Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

Volume 11, No. 1, February 2002

Friends Clear Pumpkinvine Trail between SR 13 & CR 43

A major project this fall was clearing the Pumpkinvine corridor between SR. 13 and CR 43 east of Middlebury. The trestle bridge had become overgrown with weeds and fallen trees and several adjacent landowners had placed fences in the middle of the corridor. Plywood was placed on the bridge as a temporary surface so that people could walk on it during the Sept. 30 trail walk. When some landowners near the PNT failed to move the fences as asked, the Friends volunteers removed them. *-See related story on page 5-*

Trestle bridge prior to cleanup by volunteers

Trestle bridge after cleanup on September 30 walk

Snider Promotes Urban Forest

To Dana Snider, guidance counselor at Northridge High School for 28 years, the Pumpkinvine project is "fantastic." A self-confessed tree hugger, he sees multiple benefits of urban greenways like the Pumpkinvine for wildlife and people.

Exercise close to home is one obvious benefit. "More and more people are out walking," he said. "I see lots of people on the trail behind my house, and schools use the trails for a place to exercise."

In general a greenway "makes for a happier and healthier community" and a greenway that is close to where people live will be used more than a distant park. "Accessibility is very important," he said.

Continued on page 3

Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. are cyclists, hikers, equestrians and naturalists who, by education and fund raising, support the area park departments in their effort to create a linear park on the former Pumpkinvine corridor between Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana, Indiana.

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Learn more about the Pumpkinvine and Rails to Trails Issues by visiting the Pumpkinvine Website at: **www.pumpkinvine.org**

From the President-Focus on Our Future

What's next for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail?

That's the question I hear from many of our supporters. They would like to know when the trail will be completed from Goshen to Shipshewana.

At our December meeting, the board began a strategic planning process for the next two years with the assistance of Chuck Lehman, a landscape architect from Mishawaka. Chuck has helped the **Friends** with numerous aspects of the trail in the past 10 years--everything from preparing grants to designing our logo.

We began by listing achievements of the past year: a successful bike ride in June, the clearing of the trail between CR 43 and SR 13 in Middlebury, Coachmen's donation of their section of the corridor and meetings in Middlebury and Shipshewana that demonstrated heightened interest in the greenway in those communities.

We also listed our disappointments: not being able to purchase a section of the trail when a farm came up for sale, frustration in dealing with encroachment and the failure to get funding for trail development.

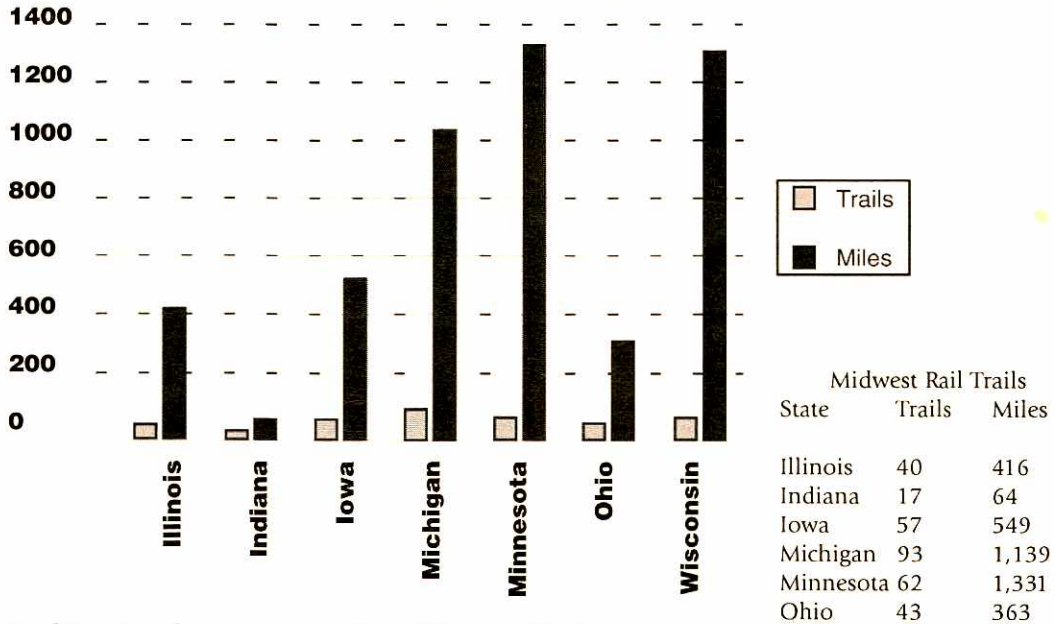
Then we set goals for the next two years. Although the process is not complete or operational yet, we set a clear direction: 1) to clear the six miles of the corridor between Middlebury and Shipshewana and make it rideable with a mountain bike; 2) to raise the local match for a federal TEA-21 grant for that same section; 3) to secure a TEA-21 grant.

Our long-range goals remain the same: to create a trail and greenway that link our towns with each other and the countries greenways which brings opportunities for family recreation and non-motorized transportation to where people live. We want our communities to see greenways as an infrastructure category that is as important to the health of the community as utility lines, sewer systems and roads. Greenways can be the lungs of the community, helping it breath and make society less "auto centric."

