

TRAIL TRACKS

Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail

P O Box 455, Edmore, MI 48829



fredmeijerheartlandtrail.org

November 2018

Trailside Mowers are a Dedicated Group of Volunteers!

The FMHT is very fortunate to have a truly dedicated group of mowers who work every season to keep the sides and road crossings of our trail neat and safe. This year we have some new names that are highlighted in black. We welcome these new volunteers to our trailside mower group! Beginning at the southern end of the FMHT in Greenville: Peck Road to M57–Karen Stearns; from Lake Road to Miller Road–Kevin Arnold; from Miller Road to Derby Road–Jack Pearl; from Derby Road to the DALMAC Bridge–Ken Mitchell; from the Bridge to McDonalds in Stanton–**Rick Baldwin**; from McDonalds area to Klees Road--Bruce Basom; from Klees Road to Cannonsville Road–Eric Rolston; from Cannonsville Road to Coral Road (McBride)–Roger Hinton; from Coral Road to Lake Montcalm Road and on to Forrest Street (Edmore)–Jeff Hansen; from Neff Road (Edmore) to Derry Road (Vestaburg)–Cedar Lake Academy crew; from Derry Road to Caris Road–Phil Peasley and **Monty Stratton**; from Caris Road to Crystal Road (Vestaburg)–Cal Callison; from Crystal Road to Lumberjack Road (Riverdale)–**Art Lombard**; from Lumberjack Road to Bliss Road–**Dr. Paul Gruca**; the Elwell elevator area and parking lot–Clyde Crequé; from Bliss Road to Luce Road (Alma)–John Eisenberger; leaf and grass blowing from Alma to Riverdale–Steve Litwiller.

This is a dedicated group who mostly use their own equipment for this formidable task. Through our website, we receive many compliments about the maintenance done on the trail and this group has a great deal to do with our positive appearance to trail users! **Thank You All!** 

Spring Banquet a Success

On the first Saturday in May, 2018, the Annual Banquet and Fundraiser for the FMHT was again held in Edmore at the Curtis Building. Many individuals and organizations support this Banquet and our warm thanks go to the GFWC-Edmore Woman's Club for allowing us the use of the building, the Montcalm Area ISD for allowing us to use their printing facilities, Bookwalter Chevrolet Buick of Stanton for sponsorship of the raffle tickets, Terry's Cycle & Sport in Alma and Dennis Bicycle Shop in Alma for raffle bicycles, and Insel Haus B&B and Cartier Mansion for B&B raffle prize donations. Individuals who make this even-



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

**The 2019 Banquet date is May 4.
See you there!**

ing possible are Dianne Wilson–Silent Auction, Nellie Lou Simmons and Patty Rockafellow–raffle ticket sales, Mary Humm–dinner ticket sales, Don and Karen Stearns--prizes, and Sharon Sorensen–publicity.

Raffle winners were:

Jane Nelson of Greenville–two nights for two at Insel Haus on Bois Blanc Island

Cindy Johnson of Breckenridge–two nights for two at Cloghaun B&B, Mackinaw Island

The Desrochers of Alma–two nights for two at Cartier Mansion, Ludington

Duane O Hansen of Sheridan–the Giant Escape bicycle

Carol Glave of Ithaca–the Cannondale Quick 8 bicycle

The four cupcake winners took home \$50, \$20, \$20 and \$10 prizes for their support of the Trail.

The Silent Auction offered hundreds of unique items for bids – baked goods, plants, bird feeders, and gently used items kept everyone alert to make sure their bids were highest.

Our banquet was again catered by Mary Ellen Coldwell and was much enjoyed by all. Everything was really delicious, but Mary Ellen and crew make desserts to die for! Many thanks to them.

Financially, the banquet cleared enough money to totally pay for all of the FFMHT insurance (Trail (including 8 bridges), Volunteers, Board of Direc-

tors and buildings) and some left over for the mailing permit, postage, materials, and such. Thanks to everyone who attended, those who contributed, and those who support the FMHT annually. Without you the FMHT would not exist.

Happy Helmets on the Heartland Trail

By Patty Rockafellow

The rain stopped long enough for a group of children to get a chance to learn about bike safety and have some fun at Happy Helmets Day on May 19, 2018! Sheridan Community Hospital teamed up with White Pine District Library and all of the local Police, Fire and Emergency Service groups, as well as the CM Bucket Fillers, Stanton Crescent Chapter #47 OES, Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail and several volunteers and friends to create this event. There were helmet checks, bicycle checks, a bike rodeo, an organized ride on the trail and then a raffle. The groups gave away bike accessories, helmets and even several brand new bikes. This was also a chance for the White Pine District Library to let everyone know about a new bicycle checkout program. A big thank you goes out to all involved including Holland Lake Golf Course, who loaned a golf cart for safety purposes and the Grand Rapids Griffins who endorse using helmets and have donated several free hockey passes for the libraries summer programs. We also thank Rolston's and Bush's Hardware for help with bike accessories and the families who came in spite of the weather.



