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MOUNT NITTANY NEWS

November 2014

Nittany
MOUNT
CONSERVANCY

www.mtnittany.org

Rain Can't Dampen 2014 Mt. Nittany Marathon Fast becoming known as "The Toughest Little Marathon in the East"

by John Hook

Sunday morning of Labor Day weekend began with an ominously dark sky and a forecast of thunderstorms. At 7:00 a.m. more than 200 runners lined up next to Beaver Stadium and heard words of encouragement. Then the starting gun sounded, they were off, and the deluge began.

By the time the runners for the 2nd Mt. Nittany Marathon covered their first quarter mile, they were completely drenched. The thunder never materialized, but the rain continued for most of the next two hours.

Just after two-and-a-half hours had elapsed, lead runner **Craig Coon** crossed the finish line as the winner in what is fast becoming known as "The Toughest Little Marathon in The East." A resident of Saratoga Springs, NY, his 2:36:59 time beat **AJ Kelly's** inaugural course record of 2:45:48. Craig ran this outstanding time while taking two breaks.

This year's race was started at 7:00 a.m. after the Inaugural race in 2013 experienced unseasonably warm temperatures – a bright sunny day that peaked in the upper 80's. Instead, this year was almost a polar opposite. Rather than a need for ice at the finish line to cool down runners, we needed blankets to keep them warm.

Despite the wet conditions, the runners raved about the race—many found the cool, damp conditions much better. As with the first year we did get a number of very positive comments about the race and the 200-plus volunteers who helped along with several interesting comments about the course. Statements such as "Challenging," "I've run 20 marathons and that was the toughest," and "Anyone who completes that should automatically qualify for Boston," were some of our favorites.

In addition to getting a reputation as a demanding course, the Mt. Nittany Marathon is now attracting more out-of-town residents to



1st Place Winner, Craig Coon, with 3rd Place Finisher, Yu Zhang

get a glimpse of Mount Nittany while they run 26.2 miles. This year's race had 265 runners registered, a 40% increase over 2013. More than one-third of those marathoners were from out-of-state, and almost three-quarters live more than an hour away from State College.

Based on the performance of this second installment of the marathon, the Conservancy's board met and agreed to hold a third marathon on September 6, 2015. We hope the race continues to grow while bringing attention to the Mount Nittany Conservancy and our efforts to preserve and conserve the land on and around the Mountain.

2014 Top Finishers

MEN'S DIVISION

1 Craig Coon, 26 2:36:59
2 David Blitzer, 25 2:54:42
3 Yu Zhang, 30 2:55:25

WOMEN'S DIVISION

1 Amy Prokop, 44 3:28:00
2 Mary Kreis, 44 3:28:28
3 Becky Wittrig, 46 3:30:16

Conservancy's Social Media Outreach

Conservancy sees success connecting online via Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest

by Vince Verbeke

Did you know that you can follow the Mount Nittany Conservancy on the social media sites Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest?

We joined Facebook on July 19, 2011. We've seen a steady increase in followers over the past 3-1/2 years. From New Year's Day to the end of October, we have seen our total "likes" climb from 408 to 508—nearly a 25% increase.

57% of our fans are women compared to 42% men. We have a fairly even breakdown across all age groups between women and men. While you could argue that there are more people using Facebook in the 25-34 age group than the other groups, it's still exciting to see that over a quarter of the likes for MNC are coming from such a young group.

We've actually been on the social media site Twitter the longest, since July 2008. We look for tweets and mentions of Mt. Nittany online. We then Retweet (share someone else's Tweet with all of our followers) their posts about their experiences and pictures of the Mountain.

Since August 2012 we have seen steady growth on Twitter. We've gone from 597 followers to 1,663 on October 31, 2014. Since January 1, 2014 we have gone from

1,237 to 1,663 followers. This is a 426 increase or a slightly higher than 25% increase. August 1 was the magic day when we topped 1,500 followers!

Perhaps our hidden social media gem is the Conservancy Pinterest account. We joined Pinterest in January 2013. This is where you can go for community-generated content of

August 1st was the magic day when we topped 1,500 Twitter followers

images on Mt. Nittany. We have six "boards" which are based on years photos were taken. We started out by uploading images from our website to Pinterest. So the earlier boards 07-09 (24 pins), 2010 (30 pins), 2011 (24 pins) and 2012 (38 pins) have less numbers because it was only our content.

Our boards from 2013 (116 pins) and 2014 (213 pins) show the addition of content from the community. So far we only have 35 followers on Pinterest. So we need to get the word out! If you haven't created a Pinterest account, please do! Then follow us to see great images of the Mountain.

Check us out! Be sure to spread the word.



www.facebook.com/MtNittany



[@MtNittany](https://twitter.com/MtNittany)



www.pinterest.com/MtNittany/

MT. NITTANY NIGHT

Save the Date
Friday, April 10, 2015
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Location TBD

Mount Nittany Podcasts Released by Conservancy Group

Podcasts highlight mountain history, mythology and geology, and can accompany hikes

by Bob Frick

Two free podcasts about Mount Nittany have just been released and are available for listening or download at MtNittany.org.

