

TRAIL TRACKS

Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail

P O Box 455, Edmore, MI 48829



fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org

November 2021

BLESSINGS. . .AND MORE

The holidays are a time when many give thanks for their blessings, and this year that goes double for one of ours. . .the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail. Without "our" Trail many of us would have been a little stir crazy through the pandemic. The Trail has meant freedom to move, freedom to be outdoors, freedom to enjoy nature, and freedom to greet others safely. For that we are truly blessed.

We are also blessed by the volunteers who trim trees, cut up felled trees, mow grass, ditch mow, pick-up and empty trash, put up and take down barriers, paint bollards and kiosks, and generally keep the Trail pleasant and safe.

This annual November newsletter always serves two functions:

1. an annual report of the Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail; and
2. a call for more volunteers, because as you'll note in the article about the Bollard Rangers, "many hands make light work." Current volunteers need help in maintaining the Trail by those who value it. Look for additions to the Facebook page so that is easier for the young folks to do.

We know there are many of you who help in various ways for which we are unaware. We may not be thanking you by name, but we appreciate your work.

The Board of the Friends of Fred Meijer Heartland Trail

FFMHT is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax deductible.

○ Resealing and Trail Surface Repairs ○

by Karen Stearns

Many areas of the Trail were improved in 2021. The Trail parking lot in Stanton and Walnut Street to Carlson Road had cracks filled, root bumps repaired, 75 depressions filled and two coats of reseal, at a cost of \$16,960. Root bumps were smoothed at Michigan Street in McBride at a cost of \$525.00. Cracks were filled for three miles from Sidney Road to Miller Road at a cost of \$11,025. Many thanks to the **Mid West Michigan Trail Authority for funding these projects and D & D Asphalt** for doing the work.

The **Greenville Area Community Foundation** funded the resealing and restriping of the Trail Parking Lot in McBride and the repainting of the safety stripe from the Trail at Lake Road to the Trail crossing at Peck Road near Greenville (2.4 miles, both sides), at a cost of \$4600. Work was completed by the **Montcalm County Road Commission and D & D Asphalt**. Many thanks!



Bollard Rangers Want YOU!!

by Jane Hemenway

The Numbers:

216 bollards at road intersections
12 bollards at driveway intersections
51 bollards in Greenville
48 bollards at bridges

327 total bollards, the short yellow posts that serve as a barrier to keep motorized vehicles off the Trail, help protect the Trail and those using it. Periodically, the bollards need a fresh coat of

paint or repair. As you can imagine, this can take many hours for one or two people. But, as the saying goes, "many hands make light work." Perhaps there are a few bollards along the Trail where you visit? Maybe you could help with that small stretch of the Trail and lessen the load of the 40+ miles of Trail we enjoy? We are looking for volunteers to donate a little bit of time once or twice annually to help keep the FMHT safe and beautiful. Will you be a Bollard Ranger? **To volunteer, contact us by email at fmht.fbpage@gmail.com or at [Fred Meijer Heartland Trail, Contact](#), and fill out the online form.**

You're never too young to volunteer!



Bridge Repairs in Greenville

by Karen Stearns

Thanks to the hard work of **LS Engineering in Greenville** and the help of **Miller Development** of Weidman, the repairs are almost completed and the bridge is again open for public use. A few details will wait until spring, mostly concerning re-seeding and a bit of painting. The bridge surface will also be re-sealed at that time. Thanks to all who made these repairs possible and to Trail users' patience.

Pictures on page 3



Tree Removal Projects by Karen Stearns

The Board has concentrated on removal of encroaching trees and dead trees on the FMHT in 2021. Smaller, encroaching trees along the Trail have been removed by **The Stump Guy**, a business in Crystal, over the nine miles from Riverdale to Luce Road. A new project to remove dead trees is underway from Sidney Road to Carlson Road in Montcalm County.

As Trail users know, there are hundreds of dead trees along the Trail that are blown over or die and block the Trail from time-to-time. Many thanks to the known

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volunteers--**Rick Baldwin, Monty Stratton, Terry's Bike Shop employees (in Alma), Don & Karen Stearns, Paul Gruca, Roger Hinton, Mark Prout, Sarah Avery**--and to the unnamed volunteers who have done a lot of Trail cleanup during this past year! Volunteers always appreciate your respect and thanks while working, so thanks for your friendliness and for giving them space as they work! Your observance of safety as they clear the way is appreciated.

Kiosk Maintenance 2021

by Jane Hemenway

Have you noticed a change at some of the FMHT Trailheads? Volunteers painted and updated the kiosks along the Trail. **Patty Rockafellow and Trudy Petersen, both FFMHT Board members,** spruced up the McBride Trailhead. Painting and kiosk updating are just a few of the many tasks volunteers can do to keep our Trail looking good! Contact us on Facebook or call if you are interested in helping.



