



TRAIL NEWS

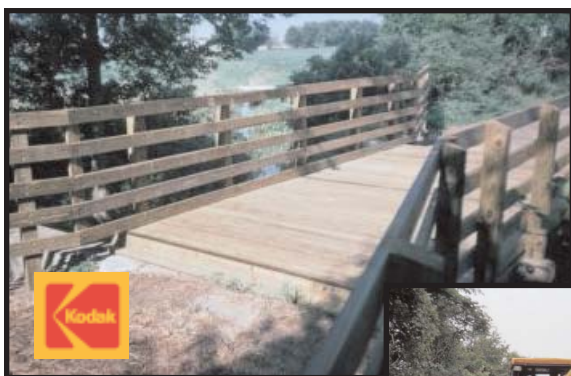
ISSUE #6

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

AUTUMN 2006

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

SEYMOUR CREEK BRIDGE COMPLETE! NEW PIECES OF TRAIL TO OPEN SOON!



FRRTI got some BIG help from volunteer Jim Wasiniak who cleared a path to the bridge site. The photo above shows the completed bridge.



Firelands Rails to Trails has completed another major project - the construction of a trail bridge over Seymour Creek, between Williams and Sand Hill Road - a major step as trail work progresses closer to Bellevue. The project was made in part possible by a grant from the Kodak Foundation, as well as ingenuity and extremely demanding labors of its volunteer members.

FRRTI is very proud of this accomplishment for several reasons. First, the project would have cost thousands of dollars more, but thanks to the structural design work of Stan Bernhardt, and quick thinking by Fritz Kuenzel, two dozen or so used extra long railroad switch ties were procured with a permit from a local railroad for use on the 24' long bridge structure. Second, about 25 hours of backhoe time were donated by Jim Wasiniak to clear trees and brush to create a half-mile access road to the site....continued on p. 3.

MIDWEST EXPRESS... A BIG SUCCESS!

Rails to Trails Conservancy's *Midwest Express* rolled through Northwestern Ohio and right across Northern Huron County on August 12-14. The ride created a lot of awareness and interest of the NCIT in several counties - especially Huron! Riders entered our NCIT at Monroeville and rolled into Norwalk. 150 riders made the trek, including FRRTI Trustees Joyce Dupont and Doug Jaqua. Joining them was Dr. Wayne Babcanec, Superintendent of Norwalk City Schools. Dr. Babcanec shares his comments on the ride: *My brother and I thoroughly enjoyed riding in the inaugural Midwest Express Bike Tour. Riding in the tour gave me the opportunity to get away for three days and experience some of the great scenery in Northwest Ohio. I enjoyed riding on the trails such as the Wabash Cannonball Trail in Lucas County and was particularly pleased that 150 riders experienced our local trail in Huron County. I felt that the tour was well organized with frequent water stops and well marked maps and directions. Each day our baggage was waiting for us when we arrived at our overnight destination. The amenities at our camping areas were good and made for a comfortable camping experience. We are looking forward to riding in the next Midwest Express Tour.*



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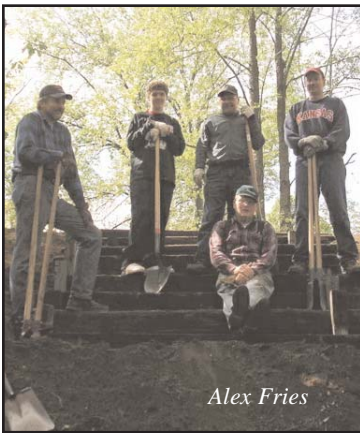
EQUINE OUTINGS

Horses and mules are becoming a more frequent sight on the NCIT. On a warm, windy evening in late spring, six equestrians rode from Monroeville to Norwalk and back. The riders included: Colleen Butler, Rita Butler, Joyce Dupont, Anne Gilcher, Tracy Sellers, and Shelby Timman. More equine outings are planned. Ample parking for horse trailers is available at North West Street in Norwalk and Peru Center Rd. in Monroeville.



Joyce Dupont

OVERLOOK PREPARATIONS



Alex Fries

Work is underway and preparations are being made for the scenic overlook at the Stone Viaduct. Several volunteers spent half a day installing railroad ties just east of the bridge to serve as steps and to help control erosion. Future plans include a walkway out to an overlook on the North East corner of the bridge so trail users will have the chance to see the stone arches of this architectural wonder.

HIGH TIDE AT THE VIADUCT!



Fritz Kuenzel

The trail withstood the June 2006 flooding without major damage. The 1853 stone viaduct is shown flooded on both sides. Normally the East Branch of the Huron River flows as a small stream through the right side arch only and is seen here at 7' deep! Further east on the trail the newly installed culvert held up well during the storms. - Joe Missler

NIGHT RIDERS

"Everything on our trail looks so different at night", explained one of the riders in the first of several night rides on the NCIT. Nine riders made the first organized night ride this June under a slight drizzle and temperatures in the 40's. Recent rides have seen new faces and warmer temperatures. Rides start at North West Street and head to Monroeville and back. Trains on the adjacent Wheeling line and nocturnal critters often add to the excitement. The next ride is Friday, October 13. Helmets and lights are required. No advance sign-up is required.