Thank you for your continued support of the Friends. The coming two years promise to be the most exciting in our history. With your help, we can ride from Middlebury to Shipshewana in 2002.

John D. Yoder-President,
Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.

Indiana Behind in Rails to Trails Development



Midwest Rail Trails

State	Trails	Miles
Illinois	40	416
Indiana	17	64
Iowa	57	549
Michigan	93	1,139
Minnesota	62	1,331
Ohio	43	363
Wisconsin	66	1,299

Note Indiana's place among the Midwest States.

2nd National Bike Summit® March 6-8 in Washington, DC

Join bicycle advocates, bike industry leaders, transportation and public health professionals, key legislators and government officials in Washington, DC for the Second National Bike Summit®, convened by the League of American Bicyclists. The Summit will be a valuable three-day forum on advancing policies and initiatives to support and encourage bicycling.

Invited keynote speakers and distinguished guests include Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), Senator James Jeffords (I-VT), Congressman Don Young (R-AK), Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, and panelists from DOT, HHS, EPA, NPS, and CDC.

Bicycling is part of the solution to many of our nation's current problems, including traffic congestion, air pollution, sprawl and childhood obesity. With federal funding for bicycling at stake, bicyclists and industry, transportation, public health and environmental interests must join together to develop a common agenda that promotes bicycling throughout our country.

The 2002 National Bike Summit® will build on the inaugural Summit's success with expanded programming and workshops. This year's Summit will be held at the JW Marriott, 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington DC.

The location is close to the White House, Capitol Hill, and the Metro. **Bicycle accommodation in your hotel room.** Discounted rates are available for National Bike Summit® participants. For more information on workshops, speakers and the hotel accomodations, check out their website at http://www.bikeleague.org/involved/nationalbikesummit.htm.

Register at https://league2.securesites.com/commerce/bikesummitreg.htm.

Update Your e-mail

If you want to receive an e-mail version of this newsletter send a message to:

jdyoder@compuserve.com

Please include in the remarks line "Pumpkinvine Newsletter." Send us your anecdotes and stories about trail riding or other fun outdoors experiences while using the Pumpkinvine Trail.

From Page 1

Promoting Urban Forest

Dana Snider's love of nature goes back to his childhood growing up southwest of New Paris, where he loved to play in the woods on the family farm. From his grandfather, he learned to view timber as a valuable asset on the farm and the importance of having trees to balance the environment.

Just as important, he learned about the contribution nature makes to our well being. "Trees and people need each other," he added. Trees provide habitat for birds, which "we all like to watch and which helps us feel connected with mother earth."

For the past 15 years, Snider has channeled his love of trees into the leadership of the Middlebury town tree board. In addition to planting trees around town each year on Arbor Day — 50 trees yearly for the last five years — the board has done an inventory of the town's trees, removed trees and established a priority for pruning. They plant a variety of trees to gives the urban forest different colors, textures and timing. For their efforts, the town has received the Tree City USA award for the past five years.

"Urban forestry cools the landscape and makes it beautiful," Snider said.

Naturally, as a person with an eye to the importance of trees, he sees a significant role for the tree-lined Pumpkinvine corridor in the urban landscape. "If we want wildlife habitat, we need ribbons of trees connecting trees," he said. "Greenways like the Pumpkinvine add linkages between natural stands of trees. Those flyways are attractive for birds and wildlife in general."

The value of the corridor for close-to-home exercise, for himself and the community, became more personal recently. Five years ago, he had a heart attack and started walking more to keep his heart in shape. Last spring, however, he discovered his walking wasn't elevating his heart rate enough, and he had to have a stint put in. "We need to be intentional in our exercise," he said.

Snider has walked the Pumpkinvine east of the Dairy Queen many times. "It's a nice section to hike through," he said, noting that there are a lot of nice young walnut trees in that section.

Talk of a senior citizen home along U.S. 20 near the Pumpkinvine opens up exciting possibilities for a walking and biking loop that would link downtown Middlebury to the Essenhaus and then back east to the Pumpkinvine. "It would make a real nice loop for people, with a nice gradual grade to hike or walk downtown," he said.

Snider is one of several Middlebury residents promoting the greenway in the town. From his experience starting the tree board Snider knows a thing or two about community projects. "These good things, like the Pumpkinvine, don't just happen. The people of Middlebury need to become advocates to make this greenway a reality."

Town of Avon to Remove Bike Trail Fence

By Stephanie Reitz
The Hartford Courant

July 10, 2001

AVON-The town council has agreed to remove 11,700 feet of chainlink fencing along the Rails-to-Trails in town. Residents whose homes abut the path had requested the move.

The fencing, which was installed years ago to ease the security and privacy concerns of some homeowner is not needed after all and is unattractive, other neighbors told the town council recently.

The paved path was created in the late 1990s along the old Boston & Maine Railroad route. It has become a place where residents go to chat, get exercise and enjoy their community, the nearby homeowners say.

"After years of listening to the choochoo train going through, it's a pleasure to watch the bikers and walkers through there," said resident Susan Namerow, whose home abuts the trail. She added, "It seems to be a really friendly situation, and I wouldn't like to see it changed."

