

TRAIL TRACKINGS

A Newsletter for Members of the Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association
Trailblazer of the Great Allegheny Passage in Somerset County

Vol. 3, No. 1

Spring 2006



CELEBRATE THE GRAND OPENING of The Great Allegheny Passage May 27, 2006



The trail connection between Pennsylvania and Maryland has been

made. Big Savage Tunnel is open, the Mason-Dixon Line is crossed, and the Great Allegheny Passage is interstate travel at its non-motorized best!

The Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association (SCRITA) invites you to join the Trail Completion Celebration Saturday, May 27, noon to 3 p.m., at the Western Maryland Railway Station, Meyersdale, PA. Trail rides, refreshments,



entertainment, displays, and activities are planned for visitors of all ages. A grand opening ceremony will take place at 2 p.m. Join trail enthusiasts to bike or hike one or one hundred miles along one of the most scenic and extensive bicycle trails completed through the rail-to-trail program. Ten Trail Towns have been selected as launch points for riders coming to this event. Each is represented by a different color, and each registered rider



will receive a T-shirt in the color of his or her starting point. Imagine the sea of color as we converge in Meyersdale for this great occasion!



Participating Trail Towns include Pittsburgh, Boston, West Newton, Connellsville, Ohio, Confluence, Rockwood, Frostburg, Cumberland, and Washington, D.C.

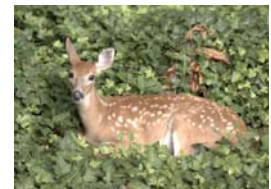
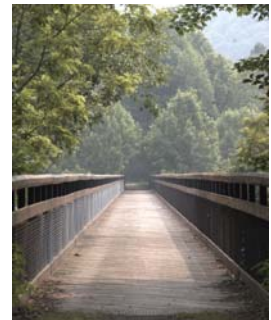
Sponsoring businesses in each trail town are offering free

wristbands in that town's color. Collect them all as you ride and discover the hidden treasures of the trail—our towns!

Shuttle service back to the Trail

Town starting

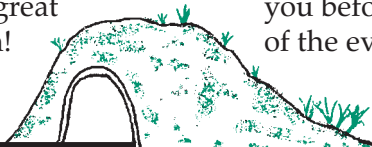
point is available upon request. Or stay the weekend to enjoy everything Somerset County and the trail have to offer.



The ride registration fee of \$25 includes the T-shirt and a voucher for \$5 at one of the food vendors at the railway station. Register at www.atatrail.org or contact Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association, P.O. Box 413, Somerset, PA 15501. For more information about celebration events and activities, visit www.meyersdale.net or call 814-634-8840. Register before May 10 so that your T-shirt reaches you before the date of the event.



Photos in this issue by Paul g. Weigman and Ed DiFrancesco



FIRST RIDER THROUGH THE BIG SAVAGE TUNNEL



George and Company Arriving at Tunnel

As most of you know by now, the honor of being the first person to officially ride through the Big Savage Tunnel was put up for bid on e-bay. SCRTA board member, Paul Wiegman, came up with the idea to raise money for the trail. As a side note, Paul was a passenger on the last train to pass through The Big Savage Tunnel in 1975.

The honor of being the first bike rider through the tunnel was won for George Cook, of Somerset, as a Father's Day gift by his sons in the e-bay auction. George and his



Onlookers Gather in the Rain with George and Paul at Center

family made history for The Great Allegheny Passage as they were the first to officially ride their bikes through The Big Savage Tunnel, Saturday, April 8. This gift



George and Sons at Tunnel

fitted George very well as he is a longtime supporter of the trail completion and also a former SCRTA board member. George has many miles logged on the trail and has already made the trip to Frostburg and back. On a past birthday he was accompanied by his six sons for a ride



Family and Friends

down the C & O Canal Trail. They didn't have to bid for that ride, they only needed to keep up with their dad's pace. Last year Maryland's DOT secured the final tract of land to complete the Maryland section of The Great Allegheny Passage. When completed, it will connect to the C & O in Cumberland. Will George's next big ride be from Pittsburgh to DC? George's sons better get ready, I'm sure he is!

YOUR TRAIL CALENDAR

Events and Happenings from End to End

Official Opening Ceremony of The Big Savage Tunnel - Friday, May 26, www.atatrail.org

Grand Opening Celebration of The Great Allegheny Passage - Saturday, May 27, see Registration Form in this Newsletter, www.atatrail.org and www.meyersdale.net

River and Wind Challenge - Saturday, June 3, www.salvationarmy-wpa.org

Rockwood River and Rails Festival - June 14-17, 814-926-3797

Yocatovac Trek - June 17-25, <http://yocatovac.org>

Rockwood Rotary 5k and 1/2 Marathon Races-contact Ken Johnson at 814-926-2469.

The races, held to benefit on-going Rotary projects, will begin at the Rockwood Trailhead, Saturday, June 24 at 9:00 a.m., entrance fee is \$15.00 per race. Prizes, aid stations and refreshments available. The 5k is open to both runners and walkers.

New Business Along The Trail

By mid-April a new business at 218 Center Street, Meyersdale, will be brewing specialty coffees and teas from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday through Tuesday each week. In addition to espresso, latte, cappuccino, and flavored coffee, 218 Java Cafe will offer chi and flavored teas, fruit drinks, breakfast items, fresh fruit plates, organic dips, maple syrup, honey, and their by-products for both sit-down and carry-out.

In warmer weather, iced drinks, fruit slushies, soups, and salads will enhance the menu, which is dominated by fresh and organic items.

"We hope to create a relaxing atmosphere where customers can linger," says co-owner Kay Crissinger, who will operate the cafe with daughter Cindy McCormick.

