



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #14

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

FALL 2010

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

HELLO BELLEVUE WE MADE IT !!!



The dream has become reality. The North Coast Inland Trail has finally reached Bellevue! Until this fall, the trail ended in the middle of a field between Ohio Route 4 and Bauer Road. Wilhelm Construction is completing the trail to Prairie Road as this goes to print! Vehicle parking will be available at Bellevue Reservoir #4. More good news from the west: The Sandusky County Park District has received ODOT and ODNR funding to continue the NCIT from Clyde east to the western edge of Bellevue in 2012-2013.

COLLINS AREA

TRAIL MILEAGE GROWS

The North Coast Inland Trail is also growing in eastern Huron County. Using an ODNR Clean Ohio grant, Mark Haynes Construction is constructing 1.2 miles of tree-lined trail between West Collins and Medusa roads. A new culvert is being installed in place of the collapsed culvert, where up until recently, the original 1852 bridge abutments were still visible. The new section will make 1.8 miles of completed trail west of Collins. Work is also under way to finish the short stretch in the center of Collins which should be open next summer. This will then complete 3.5 miles of continuous trail across Townsend Township.



BRIDGE OVERHAUL

The time is getting closer to close the gap at Monroeville. Thanks to a grant from ODOT, Schirmer Construction, of North Olmsted, was awarded the contract to rehabilitate the former railroad bridge with a new concrete deck. Federal Stimulus funds are being used to fund this ODOT project, the only such use of Stimulus Funds for a bike trail project in the state of Ohio! Work on the bridge will be complete by May of 2011 and plans are being made to connect to Peru



Center Road as well, finally linking Norwalk, Monroeville, and Bellevue in late 2011. A trailhead parking area will be then constructed at Rt 99. We expect a huge increase in trail use when this bridge is complete. The view from the bridge will be amazing.

DEPOT: ONE SIDE DONE!

The depot at Donald E. Morrow Park is starting to look old - just like it did in 1914 - and that is our intention! This future trail activity center and historical showpiece is receiving a complete overhaul. Thanks to a generous donation by Pam Morrow, wife of the late Don Morrow, the depot is getting all new windows. Volunteers are working countless hours on the exterior siding and trim. The depot also has new plumbing, electrical, and HVAC upgrades thanks to many donations and hard work. Plans are in the works for the adjacent trailside park. Look for a new red roof soon!



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MIXED FREIGHT

FRTTI is pleased to announce our newest board member: **Jan Tkach** of Wakeman. Jan is an avid outdoors lover, a Wakeman Councilperson, President of the Dalton Community Park Board and works part time at the Wakeman Community Library. We are glad to have her on board!... Trustee, Chief Birder, and Webmaster **Lisa Wendt** continuously monitors and adds to our bird houses on the trail and has also added an event calendar to our wonderful website... **Clark Hahn** donated a day's worth of backhoe time in Collins to improve drainage along the trail east of Hartland Center... **Stan Bernhardt, Rich Libbee, Gordon Oney, and Steve Siesel** have been mowing almost non-stop for most of the summer to keep the trail well manicured.... **Pam Morrow** donated funds for new depot windows.... They are being installed by FRTTI Trustee **Fritz Kuenzel**, who also created the Monroeville depot signs. Fritz, along with trustee **Steve Siesel**, have logged countless hours working on the depot exterior with **Rich Libbee** working inside.... **Rick, Robyn, and Taylor Schaffer** spent a day cleaning the depot interior.... Our **Trail Adoptees** have done a wonderful job of picking up debris on the trail although the **Wakeman Wranglers** have reported "There is nothing to pick up. No trash, just a few twigs!"... **MB's Pooch Parlor** has adopted the section just west of Sand Hill Road... Other trail sections are available!... **Paul Lindenberger**, lifelong friend of **Don Morrow**, has donated the original freight agent's desk for use in the depot. Paul has completely restored this huge antique!... Work has started on the **Kiwanis Overlook** at the double arch bridge. Spearheaded by **Jack Schaffer and Larry McGlinchy**, with steel donated by **Lake Erie Construction**, the overlook will extend high above the Huron River. Expertise, labor and equipment from **Jim, Steve, and Dave Wasiniak, Tom Eastman**, and others, made for perfectly poured footers. Work will continue over the next few months....stay tuned for more details in the spring Trail News!



