

Trail's End Nightmare Part 2

IT AIN'T OVER TILL IT'S OVER

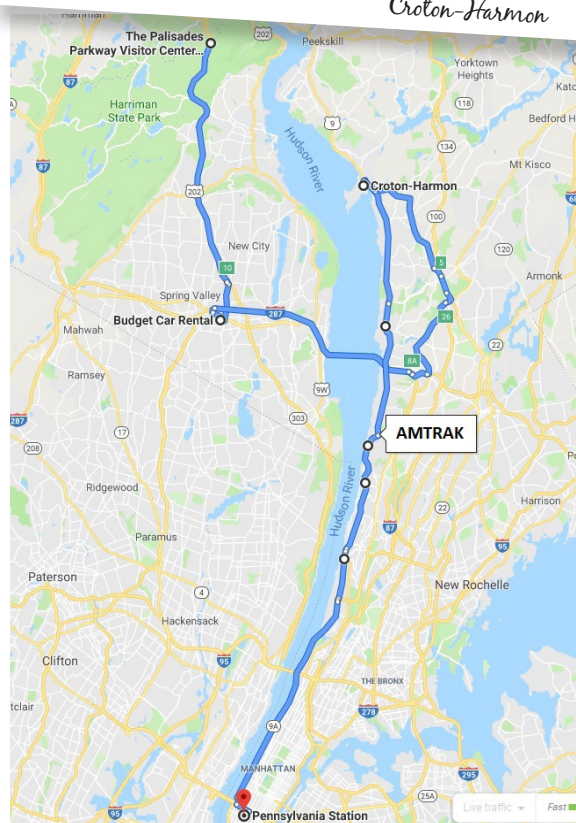
Budget Rent A Car...here he comes. Mike's in line, talking to the man behind him, regaling him with his incredible misadventures and mistreatment. Now it's his turn. "Reservation?" the woman asks. Of course. Then, "Credit card?" So Mike hands her his debit card. The very same card he reserved and paid for his Budget rental car on the way up to his backpacking adventure. "Oh sir we don't take debit cards." What?!! So Mike urges her to just put his card in the machine. Mind you, debit cards can be run as credit cards so this makes no sense. What she does next is totally inappropriate to anyone in a service profession. She immediately ignores Mike and hollers "Next!" over his head as he sits there trying to work this out. She continues to talk over him to the next guy. Finally, Mike gets up from the chair and staggers outside. His ride home is gone. How did he come so far to have his arrangements thwarted? He is in the depth of despair. What in the world is he going to do now?

Hopeless. Tired. No food all day. Miserable. No shower, hungry, no energy, no plan. There it is. Mike has hit rock bottom. This excellent adventure in AT backpacking has dumped him right here. He has been treated like he's invisible. Like he no longer exists. A non-human. What next?

Fortunately, he has packed a portable charger to power up his dying cellphone. So he calls his wife, which he is loathe to do because she immediately offers to drive 3 ½ hours up to him. No way does he want to inconvenience her so. How about getting him an Amtrak ticket online? She does that and says that the ticket will be waiting for him at the station back in Connecticut. Connecticut? Whoa...gotta get another Uber to take him all the way back up there...a nice \$60 expense. The driver arrives. Mike gets in, stinking and smelling so he tells his story all over again. "Train leaves at 3:30. Can we make it?" Mike asks. "Sure!" says the driver. But as he whips back up the freeway, he missed his exit. Mike freaks out! What more can go wrong? From the driver, expletives abound! Then he whips around at the next exit and says: "Don't worry, we'll make it!" *continued on page 2*



Croton-Harmon



Mason-Dixon Trail Quarterly Hike and Meeting

Sunday, November 10, 2019 See the back cover for more details

Trail's End Nightmare Part 2 *continued*

At 3:25 Mike arrives at the station only to find there is no ticket waiting. What?! Uh,,, check your email on your phone, Mike. With what little charge is left on his phone...there it is! He is instructed to go to the platform. It's like a ghost town...only one other person is there. The Amtrak arrives and he approaches the door. It won't open. Huh? "All aboard!" hollers the lady up front. She starts to go back in and close the door but Mike sprints up to her. She eyeballs him and says: "Do you got a ticket? You shoulda been standing on the right spot. Not all the doors open." Geez. Mike sits down with relief in a pool of happiness. He is on his way home.

