



# TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #3

HURON COUNTY

AUTUMN 2005

## NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

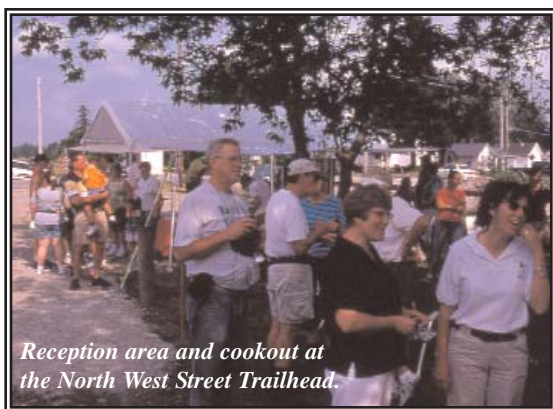
# TRAIL IS OPEN !

## BIG TURNOUT FOR BIG EVENT



*The moment everyone has waited for is here. Years of planning and a lot of hard work by volunteers paid off.*

*Norwalk Mayor Sue Lesch cut the ribbon at North West Street to officially open the first 3.3 miles of Huron County's North Coast Inland Trail. Behind her are some of the officers, trustees and volunteers of Firelands Rails to Trails. At far right is Rhonda Border-Boose, Director of the Ohio Field Office of Rails to Trails.*



*Reception area and cookout at the North West Street Trailhead.*

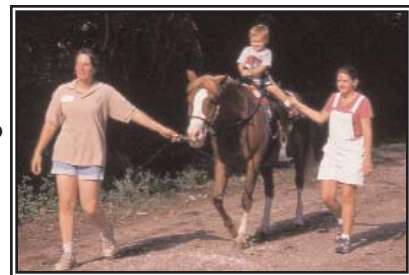
Firelands Rails to Trails Celebrated the Grand Opening of the first 3.3 miles of Huron County's North Coast Inland Trail on Sunday, July 17th. More than two hundred trail group members, their families, and friends of the community joined in the festivities at the North West Street Trailhead in Norwalk.

The newly opened trail was enjoyed by bicyclists, walkers and equestrians, with some walking all the way to Monroeville and back even in the sweltering heat. The celebration included a cookout, historical displays, and pony rides on the trail.

Norwalk Mayor Sue Lesch was one of several dignitaries present at the ribbon cutting ceremony. Firelands Rails to Trails President Gordon Oney introduced the trail volunteers and special guests including Rhonda Border-Boose, a native of Norwalk, who is now the Director of the Ohio Rails to Trails Field Office in Canal Winchester.

In a short speech, Mayor Lesch praised the many volunteers who have created a "gift to the community" and stated the need for a trail route into and through the city of Norwalk in the near future. Other distinguished guests who hiked portions of the trail included Huron County Commissioners Mike Adelman, Gary Bauer, and Ralph Fegley.

The day's pony rides were organized by Bill and Joyce Dupont, Tim and Lynn Sparks, Josh and Lori Fox, and Anne Gilcher. Trail group member Fritz Kuenzel set up a large display of railroad history just west of the stone viaduct which included many artifacts, maps and photos. Many guests ventured down to the Huron River for a recently cleared view of the stone viaduct. This great event was made possible by the many volunteers who have worked on the trail over the past five years. It was truly a Grand Opening.



*Joyce Dupont leads one of many pony rides. Kids lined up all day for a chance to saddle up and view the brand new trail.*



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*At Left: Mallory Clemons wastes no time as he clears some serious brush west of Rt. 547 on the way to Bellevue.... See how this piece of the trail is progressing on page 3.*

# OPEN HOUSE PHOTO GALLERY



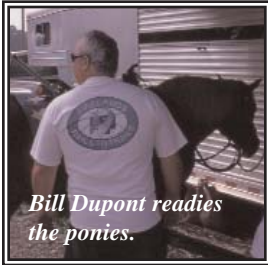
Words from Mayor Lesch, Gordon Oney, and Rhonda Border-Boose of the Ohio Rails to Trails Field Office.



