Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

Volume 6, No. 1, March 1997

Members meeting set for April 17

Greenways Live!

The annual meeting of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail association will be held at 7 p.m. April 17 in the Schrock Pavilion in Shanklin Park, Goshen. The park is located on S.R. 119 a quarter mile west of S.R. 15.

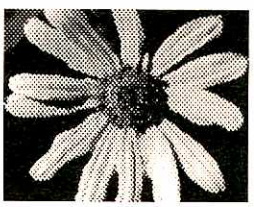
The theme of the evening is "Greenways live!" The program will include:

- A report on the positive developments around the state for Greenways and trails, including:
  The Indiana Greenways Conference, the Monon Trail in Indianapolis and the Prairie Duneland Trail in Portage.
- Slides and video of the Pumpkinvine Trail activities of the past year, including development of the trailhead
- Goals for the Pumpkinvine for the coming year
- Election of new board members (see story below)
- Refreshments

All paid up Friends members are encouraged to attend.

Dedication of Pumpkinvine Trailhead

June 7, 1997
5 p.m.
Join the Friends for a celebration picnic on National Trails Day.
Bring your own meat to grill and a dish to share.
After the dedication take a walk on the trail to see the wildflowers led by Friends naturalist, Dr. Merle Jacobs.



The trailhead is located across from Abshire Park on S.R. 4, east of downtown Goshen.

Finishing trailhead a priority for spring

Although work on the Pumpkinvine trailhead in Goshen was suspended in November due to bad weather, the Friends plan to finish the project this spring, according to Larry Neff, project manager. "All the materials for the entrance have been purchased. All we need now is some warmer weather," Neff said.

Left unfinished in the fall was the entrance to the trail off of S.R. 4. It will consist of paving bricks placed between railroad ties from the old Pumpkinvine railroad, which were discovered during the process of cleaning up the area. "The entrance will look something like the brick-and-rail work at Goshen's Old Bag Factory," Neff said. "The bricks also give a different texture to the trail surface, which is a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act for trails as they approach a road." A fence and more plantings will complete the entrance. Chuck Lehman of Lehman & Lehman, Mishawaka designed the trailhead.

A date for the trail work has not been set, but anyone interested in helping with the brickwork, plantings and fence construction should contact Bob Carrico at 266-1362 to be put on a contact list.

A $10,000 Challenge Cost Share grant from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service funded most of the materials for development of the trailhead. Friends' volunteers supplied the machinery and labor.

Two nominated for Friends' board

Two trail enthusiasts have been nominated to the Friends' board of directors. Members of the Friends' association will vote on their nominations at the annual meeting April 17 at the Schrock Pavilion of Shanklin Park. The nominees are Merritt Lehman and Steve Herendeen. Both can be elected to the board.

Merritt Lehman is an avid cyclist who believes the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail would be a great asset to the community. "To preserve the old line as a trail for the public is a tremendous resource," he said. Lehman is a graduate of Goshen College and received an M.B.A. from Cornell University. He is employed as a financial planner in Elkhart.

Steve Herendeen thinks the trail would be a great for families. He and his wife live along the Mill Race in Goshen and use it frequently for running, walking the dog and cross country skiing. "To be able to go to Shipshewana with the kids and not worry about traffic would be great," he said. Herendeen,a graduate of Goshen College, works with individuals and group insurance and investments.

Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail are cyclists, hikers, equestrians, and naturalists who by education and fund raising support the area parks department in their effort to create a linear park on the former Pumpkinvine corridor between Goshen and Shipshewana, Indiana.

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533-2305

Dwight Fish, Newsletter Editor
295-7659
E-Mail: Fish73@aol.com

Pumpkinvine Web Page access:
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/jdyoder

Two resign from board

A long-time board member and a recent addition have resigned from the Friends' board of directors. Both Don Boyer and Allen Kauffman cited busy schedules that conflict with board meetings as the reason for their decision.

Boyer has been a member of the Friend's board since it's incorporation in 1992, and prior to 1992 he was a member of the Friends' informal steering committee for several years.

"My new job will cover territory farther to the East and South [of Goshen]. Because of my business travel and the great amount of work I have at my [new] lake [home], I'm taking this opportunity, with sadness, to resign from the board. I have always felt that board members need to be very active on the trail. With this new responsibility, I will not have the time it takes to do what I believe needs to be done. Best wishes for a great year; the trail head looks great. Good luck; good luck; good luck." Don Boyer

"We are very sorry that Don will not be able to continue with the board," said John Yoder, Friends president. "However, we certainly understand the problem of distance, and we appreciate his integrity in putting the best interests of the project ahead of everything else."

Don became interested in the Pumpkinvine when the Friends' steering committee asked the Goshen Historical Society to send a representative to join the committee. Don was interested in the trail concept, but before joining the Friends he and his wife Rebecca checked out an operational rail trail by visiting the Kal-Haven Trail in Michigan. That trip convinced them of the value of the trail, and they became enthusiastic supporters.

