



ALONG THE CORRIDOR

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE DELAWARE & LEHIGH NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE CORRIDOR

2008 a banner year for D&L Trail Construction

We made significant construction progress on the D&L Trail this year. Many thanks to everyone who supported our efforts! Because of your commitment, we resurfaced nearly three miles of trail in Weissport in September, and we also dedicated the trail extension from Slatington to the Lehigh-Carbon county line in October. With this continuing momentum, we look forward to even more improvements along the Trail next year.

Lehigh Gap Trailhead Dedication

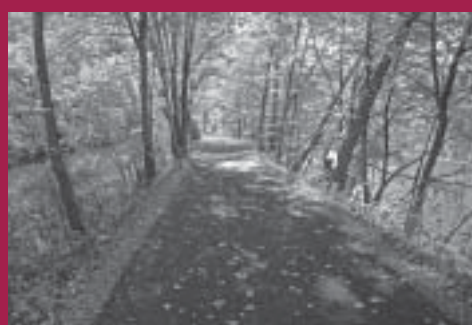
A 0.6 mile addition completed the 2.3-mile span of the D&L Trail from Slatington to the Lehigh-Carbon county line through the Lehigh Gap in October. This project, made possible through a partnership between Lehigh Valley Greenways—administered by D&L—and Lehigh County, reached completion in less than two years, compared to the typical four-to-seven year timeline of most federally funded trail projects.

“The idea of connecting Bristol to Wilkes-Barre for walking and biking connects people to outdoor opportunities that support local businesses,” PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis said at the trail dedication. “We’re connecting people, communities and economies. It is Allen’s [Sachse’s] vision and the Corridor’s persistence that makes it possible,” he added.

Weissport

Thanks in part to a federal grant, a 2.7-mile section of the D&L Trail north of Weissport has been resurfaced for travel.

This phase of the project, which began in August and reached completion in September, utilized 1,200 tons of crushed limestone. The resurfaced section winds



A newly resurfaced portion of the D&L Trail north of Weissport, Carbon County, with the Lehigh River on the right and the Lehigh Canal on the left.



The 300-foot stone wall under construction at the Weissport Trailhead.

past five historic Lehigh Canal locks built from 1827–1829 and offers Trail users magnificent views of the Lehigh River valley between Lehighton and Jim Thorpe.

A \$655,000 Federal Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA) grant, obtained with assistance from state representative Keith McCall (D-Carbon), provided necessary funding for the resurfacing. The second phase of the project will be completion of the upgrade to the Weissport Trailhead adjacent to Bridge Street. This will be completed in the Spring of 2009.

The new trail section will eventually extend to Jim Thorpe, where it will cross a pedestrian bridge over the Lehigh River at the southern end of the borough. Although other project construction near the trail will pause for the winter, it remains open for recreational use. Before winter, workers will finish a 300-foot stone retaining wall between the Lehigh Canal and the east side of the two-acre trailhead parking lot. When completed, the wall will be ADA-accessible for fishing.

In recent weeks, workers have also cleared a large number of 40- to 50-foot Tree of Heaven plants from the sloped embankment along the west side of the trailhead lot. The embankment will be graded and stabilized before construction ends this fall. Warm-season grasses will be seeded in the spring to help prevent the spread of the plant in the Weissport area.

Other plans for the spring include the installation of wood fencing along the canal and construction of a pavilion area with picnic tables, benches, and bike racks. The parking lot at the trailhead will also be upgraded to provide parking for 44 cars.

What lies ahead in 2009

In Carbon County, we hope to complete the surfacing of a trail in East Penn Township from the Lehigh-Carbon county line to the boat launch and finish the section of trail from the Nesquehoning Trestle to the Jim Thorpe train station. Additionally, through a Lehigh Valley Greenways/Lehigh Co. partnership, we plan to begin construction of a trail section from Rt. 329 in Cementon to a trailhead at Laury’s Station. We also hope to construct a section of trail in Freemansburg and finalize the design for the Box Culvert in Glen Summit.

Partners and Prospects

As 2008 comes to a close, I want to thank all of you—our volunteers, supporters, staff and board members, and friends—for your hard work over the past twelve months. Each of you played an important role in the progress made along the Corridor this year, and we look forward to your continued support in 2009.



One project we hope to advance in the new year involves D&L signage. We recently started work with our partners to develop a maintenance and replacement program for our interpretive and other signs along the Trail.

Over the past 15 years, we have provided funding for about 650 of these signs. We're currently documenting the condition of all the signs—thus far we have located, photographed, and determined the condition of 150 of them. After completion of the inventory, we hope to develop a program to replace the oldest and most worn signs each year.

