



Signals

News and notes from the
Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association
Highland, NY 12528
www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net

Volume 9 Number 1

SPRING 2012

Breakfast at Black Creek and Annual Meeting

To kick off the summer on the Hudson Valley Rail Trail, we will be having our Annual Breakfast at the Black Creek beginning at 9AM on June 2nd. This will also be the annual meeting for the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, which helps maintain the Rail Trail as well as events and programs that utilize the great setting we have.

The site for the Breakfast is a particularly attractive one (see photos here and on page 3). We will be meeting on the Rail Trail where it runs on a viaduct 20 feet above an extensive marsh. The viaduct is over a half mile long and took the railroad above the marsh during Spring floods. It replaced an earlier (1889-1912) railbed that flooded regularly. That old railbed is still visible on both sides of the viaduct when the leaves are gone (see article on page 7).

While you are having breakfast, look around and take in the sights that John Maguire, a local naturalist, wrote about in the Spring 2011 issue of this newsletter (*that issue is available on our website given in above address*). Of the area, Jack wrote:

Here we can observe a natural setting little changed since retreat of the last glacier 15,000 years ago This glacier carved the Black Creek out of solid bedrock, giving it a firmly-banked waterway that has kept its vitality and pristine quality into our own prone-to-pollute era. Yes, the water is dark, but it's due to tannin leaching naturally from oak and hemlock bark. American poet Walt Whitman, who often visited this creek, more lyrically described it as "a stream of hurrying amber."

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President's Message

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail continues to grow in popularity each and every day serving our community as a recreational venue, a tourism attraction and an economic development tool.

You certainly see the increased usage on the trail. More people are walking and more bike riders are on the trail for leisure use or to go long distances with the trail providing a safe respite from riding on the road. There is hardly a time when the parking lots do not have a number of cars.

The economic impact is evident from Walkway Over the Hudson's recently completed Economic Impact Update. The report shows that of the 500,000 yearly users, 48% of the Walkway users come from areas outside of Ulster and Dutchess Counties.

The report also attributes \$10.5 million in direct sales and the creation of 130 jobs as a result of Walkway Over the Hudson's presence in the Mid-Hudson Valley Region. A lot of that spills over into our local community and will only increase as the Town of Lloyd continues effort to attract rail trail users into the hamlet to shop and eat.

We are very fortunate to have our trail connect to Walkway. The possibilities are endless in our efforts to attract visitors, business and job opportunities to our community.

Please continue to support the trail and all that it offers to everyone in our wonderful community.

See you on the trail—

Claire

Claire R. Costantino, President
Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, Inc.

Monthly Meetings

The Rail Trail has regular board meetings that are opened to the public. These are on the third Tuesday each month starting at 7 PM. We meet at the Lloyd Town Hall, which is located at 12 Church Street in Highland NY 12528.

We discuss ongoing projects, upcoming events and issues that affect the Rail Trail. Your comments and ideas are welcomed from the floor. It's your Rail Trail and you are entitled to be heard.

For more information, contact Claire Costantino at 845-691-2066 or via email at rebenal@aol.com.



Signals

is published on an occasional basis by:

**Hudson Valley Rail Trail Assoc.
12 Church Street
Highland, NY 12528**

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BREAKFAST AT BLACK CREEK (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The Breakfast event will include election of board directors as well as updates on current and future Hudson Valley Rail Trail projects. You will also hear about our annual events such as the WinterFest that continue to draw ever increasing crowds. At the meeting you will have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

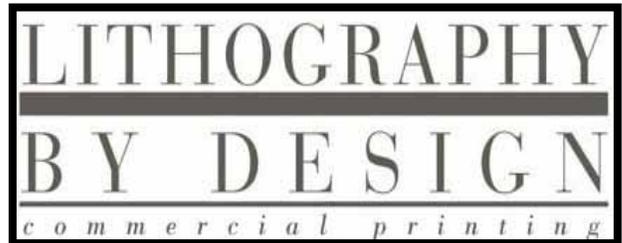
Meanwhile, do look on both sides of the Rail Trail where the meeting is being held. On one side you will see this set of stairs pictured below. Descend to get close to Black Creek and feel the expanse of the marsh. Perhaps dip a toe in the amber waters that Walt Whitman often visited.



