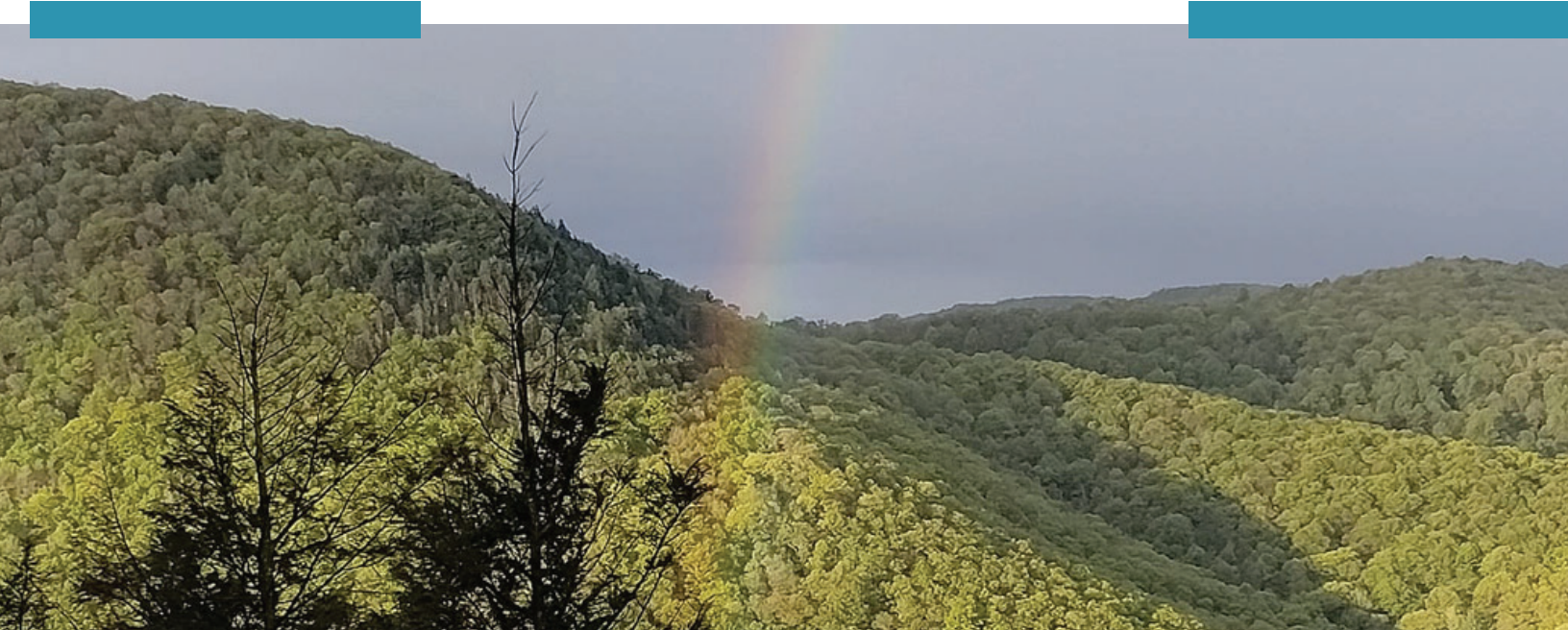


»»» STANDING STONE TRAIL CLUB «««

THE ROCK HOPPER

Spring 2024 Edition

Edited by Catherine Weld



EDITOR'S PIC(K) - PROVIDED BY LINDA CRESSMEN

YOUR STANDING STONE TRAIL 2024 LEADERSHIP TEAM

MAP MASTER - PETE FLESZAR
WEB MASTER - REBECCA CONNEMILLER
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR - BURGESS SMITH
MEMBERSHIP ASSISTANT - PAT GARTHE
GET REPRESENTATIVE - JIM GARTHE
GET ALT REPRESENTATIVE - GENNY & STEVE VOLGSTADT
KTA REPRESENTATIVE - GEORGE CONRAD
END TO END COORDINATOR - KRISTEN JOIVELL



PRESIDENT - GEORGE CONRAD
VICE PRESIDENT - REBECCA CONNEMILLER
SECRETARY - LINDSEY HAMILTON
TREASURER - CHERYL SHOPE
NORTHERN TRAIL MASTER - BURGESS SMITH
SOUTHERN TRAIL MASTER - TOM MCMATH
TOOL MASTER - ETHAN LASHLEE
SIGN MASTER - JIM SAVORY
NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR - CATHERINE WELD



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

GEORGE CONRAD

➤➤➤ WELCOME TO ANOTHER EDITION OF THE ROCK HOPPER, THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE STANDING STONE TRAIL CLUB!

