



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #20

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

SPRING 2015

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

SEE YOU UPTOWN !

New trail piece to link North West Street, Baker Street, and the Uptown Norwalk street network !

The time has come to go Uptown! A new section of The North Coast Inland Trail will now extend from North West Street to Baker Street. Construction is underway as we speak, with volunteers pulling out old ties and preparing the surface.

“We’re really excited to finally connect with the Norwalk city street network”, said Lance Franke, Firelands Rails to Trails President. “We’ll be able to open up the trail to a lot more people who live in the center of town.”

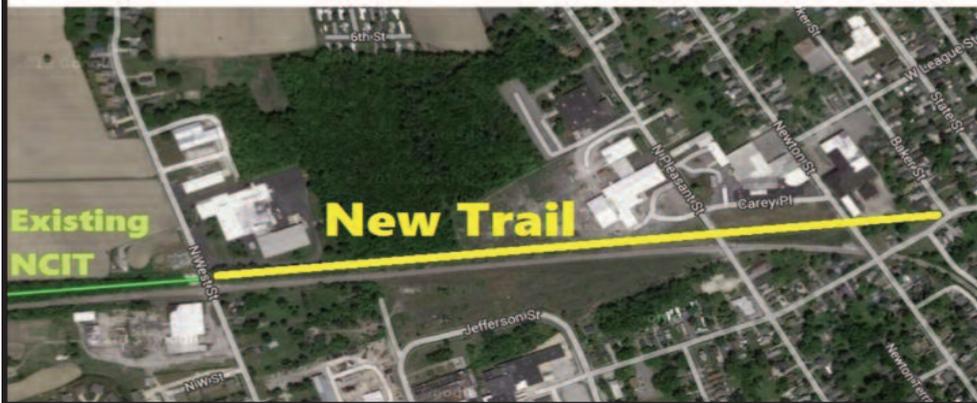
First proposed in 2002, the new route will stretch from North West Street eastward, paralleling the W&LE Railway Tracks and will cross some open areas before intersecting with Pleasant, Newton, and Baker Streets. Many thanks are in order to Ohio Edison’s Real Estate Department, who worked with FRTTI and its park district owners over the last two years to help this section of trail become a reality.

The new extension will also allow local and long distance bikers access to the many businesses in the Norwalk Uptown area, from restaurants and lodging to convenience stores. The NCIT continues to see more and more long distance bikers - all of whom are looking for the same things - what to see, where to eat and where to sleep, and where to get supplies.

FRTTI plans on removing railroad ties this spring and then grading the surface in preparation for stone. There is much work to be done with many volunteers stepping up. Can we count on you for your continued financial support?

We look forward to seeing bikes in the business district soon - and Hey! We’ll see YOU Uptown!

NCIT Trail Extension - west side of Norwalk



This map shows the location of the new trail, which for now appears as a grassy stretch between North West Street and Baker Street. FRTTI hopes to open this by late spring of this year, providing a continuous trail to Bellevue and beyond.



**IN
THIS
ISSUE:**

- Mixed Freight Photo Gallery (aka PROGRESS on all fronts).....2-3**
- Many thanks to our 2014 Donors and Endorsers.....4**
- What’s behind door #3? (or simply “What the heck?!?!”).....5**

Right: Diesels meet on the west end. Josh Wyrick took this cool shot while out mowing.



MIXED FREIGHT

The British are Coming!

Actually, they're already here and gone! And so are others from Montana, Missouri, Washington, Oregon, California and British Columbia, just to name a few.

Meet Stuart Lowe, of Leeds, West Yorkshire, England. As volunteers were working on the depot one Saturday, in rolls Mr. Lowe, loaded down with supplies.

Stuart said he flew to San Francisco and was tracing the path of the original transcontinental railroad all the way to New York.



Stuart said he bought a used bike and after taking two 40-mile rides around the English countryside, decided he was ready to go.

"Well, how was it?" asked FRTTI founder and volunteer Gordon Oney.

"The Sierras were a lot steeper than I had imagined, and the three nights of intense thunderstorms in my tent in Nebraska were like nothing I have ever experienced".

Overall Stuart said his trip was wonderful and he really appreciated the smooth NCIT with great scenery and wonderful hospitality. With his US trip complete, Stuart is no turkey when it comes to long distance bike rides. His next ride? Liverpool to Istanbul. May the wind be always at your back, Mr. Lowe, and thanks for stopping by the depot!

Full Steam Ahead in Wakeman!