Bike Repair Station Added in Stanton

by Patty Rockafellow

Thank you to the **City of Stanton** for furnishing, through grant money, the wonderful bike repair station at the  Trailhead near Maddie's Park. It is there for all to use! These would be a great idea for memorial or honor donations to the Trail! Send donations to: Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail, P.O. Box 455, Edmore, MI 48829. The Trail Board will assess the Trail needs and make a suggestion for your donation.



The decision whether to have the annual in-person fundraiser banquet and silent auction has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Watch your mail and the FMHT Facebook page for updated information as we approach spring 2022.

MOWERS – 2021
by Dianne Wilson

The Fred Meijer Heartland Trail would not be as well-maintained and safe without the hard work of those who mow the Trail's sides and trim brush from May through October. Volunteers enjoy your respect and thanks while working, so thank you for being friendly, telling them thank you, and giving them space! We want all to be observant of safety.

Who are these VOLUNTEERS? Some are retired, but many find time after work or weekends to fulfill a desire to HELP their communities! THANK YOU ALL for the work you do!

City Church Greenville, Marcy Simon, Peck Road South to M57

David Christensen, Lake Road East to Miller Road

Jack Pearl, Derby Road West to Miller Road

Ken Mitchell, Derby Road North to Bridge

Rick Baldwin, McDonalds South to Dalmac Bridge

Bruce Basom, McDonald area North to Epley Road

Eric Rolston, Klees Road to Cannonsville Road

Roger Hinton, Coral Road South to Cannonsville Road

Mike Gilbert, Edmore-Forrest Street to Lake Montcalm Road

Jeff Hansen, Lake Montcalm Road South to Coral Road

OPEN FOR VOLUNTEERS

Derry Road E to Academy Road
(Contact Dianne Wilson at 989-268-5143 to volunteer)

OPEN FOR VOLUNTEERS

Academy Road East to Neff Road
(Contact Dianne Wilson at 989-268-5143 to volunteer)

Monte Stratton, Caris to Derry Road, and many other areas as needed

Dianne Wilson, Crystal Road to Lumberjack Road

Cal Callison, Caris Road to Crystal Road, and the Vestaburg Depot area

Dr. Paul Gruca and Barry & Will Dolloff, Pingree Road to Lumberjack Road

Steve Litwiller, Charles Road to Pingree Road

David Clifford, Captain Hook's Towing Service in Greenville, for mowing a large area around the M91 parking lot and trail sides. He also provided storage for the ditch mower overnight in Greenville during the mowing.

Contact Dianne Wilson at 989-268-5143 to volunteer for mowing.

Ditch Mowing

by Jane Hemenway

Just like mowing the grass on the edges of the Trail, it's a never-ending job to trim back the trees and shrubs (and grapevines) along the FMHT. **Don and Karen Stearns** spend many hours each year with a ditch mower, trimmers, and hedge clippers to keep our Trail open and safe. Give them a big thumbs up the next time you see them working on the Trail. Their tireless dedication improves the length of the Trail, from Greenville to Alma. In only 21 days they mowed just under 70 miles this year! **To volunteer for ditch training and mowing, please contact Don & Karen at 989-235-6170.**



Veteran's Park Connected to in Stanton

by Patty Rockafellow

Creation of Veteran's Park in Stanton is in its first phase, including a connection to the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail. Trail users will be able to ride/walk/jog to and from the Trail and the park, located at 710 North State Street in Stanton.



Stanton Safety Run/Walk/Ride

by Patty Rockafellow

Once again, the **Sheridan Community Hospital, White Pine District Library, City of Stanton, Stanton Police Department, and Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail** all helped to host the Safety Run/Walk/Ride event this past August. We are so happy that we were able to bring back this wonderful family event! After a brief introduction to some important safety information from the sponsors... *they were off!* They ran, walked, or rode a bike to one of the two end goals--1 mile or 2 miles! A big thank you to all who helped or came to participate!



TRAIL DONATORS 2021

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○ TRAIL DONATORS 2021, Con't. ○

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Stearns, Don & Karen
Terry's Cycle



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E-Bike Usage on the Trail by Patty Rockafellow

A concern for all who travel the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail is the use of e-bicycles. The Trail Board acknowledges that there are special circumstances where e-bikes are needed for use of the Trail. The Board asks all who are using them to be considerate of the walkers and bikers on the Trail by keeping speed to a minimum and letting others know you're coming. Motorized vehicles, with this exception, are prohibited on the Trail.

