



Tails from the Trails

My name is Eric Steinbring and I have been a volunteer trip leader for several years.

Living in Johnstown probably makes me the trip leader furthest from Pittsburgh.

In the summer, I enjoy bike riding on the many rails-to-trails in our area. But in the cooler months, I can be found with my trusty hiking hounds Maggie and Zoey here in the Laurel Highlands.

I will be posting a few of our adventures here for Venture Outdoors while we practice social distancing during these difficult times.

If you would be interested in one of my excursions, contact the office and ask them to set up an event.

All of my events are family friendly and most are suitable for kids as young as 10-12.

See you out there!

On October 9th, 1945, members of Bombing Squadron 97 consisting of 21 Curtiss Helldivers, were returning to their base in Michigan after participating in the Nimitz Day Celebration held in Washington, D.C. Encountering heavy fog approaching the Laurel Highlands, they decided to turn back towards New Cumberland. One of the aircraft lost it's way and crashed into the side of a mountain. Killed in the accident were the plane's pilot and radio operator.

All that remains, besides a few pieces of aircraft aluminum, is the radial engine which is embedded in the ground at the wreck site. A plaque dedicated to the servicemen killed in the accident identifies the occupants and offers a brief description of what happened.

This site is located off Rt. 271 between Johnstown and Ligonier. While you can bushwhack your way to the site, it is easier and takes the same amount of time if you access it by using the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail.

This is a moderate hike that covers approximately 12 miles of trails and connecting paths.

