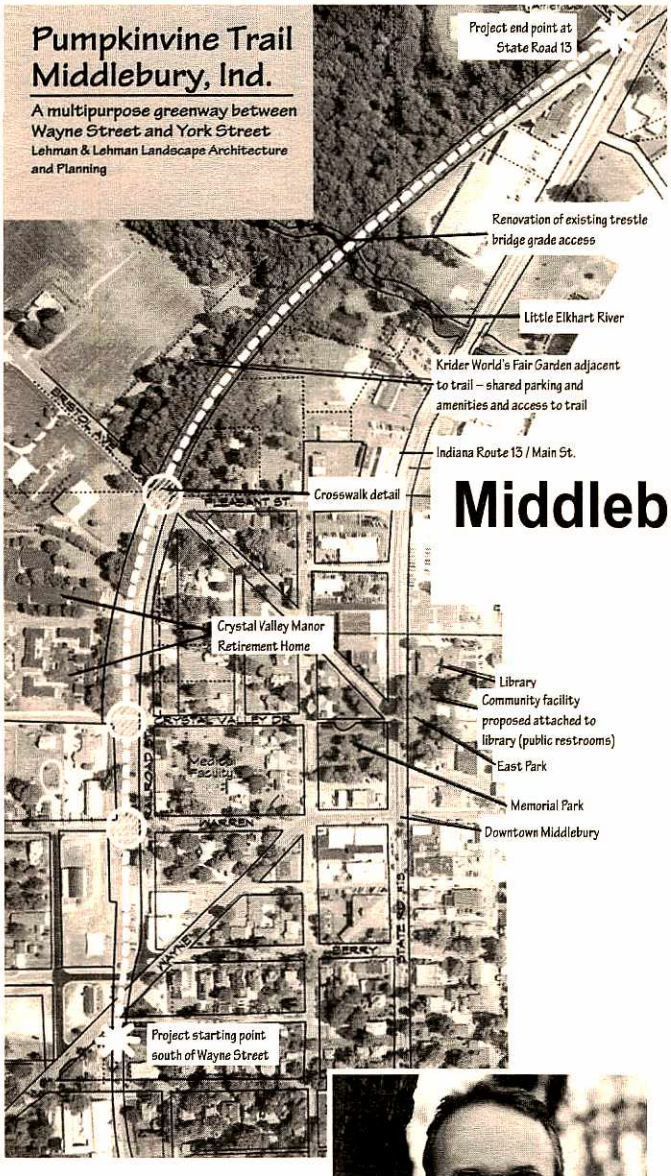
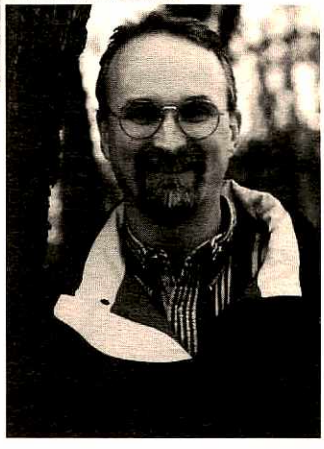
Pumpkinvine Trail Talk

Volume II No.3

September 2002





Mark Salee, Middlebury Park Board member and liaison to Friends board, was a key figure in writing the $150,000 Recreational Trails Program grant to develop .65 miles of the Pumpkinvine in Middlebury.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has awarded a $150,000 federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant to Middlebury Park Board to develop the Pumpkinvine corridor between Wayne Street and York Street.

The 0.65-mile paved trail will link up with an existing bike path near Big C Lumber on Wayne Street and follow the former Pumpkinvine corridor beside Krider Gardens to York Street near S.R. 13. The developed corridor will also provide access to the Little Elkhart River for fishing and kayaking and enable the renovation of the 158-foot trestle bridge over the river. The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail Inc. will donate the land to meet the matching funds requirement for the grant. The DNR awarded four RTP grants this year out of 22 applications.

Middlebury awarded $150,000 grant for Pumpkinvine

"This development will be a great demonstration section for us, as Friends of the Pumpkinvine, to show the residents of Middlebury what the trail will look like," said Friends treasurer, C.J. Yoder.

