Pumpkinvine Trail

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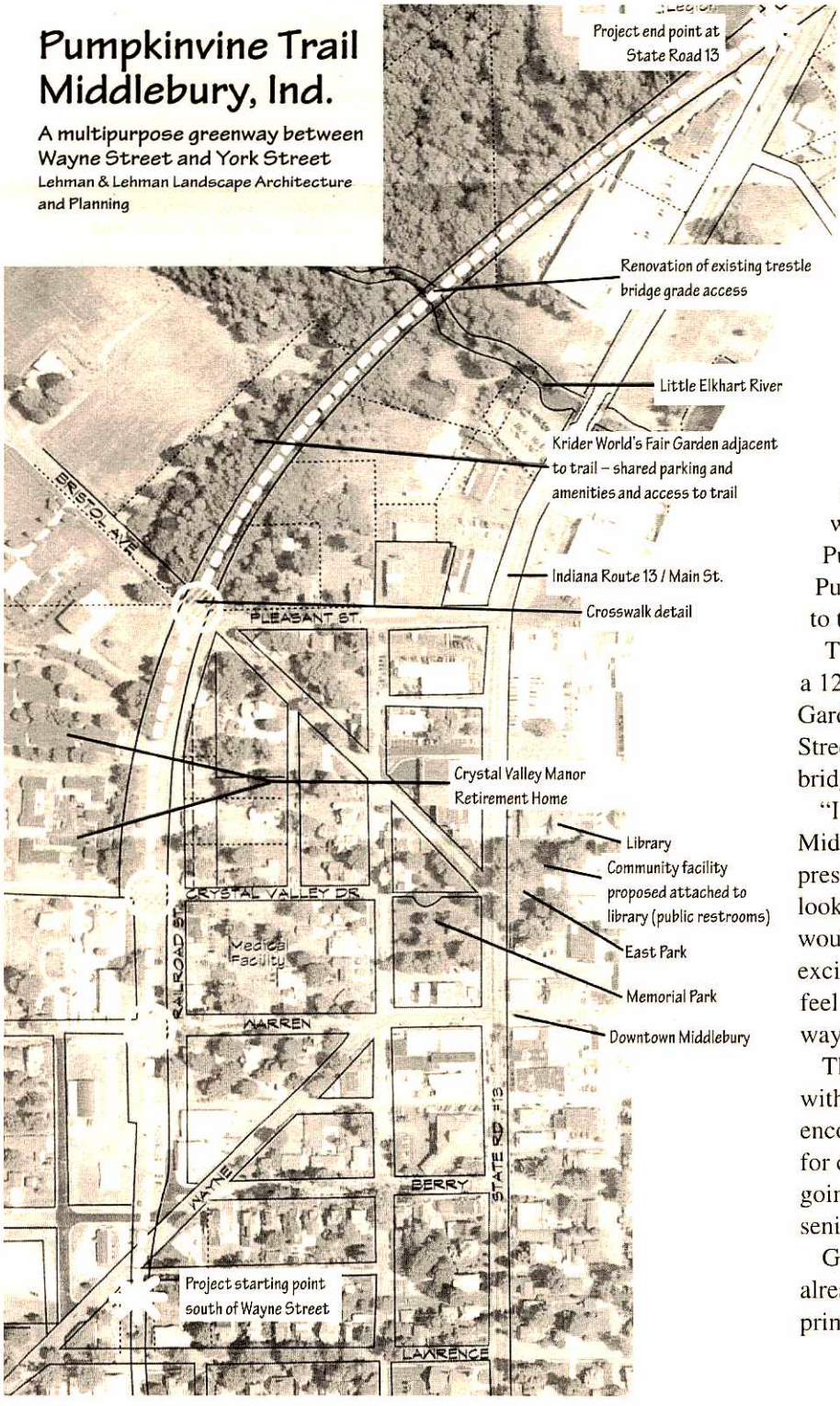

Middlebury applies for grant

By Gretchen Sommers

The Middlebury Parks Department has applied for a $150,000 grant to develop a .6-mile section of the Pumpkinvine corridor between Wayne Street and York Street. The Recreational Trails Program grant is from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and requires a match of 20 percent local funds. That amount would come from the value of the .6-mile Pumpkinvine corridor the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. would donate to the town of Middlebury.