SLECO Volunteer Week

The last week of September a group of Karen Stearns' hiking friends came to Michigan from Delaware, Florida and Wisconsin to volunteer their energy for a week of trail maintenance on the FMHT. Camping near a pond on the Stearns' farm, the group braved the mosquitoes and worked in Greenville for three days and near Riverdale for one day. The group cut, stacked and sprayed hundreds of Autumn Olive shrubs that were strangling the hardwood trees planted at Vining Road, helped Don Stearns with the ditch mowing, and painted over the graffiti on the bridge near Waterworks Park. They also painted all the bollards and barriers between M57 and the Waterworks Park bridge. Near Riverdale, several dead trees were felled, cut up, and hauled away and lots of needed trimming was done. Everyone got together on Tuesday evening at the Riverdale Tavern for Taco Tuesday and some relaxation. On Wednesday—the day off—most of the group rode bicycles from Stearns farm to Edmore and back. They were very impressed by our Trail! Many thanks to other Trail members who helped during the week—Dianne Wilson, Julie Arnold, and Nellie Lou Simmons.



In order from L to R are: Barb, Jane, John & Vince

Bike More Edmore

By Jeff Hansen

The fourth annual Bike More Edmore Ride (BME) took place on Saturday, August 18, 2018. This organized ride started at the trailhead in Edmore and then traveled south on the FFMHT. It connected with the Flat River Trail in Greenville, then traversed around Baldwin Lake and back to Edmore. This year we had 117 registered riders who enjoyed the great weather. The excess proceeds from this ride amounted to \$1,298.36, which was donated to the FFMHT trail organization.

This year, like last year, we had many returning riders (over seventy percent from previous years). We had riders from Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, and

even Ontario, Canada, plus all of the great people from our home state Michigan. The weather was so good this year that most of the riders did not return until late afternoon. Some even took the time to take a swim at Baldwin Lake.

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



Ride to Stop the Clot for Anna's Team

By Chris Maltby

On Saturday, June 2, 2018, riders on the FMHT were able to raise nearly \$21,000 for the National Blood Clot Alliance. **This event** was NBCA's largest fundraising event nationwide. Over 120 riders participated. Thank you to all who donated, time, money and resources. The lunch and prize drawing were also a huge success. We are in the planning stages of next year's ride, but we hope it will be even more successful. Thank you Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail for helping make this happen!

The history of the ride: Anna Frutiger suffered a fatal deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism in 2010, just a month after her 23rd birthday. Anna was not alone. Approximately 350,000 to 600,000 people get blood clots in the leg (DVT/deep vein thrombosis) or the lung (PE/pulmonary embolism) each year. As a result of these blood clots, we know that at least 100,000 Americans die each year. More simply, 274 people in the US will die each day of a PE. Anna was one of those 274 people on May 20, 2010.

Anna embodied brains, beauty, compassion, athleticism, and as such, seemed the picture of health while she was living her dream of becoming a dentist. No one expected that a blood clot would end her dream. Her story gets shared around the world every day. Her legacy lives on through her story. It continues to make an impact and save lives.



John and Shirley Heron Bench

This bench was commissioned last year and has found a home in Edmore. The Village generously offered a placement near the Curtis Building, site of the Annual Banquet for the FFMHT. The Village installed the lovely bench this summer and it will serve as a permanent memorial for John and Shirley Heron, long-time trail founders and supporters.



Cedar Lake Summer Camper Volunteer Days

In mid-June nearly 30 young people from the Cedar Lake Academy Summer Camp spent three days working on the Riverdale trestle bridge. The 200 foot span was washed, scraped and all graffiti was painted over by the young people. They also painted the bollards and barriers at the bridge and at Lumberjack Road. They were accompanied by several adult helpers, and the entire project was overseen by Pastor Nathaniel Oregon. Many thanks to all of the volunteers and their bravery among the mosquitoes!



