

Pumpkinvine Trail Talk

Volume 20 No. 2

August 2011

Pumpkinvine Nature Trail ribbon cutting will be Sept. 20, 2011



The bridge over Mather Ditch east of the Dairy Queen is the longest bridge between Middlebury and Shippshewana. There are three bridges in the six miles.

The official opening and ribbon cutting for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail between Middlebury and Shippshewana will be held Tuesday, September 20 at 1: 30 p.m. at the intersection of the trail and County Road 900 W. just north of County Road 250 N. Parking is available at Lifegate Church at the corner of 250 N and 900 W.

Officials from the Town of Shippshewana, Middlebury, Elkhart County Parks, Friends of the

Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., and the Indiana Department of Transportation, will participate in the ribbon cutting. Anyone interested in the trail is invited to attend.

The construction of this six-mile section of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, which nearly doubles the current developed portions of the trail, was a coordinated effort of Elkhart County Parks and the Town of Shippshewana. The engineering-consulting firm was DLZ Indiana, LLC, and the contractor was Walsh & Kelly, Inc. Funding came from Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds, with the local match coming from the Town of Shippshewana, Elkhart County Parks, and the value of the land donated by the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.

The Middlebury-Shippshewana portion of the trail has a small gap from York Street and State Road 13 to east of the Dairy Queen in Middlebury that will hopefully be finished in 2012 or 2013. Other sections scheduled for completion in 2012 include the 1.2-miles from Wayne St. to US 20 and a 1.2-mile section between County Road 37 and County Road 35.

When all phases are completed, the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail will connect Goshen, Middlebury and Shippshewana with a linear park 17 miles long. In Goshen, it will also connect to the eight-mile long MapleHeart Trail to Elkhart.

Elkhart County Parks receives grant

In July 2011, Elkhart County Parks received a \$150,000 Recreational Trails Program grant from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to complete the unfinished portion of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail between County Road 37 and County Road 35. Half of the grant is the responsibility of Elkhart County Parks. If all goes smoothly, the project could be completed in spring 2012.

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www.facebook.com/Pumpkinvine



Follow our blog,
Along the trail:
<http://fopvnt.blogspot.com/>

Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. are cyclists, hikers, and naturalists who are working with area park departments to create a linear park and greenway on the former Pumpkinvine corridor between Goshen, Middlebury and Shipshewana, Indiana.

Learn more about the Pumpkinvine and Rails Trails issues, or see back issues of our newsletter at: www.pumpkinvine.org

Newsletter layout: Sties Design Agency, LLC

From the president Frequently Asked Questions



On rides up the Pumpkinvine, by email and on Facebook, people ask me questions about the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Here are two I've heard most often in the recent past.

Q. Are there plans to pave the limestone section of the trail from State Road 4 to County Road 28?

This question comes mostly from cyclists. They'd like the smoother, less dusty surface of asphalt.

First, it is important to note that many walkers and joggers prefer the crushed limestone to asphalt because it isn't as hard on the knees.

Second, this 1.75 mile section of the trail is owned and managed by the Goshen Park and Recreation Department. Like all Goshen city departments, money is scarce for capital expenditures right now. Paving that section of the trail isn't a priority because it is working well for joggers, walkers and most cyclists and because funds are needed for other parts of the park system. It was paved with crushed limestone in 1999 because that surface is less expensive initially than asphalt, and at the time funds for trails were very limited.

Third, keep in mind that biggest problem we trail advocates had in 1999 was opposition to the whole project. That opposition made the county commissioners reluctant to support funding for the trail in the county. We needed a demonstration section to showcase the potential of a linear park to the community, even if it were not an asphalt trail. So although a limestone surface is not ideal for cyclists, it served that demo function well. The community found out that a linear park is not a magnet for perverts and muggers, but rather a great place to take the family for recreation, and that lesson translated into the political support necessary to fund the trail outside the city limits.

Personally, I'd favor paving it, but I'm extremely grateful that the Goshen Park Department built it when limited funds could do the job, rather than waiting till they had more funds for asphalt.

Q. Why do the Friends of the Pumpkinvine need financial support now that the trail is nearly complete?

The role of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., is changing from being an advocate for the trail, which included expenses for legal services, fencing and insurance, to supporting the agencies that manage and maintain the trail financially.

The budgets of these local agencies are being cut. The current economic slump, with falling home prices, means lower assessments on property and hence lower tax revenue for the city and county. And while it is true that maintenance on a linear park like the Pumpkinvine is relatively inexpensive, these agencies need funds for repairs, amenities and personnel to work on the trail.