ROAD SOLDIERS!

We have always desired the help of a local service organization to help with events and to help make short work of heavy tasks. To our luck, in rolled the Road Soldiers Cycling Club from the Ohio Veterans Home! Representatives from this enthusiastic bunch have attended board meetings all summer, and helped immensely with the huge 5K event. The Road Soldiers also held two organized bike rides this year.

"We could not have had such success at our 5K event without their help", said race coordinator Joyce Dupont. "The Road Soldiers helped with setup and coordination, and served as marshals for the race including manning water stops." In addition, the Road Soldiers spent two full days working on the depot, removing boards and sanding and applying primer.



"They really gave us a boost on the depot work and we are glad to have them involved in our trail", said trustee Rick Schaffer.

TURN UP THE HEAT

Visitors to the depot will be very comfortable thanks to the generous donation by Bob Stang of All Seasons Climate Control. Bob donated and installed a like-new furnace and a/c unit! Rick Laser and John Johnson of All Seasons, as seen here, spent two full days installing the system. All Seasons was also hired to install all new plumbing work which was meticulously installed by Barry Hammond. FRTTI Trustee Emeritus Rich Libbee has been busy upgrading our entire electrical system complete with a new panel!



ROLLING ALONG

FRTTI Founder Gordon Oney rode in his 15th GOBA ride which rolled through the hills of southeastern Ohio.... Our treasurer, Doug Jaqua, and trustee Joyce Dupont and her husband, Bill, rode from Washington, D.C. to Pittsburgh on the Great Allegheny Passage in September, covering 320 miles in 7 days as seen here, left, along the C&O Canal in Maryland.... In August, Joe Wilhelm and his sister, Rose Seliga, rode 630 miles from St. Joe, MO to Indianapolis, IN on leg 4 of their cross country trip, as seen here crossing the Mississippi River by ferry, right photo.



BIKE TO BEAT CANCER

Thirteen riders in the first annual Bike to Beat Cancer Ride raised \$733 for cancer research and had a great time in the process. Cousins Shelby Bumb and Audra Leber, both local seventh graders, organized this ride from Bellevue to Norwalk and back this July 17th. Many riders had not been on the NCIT before and were very impressed with "the wonderful trail right here in their backyard" as they described it. Shelby and Audra presented a recap of the ride at the August board meeting at the depot.

"Our favorite parts of the trail were the beautiful view from the Seymour Creek Bridge and the big hill near North West Street", said Shelby. "All of the riders wore matching yellow Bike to Beat Cancer shirts", Audra added. The shirts were designed by the girls.

"Our entire board was impressed with the well planned and well managed bike ride fundraiser", commented FRTTI president Joe Mantey. Catherine McConnell took this photo at the start of their ride.



WHAT'S NEXT?

As this goes to print, we have many projects underway on multiple fronts: wrapping up getting the trail to Bellevue, more Collins area trail work, completing the massive bridge in Monroeville, and restoring the depot, all the while keeping up with trail maintenance.

Next year's big project will be the closing of the gap from Peru Center Road to the new bridge at Monroeville. Details will be forthcoming. We also have a 0.3 mile stretch of trail to be completed in Central Collins. Preliminary work is under way there. We will also improve trail surfaces where funds permit.

With the rapidly expanding trail mileage comes rapidly expanding maintenance. This will be our biggest challenge yet in 2011. This year trail maintenance was a lot like painting a bridge: get to one end and start all over again on the other end.

Each mile of limestone trail we manage will run in excess of \$1,500 per year just to maintain, mow, and trim. We need you now more than ever to help us maintain this beautiful trail. Your memberships and donations are what keep us rolling. We thank you for keeping memberships current and for signing up friends and fellow trail users.

We also encourage you to join us at one of our regular work days as often as you like. Together we can stay ahead of the maintenance and keep the trail looking A-1. You just might meet some friends in the process. *- Joe Mantey, FRTTI President*

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

The NCIT is a true multi-use trail. While we can expect to see bikes, horses, skiers and dogs, we must also respect one another. Our success in building and maintaining your trail stems from the diversity of interests and often the financial support of those with interests which may differ from yours.