The Middlebury Town Council has taken a cautious approach to accepting the grant, raising concerns about potential vandalism, maintenance costs, liability in relation to the trestle bridge and the safety of road crossing. Jeff Gatton, president of the Middlebury Park Board, addressed these issues at the town council meeting Sept. 3. The council tabled a vote to accept the grant until the Oct. 7 meeting and asked for a review of the grant Sept. 16.

Putting the grant together were Friends board members Larry Neff and John Yoder, Mark Salee, liaison to the Middlebury Park Board and landscape architect Chuck Lehman of Lehman & Lehman, Mishawaka.

Each year a portion of federal taxes on gasoline purchased by off-highway vehicle (OHV) users are apportioned to the Recreational Trail Program by the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration. The apportionment is based on fuel sales and use of OHVs.

The federal tax dollars are then divided among the states for use in building and developing hiking trails, horseback trails, biking trails, off-highway vehicle trails and other multi-use trails. This year, more than $525,000 has been awarded by the DNR for development of four biking and hiking trails in Indiana.

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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

C.J. Yoder at the controls of a bulldozer during the clearing of the trail just north of S.R. 4 in 1996.

C.J. takes on new role

At our August board meeting, long-time Friends' board member and treasurer, Clarence (C.J.) felt that he needed to resign from the board because his duties as Elkhart County commissioner might create a conflict of interests with his responsibilities as a Friends' board member. Although the general election for county council isn't until November, C.J.'s election is virtually assured since he won the Republican nomination in the spring, and the Democrats slated no one to oppose him in the general election. (A Libertarian candidate is on the ballot.)

C.J. also told us that he will continue to be a strong supporter of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail "but in a different arena."

C.J. joined the Friends board in 1992 and has been its treasurer since 1993. He will be very difficult to replace on our board because he contributed to the Friends organization on so many levels. First, there were the many friends in the Goshen area. His connections have been an invaluable asset to the Friends, and he made many of his friends into trail supporters.

Second, he was a major helper with trail clearing and maintenance. (See photo.) One labor of love was mowing the Goshen section of the trail between S.R. 4 and C.R. 28 from 1995-99 when the Friends donated it to the city of Goshen.

Third, as treasurer, he picked up the mail, prepared the monthly financial report for the board and paid all the bills.

Most of all I applaud his willingness to get behind the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail early on when support from business people was hard to come by. He had the vision of what this greenway could be for the community and didn't worry overly much about how it might impact business at Lake City Bank. We could use several dozen business supporters like him.

Thanks C.J., for your contribution to the quality of life in this community. We will miss your skills, connections and enthusiasm for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

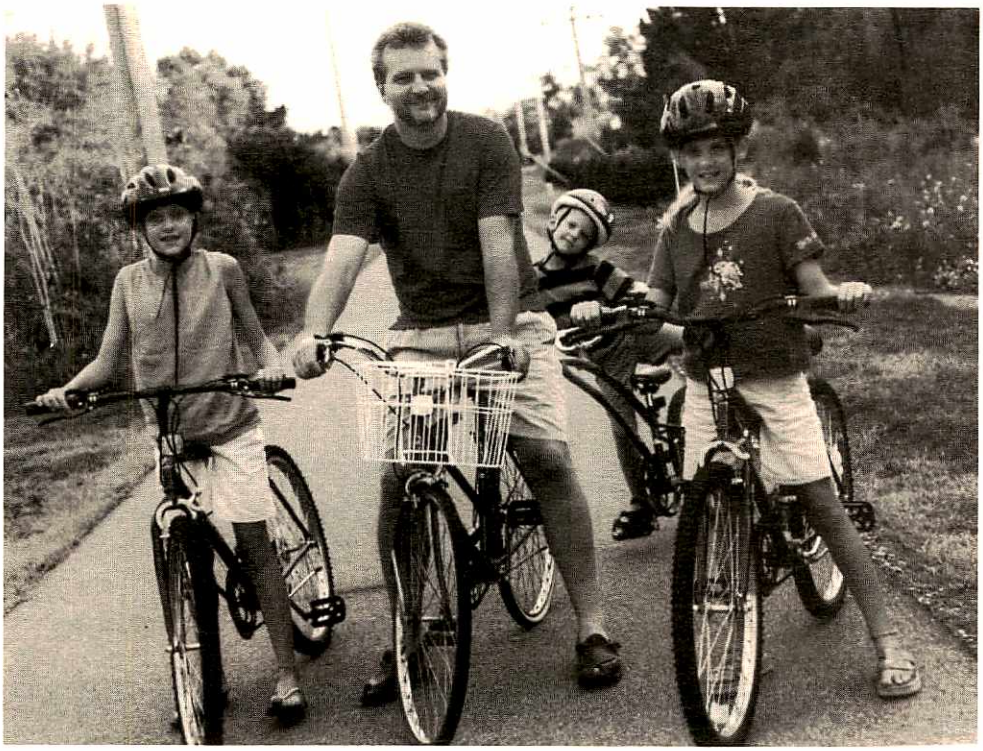
Incidentally, C.J. is the fourth former board member to leave the board in order to take a public office. Lowell Miller, Middlebury town manager, Norm Kauffmann, Shipshewana town manager and Allan Kauffmann, Goshen mayor, are all former Friends board members.