"He was always reminding us that saving the Pumpkinvine corridor was saving a part of our history, as well as creating a place for recreation," Yoder said. "We will really miss his historical perspective."

Kauffman joined the board in May 1996, but he discovered that his schedule did not permit him to participate in board meetings and other activities. "I believe this board should be a working board," he said, "and I was not able to be as involved at a level I think a board member should be."

"We are pleased that Al has agreed to stay connected to the board in an advisory capacity," said John Yoder, Friends president. "We really value his political savvy and connections to the local business community. He's the only person I know who has more contacts in Goshen than C.J. Yoder."

Legal update

by Galen Kauffmann

The quiet-title lawsuit filed by the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., against adjoining property owners between Middlebury and Shipshewana is still pending in Superior Court #3 of Hamilton County, Indiana. The purpose of the lawsuit is to clarify ownership in that section of the corridor.

Farm Bureau supplied attorneys had taken steps over a year ago to have the venue of the lawsuit changed from Elkhart County to Hamilton County in order to join the Friends' suit with another they had brought against Penn Central Corporation and U.S. Railvest on behalf of adjoining landowners in central Indiana. This change of venue has contributed significantly to the amount of time it is taking to quiet these titles.

In a meeting with Friends' attorneys Jim Byron and Jim Brotherson last year, attorneys representing the adjoining property owners were able to agree on most of the 1880's deeds that would determine the "root of title" for the parcels in dispute. However, recently, opposing attorneys have claimed that they have discovered two deeds that should serve as root of title for two of the parcels. They have not yet produced these deeds for Byron and Brotherson to review.

Once the lawyers have agreed on all the deeds representing the roots of title for each parcel, they will submit "briefs" supporting "motions for summary judgment" to the court for a ruling on the issue of ownership. If the court is not able to grant summary judgment covering all of the parcels, then the question of ownership will go to trial where further factual testimony will be presented.

Once again the Friends extend their heartfelt thanks to attorneys Jim Byron and Jim Brotherson and Charles Grodnik for working tirelessly on behalf of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail , Inc., all absolutely free of charge. Our work in establishing trail would have come to a halt years ago were it not for their help.

Rail-trails top 880

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy reports that as of Jan. 31, 1997 there were 885 rail trails open for a total of 9,013 miles. Wisconsin has the most miles (1,096) and Michigan has the most trails (89). An additional 1,000 trails are in various stages of development, totaling another 17,000 miles.

Meanwhile, Indiana has at least 19 rail-trail projects in various phases of development. Ten of those were at least partially open, with just over 32 miles of trail. The other nine projects were in either the proposed, planning, or construction phases.

To see a summary of Indiana rail trails visit the DNR web site:
http://www.ai.org/dnr/outdoor/railtrai.htm. Thanks to Mike Martin of the DNR for compiling this list.

Kal-Haven Trailblazer

Want to see what the Pumpkinvine will look like when it becomes an operational trail? Join the fun with thousands of other on the 12th annual Kal-Haven Trailblazer, Saturday, May 10, 1997. The Trailblazer is an organized bicycle ride with sag, food and shuttle services between Kalamazoo and South Haven, Mich., although you can ride any portion of the 34-mile long trail.

The official Trailblazer starts at Kalamazoo Central High School or South Haven Middle School. Riders take the trail or alternative routes set up on roads parallel to the Trail with distances of 25, 40, 62 and 100 miles. Three rest stops are provided for trail and road riders. Don't miss the vegetarian sloppy joes at Bloomingdale. Muffins, cookies, bananas, oranges and other traditional foods will be provided. Pre-registration fee is $12 per person. For pre-registration information call 616-657-3232 or write to: Kal-Haven Trail Blazer, P.O. Box 80, Paw Paw, MI 49079-0080. Registration is also available on May 10 at Kalamazoo Central High School, South Haven Middle School and the 10th Street trailhead, but the fee is increased. Profits from registration fees support trail operation. The easiest way to reach the trail is to follow S.R. 13 north from Middlebury to Kalamazoo and follow the signs to the trail.

The Kal-Haven Trail was built on a railroad corridor originally owned by the South Haven to Kalamazoo Railroad Company. Rail service ceased in 1972 and the corridor was purchased by Michigan Department of Natural Resources in 1988 for $428,000. The trail opened late in 1989. This success was attributable initially to the tireless efforts to a group of citizens which eventually became the Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail. Later the State of Michigan joined the project and greatly speeded up implementation of the citizens' proposals.

New liaison to Middlebury Park Board

The Friends' board has a new liaison to the Middlebury Park Department board.

Donna Schwartz has replaced Brent Cummings whose term on the Middlebury Park Board expired last fall.

