



Volume 24 Issue 3

Rails to Trails of Central PA Inc.

May / June 2019

## SPRING GATHERING AND RAFFLE DRAWING:



Thank you to one and all who came to the Spring Gathering on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. The weather was not so great, (although the rain stopped, it was a bit wet), the food was fantastic and a good time was had by all. A very special thank you to Sarah and Ron Gonsman,

Adam Grow and Rodney Lane who did all the prep work, setting up, hauling the grill, grilling the food, serving and clean-up. These individuals deserve a great thank you, for without them, there would have been no gathering. Following the picnic, we held the drawing and announced this year's winners for our yearly raffle. The winners this year were as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> prize: Lee Thomas** of Hollidaysburg: Spokes-N-Skis Gift Certificate

**2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Bonnie Casey** of New Enterprise: Fairfield Farm B&B night stay

**3<sup>rd</sup> prize: Deb Ridgeway** of Cassville: Gift Bag from REI

**4<sup>th</sup> prize: Chris Detweiler** of Williamsburg: Hoss's Gift Certificate

**5<sup>th</sup> prize: Sue Stratton** of Altoona: Sheetz Gift Certificate

**6<sup>th</sup> prize: Sandy Lenz** of Loretto: Brush Mountain Running & Outdoors Gift Certificate

**7<sup>th</sup> prize: Joe Tate** of Enola: Allegheny Creamery and Crepes Gift Certificate

**8<sup>th</sup> prize: Diane Johannides** of Altoona: Allegheny Creamery and Crepes Gift Certificate

**9<sup>th</sup> prize: Patty Swanson** of Hollidaysburg: Black Dog Café' Gift Certificate

**10<sup>th</sup> prize: Laura Burke** of Hollidaysburg: Black Dog Café' Gift Certificate

**11<sup>th</sup> prize: Josh Pentz** of Hollidaysburg: Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Certificate

**12<sup>th</sup> prize: Rick Geist** of Altoona: Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Certificate

**13<sup>th</sup> prize: Rick Holland** of Hollidaysburg: Dick's Sporting Goods Gift Certificate

Top ticket sales person: **Tom Fisher**. Yes, Tom outdid himself again this year selling 547 tickets! We owe not only Tom but all our Rail Trail members who helped to make this year's raffle a success. This raffle is what makes up most of our yearly operating budget. Also a very big thank you to Vickie Brua. She has handled the entire raffle process from the ticket distribution to collecting and updating of all the membership information. It is no easy task and she does a fantastic job.

Now with those thank-you's said, the raffle and gathering would not have happened without the generosity of **Spokes-N-Skis, Hoss's, Fairfield Farm Guest Cabin, Rothrock Outfitters, Black Dog Café, Allegheny Creamery and Crepes, Dicks Sporting Goods and Holland Brother's Meats**. These businesses have been very supportive of Rails to Trails. We hope that when you are out shopping that you return the favor and support these companies, eateries, and butcher shops.

## HOLLIDAYSBURG SENIOR HIGH VOLUNTEER DAYS:



Every spring for the past 18 years seniors from Hollidaysburg Area High School volunteer for three days along the trail. This past May 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup>, the students worked alongside Gregg Williams helping to plant native trees. Gregg has been working tirelessly to rid the trail of invasive plants and then planting native vegetation to improve the trail. And very glad to say it seems to be working.

As Greg had to say in his past email update: "I have a flurry of "good news" to share with all of you. First, collectively we finished our spring planting of native trees and shrubs in the three county area and set a new record – we planted somewhere around 600-700 bare root trees and shrubs, with more to come in the fall, including a couple of wildflower meadows! I invite all to walk around the marsh at Walnut Springs Park in State College, hike the nature trail along Standing Stone Creek in Huntingdon, or ride your bike the length of the Lower Trail which flows from Flowing Spring Trailhead in Blair County to Alfarata Trailhead in Huntingdon County and look for our flags, our tree tubes, and our

wildflower meadows. These native plants will not only help stabilize those ecosystems and better feed the fauna, but also sequester more CO2 for years to come.”