Membership dues also build a reserve that can be used as the local match for federal and state funds when the value of the land isn't enough for that match. And a reserve is important for the day when we will be able to purchase more land for the trail.

Let me know if my answers aren't clear, and don't hesitate to ask more.

—John D. Yoder



Lois Longenecker help rider put on his wrist band, while Willard Roth looks on.

The Importance of the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

By Danny Graber, Bike Ride Chair



Volunteers Katie Yoder and Gordon and Phyllis Hostetler serve riders at the Shipshewana SAG.

Twelve Pumpkinvine Bike Rides have come and gone. It's a lot of planning and intense labor to get it done. Yet, not to do it would rob a lot of people -- specifically, up to a thousand riders and over a hundred volunteers each year -- of the opportunity to help build the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

Over the last five years the ride has yielded roughly \$50,000 for trail development for the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. This income is critical to paying for the ongoing expenses the Friends of the Pumpkinvine incur, including publicizing the trail, fencing, insurance, legal expenses, and helping the managing agencies with trail amenities. It also builds a reserve that can be used as the local match needed for construction funds and assist with maintenance

This year 916 riders participated -- our second highest total. Next year the ride will highlight a new, six-mile section of the trail between Middlebury and Shipshewana that will hopefully increase public awareness and support for finishing this trail.

Each year we ask people to comment on the quality of the ride. Several things always stand out:

- Our volunteers are the greatest in the world.
- Our routes are scenic and well marked.
- Our SAGs are among the best.
- Our riders have the best enthusiasm, spirit, and collective gregarious personalities we could ever ask for.
- Building the trail is an important attribute to our community.

To be sure, the feedback includes things we didn't do right. We take those seriously. This year we made a lot of changes in order to attract more riders, while continuing our tradition of great service. Be sure to return in 2012. You will have a new experience and see new trail.

Put this date on your calendar

13th Anniversary
Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

JUNE
16
2012

(The third Saturday in June)

The ride is so beautiful. I did the Twin Lakes route. It was nicely directed with arrows. I didn't need a map.
—Joanne Scara, Batavia, Ill.

The food was great. I liked the variety. There were more hills than I remembered.
—Mark Clark, Elkhart

The roads were beautiful. I saw elk, deer and lamas along the way.
—Sue Altendorf, Fort Wayne, Ind.



The SAGs were very nice. We liked the officers at the busy intersections.
—Colleen and Dennis Martin, Battle Creek, Mich.



I did the Bonneville route, and I like it when you change the routes from year to year.
—Patricia Oakley, Goshen, Ind.



BIKE RIDE PHOTOS ON THE WEB

You can view bike ride photos at the following link:
<http://2011pvBikeRide.shutterstock.com/>

There is also a link on the bike ride home page: http://pumpkinvine.org/PBR_html/annual_PBR.html

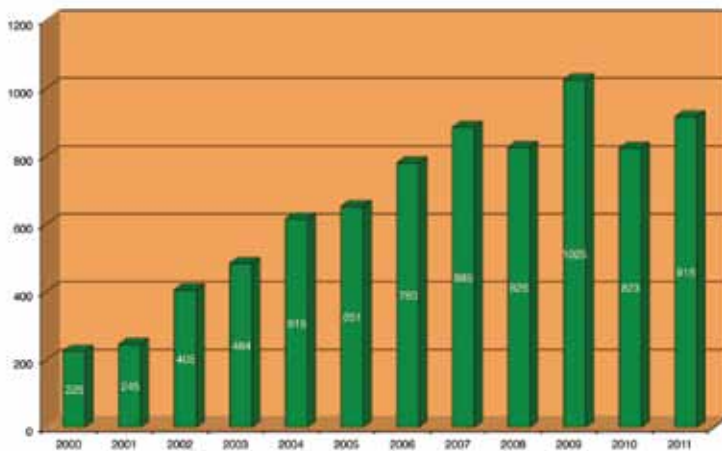
Pumpkinvine dinner ride, June 17, 2011



Over 50 riders enjoyed the Friday dinner ride and thresher's dinner at an Amish home.



