

THREE RIVERS HERITAGE TRAIL • MONTOUR TRAIL • STEEL VALLEY TRAIL  
 YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER TRAIL NORTH • YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER TRAIL SOUTH  
 ALLEGHENY HIGHLANDS TRAIL (PA) • ALLEGHENY HIGHLANDS TRAIL of MD

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## SPONSOR A FOOT OF BIG SAVAGE TUNNEL!



**F**ROM DAY ONE, we knew the Big Savage Tunnel was a major problem that someday would have to be confronted. In many ways, it was the unifying challenge that brought the ATA together.

Without the tunnel, the Pennsylvania trails would never make the connection to Maryland and on to Washington, D.C. Yes, we could have a nice system of regional trails, but the prospect of connecting to our nation's capital was a dream that we all were willing to work very hard to achieve.

Estimates to rehab the tunnel first came in around \$2 to \$3 million, using a pre-cast culvert to reline the tunnel's entire length. However, a 3,300-foot claustrophobic experience was not what we had in mind!

Following various designs and redesigns, the contractors are now rehabbing the tunnel with extensive rock-bolting, an aggressive drainage system, grouting the void between the rock and the liner, and shotcreting over the original concrete liner to retain the historic profile of the tunnel. We were able to salvage a significant chunk of the north portal's "Big Savage 1911" which we can use as we replicate the portals.

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### New Laurel Highlands Signs Guide Trail Users

**N**ew signs have been popping up all over the Laurel Highlands region. These "wayfinder" signs are designed to direct tourists to the many activities and amenities in the area, including our trail.

Thanks to a grant from Fay-Penn Economic Development, the ATA was able to purchase enough signs to lead visitors to six of our major access areas.

The blue and white "Bike Trail" signs were a compromise, explained ATA's Linda Boxx, "the sign committee settled on "Bike Trail" to be succinct enough for motorists who have approximately 3 seconds to absorb the contents of the sign."

Many other attractions are often featured on the same sign.

Boxx continued, "we hope the signs will help tourists traveling in the area discover the 150 mile, award-winning, multi-purpose, non-motorized, all-season, National Recreational Trail named the Great Allegheny Passage - which we've summarized as "Bike Trail."



### A Giant Leap Forward!

## MARYLAND PURCHASES VITAL SEGMENT

**P**rogress on the Allegheny Highlands Trail of Maryland took a giant and long-awaited leap forward this fall with the purchase of 4.8 miles of right of way from near Frostburg to the Mason Dixon Line.

The Maryland Board of Public Works approved the \$875,000 purchase of the 100 acres from the Moran Coal Company of Westernport, MD on October 16, 2002.

"This is the last piece of property we needed," said Bill Atkinson, Regional Planner for the Maryland Department of Planning, "if all goes well, we can begin construction the early part of 2003."

The section includes the 957-foot-long Borden Tunnel.

Allegheny County, Maryland, which already owns the Western Maryland Scenic Railway, will be the ultimate owners of the trail.



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Linda M. Boxx presents ATA's "Spikes to Spokes" award to John Oliver, Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Mike Ryan, Deputy Secretary of Pennsylvania's Department of Transportation, November 2002. The Award was crafted by trail volunteer Ned Williams.

### Announcing:

## THE SECOND ANNUAL ATA PHOTO CONTEST!

Just got that new digital camera? Well, now you can put it to use and try for a chance at five \$50 category prizes and a \$100 Grand Prize in the Second Annual ATA Photo Contest!

We're looking for photos from all along the Great Allegheny Passage (the Pittsburgh to Cumberland Trail).

Outstanding photos will be displayed in trail publications and exhibits, the website, and possibly news releases. Last year's winners are posted at [atatrail.org](http://atatrail.org)

### CATEGORIES:

1. Volunteering/Community Service
2. Action Shots
3. Nature
4. Wild Card
5. Young Photographers (Under 18)

### PRIZES:

- ★ \$100 Grand Prize
- ★ \$50 cash prize for each individual category plus some great trail merchandise.

### CONTEST RULES:

1. Photos must be taken on trails of the Great Allegheny Passage (see [www.atatrail.org](http://www.atatrail.org) for maps).
2. All bike riders must be wearing helmets.
3. Prints and high-resolution (600+ dpi) digital images on disk are eligible.
4. Prints and digital images must be accompanied by hard copies: 5x7 to 11x14.
5. Entries must be the original works of the submitting photographer.
6. ATA reserves the right to accept or reject any submission.
7. By entering photos in this contest, you are granting ATA the non-exclusive right to reproduce the image.
8. People employed by or contracted with the Allegheny Trail Alliance are welcome to submit and could win, but are not eligible for prizes.
9. If you would like to have your prints returned, please include self-addressed stamped envelope or suitable packaging with postage paid.
10. All judges' decisions are final.