We would like to thank the High School Students for helping to improve and enhance the trail. Also we would be very remiss in not thanking members Greg Williams and Ed Donahoe for supervising and instructing the students. Ed said he felt the students learned a lot from Greg. We also need to thank Sheetz for donating donuts to the students every morning to start off their day.

As stated above, Greg Williams is making a significant impact along the trail. He lives in Williamsburg and is volunteering his knowledge and skills in three different counties. Over the past 3 years, you can see the difference along the trail. In places you once had trouble seeing the river due to invasive plant overgrowth, you now are able to take it in. What he is doing is working. If you would like to volunteer along with Gregg or just talk with him, (be careful you may just learn a lot!) you can email him at; [wacmbok@aol.com](mailto:wacmbok@aol.com) or send him a text or call his cell at 215-242-0854.

## DEEPEST SYMPATHIES TO:

Rails to Trails would like to extend our sympathies to the Richard Hess and Bob Richers families.



On Friday May 24<sup>th</sup> longtime member and volunteer Rick Hess passed away. Rick and his wife Sally were all-round volunteers. If you were on the trail and saw a man and women weed-eating their way up or down the trail around benches and tables, you probably saw Rick and Sally. They most likely know every inch of the Lower Trail. Rick also

was very instrumental in helping to set up all the checks and balances of our finances. We have been told by different CPA's that our set up is more meticulous than most large non-profit organizations. Rick also helped research, inventory and set-up all of our insurances. All of these took a major commitment of time and effort. I think we can safely say, “Rick loved the Lower Trail and the Lower Trail and its members loved Rick.” Our deepest sympathies to Sally and his family.

On Wednesday June 12<sup>th</sup> Christy Richers-Bejmovicz past away after a lengthy illness. Christy is the daughter of Bob and Sue Richers. Bob and Sue have been long time members. Bob served on the Board for many years. He oversees every Eagle Scout project along the trail. You can also find him volunteering to help maintain the trail as well as all the bird boxes along the trail. If the name sounds very familiar to you that is because Bob helps by contributing articles to the *Trekker*.

Please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers.

## WILDFLOWER WATCH: Purple Pitcher Plant

By Bob Richers

In early march of this spring my wife, Sue, and I took a bus trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show. As usual it was crowded but also awesome! This year I was lucky enough to locate and purchase a pitcher plant. After some research on the web I discovered that my plant was a *Nepenthes Mulenessis* Pitcher Plant from Malaysia. It comes in a hanging container and has long leaves which produce long stems that grow down and turn up into the pitcher. With attentive watering of only distilled water and feeding the pitchers with dried insects I've managed to keep it alive.

While searching for my plant I learned more about the 8 varieties of Pitcher Plant found on the east coast of the USA. They are members of the *Sarracenia* Species, mostly located in the southern states, with one exception that is found all the way up to Nova Scotia. That plant is the Purple Pitcher Plant also known as the Northern Pitcher Plant. All 8 varieties of this species form their pitchers from the leaves.



The plant is found in small sphagnum bogs often in small pools. It prefers full sunlight and like the Venus Fly Trap, feeds on insects for needed nutrients. The plants are 8” to

24” high. The young pitcher plant has narrow straw-like leaves and the lid of the pitcher is curled over so that the pitcher tube is not accessible. A mature pitcher leaf of the *Sarracenia* is usually greenish to reddish with darker colored veins. When the leaves are mature, the wing is less conspicuous because the lid has expanded and the tube leaf, which contains water, has widened out considerably.

The lid of the pitcher is frilly and triangular in shape. There are downward pointing hairs inside the tube which restrict the upward movement of unsuspecting visitors. The bottom of the tube contains the digestive fluid. Not only is the Purple Pitcher plant very adept at luring in insects and spiders, but researchers at the University of Guelph and the University of Toronto found during surveys in wetlands that they were also capturing and devouring vertebrates. Eight individual salamanders were found trapped in pitcher plants during survey efforts in 2017 and an additional 35 individuals were recorded with an increased survey effort in 2018.