Vestaburg Depot, Owned & Operated by FFMHT

By Dianne Wilson

The Vestaburg Depot is a focal point during Vestaburg Community Days. In its second year, the Vestaburg Area Historical Society gave life to the old building. The rooms were filled with memories of a village past. Residents of the area set up tables of their family history, pictures, and treasures. Early businesses such as sawmills, stores, churches, and country school-

houses were displayed. Tribute was given to VHS athletic teams, the men's softball league of the 1970s, and a salute to a local highly decorated Vietnam veteran. The historical group thank the Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail for preserving this beautiful building, and making it possible to share it with the community.

The depot, as other "older" buildings in Vestaburg, received a sign to recognize it as a historical building. It is posted on the east end of the building--red and white with a picture of the early depot! Each sign is placed by the Vestaburg Area Historical Society. Sponsored by Trayer Water Wells and

Larry's Electric, a plaque has been placed beside the front door in honor of John and Marge Phelps. The depot **was** turned over to the FFMHT after Phelps Lumber Company ceased operation. The plaque was designed and placed by Bruce and Jane (Throop) Gardner in friendship of the four Phelps children.

Special Volunteers

Our thanks to volunteer tree cutters! Rick Baldwin for trail sections south of Edmore and Mark Prout and Sarah Avery for trail sections from Riverdale to Alma, Rod Alton (Terry's Cycle & Sport) who bikes with his saw pulled behind his bike and does trees and trimming from Alma to Edmore. They only had to be called and out they went to check on the situation and cut up anything that was in the trail. Thanks also to Tim Kellner and the Alma Kiwanis for many hours of trimming along the trail from Alma to Elwell--made many improvements in the appearance of our trail. Larry McKeown in Greenville--did mowing along the trail sides and also brush trimming in that area. Much appreciated!

And to a special volunteer who makes this newsletter possible--our thanks to Sarah Avery for creating a lovely, readable newsletter!

Trail Tracks
November 2018
edited by
Sarah Avery



Trail sections are open for adoption. To adopt a section contact Dianne Wilson at 268-5143 or jdwilson@cmsinter.net

Resealing in 2018

Thanks to the generosity of the Mid West Michigan Trail Authority, the Meijer Foundation and the Greenville Area Community Foundation, the FMHT was resealed in areas needing work. D & D Asphalt Specialists, LLC of Midland fixed holes, filled cracks and resealed three Trail sections. The Mid West Michigan Trail Authority/Meijer Foundation funded 6 miles from Luce Rd. to Osborn Rd. in Gratiot County. The FFMHT funded 1.5 miles from Osborn Rd. to Lumberjack Road (Gratiot County). The Greenville Area Community Foundation funded 1.1 miles from Greenville West Dr. to M-57 in Greenville.

Average cost was just under \$3,000.00/mile for repairs and two coats of non-coal tar asphalt sealer. The surface was checked by Board Members and results were very satisfactory. Thanks again to D & D Asphalt Specialists for another good job of resealing!

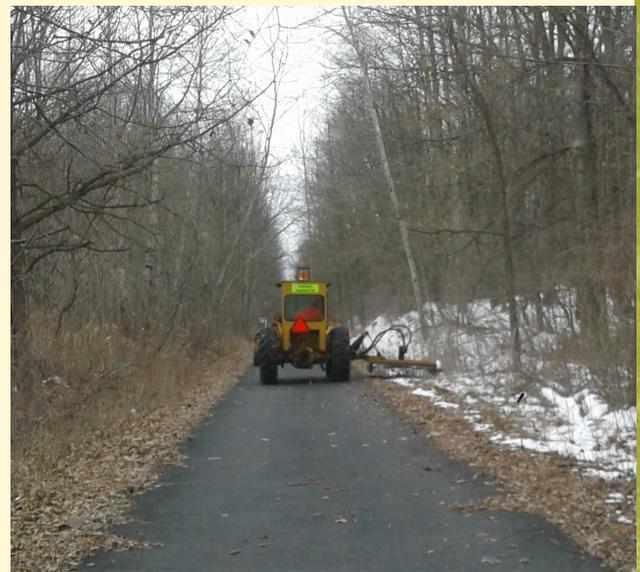
The Board of Directors is discussing resealing areas for 2019. More information to follow.

White Pine Library Loans Bikes to Patrons By Patty Rockafellow

This summer marked the first year that White Pine District Library offered a bicycle check out system. Adult and junior size bikes, along with baby carriers and tag-longs are free to the patrons to check out for the day. Perhaps a family has company and wants to take a group ride on the Heartland trail, which is only a block from the library in Stanton; they can come and check out as many bikes as they need. The library plans to open the system back up in the spring with the opening of the Heartland trail.