As the next hiking season is in full swing, it is important to think about the work that goes into making the Standing Stone Trail PA's premier footpath and all the events lined up for this year. When I went to my first Standing Stone Trail Club meeting long ago, I remember wondering how a meeting about a dirt path through the woods could possibly take 3 or 4 hours, but sure enough it did! There is so much to consider in the management of a trail and none of it is possible without our members and volunteers. With this in mind, let's take a peek at what is in store for 2024.

Once again this year, the SST Club is hosting our community hikes by doing one for each season. These hikes serve a couple different purposes besides just being a fun time socializing with fellow hikers. Our community hikes are open to everyone no matter your experience as we want them to be a way to promote the trail. So if you are the most avid hiker or someone who has never really hiked at all, we encourage you to come along as our goal is to introduce more people to the trail. This year's hikes offer something for everybody too with the one in February featuring Winter, a May hike for the whole family, August is a night hike on Stone Mountain, and then October is a leisurely hike from Locke Valley Road to Ramsey Path. Many thanks to Kristin Joivell, Kevin Busko, and Chuck Wolfe for helping to plan and lead the hikes.

Of course, maintaining the SST is an ongoing job and would not be possible without our section maintainers and those who go above and beyond. A couple projects in the works for this year is to establish a permanent campsite at Smoke-umm Springs on Jacks Mountain. This has long been in our Master Plan with Rothrock State Forest but has yet to be completed. Next we are also getting into the planning stages to replace the bridges over Detweiler Run as DCNR has been diligent in preparing the permits for this. Our plan is to replace one bridge at a time but this is going to take a lot of volunteers. Another project is reclaiming the trail on State Game Land 099 by Hooper's Gap as it continues to need maintenance after being heavily logged. This will be a similar issue on State Game Land 112 by the double power lines as the timber is up for sale. Our club relies on many individuals to do so much work, however a special note of appreciation goes to Burgess Smith, Cheryl Shope, Jim Savory, and Bill Bressler who are always ready to tackle any situation at a moment's notice.

Lastly, it is important to recognize the club's efforts away from the trail by noting our initiatives behind the computer. The website for the club continues to undergo a lot of improvements and become more interactive. Now you can renew your membership, log volunteer hours, and contact the club with ease through the website. Also the club's participation with the FarOut App has only gotten better and is a real time source of information with additional comments from hikers. Finally, one of the most exciting things to note for this year is that the newsletter has a new coordinator and many thanks to Catherine Weld for taking charge. Catherine was recommended by Huntingdon Area High School as part of their business curriculum and we hope that this endeavor is something that can continue with future students.

In closing, I hope this year allows you time on the SST and that our paths may cross soon!

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

SOME WORDS FROM A SST SUPERSTAR

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE SST?

Currently I volunteer as Vice President and Webmaster of the Standing Stone Trail Club.

TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF!

My name is Rebecca ConnerMiller. I am a high school Technology Engineering / STEM Teacher at Mifflin County High School. I also am a graphic artist employed for T&J Sports and Screen Printing. In my free time I love getting outside and creating new experiences! Some of my biggest passions are: hiking, trail maintenance, going to the races at Port Royal Speedway, four-wheeling, and snowmobiling.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE SST AND HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR TITLE?

I first started off as a general member, paying membership dues and attending the semi-annual meetings. After about a year of learning the ropes, I started volunteering for a few trail care days and volunteered to fill the open Webmaster position. In the Spring of 2023, I volunteered to fill the open position of Vice President at the Spring Membership Meeting and was voted into office by our membership.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN THE SST?

In 2020 I thru-hiked the SST. During this time, I spent many hours day dreaming and reflecting on life in general. It was through this experience that I realized one thing missing in my life was stewardship in nature. So I told myself, when you get back you are going to get involved. And that is what I did.

Picture Provided by Justin Funck



MEMBER HIGHLIGHT CONT.

SOME WORDS FROM A SST SUPERSTAR

WHAT COMPLICATIONS IF ANY HAVE YOU FACED IN MAINTAINING THE TRAIL, AND HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY HELP TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS?

When it comes to trail maintenance, the SSTC is so very grateful to our community, our membership and our trail users. Volunteering is key for keeping this trail in tip top shape, and there are many ways that those willing could assist. One option would be for those interested in stewardship to become a “trail maintainer,” whereas you would be trained and assigned a specific trail section. Another way to get involved is to watch for “trail care events,” typically advertised on our website and Facebook page.



WHY DID YOU TAKE THESE POSITIONS?

