New section closes a gap in the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

After significant delays in construction due to an unusually rainy spring, the new section of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail between County Road 33 and County Road 20 finally opened for riding on June 15, the day of the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride. “Pulver Construction worked till 8 p.m. on June 14 to finish putting a coat of asphalt on top of the base coat of asphalt to meet the promised deadline of being done in time for the bike ride,” said Bernie Cunningham, director of Elkhart County Parks.

Riders who used the new section were pleased with the results, which goes east on the old Pumpkinvine railroad corridor for a third of a mile before turning north through open pasture along the south fork of Pine Creek, then turns east to parallel County Road 20 for a half mile.

One benefit of the new route is that it eliminates major hills on County Road 33 and County Road 20.
From the president

Two kinds of stewardship

At the Friends of the Pumpkinvine annual dinner in April, my theme was the importance of trail stewardship. I made the case that the creation of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail resulted from the desire of trail advocates to preserve the potential of an abandoned railroad corridor, i.e., a desire closely aligned with the dictionary definition of stewardship: “the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care.” I also made the point that past stewardship attitude had carried over into the present where we see the four agencies (and the Friends’ Bob Carrico) that manage the Pumpkinvine working daily to keep it in good shape – cutting the grass, removing fallen trees, filling holes in the asphalt and removing debris from the trail after storms.

The most challenging part of Pumpkinvine stewardship will be in the future when trail construction is finished because we all know that maintaining a trail is much less glamorous than building one. I concluded with the comment: “Stewardship in the future will be most successful if we continue our public-private partnership, park departments and Friends advocating for the Pumpkinvine by putting our combined resources toward preserving what we’ve built together.”

Since that meeting, I’ve become aware of the importance of another kind of stewardship, something less tangible, but nonetheless just as significant for the ongoing health of the Pumpkinvine as removing fallen trees that block the trail. That stewardship involves the way trail users conduct themselves on the trail. Let me explain.

Recently, at our Pumpkinvine Advisory Committee meeting, I heard reports of people using the area where the Pumpkinvine crosses County Road 28 as a parking lot. Parking at the side of the county road is not only illegal, but it has the potential to block the view of trail users to oncoming traffic. And it annoys the trail neighbors who don’t want cars parked in that area, a practice that encourages others to do the same, creating an eyesore and potentially a traffic hazard.

The same problem with unauthorized parking has occurred along County Road 26 where people have parked in the concrete easements along that section. Another example of bad manners was when trail users trespassed into a farmer’s barn to get a drink of water.

How do these incidents relate to trail stewardship? To me these examples of bad behavior show that a few trail users don’t understand the importance of maintaining the legacy of being good neighbors that we trail advocates established in the last 20 years. This legacy has made it possible for trail users and adjacent landowners to live in harmony, as we predicted would be the case when we proposed the trail 25 years ago. We said at the time that trail users would obey the rules and respect private property and that has been the case in all be a few incidents. Being good neighbors is a heritage we want to preserve into the future just as we want to preserve the physical trail.

Both types of stewardship will require dedication and a spirit that puts what is best for the community (parking in designated parking areas) ahead of personal gratification (parking wherever you feel like it and trespassing to get a drink of water).
Brittany Short named transition coordinator for the Friends of the Pumpkinvine

At its May meeting, the Friends of the Pumpkinvine board of directors named Brittany Short, the board’s vice president, to the position of transition coordinator. In this position, she will be responsible for helping the board make decisions about the future direction of the Friends’ organization in light of the retirement of board president John Yoder at the end of 2019 and the likely completion of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail in the near future.

Short has been a member of the Friends’ board since 2016 and has been a member of the board’s executive committee as vice president since 2017. Also, in 2017, she took on the leadership of planning for the Friends’ annual dinner and for the last three years has been the point person for negotiations to close the gap in the Pumpkinvine between County Road 20 and County Road 35.

Her major responsibility will be to assist the board to define its future role alongside the four government agencies that manage the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail once the trail is completed. She will also consult with other trail groups about how to manage a leadership transition and the change in its role once a trail is finished.