Ditch Mowing projects for 2018

The intent of using the five foot rotary ditch mower on the Trail is to remove brush back about 5 feet from the asphalt edge. The entire trail was mowed this year— McBride to Charles Road (Alma) and back (12 days) was done in the spring by Don Stearns, Rick Baldwin, and Karen Stearns. McBride to Lake Road and back was done in July by Don and Karen Stearns (13 days). The Greenville area was done in late September by Don Stearns and Vince Gillette (a SLECO volunteer—4 days).



SAVE THE DATE!!

The 24th annual FFMHT annual dinner and silent auction has been scheduled for Saturday, May 4, 2019. 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.



Alma Kiwanis Club Volunteers By Timothy Kellner

The Alma Kiwanis Club has befriended the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail dating back to 2008 when the Club installed a bench alongside the trail near the city of Alma. The next year the Club cleaned the Trail of trash for a one mile stretch. Each year the Alma Kiwanis Club has helped out by picking up trash, sweeping the Trail and trimming the brush back from the Trail. During 2018 the club worked on the Trail on four different occasions, covering a four mile stretch from Luce Road to Bliss Road. Helping to make the trail more enjoyable to walk, bike and run on is one of the things that the Alma Kiwanis Club does to make central Michigan a better place to live and recreate. We give hearty thanks to them for their volunteering spirit and hard work!



More Special Volunteers By Sarah Avery

Thanks to Mary Humm for providing the list of donors and sponsors for the newsletter. Thanks, also, to Karen Stearns for every article in this newsletter that is not attributed to anyone—she wrote them all! And thanks to Karen for documenting activities, getting pictures, organizing the articles, and getting them to the layout/editor for publication. We couldn't do it without these ladies!

Trail Supporters \$0-\$99

Alma Women's Club
Avery, Susan
Blodgett/Masters, Ronn/Gordon
Bowers, Rob
Doerr, Thomas
Dvorak, Joseph
Dykstra, Betty & Duane
Edwards, Ned & Connie
Fisher, Susan
Freed, Carol
Fritsma, Mark & Kristen
Gladding, Barbara
Gratiot Chamber - Dalmac Riders
Grossbauer, Ralph
Hansen, Eric & Nicki
Harry, Francis & Joan
Hayward, Jo Anne
Heinlein, Joy & Tom
Hollenbeck, L.D. & Verna
Iverson, Dean
Kellner, Tim & Sharie
Kotenko, Ron & Susan
Lang, Barbara
Meyer, Edwin & Dawn
Michaud, John
Nester, Dale & Marion
Pearl, Jan & Jack
Piccolo, Nick & Jeri
Rayburn/Hunter, Gary/Susan
Richards, Kay
Rockafellow, Patty & Craig
Rogers, Nancy
Rowland, Jim
Salisbury, Betty & Family
Scripture, Reese
Shy, Janet
Siefer, Jeff & Laura

Trail Supporters \$0-\$99, continued

Siefer, Jeff & Laura
Smith, Katherine
SNL Group, Inc.
Springsteen, Dorothy
Stearns, Don & Karen
Stuner Family, Mary
Vos, Larry & Charlene
Wallace, Shirley
Ward, Robert
Warthman, James & Janet
Wegner, Phyllis
Williams, Dale
Wilson, Dianne & Jim

Trail Contributors \$100-\$249

Baldwin, Wilma & Elton
Barberi, Alison
Braman, Bob & Betty
Brussema, David
Chenoweth, Robert & Lois
Christiansen, John, Jr.
Clements, Terry
Duran, Jerome & Judith
Frutiger/Wassenaar, Richard/Sara
Gamble, Robert
Gibbs, George & Gen
Great Lakes GeoScience, Tchozeski, Steven
Harrell, Dick & Rhonda
Hudson, Keith & Jean
Humm, Kathleen
Julien, Sarah & Michael
Lambrecht, Tim & Family

Trail Contributors \$100-\$249, continued

Lowe, Laurie & Greg
McCormack, John
Miller, Margaret
Petersen, Mark & Trudy
Prout/Avery, Mark/Sarah
Rogers, Tom & Susan
Russell, Steve & Jan
Sheldon, Scott
Sidney State Bank
Simmons, Nellie Lou
Sorensen, Ron & Sharon
Splitstone, Paul
Tacia, Peter
Wittle, Lawrence & Karen

Trail Contributors 250 and up

Arnold, John & Julie
Bike More Edmore
Bookwalter Chevrolet
Highland Plastics, Inc
Humm, Mary
Krieger, Paul
Marshall, Dennis & Kathleen
MEA Financial Services, Mark Prout

Thanks to everyone mentioned in this newsletter, and to those folks who silently help out each and every day! We appreciate you all!