



# Signals

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

Volume 10 Number 1

SPRING 2013

## May 19 Race/Walk To Benefit Rail Trail And STRIDE Wounded Warriors

by Donna Deepröse

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association is partnering with STRIDE Wounded Warriors to sponsor a 4-mile race and 2-mile fun walk on the trail Sunday, May 19. The course starts at 75 Haviland Road, next to Walkway, and flows west into Highland in the Town of Lloyd. Registration starts at 7:30 am, and the run begins at 9.

**Proceeds from the race will be divided equally between HVRTA and STRIDE,** which is one of the leading adaptive sport programs in the US. It has offered adaptive sport and recreation opportunities to children with special needs since 1985. Recently STRIDE has

joined with Wounded Warriors Project, to provide sports opportunities to injured soldiers and marines returning home from battle.

**The 4-mile running race will be timed.** It goes roughly from the Rail Trail Caboose near Walkway to the Caboose near the Rotary Pavilion and back. For competitive runners and those who just like to stretch their legs and feel the breeze, the four-mile event is a comfortable distance with enough challenge to be interesting. Prizes will be awarded in various age brackets from 12 and under to 76 and over. A trophy will go to the school with the most entrants. Water stations and other support are being provided.

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## President's Message

As we look forward to the celebration of National Trails Day and our Annual Meeting on Saturday June 1, I can't help but reflect on our Rail Trail's history.

It is difficult to believe that the concept of converting the abandoned railroad bed into a rail trail first surfaced 17 years ago. We were so excited when we were able to pave a 2.5 mile section of the trail from Commercial Avenue to Tony Williams Park and looked eagerly to expanding the trail in both directions.

Well that took a little longer than we originally anticipated. It was not until October 2010 that the 1-mile section from Commercial Avenue to Walkway Over the Hudson was complete. It was a very challenging section. We had to tunnel under Mile Hill Road, go under the Route 9W Bridge and replace the long-ago removed railroad trestle over Vineyard Avenue to re-connect the rail corridor.

The 2012 Trail User Count proves that it was well worth the effort. It is calculated that there are approximately 670,000 annual Hudson Valley Rail Trail users. Amazing!

We are now working diligently to construct the Rail Trail from its current terminus at Tony Williams Park on Riverside Road to a new terminus on New Paltz Road near its intersection with Route 299. This is also a challenging section of the trail as we will need to tunnel under Riverside Road in order to provide safe passage for walkers, runners and cyclists as they continue their journey westward.

We are so very fortunate to have this venue to keep us active and healthy while enjoying the joys of nature, solitude and inspiration that our rail trail brings.

*Hope you find time to enjoy the trail—*

*Claire*

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

## WOUNDED WARRIORS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

For walkers, the 2-mile stretch is very doable. It covers half the territory of the running race along a tree-lined and rock canyon part of the trail. This walk will not be timed. Besides helping a worthy cause, it offers an opportunity to join with friends or make new ones while enjoying the spring air and fresh greenery.

The entry fee is \$25 for pre-race registrants and \$30 on the day of the race. T-shirts are guaranteed for the first 200 pre-registered entrants. There will be post-race refreshments for everyone and door prizes for the lucky.

To register online, go to <http://hudsonvalleyrailtrail.net>. On its opening page is a link to more information on the event and registration process. **Registration forms can also be found throughout the town.** ♦



## Signals

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

Editor: Rafael Díaz

### HVRTA BOARD MEMBERS:

*President*

Claire Costantino

*Vice President*

Eric Norberg

*Treasurer*

Marie Sidgwick

*Recording Secretary*

Loretta Miller

*Corresponding Secretary*

Susan Van De Bogart

Linda Auchmoody

Barbara Butler

Rafael Díaz

Lauriann Marion

Barbara Ritshie

Wendy Rosinski

## Annual Membership Meeting Is On June 1

Our Annual Membership Meeting is coming up on Saturday June 1 with a different twist. Instead of holding this meeting where the Rail Trail crosses over Black Creek, we are moving the venue to the Rotary Pavilion at 101 New Paltz Road.

**This new venue makes it easier to deal with fickle weather and simplifies logistics.** Last year, for example, rain forced us to make a hasty move to be under cover at Tony Williams Park, which required some logistical shifting around.

We also had to each year haul tables and chairs out to the Black Creek Crossing. At the Pavilion, we already have four picnic tables as well as an ample supply of folding tables inside the Depot building; all we need do is rent some chairs. Restrooms are right there as is electricity if needed instead of having to run a generator.

As always this is **a great opportunity for members to mingle to enjoy breakfast on the trail.** It after all is also National Trail Day. We hope to have a post-meeting, nature walk led by naturalists who will help identify features of the trail.

The business part of the meeting is for you to **vote on board members** who are either seeking re-election for 3-year terms (*Lauriann Marion, Marie Sidgwick, and Susan Van De Bogart*) or were appointed since the last annual meeting and are now seeking 3-year terms (*Barbara Butler and Wendy Rosinski*).