"We think it is important to have a liaison to the various park boards in the areas where the Pumpkinvine corridor goes," said Galen Kauffmann, Friends vice president. "Our goal from the beginning has been to work in partnership with the park board to make this trail a reality. By having a liaison from the park boards or departments present at our board meetings, they are able to advise us about how the trail would impact their community, and they become familiar with our goals and objectives."

Schwartz, who lives one house from the Pumpkinvine, is off to a fast start in her role. She has been visiting with adjacent landowners who live along the Pumpkinvine to get their input on the development of the trail."

Her hope is to create awareness about the positive aspects of Rails-to-Trails development in the Middlebury area. She said, "There are lots of things that people are overlooking." She referred to possible new businesses that could be built along the trail such as bike rentals, restaurants, and various related shops. "It would be a positive thing. A recreational facility [like the Pumpkinvine Trail] is needed around here." She is excited about working with the Pumpkinvine Board to bring about these changes.

Schwartz and her husband John operate *Shades of Green*, an interior-scaping business in Middlebury.

Cummings has served as liaison to the Friends' board since August 1993. "Brent has been a wonderful advocate for us in Middlebury," said John Yoder, Friends' president. "One of his unique contributions was to create our first site on the World Wide Web. And who will ever forget his commanding presence on our first trail walk as he removed the wire barricade that was supposed to stop the walk."

Survey shows strong support for Pumpkinvine Trail

By a two-to-one margin, residents of the Goshen-Elkhart area support the development of a linear park along the Pumpkinvine corridor. In an independent survey by Midwest Marketing Research, 48 percent of the respondents who had heard of the Pumpkinvine Trail said they believed the community should support it; 22 percent did not support the trail, and 30 percent were uncertain. Of those surveyed, 65 percent had heard of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

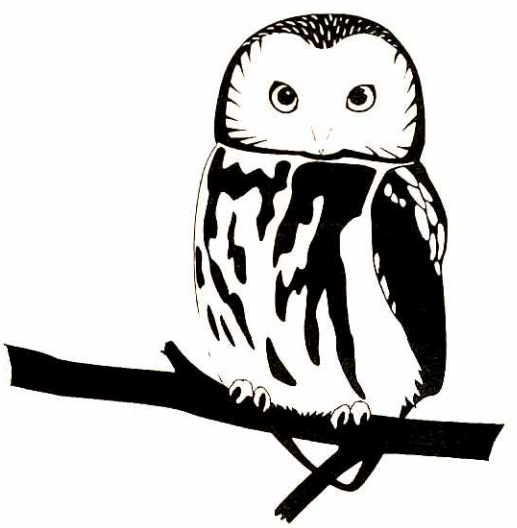
"These results are very encouraging," said C.J. Yoder, Friends treasurer. "People have heard about this project, and they think it's a good idea. The survey shows the broad support the trail has."

The strongest support came from people ages 25-34 (59 percent), 35-44 (55 percent), and 45-55 (52 percent).

Women supported the trail by a margin of 51 to 16 percent, with 33 percent uncertain. Men supported the trail by a margin of 43 to 30 percent, with 26 percent uncertain.

MMR conducted the survey of 204 randomly selected people by telephone between Dec. 30, 1996 and Jan. 6, 1997 using professionally trained interviewers.

The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail , Inc., did not commission the survey.



From the president: Thanks!

For the past seven years, the Friends group has been pursuing the dream of a recreational and transportation greenway between Goshen and Shipshewana. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who have helped sustain this massive effort. You've heard us mention our lawyers before: Jim Byron, Jim Brotherson and Charles Grodnik. Their expertise has been invaluable. But in addition, there are nonboard members who work behind the scenes to do the jobs needed for any volunteer organization to function. We salute their commitment and dedication: • ***Roy Beaupain***—donates printing services • ***Dee Birkey***—designed trail brochure • ***Janice Carrico***—understands nonprofit mail regulations and helps with mailing newsletter • ***Marie Clemens***—writes minutes of board meetings • ***Dwight Fish***—helps with mailing and editing newsletter • ***Glenn Gilbert***—maintains our large database of members • ***Iverson Grove***—has donated services as appraiser • ***Liz Jacobs***—runs errands, delivers packages and does research • ***Merle Jacobs***—gives council on all matters related to wildlife and vegetation on the trail • ***Chuck Lehman***—has donated numerous designs for trail, including trailhead • ***Tim Miller***—donated design skills for several newsletters • ***Dave Morris***—always available to staff display booth or mail newsletters • ***Oxana Werbiansky***—present designer of newsletter

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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 $15 ___ Contributing $10 ___ Family $25
___ Patron $250 ___ Sustaining $50 ___ Founder $500

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Please take note of the expiration date of your membership on the address label. Thanks.

All funds go toward paying the day-to-day expenses of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail: printing, postage, letterhead, envelopes, copying and transportation. No officers receive remuneration. Founding members will receive special recognition at the trailhead in Goshen.

10/3/97

John D & June A Yoder
200 Westwood Rd
Goshen IN 46526-4836

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