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The Hemlock

Volume 2, Issue 2 (October 2008)

"The whole of September and half if not the whole of
October, are the finest months in Pennsylvania."

--Peter Kalm, *Travels in*

North America (1748)



It Only Comes Once a Year...

It's fall, and the trees are in the process of unveiling their annual color show. Accordingly, the central theme of this issue is trees. There are few moments in the Pennsylvania year as spectacular as mid-October, so try to ignore at



least one obligation and get out into the woods. To help plan your trip, you might want to check out the following websites. [The Foliage Network](#) relies on a network of spotters to provide weekly reports to show which areas are nearing peak displays of color (according to the most recent report, we are currently at "Low Color"). The [Weather Channel's Fall Foliage page](#) offers maps, as well as an excellent scientific explanation of [why the leaves change color](#). [FallinPA.com](#) has maps, live web cams, and [road trips](#) that will take you through the best areas. A great place to start is to take PA 120 west to Renovo for the [Flaming Foliage Festival](#) (Oct 10-12).

The Hemlock is a publication of the [Environmental Focus Group](#). The articles are contributed by LHUP faculty, staff, and students--as well as members of the central Pennsylvania community. If you would like to submit something for a future issue, please contact [Bob Myers](#).

A Vanished History Unearths a New Beginning: Eagleton Mine Camp Trail

--Robert G. Zakula (LHUP 2008 Alumni; pursuing a M.A. in History at Central Washington University)

On June 10th, 2006, the grand opening occurred for the newest addition to the many great trail systems within the Pennsylvania Wilds. Located approximately 7 miles west of Lock Haven in Sproul State Forest, the reconstructed Eagleton MineCamp Trail (EMCT) is a gratifying place to visit for people who like the outdoors as well as local history.

The Eagleton Mine Camp Trail, however, was not a new project that was developed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). In fact, the EMCT was formerly the village of Eagleton, a secluded, yet productive, mining community that operated from roughly 1845-1870.



The original EMCT was part of the Eagleton Railroad system, which traversed along the West Branch of the Susquehanna in the Tangascootac Valley, and connected many other industrial towns to the small mining village on

the Allegheny plateau. The Eagleton Railroad, at that time, would have been considered an engineering feat for such a rural, underdeveloped region; the innovative railroad grade climbed seven switchbacks until it reached the top of the plateau where the village was located. It is also alleged that Prince Farrington, a notorious bootlegger during the prohibition-era, had built a still on top of one of the ridges near the mining camp.

At its peak, Eagleton's production was heavily focused on coal and iron ore, and rarely, if ever, ventured into other crude and laborious industries. Like the other mining towns in the region, Eagleton curiously vanished with no sign of reviving a quickly dying industry.

The detailed history of Eagleton's operations and its workers is difficult to dig up, literally, but so is the past of many other mining towns that existed in the surrounding valley and watershed. Any person interested in disclosing the particulars of these remote mining camps would have to "mine" their way through old industrial records and historical archives in Clinton and Centre counties' libraries and courthouses.

Today, the foundation of the mining village of Eagleton is no more, and the old railroad bed has either been dismantled or has succumbed to overgrowth over the past century. Only the limited knowledge of once was and what could have been besieges this partially isolated forest like an eerie apparition, and the workers' drudgery can be felt in spirit right alongside an individual's efforts when pursuing more modern-day, physically-demanding activities.

The Eagleton Mine Camp Trail's resurrection from the industrial past, with construction efforts led by the DCNR, was also sponsored by the Clinton County Economic Partnership and local businesses. In spite of the renovation and (limited) press coverage of the addition to Sproul State Forest's 280,000 acres, the EMCT is still fairly unknown, or rather unused, by outdoors enthusiasts. Perhaps the newly-constructed woodland trails are a gift to local citizens who view these forests as their backyard, particularly residents of Lock Haven, Mill Hall, and Renovo. For these reasons, the EMCT serves as one of the most conveniently constructed, serene trail systems in Sproul State Forest.

There are multiple options for outdoor activities in all four seasons, from hiking, trail-running, mountain biking, and horseback riding in the spring, summer, and fall, to snowshoeing and, to some degree, cross country skiing in the winter. With restrictions on logging, there is also an unaccounted number of wildlife as well as old and new plant and tree growth; it is almost guaranteed that trail users will catch sight of deer, bears, snakes, and wild turkey.

Each EMCT trail is clearly marked on trees and rocks as well as wooden posts to help someone find direction. For individuals who seek endurance-based, technical challenges, there are strenuous climbs, rock gardens, and tricky switchbacks on the trails marked as moderate to difficult. With 20-plus miles of trail and several connectors, there are a countless number of ways for anyone to enjoy this backyard treasure in solitude.