Also, as part of the business meeting, we will give reports on our various programs and events. And, **we will be discussing future plans for the Rail Trail.** Please feel free to bring up your concerns and ideas. ♦

## Rail Trail Board Meetings

You are invited to attend our monthly board meetings in which we go over projects, maintenance and other concerns involving the Rail Trail.

We meet the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7PM at Town Hall unless otherwise indicated. Email [rebena1@aol.com](mailto:rebena1@aol.com) for info.

## Rail Trail Events In 2013

**Hudson Valley Rail Trail Wounded Warriors 4-Mile Race/2-Mile Walk, May 19, 9AM:** Starts at 75 Haviland Road. Benefits Wounded Warriors and Rail Trail Association.

**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 101 New Paltz 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](http://Active.com)

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**WinterFest, February 8, 2014, 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.

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# Ever Wonder About This Old Bridge?

by Rafael Díaz

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail has many remains that point to its former life as a busy railroad link for commerce and passengers. A walk along the trail reveals several surviving signal towers and remnants of steel and concrete that supported other structures. And, if you look carefully before grasses cover them, you can spot sections of rail that were cast aside when the trail was built. But one artifact that is hard to figure out, unless you know its purpose, is the bridge to nowhere that straddles the trail just a few hundred yards west of the Pavilion.

It's a steel girder bridge with a wooden plank deck that crosses high above the rock cut that

was blasted out for the railroad. What it leads to are extensive farmlands that once thrived toward the base of Illinois Mountain. At one time, farmers crossed to these fields from New Paltz Road via an at-grade crossing a bit west of the bridge's location. Unfortunately, unlike other similar farm-related, at-grade crossings to the east of the Pavilion, this one was at a blind spot where the railroad made a gradual 90 degree turn in direction (you can see this on our trail map).

Given the location, there were some accidents or close-calls. So the railroad built the bridge. An agreement was made for other farmers to use it as well to avoid the other crossings.

*(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)*



*Farmer's Bridge Over Present Day Rail Trail*



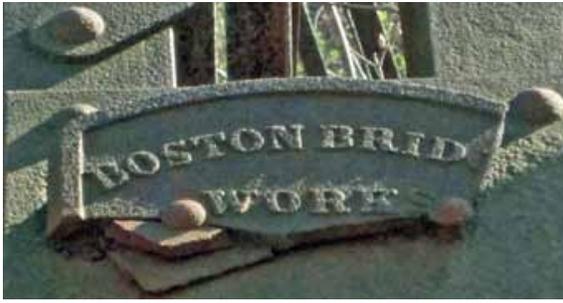
*Bridge As Viewed From Approach Road*



*Remains of Approach Road To The Bridge*



*The At-Grade Crossing The Bridge Eliminated*



A plaque on one end of the bridge indicates that it was built by Boston Bridge Works (the “ge” on the word bridge has fallen off). There is no evidence of what year it was built.

A trace of a wide approach road can still be seen as it meanders up to the bridge from New Paltz Road. The road had to climb some 30 feet to get to the top of the rock cut. But once it crosses the bridge it levels off as the land is at a higher elevation than New Paltz Road.

An invitation: As you go along the rail trail and spot something you think may date back to its railroad days, let us know. I am always discovering things. The best time to look is between late Fall and early Spring: no foliage and crystal clear blue skies. ♦

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## Story Behind Caboose & A Peek Inside

by Rafael Díaz

Whenever any of us who has a key to the Rail Trail Depot spots a family with kids hanging around the Caboose at this location or climbing its stairs, we ask a parent if they would like to see the inside. The



### 1915 Caboose At Rotary Pavilion

answer is never a “no” or “never mind.” It is always an enthusiastic “yes” with a look of delight on the children’s faces as they scamper up to the door and anxiously await our opening it up.

Even in this day of iPods and a wide world of images that flow from the Internet, there is nothing like the hands on experience of a railroad artifact up close. While a thing of the past, cabooses live on in children’s books and toys.

When we go inside, we highlight a few things. What most fascinates kids are the two bunks in the caboose’s cupola area. Even tots try to climb up. We also point out the area that has a brick floor where a wood stove once stood to warm railroad crews.

This caboose has an historical significance. It is one of a series first built in 1915 that has a steel body.

This type replaced wooden cabooses, which were not as sturdy and prone to fires. At some point, this particular caboose likely rolled along the tracks, on what is now the Rail Trail, before a fire on the Hudson River Bridge in 1974 ceased rail traffic.

This caboose had an afterlife. We know that at one time it served as a gift shop. More recently, it was a showroom for the Trane HVAC company. This is very fitting as the company’s slogan for its air conditioners is “nothing runs like a Trane.”

We got the caboose through the generosity of Ethan Jackman who purchased it via the Internet from its last home in Ithaca and donated it to us a half dozen years ago. Getting the caboose here cost the Rail Trail Association some \$10,000. This was for transporting it on two flat bed trailers (one for the caboose body, the other to carry the two sets of wheels called “trucks” in RR parlance) as well as for hiring cranes and operators at both ends of the journey.

