

TRAIL TRACKS

Newsletter of the Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail, December 2025

PARTY AT THE PAVILION

by Patty Rockafellow

Over 80 people met at the Edmore Pavilion on June 8, 2025, for music, food, prizes, and a great time. All silent auction items, merchandise, raffle prizes, and door prizes benefited the Heartland Trail. The party was followed by an optional ride/walk led by Tammy Warner and Tammy Bennett. We thank Pastor Randy Bennett for giving the blessing of the Trail and those who use it.

Winners of the 2025 annual raffles were: *Paul Gruca*, Men's Townie Bike donated by Terry's Bike Shop/Ranger Power; *Ginger Gurecki*, Ladies Reid Bike donated by Dennis' Bike Shop/LS Engineering, and Carol Smith; *Rhonda Harrell*, Small Point B & B at Mackinac Island stay donated by The Phyllis Painter Family; *Pat Finn*, Candlelite Inn B & B stay donated by Board Members; and *Lou Kitchenmaster*, North Bay B & B on Presque Isle stay donated by Fleis & Vandenbrink Engineering Inc., Grand Rapids.

The 2025 Door Prize winners were: *Don and Claudah Horrigan*, a Trek Verve 2 Bike from Dan's Bike Shop in Ionia; *Nick Springsteen, Joyce Kitchenmaster, and Judy DeGruise*, local donations baskets; *Tim Lambrecht*, Let's Talk Trash dumpster; and *Eric & Jo Raby*, Dragon Adventure Base Camp 3 Nights, sponsored by MTB Auto Body.

Hearty thanks to Marty Combs and Dave Swanson, musicians; Tim Hemenway, sound; Zach Perrin (The Stump Guy), food; Jan Russell for the homemade cookies; Michigan One for donating the cost of the ticket printing, and all the people and

business who donated prizes. We appreciate you all! Please feel free to give us feedback and let us know what you would like for us to try next year. For more information, visit <https://www.fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org/trail-events>.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

by Karen Stearns

As you are likely aware, the vegetation along the Trail grows at an astounding rate. The FFMHT Board has voted to implement a Trail-wide brush and tree management plan that will take several months to complete. The goal is to clear a "tunnel" the length of the Trail by clearing all softwood trees and all brush 8 feet out from the edge of the

asphalt and 12 feet above this surface. This will allow all Trail users and mowers clear access to the Trail surface. This project will cost over \$100.000. We have received two quote presentations and have decided to go with Zack Perrin, The Stump Guy and crew, who are currently mowing the Trail sides. We will be using FFMHT monies as well as Mid-West Michigan Trail Authority monies to support this project, but any and all donations are gratefully accepted. This project will take more than one mowing season to complete.

NEW BOARD SELECTION PROCESS

The FFMHT Board has adopted a new process for selecting members of your Board of Directors. A subcommittee of the Board will recommend a slate of new and returning candidates for the upcoming term. The slate of candidates will be presented to the current Board at the Annual Meeting in February for a two-year term.

This year's slate of candidates is:

Larry McKeown is an avid cyclist living in the Stanton area. In the past few years, Larry has taken on many Trail projects that keep the Trail safe and well-maintained.

Rick Baldwin is a lifelong Stanton resident. He is an avid biker and user of the FMHT. Rick has been a supporter of the Trail since the beginning of the Trail.

Patty Rockafellow uses the Trail often for walking and biking. She is interested in serving on the Board because she wants to have it preserved and promoted so even more people will have an appreciation for it.

Tim Kellner has been on the Trail Board for five years and has been treasurer for the past two. He rides, walks, and runs on the

Trail almost daily when he is in Alma, where he lives.

Andy Jeffers and his wife, Mary Ann, moved to Greenville in 2023 after living in Clarkston, Michigan, for 20 years. Andy would like to enhance his involvement with the FMHT as a board member.

IN MEMORY OF MARK PETERSEN A FRIEND TO US AND THE TRAIL

MEMORIALS ALONG THE TRAIL

by Patty Rockafellow

Often folks who feel that their loved one had a special connection to the Trail donate in their loved one's memory to add a bench, picnic table, bike repair station, or some other item. The Board likes to honor your requests, but we must keep in mind that only so many of those items can be added and maintained. This year we have a new option for a memorial donation of at least \$500. Your donation could add a memorial sign along the trail and also help with the cost of maintaining the Trail. For a current list of memorial options, please contact the Board at <https://www.fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org/contact>.

MEMBERSHIP

Your 2026 membership envelope is included in this newsletter mailing. Thank you for all your past and future donations! We accept memberships via US mail or at <https://www.fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org/membership>.

