



Volume 25 Issue 4

Rails to Trails of Central PA Inc.

June/July 2020

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE RIDERS



(Turn the page to find out if you know them)

COVID-19 - LOWER TRAIL-CHANGES:

As in your everyday life, COVID-19 has also resulted in changes for Rails to Trails of Central PA.

First and foremost, it is our hope that this newsletter finds everyone HEALTHY and SAFE

In the last newsletter we announced that the trail would remain open but with changes. The most noticeable change was that the porta potties were removed and the vault toilets locked. We are happy to report that the porta potties have been re-installed and the vault toilets are unlocked.

We are still asking that rail trail users continue to practice SOCIAL DISTANCING. CDC guidelines are still recommending a minimum distance of 6 feet. And gatherings of large groups are not recommended.

We are still giving it more time until any rail trail programs will be scheduled. We had hoped to reschedule the Spring Gathering for this fall. But, at the June meeting, it was

decided that there will be **no gathering this year**. We apologize for this but look forward to next spring when hopefully things will be back to normal and we can all gather again.

RAFFLE RESULTS:



Thanks to Covid-19 and social distancing, there was no Spring Gathering this year, but the raffle drawing did take place at 1 PM on Sunday May 3rd.

The winners this year were as follows:

- 1st prize:** Bob Duffet of Hollidaysburg, Spokes-N-Skis Gift Certificate
- 2nd prize:** Gary Norton of Huntingdon, Fairfield Farm B&B 1 night stay
- 3rd prize:** Ed Patterson of Williamsburg, Gift Bag from REI
- 4th prize:** Bob Duffet of Hollidaysburg, Hoss's Gift Certificate
- 5th prize:** Jerry Hymes of Altoona, Sheetz Gift Certificate
- 6th prize:** Joe Raia Altoona, Pa, Amazon Gift Certificate
- 7th prize:** Patricia Faith Altoona, Pa, Amazon Gift Certificate
- 8th prize:** Dena Kennedy Williamsburg PA, Allegheny Creamery and Crepes Gift Certificate
- 9th prize:** Dr. Bernd Kuennecke Huntingdon, Pa, Allegheny Creamery and Crepes Gift Certificate
- 10th prize:** Craig Praul Hollidaysburg, Pa, Black Dog Café Gift Certificate
- 11th prize:** Robert Richers Altoona, Pa. Black Dog Gift Certificate
- 12th prize:** Scott Houseman Hollidaysburg, Pa, US Hotel Gift Certificate
- 13th prize:** Sally Hess Philipsburg, Pa, US Hotel Gift Certificate
- 14th prize:** Barbara Irion Hollidaysburg PA, Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Certificate
- 15th prize:** Tom Fisher Williamsburg PA, Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Certificate

16th prize: Donna Fisher Duncansville PA, Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Certificate

We must apologize that there has been a delay in getting some of the prizes mailed out to the winners. This was a result of the Covid virus and places being closed. Please accept our apology for this delay.

Top ticket sales person...**Tom Fisher**. Tom again sold the most tickets by selling 150 tickets. We owe not only Tom, but all our Rail Trail members who helped to make this year's raffle a success. This raffle is what makes up most of our yearly operating budget. Also, a very big thank you to Vickie Brua. She has handled the entire raffle process from the distribution to collection and updating of all the membership information. It is no easy task and she does a fantastic job.

Now with those thank-you's said, the raffle would not have happened without the generosity of **Spokes-N-Skis, Hoss's, Fairfield Farm Guest Cabin, REI, Black Dog Café, Allegheny Creamery and Crepes, US Hotel, and Sportsman's Warehouse**. These businesses have been very supportive of Rails to Trails and we hope that when you are out shopping, you return the favor and support these companies and eateries.

WILDFLOWER WATCH: JACK IN THE PULPIT

By Bob Richers



While looking through an old photo album from 2001 I came across a photo of a plant taken at Oil Creek State Park. The flower pictured was Jack in the Pulpit. Sue and I visited Prince Gallitzin Park on Mother's Day for a hike on a trail starting at the parking lot beyond the game commission storage sheds below the entrance way to the swimming area. When we came to an

intersection where the trail crossed the water line trail, we followed it right toward the lake. The trail became overgrown, so we worked our way around through more open ground. As I stepped past a log I noticed a Jack in the Pulpit that had withered from the heavy freeze earlier in the week. Whether it will re-sprout this year or will wait until next spring I don't know, but it was neat to find one again!

Of course, I couldn't stop there, but curiosity required that I research it.

