



20 Years! 1999-2019

TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #27

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

SPRING 2019

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD 150TH ANNIVERSARY

With your help, we can drive a Golden Spike east of Norwalk soon!

150 years ago this month marks the driving of the Golden Spike at Promontory, Utah, thus completing the Original Transcontinental Railroad. How ironic that here in Huron County, on the grade of the once great Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway, volunteers are pushing hard to complete the last link of the North Coast Inland Trail.

In the back pages of our minds, we all remember as youngsters in school or at the kitchen table studying the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. With the Irish working west from Omaha on the Union Pacific, and the Chinese working through the Sierras east of Sacramento on the Central Pacific, the rails stretched toward the grand yet obscure meeting place north of Ogden, Utah.

But for one moment, did anyone ever ponder just how the trains got from New York to Chicago, and on to Omaha? Biking through the big cut just west of Medusa Road, some 233 railroad miles from Buffalo, with just the sounds of a yellow warbler and some spring peepers, one wonders.

This winter, Firelands Rails to Trails volunteers began clearing trees and brush east from Townsend Avenue toward Laylin Road. Paul Miller Construction was hired to install stone as future trail base at Laylin Road. Edwards Tree Service of Amherst was hired and subsequently made a generous donation to FRTTI to clear trees and to create the path for this new piece of trail. In addition, D&H Grinding of North Fairfield finished clearing trees just east of Townsend Avenue, where the trail will link up with the marked Norwalk Street network.

"This is an exciting phase of trail development", said FRTTI President Josh Wyrick. "We are excited to finally link Collins and Norwalk. The trail scenery west of Collins is some of the best on the entire NCIT and this key piece will form a connection to Uptown Norwalk from the east."

Our beloved Norwalk Branch of the New York Central was originally completed as the Toledo, Norwalk & Cleveland Railroad in 1853 and soon became the Cleveland and Toledo Railroad until February of 1869 when it was absorbed by the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway.

On May 10 of that year at 12:47 pm, the telegrapher at Promontory, Utah transmitted "Done! Done! Done!"

Transcontinental mail, freight, and passengers, roared through Huron County bound for Chicago on the LS&MS, on the route of what is now the North Coast Inland Trail, before heading to Omaha, Ogden and Sacramento. No bike trail in the country can claim to be any more "Transcontinental" than ours - as attested by our countless trail visitors from near and far who choose this ideal transcontinental route. **The time has come to get this "Done!". Can we count on you?**



Looking like a trail just west of Laylin Road! You may peek from the road but do not enter for now. The trail will be constructed on an easement owned by FRTTI and the trail consortium. Please respect private property.



The old grade - and route of the LS&MS Fast Mail trains of 1869 - becomes visible east of Townsend Avenue. This will be a beautiful stretch of trail built on an often overlooked part of railroad history.



THE PUSH IS ON! SEE OTHER SIDE...



NCIT: Huron County's Transcontinental Trail ! www.frtti.org

TRAIL MEMBERS: THIS COULD BE YOU!

Yes, that could be you, handing your fellow trail members a cold Gatorade on the tailgate of a pickup truck on the east side of Norwalk. We have the path cleared - time to send in the big equipment to grade it.

We're announcing "The Big Push" to get this last section of trail open soon - to finally link Norwalk and Collins and to complete the NCIT across Huron County. With work soon underway between Elmore and Genoa, as well as in Lorain, the NCIT is nearing completion on all fronts.

We cannot thank our members and donors for what they do at the end of the year when memberships renew. We would not be able to maintain the trail as well as we do. We've been at this twenty years. Let's get it done!

Will you please consider a special spring donation to help us close the gap, drive the spike, and continue to maintain this beautiful trail?



THE BIG PUSH.

Spring Fundraising Drive - help us drive the last spike soon!

YES! I'd like to help Firelands Rails to Trails close the last gap east of Norwalk soon - AND - help them continue to maintain the NCIT to the highest standards with regular mowing and fresh trail stone resurfacing.

<input type="checkbox"/> \$50
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> \$250
<input type="checkbox"/> \$500
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000
<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Other
<small>Please make checks payable to Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc.</small>

Name/Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

FRTTI is a 501(c)3 is an all-volunteer non-profit organization.
Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

***Please clip this section
and mail to FRTTI
before June 20th
(The last day of Spring!)***
Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc.
44 E Main St.
Norwalk OH 44857

If you are currently a FRTTI Member, dues are not due until December. This is a spring fundraiser. New members may find a membership form on our website. We thank all of you for your support!

THE FAST MAIL TRAIN... *News from the trail*



Volunteers worked on a misty Saturday weeding and mulching the depot grounds as new Trustees Mike Weisenberger and Dave Pifer (left) power washed and scraped the west end of the depot in preparation for paint touch-up. Look for depot open hours to be posted soon on our website calendar and Facebook page....

Group event? Be sure to let us know and we will issue a Group Event Use Permit so everyone is in the loop and the trail is ready to go for your event....

A big thanks to former FRTT President Lance Franke for his leadership and direction. Lance will stay active on the board on special projects and fundraising. Josh Wyrick is now the new FRTTI President. Josh brings us much forward thinking and energy. Welcome, Josh!... Thanks to Pam Morrow and Fritz Kuenzel for all their work as board members. They both remain active with our group.

Be sure to check out our totally awesome trail video now on our website. A big thanks to the Norwalk Economic Development Council and Eric Browne.

Volunteers worked tirelessly over the winter clearing dead trees and our mowing crews are ready to go.... Our Volunteer Trail Patrol is out in force - be sure to say hello to these friendly volunteers who look out for your safety and well being!

Best communities, Best scenery, Best route! NCIT: The Real Transcontinental.