Pumpkinvine Trail Talk

Volume 12 No. 2

August 2003

Middlebury grant finalized

Nearly a year after receiving approval for a $150,000 Recreational Trails Program grant, the Middlebury Park and Recreation Board has received official word from the Indiana Department of Transportation (DOT) and Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that the final paper work on the grant has been completed.

The holdup in implementing the grant resulted from papers that Middlebury Park Department needed the DNR and DOT to approve as part of the normal implementation process. One of these requirements was a section 106 historic search to see if there were major significant historic structures or events on the Pumpkinvine. After waiting one month, Historic Landmarks Foundation replied that they were slightly interested in the trestle bridge and asked for additional information. We provided the information and sent it on the DNR to relay to Historic Landmarks.

The DOT also needed assurance that there were no environmental or archeological questions relating to the project site. The Middlebury Park Board has now received that "categorical exclusion" for the project – the final piece of the grant implementation puzzle. The actual donation of land by the Friends to the town will occur Sept. 8.

Speak up for trails and greenways

The federal program that has funded thousands of trail and greenway projects in the past 12 years is under attack in Washington. On July 11, a U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee removed all funding for the Transportation Enhancement program for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, 2003. The Transportation Enhancements program has been responsible for nearly $3 billion in support of rail-trails and other bicycle and pedestrian facilities nationwide since 1991, according to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

On July 24, the same committee failed to pass an amendment that would have restored enhancement funding by a vote of 29-33. There is still an opportunity for enhancement funds to be added to the bill when the full house debates the transportation bill in Sept.

Now is the time to contact your representatives and let them know that you support Transportation Enhancements. The key section of the FY04 Transportation and Treasury Appropriations Bill is Sec. 114, which would eliminate funding for Transportation Enhancement. When you contact your representative, **ask them to strike Sec. 114 when the bill is voted on in September.**

Listed below are ways to contact Representatives Souder and Chocola from Elkhart and LaGrange counties. Outside of these counties, you can reach any Representative by calling (202) 224-3521 and asking to be transferred to the Representative's office. If you don't know who your Representative is or how to contact him or her, go to http://econstituent.votenet.com/lab. Click on the elected officials tab, enter your zip code, then click biography for phone numbers.

For the latest information on the status of enhancement legislation see http://www.railtrails.org/whatwedo/policy/tea21b.asp.

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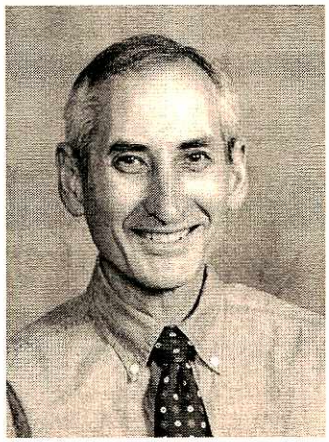
From the president



Let's be unrealistic

Conventional wisdom tells us we should be realistic when we make decisions. To be successful in life, we should "count the cost," take time to look at all sides of the issue, be sensible, pragmatic, rational, down to earth and levelheaded. By all means we should avoid being unreasonable, impractical, irrational or illogical.

Trying to recycle an abandoned railroad corridor like the Pumpkinvine is one of those decisions that appears on the surface to be unrealistic. But in the past 12 years, the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. have challenged that conventional wisdom with a dream. We have chosen to look at possibilities rather than obstacles, and as a result we have made great strides in seeing our dream of a multi-use trail and greenway become a reality.

No, the progress hasn't been as fast as we would have liked. In fact it has been agonizingly slow. Volunteers have burned out. Politicians have crusaded against it. Money has been tight.

Yet, the dream of a 16-mile Pumpkinvine greenway is alive, thanks to your support and our unwavering belief in a simple premise: if we saved the Pumpkinvine corridor from being destroyed, people would eventually see the value of this land for public recreation and transportation. Two communities—Goshen and Middlebury—have embraced that dream. Now is the time to move from the city to the county, starting with the six miles between Middlebury and Shipshewana. That is our priority for the next year.

Goals for 2003-04

At the Friends annual meeting, I outlined specific goals for the Friends in the coming year for each of the three sections of the greenway. They are:

Middlebury-to-Shipshewana

- Settle three encroachment issues that are currently blocking our access to the trail.
- Have a public mountain bike ride from Middlebury-to-Shipshewana by October.
- In partnership with local public officials, apply for TEA 21 funds to develop these six miles.

Middlebury

- Donate .65 miles to town and assist park department in developing SR 13 to Wayne Street.
- Develop a proposal for crossing SR 13.

