



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #7

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

SPRING 2007

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

GRANT MONEY HEADED OUR WAY

\$140,000 TO BE USED BETWEEN MONROEVILLE AND BELLEVUE

2007 is shaping up to be an exciting year on some new pieces of trail!

Lorain County Metroparks, our managing partner, was awarded a Clean Ohio Grant of \$140,000 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to be used specifically between Rt. 99 in Monroeville and Bellevue.

With all this success comes increased responsibility! The Clean Ohio Trails Grant comes with the condition that \$60,000 in matching funds be raised. Our trail Owners and the North Coast Regional Council of Park Districts have committed to \$30,000 of that match. We, FRTTI, are committed to raising the remaining \$30,000 in dollars and in-kind contributions (allowable labor and equipment donations). Please be sure to renew your memberships and contribute financially whenever possible to help FRTTI meet this important commitment and complete your trail to Bellevue!

Our 2007 Goals are as follows:

- 1) Complete as many miles of trail possible from Monroeville to Bellevue.
- 2) Continued operation and maintenance between Norwalk & Monroeville.
- 3) Make plans to “close the gap” between Peru Center Road and Route 99 by crossing the Huron River and the active W&LE Railway in 2008-09.
- 4) Continue brush clearing on the property owned east of Norwalk.



This view looks west near Sand Hill Road where work will soon begin to really push the trail west from Monroeville. Pictured is volunteer “trail blazer” Jim Wasiniak clearing the way.

ANOTHER EXCITING BRIDGE PROJECT

MEGGISON CREEK BRIDGE PROJECT TO BE TACKLED THIS SPRING



Similar to the recently completed Seymour Creek Bridge, only a little higher, Meggison Creek's Bridge will soon link east and west.

One of the big projects planned for the spring of 2007 is the rebuilding of the Meggison Creek Bridge located just east of Young Road.

Last summer, FRTTI Volunteers completed a similar bridge at Seymour Creek, just west of Williams.

The Meggison Creek Bridge project will consist of old tie removal, bolting new ties to the steel beams, constructing railings, and laying a new deck. Stay tuned to work day email announcements for the dates and details.



Veteran Volunteers (pictured here at Seymour Creek) have a good grasp of bridge reconstruction, but we would love to see some new faces as well!

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NEW SIGNS... ON THE TRAIL AND ON THE ROAD!



Motorists on US20 heading east from Monroeville can't help but notice the big NCIT sign as they pass below the rail trail.

Inspired by railroad practices of placing signs on bridges proclaiming "Look at us!", Trustee Joe Mantey designed signs for our many trailheads and a big sign for the trail overpass at US20 heading east from Monroeville.

"The big NCIT sign at US20 is seen by thousands of people each day - many of whom don't realize the project is alive and well", Joe said. "That's a lot of free advertising". Other trails nationwide, like the Montour Trail in Pennsylvania, also have their trail names on bridges.

In addition, smaller signs have been placed at trailheads to let trail users know who is behind the trail project and how to get involved. Inquiries, membership, and involvement have spiked in the weeks following the installation. At the February 24th Business Expo in Norwalk, visitors to the FRTTI booth from points west (Bellevue, Clyde, and Fremont) remarked, "Hey! We just saw your trail sign overhead on our way in!"

The signs were fabricated by Bulldog Graphics. Next on the "wish list" is an informational kiosk at the trailheads in both Norwalk and Monroeville. See page 4.



At Peru Center Road in Monroeville, skiers glide past this sign that lets trail users know who we are and how to get involved.

WORK DAYS BEGIN EAST OF NORWALK



Kate Mantey and Stan Bernhardt inspect the stone culvert near Medusa Road last November.

While most work days have been spent between Norwalk and Monroeville the past few years, brush clearing has begun for the first time on the property owned east of Norwalk.

Back in November, several FRTTI Members hiked the existing foot path and assessed conditions of this future piece of recreational trail.

Much overgrowth will have to be cut back but with more and more volunteers the work should progress steadily over a series of work days.



The Collins community will soon be home to a new piece of trail.

SIMPLIFIED SCHEDULE for 2007

WORK DAYS...

are now held the FIRST SATURDAY and THIRD SUNDAY of each month from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. Work day confirmations are sent out via email to subscribing members a few days before with the tasks at hand and specific meeting places listed. No tools? No problem! Simply show up and lend a hand. Work days range from brush clearing to grass trimming to bridge building. You'll feel a sense of pride and meet some new friends.



Solitude.

MONTHLY MEETINGS...

are open to all FRTTI Members and anyone interested in rails to trails. Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Highway Patrol Post on South Norwalk Road. You and your ideas are welcome!



Alex Fries captured these icicles at the Stone Viaduct west of Norwalk. Some measured more than 20' long!

*There are those who walk through life looking to be entertained...
and their satisfaction fades like the stars at dawn...
And there are those who continue to carve their own trail...
and their rewards are enjoyed by generations that follow.*

- FRTTI Trail Volunteer turned wise man

SKIERS AND SNOWSHOERS MAKE THEIR MARKS



The Blizzard of 2007 created ideal conditions for a group of thirteen cross-country skiers and showshoers on Sunday, February 18. After a delicious breakfast at the Monroeville K of C, these volunteers decided to take a break from the normal work day to lace up and head east through the fresh snow. Some drifts measured four feet deep!

