



## Going Camping? Don't forget your bike!!!

*By Bob Richers*

I always camped in a tent. As a boy scout, scout leader and with my young family, family tent camping worked quite well. After the kids grew up and moved out, my wife Sue and I took up biking and continued tent camping. We enjoyed camping along the Pine Creek Trail and through the years watched the trail expand to a complete 63 miles.

As we age, (gracefully?), we added cots to our tent to ease getting up and down in the morning. Now that we are in our 70's, in fact, I am on the downhill side of 70, we knew a change was needed to continue camping. We do continue to bike even if we do not go as fast or as far and maybe use a lower gear. As joints are replaced maybe, electric bikes are in our future.

Three years ago, we bought a used Clipper popup camper and began camping in earnest. It fits nicely in my garage over the winter season. All we require are state park campgrounds that have electric outlets for our camper and shower house/restrooms.

During the first season camping we visited as many state parks as possible that met our basic needs. While camping in an area we explored other parks in the neighborhood. Our second season, thanks to a cap on our F150 pickup truck and the easy attach feature on our bikes' front tires, we brought along our bikes and rode on rail trails close to some state parks and continued exploring other state parks. Now, in season three we have completed a list of campgrounds where trails are available and we ride on every outing. I will share our list of these campgrounds and local trails.

### Pennsylvania State Parks:

1. Bald Eagle SP - Pine Creek Trail at Jersey Shore PA, the Bald Eagle Valley Trail which is being developed from Castanea PA to Jersey Shore PA.
2. Clear Creek SP - Red Bank Trail at Brookville PA, Mahoning Shadow Trail at Punxsutawney.

Both are down PA Route 36 from the campground

3. Codorus SP = Heritage Trail from Your PA to the Maryland border, Torrey C. Brown Trail from the MD border to Baltimore MD, Northwest Lancaster River Trail off of PA Route 30 on the far side of the Susquehanna River.
4. Cook Forest SP = Route 66 Trail/North County Trail from the junction of PA Route 36 with PA Route 66 in Leeper PA, Sandy Creek Trail at a hidden trailhead along PA Route 322 east of the Cranberry Mall.
5. Cowan Gap SP - Western Maryland Trail at Hancock MD, Cumberland Valley Trail at Shippensburg PA.
6. Keystone SP - 5 Star Trail at Lynch Park, Greensburg PA, Coke and Coal Trail at Mount Pleasant PA, Roaring Run/Kiski Trail at Apollo PA, West Moreland Heritage Trail at Delmont PA.
7. Laurel Hill SP = GAP Trail mile 42 at Rockwood PA
8. Little Pine SP - Pine Creek Trail mile 50 at the trailhead at Waterville PA.
9. Ohio Pyle SP - GAP Trail mile 72. Ohio Pyle gets crowded in the summer months. We were there in early May and the White Trillium were spectacular.
10. Parker Dam SP = Clarion River/Toby Creek Trail at either Brookville or Ridgeway PA along PA Route 219.
11. Pymatuning SP = Tuttle Campground to the Spillway Trail, Presque Isle SP - Karl Boyles Trail, Maurice K. Goodard SP - John C. Oliver Trail. Pymatuning Valley Greenway has 9 miles of a 19.5 mile trails that is under development in Dorset Ohio.
12. Raymond B Winters SP = Buffalo Valley Trail at Lewisburg PA.
13. Sizerville SP = West Creek Recreation Trail at Emporium PA, Lowlands Trails in Sinnemahoning SP.

14. Youghiogheny River Dam Campground, (Army Corp. of Engineers) = GAP Trail Mile 61. This cold-water release is also a great trout fishery!

Private Campgrounds:

1. Petticoat Junction Campground - Pine Creek Trail mile 30 at Cedar Run PA.

Out of State Campgrounds -

1. North Bend SP West Virginia - A ½ mile trail connects the Lakeside Campground to the North Bend Trail.

Some of the lessons we have learned so far is that camp sites are easier to get from Monday thru Thursday. I usually make a reservation online on the preceding Friday after watching the 5-day weather forecast. Reservations can be made a day in either direction to avoid major storms. Always leave home with a full tank of gas and make a note of gas station locations near the state parks. Get gas when your tank gets down to ¼ full. Most importantly, find out the hours and locations of the Local Ice Cream Shops!!

**FEATURED TREE: AMERICAN SYCAMORE**

*By Dave Despot*

American sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*, is a large tree found in lowlands of the eastern United States. This species grows to its largest size in the river valleys associated with the Ohio and Mississippi rivers where it can reach a height of 150 feet. In central Pennsylvania, sycamore trees commonly grow 75 to 100 feet tall with an equal spread. Sycamore is one of the most common tree species associated with the Lower trail. Some people refer to sycamore trees as buttonwood trees because the fine-grained wood was used to make buttons for clothing.

Leaves are three lobed (occasionally five lobed) edged with coarse teeth. Leaves could be considered maple like, but are much larger than maple leaves. Leaf color is medium to dark green with a flat (not shiny) finish. Leaf petiole bases are hollow and surround buds on the twigs. Saucerlike stipules encircle twigs at the area where each leaf attaches. Terminal buds are absent. Lateral buds are divergent, 1/4 to 3/8 inches long, reddish brown and blunt, with the innermost scale covered with long rusty hairs. Twigs are stout, sometimes covered with hairs, yellow orange in color and zigzag shaped.



