Pumpkinvine Trail Talk

Volume 12 No.1

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SAG trivia

If the meaning of SAG has always eluded you, well, here is the answer, as best I know it. SAG is a military term for supplies and gear. Obviously with bicycling it takes on a slightly different meaning – food, drink, rest, shade, and minor bike repairs. My own version of SAG, prior to my more formal education, was stop and grub. In some instances, when states of imminent famishment were at hand, it was stop and grab. On the Pumpkinvine Ride, we try to see that you don't get that depleted. Only proper table manners are allowed! *–Danny Graber*

New adventures for the fourth annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

15, 22, 40, 65, 83, or 100-mile route – the choice is yours!

If tedium and winter weariness have befallen you, we can help – June 14 is just around the corner.

This year you can participate in a 15-mile ride and wander in and out of our specially featured historical barns. Or, you can ride the newly mapped 100-mile route. If you ride this route, great scenery awaits you.

While all other route lengths start in Goshen, the 15-mile route starts in Middlebury. It features four barns, which will have a tour guide stationed at each barn to describe the barn and its surrounding activities. There will be one SAG stop at midpoint with food and drinks.

The 65-mile route has some new roads this year and, best of all, has a new SAG stop at the LaGrange County Rogers Memorial Park. If you have not visited this park, you're missing a gem. This rustic and historical setting is a memorial to pioneer philanthropist, Dr. David Rogers. A restored log house village awaits you. Ride to the park and you will have new conversation as you leave.

If you've always thought of trying a 100-miler but just never had quite the nerve to venture out, this is the one to try. Of 100-milers I have personally ridden, this one is clearly on the easy-end of the "difficulty" scale. While some hills await you on County Road 14, it is mostly flat. You will see Middlebury, Bonneyville Mill, Shipshewana, LaGrange, Rogers Memorial Park, and some scenic lakes and wetlands on the eastern part of the route. You will ride past Olin Lake, the largest undeveloped shoreline lake in Indiana. At Olin Lake, if you don't mind walking a bit without your bike, you can encounter a nature's paradise, including some notably aged trees.

The 100-mile ride features six sag stops. There will be generous quantities of revitalizing food and drink.

All routes have SAG stops along the way. In fact, after only three years, the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride is renowned for its SAG stops – both in quantity and quality. We make bike-rider service a priority.

The new Fourth Annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride Website is up and running, along with maps of the designated routes. For the 83-mile loop, use the 100-mile map, but skip one of the added 18-mile loops. The Bike Ride Brochure and Registration Page will be mailed to you in early April.

–Danny Graber

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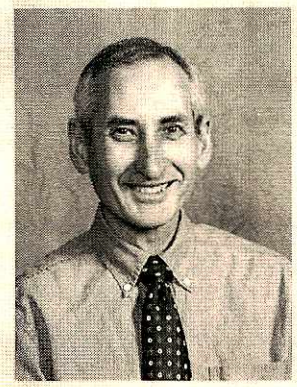


From the president

Middlebury grant in final review

As a rule, government grants are wonderful, but the paperwork can be daunting, even after you get the grant. That's the case with the Recreational Trails Grant the Town of Middlebury received from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources last fall.

After being selected to receive the grant, the Middlebury Park Board was required to write a more in depth analysis of the project. One of those reports was an historical search under Section 106 required of all federal grants.

This report was in addition to an archaeological search by Ball State University completed as a part of the grant application. During the review process the Landmarks Historic Foundation and the Indiana Department of Historic Preservation identified the bridge over the Little Elkhart River as a potential candidate for the National Register of Historic Sites. Currently the adjoining Krider Gardens Park is listed as an historic site.

The Town of Middlebury, Middlebury Park Board and the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., welcomed the possible inclusion of the bridge in the national registry. But the process for making that decision has slowed down the implementation of the grant considerably.

So presently the Middlebury Park Board is waiting for these two agencies to complete their review process of the bridge. Once it is done, the Friends will donate that section of the Pumpkinvine corridor to the city and the project can begin.

Friends receive two grants

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. has received two grants in recent months.

The first is a $5,000 grant from the Elkhart County Community Foundation for trail amenities – benches, drinking fountain, bike rack and trees – for use on the .65 miles of the Pumpkinvine corridor in Middlebury.

The Friends will donate the funds to the Town of Middlebury to supplement the $150,000 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant the town of Middlebury received for that section last fall. There was money in the RTP grant for these amenities, but by getting additional funding for them, Middlebury can shift some of the RTP funds to the bridge, which will be the largest expense of the project.

This grant is the first one the Friends have received from the Elkhart County Community Foundation.

The second grant is for $2,000 from the Central Indiana Bicycle Association (CIBA) Foundation to pay for the survey work needed to identify the boundaries of the Pumpkinvine corridor at C.R. 43 and between 1100 W. and 1150 W. between Middlebury and Shipshewana. The surveys were necessary because encroachment had made it difficult to see where the boundaries were.