### TO ENTER:

1. On the back of each photo, affix your name, phone number, email, mailing address, date and location of photo, and the category under which you'd like it to be submitted. Please indicate your age if you wish to be considered for the Young Photographers category. Send entries to ATA, 419 College Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601
2. All entries must be postmarked by March 31, 2003 and the winners will be announced on National Trails Day June 7, 2003.



(photo by Larry Adams)

# TRAIL MIX

## WORKSHOP PLANNED

The ATA is holding a Worldwide Workshop on Interpretation on Saturday, February 22. ATA-member trail organizations will come together to learn how to develop a plan, prioritize the sites and events, and determine best ways for stories to be told, whether through wayside exhibits, installations, guided tours, guide books, or websites. Check our website for location and detailed information or call 724-853-2453.

## ADULT TRAIL CLASSES SLATED

Older Adult Presentations are in demand. Yvonne Merrill, our Older Adult Project Coordinator, has made over 14 presentations to groups. John and Dorothea Motto are helping make presentations and have made three in the last two months. ATA has been asked to provide classes on using the Great Allegheny Passage at CCAC and Franklin Regional Adult Classes.

## POTOMAC CAUCUS CITES BOXX

Marshall Fausold, Linda Boxx, Brett Holtern, and Sandra Finley attended the Potomac Trail Council Caucus in Montgomery County, MD in October. Linda was honored by the PTC as volunteer of the year.

## LIONS TO RETURN

Beware of lions on the trail--Nittany Lions, that is. Thanks to a successful 2002 ride, approximately 75 Penn Staters plan to ride our 100 miles again this summer for class credit.

## MAPS FEATURE GAP

We're in print! The recently published Somerset County map highlights the Great Allegheny Passage, thanks to Hank Parke and Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association. The new Confluence Tourism brochure also features the trail, thanks to Bill Metzger.

## RELAY RIDERS WANTED

The Western Pennsylvania Field Institute is looking for bike riders to participate in a relay from DC to Pittsburgh and on to Columbus, OH. The ride will begin May 2 and use the Great Allegheny Passage. You can apply at [www.bikeroute.com/RiderQuestionnaire.htm](http://www.bikeroute.com/RiderQuestionnaire.htm)

## AND SPEAKING OF THE WEB...

The ATA webpage [atatrail.org](http://atatrail.org) is being completely updated. It should be up and running in early 2003. Check it out. The site had 175,763 visits in 2002.

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## CITY ADDS 2.1 MILES TO SOUTHSIDE TRAIL

The City of Pittsburgh has added 2.1 miles to their growing trail network. This new segment of the Three Rivers Heritage Trail runs from the UPMC facility on South Side to the Glenwood Bridge. The paved trail along the Monongahela River from 9th Street to the Glenwood Bridge is now 5½ miles long.

Although this was primarily a city project, it was done in cooperation with the Friends of the Riverfront, who originally purchased the land, and Baldwin Borough, Caruso Bros. Asphalt and Keystone Iron & Metal, adjacent landowners, both contributed labor to help with the construction.

"Our crews built an overlook with a great view of the river," said Hannah Ehrlich, Trail Development Coordinator for the city, "and they took great care to weave the trail around as many existing trees as possible."

The Friends, the City and Baldwin Borough will maintain the trail.

## EXPERIMENTAL MILE MARKERS PLACED

If you've been on the trail between Confluence and Fort Hill lately, chances are you noticed some new mileposts along the way. They're part of an experiment to choose the final design of the new Great Allegheny Passage mileposts.

The new markers are made from recycled polyethylene plastic, the stuff that milk jugs and grocery bags are made from. It's a durable material that can be worked like wood, but does not rot.

When a tentative design was settled on, the job was turned over to Jacobs Bird House Co. of Waynesburg, for manufacturing, working in association

with Greene ARC, Inc.

Thirteen mileposts in four different colors with two different fonts and letter depths were turned out; eight were placed between Confluence and Fort Hill by circuit rider Brett Hollern and the Somerset County bridge crew and the other five will be installed in Ohioyle State Park.

You can comment on the new design by email at [atamail@atatrail.org](mailto:atamail@atatrail.org).

McDonald and Keystone Viaducts getting million-plus dollar facelifts

## WORK COMMENCES ON TWO MAJOR TRAIL STRUCTURES



Keystone Viaduct as it looked in 1945 from the rear of a B&O passenger train. The second and third piers from the left and the girders that rest on them will be replaced with a single 240-foot-long girder. (See map, front page)

TWO MASSIVE STRUCTURES, the 913-foot-long Keystone Viaduct in Somerset County and the 962-foot McDonald Trestle in Washington County, will be refurbished for trail use with new concrete decks and steel railing. Construction on both bridges began in October.