To free Brittany up from some of her current board responsibilities and her job with Pumpkinvine Cyclery, the board hired her half time for six months beginning July 1.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK these local businesses and organizations that supported the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. and Pumpkinvine Bike Ride.

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Frequently Asked Questions about the new section of the Pumpkinvine

Q. Who built the overpass?
   Custom Manufacturing, Clinton, Wisconsin.

Q: Is this section finished?
   No, it is rideable, but not finished. Additions will include privacy fencing near the overpass and at CR 33, a donor-recognition area, a second entrance-exit to County Road 20 and signage.

Q: Why is there a curb along part of the trail east of the overpass?
   The curb is designed to keep gravel from the lane just south of the trail from coming onto the asphalt trail. This lane gives the landowners access to the land they own south of the trail.

Q: Why is there an overpass in this section?
   The overpass is the result of negotiations between the Friends of the Pumpkinvine, Elkhart County Parks and the adjacent landowners who had land and buildings on both sides of the trail. The Friends and Elkhart County Parks did not want the trail to leave the old Pumpkinvine corridor in this area because it would have put the trail into wetlands. But the landowners were reluctant to divide their property with the trail. The Friends of the Pumpkinvine and Elkhart County Parks promised an overpass if the landowners permitted the trail to stay on the old Pumpkinvine corridor and avoid the wetlands in this section.

Q: Why are there concrete sections of the trail?
   One concrete section along County Road 20 is for a driveway and a possible future driveway. The others represent easements that allow the landowner with land on both sides of the corridor to cross the corridor with heavy equipment now or in the future. These concrete easements are consistent with previous easements on the Pumpkinvine.

The Indiana legislature passed two laws, effective July 1, 2019, that impact cyclists in Indiana.

The first is a three-foot passing law that says when a motorist is overtaking a bicycle proceeding in the same direction, the motorist must “allow at least three (3) feet of clearance between their vehicle and the bicycle and not return the vehicle to the vehicle’s original lane of travel until the vehicle is safely clear of the bicycle.” A vehicle may pass a bicycle or electric bicycle in a no passing zone if it is safe to do so, complying with current law.”

The second law creates three classes of E bikes. The Pumpkinvine Advisory Committee made up of the four agencies that managing the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail will be discussing how this law applies to the Pumpkinvine at its July meeting.

**Class 1 electric bicycle** means an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the operator is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance to the operator when the electric bicycle reaches a speed of twenty (20) miles per hour.

**Class 2 electric bicycle** means an electric bicycle equipped with an electric motor that may be used exclusively to propel the electric bicycle and ceases or is unable to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of twenty (20) miles per hour.

**Class 3 electric bicycle** means an electric bicycle equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the operator is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance once the electric bicycle reaches a speed of twenty-eight (28) miles per hour.

The operator of an electric bicycle has all the rights and responsibilities as the rider of a non-electric bicycle.

Unless specifically stated by statute, ordinance, etc. Class 1 and 2 electric bicycles may be operated on any bicycle path or multi-purpose path where bicycles are permitted.

A class 3 electric bicycle might not be permitted on bicycle paths or multi -purpose path where bicycles are permitted.

A person less than 15 years of age may not operate a class 3 bicycle. A person less than 15 years may ride as a passenger if the bicycle accommodates more than one rider. Anyone who rides or operates a class 3 bicycle that is less than 18 years of age must wear an approved helmet.
Reflections on the 2019 Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

By Tim Drescher and Phil Mason

Rain and possible thunderstorms threatened this year’s ride resulting in a slight drop in attendance. However, surprisingly 76 percent of the 970 registered riders found their way to the fairgrounds. Fortunately, the storms stayed away so the ride could continue, albeit much of the late morning and afternoon dumped a steady rain. Riders who finished ended with amazing attitudes and high spirits.

Those who took to the routes enjoyed the newly finished section of the trail that was completed at 8:30 p.m. Friday. Riders were excited and pleased to head down the new section of the trail, bypassing the hills on County Road 20 and County Road 33.

