



Volume 27 Issue 2

Rails to Trails of Central PA Inc.

March/April 2022

UPCOMING ANNUAL RAFFLE AND CHANGE OF THE SPRING GATHERING:



Again this year we will be holding our primary fundraiser, the raffle. We are planning the Spring Gathering, but with a change. The gathering will not take place the first Sunday in May but instead

is scheduled for the First Sunday in JUNE, **Sunday June 5th**. The date change was in hoping for better weather, over the years we have had more bad weather than good weather the first Sunday in May so we decided to make the change.



You should have received your fifteen raffle tickets with this newsletter. If you did not, please let us know. This year's prizes:

- 1st. Prize: \$200 Gift Certificate from Spokes-N-Skis
- 2nd Prize: 1 night stay in Fairfield Farm B&B Guest Cabin, Spruce Creek.
- 3rd Prize: Gift Bag from REI
- 4th Prize: \$100 Gift Certificate from Hoss's
- 5th Prize: \$50 Sheetz Convenience Store Gift Certificate
- 6th / 7th Prizes: \$50 Gift Certificates from Amazon
- 8th / 9th Prize 10th / 11th Prize \$25 Gift Certificates from US Hotel and Allegheny Creamery and Crepe
- 12th thru 16th Prize \$20 Gift Certificates from ACE Hardware
- 17th / 18th Prize \$15 Gift Certificates from Black Dog Café'

The prizes were provided this year by: Spokes-N-Skis, Fairfield Farm B&B, REI, Hoss's, US Hotel, Allegheny Creamery and Crepes, ACE Hardware in Duncansville and Black Dog Café.

The raffle is our major fund raiser, providing 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. For example, even if your membership does not expire until January, 2023, by selling the tickets, your expiration date would move to January, 2024. 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 or Jennifer Barefoot at 814-695-8521 or by e-mail at jbsunbrook@gmail.com. Thank you!

The raffle drawing will take place on June 5th 2022. Winners will be notified.

WILD FLOWER WATCH: EDELWEISS:

BY Bob Richers

In August of 1966 I attended the movie sound of Music with the girl next door. We were celebrating our August birthdays and were classmates entering our senior year of high school. In those days many of us sang in church choirs and high school Glee Clubs. Sadly, it was also a time of the beginning of the end for major on-screen musicals. (The good old days?) That movie has always remained on my top five lists.

One of the songs in the movie, which was written by Rogers and Hammerstein, was Edelweiss sung by Captain Von Trapp. Edelweiss was an Alpine wildflower. It was considered a symbol of Austrian purity.

In the World War 2 series Band of Brothers, Edelweiss was mentioned again. US Army Private Blithe was looking at a flower in the lapel of a dead German soldier and his Lieutenant Nixon told him it was Edelweiss, a symbol of a soldier's mountain hardiness. Later in the campaign Blithe removed an Edelweiss blossom from another dead German and pinned it to his own uniform. The following morning Blithe was killed.

Edelweiss is a mountain flower belonging to the daisy or sunflower family. It prefers rocky limestone places and is found growing at 5,000-to-8,000 foot altitudes. It is native to the Alps and the Carpathians ranges in Europe. Unfortunately, due to its popularity, Edelweiss is protected by most of the countries where it is found because of over-collecting.



Edelweiss has white hairs on the flowers and leaves and appears wooly. The stocks grow from 1 to 8 inches high in nature but up to 16 inches when cultivated. Each bloom consists of 5 or 6 yellow clustered 5/16" spikelet-florets surrounded by fuzzy white bracts in a double stare pattern. Flowers are in bloom from July thru September.

The plant was used in folk medicine in the Alps for centuries. Different plant extracts have been used to treat abdominal pain, respiratory diseases, heart disease, and for diarrhea. It was known as the bellyache flower for centuries. The flowers have a scent similar to lilacs. They can be picked as a bouquet and last up to a week if the water is changed daily.



