

*Newsletter of the*

**MASON-DIXON TRAIL**



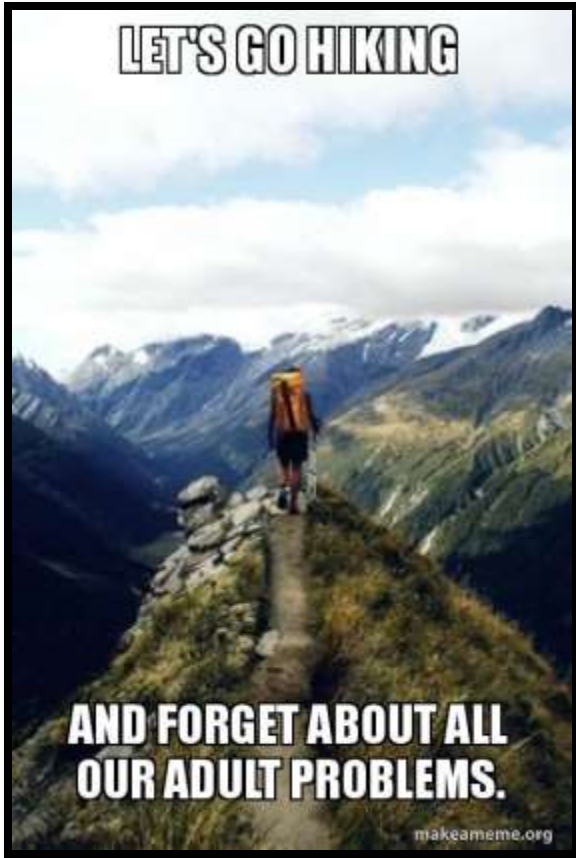
August 2021

**SYSTEM, INC.**



Jason Logue of Run PA  
presents president Tim Schmidt  
with a check for \$500

The meeting of June 13 commenced with a pleasant surprise to many of us. The association known as Run PA was represented by Jason Logue. This group promotes running, hiking, and biking throughout the state.



*Mark your calendar for the next meeting of the Mason Dixon Trail System.*

*Sunday September 12, 2021*

We will start with a work hike at 9am; meet at Elk Neck State Forest Shop/Office

717 Irishtown Rd, North East, MD 21901  
(801 Irishtown is better in Googlemaps)

We will establish a re-route around a heavily eroded section of trail and hanging the trail markers. Bring snacks/lunch, water, pruning shears, loppers and rakes.

The meeting will follow at 1pm at the Elk Neck State Forest's Black Hill Ranger Station,

130 McKinneytown Road North East, MD 21901.

All are welcome! Bring you own chair as we will be outdoors weather permitting.

As Jason Logue explained, Run PA was pleased to host the Bridge to Bridge Challenge, a virtual hike or run to be completed at the participant's convenience. This was entirely on our Mason Dixon trail. An entry fee was paid and a T-shirt was rewarded upon completion of the challenge. The money left over after the cost of the shirts amounted to nearly \$500! Mr Logue was pleased to present our president, Tim Schmidt, with a check for that sum. We are so grateful for this donation as his organization appreciates our fastidiously maintained venue! As a side bonus, Mr Logue promised that his group would help our hard-working maintainers keep the trail in fine shape.







A brisk hike from Wrightsville Riverfront Park up to High Point Park preceded the meeting. This is one of the many stunning views of the Susquehanna River along the York and Harford County sections of the trail.

## **Trail Days ... June 5, 2021**

An enthusiastic crowd of 47 people gathered at the Conowingo Visitors Center ready to task out for trail work. Fred Smith, our liaison from Exelon, welcomed us with plenty of supplies including gloves and bug repellent. Rob Bartholomew ...more colloquially known as "First Sgt Bartholomew"...separated us into teams and parceled out assignments and off we went into the woods armed with various implements!

Afterwards, Exelon provided a nice picnic lunch and some of us were regaled with useful or decorative door prizes. It was wonderful to gather all maintainers, old and new, for a social setting.



