

TRAIL TRACKS

Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail

P O Box 455, Edmore, MI 48829



www.fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org

December 2017

It's About the Volunteers!

Editor's Note: When I set up each issue of this newsletter I am always astounded with the number of people who volunteer on the Trail. I shouldn't be. Volunteering, working hard, having fun, and relationships epitomize this area. . .and the FFMHT. The folks who volunteer make the Trail the marvel that it is. . .a place that the locals and farther-aways enjoy. Without ALL of you it could not be done. A hearty thanks to each person who cares for this mid-Michigan jewel. If cabin fever is making you crazy at the end of March, call 989-235-6170 and they will help you get outside and volunteer!

CEDAR LAKE CAMPERS PAINT BRIDGE

As a community service project nearly 30 Cedar Lake Camper teens volunteered their time and energy to a painting project on the FMHT. They completely cleaned, scraped and painted the 80 foot camelback bridge at Fish Creek, near Lake Road on the south section of the FMHT. In addition, they painted the yellow bollards and barriers at the bridge and at Ferris Road and Lake Road. Their work will last several years and greatly improved the FMHT in this area. Many thanks to them and their helpers - staff from Cedar Lake Academy Camp Week.



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

KEEPING THE TRAIL BEAUTIFUL

Again this year, we owe many thanks to the mowers who give of their time, fuel and equipment to maintain the edges of the FMHT. The sides of the Trail (**all 84 miles!**) and in many instances, the entrances to the Trail at road crossings, are maintained by a crew of dedicated mowers: **Kevin Arnold**-Lake Road to Miller Road; **Cedar Lake Academy**-Neff Road to Derry Road; **Jack Pearl** -Derby Road to Miller Road; **Ken Mitchell** -Derby Road to Bridge; **Roger Hinton**-Coral Road to Cannonsville Road; **Bruce Basom**-McDonald's area (Stanton) to Epley Road; **Mary Humm**-McDonalds/Stanton to Bridge; **Eric Rolston**-Klees Road to Cannonsville Road; **Jeff Hansen**-Forrest Street/Edmore to Lake Montcalm Road and then on to Coral Road; **Karen Stearns**-Peck Road to Grove Street/Greenville; **Cal Callison**-Vestaburg Depot area; **Dianne Wilson**-Derry Road to Crystal Road and Crystal Road to County Line Road; **John Isenberger**-County Line Road to Bliss Road; **Steve Litwiller**-Bliss Road to Charles Road/Alma. Don Stearns completed spring ditch mowing from Stanton to just beyond Grove Street in Greenville in late March and early April (about 35 miles). **Many thanks to everyone who helps with this - our Trail is known for its great upkeep!**

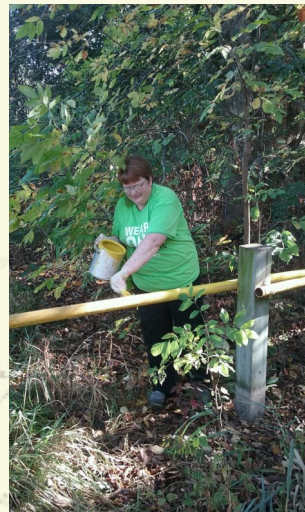
MAINTENANCE PROJECTS 2017

As we wind down another year on the Trail, it is important to acknowledge all of those who did necessary or extra things that are required to keep the Trail useable, attractive, and safe. Many of these folks remain nameless, but their efforts have not gone unnoticed. Two of these individuals that should be named are Scott North of Stanton, who assumed responsibility for adopting the Trail from Walnut Street in Stanton to the Central Montcalm High School turnoff, and Bob Braman of Stanton, who assumed responsibility for adopting the Trail from the Central Montcalm High School turnoff to Carlson Road. Both men stepped forward this summer and we appreciate their help immensely. Other

members often seen on the Trail during the season who are involved with maintenance work are Dianne Wilson, Don and Karen Stearns, Ron and Cheryl Rolston, Mary Humm, Nellie Lou Simmons, Steve Litwiller, Patty Rockafellow and family, and all others who help through Adopt-A-Trail. **Thanks to everyone who stops to pick up a branch and throw it off, who picks up trash, and who pushes trees off of the Trail. Couldn't do it without you!**