The Bruce L. Chapin Bridge in Wakeman got a haircut - thanks to your generous donations - and you can finally see this beautiful double arch bridge! Superior Tree was hired and did an excellent job cleaning up the slopes along the Vermilion River.

K.E. McCartney & Associates has been hired to do the engineering for the railing installation and this work will go out for bid soon, with FRTTI Volunteers doing some of the work as well. The US 20 bike path is being surveyed to the east and Lorain County Metroparks is clearing the last stretches of the future NCIT route from Baird Rd to the county line. Look for much progress in 2015 and 2016.

More Horsepower (of all sorts)!



Katie says: "Neighhhh. Have you been on the most scenic section of the NCIT? I have!"

FRTTI Trustee Joyce Dupont and her horse, Katie, are pictured here in the "Big Cut" west of Medusa Road. Parking is available at Ommert Historic Farm on SR 601.



One of the long-time goals of FRTTI was to always have beautifully maintained trail berms. Our wish came true in the form of a Simplicity Riding mower, donated by R. S. Hanline. On the day the new machine arrived, ten volunteers stepped up to form a mowing pool whereby the berms get mowed every 1-2 weeks and the larger equipment mows farther back every 2-3 weeks. The result are golf-course like berms which are always neat and tidy.

"Mind if I play through???"

Donald E. Morrow Park Doings



A great deal was accomplished at the trailside park in Monroeville as the snowflakes flew this winter. A new bench was installed under the pergola and FRTTI VP Steve Siesel constructed this much needed bike rack, which could double as a cross-country ski rack.

...and much progress across the NCIT



Eagle Scout Candidate Danny Ivory of Bellevue built this outstanding and much needed kiosk to help route riders through Bellevue.



Trail work never ends - but the result is a safe and well maintained NCIT. FRTTI Volunteer Rich Libbee leads a work crew west of Norwalk.



The Norwalk Double Arch Bridge got a trimming this fall as Steve Siesel and Doug Jaqua clear the top. Drainage work will take place this summer.



The Volunteer Trail Patrol is up and running and growing. With a dozen member staff, the VTP act as eyes and ears when they ride the trail. We are always looking for more!



Ranger Dave Ware has been seen on the trail a lot lately - and patrols via bike, marked ATV, and a marked red and gray 1979 Ford F250. Dave keeps an eye on things and acts as a goodwill ambassador.



Long time FRTTI Volunteer Stan Bernhardt laid out the bridge railing plans at Rattlesnake Creek and the culvert near Rt 601. Rich Libbee drilled a lot of holes in advance.



Twenty volunteers worked through a light rain setting through a light rain setting posts and installing railings at both Rattlesnake and Tank Car Culvert to fully complete this section of trail.



Stan Bernhardt (l) has decided to step down as trustee but fortunately will stay heavily involved in trail construction, planning and maintenance. The NCIT would not be where it is today without Stan!



This year's Annual Meeting took place at Eagle Creek Golf Club. Our wonderful guest speakers were ODOT State Bicycle Coordinator Julie Walcoff and ODOT Local Bicycle Coordinator



Steve Ivory, of Bellevue, pictured here at work in the depot, has joined the FRTTI Board as a Trustee. Steve is the father of Danny (above) and brings much talent and hard work. Welcome, Steve!



Joe Missler organized the "Uncovered Bridge Tour" - a road ride around southern Huron County on a beautiful fall day as a FRTTI fundraiser. The tour started and ended at the Mville Depot.



Much work took place in the cozy confines of the Depot this winter as plans were made and budgets balanced. A full financial audit also took place and the 4-member panel found all in good order.

Kathryn Sharpnack, of ODOT District 3 in Ashland. Julie, seen here, spoke about the new state and federal bicycle route system coming soon. "The NCIT will be a major part of this system and that is why it is a national route", she said. The NCIT will be US Bike Route 30. Also present was State Senator Gayle Manning, as well as Nick Turner from Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur's Lorain Office. We wish to thank Gayle Manning for her support and funding for the Wakeman Bridge and also wish to thank Nick Turner for attending even though the NCIT in Huron County is not in Congresswoman Kaptur's district. The key NCIT connections, however, are in her district - the future connection to the Wabash Cannonball Trail in Toledo and also to the Emerald Necklace in Rocky River.