The CIBA Foundation has been a strong supporter of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. This grant is the fourth the Friends have received from them since 1997.

In his letter announcing the grant, CIBA Foundation Board Secretary Donald Craft said, "The Foundation Board is pleased to support your continuing work to help bring the recreational and other community benefits of cycling" to Northern Indiana "by development of the Pumpkinvine Trail."

Survey work on Pumpkinvine completed

The survey of the Pumpkinvine between C.R. 1150 W. and C.R. 1100 and at C.R. 43 was completed in mid-February. The surveyor used wooden stakes with orange flags to mark the corridor boundary. Because the ground was still frozen and the stakes could easily fall over, Bob Carrico (below) pounded metal stakes into the ground beside the wooden ones to make a more permanent marker. The survey was necessary because of encroachment from adjacent landowners had obliterated the corridor boundary in this area.

Irvin to address annual meeting

Ray Irvin, director of Indy Greenways, will be the featured speaker at the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail annual meeting. Irvin has been the inspiration behind the development of the 150-mile Indy Greenway system in the past 10 years. He will share from his experience in building the political and public support that can make a greenway project successful.

The meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 29, 2003** beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Greencroft Senior Center in Goshen. In addition, you will receive an update on the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail project.

These are exciting and ambitious plans! To accomplish them we need your continued support. Please make this annual meeting a priority in your busy schedule. The cost per person, including tax and gratuity is $16.00. The **registration deadline is April 14**. After that date, contact Jim Smith, (kneesrus@aol.com or 574-533-7862) to see if there is still space available.

Make your check out to **Friends of the Pumpkinvine**. Then send your reservation form and check to Friends of the Pumpkinvine, P.O. Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527-0392. Upon receipt, we will send you your tickets. For additional information, check out our web site at **www.pumpkinvine.org**.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Number attending _____ x $16.00/person

Enclosed $_____

IPRA to meet at Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

The Indiana Park and Recreation Association trails and greenways interest group will hold a workshop on greenway issues June 4 at Abshire Park. The workshop will use the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail to illustrate various aspects of greenway development. The public is welcome to attend the meetings. The workshop runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will cost $20 for IPRA members and $25 for non-members.

Topics will include trail surfacing, trailhead development, bridge renovation, contracts, bids, construction phases, paved maintenance, cleaning surfaces and types of equipment, maintenance requirements, surfacing, closures, bollards, fencing, landscape, amenities, ADA requirements, erosion, growth encroachment, equipment to do the job, signage, cleaning trails, security, adapting to high water, vegetation set back, prairies and trimming.

Speakers will include engineers, architects, designers, Goshen Park staff, Brooks Construction, IDNR divisions of water and trails and the Corps of Engineers.

For more information, call Larry Neff at (574) 535-6459 or e-mail clneff@bnin.net or write to him at 211 W. Lincoln Ave., Goshen, IN 46526.

Coming greenway events

April 29
Friends annual meeting

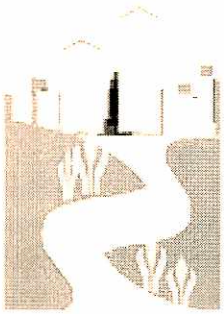
June 4
Indiana Park and Recreation Association trails and greenways interest group meeting at Abshire Park

June 14
Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

June 26-29
Trail Link 2003: Designing for the Future, Providence, Rhode Island

Sept. 21-24
Mid America Trails & Greenway Conference, Indianapolis

Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference coming to Indy



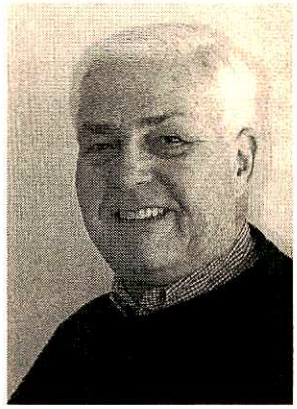
Trail and greenway advocates from five Midwest states will gather in Indianapolis, Sept. 21-24, 2003, for the first Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference. The theme of the conference is "Green Infrastructure: A Natural Framework for the Future."

The conference is an opportunity to join others from Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio who share a common interest in working together to enhance of our regional green infrastructure. It will feature motivational speakers, educational sessions and field trips all focused on the theme of green infrastructure.

The conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency, Indianapolis. Further information is available on the conference website: www.indygreenways.org/conference/index.html. Or e-mail: trails@indianatrails.org or phone (317) 237-9348.

McKee is new Middlebury Parks liaison

The Middlebury Park board has appointed John McKee as liaison to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine board. He replaces Mark Salee who was elected president of the Middlebury Park Board.



"The person who serves as a liaison from the park board to the Friends is the glue that holds our public-private partnership together," said John Yoder, Friends president. "They keep their board informed of our progress in developing the trail and keep our board realistic in our expectations of what a public park board can do."

McKee became interested in trails and greenways while living in Mankato, Minn.

