



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #13

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

SPRING 2010

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

BELLEVUE HERE WE COME!

The time has come to “Bridge the Gap” in Monroeville and extend the trail west to Bellevue.

Thanks to a grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation, the 225-foot railroad bridge over the West Branch of the Huron River, seen below, will be retrofitted to become safe for trail users. Work will begin this summer.

Pat Schwan, of Richland Engineering, is responsible for the elegant and functional designs. Planning is under way to link the east end of this soon to be completed bridge with the current trail terminus at Peru Center Road. FRTTI Trustees Stan Bernhardt and Gordon Oney will oversee construction.

On the west end, the trail will be extended from its current terminus just west of Rt. 4, across Bauer Road, and on west to Prairie Road. West end construction will begin this July.



DEPOT OVERHAUL: BACK TO THE FUTURE

Step into the 1852 Depot at Donald E. Morrow Park and you’ll think it’s 1914, the year the New York Central System took over operations of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern. The walls are painted just as they were almost 100 years ago and the original ticket windows still operate. Listen closely and you might just hear a telegraph come in over the wire ahead of the next express train from Toledo.

The winter months have afforded the dedicated volunteers a chance to get some major interior work done to create the future trail headquarters and railroad heritage center.

The restoration efforts have been led by Trustees Steve Siesel, Fritz Kuenzel and Rich Libbee. Steve, as seen below restoring the original ticket window, along with Fritz and Rich, have spent many winter evenings sanding and painting. Fritz has done extensive research on the paint colors and historical attributes. Rich Libbee has been handling the electrical needs.

Most of the interior painting is complete and mechanical items are being attended to by Bob Stang of All Seasons Climate Control. In all, the FRTTI volunteers have logged in excess of 420 hours so far this year as of this writing!

We hope to officially open the depot and adjacent park later this summer.



WESTWARD FROM COLLINS!

Collins area mileage continues to grow as work will continue to push west from the village. The trail from West St. to West Collins Road will receive a final grading from Wilhelm Construction this spring, completing another 0.6 miles.

Construction will soon take place from West Collins Road to Medusa Road thanks to a grant from The Ohio Department of Natural Resources. This 1.2 mile scenic stretch will include a new culvert to replace the existing collapsed culvert which has been exposed by erosion, as visible at left. The TN&C Railroad’s original 1852 box abutments can be seen along with the collapsed 1870’s LS&MS arched sandstone culvert. Look for work to begin here late summer. Trail clearing has also begun in the center of Collins with this 0.3 mile stretch between Hartland Center Road and West Street, to be completed in 2010 or 2011.



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This young man couldn’t wait to paint the depot but he didn’t have any paint clothes. Now he does.



SEE YOU AT THE DEPOT!



Only a mere handful of trails nationwide can be so fortunate as us to have a historic 158 year old structure to call home and be able to tell the rich history of our rail line. Our Donald E. Morrow park will be a first class example. This old Toledo, Norwalk & Cleveland Railroad depot is as rare as rare gets.

We also realize our number one priority is building trail. The winter months have given us a big jump on the depot as we know soon the grass will be growing and this year's *many* trail construction projects will be starting.

In order to keep our efforts focused, we have set up a separate fund for depot restoration and included a blank in our membership form for depot donations. When all said and done, the depot will require upwards of \$50,000 in cosmetic, mechanical and access improvements. The biggest expense will be windows - only 5 of the 14 remain. Thanks to some large initial funding from the park district owners we can address all structural and mechanical items this year and start replacing windows. Paint and interior work has been accelerated by a lot of sweat and muscle this winter and we'll start to tackle the outside this spring and summer.