Thank you to our Donors in 2014

Golden Spike Club: \$1,000 and above

Anonymous Donors
Ray and Majorie Chapin
Jeff Colvin
Lance and Lynn Franke
R.S. Hanline Company
Pamela Morrow
Twenty First Century Foundation

Trailblazers: \$500 and above

Marcy Burns
Ed and Dot Herman
Larry McGlinchy
Silver Wheels Cycling Club

Benefactors Club: \$250 and above

Rodney Cook
Fisher-Titus Medical Center
Chris and Janet Hipp
Pat Schwan
Mike and Chriss Schwieterman
Patricia Serio
Dan and Lorna Strayer
Joe and Sheryl Wilhelm
Helen Wheeler

Sustaining Club: \$100 and above

Robert Andrews
Dustin and Melissa Beal
Steve and Carol Beal
Robert and Ruth Brown
Mark and Valerie Bumb
Randy and Vickie Carpenter
Kyle and Amber Cebull
Steve and Karen Cebull
Thomas and Marguerite Cline
William and Linda Cornell
Margaret D'Anieri
Darrell and Joyce Deering

Garrett Dill
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Bud Grove
Gordon and Bonnie Hahn
Jeff and Sharon Harwood
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John and Jackie Overmeyer
Bill Owens
Keith Ridge
Ohio Tire Terminal
Henry and Marty Timman
James Schlachter
The Shakespeare Club
Tom and Karen Sharpnack
Dan Sheldon
Richard Spinello
Richland Engineering
Jim and Reta Stark
Richard and Carolyn Suhr

Kenny and Jan Tkach
David Wallingford
Janice Weltlin
Theresa Wilde
Daniel and Terry Williams

Endowment Fund Contributions:

Lance and Lynne Franke
In Memoriam of Gilbert C. Dehnkamp
Gordon and Kathy Oney

Wakeman Bruce L. Chapin Bridge Clearing

Robert Bauman
Stephen Cloud (Trustee Emeritus)
Richard Kolofer
Marvin and Patricia Wilhelm
Howard and Theresa Wyrick

And fifty-plus pages (!!!) of names of Supporting Members (\$50 and above) and individual, family, and club members.

Special Donations:

Austin Power Equipment - loaned auger
RS Hanline Company - Simplicity Mower
Fritz Kuenzel - LS&MS Ry. Photo funds
from the estate of David K. Kuenzel
Joe Mantey - LS&MS Ry. Photo funds
Alfred Oney - Fuel Tanks donation
Gerald Oney / Milky Way Farms - loaning of large tractors and equipment
Weedman Lawn Care - depot grounds work
Wilhelm Construction - multiple trail and depot repairs using equipment, time and expertise

Thanks to all who have joined our organization and have generously donated to this wonderful project and have endorsed our efforts. Our sincere apologies to anyone we may have missed. Please note some may be posted as 2015. Thank you for investing in your trail!

Thank you to our Trail Endorsers

What is an endorser???

An endorser is just that: A business, civic group, non-profit organization, or government entity (not an individual) who has presented us with a **written letter of endorsement** stating their support for Firelands Rails to Trails and the North Coast Inland Trail in Huron County.

Letters of Endorsement are kept on file and are published in our newsletter and brochure / map to show potential grantors and financial donors how much support we have and who specifically in the area supports us.

Are these donors?

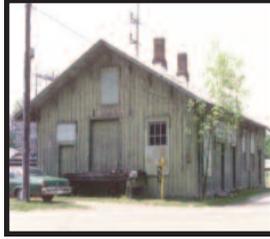
They may or may not have donated funds, but the time they spent to write a brief, personal letter of support and mail it may be worth big grant money for your trail which may have been spent elsewhere in the state of Ohio!

We're always looking for more letters. *Is your group on board?*

Andrews Asphalt Maintenance - Norwalk
Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce
Bellevue Parks & Recreation Dept.
Bellevue Knights of Columbus
Bellevue VFW
Berry's Restaurant - Norwalk
Bluto's Sports Bar and Grille - Norwalk
BMP Industries - Birmingham
Citizen's Banking - Norwalk
City of Bellevue
City of Norwalk
Dr. Ted N. Clark, Jr., DVM - Bellevue
Jeff Colvin CPA - Norwalk
Domino's Pizza - Norwalk
Excel Bike & Fitness - Norwalk
Firelands Audubon Society
Haynes Construction - Norwalk
Huron County Board of Commissioners
Lyme Township Board of Trustees
MB's Pooch Parlor - Norwalk
Mad River & NKP Railroad Society - Bellevue
Monroeville Knights of Columbus
Monroeville Marine Inc.
Mossman Music - Norwalk