More trail outings such as night bike rides and nature walks will be scheduled this spring.



Photo by Joyce Dupont

ANNUAL MEETING



Meet our new Trustees...

Steve Siesel is an avid cyclist, skier, kayaker, and outdoorsman. He and his wife Jean live in Holiday Lakes and enjoy sharing in these activities. Steve is a conductor for Norfolk Southern Railroad.

Lisa Wendt has lived south of Monroeville with her husband Tim for nearly 23 years and enjoys nature, birding, camping, hiking, and cross-country skiing. Lisa got involved with FRTTI when she and her friend Sherry Pifer starting using the trails and both became volunteers. "The dedicated and talented trail volunteers got me hooked on this project", Wendt said. "I found I really liked blazing the trails for others!"

The Annual Meeting of FRTTI was held February 1 at Berry's Restaurant in Norwalk. Molly Doss of Monroeville was the guest speaker.

"When I went to the trail ground breaking ceremony several years ago and saw Joe Missler cut some brush on the edge of *miles* of trees, I thought, Wow, you have a long way to go! But now I see what progress really is", explained Molly.

"I wanted to see one of my sons ride the trail to Norwalk and now he can". Molly went on to praise the efforts of the volunteers who kept at it and continue to expand the trail.

2007 BOARD

Stan Bernhardt, Vice Pres.
Paul Douglas, Trustee
Joyce Dupont, Trustee
Doug Jaqua, Treasurer
Fritz Kuenzel, Trustee
Joe Mantey, Trustee
Joe Missler, Secretary
Gordon Oney, President
Steve Siesel, Trustee
Lisa Wendt, Trustee

PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD HERITAGE

SCHOOL PIC-NIC - The Public Schools will have their Annual Pic-Nic on Friday, the 25th inst., at Prairie Switch beyond Monroeville. - The Cleveland & Toledo Railroad Company have generously offered to carry the scholars to and from the grove free of charge, and citizens for a *dime*. The public are invited to attend. *May 25, 1860*

"Prairie Switch" was a spot in the timetable that consisted of a siding near an oak grove. Today the siding is long gone and the oaks are a private campground.

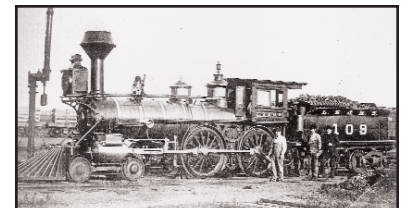
THE PIC NIC - The annual Union School Pic Nic came off on Friday last, according to announcement. Including scholars, teachers, parents and "outsiders" there was a company of from 1,000 to 1,200. The C. & T. Railroad Co., with its usual generosity on such occasions, furnished the pupils and teachers with free transportation, to the place of meeting and back, and others at 20 cents each. No labor was spared on the part of the teachers of the school and employees of the Road to make the excursion pleasant and safe for the army of "little ones" who went on the excursion. Though the weather was exceedingly warm, the day was very pleasantly spent. *May 26, 1863 Reflector*

Did you ever notice that even after a big rain, there are very few puddles on the trail? The reason for the good drainage can be traced to this article from Dec. 20, 1872 Norwalk Reflector. Loads of fresh ballast were brought in shortly after the LS&MS takeover of the former Cleveland and Toledo Railroad line...

THE LAKE SHORE ROAD -- The Toledo Commercial has the following: "For the purpose of obtaining ballasting, the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railroad Company have recently laid a track from their main line, at a point three miles east of Port Clinton, northwardly to the sand ridge, connecting Catawba Island and the Peninsula. The company have purchased the land (or rather sand) the whole length of the ridge, and erected a neat and substantial boarding house for their workers. They are now taking out and distributing along the line from sixty to eighty car loads of sand and gravel per day. The surface of the ridge, to the depth of two or three feet, consists of fine sand; below this is coarse gravel of the best quality for ballasting purposes.

The workman have exhumed several human skeletons. From the position in which they were found, and from the shape of the skull, they are without doubt the remains of Indians. They were found lying upon the right side, with faces to the east. Dentists in their day would have found but little to do if all had as perfect teeth as the specimens disinterred." *-Articles from Fritz Kuenzel*

Locomotives like this 4-4-0 "American" No. 109 (built in 1869) would have been the typical steam power on the LS&MS line through Norwalk in the 1870's. We also know the cylinder dimensions and driver height, but could anyone identify these men? What would they think of our Rail-Trail?



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 _____

TN7

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

BUILD A KIOSK!

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 Mar 18: 8:00a KofC Breakfast
Monroeville; 9:00a Work Day
Thu Apr 5: 7:00p Board Meeting
Hwy Patrol Post, Norwalk
Sat Apr 7: 8:00a Work Day
Sun Apr 15: 8:00a KofC Breakfast
Monroeville; 9:00a Work Day
Work day specifics sent via email.

TRAIL NEWS

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