



Appalachian Footnotes

Delaware Valley Chapter • Appalachian Mountain Club

Summer 2010 • Volume 48 • Number 2

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Appalachian Footnotes

the magazine of the
Delaware Valley Chapter
Appalachian Mountain Club

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Deadline for the September thru December Issue: August 2

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Warm weather is here, so get active!

By Joan Aichele, Membership Chair

The warm days of spring and summer are the perfect time to get out and involved with AMC. Whether your interest is hiking, paddling, biking, trail maintenance or conservation, AMC has a lot to offer.

The perfect way to find scheduled activities within our chapter is to visit our web site: www.amcdv.org and click on the Activity Calendar. Also, if you are not already receiving our weekly Activity Digest on Wednesday evenings you should take a minute and subscribe. Simply send an e-mail with your name and DV membership number to hotline-requests@amcdv.org. This e-mail digest has the most up-to-date information about our scheduled activities for the upcoming nine days. It is an excellent way to stay informed of our chapter's activities. We have also made an improvement to this Hotline by adding the ability, on occasion, for a few short notice trips to be sent in addition to the Wednesday e-mails. And finally, if you do not have access to a computer you can still find an abbreviated list of our activities in AMC Outdoors.

The best way for you to get the most out of your AMC membership is to get out and participate. The more you participate, the more like-minded people you will meet, leading to lots of fun. I hope you will dust off the winter blues and join us in the great outdoors.

No activities schedule in this issue!

Just like last issue, there is no activities schedule in this issue of *Footnotes*. You can download a current, printable schedule from our chapter's web site at amcdv.org/Calendar/print.jsp. You can select the entire chapter schedule or pick the period and activities you want.

If you don't have computer access, you can use the full schedule that is printed in each issue of *AMC Outdoors*.

See the facing page for more information, and for information on how to get this newsletter, faster, in full color and with many added features.

Membership Information

Moving? Please remember to change your address and desired chapter affiliation by going to the AMC Member Center at www.outdoors.org/membercenter or call AMC Member Services at 800-372-1758. This will correct your address for AMC Outdoors and for *Footnotes*. Address corrections cannot be made by the newsletter editor.

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AMC Information Sources:

Delaware Valley Chapter Web Site: amcdv.org
Delaware Valley Paddler's Web Site: paddlenow.com
Chapter E-mail: info@amcdv.org
E-mail Hotline: hotline-requests@amcdv.org
AMC General Web Site: outdoors.org

Chapter Ombudsman

Questions, complaints, concerns or comments about the Delaware Valley Chapter of AMC should be directed to Chapter Ombudsman, Jane Shepard, 610-584-4408, or ombudsman@amcdv.org.



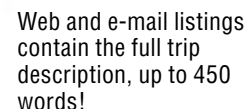
AMC Outdoors will continue to print the full schedule of all chapters in each issue.

You can get a listing of all DV Chapter trips, e-mailed to you each week by joining the chapter Hotline. (Send an e-mail to: hotline-requests@amcdv.org.) Plus, get up to three customized Activities Digests sent to you as frequently as weekly from the AMC Member Center.

[Search the entire Trips Database](#)

The activities calendar on the chapter web site is the easiest and fastest way to get the latest trip information on DV Chapter activities. The calendar is updated almost instantaneously once a trip has been entered and approved.

You can search the entire AMC database of activities from all chapters, plus interchapter and major excursions. The calendar is updated almost instantaneously once a trip has been entered and approved.



The online newsletter on our web site will be going away. It is there only on a temporary basis so you can view it to see how it looks. You need to follow the steps listed above to stop receiving the printed copy and begin receiving the electronic version as well as the activity schedule link automatically. If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Joan Aichele at 215-257-3372 or membership@amcdv.org.

