School Seniors Community Service Days.
Wednesday June 21 <sup>st</sup> .	20 <sup>th</sup> John Healy Memorial Race; 6PM Williamsburg Trail Head.

### TRAIL ETIQUETTE

With many people using the trail we must all remember we do not have eyes in the back of our heads. No one likes to be startled, so if you are riding your bike and are approaching a slower rider, walkers or horseback riders PLEASE give notice. All that needs to be said is: "passing on your left", or "just coming up behind you".

### 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!**

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Post Office Box 592  
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-0592  
814-317-9728  
[www.rttcpa.org](http://www.rttcpa.org)