Natl Alliance on Mental Illness - Norwalk
New London Family Practice
New London-Greenwich Rail-Trail Inc.
Norwalk Kiwanis
Norwalk Lions
Norwalk Township Trustees
Dr. Anna O'Donnell, DVM - Norwalk
Ohio Horseman's Council - Erie Co. Chapter
Owens Law Firm - Norwalk
Pean's Pizza & Subs - Monroeville
Perkins Restaurant - Sandusky
Project Leadership - Norwalk
Ridgefield Township Board of Trustees
Road Soldiers Cycling Club - OVH
Seneca Caverns - Bellevue
Silver Wheels Cycling Club - Lorain County
Sheri's Coffee - Norwalk
Twenty First Century Foundation - Norwalk
Townsend Township Trustees
Underground Utilities Inc. - Monroeville
Village Gallery & Framer - Huron
Village of Monroeville
Wakeman Wranglers 4-H Group- Wakeman
Wasiniak Construction - Norwalk
Wilhelm Construction - Monroeville

A new old door and it's back to 1914 at the depot's east end!



If you have been passing by the depot over the last 152 years, you may have seen some door shuffling! The east end room of the depot was originally the baggage room and a separate freight depot sat 150 yards to the west. Once the freight depot closed in the late 40's, a freight door and dock were installed in the east end of our depot. Baggage carts shuffled freight from boxcars around to the east side where pickups were made by truck. Over the last two years, FRTTI Trustees, led by Steve Siesel, Fritz Kuenzel, Rich Libbee, Doug Jaqua, Larry Carpenter and many others have been restoring the east end to the 1914 appearance (top left photo). 1914 was the first year of New York Central operations, having taken over the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern. Our depot's colors are 100% correct inside and out for the period. We are excited to "put things back as they were" so to speak. FRTTI Trustee Pam Morrow, whose late husband, Don, is the adjacent park's namesake, could not be more thrilled. "It's so exciting to see it all come together", she said.

Telegraphs from the Civil War era were among the artifacts found while restoring the old baggage room. This room will become our nature interpretive center, featuring photographs and taxidermy of native species. Meanwhile in the old railroad ticket office (center room) the LS&MS exhibit wall is taking shape with donations from the estate of the late David K. Kuenzel, uncle of Fritz Kuenzel. Coming soon: Photos of NYC RR steam and diesels from the camera of Howard Ameling and others!



PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD HERITAGE

"A feeling of euphoria pervades the car"



Quite often someone will show up at the depot by bike and after looking at all the displays, asks the loaded question, "When are they going to bring back the passenger trains?" or abruptly stated "Who shot the passenger train?" After all, rolling along on flanged wheels seems to make good sense.

We don't have pages or enough postage on this envelope to fully answer that, but in a phrase: Passengers Aren't Profitable. Period.

The 1960's were tough on the railroad passenger business. Most remaining long haul trains were losing money but were forced by the Interstate Commerce Commission to continue providing service. Some railroads such as the Pennsylvania started losing money as early as 1947. Interstate Highways and the commercial jet age pretty much sealed the passenger trains' fate. Once the all-expense account and cocktail-drinking business travelers left for Boeing 707's and their Chevrolet Impalas, train riding was left for only the most determined. Finally in 1971, Congress created Amtrak, a publically funded and government subsidized entity which would operate long haul passenger trains on trackage rights of freight railroads. While Amtrak does an admirable job of covering most (79%) expenses from fares, the challenges come when it is time to make capital improvements.

We're certainly not in the railroad business, nor do we wish to comment on government spending, but recollections of another era are worth a study. David P. Morgan, then Editor of Trains Magazine, commented aboard the Santa Fe's *Chief* in 1967: "And I wondered if whatever it is people do with all the money they tell me they save by driving and all the time they conserve by flying."

In the classic business school study, *The Wreck of the Penn Central*, by Joseph R. Daughen and Peter Binzen, one of the authors reflects on his ride aboard the Penn Central's *Broadway Limited* just before the dawn of Amtrak: "With a new engine and train crews, the *Broadway* snakes westward into the night. In the diner, Steward H.E. Steck's staff serves drinks and dinner to 100 travelers. Three cooks roast the beef over a fire of pressed logs from Tennessee. The meat is cooked to order and very good. The dinner costs \$5.95 and Steck donates a small bottle of red wine to each customer. Service is excellent and the linen is fresh. Diners linger over their coffee. A feeling of euphoria pervades the car.."