Thanks to newsletter designers

Many people work behind the scenes assisting the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. Two long-time volunteers, Dwight Fish and Oxana Werbianski, recently turned over responsibility for the design and layout of this newsletter to another volunteer, Dee Birkey.

I'd like to publicly thank Dwight and Oxana for the many hours they spent keeping our members informed of Friends-related events through the newsletter. They were wonderful people to work with and deserve recognition as super volunteers.

– John D. Yoder



The Lapps pose on the Winona Trail behind their house. From Left; Sophie, John, Ethan and Eva.

Living near the Action

By Gretchen Sommers

Linear parks and greenways are popping up all over the country and with good reason: these winding nature paths are a strong asset to any community, including adjacent landowners.

John and Sandra Lapp and their three children are some of the many residents living along Goshen's Maple City Greenway.

The Lapps are pleased to live so close to the trail and have not experienced any problems with vandalism or noise.

"We moved here about five years ago," John said. "One of our main reasons for buying the house was that we knew the trail was going in, and we got pretty anxious when it took longer than predicted to get finished," he added.

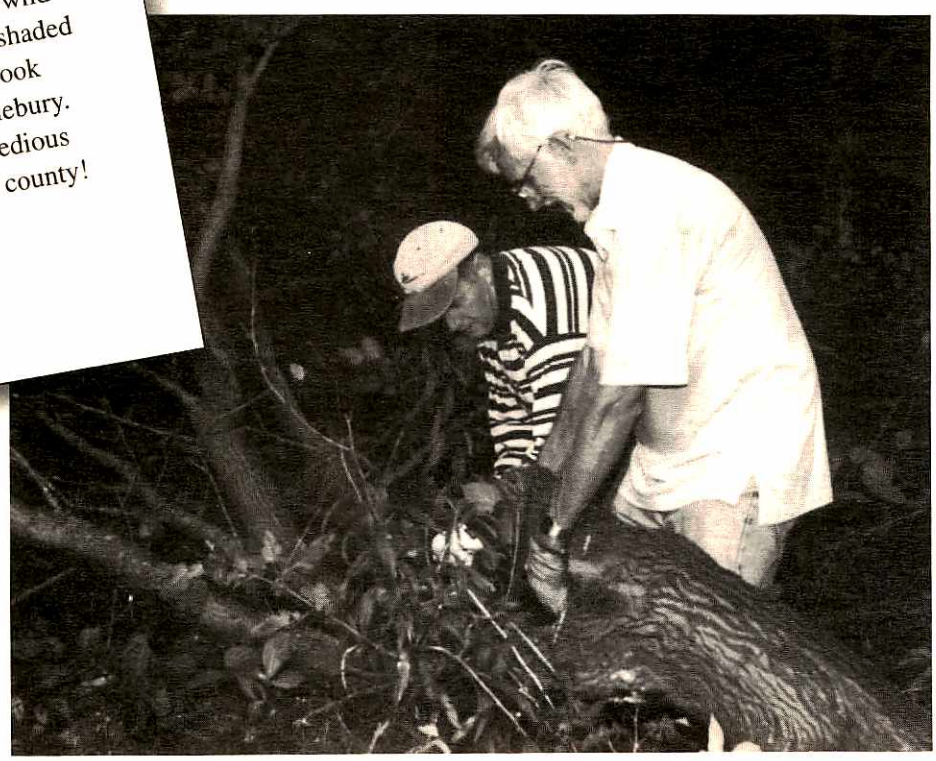
Lapp sees many people using the trail, including a great deal of traffic early in the morning on warmer days and later in the evening on hot mid-summer nights. A variety of people are using the trail, from families with and without kids, to college students going out for a jog, to roller bladders, to cross-country teams in training.

