



# Signals

News and notes from the  
Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association  
Highland, NY 12528  
[www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net](http://www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net)

Volume 9 Number 3

WINTER 2012-2013

## Fun-Filled WinterFest Is Here Again

by Donna Deeprise

Neither rain nor snow nor scorching sunshine can derail WinterFest, the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association's annual festival, to be held this year on Saturday, January 12, 11 am - 2 pm at the depot and parking lot along the Rail Trail on New Paltz Road. But this year's event concedes to climate change with one modification to previous programs. No more lovely ice sculptures melting away under the sun. Instead, WinterFest 2013 will feature a chain saw wood carver whose sturdy artwork will withstand whatever the fickle weather brings.

Other than that, all the good food, fun, and activities we come to expect and love will fill another winter afternoon along the Rail Trail. Some 20 regional eateries will bring their best batches of chili to the annual chili contest, where Highland Rotarians and other volunteers from the community will dish out

tasting cups to hungry voters. Both River Station of Poughkeepsie, which won last year, and Wagon Wheel Deli of Highland, which won first for vegetarian chili and holds the record for number of wins over the years, will be there to uphold their ascendancy against all challengers. There are bound to be some interesting new recipes and flavors to tantalize every taste bud and – who knows? – delight the voters.

While chili and WinterFest are practically synonymous, there will be other food available. Hot dogs, chips, coffee and hot chocolate will all be available. And a fire will burn brightly toasting marshmallows and roasting chestnuts.

Of course, WinterFest is not just about food (which might come to a surprise to the chili aficionados who appear every year to eat up and vote for their

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*Volunteers Dishing out Chili Tastings Last Year*

## President's Message

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association has accomplished a great deal during 2012:

- ❑ We recently received outstanding news from NYSDOT regarding the westward expansion of the trail. We will now terminate the trail near the intersection of New Paltz Road and Route 299 at a location where we will have an attractive trailhead and parking area.
- ❑ A much needed coat of paint has added to the appeal of the Caboose at 75 Haviland Road near Walkway. I constantly see people taking photos with it as a backdrop.
- ❑ The plantings and river rock along Haviland Road have made the entrances more inviting.
- ❑ Our maintenance volunteers continue to keep our planting areas at Commercial Avenue Extension, Route 9W Kiosk, 101 New Paltz Road and the parking area perimeter at 75 Haviland Road in great shape for Rail Trail visitors to enjoy.
- ❑ Five additional Corinthian granite benches have been added along the trail giving visitors more opportunities to pause to rest and reflect on the surroundings.
- ❑ The parking area at 101 New Paltz Road got a graded sub-base and is mostly paved including four handicap parking spaces (see article on p.5). The new parking area just south of the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Pavilion can accommodate overflow parking thanks to Robert LaMark Paving, Rich Klotz, Town of Lloyd Highway Department, and the Highland Rotary Club.

It continues to be true, when people come together, anything is possible. We truly appreciate everyone who volunteers for the improvement of the trail and its amenities.

Lastly, we regret that Cindy Mohr is leaving our board. She was a great asset.

*See you on the trail—*

*Claire*

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

## WINTERFEST (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

favorites). DuBois Farms of Highland will provide tractor-pulled wagon rides along the trail – always a crowd-favorite.

Under a weather-protecting children's tent, Lowe's Store will again sponsor its kid-pleasing activity table, where busy little builders can wield tools to fit small hands and make their own souvenirs of WinterFest. Sheldon Stoeve, a candlemaker will provide the materials and instruction for anyone to try their skills at candle making and take home a hand-made memento. The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association's own Caboose Store will sell train-themed toys, books, and other souvenirs.