100 mile hikers for 2009

Name	Miles	Hikes	Name	Miles	Hikes
Joan Aichele	739.95	102	Pete Jarrett	169	21
Rich Benningfield	628.95	82	Kieu Manes	165	18
Tom Sherwood	531	83	David Warfield	163.8	21
David Stein	475.5	83	Elaine Stogo	163	26
George Gorman	452.5	77	Gerry Martyniak	163	20
Kathy Claude	387	64	C.J. Lyford	162	28
Phil Mulligan	377	65	Steven Perkiss	160.5	28
Sue Bickford-Martin	374.7	39	Jim Smith	158	25
Jeff Schrager	372.5	60	Jerry Kenney	155.9	30
Bill Lotz	370.5	63	Marge Brennan	155.2	21
Eric Bucher	370.4	64	Hsin-Chien Tai	153.8	18
Bihal Shah	360	52	Kathy Ciliberti	150.2	22
Tom Olsen	344.4	43	Jeff Lippincott	147.1	20
Tina Lawless	328.5	51	Walter Von Der Linder	142.05	20
Mike Lawless	328.5	51	Chip Dennis	140.8	14
Russel Moyer	322.7	36	Jean Plough	137	22
John Rowen	311.05	49	Norm Vadner	134	21
Buddy White	306.05	41	Jennifer Berlin	132.4	17
Rich Pace	304.9	34	Nancy Hence	131.5	25
Richard Einstein	296.2	35	Emily O'Hagan	130.7	17
Anthony Youngblood	283.4	47	Allison Hudson	129	18
Debbie Hinks	281.8	27	Mary Hanisch	128.9	17
Jim Sayne	279.5	47	Fran LaRosa	128.5	26
Brian Potter	277.45	46	Peter Fox	127.1	16
David Gutter	259.6	26	Susyn Mihalasky	126.8	14
Theresa Berntsen	259.5	27	Rhoda Eisman	125.6	12
Jason Kumpas	257	41	Eve Putkovich	124	23
Sam Frederick	253	26	Dave Alexander	122.9	19
Ira Rubinstein	250.1	28	Fred Hafele	122.6	11
Irina Kulikovskaya	248.5	25	Al Schwartz	122.4	16
Jim Geisel	248	45	Sally Reeves	119.4	17
Ivan Winegar	245.95	31	Denice Bohl	118	19
Ron Phelps	238.1	24	Donna Truesdell	117.7	14
Bruce Williamson	231	37	Jason Itell	116	19
Cristy Robertson	230	40	Susan Charkes	115.3	19
Rick Hudson	225.25	30	Cheryl Hendry	115	21
Norm Cook	218.7	36	Diane Carroll	111.4	19
Joe Swope	213.95	28	Michele Valerio	110.6	11
Midori Wakabayashi	211.3	32	Paul Schott	110.25	15
Dale Brandreth	208.3	32	Tammy Brandon	110	14
Dave Block	201.4	31	Barry Mazer	106.5	14
Lou Gutzait	199.5	34	Carole Homeyer	106.1	11
Barb Blythe	198.1	22	Sylvia Decker	106	16
Jim Catozzi	193.9	23	Len Adam	105.2	17
Bob Savron	189.9	19	Christine McCarrick	104	18
Carol Broadbent	187.2	29	Louise Wright	103	9
Nancy Fredland	182	25	Trey Burg	100.3	12
Jerry Srodes	178.5	22	Renata Gaughan	100.3	14
Mike Boguski	177.8	20	Allen Male	100	12
Pat Naismith	175	35	Malcolm Preece	100	12
Angad Khalsa	174.4	23	Steve Ungvarsky	100	17
Jude Shabrach	173.5	19	Tom Harrington	100	16
Mike Manes	170.9	19	Mary Toomey	100	10
Cliff Hence	169.2	32			

If you had more than 100 miles and you don't see your name listed, it may be because we never received the leader's trip sheet or the sheet wasn't legible. Turn in a tally sheet with hikes and miles and you can pick up your award at the next social event. If you missed the activity social and earned an award you may pick it up at a future social event this year only. Past year awards are forfeited if not picked up by the end of the year.

Top leaders for all activities in 2009

Name	Leader	Days		
Barbara Blythe		7		
Mike Manes		7		
Roger Homeyer		7		
Bill Steinmetz		7		
Walter Underhill		7		
Lennie Steinmetz		7		
Carole Homeyer		7		
John Chalikian		6		
Dwayne Henne		6		
Ivan Winegar		6		
Phill Hunsberger		6		
Matt Pincus		6		
Ron Phelps		6		
Jason Kumpas		5		
Jennifer Percival		5		
Chris Rapacki		5		
Mark Kern		5		
Michele Valerio		5		
David Gutter		4		
Kevin Perry		4		
Ed Sawin		4		
Esther Underhill		4		
Jennifer Berlin		4		
Kathy Kelly-Borowski		4		
Midori Wakabayashi		4		
Peter Fox		4		
Richard Einstein		4		
Susan Charkes		4		
Kathy Anderson		4		

AMC honors volunteers' trails stewardship

The Delaware Valley chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club is pleased to recognize our members for their work on public trails in our region.

We had two major work areas in 2009, our section of the Appalachian Trail, and the Mt. Misery trail in Valley Forge National Park.

AMC-DV members helped the parks in working on the trails themselves, assisting with other Park activities and monitoring the boundaries of the AT and protecting the AT Corridor from incursions.

Appalachian Trail workers include:

Mike Manes, 264 hours

Kieu Manes, 203.5 hours

Hsin-Chien Tai, 62.75 hours

Bill Horan, 47.5 hours

Benton Schwartz, 41 hours

Valley Forge trail workers include:

Phil Mulligan, 40.5, hours

Bill Lotz, 33 hours

Midori Wakabayashi, 21.17 hours

AMC Fall Gathering is October 15-17, hosted by the Worcester Chapter, at the Prindle Pond Conference Center Hilltop, Charlton, MA. Whether you enjoy hiking, biking, paddling, rock climbing or just like to socialize with other AMC members, October is a great time to explore central Massachusetts. Family-oriented activities will be offered, so bring your children and grandchildren! Top it all off with lively Saturday evening entertainment and bonfire. More information is available at www.amcFall-Gathering2010.com

Allen Male, chapter treasurer, honored with Volunteer Leadership Award in Boston

Allen Male, our chapter treasurer, was presented with the 2009 AMC Volunteer Leadership Award at the at the AMC's annual club wide meeting held in January in Boston.

A member of the Delaware Valley Chapter since 2001, Allen has made significant contributions in the area of financial management. Over the past four years, Allen has succeeded in raising the degree of awareness of the importance of chapter budgets and prudent financial planning.

Using his professional experiences and his volunteer experience



Allen Male holds his Volunteer Leadership Award, and is congratulated by Chris Rapacki at the AMC's annual meeting last January in Boston.

from serving as Treasurer of a number of non-profit organizations, Allen has developed and instituted a variety of reporting tools that help the chapter executive committee make better decisions by relying on actual and timely financial data.

