

The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

WHO WE ARE

Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail are a group of local citizens who support by education and fund raising the city and county park departments in their effort to create a linear park on the former Penn Central right of way between Goshen and Shipshewana.

Board of Directors

John D. Yoder	Karen Fergison
Trudy Herkenroder	Galen Kauffmann
Norm Kauffmann	Quinn Holdeman, Jr.
Rosealene Long	Chet Peachey
Sharol Raber	Clarence Yoder
Richard Fay	

New to the Board

Trudy Herkenroder and Richard Fay recently were appointed to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail Board. Trudy is an account executive at WTRC Radio in Elkhart. She also has several years experience as a news reporter. Trudy serves as chair of the Public Relations Committee. Richard Fay is the new Director of the Goshen Park Department. He replaces Larry Beachy on the board as a representative of the park department. Our thanks to Larry for his work on the board the last two years. Richard is a native of Elkhart and returns to the area after 18 years of living in Bloomington, Indiana. He recently received his masters degree in Park and Recreation from Indiana University. Before coming to Goshen, Richard served on the Bloomington Park and Recreation Department. All board members volunteer their time and talents to the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

WE CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

When I was in an Iowa City bike shop recently, I saw a brochure listing 26 Iowa rail-trails. Two of them, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail and the Hoover Nature Trail will eventually be linked together to form a trail over 175 miles long in eastern Iowa. Traveling on that trail would be like going from Goshen to Wisconsin or Goshen to Detroit on a greenway.

Fifteen years ago Iowa had no rail-trails. Today it has 409 miles. What happened? How did Iowa become a leading rail-trail state? The answer is the perseverance of a few private citizens who had experienced the wonderful trails in Wisconsin. Despite opposition and limited funds, they were determined to bring that positive trail experience to Iowa.

Today the people of Elkhart and LaGrange counties have the opportunity of a lifetime: to save the last Penn Central corridor in Indiana for public use. The Friends have an option to purchase the Pumpkinvine, but we don't have much time. The option expires June 3. We need your support now. Let the community and our elected officials know where you stand. Make a pledge toward purchase of the trail. Volunteer your time to make phone calls or stuff envelopes. Drop us a line and we'll put you to work.

--John D. Yoder

OPTION EXTENDED

Penn Central Railroad has given the Friends a 6-month extension on our option to buy the abandoned Pumpkinvine Railroad right of way. The original option expired Dec. 4. The new option expires June 3, 1993. The option was

extended because the Friends did not yet have the funds necessary to buy the corridor. Penn Central is asking \$300,000 for the land. The Friends are currently having the land appraised. This appraisal will allow us to begin negotiations with Penn Central for purchase.

CAN THE OPTION BE EXTENDED AGAIN?

Penn Central has a history of not extending options a second time. Instead there is the real possibility that the railroad will sell the Pumpkinvine Railroad corridor to US Railvest. This company in turn sells the land to the adjacent landowners.

The Pumpkinvine is the only abandoned Penn Central corridor left in the state of Indiana. At one time there were 9 such corridors in the state available for development. If we want to save the Pumpkinvine corridor and add another 17 miles of trail in Indiana, the community needs to respond. There are currently 6 trails in the state and they only total 12 miles. Michigan has 44 trails and Illinois has 24. Time is not a luxury we can enjoy right now if the Friends plan on pursuing the dream of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? We need your help if we are going to purchase the corridor from Penn Central.

-Join the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

-Talk to people about the trail development.

-Volunteer your talents.

-Write letters to the newspaper, county commissioners and county council.

-Get signatures on petitions.

-Solicit financial support.

-Pledge money toward the purchase of the corridor.

THANKS TO VOLUNTEERS

Since November more than 160 names were added to our petition list and 68 new members joined the Friends since November. A special thanks to those who helped prepare the November/December mailing:

Don Boyer	Rebecca Boyer
June Yoder	Joann Smith
Chet Peachey	Norm Kauffmann

Thanks also to Doris Cripe. Doris entered all the names and addresses from the petitions into the computer.

