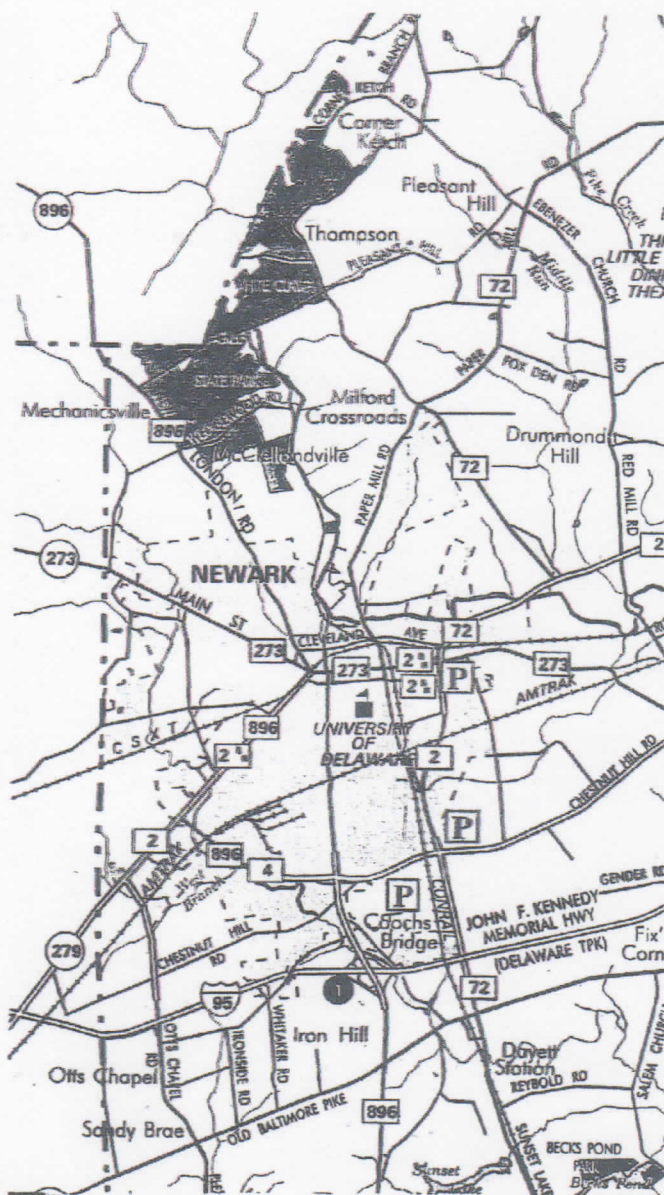


M-DTS WORK PARTY -- 9:30 a.m., Sunday, November 19
M-DTS MEMBERS' MEETING -- 1:00 p.m., Sunday, November 19

Members Meeting: At the White Clay Creek Preserve Visitor's Center off Hopkins Rd - see directions below.

For the Meeting: From the park entrance, turn right on Rte 896. At the next intersection, turn right on Hopkins Rd. Descend for about 1 mile to the valley. Just BEFORE Hopkins Rd crosses the bridge over White Clay Creek, turn left on a dirt road following the signs to the Visitor's Center. The Center is about 300 yards up the road on the left.



MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM INC

President Jim Hooper
[REDACTED]
Vice President..... Pat Wolf
[REDACTED]
Vice President..... Jim Denny
[REDACTED]
Secretary..... Yvonne Blades
[REDACTED]
Treasurer..... Mary Bleecker
[REDACTED]
Trail Coordinators:
Western Section..... Ron Gray
[REDACTED]
Central Section..... Pat Wolf
[REDACTED]
Eastern Section..... Rick Maerker
[REDACTED]
Newsletter Editor..... Yvonne Blades

The M-DTS Newsletter is published about four weeks in advance of each of the four M-DTS members' meetings/work parties held annually. Submissions are welcomed. Mail or email to editor. (See address under secretary above).

The Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc. is an all-volunteer, service-oriented association of trail clubs and individual hikers that has as its purpose the use and conservation of the backcountry through the development of new trails in the mid-Atlantic states. The nucleus of M-DTS is the 190-mile Mason-Dixon Trail which passes through historic and scenic areas of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

New members are welcome. To join send \$15 (which includes M-DT maps and patch) to

Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc
Mary Bleecker
[REDACTED]

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$5.