To make room for the realignment of the state highway that runs underneath it, two piers and three spans of Keystone will be removed and replaced with a single 240-foot-long girder. The \$1.4 million project should be completed in August 2003.

McDonald Trestle is part of a larger project on the Montour Trail that includes 4.7 miles of new trail from McDonald to Venice in Cecil Township. When this section completed by June 2003, there will be nearly 27 miles of trail open between Coraopolis and Hendersonville with a gap at the Route 50/980 intersection at Venice which is being redesigned by PENNDOT.

Funding for both structures was arranged by the Allegheny Trail Alliance.



An empty eastbound Montour Railroad coal train crosses McDonald Trestle in September, 1975. The track in the left foreground is now the Montour Trail's McDonald trail head.



## HELP TAME THE SAVAGE!

*Sponsor a foot of the Big Savage Tunnel for \$100 or more.*

TUNNELING 3,300 FEET through the Big Savage Mountain was a monumental achievement of the Western Maryland Railway in the early 1900s.

Now, nearly a century later, the ATA is working to rehabilitate this vital link in the Pittsburgh to DC trail corridor. It's a monster of a tunnel and you can help us tame it.

We are asking trail friends to support this huge project by sponsoring a one-foot section or more of the tunnel for **\$100, \$500, or \$1,000.**

All amounts are welcome; gifts of \$100 or more will be recognized, appropriately and permanently at the tunnel.

Groups are invited to participate.

Yes, count me in! I've enclosed

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

*(optional--will allow us to contact you with any questions concerning recognition.)*

Name as it will appear on the sponsorship plaque.

*(If the gift is in honor or memory of someone or an organization, please note that here.)*

Make checks payable to ATA/RTC and and send to \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your support.

All donors will be listed on our website (Please let us know if you prefer to be anonymous.)

You can check the progress of this important campaign at [www.atatrail.org](http://www.atatrail.org)

Gifts are tax-deductible and will be matched dollar-for-dollar through a special challenge grant.

## BIG SAVAGE TUNNEL NEEDS YOUR HELP!

(Continued from Page 1)

The price of reconstruction grew in major steps, several times, and for various reasons. Through our partnership with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, we were able to apply state capital budget and funding from the Department's Community Conservation Partnership Program - Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Additionally, ATA pledged to raise \$1.5 million for the grouting so that the job could be completed. An anonymous donor gave \$500,000 to kick off this campaign!

We are asking friends, supporters, and trail users who want to be part of this monumental project to help us. If we can find sponsors for every foot of the tunnel, at \$100 a foot, we can raise \$330,000. More - and less - is also appreciated.

We have received a challenge grant to match all foot sponsors, dollar for dollar, and will continue to seek funding until our commitment is fulfilled. Contributions will be recognized on a plaque near the south end of the tunnel. Check out the list so far at [atatrail.org](http://atatrail.org) and click on "Your Help is Needed." The support so far is really encouraging.

Linda McKenna Boxx

## TRAIL MIX

(Continued from Page 2)

### MONTOUR OPENS 2.5 MILES

A section of the Montour Trail from Large, on Route 51, to Clairton was finished this fall.

A special "low load" asphalt was used for the 12-foot-wide surface, according to MTC board member Paul McKeown, because much of the right of way is in a flood plain.

Since the new portion uses a railroad grade that had been abandoned for about 30 years, it was covered by some large trees that were cut down by volunteers.

A group of 70 employees of Bombardier Inc. cut brush and did a general cleanup as part of the United Way Day of Caring. McKeown said "this is the largest group of volunteers we've ever had working on the trail in one day. Montour members also built gates and fencing.

Funding from the project came from Pennsylvania DCNR with a 50% in-kind match from Allegheny County.

### FAM TOURS BIG HIT

Seven journalists took part in two "Familiarization (Fam) Tours" this summer and fall. Bob Downing, who was on the June tour, wrote a great article on the Passage that was picked up by newspapers as far away as Oklahoma.

#### The Fine Print

The **ATA Trail News** is produced and distributed by the **Allegheny Trail Alliance** by the Allegheny Trail Alliance for our friends and supporters and the members of our supporting organizations.

The **Allegheny Trail Alliance** is a coalition of seven trail-building organizations whose purpose is to assure the construction, maintenance and use of the multi-purpose trail from **Pittsburgh, PA to Cumberland, MD**, where the trail joins the **C&O Canal Towpath** to Washington, DC.

#### Officers of the Allegheny Trail Alliance

President	Linda McKenna Boxx	Vice President	Linc Van Sickle
Treasurer	Douglas Hoehn	Secretary	Bill Atkinson
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