TRAIL MOWERS 2025

by Dianne Wilson

There are many people on the Trail calling out or signaling "THANK YOU" to our volunteer mowers and workers! Our new mowers for this season are Andy Jeffers, Bob Lombard, Max Merry, Zach Perrin and his daughter. Most of the following have volunteered for years! David Christensen, Jack Pearl, Tom Burge, Rick Baldwin, Bruce Basom, Roger Hinton, Jeff Hansen, Mike Gilbert, Don and Claudah Horrigan, Bill Ball, Monti Stratton, Cal Callison, Paul Gruca, Mark Edgar and David Maybee. This past summer Steve Litwiller, a dedicated mower, volunteer and Board Member for many years passed away. We appreciate his son-in-law, David Maybee for stepping up. Other steady volunteers are Mark Prout and David Saxton, many miles of trimming done by this pair! To keep ALL safe on the Trail...ALL must be alert! Heads Up! Slow down for workers, walkers, other bikers and that creature crossing just ahead!

VESTABURG TRAIL DEPOT

by Dianne Wilson

The Vestaburg Depot hosted several FMHT events this year, all headed by Dianne Wilson:

The Depot was filled with memorials to Veterans and other local residents and was a part of honoring two local families at Vestaburg Days the third weekend in July.

The FFMHT Board held the September meeting at the Depot to give all Board Members a good view of one of our important assets.

The Depot was a trick or treat site on Halloween where ghosts and goblins could come and receive candy and drinks.

2025 RESEALING AND REPAIRS

by Karen Stearns

Sixteen cement panels in the section between Grow Road and Miles Road were leveled with expanding poly foam this summer by Kent Home Services. FFMHT covered, \$1962.50.

Miles Road to the cement section was resealed and cracks filled by D & D Asphalt Specialists of Midland. MidWest Michigan Trail Authority covered, \$1,250.

Luce Road to Winans Road resealed and all cracks were repaired by D & D Asphalt Specialists out of Midland, MidWest Michigan Trail Authority covered, \$6,080.

Grow Road to Miles Road and Miles Road to Miller Road were resealed and cracks filled by D and D Asphalt Specialists out of Midland, Greenville Area Community Foundation funds used: \$6430. FFMHT covered the \$430 over the \$6,000 grant from the Foundation.

Total 2025 expenditures for resealing and repairs were \$15,722.50.

HOW TO REACH US

<https://www.fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/MiFMHT>

PO Box 455, Edmore, MI 48829



Our heartfelt thanks to all donors and volunteers for their priceless time & energy!

2025 Supporters:

\$1-\$99

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 Alma Women's Club
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 Smith, Lon
 Smith, Kathy
 Speiser, Steven
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 Springsteen, Nick & Cheryl
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 Tanner, Steve & Marshelle
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 Tjalsma, Laurie & Kurt
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 Wakefield, Betty
 Walkington, Barb & Bill
 Aldrich
 Warner, Tammy
 Warthman, Janet
 Wegner, Phyllis
 Wesp, Heather
 Wiederhold, Trent
 Wilson, Dianne & Jim

2025 Contributors:

\$100-\$249

Adder, Thomas
 Aubin, Betty
 Avery, Penny
 Baldwin, Wilma
 Barberi, Alison
 Basom, Bruce & Diane
 Braman, Bob & Betty
 Bussema, David

Clements, Terry & Janice
 Degruise, Judith
 Dvorak, Joseph
 Edwards, Ned
 Farrell, Kathy
 Fritsma, Mark & Kristen
 Gibbs, George
 Griffin, Denny & Tammy
 Gruca, Pat & Paul
 Gullmeyer, Dan & Amy
 Hansen, Eric & Nicki
 Hansen, Jeff & Connie
 Harrell, Linda
 Harrell, Richard & Rhonda
 Hemenway, Jane & Tim
 Holloway, Ray & Naomi
 Hoskins, Marilyn
 Jakobiak, William
 Jeffers, Andy & Mary Ann
 Kitchenmaster, Lou & Joyce
 Krieger, Paul
 Lang, Barbara & John
 Levand, Betsy & Michael
 Marshall, Dennis
 Miller, Margaret
 Miller, Marty & Janet Shy
 Morey, John & Roxanne
 Petersen, Mark & Trudy
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 Woudenberg, Jeff

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 Kellner, Tim & Sharie
 Lambrecht Family, Tim
 Meyer, Dawn & Edwin
 Prout, Mark-MEA
 Financial Services
 Smith, Carol
 Stearns, Don & Karen
 Stuner, Mary & Jeffrey
 Sorensen, Sharon
 Tacia, Victoria & Peter

2025 Mowers & Trimmers

Alma College Football Team
 Baldwin, Rick
 Ball, Bill
 Basom, Bruce
 Burge, Tom
 Callison, Cal
 Christensen, David
 Edgar, Mark
 Gilbert, Mike
 Gruca, Paul
 Hansen, Jeff
 Hemenway, Jane
 Hinton, Roger
 Horrigan, Don & Claudah
 Jeffers, Mary Ann & Andy
 Kellner, Tim
 Lombard, Bob
 Maybee, David
 McKeown, Larry
 Merry, Max
 Perrin, Zach & daughter
 Perry, Jack
 Prout, Mark
 Rockafellow, Patty
 Saxton, David
 Springsteen, Nick
 Stearns, Don & Karen
 Stratton, Monty
 Tanner, Steve
 Tjalsma, Laurie
 Wilson, Dianne
 And many more unknown helpers



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