Hike of the Month: The Eagleton Mine Camp Trail

---Robert G. Zakula



If you're interested in hiking the EMCT, first download the maps of the [Sproul State Forest](#) and [Eagleton Mine Camp Trail](#). To get to the EMCT trailhead, take Route 120 west from Lock Haven for about 7 miles. Look for a large wooden sign displaying Eagleton Mine Camp Trail and turn left onto

Eagleton Road. Follow this unpaved logging road for a little over 2 miles to the eastern trailhead; there is a large gravel parking lot on the right near a set of power lines. Little Buckhorn Trail, .4 miles west of the parking area on Eagleton Road, is highly recommended for its challenging climbs, unparalleled ridgelines, and multiple stream crossings. To reach the western trailhead, follow Eagleton Road west for roughly 3 miles—the gravel parking lot will be on the left.

All previous Hikes of the Month can be found at [Hemlock Hikes](#).

Getting Started in Mountain Biking

--Caleb Sizemore (LHUP English Major)

One of the best ways to enjoy the beauty of the many trails in this area is with a mountain bike (MTB). I've been mountain biking for years, and I'd like to pass on some advice on how to get started.

One of the main considerations is what kind of area (geographically) do you live in? If you live in the mountains, say like, here in LHUP, a single track MTB might be the best thing for you! Maybe a long and fast railroad bed (rail-to-trails) would better suit your fancy. There are currently 13,935 miles of railroad track turn trail in



PA and the surrounding states. How 'bout a crazy dash to the bottom of the mountain on a tough downhill track? Penn State has some of the best downhill courses in the country. Each of these types of trails requires a different mountain bike.

You basically have two options. Most people choose a Hard-tail, a bike with shock absorbers on the front forks. Others go with a Full Suspension, a bike with shock absorbers in the front and the rear. "Old Timers" and "Purists" might choose a rigid bicycle without any shocks, but this probably won't serve well as the beginning bicycle for you.

When purchasing a bike, keep a few things in mind:

1. Decent mountain bikes are lightweight and responsive to the demanding constantly changing trail.
2. Do your research. I can't stress this enough! To find the perfect bike for you talk to friends, and read reviews on the internet.
3. Try a lot of bikes. Experiment. Ride your friends' bikes and find what you like and what works for you.
4. Go to a bike shop. For example, you might start at The Bike Gallery at 140 E. Main Street, Lock Haven. It's their job to know what bikes are out there and what bikes would be good for the trails you want to tackle.
5. When it comes to MTBs, you usually get what you pay for. Buy a cheap bike, get cheap performance. But once you've found the bike you want, don't settle for the first price you find. People are always getting rid of good bikes. Check the local paper, magazines, and the internet for a price you can afford.

Now you have a bike. But before you go riding, there are a few more purchases you might want to make. You absolutely need a helmet. Spandex padded shorts make a world of difference on the trail. After a good ten miles of bumps and crags, you'll have plenty of your own in places you would rather not. Gloves and a jersey are also very nice to have, but once again, not entirely necessary. Riding shoes are also another option for extra equipment. The shoes are rigid and specially made to clip into your peddles and help you ride through the tough terrain. Please note that these shoes are in European sizes and if you are interested in buying a pair you need to go to a bike shop and have them fitted for you. Once you actually start riding for yourself, you will realize what other pieces of equipment you would like to have, what keeps you comfy.

Mountain biking can be one of the best ways to get out of the house/town/job/busy lifestyle to see the outdoors around you. To relax. To get exercise. TO HAVE FUN! Please, treat the trail and the wildlife around you with respect. Others want to enjoy the same exciting ride that you do, so keep the trails looking pristine.

For more information, see Rob Ginieczki's [Mountain Biking Pennsylvania](#).