The most outstanding characteristic of this species is the bark on mature stems. The base of the trunk is covered with brown bark that flakes off in small pieces. Above this area, the thin gray-brown bark flakes off in long, thin, irregular strips to

expose the creme colored underbark. This exfoliating bark is the first thing to catch your eye as you approach the tree.



Fruit of this species are classified as a syncarp (multiple fruit) consisting of a ball of elongated achenes about one inch in diameter. For the American sycamore, these fruit are borne singly. There is a similar species called London planetree,

*Platanus x acerifolia*, which has characteristics similar to American sycamore with one obvious difference, the fruit are borne in pairs. London planetree is also more disease resistant than American sycamore.

**REPAIR STATIONS:**

You may have noticed the Lower Trail now has additional repair stations. This is due to donations made in memory of two individuals who enjoyed the trail.



Pictured here is Adam Grow, (left) at the Tom Harvey Memorial Repair Station and Bill Durbin, (right) at the Repair station in memory of Bill's wife

Fritzie.

We would like to thank volunteer Adam Grow for getting them installed. These repair stations are a great asset to the trail and especially those who are unfortunate enough to have to use them when riding the trail.

**A NOTE WE WOULD LIKE TO PASS ON TO VOLUNTEERS:**

**Dear Volunteers**

Thank you for your service to maintaining the Lower Trail in Huntingdon County.

My husband Tom and I biked the trail yesterday, and discovered a large tree blocking the path. Several others were there at the time and they helped us get our bikes over the high tree limb.

On the return back to Mt Etna parking lot, the tree was removed! Two volunteers- a lady and man with equipment and headphones on- were finishing the job. THANK YOU!

You have helped me in the past when I did a litter clean up near the flea market area, as well as when I removed a tire out of the water.

I am chairperson of the Litter Lifters of West Vincent Township, in Chester, a county outside of Philadelphia. I just started another litter group called Chester County Litter Lifters. Our group has removed over 30 tons of litter and organized over 50 road and waterway cleanups. It's sometimes challenging to be a lead volunteer- people come out of the woodwork to complain about this and that.

No complaints here- just praise!  
So thank you for caring about the beautiful trail!

Beth Intocciahank

## 2025 EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

*By Bob Richers*

After numerous Eagle Scout Projects, over the lifetime of the Lower Trail, our board of directors decided to direct the list of possible projects to address some of our neglected maintenance issues. This is not a slight on our WONDERFUL Volunteers. We just cannot get everything done, especially during a rainy or windy season when the grass grows or multiple trees come down.

These maintenance heroes are mostly retired, and every year we all get a little older. Sadly, some pass away or become physically limited, but fortunately, others step forward to fill in.

Lucas Rivera from Troop 32 in Hollidaysburg approached us about the painting of 25 benches and picnic tables at the Alfarata end of the trail. During the wettest spring in a long time, Lucas and his fellow minions from troop 32 completed his project a week before his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday! Of course, his dad worked alongside Lucas to help complete this excellent project.

We gave Lucas basic information on color and possible products to use, he organized the project, and he took it from there. Benches were chemically cleaned, wire brushed, sealed and stained.

To our surprise, the final project included 40 benches and is now completed up to mile 4. It really spruces up that end of the trail!

I would like to personally thank Scoutmaster Dwayne Harpster and his committee for directing Eagle Scout candidates to the Lower Trail.

## PEGGY GOODMAN:

We are saddened at the passing of Margaret J. (Peggy) Goodman, on June 9, 2025.

Peggy's love of nature, environment and history made her a perfect fit for Rails to Trails. Peggy held her master's degree in biology. She taught at Spring Cove and the Altoona School District as well as being a professor of Biology at Penn State. Her love of history was exemplified by her 30 years as Director of Fort Roberdeau and by her work with the Blair County Historical Society, especially with the research and restoring of the Royer Mansion outside of Williamsburg. Peggy served on the board from 2015 to 2022. In that time, she organized and held our summer series program until covid shut everything down in 2020. She shared so much knowledge with so many. Peggy, her late husband, Ray and their family were members of Rails to Trails since its founding in 1988. Ray helped in the formation of the organization and served on the board for almost 20 years.

The Goodman family made Central PA a better place to live. Peggy will be greatly missed.

---

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





RAILS-TO-TRAILS, INC.  
OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA  
P.O. Box 592  
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

Nonprofit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

Altoona, PA 16601

PERMIT NO. 66

*Or Current Resident.*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
September 9, 2025  
October 5, 2024  
October 8, 2025

Raffle Drawing and Monthly Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station  
Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station  
5k Run, Laces for Alli, Begins in Williamsburg.  
Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station

Please check our Calendar of Events page on our website ([www.rttcpa.org](http://www.rttcpa.org)) to keep up to date, for other events that may be taking place on the trail hosted by other organizations

### 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!**

Rails-to-Trails of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.  
Post Office Box 592  
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-0592  
814-317-9728  
[www.rttcpa.org](http://www.rttcpa.org)