Arisaema Triphyllum is also called Jack in the Pulpit, bog onion, brown dragon, Indian turnip, American Wake Robin and wild turnip. It's found in eastern North America growing in moist wetlands and thickets. This plant is between 12 and 26 inches tall and blooms in the springtime.

Jack in the Pulpit has a single stem that tops with three leaves. Above these leaves is the irregularly shaped inflorescence which is slightly over 3 inches in length. They are greenish yellow to green with purple or brownish stripes. The spathe, (the pulpit), wraps around and covers the spadix, (Jack).

The plant is unisexual, and the spadix contains flowers of both sexes. The early and smaller plants have male flowers and the larger plants have female flowers. Fungus gnats pollinate the plant. They can escape the male inflorescence but become trapped in the female ones. Plants cannot self-pollinate.

The green, 1cm fruit cluster on the thickened spadix and ripens to red in late summer. It contains up to 5 seeds which are tan in color. Seeds freed from the fruit will germinate the following spring and produce a plant with a single leaf. Seedlings need at least 3 years to flower.

Jack in the Pulpit contain calcium oxalate crystals as raphides and should never be eaten. North American Indians prepared the root as treatment for sore eyes and treatment of rheumatism, bronchitis, snakebites and to produce sterility. Some tribes used the plant as a poison mixed in meat against enemies resulting in severe pain and even death.

Locally the plant is listed on the springtime section of the Canoe Creek State Park Wildflower Guide.

TREE OF THE MONTH: SILVER MAPLE:

By Dave Despot

Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) is one of the maples commonly found in central Pennsylvania. From



landscapes to street trees to lowland forests, silver maples are relatively easy to find. The native range of silver maple extends from eastern Canada west to Minnesota and south to Georgia. It is a

medium to large tree that commonly grows 60 to 80 feet, occasionally to 100 feet. The trunk is often short and divides into two or more stems at a relatively low point. The bottom portion of the trunk can get very large – sometimes up to five feet across.

Leaves are deeply 5-lobed, 3 to 6 inches in length with a similar width, and have dark green upper surfaces and silvery-white undersides. The leaf margins are coarsely toothed, may have small lobes, and are attached with red petioles that often droop. Silver maple leaves can be distinguished from those of red maple by the number of

lobes – red maples are generally 3-lobed and have shallow sinuses in comparison to silver maple. Winter buds are red and often clustered at the end of the twigs, similar to red maple; however, silver maple twigs tend to be brown in color (in contrast to the gray twigs of red maple) and emit a strong odor when bruised. Bark on young stems is smooth and gray-brown, but with age, breaks into long thin strips that have loose ends. Large trunks tend to be covered with loose strips of bark.

A unique characteristic of silver maple is that the formation and pollination of flowers, seed production, and germination occur over a very short period of time. In central Pennsylvania, silver maple trees often bloom in March and seeds mature about two months later – around Memorial Day. The seeds have no dormancy and many germinate soon after they fall to the ground. Red maple uses a similar spring seed strategy.

**AND OUR RIDERS ARE:
FOUR GENERATIONS OF THE WARD
FAMILY**



From left to right, G Bill Ward, David Ward (Son), Jessica Farnan (Granddaughter), and Emily Farnan (Great Granddaughter).

Bill is 89 years young and been an active member for many years. This summer, he had the opportunity to bike the trail with his son, granddaughter and great granddaughter. How wonderful is that!

If you have photos of your adventures on the trail please share them with us. You might find your photo in the newsletter or Facebook.

**RAILS TO TRAILS LOSE A DEDICATED
VOLUNTEER:**

On May 5th, volunteer Bill Echard passed away at the age of 82. When trees fell across the trail, Bill was usually there with his chainsaw even before people had a chance to report the fallen tree. Bill lived in Williamsburg with his wife Audrey Jean.

Maintenance coordinator Mike Panek had this to say about Bill, “I wish to recognize Bill Echard at this sad time, for his years of exemplary service to Lower Trail. Always cheerful, Bill was ready to respond to each need, especially when removing dead, potentially dangerous, or fallen trees. Those of us who had the pleasure to know Bill, will feel the loss for a long time.” Nelson Horton, our maintenance coordinator for at least 10 years prior to Mike, also had only words of praise for Bill. Norma and Nelson knew if they needed someone down on the trail quickly, Bill was one of their first calls. “He was a wonderful volunteer, it got so the even trail users just called Bill directly.” Bill may have been 82 but he worked on the trail like a 24 year old. Our sympathies go out to Bill’s family. His loss will be felt for a very long time.

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

Due to the COVID-19 VIRUS THERE WILL BE NO MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS
Meetings are being held via Zoom or social distancing at one of the trailheads.
THE SPRING GATHERING HAS BEEN CANCELED

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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