Entrance to WinterFest will be \$2, with children 6 years of age and under free. Chili will cost 50 cents per taste or \$8 to try them all. ♦



## Signals

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

*Editor: Rafael Díaz*

### HVRTA BOARD MEMBERS:

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## Acknowledgements

*We would not be the attractive trail that we are if it were not for our volunteers. We are indebted to them:*

**Our officers and board members** organize our events and programs and meet other needs. It is a very active board.

**Trail maintenance is critical** in all seasons, with plantings and amenities in need of constant care. Our maintenance mavens include Jane and Ed Bowen, Richard Hall, Dorrine Merrill and Cathy Muller.

**Then there is Ray Costantino**, co-founder of the Rail Trail and former president. He pitches in everywhere.

**An example of Ray's work** was with the sub-base preparation at the 101 New Paltz lots He gathered an army of volunteers: Paul Costantino & Tom Marion as machine operators; machinery loan from Rich Klotz, Highway Superintendent; Dave Roehrs of Roehrs Const.- loan of a roller; Chris Larkin, Nieco Container Corp--loan of D4 dozer.

## A MoonWalk Thank-You

The event on September 28 was a success despite damp weather. Thank-you's to Highland High School Teacher, Krista Petrosoff, and her English 9 and Theater students, who added a Ghost Walk to our regular entertainment. They researched individuals from Highland's early years, wrote historical to semi-historical accounts of their lives. Their spooky effect was enhanced by being on a dark trail with only their faces illuminated by a single light.

Also from the High School, we had assistance from the Rotary Interact Club. They helped in various tasks.

Jonathan Heiles, a professional storyteller, once again volunteered his services after the Ghost Walk. Matt Smith donated the hay bales for seating.

Those attending enjoyed cider donated by the Doubrava family of Minard Farms, Clintondale, and donuts donated by Dunkin Donuts of Highland.

## Rail Trail Board Meetings

You are invited to our monthly board meetings where we go over projects, maintenance and issues involving the Rail Trail.

We meet the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7PM at Town Hall unless otherwise indicated. We hold no meetings February thru April. Email rebena1@aol.com for info.

## Rail Trail Events In 2013

### WinterFest-January 12, 11AM-2PM.

Chili cook-off by various restaurants, chain-saw carving demonstration, roasted chestnuts and toasted marshmallows. Hay rides on the trail, kids activities. 101 New Paltz Road.

### Learn to Run Program starts April 13

**at 9:00AM:** Join this program that will make a runner of you in 10 weeks. Lessons start from the Pavilion at 101 New Paltz Road.

### Hudson Valley Rail Trail Wounded Warriors 4-Mile Race/Walk, May 19:

Starts at 75 Haviland Road. Benefits Wounded Warriors and Rail Trail Association. Active.com

### Annual Membership Breakfast Meeting June 1, 9AM.

Celebrate National Trail Day, hear about Rail Trail developments and elect directors. At depot at 101 New Paltz Road.

### MoonWalk October 11, 7:00-9:00PM:

Begins at 75 Haviland Road. Chance to walk Rail Trail at night. \$5 admission includes bonfire, refreshments, storyteller & local scary history by HHS drama class.

### Hudson Valley Rail Trail Gala - An Evening Under the Stars! October 12,

**starts at 6PM.** On the trail at 75 Haviland Road. Expanded cocktail reception with substantial *hors d'oeuvres* and dancing under the night sky and festively decorated tents. Black tie optional event, rain or star-shine.

### HudsonFest, October 13, 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.

### Move Your Caboose Fun Run/Walk, October 14.

A 4-mile fun event between cabooses. Begins and ends at Caboose at 75 Haviland Road near Walkway. Active.com

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# Trail Arch Planned For Walkway End

by Donna Deepröse

When I volunteered on Walkway last summer, the number one question visitors asked me was “Where does that go?” or perhaps “Does the Walkway keep going?” as they looked westward from the gate on the Highland side. So I would tell them about the Hudson Valley Rail Trail. Frequently I watched as they kept walking to explore it.

How many people kept walking? Well, one observer counted 250 during a two-hour period on a weekday, and another counted over 800 in a similar timespan on a weekend (*see article p.7*).