With their proximity to the action, the Lapp family uses the path often – "Every chance we get!" said John.

Letter to the Friends board

As I was on my usual bike ride down and up the Pumpkinvine yesterday, I thought I would really like to thank the people that made that a reality. It is so nice to have a safe place to ride away from the traffic, where one can enjoy the wild flowers and nature. How nice to have a shaded ride on a hot, sunny day! We certainly look forward to the continuation on to Middlebury. Thanks for all your hard work on this tedious project. What a wonderful asset to our county!

Thank you,
Cindy Steiner



Trail clearing continues

Jim Byron and Bob Carrico clear back trees west of C.R. 43 during a workday on the Pumpkinvine Aug. 3.

Pumpkinvine ride a breezy success

By Danny Graber

The third annual Pumpkinvine Bike ride was a breezy success. Strong west winds made the ride back to Abshire Park from LaGrange a challenge, but the more than 400 riders had a wonderful ride in spite of the wind.

As a rider from Indy put it, "The best way I can describe this experience is 'bucolic.'" The warm sunshine, the gardens, the newborn foal in the pastures, the bright orange poppy garden, the people who waved, the food – the blended scenery just seemed to be on everyone's mind as they returned to home base. And, of course, as they dismounted, we offered them homemade cherry, apple, or pumpkin pie topped with Harley's Soda Shop ice cream. Why would anyone not smile?

And to those of us who worked on the committee, our spirits soared when we saw the registration tally break the 400-mark, up from 250 last year. Bicyclists traveled from Indy, Chicago, Fort Wayne, Kalamazoo, Valparaiso and Detroit, just to mention a few cities. And, of course, local people were tremendous, in spirit and in number.

To all the riders, not only does your support make a difference; you add flavor to the character of the ride!

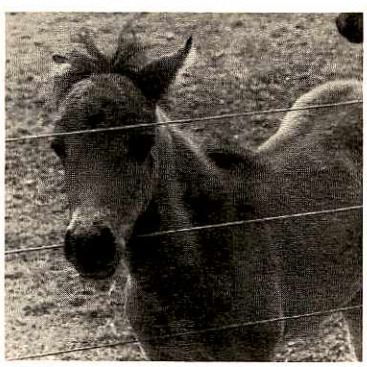
Dad worked hard on the first hill on C.R. 28 north east of Goshen.

Bill and Sue Koenig, Indianapolis, are one of many couples that traveled from out of the area to ride this year.

The sag stops in Middlebury, Shipshewana and LaGrange were a welcome stop for riders.

Riders enjoyed the cool shade of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

Nedra Noordhoorn, Highland, Mich., pins a ride number on husband Chris.



Young horses along the route added to the enjoyment of the riders.

Danny Jones, owner of Lincoln Ave. Cycling and Fitness, adjusts a front wheel for Doug Kaufman, Goshen, before the ride.

Rita Henehan, White Pigeon, Mich., and Ann Seckinger, South Bend, talk with an Amish bicyclist on C.R. 28.

Pete and Pat Oakley head home from LaGrange trailed by an Amish buggy.

A number of tandems made the ride.

On the Barn Again loop, Kenny Stutzman helped the city folk understand the fine points of a dairy operation – here what cattle feed smells like.

