Friends of

The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

Vol. 2, No. 3, July - September, 1993 Newsletter

Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail are cyclists, hikers, equestrians and naturalists who by education and fund raising support the area park departments in their effort to create a linear park on the former Penn Central right of way between Goshen and Shipshewana, Ind.

Board of Directors
Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.

John D. Yoder, President — 533-4943
Galen Kauffmann, Vice Pres. — 534-0101
Chet Peachey, Secretary — 533-3418
Clarence Yoder, Treasurer — 533-2085
Kathleen Hackel, Membership — 825-7373
Trudy Herkenroder, Publicity — 875-1239
Sharol Raber, Special Events — 848-4641
Richard Fay, Director — 533-8621
Mike Bontreger, Director — 262-4873
Don Boyer, Director — 533-5710
Quinn Holdeman, Jr., Director — 825-7258
Norm Kauffmann, Director -- 533-8036

Option renewed with Penn Central

The board of directors of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. has renewed its option to purchase the Pumpkinvine corridor from Penn Central Real Estate. The option was scheduled to expire June 3; the extension is until Dec. 3, 1993.

"We could not agree on a price for the land by June 3," said John Yoder, president of the Friends. "This extension gives us the time we need."

Negotiations between Penn Central and Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. board continue.

Elkhart City Council endorse Pumpkinvine trail proposal

The Elkhart City Council has added its support to the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. At its June 21 meeting, the council adopted a resolution urging the Elkhart and LaGrange counties councils and commissioners to create the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. The vote was 7-1.

Three Friends' members spoke in favor of the resolution — Mike Bontreger, Jim Brotherson and Merritt Lehman.

"The possibility the county could develop a linear park is an exciting one," Brotherson said. The resolution is not a legally binding document, but it is "a statement of public policy by the legislative body of this town."

Lehman spoke of his interest in the trail as a cyclist. He said the experience of other linear parks is that they have a positive economic impact on their communities.

Councilman John Calvert cast the lone vote against the resolution, but he emphasized that he opposed it only because he felt the language urging the commissioners to help create the park was too strong. In general he said he "strongly supports the possibility of this becoming a linear park."

The Elkhart City Council endorsement follows a similar endorsement by the Goshen City Council in February.

Pumpkinvine Trail included in Elkhart County and Goshen park master plans

The Elkhart County Park and Recreation Department has included the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail in its revised master plan. The park board reviewed the plan at its April 26 meeting.

Being included in the master plan is important because projects must be in the plan to be eligible for state or federal funds. The county park department has applied for $99,000 for the Pumpkinvine's Elkhart County section and received a high rating in the state's Hometown Indiana program. However, funds for that program have not been released due to the state's budget crisis.

The Goshen Park and Recreation Department is also updating its master plan. Included in the plan is a staging area for the Pumpkinvine in Abshire Park. The Pumpkinvine forms the western boundary of the park between S.R. 4 and Rock Run Creek.

Annual meeting report

Forty-two members attended the first annual meeting of Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail April 15 at Greencroft Senior Center, Goshen. The group heard reports from board members about negotiations with Penn Central, fund raising and membership.

Members spent half an hour

brainstorming about goals and strategies for the coming year. Everyone agreed that the immediate goals are to agree on a price for the land with Penn Central and raise the funds to purchase the corridor. (The board hopes to have settled on price with Penn Central by Sept. 1, 1993.)

Greater public awareness of the potential park and increasing membership were also mentioned as important goals.

New board members elected

Three members were elected to the board of directors of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail at the annual meeting April 15.

Kathleen Hackel is from Middlebury and works at NBS Office Supply in Goshen. She has agreed to head up the Friend's membership committee.

Mike Bontreger lives in Elkhart and has his own business — Logistics by Bontreger — in Middlebury.

Don Boyer lives in Goshen and works at Coachman Industries, Middlebury. He is also a board member of the Goshen Historical Society. He is particularly interested in the historical preservation dimension of the Pumpkinvine.

Welcome to these new board members.

Leaving the board were Karen Fergison, Rosealene Long and Joe Lehman. Our thanks to them for their hard work in the past two years.

Two board members on MACOG bicycle route planning committee

Richard Fay and John Yoder were recently appointed to the Elkhart County MACOG bicycle and pedestrian route planning committee. MACOG (Michiana Area Council of Governments) is the regional planning agency for Elkhart and St. Joseph counties.

Under the new federal highway program (ISTEA) they are mandated to include routes for pedestrian and bicycles as part of their overall transportation plans. These routes include bicycle lanes on existing highways and bicycle paths like the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Dan Seltenright, a member of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine and director of the Elkhart County Park Department, is also on the committee.

Upcoming Friends' events

July 23-31 **Information booth at the Elkhart County Fair Building 14).** A great opportunity to let people know about the trail by distributing literature and answering questions. Volunteers are needed. If you can help for even a two-hour shift, call Karen Fergison, 533-3763.

Aug. 5 **Pumpkinvine patch of fun,** 7 p.m. Schrock Pavilion, Shanklin Park, Goshen. An informal meeting of Friends. Bring finger-food desserts and drink.

Aug. 14 **Ride the Illionis Prairie Path and Fox River Trail in Illinois.** Join other trail enthusiasts for an exciting day on these two rail-trails. The ride will be about 55 miles. Meet at 6 a.m. at Wal-Mart parking lot betwen Goshen and Elkhart. Bring your own bike. Please confirm with John Yoder, 533-4943.

Aug. 21 **9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Clean up at Rock Run Creek bridge, Goshen.** Wear your old clothes and bring buckets, rakes, trash bags and shovels and come to our first work project. The bridge is on the corner of Cottage Ave. and Bridge St., north of Lincoln near LaCasa. Call Don Boyer for details, 533-5710.

Sept. 9 **7 p.m. Public meeting, Greencroft Senior Center.** Dr. Merle Jacobs, professor emeritus of zoology at Goshen College, has produced a stunning video on the wildlife of the greenway that is the Elkhart River, Rock Run Creek and the Pumpkinvine. Don't miss this presentation of the Pumpkinvine's natural heritage.

Oct. 9 **Ride (or walk) the Kal-Haven State Park in southern Michigan.** Meet at Lake City Bank, 2513 S. Main St., Goshen at 8 a.m. Indiana time or meet at the Kal-Haven's Kalamazoo trailhead at 10:30 a.m. Michigan time. Bring your own bike. Set your own pace and distance. To confirm call Chet Peachey, 533-3418.

New Pumpkinvine Nature Trail T-shirts coming

Check it out! Chuck Lehman has redesigned the Friends T-shirt. It has new lettering and a new graphic. The unveiling will be at the Friend's Aug. 5 event at Shanklin Park.

Barbecue a success

The Friends sold 450 chickens at the Nelson's Golden Glow Barbecue June 4. Funds raised will go toward a mailing this month to all persons who signed petitions, but who have never joined the Friends.

A special thanks to Karen Fergison and Sharol Raber who organized the events. Also thanks to members Walter and Vera Schmucker, Christine Falcon, Ruth Roth, Evelyn Kreider and Lincoln Avenue Schwinn Bike Shop for their help in making the event a success.

Friends out to make more friends

The board of directors has set a goal of increasing membership to 500 household this year. Currently the membership is around 225 households.

Increasing the membership lets local

public officials see the broad base of support for the trail, and it involves the talents of more people. It's the creativity of many people that make rail-trails a success.

HB 1851 defeated; Governor signs HB 1670

Trail advocates in Indiana had a double victory in April. House Bill 1851, which would have made it easier for adjacent property owners to claim abandoned railroad rights of way, was defeated in the final days of the Indiana General Assembly's regular session.

After the Senate Judiciary Committee refused to report the bill out of committee, Senator Grubbs, author of HB 1851, attached the it to Senate Bill 409, a bill about utility rights of way sponsored by LaGrange County representative Robert Meeks. Trail advocates, including Friends members in LaGrange County, persuaded Meeks to drop the rider (i.e., HB 1851)

The bill sponsored by the Indiana Park and Recreation Association and rail-trail advocates — House Bill 1670 — passed both houses and was signed by Gov. Bayh. HB 1670 sets up a study committee to study "all aspects of abandoned railroad right-of-way." The committee is to issue it's report before Nov. 1, 1993.

As this process shows, letting our representatives know our opinions does make a difference. Thanks to all members who called their representatives about these bills.

The state organization coordinating efforts to defeat 1851 in Indianapolis was the newly formed Transportation Development Corridor Alliance. Giving leadership to that group are Tom Olsen, Marla McDaniel and Rita Hamm, Director, Crawfordsville Park and Recreation Dept. and head of the Indiana Park and Recreation Association.

Board members visit trails

When PV board members hit the road for a summer vacation, they often look for trails to visit. Seeing other trails is always an inspiration and a great way to get ideas for what the Pumpkinvine could be. This summer board members Chet Peachey, Mike Bontreger and John Yoder visited trails in Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Iowa.

Bontreger visited Galcial Drumlin State Park Trail in Wisconsin with his family. They chose that trail because they also wanted to go to the Milwaukee Zoo, which is about five miles away.

"The trail is scenic and very nice," Mike said. "It starts out suburban and quickly becomes rural with small towns."