The proposed development would include a 12-ft. asphalt trail and connect with Krider Garden Park and the bike trail along Wayne Street. It would also renovate the 158-foot trestle bridge over the Little Elkhart River.

"I think the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail in Middlebury is a good idea," said Jeff Gatton, president of the Middlebury Park Board. "We're looking to expand our park system, and this would help us accomplish that. The board is excited about the opportunity to expand. We feel it would benefit the community in several ways."

The proposed path would also connect with all of the sidewalk systems in the town, encouraging safer bicycle and pedestrian travel for children going to and from school, workers going to factories in the York Street area and seniors at Crystal Valley Manor retirement home.

Gatton believes it will get a lot of use. "The already existing path gets used frequently, primarily during the summer months," he said.

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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**

Newsletter design: Dee Birkey

From the president

In his letter to the editor attacking Friends' board member C.J. Yoder, Mr. Doug Beasy said that C.J. and the Friends were spending money on trail instead of education.

How ironic for a farmer like Mr. Beasy to accuse us of depleting the government surplus. The small amount of Federal money the Friends have received ($10,000 in one grant) pales beside the subsidies farmers have received in the past six years.

According to subsidy figures from the Department of Agriculture (obtained by the Environmental Working Group and posted at www.ewg.org/farm), 52 percent of Indiana farmers receive government subsidies. That includes 934 farmers in Elkhart County who received $24,071,096 from 1996-2000. In LaGrange County, 769 farmers received $20,796,856. That's $44 million in the two counties of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. In other words, the ratio of federal money received in our two counties was $4,400 (farmers) to $1 (Friends).

The new farm bill continues the pattern of gigantic subsidies to agriculture. According to the Associated Press story (*Goshen News*, April 29, 2002), the farm bill will increase "planned agriculture spending by $73.5 billion over the next 10 years. . . Existing programs are expected to cost about $107 billion over the same period." That's a total of $180 billion in the next 10 years for farm subsidies. (The NBC Nightly News reported that the figure would be $190 billion, but what's another $10 billion in this context?)

That anyone associated with agriculture would accuse the Friends of spending government funds recklessly when farmers are receiving billions of dollars in government subsidies boggles the mind.

I don't know if a federal welfare program like the present farm bill is a good or bad idea for American agriculture. I'm not an expert in that field. I do know that the pittance we spend nationally and locally on greenway is not the main reason we (as a society) are "depleting the government surplus."

– John D. Yoder

Board member wins primary

Friends of the Pumpkinvine board member, Clarence J. Yoder, won the Republican nomination for Elkhart County Council from the 3rd district in the May 7 primary. In a close race, "C.J." defeated Joseph Guerro 52% to 48%. The 3rd district includes most of the city of Goshen. The 3rd district includes Elkhart, Jefferson and Washington townships.

While C.J. identified himself as a Friends board member in his campaign literature, his involvement with the Friends was not a major issue in the campaign until a letter and ad appeared in the *Goshen News* the week before the primary attacking him for supporting bike trails at the expense of education. Mr. Doug Beasy's letter appeared May 1:

"Clarence J. Yoder was instrumental in spending our tax dollars on bike trails and depleting the government surplus.

It is time for the public to take a stand and stop wasteful spending. If you want bicycle trails that we can't afford to maintain and poorly educated children, then vote for Clarence J. Yoder. If you want children to come first and to keep our taxes down then vote for Joe Guerro."

This fallacious argument didn't impress most voters. Money for education and highways comes from two entirely separate sources. Local schools are funded by property taxes. Federal transportation funds come primarily from gasoline taxes. Reducing the amount society spends on bike trails won't produce a dime more for local schools.