FRTTI thrives on memberships and your donations. If you have not joined, renewed, or donated for 2010; we still need you as much as ever to help us complete the massive trail projects this year, to maintain the ten-plus miles of trail already open, and to keep the depot restoration moving ahead. For years we've all heard about those great far-off trails with depots and big bridges which our members have visited. Now it's Huron County's NCIT that everyone will be talking about. - *Joe Mantey, President, FRTTI.*

2009 DONORS

\$1000 +

Pam Morrow
Emile Wells
Fisher Titus Medical Center
21st Century Foundation
Norwalk Eagles
Norwalk Lions

\$500-999

Ray & Marge Chapin

\$250-499

Marcy Burns
Jeff Colvin
Joe & Kate Mantey
Dick & Marilyn Palmer
Wakeman Grange

\$100-249

Bauer Heating
Steve & Carol Beal
Thomas & Margaret Cline
William & Linda Cornell
Daryl & Joyce Deering
Fred & Margaret Deering
Bruce Failor
Clark Hahn
Mark Haynes
Robert Hart
Ed & Dot Herman
Violet Herner
Tom & Peggy Heydinger
Chris & Janet Hipp
Barb Lesch
Phil & Kathy Mantey
Raymond & Bridget Musso
Anna O'Donnell
Zach Ohler
Gordon & Kathy Oney

\$100-299 (cont'd)

Bill Owens
Maureen Prack
Sean Reineck
Rick & Robyn Schaffer
Mike & Chris Schwieterman
Dan Strayer
Henry & Marty Timman
Toft Dairy
Helen Wheeler
Skip Wilde
Joe Wilhelm

\$50-99

Mike & Melodie Adelman
Robert & Deborah Andrews
Dustin & Melissa Beal
Joe Blake
Robert & Ruth Brown
Randy & Vickie Carpenter
Croghan National Bank
Rev. Margaret D'Anieri
Jim & Jorja Dawson
James Dougan
Fred & Kathleen Hacker
Jeff & Sharon Harwood
William Henry II
Albert & Betty Holb
Jim's Pizza Box - Huron
Al & Sue Lesch
Thomas Makovic
Larry McGlinchy
Paul & Linda Monnes
Monroeville Transmission & Clutch
Chris Mushett
Mike & Jill Nolan
Northwestern Ohio Rails-to-Trails

\$50-99 (cont'd)

Carol Owens
Road Soldiers Cycling Club
Jim & Reta Stark
Bilt Stainer Enterprises
Richard & Carolyn Suhr
Glenn & Patricia Tinker
Jan Tkach
Jim & Cheryl Wasiniak
Tim & Lisa Wendt
Thomas & Darlene White

Worthy of recognition / unique donations and contributions:

All Seasons Climate Control - donated furnace
Austin Power Equipment - loaned auger
Jerry Earl; A.L. Burras - surveying
Christie Lane Industries & Rec. - trail adoptees
Lake Erie Construction - sign posts
Kraus & Hanck, CPA - depot furnishings
Keith Jackson - tractor time
Joe & Kate Mantey - donated 42" riding mower
Pam Morrow - sale of depot and park
Mussun Sales Inc. - ductwork and registers
Norwalk Kiwanis - trail adoptees / overlook
Norwalk Lions - July 4th parade raffle proceeds
Zach Ohler - constructed benches
Gerald Oney - loaned skid steer
Sean Reineck - constructed a trail kiosk
Jack Schaffer - overlook project management
Schaffer Excavating - loaned excavator
Stinchcomb Nurseries - donated trees
21st Century Foundation - financial support
Wakeman Grange - donated benches at Collins
Wakeman Wranglers 4H - trail adoptees
Emile Wells - overlook funds
Jim Wasiniak - trail clearing and grading
Westland Heating - loaned box truck
Wilhelm Construction - depot gutter/roof repairs