*We think it was worth it, don’t you? ♦*



### Where A Weary Trainman Would Sleep

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# Rail Trail Courtesy/Safety Campaign

by Rafael Díaz

We have a great trail that has been attracting more and more users ever since we extended it one mile eastward from Commercial Avenue to meet Walkway and built a sizable parking lot at that terminus. With success comes concern for potential safety issues on a multi-use trail that attracts pedestrians, runners, families and cyclists. To address these, we will be introducing a Trail Courtesy Campaign in May. Its aim is to assure that all users can enjoy the trail while respecting the right of access of others.

The campaign is an educational effort based on common-sense, courtesy pointers. These will be elaborated on in new rail trail signs as well as contained on succinctly-worded business-size cards that will be handed out in various ways.

The card will address pedestrians on one side and cyclists on the other. We are still working on the wording but its gist will be:

**Pedestrians** *This is a multi-use trail for pedestrians, cyclists and skaters. Respect the access of faster-moving users:* • Stay to right, don't hog trail. • No

more than two abreast. • Look behind for faster users when passing others or changing directions. • Leash dogs. Be watchful of your children.

**Cyclists** *This is a multi-use family trail not a road. When overtaking any slower-moving user:*

• Always give ample warning even if there's room to pass. • Pass slowly in single file on left only after you are certain other user is aware of you. • Be especially cautious when passing children and senior citizens.

## How Campaign Will Play Out

To launch the program, we are planning to position a **Trail Courtesy Station** on the Rail Trail at various times of the day and locations. At the station, volunteers will seek to engage all types of users on safety needs as well as hand out the courtesy pointers card.

We will also have roving volunteers who will be wearing yellow vests marked: **Rail Trail Official**. They will be handing out the card to users they come across. They will also be there to answer questions and keep a watch on the trail. ♦

## PROJECTS FOR 2013

We have a number of projects lined up to work on in 2013. Some are big, some are small but they all add up to making the trail a more pleasurable place to be.

**Several are aimed at improvements at our 101 New Paltz Road parking lot area:**

- **Pavilion concrete floor.** Ever notice how slippery its surface can be when wet? We plan to see if an application of mercuric acid will do the trick of roughing up its surface.
- **Area between the trail and parking lot.** We will be installing river rock in this area for better drainage and looks. We currently have such an installation between Haviland Road and our 75 Haviland Road parking lot and it looks great.
- **Fixing the billboard.** We use it to announce events to cars on New Paltz Road and those entering the parking lot. The billboard needs repair and, while at it, we will replace the Rail Trail logo with our latest version.

- **The 1915 Caboose.** As you can see from the article on page 5, it is a major attraction. But it needs refurbishing inside. Don't worry, we will keep its historical inside touches.
- **Install a kiosk.** We have these all along the trail. We could use one here.

**Several projects are at 75 Haviland Road:**

- **The Gateway Arch.** We announced plans in the Winter 2012-2013 newsletter and hope accomplish them this year.
- **The 1926 Caboose.** This location has some 670,000 people pass yearly according to the state trail survey. We need to give them something to savor with a cleaned up, refurbished interior.

**Another project is the RR signal tower at the Commercial Ave. trailhead.** Historically, this signal controlled RR traffic crossing the Vineyard Avenue Bridge. It is in good shape structurally but needs rust removed and a paint job. ♦

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# Introducing A More Flexible Webpage

by Eric Norberg

The Hudson Valley Rail Trail Association has a new look for its website. The changes go beyond just appearance. The new site gives us enormous capability to interact with our members and with the public in general. Most importantly, we can keep it up to date.

That last point is a crucial one. Our page formerly was set up in a way that we could only make changes and updates through an outside administrator who was not always available and charged for each change. It's a situation many web pages have gotten stuck in, as some of you no doubt painfully know. We have now moved to rectify that predicament and have 24/7/365 administrative access by our officers and coordinators of our many events.

This means that every event can be customized so that the coordinator is in a position to fine-tune its description, add photos, provide registration forms to be filled out on-line, etc. The coordinator can also send out event reminders so that you, as a member, don't miss out on hearing about any trail event.

We can also offer something more for our event sponsors. Such sponsors provide valuable resources and funds that help us offer events such as the Wounded Warriors Race covered on the first page of this newsletter. We now have the ability to load pertinent sponsors into an automated rotator that can sit on the website's opening page and the page for the event itself. This gives them more bang for their buck and encourages their support.

We now have a member section in which we have loaded all members into the system with baseline profiles and data. This allows us to send members notices regarding renewals. You can also get the newsletter sent directly by email from the website, and we can offer information on the site for members only. Such steps increases the value of being a Rail Trail member.

Another thing, Paypal and our account are loaded in the system so you can pay your dues directly. This also allows registering for and paying on-line for an event, again like the Wounded Warrior race. ♦

## 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 also 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!**  
***Breakfast Meeting***  
***on the***  
***Hudson Valley Rail Trail***

Hudson Valley Rail Trail Depot  
101 New Paltz Road  
June 1, 2013, 9AM

[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**