Goshen to Middlebury

- Follow up on favorable legal ruling and class settlement and get agreement from adjacent landowners on ownership.
- Negotiate trail location with farmers in problem areas.

With your help, we will defy conventional wisdom and reach our "unrealistic" goal of a 16-mile greenway linking Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana.

—John Yoder, President

Bike Ride Blessings:

A Report on the 4th Annual Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

By Danny Graber

"The ride was terrific—scenic and peaceful. I enjoyed seeing all the Amish activities and the flowers."
—Stuart Green, South Bend, rode the 65-mile route.

Blessing one: 968 happy feet

Somewhere in the course of listening to Cubs baseball you'll hear a sponsor announce how many "happy feet" a homerun just traveled off the end of a Cubs' bat. Well, they have nothing on us. On June 14th we had 484 bicyclists and 968 happy feet! A Cub has never hit a baseball that far.

Enjoying a break at the Shipshewana SAG were Louis and Carolyn Frick, Bremen; Bonnie and Ron Simshauser, Winamack and Fran Carrico, Phoenix, Arizona.

All said and done, you were a marvelous crowd. This is the first blessing of the ride. We can plan all the amenities we want, but we can never create the enthusiasm each of you brings to the ride. Your support of this ride plus the ongoing development of the trail is invaluable.

We thank the many participants from our local community and the Michiana Bike Association (MBA). And to those who drove so far from neighboring cities and states, thank you. Your support from a distance is as meaningful as the support of those who hail from local communities.

Blessing two: Soothing sunshine and cottony tailwinds

This year was the absolutely picture-perfect weather day. At first I wanted to claim authorship to the warm temperatures and soft tailwind. But I soon realized it had more to do with the atmosphere you riders created than any of my wishful thinking.

After Mark Wert of Goshen finished his 65-mile ride and started eating his pie and ice cream I overheard him say, "For $20 this is the most generous ride I have ever been on." Mark's comment is a reflection of our goal—to keep this a generous, fun, and gracious experience. Keep holding us to the challenge.

To fully accommodate the sunshine and tailwind, we introduced the 100-mile route this year and were delighted with its popularity. Definitely it will be repeated next year. The route is a nice, easy century. The Barn Loop was also popular again this year. Thank you to the Elkhart County Parks Department volunteers who guided bikers through the living environs of the barns. The revised 65-mile route brought positive comments.

Blessing three: Volunteers

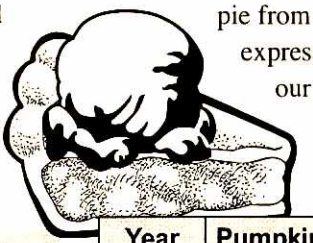
Thank you to the many volunteers. Your names are listed separately in this issue. Without you this ride would come apart at the seams. Your enthusiasm is just as notable as the riders' enthusiasm. At the end of the day, you were all still chipping in and smiling. Thank you for the unbounded efforts you bring.

Blessing four: Growing pains (yes, they're blessings too)

In spite of our best intentions, we experienced some flaws. We extend our apology if any of you were inconvenienced in any way. Your comments are always welcome and helpful to us. It is how we measure the success of our ride.

And last but not least: Pumpkin pie will return next year.

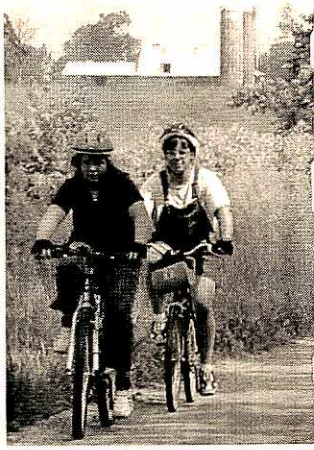
In years past we thought that fruit pies won the popularity contest and so we removed pumpkin pie from the menu. But various bikers expressed their disappointment with our decision so pumpkin pie will be back!



Year	Pumpkin	Cherry	Apple	Total
2000	25			25
2001	10	12	14	36
2002	12	15	15	42
2003		25	25	50

Craig and Lorie Crawford from Mishawaka were attending their first Pumpkinvine ride.

Ken and Anna Kirkpatrick live in Greencastle, Ind.



Riders encountered many An

Elisa and Troy M

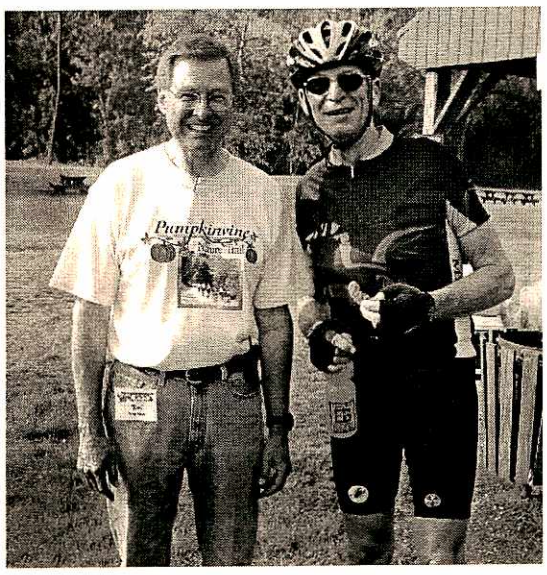
The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is perfect for families to ride together.

Virgil Brenneman, age 82, was the oldest person on the ride.

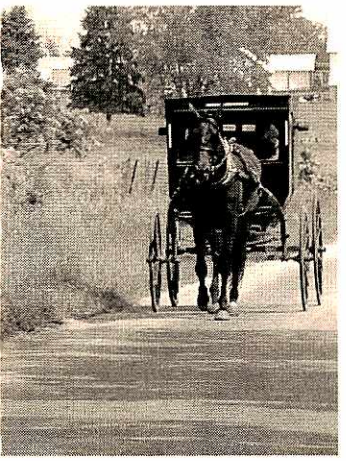
Number of riders	
Year	Riders
2000	225
2001	245
2002	405
2003	484

"That was a great day; our family had such a good time! Thanks for all you and the rest did to make it enjoyable for everyone."

—Jim and Lois Bare



The largest family on the ride was the family of Jim and Lois Bare. Left to right: Lois Bare, Jim Bare, Beth Hawn, Roger Hawn (in back), Derek Hawn (age 13, beside Beth), Marshall Hawn (age 11, in front of Beth), son Joe Bare (in back), Laura Bare (beside Joe) holding Camille Bare, Anna Bare (age 10 in front of Joe), Mahlon Bare (age 4 in front of Laura), Rebecca Bare and her spouse Laurence Koehn.



nish buggies on the route.

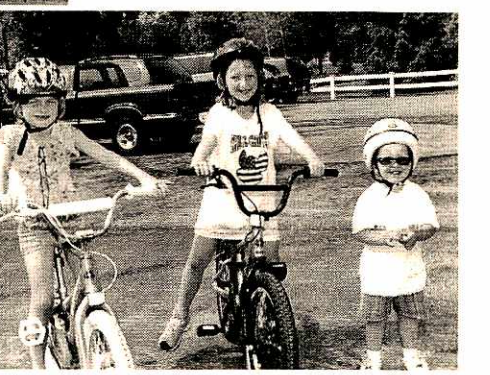
ller hosted the Shipshewana SAG.

A group of serious bikers in LaGrange County.

Bonnie Howland of Goshen on the road to Middlebury.

"This was close to a five-star ride. I liked Shipshewana. I had a flavored latte at the Bread Box Bakery."
—Tim Ellsworth, Fort Wayne

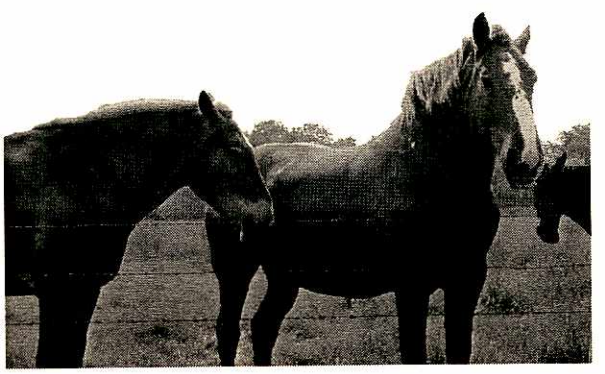
Larry and Melinda Gramm, Countryside, Ill., pulled this unusual trailer with their three children.