CHEMICAL BANK CARES DAY by Ashley Gregg

The 2017 Chemical Bank Cares Day on October 9 was a success for the Stanton team, picking up garbage on the Heartland Trail. The group focused on the Trail from McBride to Sidney. A small group painted bollards and nine picked up trash. Thank you for allowing us to help clean up the trail. It was a beautiful day to walk. If you have anything more you need us to do next year we would be happy to help.



RESEALING COMPLETED FOR 2017

Thanks to the funds from the Mid-West Michigan Trail Authority and the Greenville Area Community Foundation, the FFMHT was able to reseal 7.3 miles of Trail this season. D & D Asphalt Co. of Midland was again the contractor. The Trail was sealed from Sidney Road south to Lake Road and from Peck Road in Greenville to Grove Street. This yearly resealing helps preserve the Trail surface and repairs cracks, making a more enjoyable ride for everyone. Many thanks to the two supporting organizations for allowing us to have this work done and to D & D Asphalt for their good work.

IN MEMORY (Heron Memorial Bench)

This year marks the loss of several volunteers who have been Trail Founders of the FFMHT. Harold "Hud" Springsteen and very recently, Bud Rogers have left us. These men have been Trail supporters and volunteers on many projects or the Board of Directors since the mid-1990's. They will be sorely missed. Additionally, John Heron (Board of Directors, volunteer, Vice President) died earlier this year, after a residence in Marquette, Michigan, at the Veterans Home there. His family received several donations dedicated to the FMHT at his funeral and sent them to the Board of Directors. The Board decided to use the money to have a memorial bench created for both John and Shirley - long time Trail supporters and workers. The bench is finished and engraved with their names. FFMHT Board member Dianne Wilson is working with the Village of Edmore to find a suitable spot within the Village limits to install the bench as a memorial to this wonderful couple. Keep your eyes open for this new addition. The Board hopes to have the bench installed before snow flies.

VESTABURG ELEVATOR SILOS DEMOLISHED

by Dianne Wilson

A big part of the former Silo City USA's history is now gone from view. The Vestaburg Elevator began its journey in the early 1900s. It grew to numerous buildings and several silos along the railroad (now the Trail). It ceased operation in 2004. Recently, the site was purchased from Gavilon Grain by Helena Chemical Company. Helena has been operating across the road from the elevator since 2007. This summer the tearing down of the silos was a sight to see by many local residents!

Before:



After:



FFMHT FINANCIAL DONORS – 2017

The FFMHT is greatly indebted to those who choose to support the organization financially. This support pays for Trail, Volunteer and Board of Directors insurance, all supplies needed to operate the organization, anything needed that doesn't fall under Maintenance expenses, and our three annual newsletters are supported by these donations. We are grateful for your continued support and our apologies for anyone missed!

Trail Sustainers (\$250 and up)

Highland Plastics
Bike More Edmore
Terrys Cycle & Sport
Bookwalter Motor Sales
Alma Action/Chamber of Commerce
John & Julie Arnold
Linda & Richard Fairchild
Hansen Pharmacy
Ron & Sharon Sorensen
Wright Plastic Products Co.

Trail Contributors (\$100 - \$249)

Alison Barberi
Bob & Betty Braman
John Christensen, Jr.
Terry Clements
Sam & Trish Davis
Judy & Jerry Duran
Jerry Freed
Richard Frutiger
George & Gen Gibbs
Dick & Rhonda Harrell
Helen Humm

Trail Contributors, cont'd.

Mary Humm
Ted & Fran Kondek
Greg & Laurie Lowe
Kathy Luplow
Dennis Marshall
Margaret Miller
Jan & Jack Pearl
Mark & Trudy Petersen
Patty Rockafellow
Tom & Susan Rogers
Scott Sheldon
Janet Shy/Martin Miller
Sidney State Bank
Nellie Lou Simmons
Paul Splitstone
Don & Karen Stearns
Dr. Peter Tacia
Larry & Karen Wittle

Trail Supporters (\$1 - \$99)

Jeff Abernathy
Alma Women's Club
Beth Ashbaugh

Trail Supporters (cont'd.)