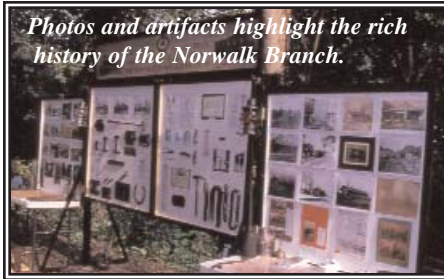
Photos, maps and volunteers.



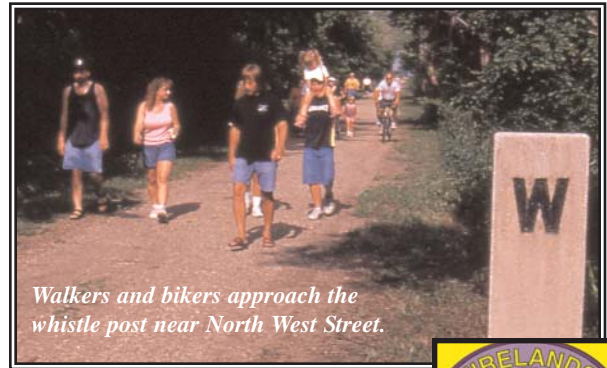
The historical displays were a popular stop on the way to Monroeville.



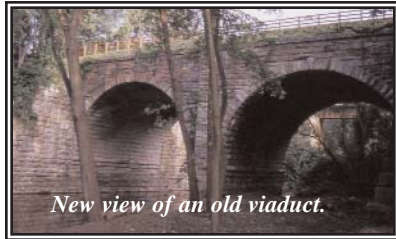
Bill Dupont reads the ponies.



Photos and artifacts highlight the rich history of the Norwalk Branch.



Walkers and bikers approach the whistle post near North West Street.



New view of an old viaduct.



Raise your hand to become a volunteer!

**OFFICIALLY OPEN !**

Norwalk to Monroeville



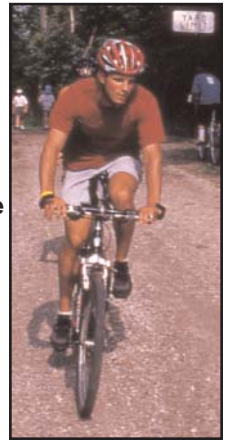
## HEALTH AND FITNESS NEWS *by Michele Skinn*

Imagine a pill that had no harmful side-effects. One that would tone up your heart and lungs, improve circulation, help you lose weight, strengthen your bones, improve your balance and mood, reduce stress, sharpen your mental faculties and help you to sleep better.

Further, suppose that this pill also had been shown to reduce your risk for many types of cancer. In addition, it helped provide stronger muscles, flexibility and balance making falls and injury less likely.

Would you take it? The answer, of course, is a resounding "Yes!" Regular exercise does all of the above at any age.

One of the most commonly cited excuses for not exercising is no time. Start slow – promise yourself "I will exercise at least three times a week for 20 minutes" and then do it! You can build from there. The Trail is a perfect place to begin, and this fall you can watch the trees go from green to gold! The trail is a safe place to walk or ride your bike and provides a perfect venue for a family outing – so get the kids or grandkids involved. Remember that you should first consult your family physician before beginning any exercise regimen. So don't wait another day! Get started improving your health today.



Approaching the trailhead at North West Street.

## CONTINUOUS TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

New trail signs have been placed both on and off the trail to alert bikers, walkers, and equestrians of road crossings and alert motorists of the trail crossings. Fold-down posts now block vehicular access at the trailheads. Horse crossing signs were donated by the Erie County Chapter of the Ohio Horsemen's Council. More historical railroad-era signs are in the works.

A crushed limestone surface has been applied and rolled near the new culvert just west of Norwalk as seen beneath biker Dustin Beal (above) as he leaves the "Yard Limits" on the day of the Grand Opening. More crushed limestone is planned for the rest of the trail.

## ON TO BELLEVUE...and wasting no time!



As Mallory maneuvers his backhoe through the jungle, one can see the future trail surface take shape.