A special attraction on the trail is an eatery called LaDuke's Frozen Custard. "Everyone we met said, 'You've got to go a few miles further and eat some LaDuke's frozen custard.' So we did," Mike said, "and it was good."

Chet and Ruth Ann Peachey rode their tandem on the Kal-Haven Trail in Michigan and the Youghiogheny River Trail south of Pittsburgh, Pa. When completed it will be 69 miles long. The trail has no user fee.

On their Youghiogheny ride they learned that the town of Ohiopyle has come to life as a result of the trail with rentals for bicycles, canoes and kayaks. At the staging area, the old depot had been converted into an information center with information about the trail, the railroad and places to stay in the area.

Chet and Ruth Ann have been cyclists for over 25 years, but the more trails they ride, the more they are convinced of their value. "Ruth and I enjoy these trails much more than riding on the highway," Chet said. "It's so much safer."

Another highlight was seeing young families on the trail. "It was great to see parents teaching their kids how to ride a bicycle in a safe environment," Chet said.

Yoder visited the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, the Heritage Trail near Dubuque, the Chataqua Nature Trail near Des Moines, The Great River Trail in Moline and the Duck Creek Trail in Davenport.

The Cedar Valley Nature Trail is a prime example of a rural trail. It goes 54 miles from Waterloo to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The surface is crushed limestone.

"I particularly wanted to see a livestock underpass," Yoder said. "As a bonus I saw three tunnels under county roads and a major tunnel under Interstate 380. The latter is the type of tunnel that would work at U.S. 20 for the Pumpkinvine."

Yoder also saw the effectiveness of the trail as a wind barrier.

"The day we rode the trail there was a 40 mph wind from the northwest. The trees along the trail protected us, making the ride much more pleasant than being on the unshielded road. But more importantly the trail's trees protected the plowed fields east of the trail. The wind was whipping up clouds of dust from unshielded fields; fields near the trail were not suffering the same degree of wind and moisture erosion."

The Duck Creek Trail is a wonderful urban trail that connects parks, schools, residential areas and commercial areas, Yoder said. "One new housing development along the trail — with houses in the $150,000 range — was building an access trail to the main trail. McDonalds, which was beside the trail, had built a special access and seating area for trail users."

If you'd like a great family experience, check out rail-trails around the country. An indispensable guide to existing rail trails is *500 Great Rail-Trails* available from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 1-800-888-7747. Iowa and Illinois also have state trail guides with more detailed maps and information. The Illinois guide is available from Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the Iowa guide from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, 505 5th Ave STE 444, Des Moines, IA 50309-9854 for $7.45.

Have you visited a trail lately?

Why not let the community know about it. Write letters to the editor of the *Goshen News*, *Elkhart Truth* and *The Paper*. Keep them short and to the point. Tell what you've observed on other trails. Then send us a copy for this newsletter.

More new members

Welcome to the 25 households who joined the Friends since the last newsletter!

Joe Dishman, Goshen
Anne Eash , Goshen
Menno and Shirley Friesen, Goshen
Andre and Cathy Gingerich Stoner, Elkhart
James Ingold, Goshen
Mary K. Jones, South Bend
Maxine Kauffman, Goshen
Robert and Betty Kincaid, Elkhart
Dennis and Ann Koehn, Goshen
Joe and Alice Kring, Niles
Mike Landis, Goshen
Richard Loney, Ft. Wayne
James and Barbara Luebke, Goshen
Ruth McLaughlin, Middlebury
Doug Mulvaney, Elkhart
Mike and Beth Myers, Bristol
Elizabeth A Naquin, Elkhart
Clysta Richard, Des Moines
Ken and Joann Riffel, Mishawaka
Beverly Robinson, Des Moines
Alice and Willard Roth, Elkhart
Will Schielder, Milford
Robert Slaski, Elkhart
Michael and Kathy VanderMaas, Goshen
Mike and Becky Wittrig, W. Lafayette

Is it time to renew your membership?

If the date on the label of this newsletter. has passed, it's time to renew your membership in the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Membership levels are:

__ Individual	$15
__ Family	$25
__ Sustaining	$50
__ Contributing	$100
__ Patron	$250
__ Founder	$500

Founding members will receive special recognition at the trailhead in Goshen.

For your membership you receive the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail newsletter and the opportunity to be part of and support an organization dedicated to the creation of a unique asset for our community — the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

What does your membership fee go for? Money collected from memberships goes toward paying the day-to-day costs of Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail — printing the newsletter, postage, letterhead, envelopes, copying and transportation. Any funds above expenses go toward the purchase of the Pumpkinvine corridor.

Send your renewal to: Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, PO Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527

Address correction requested

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