Largely as a result of Allen's efforts, the Chapter has improved its financial management to allow it to

reinvest in local programming and also make targeted contributions to other chapters in times of need. Allen is the driving force behind a new, periodic chapter financial review process that, on a voluntary basis, connects the chapter treasurer with other volunteers that have auditing experience.

The purpose of the process is to review the transactions made within the chapter and serve as a resource to answer any questions that may arise throughout the year. The chapter is more financially stable and better equipped to face the financial challenges in the coming years thanks to the dedication and efforts of Allen.

The purpose of the award is to further recognize AMC's outstanding volunteer leaders who demonstrate the desire to share their time and expertise in the pursuit of AMC's recreation, conservation, and education mission. We consistently find far more deserving volunteers than can be recognized with the Distinguished Service Award.

The Volunteer Leadership Award will recognize one or more additional dedicated volunteers who unselfishly contribute even more than just hours in the field or time on club wide committees, and who are instrumental in creating and holding vibrant activities with a passion for education, conservation and recreation ethics.

This award is for current AMC members with at least five years of active service who have made significant contributions to volunteer leadership within their club units. The recipients will have furthered the recreation, conservation, and education mission of the AMC in some way.

Particular emphasis will be given to those volunteers whose initiatives advance one or more of the following within the AMC: diversity, effective communication, volunteer involvement, membership recruitment or retention, facilities, risk management and safety, leadership training, conservation, education and/or the strategic plan of the AMC.

Come to our Annual Picnic!

*June 19 at Noon, Central Perkiomen Valley Park
Hiking! Biking! Food! Games! Family Fun!*

Free hamburgers, hotdogs and veggie burgers with fixings! Many activities such as hiking bicycling, softball, volleyball, horseshoes, biking, etc., will be available as part of the picnic. Bring the whole family! No fee!

Please bring a covered dish, salad or dessert; enough to feed four or more people. Don't forget to let me know what you are bringing.

Bring a reusable plate, utensils and a cup. This is our little bit toward becoming a little greener. Glassware and alcohol are not allowed in the park.

Bring your equipment to play softball, volleyball, or horseshoes if you'd like.

See the chapter web site (amcdv.org) for details about the pre-picnic hike and bicycle ride.

Well-behaved dogs are allowed but they must be kept on a leash six feet or less in length.

RSVP to Stephanie Wall, stephaniwall3@gmail.com or 215-421-5660.

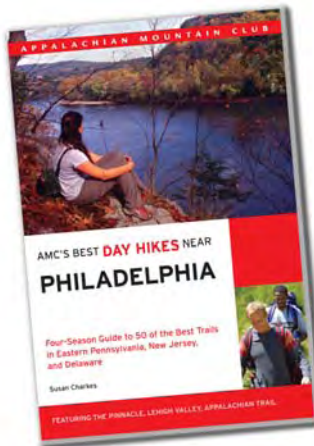
Directions: Central Perkiomen Valley Park entrance is on Plank Road between Routes 29 and 73 just south of Schwenksville along the scenic Perkiomen Creek in the center of Montgomery County, PA. The picnic will be held in the large pavilion, directional signs will be posted.

Annual Meeting & Dinner to be held on Saturday, November 6, from 5 to 9 PM

Hors d'oeuvres, dinner, cash bar. Evening will include Appie Award presentations, announcement of the 2011 Executive Committee, the Annual Business Meeting and a speaker of interest. More details on time, place, speaker and fee to be announced.

New, from AMC Books!

AMC's Best Day Hikes near Philadelphia



Written by DV Chapter member Susan Charkes, this easy-to-use guide will help you explore Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware year-round, from lesser-known excursions to area favorites, including several hikes on the Appalachian Trail. Each trip of the 50 trips includes useful information such as a detailed map showing parking areas and natural highlights, and a summary of trip characteristics.

Order from AMC Books on line at www.outdoors.org and get your member discount.

To order a signed copy, contact susan@susancharkes.com

AMC really putting PA Highlands on the map, in the cards, under foot

By Jennifer Heisey, AMC Mid-Atlantic Recreation Planner

This past year AMC released our PA Highlands Recreation Map and Guide as well as our Hike the Highlands Cards: 22 hikes throughout the PA Highlands.

Both publications are aimed at encouraging people to get out and explore the PA Highlands and increasing awareness and conservation of the region.

Thanks to some top-notch media gurus, AMC and the Wildlands Conservancy were able to distribute these hiking guides to over 60 locations throughout the PA Highlands.

We also received front page coverage in a number of newspapers and blogs, which led to almost 20,000 hits on AMC's web site and thousands of new people learning about the AMC and the Delaware Valley Chapter.

In addition to these guides, Jennifer Heisey, AMC's Mid-Atlantic Recreation Planner, contributed a number of highlands hikes to AMC's new guide book, AMC's Best Day Hikes Near Philadelphia, authored by AMC DV Chapter member Susan Charkes. If paddling is more your speed, the new Quiet Water New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania by Kathy Kenley also highlights some prime water spots in the Highlands.

When we are not working to advertise the amazing recreational areas we already have, we are working to create new ones. Great progress is being made on the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network (PHTN).

The PHTN will extend the Highlands Trail already finished through New Jersey and New York, thanks partly to a number of AMC DV Chapter volunteers, into PA. The PA trail begins in Bucks County in Riegelsville, PA, and will extend for more than 100 miles through 13 counties.

