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## From the president

### That's progress

This fall the Shipshewana town council and park board submit a \$1 million grant to the Indiana Department of Transportation to develop all 3.6 miles of the Pumpkinvine in Lagrange County, plus a 1.7 mile extension downtown from 850W (where the Friends' ownership of the Pumpkinvine ends) and a spur to the south that connects the Pumpkinvine with Yoder's Department Store, Mennohof, the Shipshewana Visitor's Center and the Farmstead Inn and Conference Center. Supporting documents for the grant include letters from the president of the town council, from the president of the retail merchants association and from a local Amish businessman.

When I read the application, I couldn't help remembering the mood 12 years ago when I first talked to Shipshewana-area residents about the possibility of a multiuse trail on the Pumpkinvine corridor. My reception was cool to say the least. Even after I wrote up a response to their concerns, there was almost no support for this trail.

The mood today is very different. This spring, three young men from Shipshewana are organizing a 5K run using the Pumpkinvine as part of their course. Recently, a couple wrote to us about a new store they are opening in Shipshewana that they've decided to call "Along the Pumpkinvine," and added, we "would love to display a history of the Pumpkinvine railroad and info on the rails-to-trails work effort for our customers to see."

What happened to change attitudes toward this project among the leadership, merchants and others? I can think of several factors.

- The 1.75 miles of finished trail in Goshen has demonstrated the beauty and safety of multiuse trails. It's was much easier to attack the concept in the abstract than it is to attack a successful model. The pilot project we worked hard to establish has done its job.
- The continued support of our members (like you) who have refused to let the dream of a 17-mile linear park and greenway fade has been critical. Without your continued financial support, we would have folded shop long ago. Our legal expenses alone in 2004 were over \$35,000.
- Shipshewana's leaders (elected and otherwise) have seen the potential of the trail for both tourism and for enhancing the recreational opportunities of local citizens.
- Small victories have created a critical mass of support: we've reached the "tipping point" where the trail has made the transition from being a political liability to being politically acceptable.

Persistence has paid off, and our community will be the richer when the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is completed. A combination of community support, leadership from local public officials and the power of the trail itself is the formula that will make this rails-to-trail idea a reality.

### Sad statistic

America Bikes reports that the percentage of kids who walk or bike to school has dropped from 71 percent to 18 percent in just one generation. (From [RoadBikeRider.com](http://RoadBikeRider.com) Newsletter.)

– John D. Yoder



Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. are cyclists, hikers, equestrians and naturalists who are working with area park departments to create a linear park and greenway on the former Pumpkinvine corridor between Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana, Ind.

Learn more about the Pumpkinvine and Rails to Trails issues, or see back issues of our newsletter at: [www.pumpkinvine.org](http://www.pumpkinvine.org)

# Pumpkinvine will host 5K run

On May 7, Shippshewana will host the first annual Mayfest Road & Trail 5K Run as part of its annual Mayfest celebration. A one-mile non-competitive walk and a one-mile fun-run for kids ages 13 and under will also be held in conjunction with the road and trail race.

The 5K course passes well known Shippshewana landmarks and businesses and includes a half-mile stretch on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Race organizers Nate Jones, Merlin Miller and Lyle Bontrager wanted to offer runners something different for their race, and the Pumpkinvine Trail was a logical choice. "We like the idea of the Pumpkinvine Trail coming to Shippshewana and this is an excellent way to promote it and for the community to experience it," said Jones.

The 5k race will begin at 8 a.m. at the intersection of Morton and Main Streets. Both the one-mile walk and fun run will begin shortly afterwards. Participants of all ages are welcome to attend the event. Overall winner and age group awards will be given to the top male and female finishers in the 5K run. All participants will be eligible to win randomly drawn door prizes following the race.

Cost of the 5K run and one-mile walk is \$10 for pre-registered entrants and \$12 on race day. Cost for the one-mile fun run is \$5. Make checks payable to **Run Shippshewana** and send them to the following address: Run Shippshewana, c/o Erin Bontrager, 6250N 550W, Shippshewana, IN 46565. For additional information, please call (260) 562-9286 or e-mail [runshippshewana@hotmail.com](mailto:runshippshewana@hotmail.com).



Nate Jones, Merlin Miller and Lyle Bontrager organized the 5K run on the Pumpkinvine.



# 6th Annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

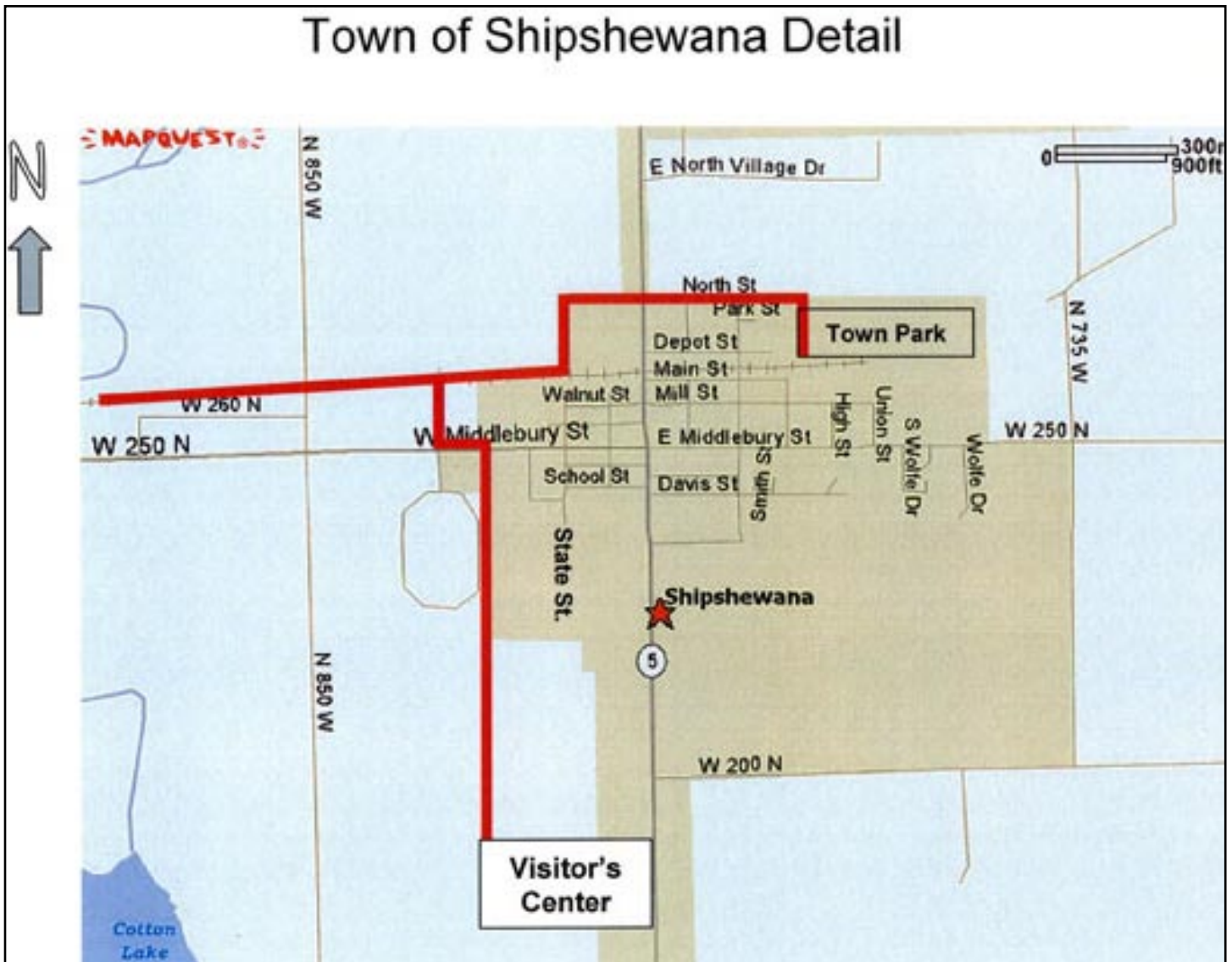
Dust the cobwebs off your bike and join hundreds of other cyclists for the 6th Annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride June 18. All ages and abilities are welcome. Riders have a choice of routes that are 17, 22, 42, 66 and 102 miles through the beautiful countryside of Elkhart and Lagrange counties. Last year over 600 riders participated.

Comments from the ride last year range from "fantastic" to "wonderful." Children of all ages enjoy the many horses, cattle, sheep and hogs along the route, and the rest stops receive universal praise for their variety, appropriateness of the food and the friendliness of the hosts and hostesses.

The ride starts at 7 a.m. at Abshire Park on SR 4 in Goshen. The popular barn loop begins at River Bend Park in Middlebury. Cost is \$17 for individuals who register before the day of the ride and \$20 the day of the ride. Families are \$34. To download a register form, go to [www.pumpkinvine.org](http://www.pumpkinvine.org).



## Town of Shipshewana Detail



## Shipshewana submits TEA 21 grant

The town of Shipshewana has applied for a TEA-21 grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) for development of 5.3 miles of the Pumpkinvine (and two spurs) in Lagrange County. The town's TEA-21 application in 2003 to develop 3.6 miles was not funded.

The additional 1.7 miles in this application comes from a connector linking CR 850W to the town park on the east side of town and a spur that connects with the elementary school and several businesses along SR 5, including Yoder's Department Store, Mennohof, the Farmstead Inn and Conference Center and the new Visitor's Center.

"The town council, park board and retail merchants see this trail as a significant boost to the tourist industry, as well as a great place for local residents to walk and bike in safety," said Town Manager Norm Kauffmann. "We're very happy that we can bring the trail to the center of town."

The Elkhart County Park and Recreation Board received a TEA-21 grant last fall to build the 2.4 miles of the Pumpkinvine corridor from York Drive in Middlebury to the Elkhart/LaGrange

County line. This application connects the Lagrange County portion with the Elkhart County portion at the county line.

The added length of the trail from the two spurs impacts the whole project as well. "These two extensions of the trail add 1.7 miles to the length of the project," said Jim Smith, Friends executive director who helped prepare the grant. "And since the value of the land is the 20 percent local match for the grant, the increased length and value of the land in town raises the potential funding for trail development from \$736,000 to \$1 million. In a sense, we're fortunate that INDOT turned the Shipshewana grant down last year because this proposal is much better."

TEA-21 funds are from the enhancement part of the federal highway program and are specifically set aside for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Projects from all over the state compete for the funds. Awards are announced in September.

# Coming Soon— the Middlebury Greenway *by Mark Salee*

The Middlebury Park & Recreation Board and the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail have been working for many years to convert a half-mile section of the Pumpkinvine rail corridor into an urban greenway. The good news is that the Middlebury Greenway will be a reality by the end of this summer.

This section of the corridor is adjacent to the Middlebury Community Historical Museum, the historic Krider World's Fair Garden Park and includes a 158-foot wood trestle bridge over the Little Elkhart River. The Middlebury Greenway is being funded with a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. In addition to the section of Pumpkinvine corridor donated by the Friends to the Town of Middlebury, the Friends also have donated \$5,000 toward trail amenities.

Unfortunately the grant and donations will not cover all costs necessary to complete the Greenway. To help fund the creation of the Middlebury Greenway, the Middlebury Park & Recreation Board is soliciting donations, which will be used in three different ways: to assist in the overall construction of the greenway trail; toward the renovation of the trestle bridge; or for greenway amenities such as landscaping, interpretive signs or picnic tables.

Interested individuals or organizations may send a donation to the Middlebury Park & Recreation Board, Linear Greenway Park Fund, PO Box 812, Middlebury, IN 46540. Please include a note indicating how you wish your donation to be used for this project.



Work to renovate the trestle bridge over the Little Elkhart River began in February. Here are before (top) and after pictures looking north.



## Print to support Middlebury Greenway



In addition to your direct support for the Middlebury Greenway, you may also support the project by purchasing a print depicting the trestle bridge over the Little Elkhart River. Arlene Moore, a Middlebury artist, is having a limited number of prints made from her original oil painting of the bridge. Arlene has generously agreed to donate a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the prints toward the renovation of the bridge. The color prints are 18"x 24" in size on rag paper. Each print is numbered and signed by the artist. The cost for the print is \$50.

Anyone interested in owning this beautiful scene should contact Arlene Moore at (574) 825-1220 or stop in to her shop, Cottage Grove Furniture and Crafts, located in downtown Middlebury at 107 E. Warren Street.



# Middlebury Park and Recreation Board president to speak at Annual Meeting and dinner

Mark Salee, president of the Middlebury Park and Recreation Board will be the featured speaker at the 2005 Annual Meeting and Dinner of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine

Nature Trail. The meeting will be Thursday, April 28, 2005, at the Essenhaus Inn & Conference Center, 240 U.S. 20 in Middlebury. The doors will open at 6 p.m. for those who would like to look over the maps, literature and promotional items that will be on display or talk with members of the Pumpkinvine Board. The meeting itself will be from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The cost per person, including tip and gratuity, is \$18, and **reservations are required**.

## Mark Salee

Mark Salee resides in Middlebury and has been a member of the Middlebury Park and Recreation Board since 1999. As board member and president, he has been a key player in the progress made to date on the trail in Middlebury. In 2002, Mark was instrumental in helping Middlebury receive a grant from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to develop the Pumpkinvine Trail from Wayne Street to York Drive, a 0.65 mile segment. Also in 2002, the Friends donated that segment of the corridor to the town of Middlebury. Mark has a leading role in the development of the trail, expected to be completed this year. He will discuss this project as well as the over-all trail plans the park board has mapped out for the town.

When not working on park board projects, Mark is a career public-sector employee with 20 years experience, including ground water protection at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, air quality at the Department of Public Health in Madison, Wisconsin, and his current position as

Regulatory Affairs Specialist focusing on water and wastewater at the Elkhart Public Works and Utilities. He has a Master of Science degree from Indiana University.

In addition to hearing Mark speak about the activities in Middlebury, you will receive an update on the overall Pumpkinvine Nature Trail project, to include details about:

- Success obtaining funding for the trail between Middlebury and the Elkhart/Lagrange County line.
- Activity to obtain funding from the county line into Shippshewana.
- Recent settlement of the class-action law suit to the great benefit of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.
- Other key negotiations, arbitration and legal actions to resolve issues critical to trail development.

Attendees will have opportunity to win one of a number of valuable door prizes, as well as purchase promotional items including Pumpkinvine mugs, pens, license plates and the new 2005 T-shirts.

It is clear to those of us working daily on this project that your support is critical to our continued success. **So, please make this annual meeting a priority in your busy schedule.** Also invite family members, friends, neighbors and any others who would be interested in learning more about our plans for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

If you cannot attend the meeting, please consider sending a gift in lieu of your reservation to help with our on-going expenses. All donations to the Friends are tax-deductible. Send your check for reservations and/or gift to Friends of the Pumpkinvine, P.O. Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527-0392 as soon as possible. Upon receipt, we will send your tickets to you.

For additional information, check out our web site at [www.pumpkinvine.org](http://www.pumpkinvine.org). For questions, contact Jim Smith ([kneesrus@comcast.net](mailto:kneesrus@comcast.net) or 574-533-7862).

**Friends of the Pumpkinvine Annual Meeting and Dinner**  
**Essenhaus Inn & Conference Center**  
**Thursday, April 28, 2005; doors open at 6 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m.**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send in your reservation as soon as possible to secure your place at the table.**

- Circle # of tickets and write check for that amount.
- Make check payable to: Friends of the Pumpkinvine.  
Mail to: **Friends of the Pumpkinvine, P.O. Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527-0392**
- Your ticket(s) will be mailed to you. (For reservations received after April 16, tickets will be available for pickup at the Conference Center after 6 p.m. the evening of the Annual Meeting and Dinner.)

**Can't attend? Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Friends.**

- Enter your name and address above. Indicate the amount of your gift: \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Make check payable to: Friends of the Pumpkinvine and mail to address above. A receipt will be sent to you for your gift.

**TICKET CALCULATOR**

1 x \$18.00 = \$18.00  
 2 x \$18.00 = \$36.00  
 3 x \$18.00 = \$54.00  
 4 x \$18.00 = \$72.00

## Two board members resign

Two long-time members for Friends board ended their work with the board this winter. Galen Kauffmann, one of the founding members of the board, served on the board for 12 years. In fact, Kauffmann, an attorney, wrote the articles of incorporation and the bylaws that have guided day-to-day operations of the board ever since. He served as board vice president from 1993 to 1999.

“Galen’s legal expertise was an invaluable asset to our board,” said John Yoder, board president. “We could never have paid for the all advice he gave us when we were getting started.”

Kauffmann will continue to be involved with the board as one of several lawyers who give the board legal council.

Myron Yoder served on the board since 1994 as a strong advocate for cyclists.

In recent years, he used his expertise in electronics to assist with communications during the annual Pumpkinvine bike ride. “Myron’s enthusiasm for the Pumpkinvine was evident at every board meeting,” John Yoder said. “We could always count on him to give us a sense of hope when we were discouraged about some trail development.”

Myron will continue to be involved with the Friends as a worker on trail clean ups and as a volunteer with the bike ride.

## Ringenberg named to Friends board

Frances Ringenberg, a Middlebury resident who enjoys walking, was elected to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. board at its February 2005 meeting.

Ringenberg became interested in rail-trails when her family lived in Minneapolis and Chicago. “Both of our homes in the Chicago area were close to the Illinois Prairie Path, a 61-mile rails-to-trails project,” she said. “There is real delight in returning to a more rural setting and appreciating it in a new way.”

When her family was planning their move to Elkhart County in July of 2003 at the top of their list was buying a house in a location where we could do real walking.

“My husband and I found walking to be one of our best tools for dealing with stress as well as battling middle age flabbiness,” she said. “It has also been one of the ways we spend time together catching up on the deeper layers of our lives. After lots of looking we found a home in Middlebury where we could walk to the library, the bank, the hardware, the post office... as well as Krider Gardens.”

She also heard rumors of a hiking/biking trail in Middlebury and immediately wanted to know more. “I was delighted to discover that our daily loop already included walking a potential part of the trail, along Railroad Street.”

Ringenberg got involved with the Friends last year, helping with registration at the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride. She also helped on a work day project to clear the corridor.

“One of the great things about this area is the energy here to contribute and make a difference,” she said. “I am just beginning to realize the many years of hard work and creative thinking already put into making the Pumpkinvine Trail a possibility and am honored to join those who have a vision for this gift to our community. Working with the Pumpkinvine Board fits with my desire to serve community and care for creation.”



A random inspection of the Pumpkinvine corridor in late February between CR 35 and CR 37 south of Middlebury revealed that someone had cut 36 mature cherry trees on the Friends’ property. Here board members Bob Carrico and Larry Neff inspect the damage. They spray painted the stumps and timber remains of the harvested trees with numbers to document the damage. The Friends have turned the investigation of the illegal cutting over to the county conservation officer. An initial conversation with the officer revealed that illegal timber cutting has become a major problem in Indiana since good timber has become less and less available. Cherry trees are particularly valuable.

## Vandalism along the Pumpkinvine



You may become a member of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. or renew your membership by completing the form below. Your tax-deductible donation will be used to complete the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and toward paying the day-to-day expenses of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. No officers receive remuneration.

By showing your membership card, you will be eligible for discounts on specified purchases at the following area bicycle shops: Elkhart Bicycle and Fitness, Elkhart; Family Bicycle, Elkhart; Hollinger Bicycle, Goshen; Lincoln Avenue Cycling and Fitness, Goshen; and House of Bicycles, Osceola.

## Don't forget your membership dues!

If the date on the label of this newsletter has passed, it's time to renew your membership in the **Friends**. Membership levels are:

_____ Individual \$20	_____ Family \$30	_____ Sustaining \$50
_____ Contributing \$100	_____ Patron \$250	_____ Benefactor \$500

Send your membership payment to:

**Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail • P.O. Box 392 • Goshen, IN 46527**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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