



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #11

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

SPRING 2009

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

OLD DEPOT, NEW HOME!



The 150 year old Toledo, Norwalk & Cleveland R.R. depot and grounds in Monroeville will soon become the Donald E. Morrow Park!

Pamela Morrow, wife of the late Donald E. Morrow, has sold the depot and a portion of the surrounding property to Lorain County Metroparks for use by Firelands Rails to Trails. The depot will double as historical center and trail headquarters building.

FRTTI has long desired a building of its own and has had its eye on the depot due to its location on the trail as well as its historical significance as one of the only original depots remaining.

Thanks to the generous sale of Mrs. Morrow, and the foresight of Mr. Morrow in preserving it all these years, FRTTI will make plans to convert the building and surrounding grounds into a tremendous gift to the community by late 2010.

COLLINS GRAND OPENING



The Collins Community is now on the NCIT Map thanks to the tremendous work of contractors and volunteers and funding from the park districts.

About 100 area residents attended the grand opening celebration of this new beautiful 1.3 mile section on Sunday October 19. Festivities were held at the new trailhead parking lot at Hartland Center Road. The Wakeman Wranglers 4-H club assisted with the ceremonial ribbon cutting.

Volunteers from Firelands Rails to Trails started reclaiming the path in the winter of 2006-2007.

Hundreds of man-hours were donated and Wilhelm Construction of Monroeville was hired for grading and ditch clearing to create this community asset.

Work has already begun to continue to extend the trail west from Collins.

TIME TO CLOSE THE GAP



“The Gap” will be soon be bridged thanks to a grant from the Ohio Dept. of Transportation.

The 225’ bridge over the Huron River in Monroeville, above, will receive a new deck, new railings and will be ready for trail users in late 2010.

The bridge is one of the last hurdles in linking the two open trail pieces of 3.25 and 3.3 miles.

In addition to refurbishing the bridge, work remains on crossing the W&LE Railway at grade, some regrading near Peru Center Road, and some approach work on each end.

FRTTI is making plans for a trailhead parking lot at Rt. 99 at the west end of the bridge.

Visible in the top right corner of the photo is our future new home - right next to our future new bridge!

Details on the bridge grant and progress will follow.

5K

The second annual 5K “Bridge the Gap” run and walk fundraiser will be held on Saturday, May 16 at the North West Street Trailhead in Norwalk. The race begins at 9:00 am. Race organizer and FRTTI Trustee Joyce Dupont states, “We’re expecting an even larger crowd this year as the trail has become more popular with runners and walkers”. Prizes will be awarded for top finishers in each division. All proceeds will help FRTTI bridge the gap in Monroeville.

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Winter view of the Huron River from the double arch viaduct. Carol Missler photo.



WORK DAY REPORTS

Work Days are held the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month from 8 am til Noon. All work days are announced the week before via email. No need to sign up and we welcome all talents and abilities. "Where seldom is heard a discouraging word..."



Work continued at Collins as the snow fell. Volunteers cleaned up more debris, twigs and trash to ready the trail for spring. Some additional cross-trail drainage issues will be addressed in the coming months. More work days are planned for the area.



New member Larry Carpenter of Norwalk lends a hand near the Hartland Center Rd. Trailhead. The amount of trash and scrap removed from this abandoned industrial corridor can now be measured in tons!



In Monroeville, volunteers widened the future trail bed just west of Peru Center Road. Off the trail, Lisa Wendt gave our website a major overhaul and added an event calendar and Joyce Dupont prepared our tax forms updated our Power Point presentation.



A sunny February day was a good day for an inspection of "The Gap". After brush clearing, the work party inspected the future trail bridge, Rt. 99 parking lot and the future Donald E. Morrow Park and historical center grounds.



The cure for cabin fever was found when the temperature reached fifty and there was brush to be cut west of Collins! New volunteers included Greg and Autumn Ashley of Norwalk, Taylor Schaffer, son of Rick Schaffer, Jeff Harwood of NLGWRT, and Larry Libbee of Ft. Wayne, in town to visit his dad, Rich, who brought a tractor to push back the brush.

ADOPT-A-TRAIL

Norwalk Kiwanis adopts first piece

The Norwalk Kiwanis will be the first group to adopt a mile and a half of trail! Kiwanis members Jennie Hipp and Mike Moore attended our January board meeting and announced they were interested in adopting a piece of trail, specifically from North West Street in Norwalk to Halfway Road, after seeing our Power Point Presentation at their Kiwanis Meeting.

FRTTI VP Stan Bernhardt will head The Adopt-a-trail program, which allows local organizations a chance to involve their group in the general maintenance, trimming and upkeep of their community trail.

Their stretch will be marked with an Adopt-a-Trail sign and the Kiwanis name. They expect to be out on the trail soon with the Norwalk Key Club assisting.