Brant's Landing Boat Launch

Located a short distance from the Garrett Trailhead, the landing was named in honor of Dave Brant, of Rockwood, who spent much of his time cleaning up the Casselman River. A Grand Opening was celebrated on April 22. Take your kayak, canoe, or raft and launch from there for a trip down the river.

Trail Clean-Up a Success

Brett Hollern, in charge of SCRTA trail maintenance sends out a big "Thank You" to everyone who helped on Saturday, April 22 in the trail clean-up. About 30 volunteers braved the wet and chilly weather to help get our section of The Great Allegheny Passage in shape for the upcoming season and the Grand Opening.

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

TWENTY YEARS IN THE MAKING!

- Unearthing the Great Sphinx took 108 years
- Building Notre Dame Cathedral took 185 years
- Completing the Great Wall of China took hundreds of years

Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association is proud to announce that construction of Pennsylvania's Allegheny Highlands Trail Section of The Great Allegheny Passage *is complete* and it only took a fraction of the time to finish the job!

We invite you to help us celebrate the joining of our section to those miles already on the ground—both ours and those of our sister group members of The Allegheny Trail Alliance.



Miles of Fun

A grand opening ceremony will take place at 2:00 PM at the restored Western Maryland Railway Station in Meyersdale but the real celebration happens all along the Great Allegheny Passage.

Begin your ride from your choice of suggested towns along the trail, converging in Meyersdale on Saturday afternoon for refreshments, music, prizes and fun. Consider starting out in Pittsburgh or Washington and taking a few days along the way!

SIGN UP BEFORE MAY 10TH SO YOUR T-SHIRT REACHES YOU BEFORE THE DAY OF THE EVENT

A RAINBOW OF COLOR

Ten Trail Towns have been selected as launch points for riders coming to the event. Each one is represented by a different color and each registered rider will receive a T-shirt in the color of his or her starting point Trail Town. Imagine the sea of color when we all come together in Meyersdale in our different shirts!

For a registration fee of \$25 each rider will receive a T-shirt and a voucher good for \$5 at one of our food vendors at the Railway Station.

Information is available upon request for shuttle services back to your Trail Town starting point—or start your trek back on Sunday morning. A limited amount of overnight camping is available in Meyersdale.

VISIT OUR TRAIL TOWNS

The rainbow doesn't stop there! We have beautiful little towns all along the way. Stop by one of our sponsoring businesses as you ride and pick up a free wristband in the appropriate Trail Town color. Collect them all as you ride and see the hidden treasures of the trail—our Towns!

ENJOY MEYERSDALE

Not up for a long ride?

Make Meyersdale your starting point and meet us at the Station for the celebration. There will be music, food and fun from noon until 3:00 PM on the grounds of the Station.



Small Town Charm

Registration

Please complete one form for each rider, including the waiver below.

I'll ride from the following Trail Town:

- Pittsburgh
- Boston
- West Newton
- Connellsville
- Ohioopyle
- Confluence
- Rockwood
- Frostburg
- Cumberland
- Washington, DC

I'll meet you in Meyersdale

Please send me information on:

- Shuttle Services
- Camping in Meyersdale

T-shirt Size Requested:

- Medium
- Large
- Extra Large

Registration Fee Enclosed:

Ride Registration (\$25.00) \$ _____

Additional Donation (All Proceeds Benefit Trail Maintenance Endowment Fund) \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Mail your check to SCRTA, c/o Confluence Tourism Association, PO Box 144, Confluence, PA 15424.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

WAIVER OF RESPONSIBILITY

In consideration of acceptance of this entry, I hereby for myself, my heirs and administrators and assigns, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages that I may have against the sponsoring organizations and the Commonwealth of PA, or their representatives, successors and assigns, arising out of any and all injuries suffered by me while participating in the event. Parent and/or Guardian agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the sponsoring organizations and the Commonwealth of PA, and their representatives, successors and assigns, from any and all damages for injuries received by a minor participant while participating in the event.

Signature of Participant _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if minor) _____

Keep it Going

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Join Today!

Please join or renew your membership now to help keep your trail going! Your membership in the Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association will provide the funds needed for the future upkeep of the Great Allegheny Passage in Somerset County, guaranteeing its use for you, your family, and future generations. As a member you will receive our newsletter, "Trail Trackings", with information and articles about the trail. Please support the trail by choosing a membership that suits you or purchase one for a family member or a friend. If you like, you may also make a gift contribution.

- MEMBERSHIPS -

- \$20 Individual One-Year
- \$25 Family One-Year
- \$50 Individual Three-Year
- \$60 Family Three-Year
- \$300 Individual Lifetime
- \$60 Business/Organization One-Year
- \$250 Corporate Five-Year
- A Gift of \$ _____

Donations are Tax Deductible

New Member Renewal Address Changes Date _____

Member Name _____

Company (if applicable) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please Send Membership Info To _____

Address _____

*Please Mail Application and Check to: **Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Assoc.**
P.O. Box 413, Somerset, Pa 15501*

The Great Allegheny Passage in Somerset County IS COMPLETED!

Come ride with Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association to celebrate this marvelous achievement. All registrants are eligible for prize packages to be drawn at Meyersdale's Western Maryland Railway Station. See page 1 and inside for details, sign up before May 10. You need not be present to win.

Stay the weekend and enjoy everything Somerset County and the Trail have to offer!



NEWSFLASH!

Opening Ceremony for The Big Savage Tunnel - Friday, May 26
Grand Opening of The Great Allegheny Passage - Saturday, May 27
Check the Allegheny Trail Alliance Website at www.atatrail.org for details.
Registration Form Enclosed for the Grand Opening Celebration
Please Sign Up Prior to May 10th

Come and See . . .

"The Light At The End Of The Tunnel"

Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association

P.O. Box 413
Somerset, PA 15501

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