Our current focus for the trail is Upper Bucks and Lower Northampton counties, where we are working to create a network of interconnected trails that will increase the recreational opportunities available to local residents. The trail will link to existing trails in Upper Bucks County with a goal of connecting to Green Lane Reservoir in Montgomery County and west to the Appalachian Trail.

It will provide close-to-home recreational opportunities for Bucks County residents as well as those within the 1.9 million-acre PA Highlands. The PHTN will represent an extension of the nearly-complete, 150-mile Highlands Trail in the NY and NJ Highlands that will not only link existing trails with new trail segments, but also create loops and spur trails throughout the PA Highlands.

To develop the trail in Upper Bucks and Lower Northampton Counties, AMC has lead a 25-member PHTN Upper Bucks Steering Committee comprised of municipal representatives, community members, conservation organizations, county planners, staff from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and staff from the National Park Service – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance.

Last year the steering committee completed a prioritized action plan. Recently subcommittees have formed to implement the action plan and are focusing on increasing PHTN Community Awareness & Local Engagement, County & Municipal Collaboration, identifying a Trail Route, and developing Trail Identity for the PHTN.

We also are working on a land analysis to determine a possible route for the trail in Upper Bucks County as well as kiosks and signage (which will hopefully be up this summer.) A number of AMC volunteers have contributed hours to our work to develop this trail for which we are very thankful.

To get involved and volunteer with one of the PHTN Subcommittees, contact Kristen Sykes, KSykes@outdoors.org or 610-868-6906. To order a PA Highlands Recreation Map and Guide,

Leader Appreciation Social, Sat. May 15

Activity leaders! Fun, free food and drink!

Join us for a day of hiking, biking and trailwork on the trails and roads near Nockamixon State Park, followed by a happy hour and barbecue dinner at Weisel Hostel.

The DV Chapter's activity leaders – hiking, bicycling, backpacking, paddling and trailwork – are the backbone of the chapter. To say thanks for all you do, the chapter is sponsoring a Leader Appreciation Social on Saturday, May 15 at Weisel Hostel near Quakertown.

Come for the day, the afternoon, the evening; whatever fits your schedule.

This event is also for recent Outdoor Leadership Training graduates who will have the opportunity to meet and learn from experienced leaders. Bring your wit and wisdom to share, and help welcome these new leaders to the chapter!

10 AM: hike the Delaware Canal towpath. Leader, Rich Einstein.

10 AM: Bike trip, 40 mile road ride at a moderate pace, following the route of the Covered Bridge Century. Leader, Bill Steinmetz

1 PM: Afternoon hike, Haycock Mountain. Leader, Pete Jarrett.

2:30 PM: Trail work. Clipping and brushing, basic trail improvements to trails at Nockamixon State Park. Tools provided, no previous experience necessary. **This work is being done, in part, to allow us to use the hostel free. Please help!** Meet at Weisel Hostel. Leader, Phil Mulligan.

5 PM: Happy Hour at Weisel Hostel. NA beverages and appetizers provided, BYOB,

6 PM: Barbecue Dinner. Salads, chips, desserts and beverages provided.

7 PM: Discussion session, "Making It Better." What can we do to make the DV Chapter better? How can we improve the schedule of activities offered? How can we communicate better with our members, and with those outside the chapter? Bring at least two suggestions to share. RSVP to Lennie Steinmetz, steinmetz.lennie@gmail.com, or 610-694-8677 by May 11.

download Hike the Highlands cards and to keep up to date on happenings in the Highlands, visit: www.outdoors.org/hikethehighlands. To find out more about the PA Highlands Trail Network, contact Kristen Sykes, KSykes@outdoors.org or 610-868-6906. To order AMC's Best Day Hikes Near Philadelphia or Quiet Water New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania www.outdoors.org/publications/books.

Register for 2010 AMC Volunteer Trail Vacations - AMC's Volunteer Vacations are not just for teens, adults can participate in a variety of locations in Maine and New Hampshire during the 2010 season. Spend a week with the AMC working in the White Mountains, NH and Baxter State Park and Acadia National Park, ME. For more information on all of our Volunteer Vacation opportunities for adults, please visit www.outdoors.org/volunteer or contact Alex DeLucia at 603-466-2721 x8128 or adelucia@outdoors.org.

Solo canoe, swiftwater safety courses set for July

A two-day solo open canoe course will be offered by our chapter July 3-4, most likely on the Schuylkill River near Reading.

This course will first cover basic strokes and boat control on flat water. Then basic maneuvers, such as ferries, eddy turns, and peel-outs will be taught and practiced on moving water.

On the second day, while on a river trip, students will get a chance to review, practice what they learned and gain experience on moving water.

Some experience is good, but not required. The tandem canoe course given in May and June is helpful. Boats and other equipment is provided. Cost is \$20. Contact Walt Underhill to register, underwalt@aol.com or 610-837-7776 before 9 PM.

We will also offer a general and swiftwater safety course on July 17. This safety session is for anyone who paddles, regardless of the level of difficulty or the type of boat. It is highly recommended for trip leaders, and is of great value to all paddlers. It is also very useful for hikers and backpackers who cross streams.

It will cover recognizing and avoiding water dangers, swimming in swift water, with and without your boat and equipment, self-rescue, assisted rescue, deep water rescue and re-entry, managing the rescue scene and selecting and using safety equipment.