Colleen Bernhardt

NCIT BACKPACKING

FRTTI celebrated National Trails Day on Saturday, June 3 with a presentation by local backpacker Paul Hiszem. We were amazed as out of his backpack came a tent, sleeping bag and mat, bathroom necessities, clothes, cooking supplies and food. He shared stories about his many exciting trips as we made the 6.6 mile trek down the trail to Monroeville and back on a beautiful day. Paul was preparing for a week long pack trip to Isle Royale, above the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

The North Coast Inland Trail is a great place for day trips with a small pack and a great place to train with all your gear on board.

Happy Trails! - Joyce Dupont



Joyce Dupont

OPENING SOON!

"Just a few inches of snow and this piece is almost ready for cross country skis!", remarked volunteer Steve Siesel at a recent work day. The big news this fall will be the opening of this 1.6 mile stretch of new trail!

Joe Wilhelm and crew, along with many volunteers, are working to clear brush, improve drainage ditches, and grade the trail surface to open the piece from Rt. 547 to Williams Road. Soon work will push west to meet the new Seymour Creek Bridge.



Fritz Kuenzel

SEYMOUR CREEK BRIDGE PIECE TO OPEN SOON



continued from p. 1: In addition, about 300 hours of labor were contributed by at least twenty people for the bridge preparation and construction. The list of volunteers included Matt Bernhardt, Stan Bernhardt, Bill Dupont, Joyce Dupont, Alex Fries, Doug Jaqua, Fritz Kuenzel, Myles Kuenzel, Rich Libbee, Joe Mantey, Phil Mantey, Andrew Missler, Joe Missler, Bryan Oney, Gordon Oney, Kate Pierce, Sherry Pifher, Steve Seisel, Rob Smithson, Jim Wasiniak, and Lisa Wendt. These determined volunteers fought thick brush, swarms of bugs, oppressive heat; moved dozens of heavy ties, and drove thousands of screws and bolts.



"Someday we're actually going to enjoy this from our bikes", said Bryan Oney, after moving the thirty sixth or seventh railroad tie. For now, the bridge sits in a virtual jungle as volunteers and contractors work to clear brush and smooth the grade from the east and west. This piece of trail will open soon once brush removal and grading are complete.



The job was completed at a purchased materials cost of about \$2,000, as compared to an original materials estimate of \$4,000.

Firelands Rails to Trails was one of only 47 groups nationwide awarded the \$1,000 Grant from the Kodak American Greenways Awards Program in Arlington, Virginia, for their innovative local efforts to complete the North Coast Inland Trail. The Grants Review Committee consists of conservation experts from around the country. The committee selected grant recipients from a pool of nearly 300 qualified applicants.

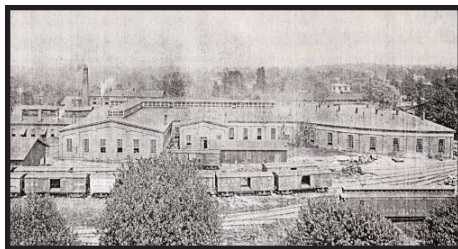
The Kodak American Greenways Awards, administered by The Conservation Fund, a recognized leader in working with local communities to expand the nation's network of linked open spaces, provides small grants of up to \$2,500 to non-profit organizations for such projects as recreational trails. The Kodak Awards provide seed money to spark creativity in conservation, outdoor recreation, and trail development.



How to build a bridge heavy enough for a locomotive, but perfect for for bikers, equestrians and pedestrians: (Top to bottom)

- 1) Old ties are removed and fresh ties are bolted to the steel beams.
- 2) Two layers of decking are attached to the ties.
- 3) Railings are screwed to the posts which were bolted to the notched ties. Other posts on the wing fences were set into the ground thanks to the help of Rich Libbee's tractor with power auger and a lot of manual digging by some dedicated volunteers.
- 4) Take a break once in a while to admire your work.

Photos by Joe Mantey



As plans were being fabricated for bike trails back in 1898, The Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway's Norwalk Shops were busy working on locomotives and cars in this massive shop complex on the near northeast side of Norwalk. This shop was later closed and torn down in favor of the more modern facility at Collinwood just east of Cleveland.

PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD (and bicycle) HERITAGE

THE BICYCLE CONVENTION.

A Committee Appointed to Act in the Matter of Path Construction.

The delegate convention of Huron County wheelmen met in the Grand Jury room this (Monday) morning with good attendance. Hon. L.C. Laylin was chosen chairman of the convention and Fred B. Cole, secretary.

After an exchange of views, by the delegates, on the subject of bicycle paths through the country districts, on motion of the chair appointed Mayor Van Dusen, of Norwalk, Mayor Simmons, of Monroeville, and Fred B. Cole, a committee to report to the convention the names of five gentlemen to represent the wheelmen of the county in the matter of path construction and to report upon the advisability of a permanent county organization.

After due deliberation the following names were presented and the report was adopted: Judge S.A. Wildman, Rev. Dr. W.A. Broadhurst, Hon. L.O. Simmons, E.P. Snyder, Leon Starr. The convention then adjourned.

August 29, 1898 Norwalk Reflector

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Dues Level:

___ New ___ Renewal

___ 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 BOARDThe latest news and information

KIOSK NEEDED!

With more and more activities on the trail - and more and more people getting involved - the need has never been greater for an informational kiosk at the North West Street Trail Head. We are hopeful that a civic minded group or company can provide materials and/or labor to build a kiosk similar to the ones pictured below.



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!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun. Oct. 1: 8:00am work day
work location tbd
Fri. Oct 13: 9:00pm Night Ride
N. West St. Norwalk
Sun. Oct 15: 8:00am KofC
Breakfast
9:00 Work tbd

TRAIL NEWS

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