ENDORSEERS

Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce
Bellevue Parks & Recreation Dept.
Berry's Restaurant - 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
Huron County Board of Commissioners
Lyme Township Board of Trustees
MB's Pooch Parlor - Norwalk
Mad River & NKP Railroad Soc., Bellevue
Mossman Music - Norwalk
Natl Alliance on Mental Illness - Norwalk
New London Family Practice
Norwalk Kiwanis
Norwalk Lions
Dr. Anna O'Donnell, DVM - Norwalk
Ohio Horseman's Council - Erie Co.
Owens Law Firm - Norwalk
Pea's Pizza & Subs - Monroeville
Perkins Restaurant - Sandusky
Project Leadership - Norwalk
Ridgefield Township Board of Trustees
Sheri's Coffee - Norwalk
Twenty First Century Foundation - Norwalk
Underground Utilities Inc. - Monroeville
Village Gallery & Framar - Huron
Village of Monroeville
Wakeman Wranglers 4-H Group - Wakeman
Wasiniak Construction - Norwalk
Wilhelm Construction - Monroeville
Thanks to everyone for their financial, written, material, and physical support. Firelands Rails to Trails relies on your support to build and maintain more trail.

QUESTIONS... often pondered and often asked

- Q: How do I get involved?** **A:** Sign up for email announcements, and simply show up at one of our work days.
Q: If I come to a work day, do I need to come every time? **A:** No, come as often as you like on work day tasks that interest you.
Q: May I cut firewood? **A:** At a work day you can cut and take all you can carry. Otherwise, with written permission only!
Q: How do I contact FRTTI? **A:** Email us through the website or contact us through Joe Missler at Excel Bike 419-668-3027
Q: Who patrols the trail? **A:** Local law enforcement and three FRTTI Trail patrol officers on bikes during the summer months.
Q: Who do I call in case of emergency? **A:** Dial 911. Same applies to report unauthorized motor vehicles or unusual activity.
Q: May I take my dog on the trail? **A:** Yes, if the dog is on a leash at all times. **Q: May I burn leaves on the trail?** **A:** No.
Q: Will the trail go into Norwalk? **A:** The City of Norwalk is working on a plan to extend the trail from N. West to Whittlesey.
Q: What do I do if I approach a horse while biking or running? **A:** Slow down or stop, announce yourself and await instructions.

OWL PROWL

Despite the trail normally closing at dusk, the evening of Dec. 4th found the North West Street trailhead crowded with prowlers...owl-prowlers, that is, for this special nighttime event.

Wondering if there is an owl-population on/near our rail-trails, more than 20 "prowlers," led by FRTTI Trustee Lisa Wendt, members of the Firelands Audubon Society and others set out, after dark, armed with flashlights and sound recordings of various Ohio owls. The night was cold but clear and the sky was dotted with so many bright stars that flashlights were not needed.

The Auduboners played sound recordings of a Barn Owl, Barred Owl and Eastern Screech owl in hopes of attracting their attention while the 'prowlers' patiently waited for more than an hour. But, alas, a visit from an owl or two was not meant to be ... maybe they were out to dinner or holiday shopping. Trail users have reported hearing at least one Barred Owl so another 'prowl' might be scheduled soon!

WISH LIST & OTHER NEWS

As the Huron County portion of the North Coast Inland Trail grows, more tools are needed to keep it in top shape.

Some of the items on our wish list include: a 1-ton dump truck, a large trailer, a big roller, and a shed around 8 x 8 feet for mower storage, and a projection screen for presentations...

We are always looking for railroad photos and artifacts for our depot - very specifically from Huron County's railroads: New York Central, B&O, W&LE/NKP, and Lake Shore Electric....

Thanks to Stinchcomb Nurseries of Sandusky, our new trail west of Monroeville has over a dozen new trees planted on the west end, coordinated by FRTTI Trustee and webmaster, Lisa Wendt..... Our 501(c)3 paperwork once again complete thanks to FRTTI Trustee Joyce Dupont. She, along with Treasurer Doug Jaqua, keep us in the black and keep us building our NCIT.

ANNUAL MEETING

A record 43 FRTTI members gathered February 4th for the organization's 10th annual meeting. They were told not only of the impressive progress of our North Coast Inland Trail, but also the separate plans for a new rail-trail in southern Huron County.

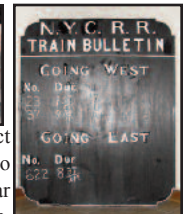
New London physician Jeffrey Harwood was the keynote speaker. Harwood is treasurer of New London - Greenwich Rail Trail Inc., which is trying to develop a 7.8-mile trail on the old Akron, Canton and Youngstown (later N&W, W&LE) railbed between the villages.