Contact Eric Pavlak, 610-650-8926 or eric@outings.org. The fee is \$20 for first-time attendees, free for all others. Location is likely the Delaware River near Lambertville, NJ.

The location and even the dates of both courses is subject to change due to water levels.



Colbert a surprise guest at Mohican

You never know whom you might run into at the Mohican Outdoor Center.

One Saturday last August, guests were gathered for traditional Music Night in the main lodge. Later in the evening, Mohican manager Dave Simpson, who lends his musical talents on piano and guitar at these sessions, said to the guests, "Did anyone notice someone even more famous than me here tonight?"

Only one person had observed that Stephen Colbert, the Emmy-nominated comedian who stars in the Colbert Report on Comedy Central, had been part of the audience that evening. Colbert spent the weekend with his son and some friends at Mohican, at the urging of his son, who had been there previously with a youth group.

Colbert launched his career as part of the Second City Theatre in Chicago, where so many famous contemporary comedians (Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Mike Myers, Steve Carell) have started out. His work on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart introduced him to a larger audience, and resulted in the creation of his own series in 2005.



The Colbert Report is one of Comedy Central's highest rated series, and has earned Colbert three Emmy nominations and legions of loyal fans known as the "Colbert Nation." He was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People in 2006, and his book *I Am America (And So Can You!)* was No. 1 on the *New York Times* best seller list for many months. This past December, he was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* magazine for his role in saving the US Olympic Speed skating Team by launching a hugely successful fund-raising campaign among his Colbert Nation supporters.

Colbert has rapport with kids and nature at Mohican.

Simpson said that Colbert and his party were "dressed like casual campers with hiking boots and baseball caps, wholly indistinguishable from anyone else in our out-of-doors environment."

He was friendly and unassuming, according to Simpson, and went out of his way to stop at the office before departing to say thanks and to say that he and his group had a great time that weekend.

Matt Bruce, the Mohican staff member on duty when Colbert arrived, said, "He acted so humble and quiet, as if he had never been introduced to fame."

Matt felt surprised that someone so famous could be so lacking in conceit, and such a nice guy in person. So, the next time you pay a visit to the Mohican Outdoor Center, look carefully at your fellow guests there. You just never know what celebrity might decide to sneak away from the big city for some quiet time in the outdoors at Mohican!

Ramblings on the Perkiomen Trail

By Eric Pavlak

Beloved by cyclists, joggers and hikers, the Perkiomen Trail is a recreational gem that threads its 19 mile way through the heart of Montgomery County, PA, from Lower Perkiomen Park in Oaks in the south, on to Green Lane Park in the north, generally following the Perkiomen Creek.

Midway on this journey, it passes through lovely Central Perkiomen Valley Park, the site of this year's annual chapter picnic.

Most of the trail is in the woods, and quite scenic. Mostly it is gravel, making it suitable for mountain or hybrid bikes, but there are occasional long stretches of paved trail. This paving was done to reduce maintenance costs in flood prone areas and in areas with

(continued on next page)



It took seven AMC hikers to circle this giant sycamore tree located in the less frequently traveled Walnut Hill-Pawlings Farm section of Valley Forge National Historic Park. — E. Pavlak photo.

Perkiomen Trail (continued from previous page)

poor drainage or erosion problems. The quality of the trail surface is generally good and well-maintained.

The trail is mostly located on the right-of-way of the abandoned Perkiomen Valley line of the defunct Reading Railroad, extending from Oaks to Green Lane.

In Oaks it connects to the Schuylkill River Trail, which currently goes south past the Art Museum in Philadelphia as far as Locust Street. Recently, \$17 million in stimulus funds have been allocated to extend the Schuylkill River Trail to Bartram Gardens and relocate and improve trail sections currently on streets, particularly in the Manayunk area. Going north, the Schuylkill River Trail currently ends in Phoenixville, although there are long sections built and open near Pottstown and Reading. Eventually, the trail is planned to extend all the way to Pottsville and Tamaqua.

Also in Oaks, the Perk Trail connects to the four mile long Audubon Loop, which goes through Mill Grove, the first home of John James Audubon in America (and the only Audubon home still standing in the country), a place well worth visiting. The loop is notable for one short but very steep hill.

Beginning in Lower Perkiomen Valley Park (public restrooms) at its junction with the Schuylkill River Trail, the first mile of the Perk Trail is paved. Be particularly careful exiting the park: a poorly-engineered, negative camber, sharp 90-degree turn drops steeply downhill. This is dangerous when the path is wet or strewn with autumn leaves. I have seen several riders take nasty falls here.

Once you arrive at the gravel section from Oaks through Arcola, you will be treated to one of the prettiest sections of the trail with over-arching trees, seasonal wildflowers and views of the creek.

Arriving in Collegeville, the trail passes behind and around some commercial buildings (including a diner) and crosses several major streets. Do yourself and everyone else a favor and cross with the traffic lights!

Once you leave Collegeville and cross Route 29, with two exceptions you will be away from heavy traffic for the rest of the way. Just north of Collegeville the trail passes the Rhans trail access and parking area, seven miles from the trail's start.

From here to Schwenksville, the trail goes through woods and open fields and crosses the creek twice on dedicated bridges, one an old railway bridge, one completely new.