Edelweiss became a symbol of the rugged purity of the Alpine regions and its symbol was adopted by local clubs, military groups and even countries. Due to the difficulty of gathering Edelweiss in extreme mountain areas it was

immensely valued by Swiss maidens. Some of the young men even fell to their deaths trying to pick bouquets from cliff faces. I wonder if the smarter Swiss lads had more luck with the ladies by staying off of the mountains and just presenting a box of Swiss Chocolates?

There are sites on-line where seed or plants can be purchased. With the proper alkaline soil conditions, the plant can grow in flowerpots or better yet, in a sunny corner of your garden.

TREE OF THE MONTH: RED MULBERRY

By Dave Despot

Red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) is a small tree, often reaching a height of 20 to 30 feet and a trunk diameter of 1 to 1.5 feet. The trunk is generally short, dividing into a series of stout spreading branches. This species has a wide range in the United States from Massachusetts west to South Dakota and south to Texas and Florida. It is rarely found in pure stands, but mixed in stands of other hardwoods. It prefers moist rich soil that is often found in bottomlands and lowland forests. The best growth occurs in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys.



Leaves are 3 to 5 inches long, occasionally 2 or 3 lobed, with heart shaped bases, quickly tapering to sharp pointed tips. Leaves have coarsely toothed margins with upper surfaces that are dark green and rough and pale green undersides. Winter twigs are thin, zig-zag in appearance, greenish-brown with a reddish tinge, and contain

milky sap with a sweet taste. Buds are about ¼ inch long, pointed, shiny, and covered with greenish-brown to reddish-brown overlapping scales. Terminal buds are absent, which contributes to the zig-zag appearance of the twigs. Leaf scars are nearly round

and appear sunken into the raised nodes on which they are found. The bark is gray-brown with a reddish tinge that darkens and develops narrow ridges and warty outgrowths with age. The sweet juicy fruits look similar to blackberries and ripen in July. Birds consume the fruit ravenously.

The wood is soft, resilient in contact with the soil, and has dark reddish-brown heartwood. It is used locally for fence posts, ship building, and cabinets. The fruit is used to make pies and jelly. The fallen fruit can be messy so this is not a tree suited for a small backyard. Perhaps this species is best viewed as we walk through the forest.

2022 ELECTION RESULTS:



At the monthly Rails to Trails of Central PA Inc. board meeting, held via zoom on January 11th, elections were held for the officers of the Board of Directors. The 5 individuals elected this year for a 3 year term were: Jennifer Barefoot, Adam Bergstein, Hazel Bilka, Mary Emeigh, and Adam Grow. Elections were also held for officers for the 2022 year. There was not much change: President: Ethan Imhoff, Vice President: Mike Panek, Treasurer: Sarah Gonsman, Secretary: Mary Emeigh and Assistant Sec/Treas: Jennifer Barefoot.

Also in January, board member Peggy Goodman resigned from the Board leaving an opening which was filled at the February meeting by Rails to Trails member Ben Varner.

Rails to Trails would like to thank both Gary Patterson and Peggy for their outstanding contributions to Rails to Trails and the Lower Trail. Both of these individuals devoted their time and talents to the organization. Many of you would see Gary working along the trail, especially from the Williamsburg to Flowing Spring end of the trail. Gary's maintenance talents were challenged throughout the years along this section of trail, dealing with flooding, clogged ditches, downed trees, washed out roads, legal challenges by adjacent land owners, broken benches and picnic tables, just to mention a few things. I personally got to work alongside Gary untangling mangled split-rail fence; retrieving it from the river following the 1996 flood. When Gary saw something needed attention, he just got to it and fixed it. Rails to Trails has Peggy to thank for the outstanding summer program series until the pandemic hit and the wonderful canal era displays in the Grannas Station. Peggy brought her educational talents to planning and conducting a diverse set of programs just as she had done in the past, making Fort Roberdeau and Royer Mansion what they are today. Peggy's biology and historical knowledge has been a great asset to the trail. We could not have been more fortunate to have Peggy come on board following her retirement from the Fort.