Not long after the tents came down at the Grand Opening festivities, volunteer Mallory Clemons was back on the trail clearing thirty years of tree growth to expose the former railroad grade just west of Monroeville.

"The brush is really, really thick, but I'm making a lot of progress", he said at the open house while attending with his family.

Thanks to his help, Mallory can accomplish in a few hours what would usually take weeks with chainsaws and lots of manual labor. The trail is now clear from Rt. 547 to Williams Road (1.6 miles) and will open soon.

"It's going to be a great trail", he added. We couldn't agree more.



## STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

On September 3, 2005 nineteen Oberlin College students participated in a work day on the trail between Norwalk and Monroeville.

The freshmen students had all volunteered for a Community Service Day in advance of beginning classes in earnest. They trimmed brush and picked up stones, limbs, and railroad tie remnants along the 3.3-mile section of the North Coast Inland Trail.

The students hailed from Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Maryland, California, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Washington D.C.

FRTTI members Stan Bernhardt and Gordon Oney led the students in their work.



## BEHIND THE SCENES...faces on the trail



The trail surface is getting smoother all the time thanks to the hard work of Joe Wilhelm and his crew. Their backhoes and dozers have been improving the trail surface near Monroeville and are clearing debris from the ditches in preparation for the crushed limestone surface.

Trail maintenance never ends on the NCIT. Volunteers such as Stan Bernhardt and Fritz Kuenzel regularly patrol the trail on foot or by vehicle in search of fallen trees or other obstructions. Grass mowing is performed regularly by Rich Libbee, Joyce Dupont and Stan Bernhardt along the trail and at the trailheads. Trail worker vehicles can be identified by the magnetic signs (right) which were made by Bonnie Smith.



PRESERVING  
OUR  
RAILROAD  
HERITAGE

### NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS!

Toledo, Norwalk and Cleveland  
Rail Road.

PROPOSALS will be received at the Rail Road Office in Norwalk, Huron County, Ohio until Monday, the 23rd of June inst., at noon, for doing the Grubbing, Clearing, Grading and Masonry of Twenty-Nine Sections of the Toledo, Norwalk and Cleveland Rail Road, between Fremont and Norwalk, through Bellevue and Monroeville.....

By order of the President.

L.W. Ashley, Engineer  
Norwalk, June 2, 1851.

154 years later, we're still clearing brush!

"If God had designed that His intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of fifteen miles an hour, by steam, He would have clearly foretold it through His holy prophets. (Railroads are) a device of Satan to lead immortal souls down to Hell." -Lancaster Ohio School Board, 1831.



Ten 4-4-0 "American" type locomotives pose with the men of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad (former TN&C RR) at the Norwalk Roundhouse in the 1860's. Note the fountain! Fritz Kuenzel Collection.

## Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues Level:

\_\_\_ Individual \$ 10.00

\_\_\_ Family \$ 15.00

\_\_\_ Patron \$ 50.00

\_\_\_ Business \$ 100.00

\_\_\_ Donation \_\_\_\_\_

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 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Detach and Mail this section.  
Please make your check payable to:

Firelands Rails To Trails, Inc.  
44 East Main St.  
Norwalk, OH 44857

## The EXTRA BOARD ....The latest news and information

### FRTTI RECIEVES KODAK GRANT



\$1,000 Grant to be used  
for bridge materials at Seymour  
Creek crossing west of Monroeville.

### National Trail Conference

FRTTI President Gordon Oney received a  
scholarship to attend the National Trail  
Conference in Minneapolis this July  
where he gained extensive knowledge on  
constructing and maintaining rail trails.

### New Trustee

FRTTI has elected Fritz Kuenzel as  
Trustee. We are appreciative of his  
hard work and historical expertise.

### CONTACT US

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[bikedoc@accnorwalk.com](mailto:bikedoc@accnorwalk.com)  
or contact us online!  
[www.firelandsrailstotrails.org](http://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!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Work Days:

- Sept. 25: Brush removal at viaduct
- Oct. 2: Set posts and benches
- Oct. 16: KofC Breakfast, work tbd

### TRAIL NEWS

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