The Pitcher Plant has a 2” flower that grows on a separate yellow stem. It curls when mature. The sepals are red-purple and pointed. The flower produces tiny seeds which have tiny knobs which aid in distribution to new locations.

I am awaiting the delivery of 9 small potted Northern Pitcher Plants that I hope to grow on a submerged platform in the smaller of my two backyard decorative goldfish ponds. A mixture of 2-

parts sphagnum peat moss and 1-part play sand will bed the plants. The lower 1" of a 5" planter will rest in the water. The pond will receive full daily sunlight and any watering will only use distilled water. The Pitcher Plant will also grow in a shallow container filled with peat/sand setting in a tray which can be used for watering. So just remember, peat/sand bed, distilled water and full sunlight. Time will tell if it works out.

**TREE OF THE MONTH: Japanese Maple**

*By Dave Despot*

Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*), often called Japanese red maple, is a small (15 to 20 feet in height,) ornamental tree commonly found in landscapes. In the wild state, the species can reach 40 to 50 feet in height and many fine examples can be found along the east coast between Boston and Washington D.C. This species generally has red leaves in the spring, which, depending on the cultivar, often turn green during the summer months. Many cultivars have been developed and one of the characteristics often touted is the tendency to hold red leaf color into the summer months.



Leaves are simple, opposite, 2 to 5 inches long bearing 5 to 9 lobes, doubly toothed, with color varying between red and green, depending on cultivar and season of the year. Buds are covered with a pair of scales (valvate bud scale arrangement) which separate to expose the growing shoot in the spring. Twigs tend to be shiny red

to green. Mature bark is gray with a shallow vertical texture. Young trees of this species tend to grow at a medium rate but the growth rate slows down with age. Japanese maple is a versatile landscape tree with the ability to grow on a variety of sites. It is reported that even in the heat of the south, many fine specimens can be found.

One group of Japanese maples, the cut leafed maples (Dissectum group), has a distinctive appearance. The lobes on the leaves are cut to a fine point of attachment and each lobe is in turn also finely cut. The result is a leaf with a great deal of open space between narrow strips of leaf tissue. The cut leaf maples often grow as a mound of foliage and often do not exceed 6 or 8 feet in height.

Although you are not likely to find Japanese maples growing in the forest you should be able to spot them in landscapes around the area.

**SUPPORTING RAILS TO TRAILS IS AS EASY AS:**

**SHOPPING AMAZON.COM.**

Please consider using **Amazon Smiles** and **designating Rails To Trails of Central Pennsylvania Inc.** when you make a purchase through Amazon. This will provide our trail organization with a

percentage of the purchase at no cost to you. Thanks to all those who have already used this feature.

You can use this quick link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/25-1605920> to access Amazon Smiles using RTTCPA as donor recipient.

**JUST FYI:**

There is **NO** July monthly Board meeting. As in years past, due to summer vacations, it is usually difficult to have a quorum. Thus we have found it best to not have a July meeting. The internet allows the board to stay in touch for any immediate business that needs tended to.

**FRIENDLY REMINDER:**

Dogs are to be leashed and under control on the trail. This is not only for the safety of trail users but your pet as well.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_)-\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ New Membership      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

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_____ Family	\$20.00
_____ Supporting	\$50.00
_____ Group	\$75.00

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| _____ Nature Study | _____ Jogging   |
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I would like to help by volunteering for:

Make checks payable to:  
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday July 28 <sup>th</sup>	5k Laces for Alli, 2 PM Registration, 4 PM Race Time. Location: Williamsburg.
Tuesday August 13 <sup>th</sup>	Monthly Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station
Tuesday Sept. 10th	Monthly Board Meeting, 7 PM at the Grannas Station

## 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 following address.

**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!**

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