Trail users arriving in Central Perkiomen Valley Park will be greeted by a very welcome sight: the first public restrooms in 10 miles. The all-season facility has flush toilets, a large wooden bike rack and chance to refill your water bottles. This park is the site of our chapter's 2010 Annual Picnic, so riding to the picnic is a possibility.

Heading north, in a mile the trail crosses narrow but busy Route

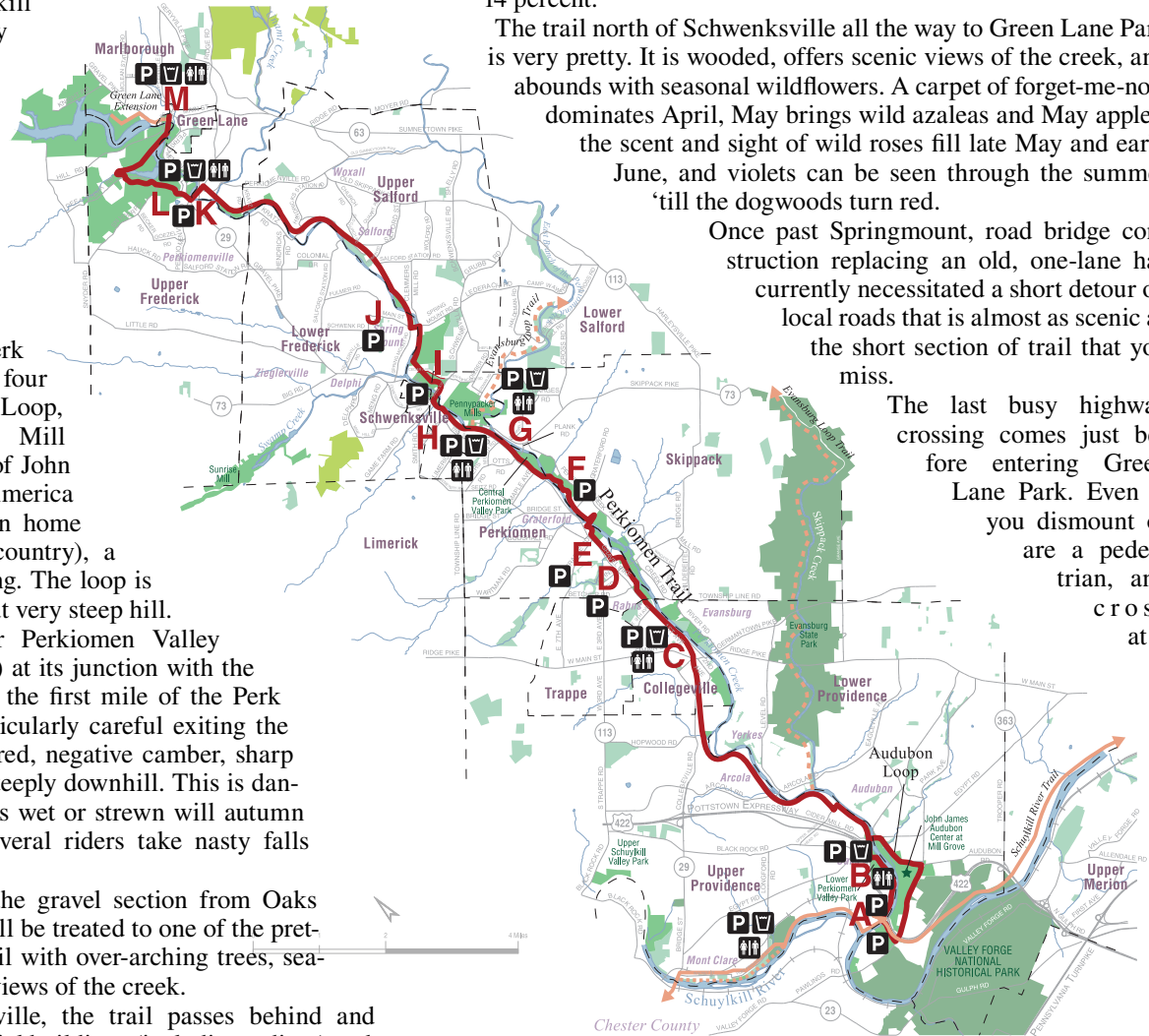
73 at a traffic light. Here, 11 miles from its start, it enters Schwenksville, an attractive old town that offers two amenities that welcome and cater to trail users. One is a restaurant that serves breakfast and lunch to 3 PM and ice cream all afternoon, the other is a full-service bicycle shop that sells parts, fixes flats, rents bikes and offers free cold water.

From Schwenksville, the trail once again crosses the creek, this time on a new, dedicated bridge. Once across the bridge, the traveler will begin to climb the only major hill on the trail, Springmount. All but the first hundred yards of the trail northbound are gravel, and the grade on the northbound climb is gradual. The southbound climb (and hence the northbound descent) is a steep 14 percent.

The trail north of Schwenksville all the way to Green Lane Park is very pretty. It is wooded, offers scenic views of the creek, and abounds with seasonal wildflowers. A carpet of forget-me-nots dominates April, May brings wild azaleas and May apples, the scent and sight of wild roses fill late May and early June, and violets can be seen through the summer 'till the dogwoods turn red.

Once past Springmount, road bridge construction replacing an old, one-lane has currently necessitated a short detour on local roads that is almost as scenic as the short section of trail that you miss.