Annual meeting looks to the future

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. annual meeting was held on Tuesday, April 30, 2002 at the new Blue Gate Restaurant in Shipshewana. Our first dinner meeting, it was attended by 163 supporters from the local area as well as Indianapolis and Kalamazoo and set an annual-meeting attendance record.

The purpose of the meeting was to increase visibility, enthusiasm and support for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail by reviewing accomplishments from last year and discussing plans for the next 12-18 months. In addition, the accomplishments of the Cardinal Greenway, Muncie, Ind., were presented to help visualize what our trail will look like when completed.

Friends will continue negotiating with landowners between Middlebury and Goshen...so that the greenway will have a continuous route between these two towns.

John Yoder, president of Friends, explained last year's accomplishments and goals for 2002-2003. Physical progress was made in clearing the trail between SR 13 and CR 43, east of Middlebury. We cleared vegetation, removed fences, installed a walking surface on the 70-foot long trestle, filled holes and celebrated with a community trail walk in September.

Community relations reached a high point in 2001 with the generous donation by Coachman Industries of a valuable 500-foot section of the corridor along Railroad Street in Middlebury. With this donation, Coachman Industries set in motion the possibility of the town of Middlebury and Middlebury Park Board applying for a grant to develop a half-mile demonstration section of the Pumpkinvine Trail in Middlebury.

Last year also saw significant progress in community recognition of greenway benefits. In 1994, many landowners adjacent to the trail stated their opposition with signs along the trail. Yoder showed a March 2002 ad from the *Elkhart Truth* (*see below*) specifically advertise that homes for sale in the same area near the Pumpkinvine (Trail) are "the perfect place to live."

Other accomplishments in 2001 include the very successful Second Annual Pumpkinvine Bicycle Ride in June, where we hosted 245 riders and the initiation of an endowment fund at the Elkhart County Community Foundation for trail maintenance.

Yoder then proceeded to define the goals for the next 12-18 months.

The first is to facilitate the development of the trail over the six miles between Shipshewana and Middlebury in partnership with town and county park departments and elected officials. This goal is achievable with the help of a federal TEA-21 grant. The second goal is to assist Middlebury with the development of the half-mile segment that runs from Wayne Street, past Krider Gardens and out to SR 13. Finally, the Friends will continue negotiating with landowners between Middlebury and Goshen (where necessary) so that the greenway will have a continuous route between these two towns.

Mr. Bill Peterson spoke next about the successes of the Cardinal Greenway between Richmond and Muncie, Ind. The Cardinal Greenway, at 61 miles, is the longest rail-trail in Indiana and rolls through five counties and seven towns. Bill, a founding member of the Greenway who continues on its board, related the challenges and successes they have experienced and showed slides of the completed sections.

In summary, the Friends are clearing new sections, addressing ownership and encroachment issues, writing grant applications, developing plans for trail management and in the process, making slow but steady progress toward our goal of a greenway between Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana.

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Goshen-Middlebury Rd-on the pumpkin vine

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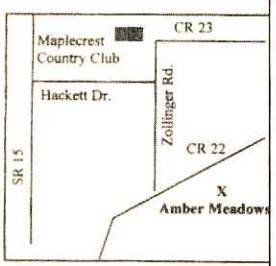

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Third Pumpkinvine Bike Ride June 15

Plan now to participate in the third annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride June 15, 2002. 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 following county roads to Middlebury and Shipshewana. Join us for the ride and refreshments. Bring a friend for an enjoyable day of riding through the peaceful Elkhart-Lagrange County countryside.

League holds 2002 National Bike Summit®

Over 275 people—including bicycle advocates, transportation, public health and environmental professionals and leaders from the bicycle industry—came together to exchange ideas, explore common goals, and make new alliances to encourage and promote bicycling at the League's National Bike Summit® in Washington, DC, March 6-8.

Bicyclists are an integral part of our nation's transportation system.