We have many more miles available and FRTTI board members are always available to speak to your group on current trail news.

TRAIL PATROL

Year End Report

Norwalk Police Sergeant and Trail Patrol Officer Mike Conney gave his year end report of his bike patrols on the trail for 2008.

Mike biked 1,658 miles and spent 131.5 hours patrolling the trail. He encountered 1,445 people, only 5 of whom were "somewhat belligerent". The remaining 1,440 were very pleasant and were happy to be out enjoying the trail.

ANNUAL MEETING

Record crowd shows up to learn plans for 2009 and beyond.

by Rick Schaffer "Every person in this room provides vital support for our efforts," said President Gordon Oney, noting that it was the biggest turnout ever for the group's 9th Annual Membership Meeting. 40 of FRTTI's 175 members were on hand.

The highlight of 2008 for FRTTI was the opening of a 1.3-mile section of trail in Collins, giving the group a total of 7.8 miles of open trail across portions of northern Huron County.

"I've been in 46 states looking at park districts, and I can't recall anyplace getting so far so fast," said Erie County Metroparks Steve Dice, the meeting's keynote speaker. "Listening to what you have accomplished, it gives me hope... You guys are giving us inspiration to go on."

Dice recounted the legal troubles that have slowed progress on the Huron Greenway, the partially-open rail-trail that will eventually link Milan and Huron. Plans call for the greenway to be continued on to Norwalk, where it would connect to the North Coast Inland Trail.

"We still have the dream and that dream will come true," Dice said. "Someday, you'll be able to leave Norwalk and ride all the way to Huron."

When the US 250 bridge in Milan was rebuilt last year, ODOT built a "tube" for the rail-trail to go through, Dice reported.

Among the dignitaries at the meeting were Norwalk Mayor Sue Lesch, former State Rep. and Erie County Metroparks Commissioner Fred Deering, former Juvenile and Probate Judge and former State Representative Thomas Heydinger, former County Engineer Larry McGlinchy and County Coroner Jeffrey Harwood. Harwood, along with Anna O'Donnell, are part of a group in the early stages of developing a rail-trail from New London to Greenwich. You can support NLGWRT by visiting www.newlondongreenwichrailtrail.org



L: Steve Dice addresses a full house at Berry's. Lisa Wendt R: FRTTI Board Members stood still long enough for a rare group photo.

Kate Mantey photo.



2009 GOALS

A look at some of the goals for 2009

- Increase membership 10% from 175
- Recruit one Trustee from Eastern Huron County
- Increase Letters of Endorsement to 35
- Recruit 5 active volunteers including 2 from Bellevue
- Recruit 1 new service organization partner
- Submit 5 grant applications for trail construction
- Do 2 fundraisers: GOBA and the 5K
- Re-initiate Trail Patrol for 2009
- Arrange Collins area mowing and mower storage
- Eliminate "two track" west of Halfway Road
- Repair and smooth "large stone" surfaces
- Encourage Norwalk to submit grant application to extend trail to Whittlesey Ave.
- Participate in 10 public outreach events
- Build new trail between Sand Hill Road and Bellevue
- Rebuild Meggison Creek Bridge near Young Road
- Support planning and design of Huron River Bridge
- Initiate plan to develop, preserve, and occupy the Donald E. Morrow Park & Depot in Monroeville
- Open Peru Center Road to W&LE and on across bridge
- Modify grading east of Peru Center Road
- Build fences at the "Big Dip"
- Formulate plans for work west of Collins
- Continue brush removal west of Collins
- Take a break from working on the trail and enjoy it with our families and friends!

"People are different on a path. On a town sidewalk strangers may make eye contact but that's all. On a path like this (Stowe, VT) they smile, say hello, and pet one another's dogs." - Anne Lusk, trail builder, Vermont

So long Winter
from the camera of Alex Fries



THANKS TO OUR DONORS

\$1000 +

R.S. Hanline Company
Twenty First Century Foundation

\$500-999

Chapin, Ray and Marge
Colvin, Jeff
Fisher Titus Medical Center
Martin, Patrick J.