GRANT RECEIVED

Recreational Equipment, Inc., of Sumer, Washington, has awarded The Friends a \$2,105 grant. The grant will be used to increase community support of the Friends and our rail-to-trail project.

RESULTS ARE IN

This past summer the Elkhart County Park and Recreation Department completed a survey to help update its 5-yr. master plan. According to the survey the Pumpkinvine received strong support as a project the park department should pursue. More than 440 surveys were completed.

COMMITTEES HEAR MORE ABOUT PUMPKINVINE

Goshen's Bicycle committee and the Face of the City learned more about the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail in January. John Yoder and Clarence Yoder met with the city's bicycle committee to find out more about the city's plans for bike routes and how they can be integrated with the development of the Pumpkinvine.

Also in January, John & Clarence talked to the Face of the City board of directors about the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. The Face of the City is a group developed in conjunction with the national Main Street USA. The goal of the group is to revitalize historic downtown areas such as Goshen. In addition to the trail's recreational, transportation, and aesthetic benefits, John Yoder cited several economic benefits of developing a trail.

1. Increased property values along the trail.
2. Expenditures by trail users, such as biking equipment.
3. Concessions that cater to trail access.
4. Agency expenditures (staff salaries, supplies).
5. Tourism (motels, restaurants, gift shops).
6. Corporate relocation and retention (trails improve the quality of life).
7. Decreased health care costs for employers.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

In an attempt to raise awareness about the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, meetings were planned in three area communities. Please plan to attend the February or March meeting.

Elkhart

In January more than 30 people attended a meeting in Elkhart. A strong showing of support was exhibited by those at the meeting. They had the opportunity to ask questions about the Pumpkinvine.

Middlebury

Thursday, February 11, is the next meeting of the Friends at the Middlebury Public Library at 7 p.m. Steve Haddad, founder of the People Against the Kal-Haven Trail in Michigan, will be present. Steve is an adjacent land owner of the Kal-Haven Trail. He now serves on the Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail Board of Directors. Encourage anyone you know to attend.

Goshen

Thursday, March 11, 7 p.m., at the Goshen Public Library is the last of this series of meetings.

PLEASE JOIN US

Some of you are receiving this newsletter for the first time. You have shown an interest in the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail either through a pledge or signing a petition. If you would like to continue to receive our newsletter as a member of The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, the cost is only \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a family. Please make your tax-deductible check payable to - The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Mail to:

**Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail
PO Box 392
Goshen, IN 46526**

NEW MEMBERS - Welcome!

Artley, Tom & Eleanore
Bontrager, Wilbur
Boyer, Don & Rebecca
Campos, Sue
Clemens, Don & Marie
Coddington, Dale
Fancil, Robert
Fay, J. Richard
Gilbert, Glenn & Mary
Golden, Roger & Alice
Graber, Marilyn
Graff, John & Susan
Grove, Iverson & Rosalie
Hankins, Mary
Holdeman, Quinn, Jr.
Hollinger, Rex
Hooley, Eric & Glenda
Hopkins, Phil & Sally
Hostetler, Clair & Naomi
Hostetler, Jerry & Beth
Kaufman, John & Myrna
Klassen, Tyler
Martin, Steve & Lucie
Miller, David & Mary Kathryn
Miller, Karen
Miller, Pete
Miller, Stan & Sandy
Miller, Tim & Anita
Nafziger, Roger & Laurie
Nagys, Sigi & Elizabeth
Nofziger, Myrl & Phyllis
Plake, Earl
Salisbury, Robert & Jeanette
Saner, Floyd & Eileen
Shank, Paul
Spirito, Georgiana & Lisa
Stutsman, Gene
Tassin, Emile
Thomas, Everett
Vonnegut, Richard
Weaver, David & Dawn
White, Annette
Wietstock, Timothy & Kendra
Wilson, Erin

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Wear the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail logo and map. T-shirts are available for \$12. You can buy one at any Friends' meeting or by sending your size and check to our address.