Overall participation in the 2002 Summit grew by 53% from the inaugural Summit in 2001; bike industry participation more than doubled.

Key achievements and successes of the 2002 Summit include: Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) agreed to co-chair the new Senate Bike Caucus during a meeting with the Texas delegation. Summit participants secured another 15 commitments to join the Senate Bike Caucus. The Congressional Bikes Caucus has 107 Members in the House of Representatives.

Summit participants encouraged interest in the U.S. Senate in the Bicycle Commuter Act, introduced during the 2001 Summit by Congressman Blumenauer (D-OR) and Congressman Mark Foley (R-FL). Visit http://www.bikeleague.org/educenter/hr1265.htm for details. Participants also generated overwhelming support in Congress for Safe Routes to Schools programs to make bicycling and walking to school a safe and valued activity for children.

FHWA Administrator Peters in her keynote address said, "Bicyclists are an integral part of our nation's transportation system and we all need to work together to develop a better, more balanced transportation system that provides facilities and programs for bicyclists on a routine basis. In planning, designing and operating our nation's transportation system and its related programs, the needs of all users—and that clearly includes bicyclists—should be considered from the moment planning starts on a new project." Visit http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/re020306.htm for the full text of her remarks. For more details on the Summit, visit http://www.bikeleague.org/mediacenter/e-news3-18-02.htm#december14.

—From League of American Bicyclists' electronic newsletter, BikeLeague News

President Bush names Dr. Richard Carmona as new surgeon general

A key focus will be promoting exercise and healthy diet

President Bush's appointment of Dr. Richard Carmona as Surgeon General of the United States, and his announcement that one of Dr. Carmona's three key missions will be to encourage Americans to exercise and improve their diets, have great implications for the future of bicycling and fitness in the U.S. The Surgeon General's job is to educate Americans on how to improve their health and reduce the risk of disease.

The President said Dr. Carmona's top priority will be to help educate Americans about the threat of bioterrorism. Dr. Carmona has had a multifaceted career; he has been an Army Green Beret in Vietnam, a decorated police officer in Arizona, a SWAT team member, a nurse and a physician. Following are excerpts from the President's remarks on the appointment:

> "I have asked Dr. Carmona to lead an important initiative focusing on prevention and life-long healthy living as a key component to medical care. The research is overwhelming that simple improvements in diet and exercise would result in dramatic improvements in America's health. Studies show that overweight Americans who are at risk of developing type II diabetes or coronary heart disease can delay and possibly prevent these diseases with just moderate exercise and a healthy diet. Walking 30 minutes a day will dramatically improve your life. Playing a game with your children in your backyard will help. Walking in a park can make a difference to your health."
>
> "These relatively small actions can dramatically reduce costs and strain on our health care system. Fitness and a healthy lifestyle are a priority for me. I really like to run. It makes me feel better. The doc and I are going to encourage all our country to either run or walk or swim or bicycle for the good of their families, for the good of their own health, and for the good of the health of the nation."

The President has also tasked Dr. Carmona with educating the nation about alcohol and drug abuse. For more information and the full text of the President's remarks, visit http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020326-3.html and http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2002pres/20020326.html.

–From American Bicyclists' electronic newsletter, BikeLeague News

Study links pollution and asthma

A new report from the University of Southern California shows that children who breathe polluted air while exercising are at higher risk of developing asthma. Although air pollution and high levels of ozone have long been known to aggravate symptoms in children who already have asthma, this is the first clear evidence that they may actually cause the disease. According to the *Washington Post,* asthma is the leading serious chronic youth illness, affecting more than 9 million children and leading to millions of hours each year in lost school time for children and work time for parents.

Published in the British journal *The Lancet,* the study found that children in Southern California who played active outdoor sports in areas with high levels of air pollution were diagnosed with asthma at a significantly higher rate than similarly active children in less-polluted areas.

For more information on this study, visit http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A6057-2002Jan31.html.