Ride statistics



Where riders came from	No. of riders
Goshen/Elkhart/Middlebury/ Bristol/Millersburg/Bremen/ Shipshewana/Lagrange/ Nappanee/New Paris/Wakarusa	347
Warsaw south to Indianapolis	70
Kalamazoo/Battle Creek/Grand Rapids	130
Mishawaka/South Bend/ Walkerton/New Carlisle/Niles/ Granger/Edwardsburg	111
Fort Wayne and region	129
Chicago and area	44
West of South Bend to Illinois	37
Arizona	3
Florida	2
Iowa	5
Kentucky	2
Ohio	28
Missouri	1
Pennsylvania	1
Wisconsin	1
Georgia	1
Wyoming	1
California	1
Oregon	1
Other	1
Total	916

BIKE RIDE VOLUNTEERS

Ride coordinator

Danny Graber

Bike Ride Committee

Bob Carrico
Gary Chapman
Georgia Gingerich
Mark Gingerich
Danny Graber
Bob Hess
Devon Hoffman
John Nafziger
Karen Sommers
Cosette Torrance
John Yoder

Goshen logistics

Mike Bontreger
Bob Carrico
Bob McCoige
Rhonda Yoder

Goshen registration

Janice Carrico, Lead
Lois Longenecker
Vawn Recla
Willard Roth
Loren Stauffer
Miriam Stauffer
June Yoder

Goshen SAG

Larry Neff, Lead
Susie Neff, Lead
Kathryn Aschliman
Robyn Buenger
Lois Dyck
Ruth Gunden
Joy Hite
Elizabeth Jacobs
Donna Kooy
Marty Kooy
Dierra Lehman
Merritt Lehman
Daniel Neff
Mary Spilman
Mic Stouder

Randy Stouder
Fern Yoder
Gretchen Yoder
Goshen parking
Bob Carrico
Dwight Fish
John King
Al Longenecker
Rod Recla

Shipshewana logistics

Gary Chapman
Georgia Gingerich

Shipshewana registration

Cosette Torrance, Lead
JoDee Hooley
Beth Thornburg
Keith Gassman
Carol Miller

Shipshewana SAG

Jeanie Martin, Lead
Marlene Miller, Lead
Joe Bean
Mary Ann Bean
Bob Hatch
Brenda Hess
Gordon Hostetler
Phyllis Hostetler
Gail Houlihan
Tom Houlihan
Greg Martin
Tom McArthur
Chet Peachey
Ruth Ann Peachey
Cosette Torrance
Kathy Yeckley
Rich Yeckley
Katie Yoder

Shipshewana parking

Jim Smith
Joy Kauffman-King
Titus King

Middlebury SAG

Cathy Miller, Lead
Mike Miller, Lead
Jim Cameron
Mary Cripe
Jim Fisher
Marg Fisher
Megan Graves
Sheryl Graves
Craig Kirkwood
Dena Martin
Sherry Mast
Justine Pletcher
Sherry Smith
Marlene Springer
Ted Springer
Barb Stahly
Becky Yoder
Byron Yoder
Janette Yoder

Twin Lakes SAG

Elma Chapman, Lead

Food coordinator

Bob Hess

Friday evening dinner ride

John Yoder, Lead
Jim Bare
Lois Bare
Cal Graber
Lois Hartzler
Roy Hartzler
Chet Peachey
Ruth Ann Peachey
June Yoder

Roving SAGs

Kerm Gerber
Stan Gingerich
Wilmer Hollinger
Paul Meyer Reimer

Traffic detail

Elvie Bontrager

Dale Eash
Tom Kreiser
Steve Pletcher
Darrel Sommers
Ed Weske

Route information detail

Mike Bontreger
Chris Congdon
Jim Smith
Gail Weaver

Volunteer coordinator

Karen Sommers

Maps

John Nafziger

Gps system

Devon Hoffman

Road markings

Bob Carrico
Gary Chapman
Danny Graber
Devon Hoffman
Merritt Lehman

Treasurer

Rhonda Yoder

Rider data base

Cosette Torrance

Photographers

Branden Beachy
Joe Guth
Ellen Stevens
John Yoder

Naturalist station

Krista Daniels
Andy Langdon

Abshire mechanic

Danny Jones

What's *not* to like about the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride?

By Harry Dyck

In the middle of the night following another one of those truly successful rides that the Pumpkinvine team has become famous for, I awoke, and the first clear thought to emerge in my foggy mind was: What is there not to like about the Annual Pumpkinvine Ride? That led me to list the positives that came easily to the fore.