So far so good, right? Well, there's a one hour layover at Penn Station in NYC. Fine but there are hoards of people here. Various trains. Various platforms. A narrow one-person escalator leading to each individual platform. But you don't know til the last minute which platform to run to for your train til it arrives at the station. So you are poised for action with the multitude. Finally, his train

arrives. The ocean of humanity plunges into the escalator. Mike feels the swarm all around, reaching, touching, jostling his backpack, going for his wallet and cellphone. He has a hand on each as they are shoved like cattle into the train.

Aboard the train...it is crowded. In fact, it is announced that this ride is completely full and all luggage must be stowed in the bins above. So since Mike snagged himself two empty seats, he picks up the backpack he had put on the adjoining seat and places it in the bin. Now people are trickling by, glancing at him, all hairy disheveled odiferous weeklong woodsy wanderer that he was...and passing on by. So Mike sits by himself. Fine by him. But by now he is cold. He dons everything he has to wear including his rain jacket.

Aberdeen station! His wife pulls up. Ahhh...the nightmare is over. Our weary hiker takes off his pack. Thirst consumes him. No matter...every prepared hiker has his water bottles at the ready. But...

both water bottles are gone! Out of his pack! Out! Out like a fat kid in dodgeball! Well sh--. They stole them from him in NYC. What. The. Frig. This is the final insult.

"Honey, you really look rough. Like you're homeless!" Ok I lied. This is really the final insult. Such is the loving greeting from Mike's wife.

Well, gentle reader, that would almost be the end. But two days later, Mike was driving around and he spots a woman on the side of the road. She has a sign: "Homeless. Need to feed kids." There it is, he just can't blithely blast past. So he rolls the window down and hands her \$5. He looks at her and says, "You have a great day!"



Penn Station

President's Message

On Saturday, September 7, I was one of the volunteers near the finish line of the Keystone Trails Association 25/50K Trail Challenge. I heard nothing but praise for the excellent condition of the Mason-Dixon Trail. The praise came from participants as well as other volunteers, who had been on the trail during the event. I wanted to pass on this praise and thanks to all the volunteers who worked on clearing and improving the trail during the summer in preparation for this event. The other comment I heard several times was from people who had never been on the M-DT

before. They couldn't believe that such a beautiful trail was nearby and they didn't know about it.

TREASURER STILL NEEDED!

We've made progress on simplifying the Treasurer's duties. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, the Treasurer is no longer responsible mailing the maps that are purchased by check or through the website. Starting October 1, the Treasurer was also no longer responsible for maintaining the membership list or recording the cumulative dues for each member.

However, we still need a Treasurer, whose main responsibility is to record income and expenses on the M-DTS Balance Sheet, currently a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. We're open to converting to a basic bookkeeping software package if the volunteer would prefer. For simplicity, we'd prefer a single entry bookkeeping system (similar to a personal check book register) rather than a double-entry one.

If you interested in helping to support the trail, consider volunteering to become the M-DTS Treasurer. For more information about these duties, please contact me at president@mason-dixontrail.com.

Trail Maintenance Highlights

|| July – September 2019

WESTERN SECTION

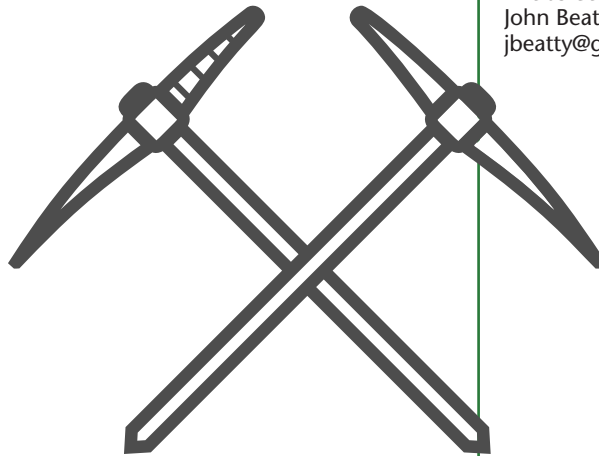
- The Thursday Work Crew along with some of the section maintainers contributed over 160 hours of labor, chain sawing, weed whacking and lopping, to clear the trail from Peavine Island to the Otter Creek Gorge. The excellent condition of the trail was appreciated by the organizers and participants in the KTA Trail Challenge.
- The Thursday Work Crew also spent a few days clearing the trail in Pinchot State Park from Squire Gratz Road to the campground.
- A few dedicated section maintainers spent several hours clearing the trail in Hellam Hills as well as the off road sections between Wrightsville and Shanks Mare.