Fred Smith addresses the crowd





## President's Message

Does your employer have an Employee Volunteer Program (EVP)? Since the Mason-Dixon Trail System (M-DTS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and volunteer hours in support of the M-DT should be accepted by an EVP. We have a wide range of volunteering options, everything from committing to a couple of hours a week for a 3-year term to committing to a few hours on short term project.

Most M-DT volunteers perform trail maintenance. Obviously, a committed cadre of maintainers is critical to the survival of the M-DT. More details about that are available at <https://masondixontrail.wixsite.com/mdts/trail-maintenance>

Other critical tasks are accomplished by the members of the board who perform specific duties for a term of 3 years; most serve more than one term. Right now, we need a Treasurer and a Vice-President. A short description of their duties is available on the website at

<https://masondixontrail.wixsite.com/mdts/open-positions>

There are also very specific tasks that arise occasionally that are posted on the Open Positions page. Currently, we have a need for someone who has expertise in both MS Word and Adobe to help us with the process of migrating changes to the map descriptions from MS Word to Adobe for printing. More information is available on the website at

<https://masondixontrail.wixsite.com/mdts/open-positions>

Please consider helping out. Join us at the Sep 12 meeting to find out more about how the organization operates.



## Relocations



Vulcan Quarry relocation has begun!  
This will make a safer connection from  
Havre de Grace to Susquehanna State Park



## VULCAN QUARRY BRIDGES

Yup, they did it! Twenty-some volunteers marched in squad deep to the two creek crossings armed with serious equipment and a ponderous load of lumber.

Post hole digger whirled, shovels plunged, saws buzzed,  
hammers and drills fastened wood furiously.

When the dust settled, two beautiful bridges spanned the steep cuts.  
I challenge anyone to do a more professional job in the depths of a forested trail!





Not everyone grasps the sheer magnitude of volunteer work that goes into keeping trails open and safe all year round. One evening, one of our maintenance section chiefs, was sitting at a shelter on the AT. The conversation that swirled around him was lively and agitated. A group of young hikers were annoyed about the trail conditions and were loudly complaining about whoever was supposed to keep things in good shape. It seemed they assumed that paid employees were shirking their duty.

Now, our chief is a mild-mannered fellow and normally treats drama with good-natured passiveness. But he has also lugged his 20inch bar Stihl chainsaw up many a switchback to relieve the trail of a number of “widowmakers”. All for zero dollars plus a few ticks and poison ivy. So eventually, the conversation reached a peak and he could take it no more.

Suddenly, he addressed the group, loud and clear with one word: “Bull----!” His stunned listeners fell silent. He followed this with thirty seconds of informing the young hikers that a great deal of the trail maintainers were seventy year old retirees who do this purely as volunteers. No one gets paid, it is a labor of love.

He finished his tirade. You could hear a pin drop.

Out to his tent he went and no one messed with him the rest of the evening. Or the next morning! In his wake, maybe, just maybe, one or two of the young adventurers gave it some thought.

This is indeed a labor of love but it’s fun. There’s the camaraderie of teamwork and the satisfaction of a job well done. Yeah, the briars all grow back and we get to do it all over again. And yeah, the ticks are waiting for us. This year, the cicadas are our bonus as well!

We have weekday work sessions, there are weekend gatherings. There is also the option of adopting a section of trail and keeping an eye on it and maintaining it to your ability. If you don’t have the tools, we will be happy to introduce you to a Pulaski, a weed whacker, or loppers. Anything that you can’t accomplish, someone else will be happy to help you. The Mason Dixon Trail has a lot of beautiful scenery and more seclusion in spots than you can find in most community parks. What better working environment?! It is a treasure to respect and there is that “Wow!” moment when you walk away from a job well done.

## Trail Maintainers

A big thanks to all!