Most signs have a life expectancy of around 10 years; they wear over time due to exposure to the sun and other inclement weather. By constructing new signs with more durable material, we can upgrade the signs' condition to a level that exceeds the expectations of the D&L restoration team and those who venture out to experience the Trail.

Next year we plan to replace several faded signs and install new interpretive and directional signage in Lehigh Gorge and Delaware Canal State Parks. We also expect to install new interpretive signs at the Lehigh Gap.

In order to improve our knowledge of those signs in need of repair, we would like to ask your help. If you know of any D&L signs in need of cleaning or replacement, please email Elissa Thorne at elissa@delawareandlehigh.org.

As in the past, the success of the D&L projects will continue to need your help and support as we travel this trail of progress together.

Artisan Trail Studio Tour Weekend

Lovers of both crafts and fine art had an opportunity to connect with artists during the first Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor "Artisan Trail Studio Tour Weekend," held October 18th and 19th in the Lehigh Valley, Jim Thorpe, and Stroudsburg.

Fall in the Poconos is a popular time, and there was no shortage of competing events on the weekend of the 18th, between the Pocono Balloon Festival, fall foliage events in Jim Thorpe, and other attractions. The Studio Tour Weekend is a unique, free event, though, allowing visitors to not just see works of art, but also to interact with artists in their studios and galleries, learn about their creative processes, and even purchase works for their own collections.

In fact, more than 350 people—including several from outside of the area—trekked to one or more of the 23 participating artist sites. These visitors had a chance to see pieces from some talented individuals working in oils and watercolors, blown- and stained glass, clay, metal sculpture, apparel and jewelry.

The turnout was thanks in part to D&L's efforts to promote the weekend on local tourism-related sites and in area publications, such as *Lehigh Valley Style* and *Local Flair* magazines, *The Morning Call*, *Times-News*, *Easton Express-Times*, *Pocono Record*, and others.

Virtually all of the participating galleries reported an increase in traffic over the weekend, and first indications are that visitors scooped up more than \$3,000 in local artwork. Several of the artists also donated pieces to be raffled off the following weekend.

Organized by The D&L, the Studio Tour Weekend was a joint initiative with the Lehigh Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Pocono Arts Council, Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau, and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

The event was an outgrowth of the two-year-old D&L Artisan Trail initiative, which features 35 art galleries, museums, and private studios located in Northampton, Lehigh, Carbon, and Monroe counties. The Trail also makes up a portion of a statewide network that includes the Route 6 Artisan Trail, the Route 15 "Byway of the Arts," the Route 45 Central Pennsylvania Artisans Trail, and several others.



Artisan Trail Studio Tour Weekend brochure cover

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Participates in Area Events

The D&L partnered with the No. 9 Coal Mine and Museum during their first annual Coal Miners' Heritage Festival, held **July 13, 2008** on the No. 9 grounds in Lansford, Carbon County. This new event is a celebration of coal region history, customs, ethnicity, foods, crafts, and music. D&L sponsored half-price admission for the first 200 attendees who purchased tickets to tour the mine and museum. D&L staff were also on hand to meet visitors, promote the Corridor, and hand out 20th Anniversary commemorative souvenirs.

On **August 24, 2008**, D&L staff members were on hand to participate in the annual "Jam below the Dam" in White Haven, Luzerne County. This summertime street festival, held in the heart of the Pocono Mountains, is an annual opportunity to explore many types of music, food, local history, and the great outdoors for which White Haven is famous.

The annual Mauch Chunk Lake Bluegrass & Anthracite Heritage Festival took place on **September 20, 2008**, near Jim Thorpe in Carbon County. D&L representatives took part in the event, which featured exhibits by local organizations, bluegrass music, historical displays, great food, and opportunities for outdoor recreation.

October 19, 2008 was the annual "Walnutport Canal Festival" in Walnutport, Northampton County. Our staff members were on hand with the D&L booth to take part in this annual autumn celebration of canal heritage, music, crafts, historical exhibits, reenactments, recreation on the canal, and autumn foliage.



A few of the 200 attendees who turned out for the first Coal Miners' Heritage Festival at the No. 9 Coal Mine and Museum

D&L Welcomes New Regional Main Street Coordinator

The D&L National Heritage Corridor is happy to welcome Donna Boone as the new Regional Main Street Coordinator for Landmark Towns of Bucks County, a regional economic development initiative of the four Delaware riverfront boroughs of Bristol, Morrisville, Yardley, and New Hope. As coordinator, Donna will be responsible for developing a regional strategy to foster economic development and community revitalization with a focus on growing downtown business opportunities and tourism through the Main Street approach.