The volunteers this year did not disappoint. They were resourceful, friendly and truly made the day a success. Better food planning resulted in less leftover food.

Bob Carrico, a.k.a. Pumpkinvine Work Horse, and friends erected tents, distributed signs and prepared our sites all behind the scenes helping to make the day run smoothly. Much thanks to Janice and Bob for the washing and organizing of the coolers, hoses and many supplies.

Well organized and so easy to get the right information. Greatly appreciated the Sag efforts to have a pick up if needed. So many times the sag is not organized and I don’t feel it is reliable. Yours sounded fantastic even though I did not need it.

—Lisa Wedge,
North Fort Myers, Florida

The new roads on the 100 mile route were a nice change. The weather made it memorable. Chocolate milk at Bonnyville sag was great! The peanut butter rollups were delicious.”

—Richard Houston,
Elkhart, Ind.
Bike ride photos available
You can view and order photos of the 2019 Pumpkinvine Bike Ride at the following links:
• https://2019pvbikeride.shutterfly.com/
• www.pumpkinvine.org/PBR_HTML_POST_PBR.HTML

Beautiful countryside and friendly people were the best!
—Camille Rosinski, Flora, Ind.

I like doing the beginning of the route on county roads and finishing along the path back to Goshen. 2. Liked the food options at Shipshewana.
—Brenda Toews, Goshen, Ind.
Overall very well organized and well marked.
—Maureen Kennedy, Osceola, Ind.

My daughters (14, 12, 7) and I loved the ride! We had fun making memories that will last a lifetime.
—Barry Marshall, Elkhart, Ind.

JUNE 20, 2020
21st Annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

Mark your calendars now!
Bike Ride Volunteers

Bike Ride Committee
Tim Drescher, Co-Director
Phil Mason, Co-Director
Bob Carrico
John Ferguson
Georgia Gingerich
Mark Gingerich
Renee Springer

Phil Mason, Co-Director
Bob Carrico
John Ferguson
Georgia Gingerich
Mark Gingerich
Renee Springer

Food Coordinator and Sorting Detail
Renee Springer

Friday Food & Supply Deliveries
Jane Bontrager
Bob Carrico
Tim Drescher
Lonnie Holub
Phil Mason
Jane Short
Chuck Thompson

Thursday & Friday Tent, SAG & Signs
Bob Carrico
Fran Carrico
Chuck Thompson

Road Route Markings
Matt Thomas
Tim Drescher

Roving SAG
Kerm Garber
Stan Gingerich
Wilmer Hollinger
Lynda Hollinger-Janzen
Paul Reimer
Josh Weaver

Photographers
Branden Beachy
Marie Clements
Danny Graber
John Yoder

Goshen Location Supervisor
Bob Carrico

Goshen Registration
Arloa Bontrager
Paul Steury
Merv Miller
Grant Miller
Scott Miller
Estella Borden
Lydia Miller
Dylan Diener
Jonathon Snyder
Karsten Hess
Areleth Martinez
Vargas
Katie Shirk
Brittany Short
Barry King

Parking
Cliff Hochstedler
J. Steiner

Truck Drivers
Wedel Landes
Phil Mason
Bob Toews

Goshen – Direction Assistant
Debi Riegsecker
Joe Riegsecker

Goshen Mechanic
Danny Jones

Merchandise Sales
Chet Peachey
Ruthann Peachey

Friday Dinner Ride
John Yoder, lead
Jim Bare
Marie Clements
Terry MacGregor
Patti MacGregor
Chet Peachey
Ruthann Peachey
June Yoder

Friday Dinner Drive
Kurt Neufeld
Debi Riegsecker

Bonneyville Mill SAG
Dennis Kelly, lead
Michelle Nash, lead
Bob Hatch

Westview (Emma) SAG
Jane Bontrager, lead
Sally Fuller
Bev Short
Cindy Cooper
Gary Chapman