Susan & Bob Baldyga

Judy Benger

Bigby's of Alma

Robb Bowers

Grant Colthorp

Jerry & Judy Duran

Joseph Dvorak

Mark & Kristen Fritsma

Geoff & Susan Gillis

Evelyn Green

Denny Griffin

Eric & Nickie Hansen

Ken & Laurie Hansen

Mr. & Mrs. Francis Harry

JP Health Education Corp.

Thomas & Joy Heinlein

LD & Verna Hollenbeck

Janet Holt

Marilyn Hoskins

Dean Iverson

Mike Julien

Tim & Sheri Kellerman

John & Barb Lang

Tom & Alice Lanning

Melvin Morford

J & S Oseronsky

Rose Peck

Tim Reno

Kay Richards

Robert Richards

Brian & Deb Rockafellow

Ernest & Nancy Rogers

Jim Roland

Ron & Cheryl Rolston

Les & Carol Rosan

Ron Salisbury

Jeff & Laura Siefer

Kathy Smith

Jim & MarySusan Snively

Hud & Dot Springsteen

Mary Stuner

Terry Taylor

Kay Tobin

Dean Voss

Larry & Charlene Voss

Beth & Bill Walker

Shirley Wallace

Robert Ward

Kay Yarnell

SAVE THE DATE!!

The 24th annual FFMHT annual dinner and silent auction has been scheduled for Saturday, May 5, 2018. This is the only fundraiser for the year. We are always looking for silent auction items so keep an eye out for something you think might be appropriate. More details on the dinner later.

Trail sections are open for adoption. To

adopt a section contact Dianne Wilson at
268-5143 or jdwilson@cmsinter.net

LENA MEIJER TRAIL CONNECTOR

On October 5, 2017, the Lena Meijer Trail Connector was dedicated on the Montcalm Community College Campus. This connector is the link between MCC and the FMHT and parallels Sidney Road to the FMHT in Sidney. This project has been supported by MCC and represents many hours of work to reach its completion. A good job well done.



BIKE MORE EDMORE 2017

by Jeff Hansen

The third annual Bike More Edmore Ride (BME) took place on Saturday, August 19, 2017. This organized ride started at the trail head in Edmore then traveled south on the FMHT. It connected with the Flat River Trail in Greenville, then traversed around Baldwin Lake, and back to Edmore. This year we had 91 registered riders who enjoyed the great weather. The excess proceeds from this ride amounted to \$661.20 which were donated to the FFMHT trail organization.

Like last year, we had many returning riders (over seventy percent from previous years). We had a

group of riders from Sterling Heights, Troy, and Plymouth that started as a group of three on the first ride, and has grown to nine riders this year. Some of these riders are pictured sitting in front of the BME sign. This group hopes to grow even larger next year.

Thank you to all the people who helped organize and SAG this ride. Also, a big thanks goes out to the FFMHT committee and its volunteers who provided us with a great place to ride.



ANNUAL BANQUET A SUCCESS

The 23rd Annual Banquet and Fundraiser was held May 6 in Edmore at the Curtis Building. Nearly 140 attendees enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by Mary Ellen Coldwell. Many people found items to purchase at the Silent Auction. The Raffle drawings for a Raleigh bicycle, a Cannondale bicycle, and three trips for two people each to bed and breakfasts on Mackinaw Island, Bois Blanc Island, and in Ludington were greatly anticipated. Attendees also discovered if they had won cash prizes in their cupcakes! The combined events earned over \$8,000. When expenses were taken out, the evening gave the FFMHT just under \$6,000 in profits--enough to cover all insurance costs for the year with a little left over. Thanks to all who donated items to the Silent Auction and who helped during the evening. **The 2018 date is May 5 – same time and place. Looking forward to seeing you!**