Life membership is available for \$250.

Visit the M-DTS web site at:
[REDACTED]

RON GRAY HONORED FOR "AT" TRAIL WORK

At the York Hiking Club Board of Directors meeting July 31, 2000, Ron Gray, YHC Trails Committee Chairman, was honored by the Appalachian Trail Conference for his years of volunteer service to the Trail. This is the 75th anniversary for the Appalachian Trail Conference, the non-profit organization that maintains the 2,160 mile footpath. In honor of their 75th anniversary, they recognized 75 volunteers from the 31 maintaining clubs along the length of the Trail. Ron Gray was included in this Honor Roll of Volunteers for his more than twenty years of volunteer service to the Trail. Michelle Miller from the Boiling Springs office of the ATC presented the award at the club's regularly scheduled Board Meeting.

* * * * *

TRAIL UPDATES AND ALERTS

Trail Coordinator Needed: We are losing Rick Maerker as our Eastern Trail Coordinator due to pressure of other commitments. A replacement is needed. The job involves coordinating the work of the 7 M-DT trail maintainers in the section from the Eastern Terminus to Perryville. For further details or to volunteer call Rick Maerker [REDACTED] or Jim Hooper [REDACTED]

Trail Interruption near North East in Cecil County, MD: Because of house construction and an unfriendly landowner, we can no longer access the telephone cable right of way westbound at Red Toad Road (Map 7: Mile 3.7 East to West). This prevents access to three miles of the Mason-Dixon Trail between Red Toad Road and Belvedere Road. There is no easy way to bypass this area. Therefore, until further notice: the **Mason-Dixon Trail is closed between Red Toad Road and Belvedere Road (Map 7: East to West, Mile 3.7 to 6.6; West to East, Mile 5.5 to 8.4).**

The section of the M-DT just east of this closed section has also been a problem due to an aggressive dog at the Stony Run stream crossing. (Map 7: Mile 9.2 West to East).

The Eagles Have Fledged: The Pennsylvania Game Commission has reopened the main route of the Mason-Dixon Trail along the Susquehanna River between McCall's Ferry Road and Oakland Run, north of Holtwood (Map 5, East to West, Mile 22.6 - 23.3). That section had been closed in April by the Game Commission due to nesting eagles. A bypass route was constructed last spring to avoid the closed section.

Beaver Activity in Elk Neck State Forest: Beaver activity has caused a difficult stream crossing on the M-DT in Elk Neck State Forest, Maryland: Map 8 (West to East - Mile 5.9). A detour route, about 300 yards long, has been cleared and flagged to avoid the crossing. Watch for blue ribbons marking the detour which is on the east side of the current route and starts about 30 yards before the beaver dam.

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 20, 2000 MEMBER'S MEETING

The meeting was held at Elk Neck State Forest following the work party. Members present were: vice president Pat Wolf, who conducted the meeting in the absence of the president, vice president Jim Denny, secretary Yvonne Blades, treasurer Mary Bleecker, and Turner Darden, Ron Gray, Ruth Galantino, Tim Schmidt, Rick Maerker, Ken Trimble, and Bob Bennett. M-DTS members, Ted Sanderson and Anthony Belfiglio joined us for the work party.

The minutes of the April 30 member's meeting were approved as circulated.

Treasurer's Report

Mary Bleecker presented the following treasurer's report which covers the period from April 30 to August 18, 2000.

Income		Expenses	
Membership renewals	\$160.00	July Newsletter printing	73.90
New members	77.00	Purchase of 200 M-DT patches	370.00
Sale of M-DT maps	202.00	Trail maintenance supplies	31.20
Sale of patches	51.30	Bad check and fee	17.00
Interest	2.77		\$492.10
	\$493.07		

Balance as of April 30, 2000	\$1900.28
Income minus expenses 4/30-8/18	0.97
Balance in checking account as of 8/18/00	\$1901.25

The secretary presented a list of those in arrears with their 2000 dues after a dues notice with the February newsletter and a "final notice" with the May newsletter. The removal of 22 names from the membership rolls was approved. Membership now stands at 171.

Election of Officers

Rick Maerker, chairman of the nominating committee, presented the results of the mail-in ballot for officers of M-DTS. Thirty-three ballots were received. The following were elected to serve for the term from January 1, 2001 to December 30, 2003.