CENTRAL SECTION

- Work completed throughout the summer includes:
 - Weed whacking from Fisherman's Park in Conowingo to the Pennsylvania Line.
 - Cut blowdowns on the Lock 15 re-located section
 - Installed new ladder rungs on a rock face along Lock 15
 - Replaced missing ladder rungs at Peavine Island
 - Cleared log jam at Peavine Island
 - Weed whacked and trimmed between Lock 15 and Lock 13
 - Re-Blazed Lock 15 to Lock 13
- Trail conditions between Susquehanna State Park and the Wrightsville, PA are currently exceptionally well groomed. It's a great time to get out there to see the changing Fall foliage along the river.

EASTERN SECTION

- The M-DTS is fortunate to have three new volunteer trail maintainers in the eastern section. Sections of trail that run through Elk Neck State Forest, Maryland, will have added help on the east side from David Judd and on the west side by Geoffrey and Cheryl Yost. They already have put in a number of hours of trail trimming work and have ideas on additional improvements. Ethan Whittaker and his wife Alyssa have volunteered to be the section maintainers for the part of the trail south of Newark, Delaware that includes Iron Hill County Park. They have already made some improvements to routing through the park that eliminates some confusing areas where the old trail was blocked and new trail ran parallel. Some minor trail re-routes will need to be made over the winter, including routing to accommodate some road changes in the North East, Maryland area.



MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

President

Tim Schmidt
1803 Orwig Rd., New Freedom, PA 17349
(717) 235-5940
president@mason-dixontrail.org

Vice President

Volunteer Needed
vicepresident@mason-dixontrail.org

Secretaries

Ruthie Franczek & Linda Lambert
secretary@mason-dixontrail.org

Treasurer

Volunteer Needed
treasurer@mason-dixontrail.org

Director - Pennsylvania

Jim Hooper
padirector@mason-dixontrail.org

Director - Maryland

Mike Hall
mddirector@mason-dixontrail.org

Director - Delaware

Mike Ott
dedirector@mason-dixontrail.org

Trail Coordinator – Western Section

Roxanne Strine
westerncoordinator@mason-dixontrail.org

Trail Coordinator – Central Section

Mike Hall
centralcoordinator@mason-dixontrail.org

Trail Coordinator – Eastern Section

Pete McLaughlin
easterncoordinator@mason-dixontrail.org

Newsletter

Tony Nardi
newsletter@mason-dixontrail.org

Website Coordinator

John Beatty
jbeatty@gmail.com

MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM

Tim Schmidt
1803 Orwig Road
New Freedom, PA 17349

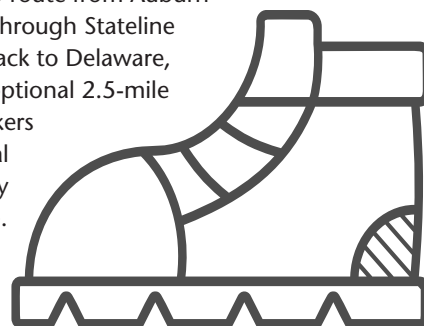
M-DT Quarterly Hike and Meeting

Sunday, November 10, 2019

Hike: 9:00 am

Meeting: 1:00 pm

The next quarterly M-DTS hike & meeting will be on Sunday, November 10. The meeting will be at 1 pm in the Hockessin Library, 1023 Valley Rd, Hockessin, DE 19707. A pre-meeting hike will begin at 9:00 am at Auburn Valley State Park. Parking is at the park's Paper Mill Parking Lot, 698 Bengel Rd, Hockessin, DE 19707, near the park office (two nearby lots are available for overflow on Yorklyn Road and Farm Lane). The main hike will be an approximately 4 mile lollipop route from Auburn Valley State Park in Delaware, looping through Stateline Woods Preserve in Pennsylvania, and back to Delaware, mostly on the M-DT. There will be an optional 2.5-mile add-on after the main hike for faster hikers desiring more distance to view potential future M-DTS re-routes in Auburn Valley State Park and Marshall Bridge Preserve. Bring snacks/lunch and water.



The M-DTS Newsletter is published about four weeks in advance of each of the four M-DTS board meetings held annually. Submissions are welcomed.

The Mason-Dixon Trail System, Inc. is a non-profit 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 199-mile Mason-Dixon Trail which passes through historic and scenic areas of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

New members are welcome. To join, send \$20 (which covers initial membership as well as the M-DT maps) to:

Mason-Dixon Trail System, Tim Schmidt, 1803 Orwig Road, New Freedom, PA 17349

Thereafter, the annual fee is \$7. Life membership is available for \$250.

Visit the Mason-Dixon Trail web site at: www.mason-dixontrail.org

Visit the Mason-Dixon Trail Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/theMDTS