"Back in Palm Falls, Conewego Creek, Catawissa Rapids and other sleeping cars, the towels are clean and the water hot. Everything works. After slipping between starched sheets, one traveler flicks on his night-light and dips into a mystery novel as the *Broadway* hurtles across Ohio through a blinding thunderstorm. It seems to him that this is the only civilized way to travel.

"At 7:35 next morning, the sun shines on the puddles in the Fort Wayne, Indiana, station. On the platform, the *Broadway's* new conductor, a veteran employee from Fort Wayne, complains about the deterioration of Penn Central's rolling stock.

"This is the only recent train we've got," he says. "The rest of 'em are a bunch of junk. The equipment's terrible and everything's pretty well wore out. Too many men are laid off and they're not fixing the cars. The tragedy is that nobody seems to give a damn."

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Dues: _____ New _____ Renewal

____ Student \$ 5.00

____ Individual \$ 10.00

____ Family \$ 15.00

____ Club or Organization \$ 30.00

____ Supporting \$ 50.00

____ Sustaining \$ 100.00

____ Benefactor \$250.00

____ Donation _____

____ Endowment Fund _____

TOTAL _____

I would also like to donate:

____ Labor _____

____ Equipment _____

Detach and Mail this section.

Please make your check payable to:

Firelands Rails To Trails, Inc.

44 East Main St. Norwalk, OH 44857

Membership fees and donations to Firelands Rails to Trails are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

TN20

The EXTRA BOARDThe latest news and information as well as some friendly reminders!



GROUP EVENTS are becoming even more popular on the NCIT in Huron County both on the trail and at the beautiful Depot at Donald E. Morrow Park. Erie Shores Early Childhood PTA visited the Depot on a fine fall day and took the Before-and-After photo challenge. The Shakespeare Club of Norwalk spent an evening at the depot checking out the displays and learning about the trail and also talked trains. If your group would like to visit the trail (for history tours, 5K's, organized hikes and rides, fundraisers, and the like), be sure to drop us a line. ALL group outings require a Group Event Form. This gets all of our safety and maintenance forces in the loop but more importantly shows our potential grantors and park district owners that we have big things going on!



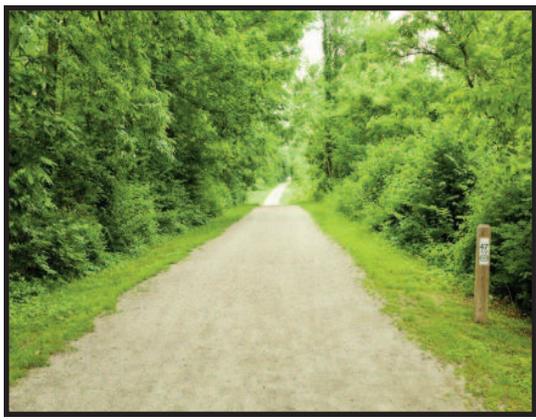
Please remember to respect private property at all times - after all - it was our good neighbor policies which helped us to get the trail done in a win-win manner. The gravel area at Halfway Road is not a trail parking area. It is a private field access point. Please park at designated trail-heads in Norwalk or Mville.



We have gear! Be sure to pick up some cool FRTTI hats, shirts, and railroad spike grasshoppers the next time you are at the depot. FRTTI Volunteer Jackie Mantey, age 4, organized this display rack. We plan on having the depot open this summer weekends and some evenings. Look for the OPEN flags!



SPRING !!!



Just in case you forgot how green things get after a spring rain!

CONTACT US
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419-465-3367 or 668-3027
or via the website:
www.firelandsrailstotrails.org

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Cut and mail the form above or visit us online and print the membership form.
- Join FRTTI for as little as \$5
- Sign up for our Email News
- Join us on one of our Work Days
- Tell some friends about it!

Board Meetings are open to members and the general public and are held the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Depot at Donald E. Morrow Park, 69 S. Ridge Rd. (Rt 99), Monroeville. Work Days are generally held the 1st Saturday and 3rd Sunday 8am-12pm. Watch for email and simply show up!

TRAIL NEWS

Published by the Trustees of Firelands Rails to Trails Inc. (FRTTI) and is mailed to all members.

Edited by Joe Mantey

Wonderful photos by Josh Wyrick

For more photos from work days as well as trail scenes, check our Facebook page!