



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #24

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

FALL 2017

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

BLAZE IT BLUE!

Buckeye Trail routed via NCIT means statewide trail connections!

The time has finally come to reroute the Buckeye Trail (BT) from its current on-road route in southern Huron County to the North Coast Inland Trail!

Buckeye Trail Council (BTC) area managers Bob and Ruth Brown, (right and center), have been working with Firelands Rails to Trails for the last few years to make this dream a reality. Blue Buckeye Trail blazes will be placed on the trail once the Wakeman and Bellevue ODOT connections are complete (see below).

"This is a big deal", said BTC President Andrew Bashaw. "The BT is a 1,440 mile hiking trail which circles through Ohio connecting small towns with many state and national parks and forests. It sees thousands of local and through hikers each day and brings tourism dollars to each community on the route."

Bob and Ruth and members of the BTC escorted Mie Ling Leber (left in picture) as well as hiker Tom Helbig earlier this summer over the proposed NCIT routing. The 2"x6" blue blazes will appear on posts in the next few months and BTC's maps will be updated. Be sure to visit and join www.buckeyetrail.org



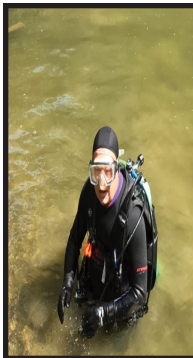
ONE IF BY TRAIL, TWO IF BY STREAM!

At the 1871 stone double arch bridge just west of Norwalk, the southeast headwall has crumbled over the past ten years due to erosion and river currents.

The Army Corps of Engineers recommended we bring in noted potomologist Dave Derrick from Vicksburg, MS to study the situation. Dave made many recommendations and gave us field based notes before work could begin.

In order to determine if the foundation was stable, Jim Wilson of Bay Area Divers graciously volunteered his time and diving expertise to examine the headwall footers.

The good news is that the footers are all well intact and most of the stones are in the water. We will put this project out for bid in early 2018. Many thanks to Dave and Jim !



FILLING IN THE GAPS!

The gaps in the NCIT continue to grow closer to completion on three fronts:

- The city of Norwalk widened some existing sidewalks on the near west side of town near Baker Street. Signage through town is being upgraded.

- Thanks to an ODOT grant, Bellevue is wrapping up their dedicated through-town bike-way which brings the NCIT into town from the west along US20. It then uses a road route south past the railroad museum and east toward the rec center and Prairie Rd.

- The Wakeman US20 bike-way is nearing completion and will not only link Kipton to Wakeman but will provide a local bike and pedestrian path. The connector to the Chapin Bridge will begin soon on the west side of SR 60 from Red Cap Park.

- We hope to begin work between Laylin and Townsend in early 2018.



Norwalk



Bellevue



Wakeman

WWW.FRTTI.ORG or visit us on facebook!

NEW OWNERSHIP !

We are pleased to announce that Firelands Rails to Trails is now a 28% owner in the NCIT on most trail parcels in Huron County. Until now, we were simply the designated trail advocacy group as spelled out in the deed covenants.

Some background: In 1997, the Northwestern Ohio Rails to Trails Association (NORTA) purchased the trail parcels from Penn Central. NORTA is a non-profit like us who builds and maintains the Wabash Cannonball Trail west of Toledo. Soon after their purchase, NORTA deeded the trail to five park districts from Huron and surrounding counties, all of whom were interested for reasons of connectivity to their existing trails and to see the completion of the NCIT.

In 2002, the Huron County Park District opted out of the purchase in strict accordance with the deed, citing their inability to attain funding via a levy or other means. Their 28% ownership reverted to NORTA as per the deed.

Three years ago, NORTA approached us about transferring their 28% ownership to FRTTI and this was completed in August of 2017 per the guidelines of the Federal Highway Administration (the original funds provider to NORTA).

The current ownership on the bulk of the trail parcels is as follows: (The Ohio Revised Code permits park districts to operate outside of their counties where appropriate.)

Lorain County Metroparks 39%

Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc. 28%

Toledo Metroparks 20%

Erie Metroparks 7%

Sandusky County Park District 4%

Wood County Park District 2%

We appreciate NORTA's foresight, efforts and generosity, and look forward to working with our fellow co-owners.

MIXED FREIGHT

We are excited to have a **new Treasurer, Sonya Williams!** Sonya is a controller with a local concrete company and she brings a wealth of experience and knowledge!... **Kiosks** across the trail have been updated with new maps... Eagle Scout candidate **Davis Hedrick of Troop 208** has installed three new benches on the trail... **Model T enthusiasts** gathered at the depot (lower left) led by **Tim Morsher**... Our **Mowing Crews** of volunteers did a fantastic job on the trail this summer keeping its golf-course green like appearance. A well oiled system!... **Jim Wasiniak** assisted with mortar joint repair at the **Wakeman Bridge** with more work to be done. Cross country riders checked out the work (lower center)... The **transcontinental riders** continued to pour through Huron County from all over the US and Europe, as attested by these two young ladies from Germany (lower right)... **The Depot was open** many Saturdays and Sundays this summer and fall now that the former baggage room has been restored by volunteers. We had many trail users stop in. We plan to have it open on spring Saturdays from 10am to 2pm at a minimum.... **Yellow signs** have been placed at each road crossing with a contact number (419-465-3367) for **contractor access, group events and adverse conditions**. (Dial 911 for emergencies!). We aim to work with our utility neighbors and partners with safety as the priority for all involved. The phone rolls to emails of several board members... The **Volunteer Trail Patrol** was present in great numbers on the trail this summer and typically rode 250-300 miles per month.... **Bill Ommert** passed away in August. Bill and Carol Ommert were the ones who sold a large portion of their farm and former railroad property to our park district owners through a Clean Ohio Grant thus creating **Historic Ommert Farm**.



LIFE MEMBERSHIP !

You can now become a Life Member of Firelands Rails to Trails!

For a one-time \$1,000 membership you can become a Life Member and your name will appear on a plaque at the Depot. We will also recognize our new Life Members at the Annual Meeting.

NORTA recently started this program with fantastic success!

Watch for our year end recap letter and membership / donation mailing in December. Our new membership form will feature this membership level option. Thanks in advance for your continued support and we look forward to even more support from you now that we are an actual owner of the trail!

CONTACT US

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Visit www.frtti.org
- 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!

Board Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Depot at Donald E. Morrow Park, 69 S. Ridge Rd. (Rt 99), Monroeville.

Work Days are generally held the 1st Saturday and 3rd Sunday 8am-12pm. Watch for email and simply show up!



Member Kenny Tkach has crafted these cool, colorful and useful hammers from railroad spikes! On sale at the depot and the bike shop now for \$20 each.

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL