Work on closing the gap in the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail between County Road 33 and County Road 20 began at the end of July, and the construction company, Pulver Asphalt and Paving, Albion, Ind., were scheduled to finish the job by the end of October. However, Pulver has since pushed back the completion date because one of the subcontractors was not able to build the bridge over the south fork of Pine Creek as soon as expected.

“The bridge builders had other projects to work on and could not give the resources to building the bridge when they were needed,” said Bernie Cunningham, superintendent of Elkhart County Parks, the agency managing construction.

While it is possible the trail will be paved this fall, Cunningham thinks that it is more likely to happen in the spring. In the meantime, work will continue grooming the trail shoulders, installing fencing and vegetation screening, creating a small parking lot at County Road 33 and building an overpass connection two land parcels separated by the trail.

“This extension of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail will definitely be done by the time of the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride on June 15,” Cunningham said.
Learning from three trail incidents

In early August, a young male was observed riding back and forth on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail between the State Road 13 and County Road 43 on a moped. Besides the illegality of riding a motorized vehicle on the trail, the person was also harassing other trail users. Those trail users called the police, and they arrested the person for riding a motorized vehicle on the trail.

Around the same time, two men set up a table at the County Road 37 parking lot to distribute religious materials to trail users, not understanding that it is illegal to sell or distribute literature in a public park. And I recently heard about a cyclist who was traveling at a high speed and ran into the side of a car crossing the trail at Sunrise Lane (where cars have the right of way) damaging the door of the car, and then somehow managed to speed away without taking responsibility for the damage he caused to the car—a thoughtless case of hitting and running.

These types of incidents are, fortunately, rare on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. In the 18 years since the first 1.75 miles of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail opened in 2000, there have been very few illegal or anti-social activities reported. Indeed, the trail is one of the safest parks in the area. Most cyclists, walkers and runners are considerate of others and anti-social behavior is rare.

Yet, as these three incidents illustrate, there are a few people in our society who are inconsiderate of others (e.g., the speeding cyclist), unaware of trail rules (e.g., no solicitation or sales on trail property) or are acting illegally (e.g., riding a motorized vehicle on the trail). And even though park staff patrol the Pumpkinvine on a regular basis, it is important for all trail users to be alert to illegal or anti-social behavior.

What should you do if you see such activities on the Pumpkinvine?

1. First, do not attempt to be the police. It is not your job to enforce trail rules. If you observe illegal activity on the trail, you should call 911, report what you saw, and give them the time and location of the incident.

2. If you see someone breaking the posted park rules (like putting up a sign advertising a house for sale, handing out literature or riding over 15 mph or recklessly), report the incident to the appropriate managing agency with as much detail as possible. A list of agencies and their contact information is found on page 5 of this newsletter. It would help to take a photo of the incident as well.

Finally, the best way for us to keep the Pumpkinvine safe is to use it often and demonstrate good walking and cycling behavior. Cyclists should alert walkers to their presence with a bell (a legal requirement for cyclists in Indiana) and announcing that they are “passing on the left.” Walkers can be considerate by not walking three abreast, blocking the trail and turning down their music so they can hear a cyclist’s bell and their words, “passing on the left.” Together we can keep the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail a safe place to exercise and enjoy nature.
Negotiations continue to close the gap in the Pumpkinvine between CR 20 to CR 35

The last gap in the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail in Elkhart County, between County Road 20 and County Road 35, has been the focus of discussion between the Friends of the Pumpkinvine and the families that live in this section since the summer of 2016. Early in the discussions, the Friends of the Pumpkinvine received verbal approval from the people who owned the 600 feet of the Pumpkinvine corridor that the Friends did not own that they were willing to work with the Friends to make the trail happen. Based on that commitment, the Friends applied for and received a $250,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Elkhart County to build the trail in this section.

Still, arriving at a route that will work for everyone has been challenging. Look for an announcement about the route in the March 2019 newsletter and earlier on Facebook: www.facebook.com/Pumpkinvine

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine need to raise more than $100,000 from donations, sponsors and the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride to build this section.

OWNERS WILLING TO SELL TO THE FRIENDS

HOW YOU CAN HELP CLOSE THIS GAP

Donate to the Campaign to Close the Gaps
Contributions of any amount are welcome. Individual, families and organizations that contribute $1,000 between Jan. 1, 2017 and June 30, 2019 will have their names displayed on a plaque in this section. Contributions of $10,000 or more will be honored with their name on a stone placed along the trail.

Mail contributions to:
Friends of the Pumpkinvine, P.O. Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527
Winnebago expansion impacts Pumpkinvine

Winnebago Corp., a manufacturer of recreational vehicles in Elkhart County, recently expanded their plant east of the Dairy Queen and north of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Because of the plant’s large footprint, it required a retention pond to manage stormwater runoff and prevent flooding.

Although there wasn’t room for a retention area on Winnebago’s land on the north side of the Pumpkinvine, Winnebago did owned property on the south side of the Pumpkinvine corridor. So, the company’s consultants, JPR Corp., arranged with the board of Elkhart County Parks to place a discharge pipe under the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail to drain water from the north to their retention pond on the south side. Installing the pipe required workers to cut through the trail surface and remove some vegetation along the trail.

After the pipe was installed, JPR Corp., resurfaced the trail and planted trees and bushes on the trail slopes that will stabilize the slopes so that they will not erode and damage the trail. In addition, JPR Corp. will install a drinking fountain along the trail east of the Dairy Queen.
Riding the Pumpkinvine reduces stress

By Andrea Thompson

If you are a Pumpkinvine “regular,” chances are you might have seen Lori Copsey on the trail. A 25-year Goshen resident and avid cyclist, Lori Copsey lives near the library, so it’s convenient for her to access the trail at Abshire Park where she begins most of her rides on the Pumpkinvine these days.

Before the Pumpkinvine was built, Lori would ride the Millrace Trail in Goshen, because she doesn’t like to ride on the street. However, once the Pumpkinvine opened, it quickly became her trail of choice.

“I prefer to ride on the Pumpkinvine, because I like to go hard sometimes, and there aren’t as many walkers,” Lori says.

For her, riding the trail has physical and mental benefits. She has a busy yet rewarding career as a Behavior Consultant for the Elkhart County Special Education Cooperative (ECSEC), which serves the Baugo, Concord, Fairfield, Goshen, Middlebury and Wa-Nee school systems. Here, Lori meets with teachers to develop behavior and medical plans for students, ages 3 to 22 who have significant disabilities. Her job is to maximize each student’s independence so that they can grow to their full potential and meet their goals with dignity. Every decision is a “heavy” one because a person’s ability to thrive is at stake.

Once she leaves work, “I ride the trail as often as I can, which is usually about three days a week. It helps me clear my head, reflect on my day and just unload.” She usually completes a 12-mile ride in the evening before it begins to get dark.

“I look forward to my rides. I’m able to reframe problems and turn them into opportunities. This reduces stress and lets me focus on other things at home,” Lori says.

That’s the beauty of cycling (or doing any exercise) in the fresh air: improved creative thinking and problem solving. After a long session on the trail, Lori, feels revitalized, more positive and less tense, which is always a good thing. And, it’s a bonus (beyond physical activity) that the Pumpkinvine can deliver for anyone.

Contact information

Medical emergency on the trail: call 911. Do not call 911 about trail conditions.

General information on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

Check: www.pumpkinvine.org Email: Friends@pumpkinvine.org Call: 574-535-6458

Use the following emails and phone numbers to contact the agencies that manage the trail. The areas the four agencies manage are identified by the color of the mile markers: Goshen (blue); Elkhart County Parks (brown); Middlebury (green); Shipshewana (red). If in doubt, call 574-535-6458.

Goshen Park and Recreation
State Road 4 to County Road 28
Tanya Heyde
574-534-2901
ParksRecreation@GoshenCity.com

Middlebury Park and Recreation
US 20 to York Dr.
Tom Enright
Weekdays: 574-825-1499 Weekends: 574-533-4151
Parks.Middleburyin.com

Elkhart County Parks
County Road 28 to U.S. 20 and York Dr. to LaGrange Co. line
Weekdays: 574-535-6458
Weekends: 574-875-7422
nsteele@elkhartcounty.com

Shipshewana-LaGrange County
Elkhart Co.-LaGrange Co. to CR 850 W
Bob Shanahan
Medical emergency: 260-768-4310
Trail issues: 260-768-4743
townmanager@Shipshewana.org
Memorial to Ike Heign dedicated Sept. 19, 2018

Members of the Heign family gathered Sept. 19 along the Pumpkinvine at a spot south of Sunrise Lane in Middlebury to dedicate a section the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail to the memory of the family patriarch, Ike Heign. The story of that dedication goes back to 2005 when the Heign family agreed to sell the west half of the Pumpkinvine corridor adjacent to their property to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine, and the Friends agree to honor Ike’s memory in this section. “When the history of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is written, this purchase will go down as the most critical one we made, after the initial purchase from Penn Central,” said John Yoder, Friends president.

The need to purchase the land resulted from the fact that Penn Central held this part of the Pumpkinvine corridor as an easement, and when they abandoned the railroad, it reverted to landowners on the east and west side of the corridor. “None of the landowners on the east side of the corridor were interested in selling their half, but fortunately the Heigns owned all of the west side of the corridor that had reverted, and we could build the trail on 33 feet instead of 66,” Yoder said.

The Friends’ Dec. 2005 newsletter described the purchase this way: “As early as 2000, the Friends advised the Heigns of their interest in purchasing the west half of the corridor. However, the timing wasn’t right for the Heigns. Then, in 2004 Mary’s husband Ike and her son, Jeff, attended the Friends’ annual meeting to become more acquainted with the project. One week later, on May 4, 2004, and before any further discussion of a purchase, Ike died in a tragic automobile accident.”

Jim Smith, former executive director of the Friends, and Bob Carrico another board member, picked up on the negotiations to purchase the property a year later. At the dedication of the memorial, Smith recalled the meeting to sign the purchase agreement. The purchase was “not a big parcel of land,” he said, only “about one acre in size . . . But it was huge to us! Without this 33-foot wide parcel, the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail would pass through the million-dollar US 20 tunnel, go past “That Pretty Place” and end with a whimper . . . in the middle of nowhere. We really needed that piece of land; without it, there was no obvious way to build a trail through Middlebury. But of course, we did not want to look or sound desperate as we made an offer to purchase the ‘Heign property.’”

Fortunately, the meeting went well. “We weren’t far into our meeting before we realized that Mary Lou and her sons were supporters of the trail,” Smith said. “They too wanted to see it pass through Middlebury and link up with Shipshewana and Goshen. It didn’t take us long to reach terms acceptable to all. Then Mary Lou mentioned that she would like the portion of the trail that would be built on the “Heign Property” to be named in honor of her late husband, Ike. I hand-wrote that condition onto the bottom of the agreement, and we both initialed it.”

Then in 2013, the corridor was transferred to the Middlebury Park Board and the trail was built. But in the following years, the promise to honor Ike languished until Cathy Heign, a daughter-in-law, contacted the Friends and suggested using a large rock the family had found as the place to write an inscription honoring Ike.

“I was delighted to learn that after some 13 years, that handwritten promise at the bottom of the purchase agreement was to become reality,” Smith said. “I am very pleased to be here today, to again thank Mary Lou and her family for selling the land that made the trail through Middlebury possible, and at long last, to participate in dedicating this section of the trail to the memory of Ike Heign.”
The 10th Maple City Walk donates part of fee to Friends of the Pumpkinvine

The 10th annual Maple City Walk, hosted by Downtown Goshen, Inc. was held September 15 on a beautiful fall day. Fifty-five walkers started and finished the walk: four marathon walkers, 32 half marathoners, and 9 10K walkers. To celebrate our 10th year and to thank the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, $5 of the registration fee will be donated to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine for trail maintenance and closing trail gaps.

The start and finish were the Clover Hills building at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds. The route started on the Maple City Greenway Monroe Trail continuing on the Prairie Trail to the Abshire Trail and linking to the Pumpkinvine. Most of the walk was on the Pumpkinvine with the half way mark for the 10k CR 28; CR 33 for the half and 1.1 miles past the Middlebury Dairy Queen for the marathoners.

The Maple City Walk is not competitive but is timed. The half marathoners have five hours to complete the course and the marathoners nine hours. All walkers completed the course in the time allotted.

The purpose of the walk is to highlight the Maple City Greenway, the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and to encourage walking for health. All walkers who finish receive a unique medal designed by Gerrit Huig, a previous Goshen resident and acclaimed cartoonist.

The Maple City Walk is currently the only long distance walking event in Indiana, and we are fortunate to have resources like the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Some walkers experience the Pumpkinvine for the first time during this walk.

Many thanks to our walkers, volunteers and sponsors. Premiere sponsors were Everence and the Well Foundation, a field of interest fund held at the Community Foundation of Elkhart County. Other sponsors were WNIT, Cripe Septic Services, Goshen Parks and Recreation, Elkhart County Parks and Recreation, Friends of the Pumpkinvine, Hawkins Water Tech, Maple City Market, Kercher’s Sunrise Market, Woldruff’s Shoes and Apparel.

The date for the 2019 walk is September 21. Grab your walking shoes, invite a friend and enjoy a special Pumpkinvine experience.
The first Pumpkinvine Poetry contest last year was a rousing success. The winning poems gave us insights into three unique experience of the trail. They were printed in the March Trail Talk newsletter and read at the Friends of the Pumpkinvine annual dinner in April.

The challenge this year remains the same: help trail users understand how you experience the unique relationships and qualities of this linear park in a poem.

Here are a few guidelines. The poem should:
1. Be inspired by the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.
2. In some way make clear that is about the Pumpkinvine.
3. Should be no more than 40 lines.
4. Be original.

The winning poems will be printed in the Trail Talk newsletter, posted on our website and read at the annual dinner.


Send your poem to friends@pumpkinvine.org by January 31, 2019.

- The first-place winner will receive four tickets to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine annual dinner or the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride.
- The second-place winner will receive two tickets to the annual dinner or Pumpkinvine Bike Ride.
- The third-place winner will receive one ticket to the annual dinner or the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride.
- Friends of the Pumpkinvine board members and families are not eligible.

Parking lots at CR 35 and CR 43 will close in November

Parking lots on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail at County Road 35 and County Road 43 will close sometime in November. The exact date of the closing depends on the temperature and weather conditions, according to Nick Steele, Tail and Safety Coordinator for Elkhart County Parks.

“I use my best judgment when it comes to closing them for the season,” Steele said. Because the gravel used as a base at County Road 43 is round and not a crushed limestone, it cannot be plowed efficiently, and therefore, would be plowed into piles with the snow.

The lot at County Road 35, however, “has little to no gravel base and becomes extremely muddy and hazardous,” Steele said. “So, from a maintenance stand point, it’s much easier to close the lots (at County Road 35 and County Road 43) down once the weather turns nasty.” (This parking lot will remain unfinished until there is definite word on how the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail will cross County Road 35.) The County Road 37 parking lot, however, is paved and is maintained throughout the winter months.

Other factors that impacts the decision to close the parking lots are that Elkhart County Parks no longer have seasonal, part-time staff to maintain all the parks nor the equipment necessary to keep everything open and well maintained.

Steele also noted that the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is the last trail in the Elkhart County Parks system to be plowed in winter. “If the snow becomes too intense or we feel its unsafe to maintain, it will be closed,” he said.
Church group tackles invasive species

Most of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail has wooded edges that is habitat for a diversity of wildlife. The trees, shrubs, vines and herbaceous ground cover provide fruit and seeds, green browse, winter cover, nesting sites, and protection from predators. One of the many services that Isabela Torres, our 2018 summer intern, provided was to design a long-term plan to increase the quality of the wooded edge of the trail. Engaging volunteers to remove invasive species and to plant native ones is a big part of that plan. Isabela established a volunteer data base of churches, schools and other groups to provide volunteers to remove invasive plants.

The first group to volunteer was from LifePoint Church of Goshen on Oct. 7. According to pastor Michael Hays, “LifePoint sent these volunteers to work on the Pumpkinvine Trail as part of our ‘Go Sunday’ celebration, where we all gathered at church briefly that morning to then go out into our community and show God’s love through service. We had groups volunteering all over Goshen. The Pumpkinvine is a valuable part of the community, so when we learned of a need for some work along the trail, it seemed like a good project to add to our list.”

The 12 volunteers, along with Bud Wulliman from the Friends board, worked on the Pumpkinvine south of Abshire Park, removing tree of heaven saplings from the edges of the trail. They lopped off the woody stems and sprayed the cut ends with herbicide. In preparation for the volunteers, Aaron Sawatsky-Kingsley (Goshen City Forester), Bud Wulliman and John Smith (volunteer naturalist) had marked invasive plants for removal.

Increasing the quality of the wooded edges of the Pumpkinvine is a long-term, on-going project. Volunteer groups of Friends of the Pumpkinvine and outside groups, such as LifePoint Church, will be needed from May through October each year. Look for calls for volunteers in upcoming Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail Newsletter and Facebook page.
**Cross-country skiing is best at county parks, not on the Pumpkinvine**

The best places to cross-country ski in this area are at the four Elkhart County parks where the trails are groomed: Ox Bow County Park has a 2.5-mile loop—trailhead begins at Fisherman’s Camp Shelter. Bonneyville Mill County Park has a 3-mile loop—trailhead at the main parking lot and Briar Patch Shelter. Cobus Creek County Park has a 2-mile loop—trailhead at the parking lot. River Preserve County Park has a 3-mile loop—trailhead at Benton Spillway. None of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is groomed.