Donna is no stranger to downtown revitalization, having spent over four years as the executive director of Main Street Burlington, a traditional, single-community revitalization effort in New Jersey. During her tenure, the Burlington downtown witnessed the introduction of 40 new businesses and over 100 new job opportunities. Donna also accepted the Burlington County Chamber of Commerce Award for Economic Development on behalf of Main Street Burlington.

"Seeing the transformation to a Main Street community, working through the transition for four years, and seeing the new life and new businesses going in downtown was the most rewarding part," she says. "The same passion for downtowns exists in these four communities. The residents, business owners, and officials all have the same commitment."

Having completed the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Downtown Revitalization and Management Institute courses, Donna is well versed in the National Trust's Main Street approach to downtown revitalization. Following this approach, hundreds of communities across the country have seen tremendous growth in their communities; Donna foresees similar success here in Pennsylvania, thanks to the commitment of the individuals involved.

"They really care about the downtown," she says. "It's exciting to work with people who are that passionate."

Donna also has high praise for the D&L's contribution to the Landmark Towns Initiative. "Working with the D&L offers a tremendous resource that I didn't have in Burlington," she says. "They have an organizational structure already set up to provide support through Elissa and Allen. It makes it easier to do my job."

Prior to her work with downtown revitalization, Donna worked in a non-profit organization as a community development officer. She has also held several elected positions, including that of local school board president. Congratulations and good luck to you, Donna, on your new position!

To contact Donna Boone, please email donna@delawareandlehigh.org or call the Landmark Towns office at 215-781-2605.

Traveling Trunks Make their Debut

The first “Traveling Trunks” are rolling out to a few lucky pilot schools in the next step of the D&L’s “Tales of the Towpath” curriculum. Freemansburg Elementary (part of the Bethlehem Area School District), Sheridan Elementary in Allentown, Memorial Elementary in Hanover Township, Luzerne County, the Penn-Kidder Campus in Jim Thorpe, and Welch Elementary in Council Rock School District were among the first to get their hands on these unique learning tools.

Students and teachers alike say they are thrilled with the trunks and eager to get started with the curriculum.

The trunks were crafted by the Advanced Woodworking class at Moravian Academy in Bethlehem, and each includes a selection of books and other items representative of life in and around the region in the mid-19th century. Students will begin their exploration through elementary-level spelling, reading, and math books, most of which were known as “primers.” Each trunk will also contain a conch shell of the type used as a horn on the canal, a reproduction miners’ lamp, and boy’s and girl’s clothing that would have been typical for those living on 1850s-era homesteads.

The trunks enable students to engage and interact with their lesson materials in innovative ways; kids can wear period clothing, try their hand with the kinds of slate boards and pencils that may have been used by their ancestors, and even



D&L Heritage Interpretation & Preservation Specialist Amey Senape unpacks one of the first Traveling Trunks.

play with reproduction toys and games. The trunks also contain a variety of multimedia pieces, including DVDs showing historical footage of canal boats in operation, a video of the switchback gravity railroad, and even CDs with songs from the canals, coal mines, and towns.

“We really are giving the teachers everything they can possibly need,” says Dennis Scholl, who is managing the project for the D&L. “We want these pilot teachers to help us decide what works and what



A few of the pilot trunks being readied for some lucky elementary students.

Photos by Dennis Scholl

doesn’t and to refine the items that go in the trunks.”

Funding for the “Tales of the Towpath” pilot program was made available through a grant from the Keystone Nazareth Charitable Foundation. Additional program funding was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, through Sen. Robert Wonderling; Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Luzerne Foundation; Sovereign Bankcorp; Sovereign Securities; Embassy Bank; Capital BlueCross; and the D&L National Heritage Corridor.

School districts that are interested in learning more about the “Tales of the Towpath” curriculum should contact Dennis Scholl (610-923-3548 x225; dennis@delawareandlehigh.org).

New Grant Opportunities

Are you aware that non-profit organizations and municipalities can apply for grant funds to support projects that further the D&L’s mission? This is your opportunity to request a grant to support projects that preserve the heritage of our communities, conserve resources, enhance our trails, tell our stories, and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

If you’ve applied before, you’ll notice some improvements to our application process:

- We now offer a rolling application period with no specific deadline, so you can apply when it makes sense for you;
- “Challenge” grants are now available (up to a \$1000 maximum);
- An “in kind” matching is acceptable on “Challenge” grants;
- You can take advantage of a shorter processing period, and;
- You can apply online using our shortened 1 – 3 page application at www.delawareandlehigh.org/grant-applications.asp

As in the past, Planning grants require a 25% match, while Implementation grants require a 50% match.

We hope you’ll take this opportunity to become a partner in furthering the goals of the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and State Heritage Park. Please feel free to contact Elissa Thorne (610-377-4063) with any questions.