Both Gary and Peggy will continue to be active in the organization. They have just wanted to step back a little. You will continue to see Gary on the trail and Peggy has said she is willing to plan some programs. The past year with the pandemic really put a temporary halt to gatherings and programs.

With that all said we would like to welcome Adam Bergstein and Ben Varner to the Board of Directors. They have large "shoes" to fill. Many know Ben from always being on the trail cleaning up

downed trees. Ben is known to be cutting, cleaning up, and repairing the trail/bridges even before he is called to be notified that there is a tree down. He is on the trail that much. He rides the trail with a chainsaw on his bike (he must have been a boy scout -"always prepared.") Ben retired from the Department of Corrections. He has been helping mow the trail for several years and is very active with Habitat for Humanity. In his spare time he enjoys golfing and riding his bike on the Lower trail. Adam is from Hollidaysburg and brings his love of the trail and computer knowledge to the board. This is a welcome asset for some of us (meaning myself.) Both of these men are dedicated volunteers who help our organization to grow and remain strong.

DO YOU REMEMBER THIS?



In the fall of 2004, the northeastern United States felt the impact of Hurricane Ivan. The trail, along with a good portion of Williamsburg, was under water. When the water receded, this was how the lower trail looked as you headed east from the Williamsburg trail head.

(From the March 2005 *Trail Trekker*)

Hardest hit was 17 mile Lower Trail connecting Alexandria to Williamsburg, recording nearly \$800,000 worth of damage after Hurricane Ivan rendered the majority of the trail unusable. The condition of the trail was a hard blow to morale in the two small towns; says Jennifer Barefoot, then president of Rails-to-Trails of Central PA Inc. Barefoot says "Lower Trail intertwines communities and brings a sense of pride to the area," because of its historical significance, educational value, economic draw and popularity,. And in a year capped with job losses, many area businesses, including a trailside rental service, were adversely affected by the flooding. Managers of many of the affected trails applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for aid, which includes a category covering public parks. The Lower Trail is a privately owned nonprofit and at press time was still seeking funding from FEMA and PEMA to repair the entire trail.

(From the May 2005 *Trekker*)

To this:



At this time last month, we would have never imagined in our wildest dreams that the Lower Trail would be well on its way to being 100% repaired. That is just what has happened. It was beginning to look like it would be at least 2006 before any repairs would be made to the flood damaged trail. As reported in

the past issue of the *Trail Trekker*, we had no hope of receiving any funding from FEMA. We have yet to hear any news of the DCNR Grant, which would not have covered the total cost of repair in any case. We have been working on securing funding from many different avenues, none of which would have allowed repairs to start this season.

(The repair of the entire trail would not have happened, if not for Grannas Brothers stepping forward to do all of these repairs.)

WE MAY HAVE A GLITCH:



In emailing the past newsletter out we were notified that a number of them were undeliverable. Certain E-Mails domains, (example @embarqmail.com) are being returned due to spam filters on the mail server.

So if you had gotten the newsletter via email in the past and are not receiving them now, please check you spam filter.

SUPPORTING RAILS TO TRAILS IS AS EASY AS; SHOPPING AMAZON.COM.

Please consider using **Amazon Smiles** and designating **Rails To Trails of Central Pennsylvania Inc.** when you make a purchase through Amazon. This will provide our trail organization with a percentage of the purchase at no cost to you. Thanks to all those who have already used this feature.

You can use this quick link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/25-1605920> to access Amazon Smiles using RTTCPA as donor recipient.

Next Newsletter: E-Bike policy update, Greg Williams projects along the trail.

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.
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 Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
www.rttcpa.org





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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

April 12th
May 10th
June 5th
June 14th

Monthly Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station
Monthly Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station
Spring Gathering/Raffle Drawing,
Monthly Board Meeting 7 PM at the Grannas Station

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 address below.

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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