Now plans are afoot to make the answer to the visitors’ question dramatically obvious. In the summer of 2013, the Hudson River Rail Trail Association in partnership with the Herbert Litts family intends to erect a steel arch, soaring some 20 feet high, with the Rail Trail’s name on the curving span at the top. (*In the accompanying picture, which is an early artist’s rendition, the span is flat, but that will be changed.*) Not only will the arch name the trail, but it has two other important attributes, as described by Ray Costantino who is spearheading the project.

## What Arch Will Do

First, it will identify exactly where Walkway Over the Hudson State Park ends and our Rail Trail begins. Guess what? That’s not quite where we’ve all thought it was in the past couple of years. We thought the trail began where the wooden fence starts. But, in fact, the trailhead is closer to the bridge. The arch will rise next to the trailer that serves as the Park’s temporary headquarters. So it’s going to be more obvious to bridge walkers and more alluring.

Second, the structure itself will have historical RR significance. The two towers that will support the arched span are repurposed from an earlier existence in the very same

area. They started life as posts for the electricity transmission lines that ran along the old railroad bed from the bridge through Highland to Illinois Mountain. Forty-plus years ago Central Hudson took down all the steel supports and replaced them with wooden poles. The late Herbert Litts II, father of Lloyd Town Councilman Herbert Litts III, acquired the steel structures and stored them on his farm, where they have remained until now.

## Genesis of Gateway Arch

Looking for a way to differentiate the Rail Trail and the parking lot alongside it from the Walkway Park, the idea of an arch emerged. On behalf of the Rail Trail Association, Costantino asked Litts if he would donate two of the towers. Not only did Litts agree, he is also volunteering his engineering services. It’s going to be a family thing. His cousin, Ellis Meuser has offered to do the welding.

Costantino points out that the steel towers celebrate not only the historical aspect of the railroad bed and the bridge, but also the area’s



**Artist’s preliminary sketch of arch to mark where Walkway joins the Rail Trail. The gateway sign will likely be an arched span rather than a straight one.**

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industrial heritage. “Just look out the window as you ride Metro North,” he says. “You’ll see similar towers all along the track.”

To complete the span, Costantino is hoping to locate more used steel, stored away somewhere, just waiting to be repurposed into something beautiful. Contemplating the possibilities, he notes, “Floor or roof trusses from an old indus-

trial building could work.”

When this arch is all finished, the project may not be over. Now that approval has been granted to re-scope the rail trail plans and end the trail near Fire Station Number II on New Paltz Road, Costantino is already envisioning another arch there. “Wouldn’t it be nice,” he muses, “to have one at both ends of the trail.” ♦

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## Highland Rotary Adds More To The Trail

by Rafael Diaz

The Highland Rotary Club has been a big part of the Hudson Rail Trail since Day One. Not only was it Rotarians (*Ray Costantino, Everton Henriques, John Canino*) who in the late 1990s had the concept of a Rail Trail to run on the abandoned rail trail bed. They also founded the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Assoc. that manages it for the Town of Lloyd. The Rotary also continues to add amenities and features.

In past years the Highland Rotary financed, found donations and had built the exercise stations to the west of the Commercial Avenue trailhead. More recently the Rotary created the Pavilion at 101 New Paltz Road as a presidential project when Costantino was club president. Now that parking lot area has seen some additions and improvements.