I was interested in both of these positions because I have a very strong calling in life to give, give, give. The Webmaster position was very appealing to me. I love our trail, I love graphic design, and I love promoting the SSTC and all it stands for to so many. The Vice President position felt right, it felt like another way to give back and positively support all that I value. Our former Vice President Jim Garthe is an amazing human, he trained me as a “Trail Maintainer,” and set a great standard for what it means to be an advocate for our club. His showcased leadership, and the leadership of our current President George Conrad...made me want to be a part of this amazing team.



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The SSTC encourages everyone to join in our community hiking events hosted by members/officers and to continue to explore this amazing trail system...it has so very much to offer! Some of my favorite spots are: The Throne Room and Hall of the Mountain King in the fall, Rocky Ridge Natural Area in the spring, Thousand Steps in the winter and Alan Seeger to Greenwood Furnace in the summer!

NOTES FROM THE LINK TRAIL

MIKE SAUSSER

>>> THANK YOU TO THE CLARKS

The third and fourth people to answer my call for trail maintainers were Mount Union locals, Joe and Betty Clark. By dumb luck, I gave them the Thousand Steps. I told Joe, all he needed “was a broom to sweep them off”. The Clarks did far more than that! They dug out, rebuilt, shored up, built new steps, built siding, and installed signs. Betty even led prison chain gangs work crews up the mountain. I dubbed the view at one of the quarries up on Jacks Mountain, Clarks View, complete with sign. They installed their own sign and renamed the area after its historical name, Mill Creek Quarry, stating that I gave every caretaker the right to name stuff on their section, which I did. Plus, I can’t overrule a historically correct name either. So, I came up with Clark’s View at Mill Creek Quarry in the original trail guide, but the trail sign merely reads Mill Creek Quarry Vista. I should also mention Joe became the equipment manager for all the power tools. Kept them clean and ready to run at all times. The Clarks were my go to people, my right hand. They worked the Thousand Steps for over 25 years! They were the perfect people for that section.

Picture Provided by Mike Sausser



>>> END-2-END HIKERS

SECTION HIKERS

Mike Sausser
 Sabrina “Trip” Deed
 Roger “Mule” Deed
 Wanda Shirk
 Jim Fitzgerald
 Jodi Fitzgerald
 Lisa “One of a Kind” Myers
 Chuck “Chuckles” Wolfe
 Cindy Redich
 Gail Brossman
 Andrea Viazanko
 Dawn Hale
 Christopher Hale
 Choloe Hale
 Care Hale
 Lucas Hale
 Leah Hale
 Faith Hale
 Leah Stephens

THRU HIKERS

Caleb Fisher
 Lisa Lilly
 Christopher Russell
 Jessica Imes
 Bryson “Neon Gator” Peterman
 Daniel “Danimal” Kovalik
 Georgetta “Trail Mama” Fredrick
 James Rowland
 Kristin “Little Engine” Joivell
 Kevin Busko
 David Smith
 Michael “Toesock” Ruhl
 Tim Wilderoder

WANT TO BE AN END-2-END HIKER?

Hike the entire Standing Stone Trail and document your journey! You can submit either a Thru or Section hike using the SST website . There are no expiration dates so send in your documentation from past hikes to be added to the list!

UPCOMING EVENTS

FOR THE 2024 SPRING SEASON

➤➤➤ APRIL 6TH, 2024 - STANDING STONE TRAIL CLUB SPRING MEETING

MEETUP LOCATION: DCNR Headquarters for Rothrock State Forest

MEETUP TIME: 9:00 AM

OVERVIEW: A discussion on plans for the upcoming year. We will review regular business of the club, prepare for this years events, and elect officers. Everyone is welcome!

SUPPORT AND MEMBERSHIP

We hope our efforts provide our community with a great experience on the SST! Our club is blessed to have an amazing group of people offering their time and resources to make the SST great. We have a lot of exciting projects and events in the future, and we always appreciate help. Whether you would like to join an event, support us with a donation, or become a member of the Standing Stone Trail Club, we thank you for your contribution!

<http://www.standingstonetrail.org/copy-of-membership-donor-levels>

➤➤➤ MAY 4TH, 2024 - SPRING FAMILY FRIENDLY HIKE

MEETUP LOCATION: Allan Seeger Natural Area Picnic Pavilion at the SST crossing of Seeger Road

MEETUP TIME: 10:00 AM

OVERVIEW: A one-way, shuttle back, 2.2 mile, family friendly hike from Alan Seeger Natural Area to Bear Meadows Road along Detweiler Run.

Picture Provided by Justin Funck