Tales of the Towpath

Elementary school teachers normally don't take days off from summer vacation to attend school. But 12 teachers from several Heritage Corridor school districts did exactly that in early August when they attended the D&L's first-ever "Tales of the Towpath" teacher training workshop at the Emrick Technology Center in Hugh Moore Park.

"I really enjoyed the training," said Anne Korves, a fourth-grade teacher at Freemansburg Elementary School in the Bethlehem Area School District. "And I am looking forward to working on the program."

"Tales of the Towpath" is the Corridor's initial endeavor at providing schools with curriculum that will enable students to gain a better understanding of local history and culture. Developed by the D&L's 20-member Educational Advisory Team (EAT), the curriculum is based on a children's storybook about a 10-year-old boy whose adventures along the Lehigh and Delaware canals take him to towns and industries that played important parts in the birth of the American Industrial Revolution. The 24-chapter book was authored by Dennis Scholl, the Corridor's Outreach Coordinator, and illustrated by Quakertown artist, Dennis Gerhart.

Korves's sentiments were echoed by other fourth- and fifth-grade teachers who attended the day-long workshop. Representatives from Allentown School District in Lehigh County, Council Rock School District in Bucks County, Jim Thorpe School District in Carbon County, and Hanover Township School District in Luzerne County heard how the curriculum was designed and learned optional ways to present it to students.

"I was amazed to see how quickly they picked up on what the book offered," said Barbara Fritz, a retired teacher from Wind Gap who is part of the EAT. "The lessons they developed in just one short interactive session showed me that they will be a valuable part of the development of the program."

Pilot teachers, as well as their students, will provide input that will further shape and refine the curriculum before its release to public, parochial, private, and home schools in fall of 2009. The curriculum began arriving at pilot schools in late October, housed inside a hand-made period trunk designed and built by Michael Broly, Woodworking Studio Instructor at Moravian Academy's Upper School in Bethlehem.

The trunks contain copies of the "Tales of the Towpath" book for each student and a teacher's manual containing lessons, a book glossary, field trip opportunities, historical resources, and a copy of the storybook with inquiry questions, internet links, historical tidbits, and other teaching options graphically designed into the page margins. The trunks also house a variety of items representative of mid-19th century life.

"We're trying to offer teachers all types of options for education and then allow them to pick and choose which ones suit their needs," said Scholl, who is managing the project. "There are opportunities to teach language arts, math, science, geography, social studies, art, music, and even family and consumer science."

The curriculum is aligned with Pennsylvania Academic Standards and has been developed with guidance from Jeff Zeiders, the Department of Education's social studies education advisor. The training program was approved by the PDE as an Act 48 accredited workshop. Each teacher who attended the workshop received six hours toward their state professional development requirements.

Volunteer Picnic Caps Another Successful Year for Trail Tenders

More than 40 Trail Tenders turned out for the D&L volunteer picnic held Saturday, September 20th at the Walnutport Canal Association pavilion. Attendees ate, played games, and enjoyed a variety of activities as they celebrated the achievements of both the organization and its volunteers.

Those who donated a significant portion of their time to the Trail Tenders' cause this year received special recognition, but it was a perfect time for the D&L to pause and recognize the time, energy, and effort put forth by *all* who spent time as part of this dedicated group of individuals. Thanks so much for all your hard work!



The "Three Amigos," (l-r) Trail Tenders Jerry Weiner (Nazareth), Beth Masiado (Bethlehem), and Steve Szarko (Allentown) each logged over 300 volunteer hours in 2008. They were awarded plaques (and sombreros!) in recognition of their contributions. Photo by Nancy Szarko

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The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and State Heritage Park is a joint effort of private groups and interested citizens, county and municipal governments, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government to conserve cultural and natural resources and provide appropriate development opportunities for a sustainable future.

Future issues of *Along the Corridor* will be available online and via email. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically, please write to the above address or send your email to info@delawareandlehigh.org.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

December 6: Ye Olde fashioned Christmas Parade, Yardley, starts at 3:30 at the American Legion parking lot on the South end of Main Street and works its way through town, yba@yardleybusiness.com or 215-504-7589.

December 6: Winterfest, Morrisville, Parade starts 10:00 a.m. Post Road to South Pennsylvania Avenue, ending at the Morrisville YMCA, followed by the Bridge Street Block Party.

December 12: Downtown Holiday Open House, 6:00–10:00 p.m., Bristol Borough.

December 13 and 14: Victorian Christmas Open House, The Parry Mansion, New Hope, www.newhopehistoricalsociety.org.

January 21-25: Winter Festival 2009, New Hope
www.winterfestival.net