Legal team rides the trail When the Friends filed its first lawsuit to quiet title on the Pumpkinvine in 1993, we were represented (pro bono) by the law firm of Chester, Paff and Brotherson. Since then, that firm has merged with Baker and Daniels. Jim Brotherson recruited a group of his colleagues to ride in this year's Pumpkinvine Bike Ride. They are (from left): Keith White, Daniel White (Keith's son), Tom Adams, Rob Moreland, Jennifer Roman, Drew Welborne, Jane Johnson, Mike Smith, Carol Adams and Jim Brotherson.

Volunteers made the ride work

The success of the 2002 Pumpkinvine bike ride was a direct result of the efforts of more than 50 volunteers. Thanks to all for making the day memorable for the riders.

Kathryn Aschilman, Sag #4 morning
Mike Bontreger, Homebase Parking
Robert Carrico, Homebase Organization
Janice Carrico, Homebase Registration
Bill Clabaugh, SAG Shipshewana
Donna Clabaugh, SAG Shipshewana
Gesa Csapo, Homebase Traffic
Kellie Edwards, Radio
Dwight Fish, Homebase Parking
Chris Gaby, SAG Middlebury
Danny Graber, Homebase Organization
Larry Hahn, Homebase Registration
Dawn Hatch, Homebase Nurse
Bob Hatch, Homebase Organization
Thane Hauffman, Radio
Hawkins Water Tech, Water
David Horst, Radio
Mike Huber, Marketing
Don Hyde, Traffic Orpha Drive
Danny Jones, Bike Repair
Cynthia Kauffmann, Sag #4
Tom Kreiser, Homebase Registration
Mike Landis, Food
Merritt Lehman, Homebase Organization
Dierra Lehman, Homebase Registration
Al Longenecker, Food
Lois Longenecker, Homebase Food/afternoon
Lisa Matteson, SAG Shipshewana
Galen Matteson, SAG Shipshewana
Sahara Matteson, SAG Shipshewana
Gareth Matteson, SAG Shipshewana
Carl Metzler, Homebase Parking
Marlene Miller, Homebase Registration/morning
Marlene Miller, SAG 4 Afternoon
Susie Miller, SAG LaGrange
John Nafziger, Maps
Larry Neff, SAG LaGrange
Leah Neff, SAG LaGrange
Daniel Neff, SAG LaGrange
Michelle Rhude, SAG Shipshewana
Mike Rhude, SAG Shipshewana
Mahlon & Treva Schlabach, Sag #4
Bill Schmidt, Homebase Registration
Glenda Sherk, SAG Shipshewana
Jim Smith, SAG Middlebury/Marketing
Sherry Smith, SAG Middlebury
Darrel Sommers, SAG Middlebury
Karen Sommers, SAG Middlebury
Ben Stutzman, Brochure
Dale Stutzman, Traffic C.R. 28
Roy Valencourt, Traffic S.R. 4
Judy Weldy, SAG Middlebury
Tim Weldy, SAG Middlebury
Rhonda Yoder, Homebase Registration
John Yoder, Photography

Jim Smith joins Friends board

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. board has elected Jim Smith of Goshen to the Friends' board of directors.

Smith first became active with the Friends after attending the Friends' April 2001 annual meeting. He and his wife Sherry joined the Friends at that time, and he was soon helping with workdays on the trail, assisting Bob Carrico with the Friends' booth at Middlebury Days and assisting with refreshments at the September trail walk from S.R. 13 to C.R. 43. He and Sherry also managed the Middlebury food stop at the second annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride. Last April he chaired the committee that planned and executed the annual meeting at the Blue Gate restaurant in Shipshewana. He also served on the marketing committee for the third Pumpkinvine Bike Ride and again managed the Middlebury food stop.

His current assignment with the board is to manage the process for potential transportation enhancement funding from the Indiana Department of Transportation.

Besides his strong organizational skills, Jim has an extensive marketing and project management background. "I like to be busy helping make things happen, whether it be wielding a chain saw to help clear the trail, managing a SAG or planning strategy for a key initiative."