Go back up. Look the other way to get another view of the creek. Further out are the abutments for a bridge that served the earlier railbed, which is still visible. Illinois Mountain is in the background. ♦



A Very Special Thanks To:



Keith Garbounoff for mowing area to the right of the pavilion

Baker and Sons for mowing the area in front of the pavilion

Rail Trail Events In 2012

Annual Membership Meeting and Breakfast on Black Creek June 2 at 9:00 AM. This is National Trail Day. Free breakfast with music. Learn about future plans for the Rail Trail. Members vote for directors to the board of the HVRTA. On Rail Trail at Black Creek.

Learn to Run Program Starts September 8th at 9:00AM: Join this 10-week program that will make a runner of you in 10 weeks. Lessons are taught on the Rail Trail and start from the Rotary Pavilion at 101 New Paltz Road.

Harvest MoonWalk September 28th, 7:00-9:00PM: Begins at Depot at 101 New Paltz Road. Here is your chance to walk the Rail Trail at night and enjoy the full moon. \$5 admission includes bonfire, storyteller & refreshments.

Hudson Valley Rail Trail Gala - An Evening Under the Stars! October 6, starts at 6PM. On the trail at 75 Haviland Road. Expanded cocktail reception with substantial *hors d'oeuvres* buffet and dancing under the night sky and festively decorated tents. Black tie optional event, rain or star-shine.

HudsonFest 2011, October 7, 10AM to 6PM. A festival on the Rail Trail to celebrate what Valley has to offer with a focus on the arts, artisans, crafts people, farmers, wineries, local restaurants, food vendors, distilleries, breweries, agri-business, non-profits and community service organizations. Entrance at 75 Haviland Rd.

Hudson Valley 5K Race/Walk October 8th, 10AM. Event is on the Rail Trail; begins at Caboose at 75 Haviland Road near Walkway.

WinterFest 2012 Continues Warm Trend

WinterFest remains as popular as ever. The one on January 14th again drew big crowds.

What seems to be changing, however, are the temperatures. Gone are the days of 15 degree weather. And, this year, there was zero snow. This affected one new activity in the ever popular kid's program: an organized snowball fight. We never intended the kids to be throwing actual snowballs; fuzzy balls were the projectiles. But it would have been good to have a bit of snow to build snow fortresses. Cardboard boxes were used instead.

Other kids' activities were popular. In particular the Lowe's tent, with its wooden projects for them to hammer away on.

The chili contest has gotten bigger. Local eateries provided 22 pots, up from 16 the previous year. That amounted to 110 gallons of chili for tasting! The winner was River Station restaurant from Poughkeepsie in regular chili and Wagon Wheel from Highland in the vegetarian chili category.

Lots of thank you's are in order for the many volunteer groups that helped such as the Highland Rotary, Boy Scouts, etc. A particular appreciative kudo to Laurianne Marion, one of our board members, who took over the event's organization from the Lukes who were the perennial go-to organizers. Laurianne did great her first time out of the gate. ♦



Snowball Fight Without the Snow



Highland Rotarians Serving Chili Tastings



Roasting Chestnuts, A WinterFest Tradition



Tractor Ride Passes the Caboose

Safety Cones Are Slowing Down Bike Riders

If you have been on the Rail Trail recently where it meets Walkway over the Hudson you will no doubt have come across the setup of cones in these photos. The cones have been placed there by the NY Parks staff responsible for the Walkway to address the speed problem that they have been having with bike riders vis-a-vis pedestrians and other users of Walkway. But the setup also benefits safety for the Rail Trail itself.

As you can see the cones abruptly interrupt bike traffic, forcing it to slow down drasti-

cally rather than roar on to the Walkway at full tilt. The cones also serve to tell bike riders to yield to pedestrians since they are slowed down enough to see the sign in the photo on the left.

Some bike riders are angry about the signs. When I was taking the photos one rider called to another "This is a pain in the ass!" Walkway volunteers who staff the gift/info booth about 150 feet away say that they hear much stronger language coming from the vicinity of the cones.

Some bike riders do know what the cones are attempting to accomplish, i.e. slow down bike traffic for safety sake. Again, while I was taking pictures, I heard the person walking her bike through say "This is a great idea!"

The cones are aimed at Walkway bound bike riders, but it should also help make riders aware of the need to yield and control speed when they enter the Rail Trail. Immediately past the cones, there is a Rail Trail sign in yellow put up last year that asks riders to alert pedestrians when passing. Bikers have been flying by it without noticing it. Now that they have been slowed down by the cones, they more likely will. ♦



Cone Sign For Walkway bound Riders



You Can Walk Your Bike Thru the Cones or...