The last busy highway crossing comes just before entering Green Lane Park. Even if you dismount or are a pedestrian, and cross at a



clearly marked crosswalk, it is unlikely that any cars will yield to you; less likely that at any other crosswalk on the trail. Use caution!

Green Lane Park offers drinking water, flush toilets, and many pleasant places to picnic with a view of the lake. It has miles of easy to very tough mountain bike trails, and is a mountain biking destination in its own right. Lightly traveled roads with steep hills make the area attractive to road cyclists. You can continue into Green Lane Borough, where there are several stores and restaurants.

I tend to see the Perkiomen Trail from a bicyclist's perspective, though I have walked and even skied portions of it. The sections from Oaks to Collegeville and from Schwenksville to Green Lane are the best for hiking, although, if you live near the trail, any part near you is an admirable place to walk. As for skiing, pick your section carefully, as the middle part of the trail has many road



crossings. And don't expect your ski tracks to remain untrampled for very long.

Cyclists should be ever aware of other trail users. Be particularly careful of people walking or running with baby strollers, dogs on extended wire leashes, loose dogs, toddlers straying from pre-occupied parents, and children on bikes just learning to ride or not yet aware of their surroundings. The trail can be a busy place on a sunny summer weekend,

yet I have never found it so busy that it's unpleasant or chose not to ride there. It is still a great place to ride!

Also, you may encounter horses (and their droppings). The safest thing for both you and the equestrians is to assume that the riders are inexperienced and may not be able to fully control their horses. An experienced equestrian will take no offense, and give horses plenty of room, and do not startle them.

I have ridden every inch of the Perk Trail in every season. It is a fine place to ride, and is often my first trail ride in spring, when there is still spots of snow on the ground. And my last ride of the fall, when all of the brightly colored leaves are down and just the last few rich brown oak leaves cling tenaciously to their branches.

Keep it safe and friendly!

- Ride, walk and run on the **right** side of the trail, pass on the left.
- Be aware of other trail users! Pay attention. Don't suddenly swerve, gesture or change direction,
- Bicyclists should warn other trail users when overtaking. "On your left," is the recommended call when overtaking.
- If you feel unsure about riding or walking alone, do it with a friend, a group or a club (such as AMC). There are many clubs that have rides. The bike shop in Schwenksville has rides every Sunday morning.
- Carry a cell phone. Put it in a plastic bag with a few bandages. And keep both there for emergency use. (Cell phone while walking or riding is distraction and unsafe.)
- Behave and speak as if you are in a public place. You are! But then, AMC members know that!
- Keep dogs on a leash (required), and don't allow the leash to stretch across the trail. Dog-bicycle collisions are not good for either cyclist or dog.

What other say

"Great trail! Great asset to Montgomery County."

"The trail is a real asset for residents and visitors providing a low-cost way to see the beauty of the county."

"I bought my house in this area because of the trail."

"The trail is a real asset to the community. I have been on many trails within a hundred-mile radius and this trail is one of the nicest."

"Trail system is a great investment!"

"This trail...is one of the most attractive features to the region, and one of the primary reasons why I would never move from the area."

From the *Perkiomen Trail 2008 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis*, prepared by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and various Pennsylvania agencies.

In my somewhat knowledgeable opinion...

The following is my personal opinion, but I have been riding the Perk Trail since it opened, and hiking parts of it before it opened. I live near it and ride it regularly.

Overall

Probably the best public works project Montgomery County ever built for its citizens. A boon to the health, recreation, business and well-being of the whole community.

Great for

Bicycling (especially bicycling!), walking, dog walking, jogging, running, xc-skiing in selected areas.

Disappointing for

Road bikes (unless you enjoy falling and fixing flats), back-country hiking (none), those seeking solitude, except in colder weather.

What to ride

Mountain bike, hybrid bike, cyclocross bike

Maps and brochures

Generally available at trailhead kiosks, or download from <http://trails.montcopa.org/trails>

Maintenance gets an A. Washouts and downed trees quickly remediated, trail surface is well maintained.

Design gets a B+ to a D-. The dangerous corner leaving Lower Perk Park is bad. All side street and rural road trail crossings should have stop signs for the cars. (They do, in some places.) The bridges could use safer railings, such as the kind used on the Schuylkill Trail bridge over the Perkiomen. The paved portions of the trail are often below grade, particularly in Lower Perk Park, and tend to hold large puddles. My suggestion for future projects would be to use bike path engineers that are avid cyclists who see the world from a cyclist's view point. The trail may be multi-use, but its defining use is bicycling, and it is the less experienced cyclists who would most benefit from safer design.

Markings earn an A. There are clear signs everywhere, and if you get lost on this trail, you must not be paying attention.

Safety

The popularity of the trail makes it generally a very safe place to be. Particularly on evenings and weekends, you are seldom alone for long. See box at left.

Cleanliness

Generally litter-free and almost always very clean.

Strange policy: Trail users are urged and required to clean up after a 10 pound dog, but not so for a 1,000 pound horse. In contrast, equestrian trail users in Green Lane Park are told to shovel horse droppings off the trail into the woods.

Family friendliness

An excellent place for the whole family. The trail is well-used by all ages, including babies in strollers, backpacks and bike trailers (which may be rented). Parents should keep a careful eye on their children, as there are many others using the trail. Kids get really enthused seeing lots of adults, including their parents, riding and walking and just having fun. There's lots to see along the trail. Parents should be mindful of restroom locations!