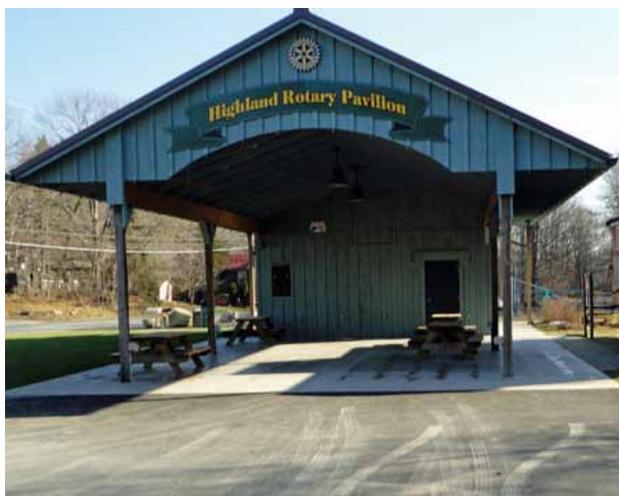
**First the parking lot itself, which has long needed paving.** The Rotary Club had set aside \$20,000 for paving several years ago that started as a presidential project under then-president Steve Laubach. As costs raised and grants could not be found

for this increase. Rotary decided to bid out a project to see how much of the parking lot they could get done. Through negotiations with Robert LaMark and reducing the total area to be paved (it was cut back to only pave the apron) Rotary was able to fund this project. LaMark also made a difference, contributing materials and labor over and beyond what was contracted.

Earlier, Rotarian Ray Costantino with a crew of helpers (*see thanks and acknowledgement on page 2*) donated their time and effort to spread the stockpile material at the Rail Trail Parking Lot to provide a strong sub-base for the final fine grade and paving.

**Next, Rotary has added a Rotary rock** (*see picture above*) to celebrate the close ties the Highland Rotary has with the Rail Trail. It is the presidential project of current Highland Rotary President Christine Giangrasso. The rock is at the foot of the parking lot flagpole. It displays the trademark Rotary wheel and the 4-Way Test, the ethical code of conduct followed by some 1.2 million Rotarians around the world. The plantings surrounding the Rotary rock were placed by Baker and Sons, who also prepared the concrete slab base for the rock.

In addition, the Highland Rotary in early 2013 will be repairing the number of the exercise station signs that were damaged by vandals several years ago. It has taken some time to locate funds and to arrange their replacement. ♦



**Paved Parking Lot in Front of Rotary Pavillion**

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# Learn-To-Run Class: Our Amazing Results

by Paul & Toni Banner

Our good friend, Cindy Mohr told us about a program in Highland, called the Learn to Run Program that would train us to run for 20 minutes. Prior to the program, we walked several 5K events and were interested in seeing if this would help us learn how to run. Especially since we always came in last at these events because most of the people were running or walking faster than us!

We tried getting into some running clubs but they seemed “professional” with people able to run sub 6 minute miles with all sorts of performance standards and competitive goals. We were left in the dust and it was uncomfortable. There were other programs that were limited in size and we got shut out.

We decided to join the Spring class on the Hudson Valley Rail Trail that started in April of 2012. This program in Highland was different. We liked that it offered the idea of beginning at an easy pace of repeated sets of running 1 minute and walking 2 minutes; it seemed doable. Our first experience with Rafael Diaz and Donna Deeprise, who run the program, was so delightful. They were welcoming, having fun, tapping toes and stretching. It was like being with good friends or being with a fun loving family. They knew what we needed, which gave us confidence to come each week and do the lessons.

We learned how to stretch before and after each session. It created a great habit of getting our body ready for our workout and cooling down when we are done. The key was to practice the week’s training so that by the following Saturday we were able to go to the next level of training

There was a pace for everyone in the class from slow to fast with no one feeling left behind. We were paced by past graduates who returned to assist Rafael and Donna as a payback for the help they got earlier in becoming runners. Some of these graduate assistants were at the head of the pack with those who were stronger; others were in the middle, and some, jogging at a slower pace, were at the rear encouraging the back of the pack. We loved the fact that there was no pressure to perform and we all could enjoy the nature and beauty of the Rail Trail setting.