Cone View Entering Rail Trail From Walkway



... You Can Ride Thru the Cones Slowly



Rail Trail Sign for Cyclists Now More Visible

Rail Trail Benefits Many Groups & Causes

Increasingly, the Hudson Valley Rail Trail is being used by non-profit organizations for a variety of purposes. Most of this is for a venue to help in fundraising and public awareness of diseases. Some is for community needs.

With the connection to the Walkway over the Hudson, such usage has grown enormously. At our monthly Rail Trail board meetings, we regularly are reviewing requests for groups to use the Rail Trail's miles of paved surface and/or its facilities such as the parking lots and pavilion. The requests are coming so often that some 18 months ago, we created a five-page Special Activity Application.

The Application Form

The form was prepared very carefully by Claire Costantino and was based on extensive research. It was approved by the Town of Lloyd Board. The form has been also adopted by the Highland Landing Park Association, which is similar in structure to the Rail Trail Association.

The application covers a lot of ground in addition to such things as name of organization and contact information. A thorough description of the event using the Rail Trail and any charges or donations that are part of it. A map of placement of tents and equipment. What assistance and stand-by needs by police and emergency services. \$1 million liability insurance. If alcohol is to be served, the organization needs to submit a Town of Lloyd Alcoholic Beverage Permit with the application and it must be approved by the Town Board. There is also an event permit fee structure depending on number of people expected and electrical hookups.

The text box on the right shows what is going on this year. Some of these are repeats from earlier such as the Get Your Guts in Gear

Some Groups Using Us in 2012

Marlboro Hose Company #1 - April 29
1st Annual Apple Blossom Ride
Fundraiser – Marlboro Hose Co #1, Hospice, March of Dimes

Mid-Hudson Valley AIDS Task Force, Inc.
May 5 (Shown in Photo Below)
Hudson Valley AIDS Walk
Fundraiser – ARCS

Maplebrook School – May 20
Hand-in-Hand 7K Run/Walk
Co-sponsor St. Francis Hospital & Health Care Foundation
Fundraiser for The Panichi Family Center for Communications and Learning

Get Your Guts in Gear, Inc. – June 9
The Ride for Crohn's and Colitis
Fundraiser – Get Your Guts in Gear, Inc.

ALS – Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Association Greater New York Chapter
October 21
Walk to Defeat ALS

group. One year its bike riders took time out from their 130 mile ride to help us raise the 25 foot flagpole at the Pavilion parking lot.

Last year, the Highland High School drama class, in cooperation with the Highland Public Library, did a Ghost Walk play at the Pavilion and on the trail (*Signals*, Winter 2011-12). Walkway Over The Hudson regularly uses the parking lot at Haviland Road as a support area. ♦

If your organization wishes to use the Rail Trail, contact Claire Costantino at 845-691-2066 or by email at reben1@aol.com.



Ever Wonder About Things On The Trail?

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail has many reminders still visible that speak to its earlier history as a major railroad. Here are a couple:

West of the Pavilion is this steel bridge. It seems to go nowhere. It once carried traffic to/from extensive farmland. It was put up to avoid an at-grade earlier crossing a bit further west.



Here is another RR item. It is in the woods east of the New Paltz Road bridge. It dates from when the RR followed a different route from 1889 to 1912. That route had an at-grade crossing with NP Road. When the RR was re-routed, the bridge was built for the road to cross.

That older railbed continued west and swung under the newer railbed a few hundred yards West of the NP Road bridge at a spot where we have a new stone bench. What looks like a stream gully behind the bench is the older route. That old route continued parallel to the Rail Trail's one for a half-mile. In winter, you can see the older route on what looks like a low berm. It then went under the later railbed. Where it crossed Black Creek is visible in the lower photo on page 3. We will likely lead a hike along that older route this coming Fall or Spring when the foliage is gone. ♦



Membership Form

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating, maintaining, promoting, and improving the Hudson Valley Rail Trail for the benefit of the public. Please help by becoming a member and volunteering your talents. (*You can join at www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net*)

\$15 Individual \$20 Family \$50-\$99 Patron \$100-499 Supporting \$500 Benefactor

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ E-Mail _____

I'd like to volunteer for:

Trail Maintenance
 Special Events
 Ecology Projects
 Other (Specify) _____

Newsletter
 Fund Raising
 Refreshments

Please send form and check payable: **Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, Inc.**
 12 Church Street, Highland, New York 12528

Signals



...from the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association

Don't miss!

Breakfast at Black Creek 2012 on the Hudson Valley Rail Trail

**Where Rail Trail Goes Over The Black Creek
(Half Mile From Tony Williams Park)**

June 2, 2012 starts at 9AM

www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Highland, New York 12528

12 Church Street

Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, Inc.

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