\$250-499

R.R. Donnelly Foundation
Oney, Gordon & Kathy

\$100-299

Beal, Dustin & Melissa
Carpenter, Randy & Vickie
Cornell, William & Linda
D'Anieri, The Rev. Margaret
Deering, Daryl & Joyce
Deering, Fred & Margaret
Hahn, Clark
Hart, Robert
Helmstetter, Mike
Herman, Ed & Dot
Heydinger, Tom & Peggy
Lake Erie Construction
Lesch, Barb
Lesch Canvas
O'Donnell, Anna
Owens, Bill
Prack, Maureen
Richland Engineering
Ridge, Keith
Ryan, Kevin & Susan
Schwieterman, Michael & Christine
Sharpnack, Tom & Karen

\$100-299 (continued)

Suhr, Richard & Carolyn
Wheeler, Helen
Wilde, Skip
Wilhelm, Joe
Wolf, Gary & Christine

\$50-99

Adelman, Mike
Balduff Carpet
Beal, Steve & Carol
Berry, Doug
Hacker, Fred & Kathleen
Harwood, Jeff & Sharon
Holb, Albert & Betty
Lesch, Al & Sue
Mantey, Phil & Kathy
McGlinchy, Lawrence
Monnes, Paul & Linda
Northwest Ohio Rails to Trails
Riley, John & Sue
Smith, Ken
Stark, Jim & Reta
Theisen, Eric & Jeanne
Weltlin, Janice
Wendt, Tim & Lisa

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Thanks to these individuals, families, businesses and organizations for their generous financial gifts which have enabled the success of the North Coast Inland Trail - and kept us afloat when funds were scarce! This list include general donations and 5K / Close the Gap donations for 2008.

TRAIL ENDORSERS

Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce
Berry's Restaurant - Norwalk
BMP Industries - Birmingham
Citizen's Banking Co., Norwalk
Dr. Ted N.Clark, Jr., DVM - Bellevue
Jeff Colvin CPA - Norwalk
Domino's Pizza - Norwalk
Excel Bike & Fitness - Norwalk
Huron County Board of Commissioners
MB's Pooch Parlor - Norwalk
Mad River & NKP Railroad Society - Bellevue
Mossman Music - Norwalk
National Alliance on Mental Illness - Huron County
New London Family Practice
Norwalk Kiwanis
Ohio Horseman's Council - Erie Co. Chapter
Owens Law Firm - Norwalk
Pean's Pizza & Subs - Monroeville
Perkins Restaurant - Sandusky
Project Leadership - Norwalk
Twenty First Century Foundation - Norwalk
Underground Utilities Inc. - Monroeville
Village Gallery and Framer - Norwalk
Wakeman Wranglers 4-H Group- Wakeman
Wasiniak Construction - Norwalk

These businesses and organizations are among the growing list of Trail Endorsers. Be sure to patronize those who help support your trail.

Support from the local business community is essential to bring trail grant money back to Huron County.

Thanks to your support, we have been successful in securing some of your money from state funds and have returned it to Huron County to build your trail. Otherwise, these funds would have been spent elsewhere in the state.

Thanks to all those who demonstrate broad community support for the trail.

To join the Coalition of Endorsers, visit our website for sample letters of endorsement.

A GRAND OPENING IN COLLINS

“We are so glad to have the trail here in Collins for the girls to ride”. - Wakeman Wranglers 4H Mom
 “Every time I pass by the trailhead there’s always someone walking or biking.” - Hartland Twp. Resident
 “The trail is a real asset to the community. A real asset.” - Collins Resident



COLLINS BEFORE AND AFTER

No, we’re not kidding. We’ll just let the pictures explain...



ELSEWHERE ON THE NCIT

The North Coast Inland Trail continues to grow both east and west of Huron County.

In October, Trail members Joe and Kate Mantey attended the grand opening of the new paved trail linking Fremont, Lindsey and Elmore. The Sandusky County Park District held festivities in each of these locations. Typical of the wide open scenery is this shot below of Kate passing the Lindsey elevators. In other places the trail runs through shady stretches.

A few weeks later, FRTTI Treasurer Doug Jaqua did a Clyde - Fremont - Lindsey - Elmore 42 mile round trip with a brief stop in Lindsey for breakfast! Doug used connecting roads in Fremont to link the trail pieces east and west of town.

On a warm December day, FRTTI President Gordon Oney biked the new trail from Fremont to Elmore and back on his recumbent.

Back east, Lorain County Metroparks is adding to their beautiful Black River Reservation piece of the NCIT which passes through some cleverly-routed industrial scenery near the steel mills.



NEW TRUSTEE STEVE CLOUD

FRRTI is pleased to introduce our newest trustee, Steve Cloud. Steve has been involved with and has been an asset to the trail for several years, as seen here at a Collins work day (holding fence board in the photo below).

Steve and his wife Cynthia live in Bellevue and have four children. Steve is a retired clerk, working for the N&W and later Norfolk Southern for 41 years. Steve also served for 10 years on the Bellevue City Council.

Steve's is a stone and wood carver and sculptor and enjoys researching ghost railroads.

Join us in welcoming Steve.