Westview Direction Assistant
Elma Chapman

Middlebury SAG
Jane Short, lead
Tim Short, lead
Byron Yoder
Claire Gisel
Miriam Stauffer
Lou Anne Hostetler
Judy Kolb
Barb Shembab
Cindy Mason
Judith Davis
Miranda Cripe
Linda Rouch
Lorraine Pflederer
Robert Pflederer

Middlebury SAG Assistant
Bill Davis
John Kolb

Shipshewana SAG
Mary Gilbert, lead
Glenn Gilbert, lead
Tom Watson, lead
Pat Watson, lead
Lois Bare
Carl Rutt
Lovina Rutt
Anne Wilson
Janice Eigsti Miller
Marilyn Eigsti
Sue Howe
Chuck Thompson
Linda Thompson

Middlebury Direction Assistant
Dawn Blessing

Civilian Patrol
Jim Bare
Titus King
Chuck Thompson
Georgia Gingrich
Marty Kooy
Donna Kooy
Francis Shembab
Kathy Wilmot
June Yoder

Volunteer Coordinators
Lynn Diener
Jo Lehman

Treasurer
Cory Wilson

Online Registration
Tim Drescher
Phil Mason

Ride Website & Social Media Ads
Tim Drescher
Phil Mason
Andrea Thompson

Pie and Ice Cream
Janice Carrico
Arloa Bontrager
Willard Roth
Bill Miller
Phyllis Miller
John Smith
Joann Smith
George Smucker
Barbara Smucker
Evelyn zum Felde
Margaret Steiner
Wes Steiner
Sally Schreck
Gillette uses the Pumpkinvine: Crossing the Finish Line and Winning

By Andrea Thompson

Justin Gillette, a Goshen local, won his 100th marathon on March 23 of this year, becoming only one of two people in the United States to have accomplished this feat. He uses the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, the ‘Vine as he calls it, for his training runs about three times a week. You might know him by sight – he’s the friendly guy running very fast, pushing a red jogging stroller, sometimes for up to 21 miles!

“I use the ‘Vine specifically for my interval workouts and long runs, Gillette says. “The trail is about two miles from my house, and then I use the first five miles of the Pumpkinvine. The last two miles home are my cooldown.”

Two aspects of the trail help his training. “The lack of traffic interruptions and the half-mile markers make the ‘Vine an ideal location for hard workouts,” he says.

All these workouts definitely pay off, but how does someone train for and win 100 marathons? For that, you need a little more of Justin Gillette’s backstory.

“My favorite victory is deciding in life that I was going to be the victor and not the victim when life threw circumstances my way that I couldn’t control,” Gillette says.

Now, this can mean many things to many people, but for Gillette it meant overcoming generational poverty. Gillette grew up poor and he didn’t like it, so at the ripe old age of 13, he sat down and wrote out some life goals. Whether he knew it or not, he was just lining up on the starting line of his running career.

“I was going to be the generation that ends generational poverty,” he says.

One of Gillette’s aspirations was to be athletic and use his abilities to go to college. He achieved that goal. After high school, Gillette was accepted at Goshen College on a track and field scholarship where he was a four-time All American and still holds the school record in the marathon distance at 2:29:14, set in 2005.

While at Goshen College, Gillette shared two more goals with his academic advisor: he wanted to make running his profession; and he wanted to find a wife. Check and check. Obviously, having won 100 marathons, running has been a great career for him. He earns his living by coming in first (because coming in second doesn’t pay as much), through sponsorships and through paid speaking engagements.

Also, Gillette met and married Goshen College running standout, Melissa Lehman, and they now have four children.

Another goal of Gillette’s was to live near the college he attended. He explains, “I wanted to create a new life, have a new social group, and I wanted to start over.”

Life got in the way of that goal for a while, when the family had to move out of town, but eventually Justin and his family came back to Goshen.

“When we were deciding on where to live back in 2010, we picked Goshen due to the trail systems,” says Gillette. After all, Justin runs… a lot.