President	Jim Hooper
Vice President	Jim Denny
Secretary	Yvonne Blades
Treasurer	Mary Bleecker
Director - PA	Tim Schmidt
Director - MD	Tony Belfiglio
Director - DE	Bob Bennett

Trail Reports

Eastern Section - Eastern terminus at Chadds Ford to Perryville

Coordinator: Rick Maerker

- Rick Maerker has reblazed 10 miles of the M-DT from the eastern terminus west to the HB Dupont Middle School.
- Bob Bennett recommends a relocation of the M-DT in Newark away from Christina Creek, north of Rt 273. The trail there passed through private property that was deeded public access however some of the landowners were uncooperative and trail maintenance became a problem. The proposed relocation

will follow Country Club Road, cross Rt 896, then go down to White Clay Creek. It will rejoin the existing trail in White Clay Creek State Park.

- A short section of the M-DT along Christina Creek south of Church Road was closed by Newark Public Works Department for 2 to 3 weeks in July for a gabion project to stabilize the stream bank.
- At today's work party in Elk Neck State Forest, 0.3 miles of eroded trail was relocated. See separate account.
- On July 29th, a hiker reported that he could not access the M-DT westbound at Red Toad Road near North East, MD (Map 7: East to West, Mile 3.7). A home was being constructed next to the telephone cable right of way which the trail follows. The home owner is using the right of way for his driveway and said he allows no trespassing on his land. M-DTS has used this ROW since the trail was first completed in 1983. Verbal approval was given at that time by a person at the telephone company. The trail follows the ROW for 3 miles, between Red Toad Rd and Belvedere Rd; there is no easy way to access the trail between these two points. A notice about the trail interruption will be placed on the M-DT website.

Central Section - Havre de Grace to Lock 12 Coordinator: Pat Wolf

- At Havre de Grace, 65 tons of stone dust has been unloaded under the Rt 40 bridge to be placed on the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway/Mason-Dixon Trail along the old railroad bed heading north. LSHG hopes to hire someone with a "bobcat" to spread the stone.
- Ron Gray reports that the remaining side hill work on the trail relocation below Bald Hill has not yet been completed.

Western Section - Lock 12 to Western Terminus at Whisky Springs

Coordinator: Ron Gray

- Tim Schmidt replaced the missing step on the stairs climbing up from Mill Creek heading north to Holtwood. He reports that the trail is eroding near the power line towers and suggests it be rerouted.
- Ron Gray reports he received no information from the Game Commission regarding the trail closure near Oakland Run due to nesting eagles. He assumes the trail is now reopened.
- Ron Gray notes that the bridge across Sawmill Run near Otter Creek Campground becomes slippery when wet. He will cover the walkway with 1/2 inch square poultry wire to improve traction.

Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

Yvonne Blades, M-DTS representative on the LSHG steering committee, reports that a new Executive Director of LSHG has been hired to replace [REDACTED] who has resigned and is moving away. The LSHG office has moved from Roger's Tavern in Perryville to the Conowingo Visitor Center. Several representatives of LSHG met with the president and vice president of Arundel Corporation about possible routes to bypass the quarry. They reported the Arundel team was very supportive. Initiatives discussed included: a water taxi, a trail around the perimeter of the quarry property (community input desirable), removal of the rocks on the M-DT route up to the firing range and construction of a switchback trail up the steep slope, and a trail to an overlook into the quarry.

Other Business

Next Meeting: The next members meeting and work party will be held on Sunday, November 19th at White Clay Creek State Park near Newark, Delaware.

Successful Trail Relocation Project in Elk Neck State Forest

Our August 20th work party consisted of 12 M-DTS members plus [redacted] Outdoor Adventure Coordinator, Maryland State Parks, [redacted] Crew Chief/Supervisor, Maryland Conservation Corp (based at Elk Neck State Forest), and [redacted], a founder of the new Elk Neck Trail that connects the M-DT to Turkey Point. [redacted] had approved the proposed relocation and volunteered to join us and use the opportunity as a trail construction workshop. The section of M-DT to be relocated was on an old hunter access trail that had become badly eroded, especially on the down slope. On the level section, the relocation followed game trails; some branch cutting was required, removal of deadfall, the blueberry bushes were cut back with a brush cutter, then [redacted] followed behind with a leaf blower which made the new route instantly recognizable as a trail! Mary and Turner added the blue and white blazes. On the down slope, the relocation followed higher ground next to the gully created by the old trail. [redacted] pointed out a young oak tree that was dying due to gypsy moth infestation. It was cut down and used to make 4 water bars which were strategically placed on the new trail. The old route was completely obliterated by covering it with brush, deadfall and leaves (again the leaf blower was useful). [redacted] covered up the old blazes with Ron's "blaze-obliterator" paint.