— Eric Pavlak, [eric @outings.org](mailto:eric@outings.org)

For more information:

<http://trails.montcopa.org/trails>

www.outdoors.org/pdf/upload/highlands-hike7-perkiomen-trail.pdf

Outdoor Leader Training Course Graduates Eighteen



The DV Chapter's Outdoor Leader Training course for 2010 took place on the weekend of April 16-18 at Weisel Hostel near Quakertown. Eighteen students attended this year's course, which included two days of class time, role plays, and sociability. Evaluations from the course participants were extremely positive, including comments like "Very thorough and complete, extremely well organized" and "Great opportunity to glean insight from experienced leaders. It surpassed my expectations!"

This year's event included a dinner on Saturday night prepared by Chef Jim Catozzi which gave participants a chance to relax and get acquainted.

The eighteen course graduates will now be doing two "co-leads" of outings as leaders-in-training. If their co-leads are successfully completed, they will be joining the ranks of DV Chapter outings leaders.

Those who attended this year's training were:

Leonard Camp	Dave Trindle
George Gorman	Joe Geib
Jeff Waltrich	Steve Bailey
Cassandra Hogue	Lorraine Abate
Paul Potochniak	Irina Kulikovskaya
Tim Rooney	Jonathan Pincus
Paul Schott	Sue Caskey
Ian Kindle	Bonnie Tobin
David Block	Tammy Brandon

Thanks also to the DV leaders who served as trainers and organizers for this year's course:

Jeff Alpert	Jim Catozzi
Pete Jarrett	Mark Kern
Jeff Lippincott	Donna Morgan
Phil Mulligan	Ron Phelps
Craig Smith	Bill Steinmetz
Lennie Steinmetz	Rich Wells

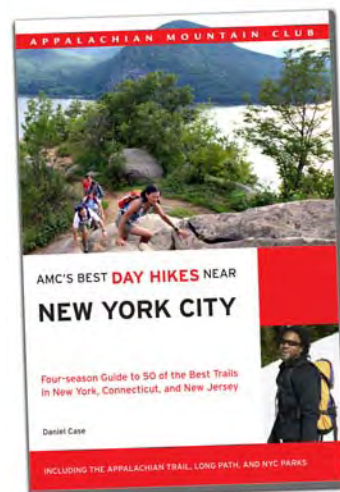
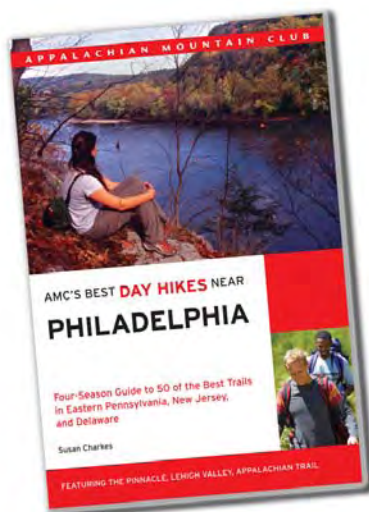
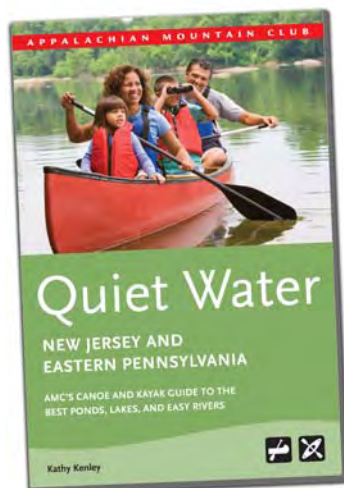
AMC Summer Travel Adventures

AMC Family Adventure Camps are the perfect way to spend quality time with your family this summer. Combine a week of outdoor adventure with traditional mountain hospitality in spectacular settings in New Hampshire and Maine. Our expert staff will lead a full program of activities for kids ages 5-12, tailored for each camp location. New for 2010 -- more hut overnights and outdoor skills. Learn more at www.outdoors.org/summerguide.

AMC's Teen Wilderness Adventures offer more than 30 exciting, rewarding outdoor adventures in the White Mountains and Lakes Regions of New Hampshire, as well as Acadia National Park and western Maine, for youth ages 12 to 18. Summer trips range in length from 5 to 23 days, and many of them combine different outdoor elements such as backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, and rock climbing. New this year, we've expanded our single- and multi-sport adventures and added new offerings such as a 7-Day Ocean Kayak Adventure and a Waterfalls and Swimming Holes Backpack Adventure. For details, visit www.outdoors.org/teenwilderness.

Registration for a family-friendly Major Excursion to Rocky Mountain National Park is now open - August 7-14, 2010. Introduce your family to the amazing beauty of Colorado's Estes Park. Experience the grandeur of the area through hikes and activities designed for maximum family enjoyment. Hikes will be matched to the ages, limits, and interests of the family members. More challenging hikes (5-7 mi) will be offered for parents who can split childcare duties. Others welcome without families. Accommodations will be at the YMCA of the Rockies with transportation by vans. Approximate trip cost - Adults 13 and over: \$1,665 per person adult double occupancy (Single supplement \$490), Children ages 6-12: \$620, Children under 6: \$425. Includes lodging, all meals, ground transportation, park passes and evacuation insurance. Airfare of ~ \$400-600 not included. Some hiking experience required. For more information, visit <http://snebulos.mit.edu/majorexursions/trips/1022.pdf>.

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