Bikers: Remember that pedestrians and horses have the right of way. Announce when passing walkers and runners and remember to stop, announce yourself, and await instructions from those on horseback. Never startle a horse. When stopping along the trail, always pull off into the grass.

Birders: Step off trail surface when stopping to watch or photograph birds to allow others to pass. Do not disturb or approach nesting boxes.

Dog walkers: Keep dogs on a leash and keep control of your dog at all times. Be sure to clean up after your dog.

Equestrians: Stay to the right and move onto grass berms when stopping. Kick off or shovel off any horse manure from the trail or trailhead lots.

Walkers and runners: Stay to the right to allow bikers to pass. Stay on the trail. There are no side paths off the trail. Adjacent land is private property. Do not climb on railings or abutments.

Winter trail users: Stay out of the cross country ski tracks - walk to the side of them.

For emergencies, dial 911. To report an unusual condition, contact us via the website. Together we can all coexist and enjoy the trail!

NIGHT RIDE



12 nocturnal bike riders rode the annual night ride from Monroeville to Bellevue and back this October 14. Riders brought their loose change and we raised over \$130 for depot restoration and trailside park development!

5K A HUGE SUCCESS



The 3rd annual 5K race brought out 200 runners and walkers this May. "We raised almost \$1,000 for our trail", said race coordinator and FRTTI Trustee Joyce Dupont. Prizes were awarded for the women's and men's divisions for runners and first place walkers. For complete race results, visit our trail website.

PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD HERITAGE

In the early 1900's, railroad mergers were typically end-to-end to expand systems. By the 1960's, railroads, especially in the northeast, were looking to merge to eliminate duplicate lines and facilities. Beset by heavy passenger losses, antiquated work rules, excess WWII trackage still on the tax rolls, and competition from trucks and highways, the trunk lines (the New York to Chicago railroads) sought out merger partners.

Erie teamed up with Lackawanna in 1960. C&O took control of B&O and later added Western Maryland. In 1964, N&W added the Nickel Plate, the Wabash, the AC&Y, and the P&WV. The two giants, New York Central (NYC) and the Pennsylvania (PRR) suddenly found themselves unattached and decided to merge in 1968 to form the sixth largest corporation in the world: Penn Central. It began profitable but would soon become a disaster.

Little thought had been given to the actual merging of operations. PRR was an archaic railroad with miles of excess unneeded trackage and ancient operating methods. NYC was a lean, streamlined machine. NYC's "Green Team" and PRR's "Red Team" (named for their boxcar colors) didn't have a plan to integrate operations. The Green Team saw the merger as a takeover and soon left for other jobs. PC's Chairman, PRR's Stuart Saunders, and PC's President, NYC's Alfred Perlman, maintained separate offices in Philadelphia and New York, respectively, and rarely spoke. Shipments, freight cars, and entire trains became lost for days as the early computer systems didn't mesh. Accounting was an intricate web of lies and the road's system map was a bowl of spaghetti.

By 1970, the PC was bankrupt and most maintenance was deferred. Weeds choked busy mainlines, tracks washed out, and derailments were common. By 1976, Congress created Conrail which consolidated PC with other bankrupt railroads in the northeast. The Norwalk Branch had a severe washout near North West Street and was not to be included in Conrail. It was abandoned on March 31, 1976 by Penn Central and the property was sold off. Railroads had hit an all time low but would come bounding back as you will see in the next issue. The many branch lines that didn't survive have given us plenty of trails!

-Compiled by Joe Mantey

PART 5 OF 5: PENN CENTRAL



On the ground!
Penn Central GP9 #7386 has derailed at Fremont in 1968. This scene would be repeated many more times before the line's demise. Howard Ameling photo.

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.

TN14

The EXTRA BOARDThe latest news and information

BE IN THE KNOW!

Stay informed of the latest trail activities, work days, and trail updates via our regular email announcements.

If you are not receiving trail information via email, please email FRTTI Secretary Joe Missler at bikedoc123@frontier.com

CONTACT US

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44 East Main St.
Norwalk, OH 44857
bikedoc123@frontier.com
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 \$5
- Sign up for our Email News
- Join us on one of our Work Days
- Tell some friends about it!

WORK DAYS are held the first Saturday and third Sunday of each month from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. Sign up for email announcements or check our new web calendar for work day locations and other on-trail events! See you on the trail!

TRAIL NEWS

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