A Sense of Place at LHUP

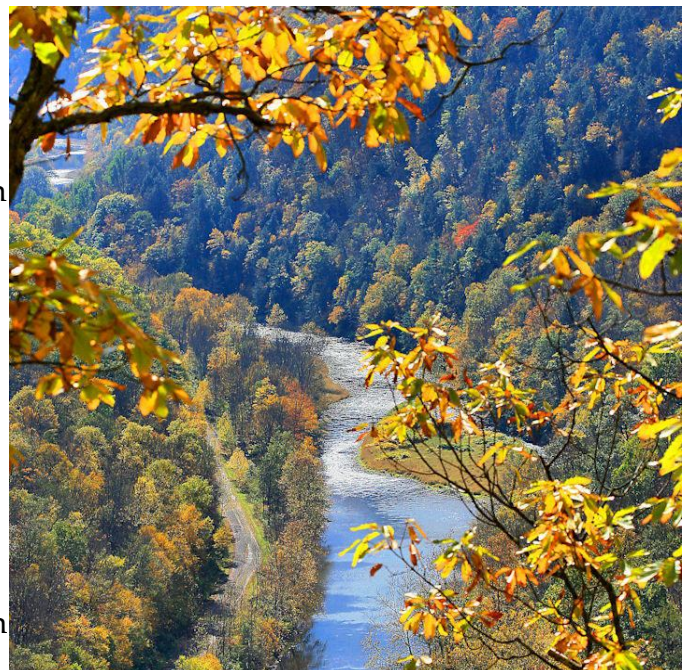
--Jeff Schaffer (LHUP Campus Minister)

As I write this, the calendar does not yet give its permission to talk of autumn in the present tense. Nevertheless, the signs of its arrival are beginning to appear all around Lock Haven. For example, on recent morning walks I've observed migrant warblers in the nearby forests. These small, colorful birds are busily focused on finding food to fuel their south-bound journeys.

Yet another tell-tale sign of the season is the hike up to the Hubert Jack Stadium for LHUP football. I love our LHUP Bald Eagles and enjoy the games but I also appreciate the setting for those contests. LHUP has one of the most picturesque venues for sporting events in the world!

From the bleachers fans can look down the mountain and see the university and the river valley below. There, the West Branch of the Susquehanna reflects the forest-cloaked mountains beyond. The trees of those forests seem to have been woven into the fabric of the town. To me, the stadium is a reminder of a unique intimacy between our university and the natural world that surrounds it.

The LHUP alma mater is another reminder of that intimacy. The first verse in particular articulates a sense of place – a connection to the environment. As we all know, Lock Haven is the place “where the crystal Susquehanna shimmers in the sun.” It is also the place where “the hemlock, pine and maple murmur in



the night.”

As I reflect on my time here at LHUP, I recognize that I have experienced a growing intimacy with the natural world around me. I have enjoyed a growing *sense of place* -- a sense of the grace imparted to this corner of creation and of how I fit into that landscape.

As a person of faith, I believe this is as it should be. If we human beings are to be good stewards of the environment, we need to recognize our place within it. My own faith tradition, drawing from the Hebrew Scriptures, puts it this way, “Dwelling in the presence of God, we begin to experience ourselves as a part of creation, as stewards within it, not separate from it. As faithful stewards, fullness of life comes from living responsibly within God’s creation.” (*Renewing the Earth*, US Catholic Conference, 1991) From my own research, I know that the Anglican and Lutheran churches have said much the same.

As members of the university community and as citizens of planet earth, I hope and pray that our connection to the natural world will deepen over time. That intimacy can only help us to protect the environment as well as those of us who live here.

This article was adapted from *For the Good of God’s Green Earth*. FGGGE is a blog-pod written by LHUP campus minister Jeff Schaffer that explores the connection between faith and caring for the environment. Other postings from FGGGE can be found at: <http://ministries.dioceseaj.org/lhucatholic/> . For more information on faith-based environmentalism, visit the following sites: [The Catholic Coalition on Climate Change](#), [The Episcopal Ecological Network](#), and [The Evangelical Lutheran Church Statement on the Environment](#).

Getting to Know Your Local Conservation District

--Steven Putt, CPESC, Resource Technician, Clinton County Conservation District

Working for the Clinton Country Conservation District, I find that many people are unfamiliar with the idea of a county conservation district. This is unfortunate since conservation districts



have been helping to conserve our natural resources since the late 1940s. The 66 conservation districts were initially established to help promote soil and water conservation on farm lands. Since then, they have evolved to meet the needs of today's ever-changing environment. Currently, Conservation Districts are involved in environmental education, erosion and sediment pollution control, stormwater management, watershed restoration, wetland protection, abandoned mine land reclamation, agricultural land preservation, nutrient management, floodplain assistance, forest management, outdoor recreation, and wildlife habitat improvements.