### Western Sector

**Roxanne Strine,**

### Coordinator

Dave Strine

Jim Mc Coy

Jim Hooper

Tom Morley

Tim Schmidt

Ron Grey

Leo Herbert

Jim Boyle

Jeff Willard

Patrick Kinnier

Todd Trimmer

John Eveler

Ruthie Franczek

Jo Jo Dietrich

Luke Ream

Scott Longnecker

Karen Rineer

Curt Ashenfelter

Shane Spangler

Shane Smith

Robert Hale

Chrissy Tobias

Steve Stroman

Ryan Jenkins

Travis Karlie

Aaron Root

Tim Black

Jeff Kernes

### Central Sector

**Mike Hall, Coordinator**

Rob Bartholomew

Cathy Bartholomew

Dan Boehm

Todd Fisher

Christina Graber

Andrea Griffith

Scott Kearby

Mark Knetzer

Jake Landon

Linda Lambert

Steve Larick

Eddie Pantoja

Gary Wenczel

Lori Weyer

Mark Weyer

Tyler Winnett

### Eastern Sector

**Pete McLaughlin,**

### Coordinator

Nick Brock

David Judd

Jake Landon

Dave Landon

David Long

Marshall Moore

Mike Ott

Reese Tippet

Ethan Whittaker

Geoff Yost

Wilmington Trail Club

Chester County Trail Club

Friends of White Clay Creek

State Park.

Friends of White Clay Creek

Preserve





# Mason Dixon Longest Day 100K

The Mason Dixon Longest Day 100k took place on June 19, 2021. It is a point-to-point course on the M-DT starting at the Rock Run Grist Mill in Susquehanna State Park and finishing at Shank's Mare Outfitters in Wrightsville, PA. This year there were eleven finishers with four of them meeting the challenge of starting at sunrise and finishing before sunset. Jake Landon was first overall in a 13:17 and Melissa Moreland was first female in a 13:21.

There were an additional 26 participants that completed a partial distance, anywhere from 5 to 55 miles. Some of the partial distance participants hoped to complete the entire course and just were not capable that day. Others had no intention on completing the entire 100k course and only came out to complete a partial distance.

This year was the 16th annual MDLD 100k. A total of 83 runners have completed the MDLD 100k since its inception in June 2006 with a total of 117 finishes between them. 51 of the finishes have met the "Sunrise-to-Sunset Challenge". The men's course record is a 10:30 set by James Weaver in 2019 and the women's course record is a 12:01 set by Jackie Palmer in 2014



### MDLD 100k Finishers

Place	Time	First	Last	Age	Gender	Distance
1	13:17	Jake	Landon	21	M	100k
2	13:21	Melissa	Morland	45	F	100k
3	14:32	Steven	Larick	27	M	100k
4	14:32	Caleb	Roth	31	M	100k
5	15:03	Luc	Claessens	56	M	100k
6	15:07	Riley	Andridge	27	M	100k
7	15:08	Serge	Arbona	56	M	100k
8	15:56	David	Long	45	M	100k
9	16:01	Jakob	Sinclair	41	M	100k
10	16:55	Kirk	Bolen	40	M	100k
11	16:55	Jeff	Izzo	46	M	100k

### Partial Distance

First	Last	Distance
Ryan	Leppo	55
David	Lantz	45
Daryl	Lehman II	45
Cassandra	Lizza	45
Mandy	Pierce	45
Chris	Rush	45
Roxanne	Strine	45
Kathleen	Cusick	41
Todd	Fisher	40
Gary	Wenczel	37
Jessica	Eager	35
Clifton	Shanklin	35
Marty	Angulo	33
Henriett	Blodgett	31
Jeff	Kearns	31
Julie	Lyness	31
Sarah	Wenger	28
Lisa	Gesualdo	23
Glen	Ausmus	22
Robert	Bartholomew	22
Patricia	Boone	22
Jen	Lange	22
Rob	Story	22
Diana	Wildowsin	22
Alberto	Vasquez	21
Eddie	Pantoja	5







Jake

Melissa

Luc

Steve and Caleb

Riley

Serge

David

Jakob

Kirk & Jeff



Taking a hike along the Susquehanna River is like taking a trip back in time. Today's guide is Eric Cromwell, a local resident whose family graced these historic shores for generations. Back to the 1800's we go...long before the three dams were built.



1860: Enter Jonas Cromwell. Picture this: at the end of Slab Road near Lock 13, right along the river was the Slab Tavern. At 29, Jonas was the barkeeper. The "slab" part refers to the construction of the building. Rough sawn wood blanks would have been fashioned into a clapboard style. Set right down and enjoy the company of canal boat pilots and locals. But be forewarned: the tavern was described in the daily paper as "...a hard place frequented by a hard lot. Three card monte, sweat clothes and such little diversions were practices there to rob

#### 1 Lock 13

the pilot of his money and it took a prudent man to steer clear of the land sharks."