We graduated in June 2012 with so much confidence in our new found running ability that we decided to register for the Atlantic City Half Marathon just six months away in mid-November. After reach-

ing our goal of running 20 minutes in the 10 week Rail Trail program, we continued training by increasing our running time every week. We became confident that we could go to 25 minutes, then 30 minutes, an hour etc. We programmed music for both of us for up to 3 hours so we could run to the beat and keep a good pace. In terms of miles covered we moved up from the 1.5+ miles in the Rail Trail running program to being able to run 10 miles, the week before the event! It was exhilarating; we felt like athletes.

## Running A Half Marathon!

What an amazing feeling and unforgettable accomplishment. We completed running our first Half Marathon (13.1 miles)! We also had the pleasure of running with our son Adam and his wife Kaitlin. What a great way to be with your loved ones doing something healthy and fun.

Think of it: from a modest start in April we were able to get to 13+ miles by November, something beyond our wildest dreams. Paul finished in 2:30 hours and Toni finished in 3:15 hours; both of us ran the entire event with no walking breaks. It was a beautiful morning and we were inspired. Over less than a year, we lost weight, felt great, changed our diet and sleep better at night. We will cherish the experience forever and are excited about inviting friends to the next Learn to Run class that begins April 13, 2013. ♦



**From Left: Paul, Toni, Kaitlin, Adam with their finisher medals for the Half-Marathon Race**

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# Stats On Users of the Rail Trail in Highland

by Claire Costantino

Ever wonder how many people are using the Rail Trail? In August of 2012, we decided to find out by participating in the Parks & Trails New York's 2012 NYS Trail User Count. Over four different days we did two hour counts. The results were overwhelming:

- ▶ **Wednesday August 15 from noon to 2 pm** the count was 134 rail trail walkers, 12 runners, 74 bicyclists, 6 bicyclists with child in seat or trailer, 4 users with carriages or strollers, and 6 inline skaters or skateboards for a total of 236 users.
- ▶ **Thursday August 16 from noon to 2 pm** came up with 228 walkers, 18 runners, 76 bicyclists, two bicyclists with child in seat or trailer, 2 tandem bicycles, 1 recumbent cycle, two tricycles, 11 users with carriages or strollers, 2 wheelchair users and one inline skater for a total of 343 users.
- ▶ **Tuesday August 21 from 4:30 to 6:30 pm** we counted 286 walkers, 31 runners, and 122 bicycles, 7 users with carriages or strollers, 2 unicycles, and 1 red wagon for a total of 448 users.
- ▶ **Sunday August 19 from noon to 2 pm** showed how popular the Rail Trail is on weekends. We counted 535 walkers, 9 runners, 255 bicyclists, 3

bicyclists with child in seat or trailer, 1 recumbent cycle, 14 users with baby carriage or strollers and 14 inline skaters or skateboarders for a total of 831 users.

During the four count periods, we documented 1,858 rail trail users. The counts were performed at the 75 Haviland Road entrance to the trail to include those entering the Rail Trail at this location and those coming from other remote parking areas.

Approximately 60% of the users used the Rail Trail to access Walkway. Approximate 40% of the users accessed the Hudson Valley Rail Trail or were already on the trail coming from other locations. That equates to 232 users each hour with 40% or 93 users accessing or using the Hudson Valley Rail Trail to walk, jog, run, cycle, in line skate or to bring young children or physically challenged individuals to enjoy our trail.

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association finds it truly gratifying that so many individuals from all walks of life are using the Hudson Valley Rail Trail for an outdoor recreational experience. As a community, we should all be very proud that this unique venue exists in our backyard. ♦

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## 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](http://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

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# Signals



*...from the Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association*

**Don't miss!**  
**WinterFest 2013**  
**on the**  
**Hudson Valley Rail Trail**

Hudson Valley Rail Trail Depot  
101 New Paltz Road  
January 12, 2013 from 11am to 2pm

[www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net](http://www.hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net)

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Highland, New York 12528

Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association, Inc.  
12 Church Street

**Signals**