2009 BOARD of TRUSTEES

Stan Bernhardt, VP - *Norwalk*

Steve Cloud - *Bellevue*

Joyce Dupont - *Norwalk*

Doug Jaqua, Treasurer - *Collins*

Fritz Kuenzel - *Hartland Twp.*

Joe Mantey, President - *Vermilion*

Joe Missler, Secretary - *Norwalk*

Gordon Oney - *North Fairfield*

Rick Schaffer - *Norwalk*

Steve Siesel - *Willard*

Lisa Wendt - *Monroeville*

THANKS, GORDON

FRRTI founder Gordon Oney, who served as Trail President from 2000-2009 has decided to step down from the chair "to allow some fresh ideas", as he said at the monthly meeting.

Upon his retirement from the R.R. Donnelly Company ten years ago, Gordon decided he wanted to volunteer his time in a parks and recreation capacity.

Gordon assembled a team of local interested individuals and under his leadership the trail grew from just an idea to an eight mile scenic recreational venue in just ten years. FRRTI now has over 142 members, eleven trustees and *thousands* enjoy the trail all seasons of the year.

Gordon will remain on the board and will wear almost as many hats as he has in the past. Gordon, along with Trustee Stan Bernhardt, will oversee construction of the trail west to Bellevue, among many other projects.

Trail News Editor and long time trustee Joe Mantey has been nominated as the new President of FRRTI. Joe is an avid biker, cross country skier, snowboarder and model railroader. His wife Kate is also a biker, has been active at work days and does a lot of behind the scenes trail work.

Thank you, Gordon for your vision and dedication.

Just what is a Trustee??? A trustee is a trail member who has gone above and beyond in volunteer efforts and has indicated a desire to further commit themselves to FRRTI. Trustees are elected by the members at the annual meeting and are responsible for the trail planning and operation. Trustees typically contribute work or finances, spearhead projects and demonstrate leadership.

PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD HERITAGE

PART 2 OF 5: THE CLEVELAND AND TOLEDO RAILROAD

LARGE TRAINS.-*The Freight Trains on the C.&T. Railroad, for a few days past, have been very large. On several occasions we have noticed two locomotives attached to single trains. We would judge from this, that the Freight business of the Road is large, and increasing. We understand that the passenger business of the Road is also good. ...We always feel, when traveling over this Road, that a certain member of the Editorial fraternity will not be sent to "kingdom come" by any mismanagement or negligence. There is no better managed Road in the State.* Norwalk Reflector, 1858.

Such was said of the Cleveland and Toledo Railroad, successor to the original builder of the line, the Toledo, Norwalk & Cleveland Railroad. The TN&C was just two years old when they merged with the Junction Railroad in 1853. The Junction Railroad was building west from the west side of Cleveland to Sandusky and completed a bridge across the Sandusky Bay in 1855. This bridge was soon abandoned as the road's financial condition worsened. After the Civil War a bridge across the Cuyahoga was completed giving the road direct access to Cleveland without relying on the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Railroad (later the "Big Four Route") connection at Grafton. The Sandusky Bay bridge was then reopened.

The 1853 timetable shows three passenger trains each way through Norwalk with Monroeville and Clyde being important junctions on the line.

The map below shows the original line beginning in Grafton and dates to 1859. In 1866 the C&T connected their Northern and Southern divisions with eight miles of new track between Oberlin and Elyria. The original line to Grafton was abandoned soon after, traces of which can still be seen just east of Parsons Road in Oberlin.



Under C&T management, the road built extensive shops in Norwalk which sat just north of the now closed grocery store and east of Home Lumber on Whittlesey Avenue. The Norwalk Shops were capable of building their own 4-4-0 steam locomotives in entirety and employed hundreds of men.

The railroad scene was expanding in the late 1800's and in 1869 the C&T would become part of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, extending to Buffalo and Chicago. - F.N. Kuenzel / J.P. Mantey

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Dues: _____ New _____ Renewal

___ Individual \$ 10.00

___ Family \$ 15.00

___ Patron \$ 50.00

___ Business \$ 100.00

___ Donation _____

___ "Bridge the Gap" Fund _____

TOTAL _____

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

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

TN11

The EXTRA BOARDThe latest news and information



*"Speak only if it improves the silence."
Carol Missler photo.*

CONTACT US

Firelands Rails To Trails Inc.
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Norwalk, OH 44857
bikedoc123@verizon.net
or contact us online!
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 \$10
- Sign up for our Email News
- Join us on one of our Work Days
- Tell some friends about it!

Thurs April 2 - Board Meeting
Sat April 4 - Work Day, Collins area
Sun April 19 - Work Day, M-ville
Sat May 2 - Work Day - Collins area
Thurs May 7 - Board Meeting
Sat May 16 - 5K Race - Norwalk 9am
Tues May 26 - Trail Presentation
@ Huron Library - 7pm
*Work Day announcements sent out via email the week before to all members of FRTTI.
Board Meetings: Norwalk Police Station @ 7pm*

TRAIL NEWS

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