The longer of the two podcasts is 40 minutes and includes stories of the Mountain's history, preservation and its place as a symbol of Penn State University and the Centre Region. It also tells of battles against loggers and gypsy moths, and how the Mountain was bought and protected for public use. It features the voices of hikers, experts and key figures in the Mountain's conservation.

If a hiker begins the podcast at the Mountain's trailhead in Lemont, the longer

podcast is an ideal accompaniment for a hike up the Mountain. The shorter podcast is seven minutes and tells of the Mountain's mythology and geology.

The podcasts were co-produced by **Patty Satalia**, senior producer/host at WPSU-TV & FM, and by **Kathleen O'Toole**, Penn State PhD in communications, and a PSU instructor. Says Satalia, who narrates the podcasts: "As much as I've always appreciated Mt. Nittany and enjoyed occasional hikes, I had no idea until we started this project just how significant, even sacred, the place is to so many people. That made it a really satisfying assignment."

Highlights of the podcasts: How Fred Lewis Pattee, of Pattee Library fame, prevented a giant, concrete "S" from being erected on the Mountain's side; the discovery of ancient Native American relics there; how to navigate the Mountain's trails; and the legacy of Mountain Man, Mike Lynch.

Both podcasts were commissioned and funded by the Mount Nittany Conservancy, and additional funding was provided by the Lion's Paw Alumni Association.

To listen to the podcasts, visit mtnittany.org/podcasts/.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Centre County United Way Col. Gerald Russel Day of Caring *Mount Nittany dedeed square inches site receives brand new look*

by Eric Loop

Mount Nittany was the beneficiary of the concerted efforts of community volunteers during the Centre County United Way's Col. Gerald Russell Day of Caring on Thursday, October 2. Named in memory of its founder, this annual event engages hundreds of community members in projects at local non-profits, historical sites, and recreational facilities.

Conservancy board members **Chad Bell** and **Doug Wion** were assisted by volunteers from HRG, Inc. in the morning. This small band of workers spent much of their time improving the site of the Conservancy's dedeed square inches. The volunteers cleared and marked the site using dead trees they

felled nearby and reset the trail sign at the site. In just a few hours of very deliberate work, they gave the dedeed square inches site a brand new look.

Conservancy board member **Eric Loop** and Mountain Ambassador **Troy Weston** were joined on the mountain by coaches and players from the Penn State Women's Lacrosse team in the afternoon. Head Coach **Missy Doherty** and assistant coaches **Amy Altig** and **Brooke Matthews** led an energetic and enthusiastic group over almost six miles while clearing trails and overlooks and collecting trash. Coming off the mountain to get back to campus for practice later in the afternoon the players ran the last mile to their cars at the trailhead.



Steve Lynch, Chad Bell, and Dave Swisher of HRG, Inc. at the site of the dedeed square inches

Volunteers Work To Maintain Mount Nittany

This fall work parties cleared trails, removed debris and improved overlook views

by Bob Andronici

Work parties on the Mountain this fall have been extensive. Six work parties have been completed and two more are scheduled with the last one planned for November 9th. Volunteers cleared trails, removed trail dangers (dead overhanging trees, loose rocks), repaired or installed water bars, maintained overlooks, and improved overlook views.

One or more of the following Mountain and Recreation Committee members worked alone on the Mountain or led work parties and assured provisioning of water, food and tools adequate to sustain each work party: **Troy Weston, Eric Loop, Brian Stouffer, John Mentzell, Doug Wion, Chad Bell, Blake Gall, and Bob Andronici.**



Thanks to the PSU Women's Lacrosse Team (top) and employees of HRG, Inc. (bottom) for volunteering their time to help maintain Mt. Nittany for the good of all of us.

Volunteers from the following groups and organizations helped this fall:

- Penn State Fresh Start program
- Omega Phi Alpha Service Sorority
- Circle K
- Centre County United Way Day of Caring
- Panhellenic Council
- Omega Phi Alpha Sorority
- The Bridge Initiative
- Phi Delta Phi Legal Fraternity,
- Sigma Delta Tau Sorority
- HRG INC.

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS

We are pleased to recognize the individuals and groups that have recently supported the Mountain and the Mount Nittany Conservancy by donating to the Conservancy or one of our events, renewing their commitment as a "Friend of Mount Nittany," purchasing one or more Life Estate Deeds, honoring a loved one, or giving to a special endowment or program.

Lynn Abramson
 George & Judy Ahart
 Karen Randolph Aman
 Eunice Askov
 Warren & Nickie Askov
 Melvin Axilbund
 Edward Balzer
 Heidi Battista
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**Every effort was made to ensure accuracy. We apologize in advance for any errors or omissions!*