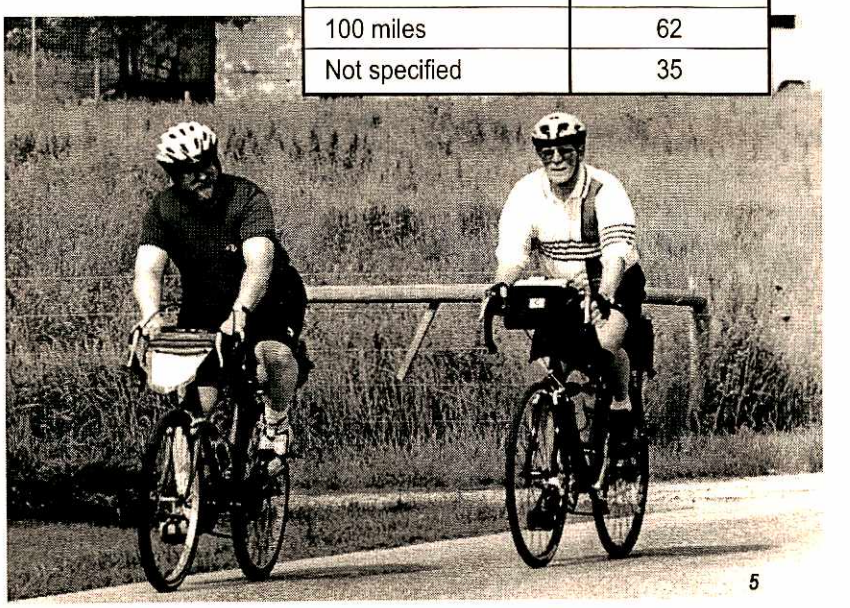


These young riders started in Middlebury: Eleanor Ohm and Maggie and Sam Morrison.

Where they came from (2003)	
Goshen Elkhart area and surrounding communities	197
Southern Michigan (Niles, Kalamazoo)	81
South Bend/Mishawaka and surrounding communities	67
South of Goshen, Warsaw to Indianapolis	46
Fort Wayne and surrounding communities	33
West of South Bend to Illinois line	24
Illinois (Chicago area)	23
Ohio	8
Special kudos to people from Connecticut, New Mexico, Colorado, and Arizona	5

How far they rode (2003)	
Route length	No. of Riders
Barn Loop (15-mile)	59
22 miles	121
40 miles	113
65 miles	93
100 miles	62
Not specified	35





Volunteers make the ride

It takes a fantastic volunteer effort to make an event like the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride a success, and we are fortunate to have had 56 wonderful volunteers help with the ride. Our thanks to all of you who, not only made 484 riders feel welcome, but almost all worked the day of the ride and gave up the opportunity to ride the ride themselves!

Volunteer	Job or responsibility
Kathryn Aschilman	County line SAG
Dee Birkey	Brochure
Mike Bontreger	Homebase parking
Valorie Breeden	Database
Eunice Carrico	Middlebury parking
Robert Carrico	Ride committee
Janice Carrico	Homebase registration/food serving
Gesa Csapo	Homebase traffic
Dwight Fish	Homebase parking
Stan Gingrich	Roving mechanic
Danny Graber	Ride committee—chair
Larry Hahn	Homebase parking
Larry Hahn	Homebase parking
Dawn Hatch	County line SAG
Bob Hatch	Homebase organization
Gordon Hostetler	Middlebury parking
Phyllis Hostetler	Middlebury registration
Don Hyde	Homebase parking
Danny Jones	Abhsire Park bike repair
Cynthia Kauffmann	County line SAG
Liese Kreiser	Registration
Tom Kreiser	Food acquisition
Max Laudeman	Roving mechanic
Janet Laudeman	Homebase registration/food serving
Merritt Lehman	Ride committee
Dierra Lehman	Homebase registration/food serving
Roseleane Long	Shipshewana SAG
John Mckee	Photography
Nicole Mehas	Route marking
David Mehas	Route marking
Tory Miller	Shipshewana SAG
Elisa Miller	Shipshewana SAG
Beth Miller	Registration
Marlene Miller	Shipshewana SAG
Lois Nafziger	Homebase registration/food serving
John Nafziger	Maps
Issac Neff	Middlebury bike mechanic
Susie Neff	Rogers Park SAG
Larry Neff	Rogers Park SAG
Leah Neff	Rogers Park SAG
Daniel Neff	Rogers Park SAG
Mahlon Schlabach	SAG site provider
Treva Schlabach	SAG site provider
Bill Schmidt	Homebase registration
Jim Smith	Middlebury SAG & marketing
Sherry Smith	Middlebury SAG
Darrel Sommers	Middlebury SAG
Karen Sommers	Middlebury SAG
Dale Stutzman	Homebase traffic
Roy Valencourt	Homebase traffic
Judy Weldy	Middlebury SAG
Tim Weldy	Middlebury SAG
Myron Yoder	Radio
Rhonda Yoder	Middlebury registration
John Yoder	Mechanic/photography
John Zitlaw	Middlebury SAG
Audra Zitlaw	Middlebury SAG

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
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The sandwich-making operation at the Middlebury SAG of Karen Sommers, Sherry Smith and Audra Zitlaw.