(From *TRANSFER* - Vol. 8, Issue 2, Feb. 05, 2002, publication of the Surface Transportation Policy Project)

Senate adopts Conserve By Bike Amendment

Washington, DC—During debate on the energy bill, the United States Senate adopted an amendment that would promote energy conservation through bicycling. The Conserve By Bike Amendment passed by a voice vote and was recommended by Senator Frank Murkowski (R-AK), Ranking Member of the Energy Committee, as an amendment that "suggests the obvious benefits of the bicycle."

Introduced by Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), the Conserve By Bike Amendment establishes within the Department of Transportation a Conserve By Bicycling pilot program. This program would oversee up to 10 pilot projects geographically dispersed across the country designed to conserve energy resources by providing education and marketing tools to convert car trips to bike trips. In addition, the projects would encourage partnerships between stakeholders from transportation, law enforcement, education, public health, environment, and energy fields. Project results and energy savings must be documented, and the Secretary of Transportation is instructed to report to Congress on the results of the pilot program within two years of implementation.

The Department of Transportation is also authorized to conduct a study on the feasibility and benefits on the conversion of car trips to bike trips. The amendment authorizes $5.5 million for the pilot projects and the study.

"We have been spending a modest amount of federal, state and local funds on bicycle facilities since 1991. This amendment will leverage those investments and help people take advantage of the energy conservation choices they have in getting around their communities," Durbin stated.

The full energy bill is slowly making progress through the Senate, but debate on drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has yet to occur. Once the bill passes in the Senate, it will go to conference with the House to work out any differences prior to being sent to President Bush for signing. Regardless, the amendment is a tremendous win for bicycling.

According to Elissa Margolin, League Executive Director, "With the adoption of the Conserve By Bike Amendment, the Senate recognizes the important contribution bicycling makes to energy conservation in this country. Senators Durbin and Collins have shown tremendous leadership on this issue."

Contact: Melé Williams, Director of Government Relations

Phone: 202-822-1333 • E-mail: Mele@bikeleague.org

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

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

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New Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Web site

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) has a new Web site – www.railtrails.org. Launched this spring, the new site is proving to be one of the most comprehensive resources for the trails community nationwide. While the Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse Web site remains RTC's primary source of assistance for trail builders and developers, the new main RTC site features in-depth information on the benefits of trails and trail usage, the programs, projects and events taking place in our six field offices, and several links to the detailed technical assistance information and resources on the Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse site.

In addition, the new main site allows visitors to subscribe to RTC's *Action Alert Network,* visit the comprehensive media center, or support RTC by purchasing apparel, an RTC membership or one of our many regional trail guidebooks.

The purpose was to design an online resource where you could continually return to help you build, learn about, and thoroughly enjoy trails.

Save your life in a thunderstorm

Spring starts the T-storm season.

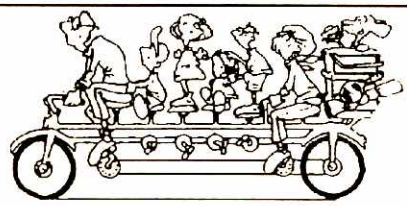
When you're on a ride and hear thunder, the storm is within 15 miles. Plan fast. It could be moving at better than 50 mph – toward you! You don't want to mess with that. Each year about 95 Americans do and don't live to tell about it. Use these tips when a thunderstorm is chasing you down.

- Get inside a building (safest place).
- Get away from anything metal, including your bike.
- Get out from under lone trees or a group of tall trees.
- Get low in a ditch or gully, but not in a streambed.

If you're in an open space and feel your hair stand on end (yes, it really happens), crouch on the balls of your feet, put your head between your legs. Experts say that this position could allow a bolt to pass through your body without fatal damage. But don't lie down!

— RoadBikeRider.com Newsletter, Issue No. 36, 03/28/02. subscribe@roadbikerider.com (or use the subscription form you see on the http://www.RoadBikeRider.com home page).

Friends members receive discounts at these five local bike shops. Just show your membership card!



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