Of course, Gillette has some more goals. I mean… why stop now? Naturally, he wants to beat the person who has won more marathons than he has, which means running and winning a lot more races. He also wants to be rich. I certainly think he has a shot at winning more marathons, but as for being rich, I’d count that as a goal achieved. This is one person who is richly winning at life.
Over 60 percent of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is lined with trees on both sides. The trees provide shade that trail users appreciate, especially on hot summer days. But sometimes a good thing has disadvantages, which in the case of the Pumpkinvine, are the trees roots that grow under the trail’s asphalt. Pressure from the growing roots forces the asphalt upward creating a ridge across the trail. Over the years, an increasing number of ridges degrades the quality of the trail.

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine has explored what other trails are doing about this problem. The Friends of the Little Miami State Park in Ohio cut the roots under 100 miles of their trail with a sub-soiler, but they recommended against their method. The Friends of the Panhandle Pathway, Winamac, Ind., have used a trencher successfully to cut roots. However, we decided against these methods because they both disrupt the soil and open it to erosion at some locations.

We decided to try an Extreme Cutting Coulter manufactured by Yetter. The coulter is 24 inches in diameter and can cut buried tree roots up to six inches below the trail asphalt. We mounted the coulter on the tines of a pallet fork on tractors or Bobcats owned by the trail managing agencies. The weight of the front of the tractor forced the coulter into the soil.

Usually the coulter cut the soil down to the hub, a depth that cut roots about six inches below the bottom of the asphalt.

Following the first tests, we used the coulter on our trail outside of Goshen and encountered fewer stones in the soil. Generally, the coulter stayed buried up to the hub. We took this experience as a success and proceeded to cut both sides of the trail where there were trees close enough to the asphalt to grow roots under it. The plan is to cut the trail sides at three-year intervals.

Many rail-trails have railroad ballast supporting the asphalt. We are fortunate that the railroad removed the ballast when they abandoned the Pumpkinvine. Based on our experience a coulter would not work well for cutting roots when ballast is present.

Ultimate cutting roots is a temporary solution. In the long run, the solution is to remove some of the trees that are causing the problem and resurface that trail area. That option is possible when the managing agencies or the Friends of the Pumpkinvine have the funds.

For a glimpse of more ways Bob Carrico and his crew are working to improve the trail surface, see http://fopvnt.blogspot.com
Maple City Walk benefits the Pumpkinvine

The 11th annual Maple City Walk, hosted by Downtown Goshen, Inc., will be held Saturday, September 21, 2019. Again this year the route will include the Maple City Greenway and feature the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail as the core of its 10K, half marathon and marathon course. The marathon courses will use a new one-mile section of the Pumpkinvine between County Road 33 and County Road 20, eliminating a mile on county roads.

All walks start and finish at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds, Gate 6, Clover Hill building, 17746 CR 34, Goshen, Indiana. Five dollars of the registration fee will go to Friends of the Pumpkinvine for closing two gaps in the trail and for trail maintenance.

Register online for a reduced fee by September 16 or register the day of the walk. Registration and starting times are:

- 6:30 a.m.: On-site registration begins for the half marathon and marathon
- 7:30 a.m.: Starting time for half-marathon and marathon walks. (10K walkers can start, if desired.)
- 8 a.m.: On-site registration begins for 10K.
- 9 a.m.: 10K walk begins

“Goshen is recognized as a walkable city” said Julia Gautsche, chair of the planning committee. “We encourage participants to experience the beauty of the Maple City Greenway, the scenic countryside of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and to enjoy walking for health.

Each participant who completes the walk will receive a unique Maple City Walk medal and be entered in a drawing for a free pair of walking shoes. Water to fill water bottles and snacks will be offered along the course. Additional portable toilets will also be available along the course.

For more information, registration and a map of the course:

- Visit the Maple City Walk website: www.cityonthego.org/maple-city-walk/home
- E-mail: juliagautsche@gmail.com
- Call: 574-596-1632
- “Like” Maple City Walk on Facebook

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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: https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/

Instructions for how to sign up are also at http://pumpkinvine.org/donate/kroger-rewards-2/

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

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