In more recent times, the nefarious Sugar Shack was a speakeasy at the top of a hill on road 425 near Otter Creek. Some





folks today still remember it. Consequently, Lower Chanceford is a “dry” township today.

At the age of 34, Jonas wed the 18-year-old niece of the hotel owner nearby. Soon he apparently acquired this hotel, as records show that he was taxed five dollars as a “hotel keeper” and twenty dollars for “retail liquor”. Ummm...can I note that their first child arrived barely seven months after the nuptials.



2 McCall's Ferry landing, hotel in background



What is this floating down the river, smoking and glowing? It is June 1863 and embers of a great fire are flowing along. Confederates pushed the Civil War all the way north to conquer York. They had their

eyes on the prize and prepared to cross the “Susky” with intent of taking Lancaster then Philadelphia. But the Yanks would not have it. The mile long wooden covered bridge that spanned from Wrightsville to Columbia was the key to the rebels’ advancement. Union troops tried to blow up the bridge. No luck. So they set fire to it! They spread crude oil on it from a Columbia refinery. Then set it afire at the Wrightsville end. Confederates tried in vain to quench the flames. But the bridge went down...burned completely in six hours. The Pennsylvania militia had saved Lancaster!



Today you can see the grave of an unknown Confederate soldier along the road near the Accomac Inn up in Wrightsville. This may be the only Confederate grave outside of a cemetery.



Our friend Jonas was quite busy. By 1870 he was also in charge of McCall's Ferry. This is an important river crossing as it is one of the narrowest points in the river bounded by picturesque hills on either side. Yet he was also a "Canal Boatman". His specific job was to use a steamship to take canal boats from Columbia to the first canal lock. The colloquial term for the men that moved the canal boats to the locks was...of all things..."pimp". Once in the canal, mules

towed the boats because, you know, mules don't particularly want to swim that far.

Jonas was indeed quite the hustler. Every spring, logs from the northern Pennsylvania forests were floated down to the lumber mills of Maryland. Various and sundry logs went astray to shore and it was "finders: keepers". The logs were identified with markings so Jonas was bound to advertise his findings. But if no one claimed them...he was richly rewarded. There were so many logs acquired in this fashion that Jonas' offspring created a lumber company from their findings. As an example of the bounty the river provided, during a span of two weeks one spring, there were 115 logs of hemlock, pine, and oak. Using the 2020 prices per board foot, the family's findings were valued at over 1.3 million dollars!

A bit of a weird aside here: one day our guide, Eric, was cleaning out the chicken coop with his grandfather. Among the odd and mysterious findings were lovely



3 Flatboat on the Susquehanna and Tidewater Canal



solid oak boards. Uniform in size and beautiful in dense grain they were. The story goes that in the late 1800s, there was an accident in one of the locks. A boat overturned. Several people drowned! The Cromwell family created lovely coffins for the victims from these boards. No mere pine boxes for them. They got solid oak!



4 *Holtwood Dam in construction*

Most of the laborers were straight off the boat from Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, and Croatia. “Little Italy” was a collection of rude cabins to house the workers on the Lancaster County side. Ahh...but the saga of the dams is a story for another day! The river has much more to tell.

The thread of generations continues as Ed senior, Jonas’s youngest son, took over as the ferryman at McCalls. But by 1910, the Holtwood Dam was constructed and Ed was a laborer, iron worker, whatever assorted dam construction worker was needed. This was the third longest dam in the world. It was built of solid concrete and is 55 feet high.



5

*Little Italy*

6 *Wrightsville bridge today*



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Do you want that happy cat feeling?

Enjoy drop dead gorgeous terrain along the Susquehanna while working.

We would love to have you volunteer for:

Map 4: Green Branch to Wilson Run or Map 5: McCall's Ferry to the Gamelands

Contact Roxanne Strine: [riverdawgmd@gmail.com](mailto:riverdawgmd@gmail.com)