Irvin links greenways to community infrastructure

"Few things in today's transportation industry make better sense than combining the needs for pedestrian and bike trails with the need to locate, maintain and sustain community infrastructure," according to Ray Irvin, director of Indy Greenways, and featured speaker at the Friends of the Pumpkinvine annual meeting, April 14.

And Irvin should know. Under his leadership "the City of Indianapolis over the past decade has developed a substantial Greenways network and trails system, and in the process, has worked closely with the Department of Transportation, Public Works and utility companies to meet our city's needs," he said.

Those needs included fiber optic cable, cable TV, sewers, water and gas lines, phone lines and live steam from the solid waste recycling burn plant. A prime example of how greenways help other parts of the infrastructure occurred in 1989 when a lift station on the north side of our city failed, dumping millions of gallons of raw sewage into Williams Creek and White River.

"This episode prompted the EPA to demand the building of an interceptor sewer system to serve the entire North Central part of Indianapolis," Irvin said. "The 48-inch sewer main was co-located under the Monon Trail in record time, at a fraction of the cost of digging up streets to locate the main sewer line."

At the same time, the development of the Indy greenway system has attracted new businesses to greenway areas. "As our system developed, many new environmental, commercial, housing, art and nature opportunities began popping up along the Greenways," he said.

Today the Indianapolis Greenways System consists of over 5,000 acres of dedicated green ways on over 200 miles of linear space, along with 65 miles of dedicated trails. Additionally, 45 miles are being planned or constructed and another 75 miles will undergo construction in the near future. "Today our trail system is well underway to connect over 125 major destinations throughout our county to hundreds of Indianapolis neighborhoods. Such destinations include 55 parks, along with schools, museums, a zoo, libraries, one college and two universities," he said.

There is no doubt in his mind that "an effectively planned greenways system for any city can rapidly develop into an important quality of life amenity. Greenways become recreation and transportation assets that also serve to meet the community's needs for 21st Century infrastructure."

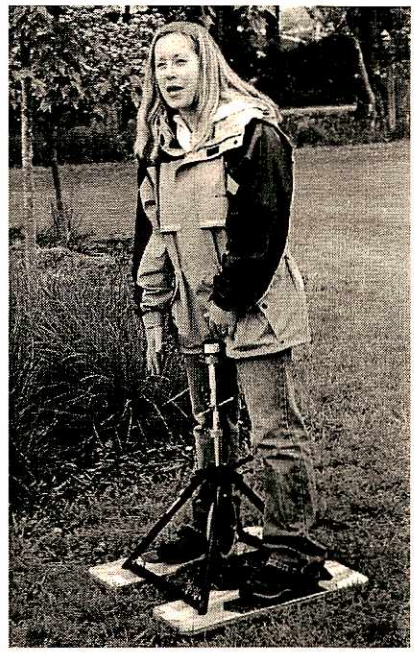
IPRA workshop uses Pumpkinvine for workshop

The Indiana Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) used two sections of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and Abshire Park as the setting for its trail workshop, June 4. Park and recreation directors from all over northern Indiana attended the workshop.

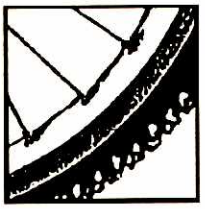
Participants studied trail maintenance, signage, accessibility and other issues. Leaders used sections of the Pumpkinvine to demonstrate various ways to construct and maintain a trail with an asphalt surface or a crushed limestone surface. Also included in the outdoor classroom was a wetlands area southeast of the Pumpkinvine where the Goshen Park Department would like to create a trail to connect Abshire Park with the country fair grounds.

Workshop presenters included Jennifer Skulski and Amy Patrick with the National Center on Accessibility; landscape architects Chuck Lehman of Lehman & Lehman, and Cheryl Chalfant of Rundell Ernsberger & Associates; botanist Nicole Kalkbrenner; John Ritchey, biologist with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; John Hall of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Water; Andrew Pelloso and Jason Randolph, project managers of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management; Ed Pilipow, project engineer with Brooks Construction; Steve Varner, executive director of Cardinal Greenway; and Lise Schools, owner of Interpretive Ideas.

(Above) IPRA workshop participants watch one of the machines used to smooth the surface of the Pumpkinvine.



(Right) Amy Patrick with the National Center on Accessibility demonstrates a device that measures the firmness of a trails surface to see if it complies with the standards of the American's with Disability Act.



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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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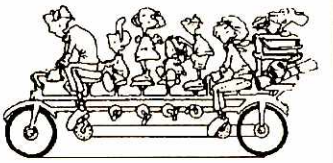

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