In addition, skiing on trails with an asphalt surface like most of the Pumpkinvine has the potential to damage the surface and the ski poles. Consequently, the only recommended place to cross-country ski on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is the limestone section of the trail from State Road 4 to County Road 28 north east of Goshen.

**Note:**
- You can rent cross-country skis at the Goshen Park Dept., 524 E. Jackson, Goshen. Phone: (574) 537-3844.
- Elkhart County Parks does not plow the parking lots at County Road 35 and County Road 37 and County Road 43.

### Pumpkinvine section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managing Agency</th>
<th>Section Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goshen Park and Recreation</strong></td>
<td>- The city plows the Pumpkinvine one plow-width wide from State Road 4 to County Road 28 (the limestone section) and from State Road 4 to the water plant on 5th St. That leaves the other half of the trail open for cross-country skiing. &lt;br&gt; - The unplowed portion of the trail is not groomed for cross-country skiing. &lt;br&gt; - Plowing the trail is a low priority.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Middlebury</strong></td>
<td>- The town plows half the width of the Pumpkinvine from York St. to the U.S. 20 tunnel. &lt;br&gt; - The trail is not groomed for cross-country skiing. &lt;br&gt; - Now that Ridge Run Trail is open, plowing the trail is a priority because it is part of Safe Routes to School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elkhart County Parks</strong></td>
<td>- Elkhart County Parks plows the Pumpkinvine: &lt;br&gt;  - From County Road 28 to County Road 33. However, this section may not be plowed due to blowing and drifting snow. &lt;br&gt;  - From the County Road 35 to the north side of the U.S. 20 tunnel. &lt;br&gt;  - From York Dr. to County Road 1150W in LaGrange Co. &lt;br&gt;  - The trail is not groomed for cross-country skiing. &lt;br&gt;  - Plowing the trail is a low priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shipshewana</strong></td>
<td>- Shipshewana does not plow the trail from County Road 850W to 1150W, and the trail is not groomed for cross-country skiing.</td>
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To schedule your 2019 event on the Pumpkinvine, start with the Friends of the Pumpkinvine website

To assist non-profit organizations planning a biking, walking or running event on the Pumpkinvine, the Pumpkinvine Advisory Committee has prepared a Trail Event Guideline and Application packet. The goal of the guidelines is to assist those planning an event to have a safe and well-planned event.

Event organizers are also asked to donate to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine for events that have a fee. This donation will assist with the ongoing cost of trail maintenance, as well as assistance with the trail marketing through the Friends website. The goal is to keep this trail in top-notch condition.

The Event Guidelines and Application are available at the Friends of the Pumpkinvine website. If you have questions, contact Staycie Gervais (Pumpkinvineevents@gmail.com or 574-537-3844), and she will connect you to the managing agency where your ride or walk is taking place.

Kroger shoppers can support the Friends of the Pumpkinvine by using their Plus card

Kroger shoppers, who also are supporters of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine, generated more than $1,100 for the Friends of the Pumpkinvine in 2017 through the Kroger Community Rewards Program simply by using their Plus card when they shop. The Kroger Community Rewards Program donates a percentage of each purchase to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine when Kroger shoppers pick the Friends of the Pumpkinvine from a list of eligible organizations on the Kroger website.

Remember that you must renew your participation each January for the program to work. Instructions for how to sign up are at http://www.pumpkinvine.org/html/kroger_rewards.html.

AmazonSmile shoppers can support the Friends of the Pumpkinvine

If you shop at SmileAmazon.com, your purchases can support the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. Go to https://smile.amazon.com/ch/35-1871609 and link your account to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine.
Complete the form below to become a supporting member of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail or to renew your membership. Your tax-deductible donation will be used to build and maintain the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and goes toward paying the day-to-day expenses of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. No board members receive remuneration. By showing your Friends’ membership card, you are eligible for discounts on specified purchases at the following area bicycle shops: Elkhart Bicycle Shop, Elkhart; Family Bicycle, Elkhart; Lincoln Avenue Cycling and Fitness, Goshen; House of Bicycles, Osceola; and Pumpkinvine Cyclery, Middlebury.

Has your membership expired?
You are receiving this newsletter because you have contributed to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine in the past five years. If the date on the label of this newsletter has passed, we hope you’ll consider renewing your membership in the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Membership levels are:

- Individual $30
- Family $40
- Sustaining $60
- Contributing $100
- Patron $250
- Benefactor $500
- Benefactor Silver $1,000
- Benefactor Gold $2,500
- Benefactor Platinum > $5,000

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 ____________________________ E-mail __________________________