Based on his personal experience with trail riding in New Jersey and in Michigan, Jim believes the Pumpkinvine will be a tremendous asset to our community. "When I heard about the PV project, I instantly felt that this was something that had to be done," he said, "and I wanted to help. Indiana seems to be behind the rest of the nation in the development of trails, another reason to get involved."

Jim has enjoyed the benefits of vigorous exercise since high-school days, taking up cycling after years of jogging "to avoid wear and tear on my joints," he said. "I quickly learned that with road riding, automobiles are a constant threat to cyclists. The occasional trail that I found was always a welcome relief."

He is currently Director of Sales Training for Zimmer, Inc., Warsaw, Ind. Jim and Sherry have two adult children, one near Charlotte, North Carolina and the other newly arrived in the Goshen area. They have one grandson.

New board members needed

If you have a strong interest in the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, we'd like to talk to you about become a board member. Responsibilities include being an advocate for the trail, attending the monthly board meetings and occasional sub-committee work. As a board member, you'll have the satisfaction of helping develop a greenway that will be a tremendous asset to our community for generations to come. Interested persons should contact John Yoder at 533-4943 or e-mail to jdyoder@compuserve.com.

Indiana greenway news

Settlement ends nine-year suit over B&O abandoned rail corridor

By Jeff Smallwood and Diana Virgil

Final approval of a class action settlement has ended a nine-year dispute over abandoned CSX rail corridors in Indiana. The settlement, approved Thursday July 25, 2002 by Hamilton County Superior Court Judge William Hughes in Noblesville, concludes negotiations between CSX Transportation (CSX) and thousands of landowners over 600 miles of abandoned railroad corridors in 36 Indiana counties, including the B&O corridor in Marion, Hendricks, Putnam and Parke Counties.

Contrary to common misconceptions, the settlement does not automatically convey title to adjacent property owners. The key outcome of the settlement is that both sides agree to abide by Judge Hughes' rules of deed construction, issued on November 26, 1997, on behalf of the city of Carmel subclass pertaining to the Monon Trail, and upheld by the Indiana Court of Appeals on October 12, 2000. The adjacent landowner attorneys transferred the case to the Indiana Supreme Court and on July 24, 2002 the Supreme Court denied a hearing of the case thereby letting stand the Appellate Court decision. A review committee, comprised of attorneys representing both CSX and adjacent property owners, will now review each deed and determine, based on those rules, which parcels belong to adjacent property owners and which belong to CSX. This review is expected to be completed by the end of September 2002.

Those adjacent landowners who are determined to be the owners of the corridor and filed claim forms will receive payments from CSX of $1.50 per linear foot of corridor adjacent to their property lines. Of the over 9,800 claim forms mailed out, as of July 25, approximately 1,700 had been returned. If any adjacent property owners purchased portions of the corridor from CSX, and it is determined that CSX did not own those portions of the corridor in fee simple, CSX will refund the purchase price. The total liability of CSX for payments to adjacent property owners was capped in the settlement at $4.0 million. The administrative costs were capped at $750,000 and attorney fees for the class were capped at $2.25 million and will be paid by CSX.

Of the approximately 10,000 people in the original class, about 700 opted out of the class, so the settlement does not apply to them.

"This settlement is a major milestone for the B&O Trail project," said Jeff Smallwood of Rail Corridor Development Inc. "We can now begin the process of buying the corridor from willing sellers. For the past 9 years, we have been building public support and raising funds, and now we can finally move forward with acquisition."

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Tools needed for trail clearing

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine need some basic tools to clear the trail between Middlebury and Shipshewana. If you have any of the following items and would like to donate them to the Friends, call Bob Carrico at 266-1362.

- weed whips (hand-held)
- brush cutter (Weed Eater)
- pruner / loppers
- cross-cut pruning saws
- pole pruner
- axes
- pointed shovels
- post-hole diggers
- wire cutters
- post driver
- fence stretcher
- gas cans
- chainsaws
- chains
- Handiman Jack

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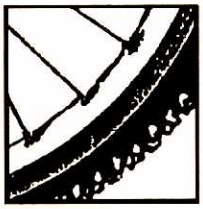

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