The Clinton County Conservation District was established in 1946 and currently has six staff members, who work towards the preservation, enhancement and protection of Clinton County's natural resources. Our four primary responsibilities are granting permits for construction and timber harvesting activities, watershed management, environmental education, and technical assistance for agricultural activities. The Clinton County Conservation District has been involved with the Chatham Run and Fishing Creek Stormwater Management plans. The District has also helped to establish a no-till cover crop program to reduce soil erosion on farmlands, which will help improve conditions in the Chesapeake Bay. We have been directly involved with the Kettle Creek, Beech Creek and Sugar Valley Watershed Associations, as well as with the cooperative effort to assess and remediate acid mine drainage problems. The District also hosts many environmental educational activities throughout the year, including County Envirothon, a poster contest, rain barrel workshops, conservation summer camp, 6th grade conservation field days, and various trainings for municipal officials, environmental consultants, and contractors.

Conservation Districts are local people working to preserve and enhance the local natural resources. If you have a question or concern, or would simply like more information about programs the District is involved with, please feel free to contact your local Conservation District office. The Clinton County Conservation District is located at 45 Cooperation Lane, Mill Hall, PA. You can contact us by visiting our website at <http://www.clintoncountypa.com/conserve.htm> or by calling (570) 726-3798.

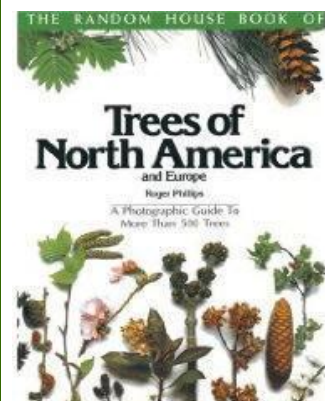
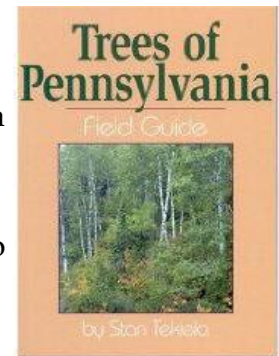
Book Review: Tree Guides

--Bob Myers

Last fall my son had to do a leaf collection for his 7th-grade science class. To help him, I bought a tree guide. I now have three of these guides

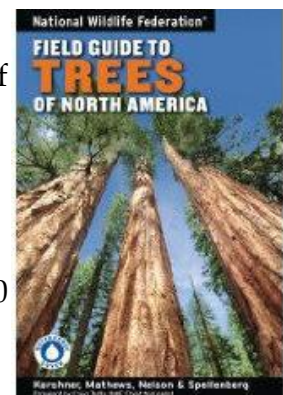
and haven't ruled out the possibility of picking up a fourth. But before I do, I thought I'd tell you about the ones I have.

My first guide was Stan Tekiela's [Trees of Pennsylvania Field Guide](#) (Adventure Publications, 2004). The book includes 117 species of the most-common Pennsylvania trees. The trees are arranged by needle or leaf type (simple, lobed, etc.) and how they are attached to the tree (alternate or opposite), which makes it very easy to narrow down the possibilities quickly. Within each section, the trees move from small to large needles or leaves. Tekiela includes descriptions of the tree as well as large pictures of the leaves/needles and smaller pictures of the bark, flower, and fruit of the tree. His notes offer interesting information about the relationship of the tree to the forest and to the human community. At \$12.95 it's reasonably priced and the compact size (4.5" x 6") enables you to shove it in your pocket.



The only problem with Tekiela's guide is the relatively few number of trees--I found myself frustrated because many of the trees I was encountering were not included. Which led to my second purchase, Roger Phillips, [Trees of North America and Europe](#) (Random House, 1978). At \$29.95, Phillips is much more expensive, and at 8.5" x 11" it doesn't fit into too many pockets, but it makes up for these limitations with its coverage--a whopping 500 trees. The organization is a bit more complicated--the first 50 pages present a leaf index, with similar looking leaves/needles grouped together. For example, there are four pages of maple leaves. Once you think you've found the right tree, you are referred to a page in the second section of the book, which presents pictures of the leaves and fruits or cones, as well as a detailed description.

With the Phillips guide I was able to indentify many of the trees that had eluded me, but I found it clunky to carry around. Within a week of buying Phillips, I found what I thought was the perfect guide: The National Wildlife Federation's [Field Guide to Trees of North America](#). Like Philips, the NWF guide covers 500 trees, the price is reasonable (\$19.55), and at 4.5" x 7.5" it's portable. The organization makes it easy to find your tree. The major sections are divided by type of



leaf and arrangement (needlelike leaves, scalelike leaves, fan-shaped leaves, opposite leaves, etc.). Each section is color-coded, and within each section are further groupings: for example, within opposite leaves, the trees are grouped by lobed simple leaves, unlobed untoothed simple leaves, etc. The beginning of each major section also has a guide that often uses the fruit of the tree to direct you quickly to the right area (that's why this is an especially good time to begin tree identification--the fruits are out). The supplemental material is first-rate as well--interesting introductions to forests, tree ecology, and identification tips. In short, this is the guide to buy.