[redacted] does not approve of the log bridges we use on the M-DT in Elk Neck State Forest. [redacted] of the MD Conservation Corp is interested in a bridge building project for her crew. We hope she can obtain the necessary permits and carry out this project to replace our "rustic" bridges.

* * * * *

Susquehanna River Sojourn - 2000

Editor's Note: M-DTS Vice President, Jim Denny, took part in this annual event in June. I asked him to write about his experiences.

On Sunday morning, June 18, approximately 240 river sojourners set out in 140 canoes and kayaks from Fort Hunter Park just north of Harrisburg, PA. Their destination: Havre de Grace, MD. Eighty river miles and 6 days later, the group reached their destination, ahoying wharfside at this top-of-the-bay town in time for lunch courtesy of the mayor, members of the city council and Starrk Moon Kayaks.

The group included both young and old, experienced and inexperienced paddlers, a number of veterans of earlier sojourns, with tandem and solo paddlers in a wild assortment of craft. About 60 percent of the craft were canoes and 40 percent kayaks. Some were many thousand dollar handcrafted wooden boats. Others were the most basic Grumman aluminum or home-made boats. The two most unusual were a 12-person war canoe that could out-paddle any tandem canoe or kayak and a dug-out style log canoe that had been handcrafted using traditional techniques by staff and volunteers of the Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology. This most primitive of craft weighed over 800 pounds; it was a daunting task that required many strong backs to accomplish the put-ins and take-outs.

Along the way, the group was treated to more than fifty percent of its meals by volunteer groups, including a local Methodist church, Pennsylvania DER, Maryland DNR and the two power companies, PP&L and PECO. Most evenings included a program that was either environmental, historical, musical or a combination of these. At two dams, the group received extended VIP tours of the hydroelectric works. A special treat was a noonday ceremonial program at the Indian Steps Museum in York County put on by Susquehannock and Leni Lenape Indians, along with the showing of a collection of historical artifacts that had been found locally. Another afternoon there was an environmental walk with interpretation along a stretch of the Mason-Dixon Trail. Some of the folks heard about the M-DT with its famous blue blazes for the first time.

A necessary feat along this stretch of the Susquehanna is to get around the four major hydroelectric dams: York Haven, Safe Harbor, Holtwood and Conowingo. All are familiar river landmarks to veteran hikers of the Mason-Dixon Trail. The group received portaging assistance from the power companies around the dams. Executing a proper takeout above the dams is important in that the current picks up as you approach the dams.

There was much to see and hear along the way. On the rough side, the group experienced a brutal noon-day sun, occasional strong headwinds or cross-winds, dead carp, descending and screeching jet aircraft, wild-man jet-skiers and a caliginous flotsam of natural flora and fauna, as well as the river-borne detritus of all levels of human society and activity,

On the softer side, the bird life, fluttering dragonflies and butterflies, the blooming water lilies, loads of late spring and early summer wild-flowers along the bank, the fresh natural smells, the cooling breeze and the steady, rhythmic dip of paddles in and out of the water made the sojourn a delightful sensory experience.

Susquehanna Sojourn 2000 is the tenth sojourn put on by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. Earlier sojourns have been run on the East and West Branches of the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania and also in New York State. This is the first time the Sojourn has been run on the final stretch of the Susquehanna all the way to the Chesapeake. Look for Susquehanna Sojourn 2001 sometime in June of next year.

**Preserving Nature's Heritage:
33rd Biennial Appalachian Trail Conference, July 13-20, 2001
at Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania**

Hiking and backpacking trips of various challenges will be led on the A.T. in southern and central PA and MD, and popular local trails will also be included. Numerous excursions are planned along with biking, canoeing, horseback riding opportunities. A variety of workshops will be held.

Registration information will be available in the March issue of the ATN, and on the AT and KTA Web sites.

MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM, Inc.

Yvonne Blades
[REDACTED]



R. Ronald Gray
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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