"I rode my bike on a number of trails and learned to appreciate the beauty of the trail and just being outdoors," McKee said. "What impressed me was the number of people of all ages that used the trails. They were riding bikes, walking, running, roller blading and thoroughly enjoying themselves."

Minnesota is a state that has been very active in developing trails on abandoned railways. At last count, the state had 62 rail trails totaling 1,331 miles – first in miles among all states. By comparison Indiana has 64 miles on 17 trails.

McKee was also impressed with the economic potential of trails. "The communities the trails went by or through benefited economically and for some an entire tourist industry grew around the trails," he said.

After moving to Middlebury, McKee attempted to find trails like those in Minnesota, which led him to the Pumpkinvine. He became an active Pumpkinvine supporter last summer when the Middlebury Town Council was debating whether or not to accept the $150,000 Recreational Trails Program grant for development of .65 miles of the Pumpkinvine in Middlebury. He and Kent Miller went door-to-door gathering names on a petition favoring accepting the money that they presented to the town council, and the council accepted the money.

The experience also was enlightening as a measure of Pumpkinvine support in Middlebury. "Our response was universally positive in support of the project," he said.

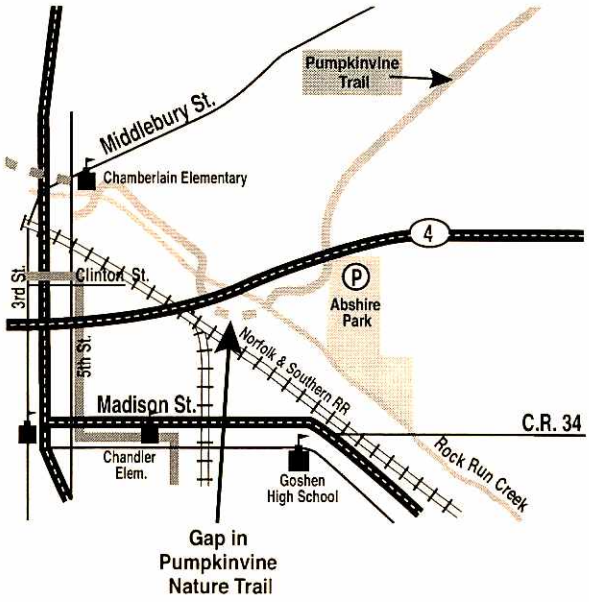
The contrast between Minnesota and Indiana was another factor that motivated McKee. "After researching state trails in Ind., I am surprised at Indiana's lack of active support in converting abandoned railways to trails," he said. "It led to my support of efforts to make the Pumpkinvine a reality."

The immediate need McKee sees in making the Pumpkinvine a public greenway is to help people understand the benefits of trails and greenways. "They are an important extension of our local and state park systems," he said. "They provide a safe environment to ride bikes, walk and run. We have some great country roads to ride bikes but the reality is, it's somewhat intimidating, especially for younger bikers. Local businesses can also benefit economically from trail traffic. In general, those using trails and greenways respect the environment and adjoining property."

Forming a Middlebury support group is one way he is planning to help support development of the Pumpkinvine Trail.

Before he retired, McKee was C.O.O. of Cotswold International, a swine genetics company and a division of Ridley Inc. Ridley is one of North America's largest animal-feed manufactures.

– John D. Yoder



Goshen Parks to close trail gap in 2003

The Goshen Park Department plans to close the gap in the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail between Rock Run Creek and SR 4 sometime this spring, according to Sheri Howland, park superintendent. Currently walkers or bikers who go south on the Pumpkinvine from the Abshire Park cabin find that the trail stops at the bridge over Rock Run Creek. "We need to close that gap," Howland said.

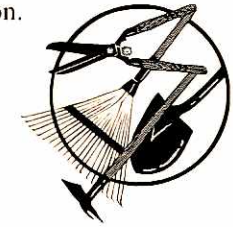
To accommodate Bartow Cartage, which still uses the old Pumpkinvine tracks south of the bridge, plans are to turn the bridge to the west, Howland said.

Trail maintenance equipment needed

Do you have equipment that could be used for trail maintenance that you'd be willing to give to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.? If so, we would welcome your tax-deductible donation. Until the trail becomes a public park, the Friends will need equipment to keep the trail from being overgrown by vegetation.

Items needed include:

- Dump truck
- Tractor
- Mower
- Chain saws
- Trimmer
- Generator
- Bow saw
- Pruner
- Weed sickle
- Rakes
- Shovels
- Post hold digger



To donate any of these items, contact:

Mike Bontrager
Evenings: 262-4873
Days: 848-7699
E-mail: logisticsbb@aol.com

For a complete list of items needed, see **www.pumpkinvine.org**.

All funds go toward paying the day-to-day expenses of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. No officers receive remuneration. Friends' members receive discounts at five local bike shops whose ads appear on the back page. Just show your membership card!

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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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**

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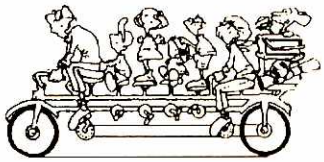

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