As a family physician, Harwood sees the trail improving both the personal and economic health of the communities. With the help of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, the group is in negotiations to obtain the corridor from the current owners, the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railroad.

While NLGWRT is not affiliated with FRTTI, nor would their trail connect directly to ours, our group has been able to offer advice and point them in the right direction. Please consider a NLGWRT membership to help them succeed.

www.newlondongreenwichrailtrail.org

Jeff Harwood tells FRTTI members of plans for a new rail-trail in southern Huron County. (photo by Robyn Schaffer)



Fritz Kuenzel has created this beautiful, exact replica train bulletin board, at right. We also now have a baggage cart for our depot, similar to the one outside our depot as seen here, above, in the 1950's. Fritz, along with Tom Greulich and Geoff Wood donated time and funds to bring it home from Elmore! Joyce & Bill Dupont, Gordon Oney, and Joe Mantey also donated funds.

PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD HERITAGE



PART 4 OF 5: THE NEW YORK CENTRAL SYSTEM



The New York Central years were often regarded as the "Golden Era of Railroading", however, such was not necessarily the case on our beloved Norwalk Branch. The Norwalk Branch reached its zenith about the time the New York Central took control of the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern in 1914. The New York Central grew into a massive, four-track mainline New York to Chicago route with lines extending to Boston, Montreal, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Charleston. Our Norwalk Branch was just that, a branch, and from 1914 on, the line's importance steadily declined to a local route to serve on-line customers and provide a bypass in the event of a derailment on the main line which ran through Sandusky.

The Central was known for magnificent streamlined Hudson and powerful Niagara steam locomotives, passenger trains like the Twentieth Century Limited, lightning-striped diesels and the first installation of CTC (Centralized Traffic Control) in 1927 in Fostoria, allowing a remote dispatcher to control signals and train movements from afar. Meanwhile, the Norwalk Branch often saw 2-8-2 Mikado type locomotives pulling small local freights, with passenger service on the branch ending in the late 1950's. Depots closed soon thereafter.

Starting in 1954, NYC President Alfred E. Perlman streamlined the Central, shedding excess trackage and fully dieselizing the railroad. In their quest for dieselization, many steam locomotives, some with less than 10 years of service, were sent to the scrappers. Not a single Hudson nor a Niagara was saved for posterity. However, Perlman transformed the Central empire into a lean and profitable machine. All of this would change in 1968 when they merged with arch-rival Pennsylvania Railroad. "To me it was not a merger; it was a takeover, frankly", said Perlman.

-Compiled by J.P. Mantey; photos at right by Howard Ameling



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 _____

____ Depot restoration fund _____

TOTAL _____

I would also like to donate:

____ Labor _____

____ Equipment _____

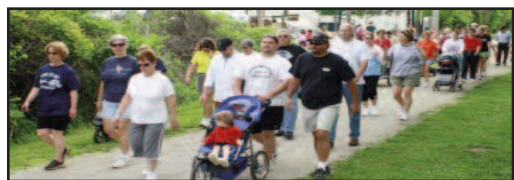
Detach and Mail this section.

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.

TN13

The EXTRA BOARDThe latest news and information



**2010 5K
WALK AND RUN
SATURDAY, MAY 15 9AM
NORTH WEST ST. TRAILHEAD**
Proceeds to Close the Gap, develop Donald E. Morrow Park, and rehab the depot.

If your email has changed, please update it by contacting us through www.firelandsrailstotrails.org

CONTACT US
Firelands Rails To Trails Inc.
44 East Main St.
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. Apr 1: Board Meeting 7pm
Sat. April 10: Work Day, 8am-12 noon
Sun. April 18: Work Day, 8am-12noon
Sat. May 1: Work Day, 8am-12noon
Thurs. May 6: Board Meeting 7pm
Sat. May 15: 5K Walk & Run 9am
Work Day announcements sent out via email the week before to all members of FRTTI. Check our website for work day details and meeting locations.

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