Namerow and other residents surveyed homeowners whose property abuts the trail and found that they overwhelmingly supported the removal of the fencing. Town council members responded enthusiastically. For safety reasons, such as in areas where the ground drops below the trail, the town will replace the chain link fencing with about 2,690 feet of split-rail fencing.

The overall result should be a more accessible and attractive trail, residents and town officials said.

"I've had utterly no problems with it whatsoever. I agree with my neighbors that the trail is a wonderful thing," said resident William Longstreet, who bought his home from a man who opposed the trail, but then used it as a selling point.

Proximity to the trail has been advertised as an attractive feature in many homes on the market, said Town Planner Steven Kushner. "They feel the trail is really a significant asset," he said.

Completing the final portion of the trail in Avon was delayed because of a sewer project, but it was finished over the past year, and the first layer of base pavement has been laid. The final paving is expected to take place this fall, along with the possible addition of mile markers and oft signage.

Third Pumpkinvine Bike Ride set for June 15

Plan now to participate in the third annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride June 15, 2001. All levels of riders will find a route that matches their ability. Similar to last year, there will be 22, 40 and 65-mile routes, starting at Abshire Park in Goshen, going up the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and followed county roads to Middlebury and Shipshewana. Join us for the ride and refreshments. Bring a friend for an enjoyable day or riding through the peaceful Elkhart-Lagrange County countryside.

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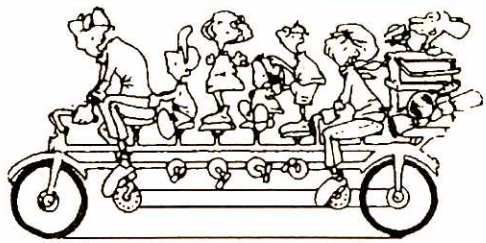
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Access to Greenway Critical in Business Relocation

"Ruby Tuesday Inc. moved its national headquarters from Mobile, Alabama to the Knoxville, Tennessee area for several reasons, but the specific site was chosen in downtown Maryville primarily due to its location on the beautiful Greenbelt and trail system," according to Sandy Beal, Chairman & CEO, Ruby Tuesday, Inc.

Ruby Tuesday's uses the community greenway system as an amenity for new employees coming to Maryville for training. These new employees are provided a bicycle when they arrive and can travel between the corporate offices, lodging, restaurants, and training facilities along the trail. (Ruby Tuesday employs approximately 104 professional employees at this site.)

Maryville would like to continue its downtown revitalization by encouraging other corporate, commercial and residential development in the city. The community's greenway network offers an attractive enticement to other businesses, just as it did to Ruby Tuesday's.

— From the *"Tennessee Greenways & Trails Plan"* developed by the Governor's Council on Greenways and Trails.

Trail Walk Explores PNT East of Middlebury

On a gorgeous fall afternoon this past September 30, more than 60 Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail came out to look at the newly cleared Pumpkinvine corridor between SR 13 and CR 43. Walkers started at the Middlebury Dairy Queen restaurant following the PNT over the 75-foot bridge and past several RV manufacturers before emerging into the farmland east of Middlebury. This two-mile section of the PNT is the longest uninterrupted section of the corridor between Goshen and Shipshewana.

Volunteers removing fencing along corridor

Equipment and Labor provided by Pumkinvine volunteers

Seniors Benefit from Walking

The Partnership for Prevention has just published Creating Communities for Active Aging, a guide to developing a strategic plan to increase walking and biking by older adults. The guide includes extensive strategies aimed at changing community design and bicycling/pedestrian facilities. To obtain a copy, visit the website-**http://www.prevent.org.**

(from *Transfer* 11/8/01, Volume 7, Issue 15, published by Surface Transportation Policy Project & Smart Growth America.)

Surgeon General Calls to Action

U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher has released a report saying that "Communities can help when it comes to health promotion and disease prevention." Approximately 300,000 U.S. deaths a year are associated with being obese or overweight. The report is full of statistics relating to community focus on recreational facilities, excersise, and overall health.

Website: **www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity**

(from League of American Bicyclists' BikeLeague News.)

Discounts Continued for PNT Members

Five area bicycle shops are showing their support for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail in a tangible way. The five stores offer members of the Friends a 5 to 10 percent discount on accessories, clothes and equipment and two have extended the discount to bicycles. To receive the discount, members must present a Friends membership card at the time of purchase. "This action will be a tremendous benefit for our members," according to PNT Director Bob Hatch. He added, "We greatly appreciate the support of these local shops." There is a chart on the last page of this newletter showing these fine merchants and the discounts they offer. See their display ads on page four of this newsletter.

THINK SPRING!

Retail Discount Chart

	Accessories	Clothes	Equipment	Service	Bicycles
Elkhart Bicycle and Fitness	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Family Bicycle	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Hollinger Bicycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
House of Bicycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Lincoln Ave. Cycling	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

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 payments to:
Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, P.O. Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Please take note of the expiration date of your membership on the address label. Thanks.

All funds go toward paying the day-to-day expenses of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. No officers receive remuneration.

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