Since I had just spent \$29 on Phillips, it took me a few months to buy the NWF guide, but eventually I broke down, and I've been very happy with it. However, I have found that ultimately it's not such a bad thing to have three guides. There are trees in Phillips that are not in the NWF guide--for example, the common yews in Highland cemetery. Also, it's often helpful to have several pictures of the tree, leaves, or bark. I struggled to find the beautiful swamp cypress that is at the northwest corner of Ulmer until I saw the picture of its distinctive green fruit in Phillips. And each time I'm in a bookstore, I flirt with the many other tempting guides...

But regardless of which one you choose, I strongly encourage you to get a guide. Before I began learning the individual species, the trees I passed each day were just a generic blur of trees. Once you begin learning a few species, you begin to see the individuality of each tree--an important part of developing a sense of place.

Energy Conservation at LHUP

--Dave Proctor (LHUP Director of Facilities Planning)

With the cost of oil at all time highs, the cost of natural gas rising almost as quickly, and the impending deregulation of the Electric Companies, energy remains a major expense for LHUP. With our total energy costs approaching \$3,000,000 this year, a small 10% reduction in usage can lead to a \$300,000 saving, providing funds for other uses. In addition to economic pressures, the "Green" movement has encouraged LHUP to use energy more efficiently than was done in the past.



To meet this challenge the university has been active in several areas, and the result has been that our energy usage has dropped by 33% since 2002-03. We measure our energy consumption in terms of BTUs per square footage (SF) per year. In 2002-03, we expended 133,163 BTUs/SF for a total cost of

\$1,786,331. In the fiscal year 2006-07 we expended 98,197 BTUs/SF at a cost of \$2,337,777. At that level of usage, we were the third lowest in energy consumption out of the 14 PASSHE universities. The report for the last fiscal year is not yet complete, but we hope to have lowered our energy usage even more.

Leading the effort to achieve energy efficiency in our operations is an Energy Committee that operates within the Facilities Department. Active now for several years, this committee has been one of the primary reasons we have achieved the efficiencies noted above. This committee meets weekly and is attended by our mechanics and supervisors. It focuses its efforts on identifying the least energy efficient buildings and then improving their efficiency by either improving the operations of the existing equipment or replacing equipment with better, more efficient technology.

Secondary to this effort is the energy audit we recently completed. Honeywell, Inc. working with the Energy Committee, performed a detail review of the energy operations of over 1.3 million square feet of university building space. As a result of this audit LHUP is in the process of negotiating a contract with Honeywell to invest over \$10 million in our buildings over the next two years. The energy savings from this effort will recoup the \$10 million in less than 15 years and reduce our energy consumption by approximately 25%. As part of this project, we will change 50% of our lighting to more efficient type fixtures, and replace approximately 25 boilers with newer technology that will operate 10-15% more efficiently.

We are also utilizing what is know as LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), design/construction/operation criteria developed by the US Green Building Council in the design of any new or renovation of existing buildings. This criteria was used for the Durrwachter Alumni Conference Center, the expansion of Bentley Dining Hall, and for the

design of the new Classroom Building in Clearfield. It will also be the design criteria used for the design of the new Science Center at East Campus. Utilizing this design method ensures that all aspects of the design, construction and operation of any new or renovated building on campus receives full environmental consideration.

Last, but definitely not the least, for several years we have been purchasing our energy on the open market. What this means to LHUP is that we can purchase gas at the well head and get it delivered to the university at a cost less than what the local utility company charges. As the market cost of gas fluctuates, we are able to take advantage of lowered costs and lock in those prices for extended periods. During the fiscal year 2007-08 we were able to use this to our advantage and saved several \$100,000 in our gas costs.

LHUP is committed to reducing not only energy costs, but energy usage. We will continue to strive to improve our performance in these areas and look for ways to increase our overall results.

Environmental Focus Group

Bob Myers (chair), Md. Khalequzzaman, Lenny Long, Jeff Walsh, Danielle Tolton, John Crossen, Sandra Barney, David White, Tom Ormond, and Ralph Harnishfeger. The committee is charged with promoting and supporting activities, experiences, and structures that encourage students, faculty, and staff to develop a stronger sense of place for Lock Haven University and central Pennsylvania. Such a sense of place involves a stewardship of natural resources (environmentalism), meaningful outdoor experiences, and appreciation for the heritage of the region.