1. The staff at the registration tables had me identified, banded, and T-shirted in less than five minutes.
2. The guards at the intersections – both volunteers and sheriffs - were alert to bicyclists' safety. Every one of them responded with encouraging words as I thanked them for their help.
3. The route cartographers had chosen some of the best roads available in Elkhart and LaGrange counties, allowing cyclists to enjoy the scenery that has made these counties tourist attractions.
4. The newly designed large and logical signs at departure gates, staffed with knowledgeable guides to ensure riders got to the route options they had chosen.
5. The SAGs – absolutely the best – providing riders first with sanitation stations prior to reaching the food tables, and then supplying the riders with all those good food and drink options, especially those foods noted for supplying energy and nutrients – all served by gloved staff equally concerned to keep riders healthy, rested and invigorated to hit the road to the ultimate finish line. These servers were efficient; they anticipated the riders' needs, they highlighted what foods were available, and they made us feel like they wanted us to enjoy both food and rest sufficient for the miles yet to be pedaled.
6. The route options in terms of starting points, distance, and preferred scenic and pastoral farms for which Elkhart and LaGrange counties are famous. I was struck by the multiple breeds of horses and cattle in the pastures, and the wild flowers and plants along the route. But the scene to treasure was the darling little Amish children en route, some offering cookies for sale, others volunteering free lemonade to the riders pedaling by. How I wished that I had stopped to engage these dear children in their overtures of local Samaritan service.



B. Harry Dyck on the 2001 Pumpkinvine Bike Ride



All SAGs had a place for riders to clean up before eating.



New patio seating area.



First installment of bike racks.

The DQ is ready for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail to open

Mike Landis, owner of the Middlebury Dairy Queen, isn't waiting for the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail to open officially to see if it will bring in new business. He already knows. His DQ is located at the west end of the Middlebury-to- Shipshewana section of the trail, and in July, two months before the official opening and even with an unsurfaced section of trail east of the DQ that ends in the woods, he saw people coming out of the woods.

"People started coming in to the counter and asking, 'How do I get on the Pumpkinvine Trail?'" he said. "One Saturday we had 35 bikes in the parking lot. Another group called and ordered 70 Dilly Bars for a kid's bike ride."

Wanting to accommodate the bikers, he installed an outdoor seating area for about 30 people and put bike racks in the parking lot. Yet to come are more bike racks and an air compressor to pump up tires and possibly cyclist-specific food and drink.

Third Maple City Walk will showcase Pumpkinvine fall colors

The third Maple City Walk will be held Saturday October 15, 2011. Again this year, the route will feature the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail as the core of its 13.1-mile course, which is equivalent to a half-marathon.

Registration begins at 7:15 a.m. outside the Mill Race Farmers Market, 212 W. Washington Street and walk the walk starts at 8 a.m. Parking is available in the city lots on 3rd



street. Cost is \$15 for preregistration and \$20 the day of the walk. Register on-line at http://www.cityonthego.org/maple_city_walk_2010.

"Fall is a magical time on the Pumpkinvine," said Julia Gautsche, chair of the planning committee. "Walkers have a great time walking and enjoy wonderful fall colors at the same time."

Every participant who completes the walk will receive a Maple City Walk medal and be entered into a drawing for a pair of walking shoes.

For more information and a map of the course:

- Visit the Maple City Walk's web site: <http://cityonthego.org>
- E-mail ljgautsche@hotmail.com
- Call Julia Gautsche: 574-596-1632.

Sponsors of the event are: Cripe Septic Cleaning Service, Inc., Downtown Goshen, Inc., Elkhart County Parks, Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., Goshen City Park and Recreation Department, Hawkins Water Tech, Kercher's Sunrise Orchards, Inc., Maple City Market, A. Kent Sifford, DC, Woldruff's Footwear & Apparel.



Friends win legal case; No appeal filed

On April 1, 2011, the Indiana Court of Appeals unanimously upheld the ruling of Judge Stephen Bower of Elkhart Superior Court No. 2, that the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. are the owners of a disputed section of the Pumpkinvine corridor between County Road 35 and County Road 37. No appeal to the decision was filed.

“Settling this case means that the Friends can now donate the disputed land to Elkhart County Parks with no cloud on its title,” said John Yoder, Friends president. “It also means that Elkhart County Parks can apply for state funds to complete the trail in that section. A portion of the trail is already finished west of County Road 37, but had to stop when it reached the disputed part of the corridor. (See box on page one. Elkhart County Parks received the grant.)

The legal arguments: a brief summary

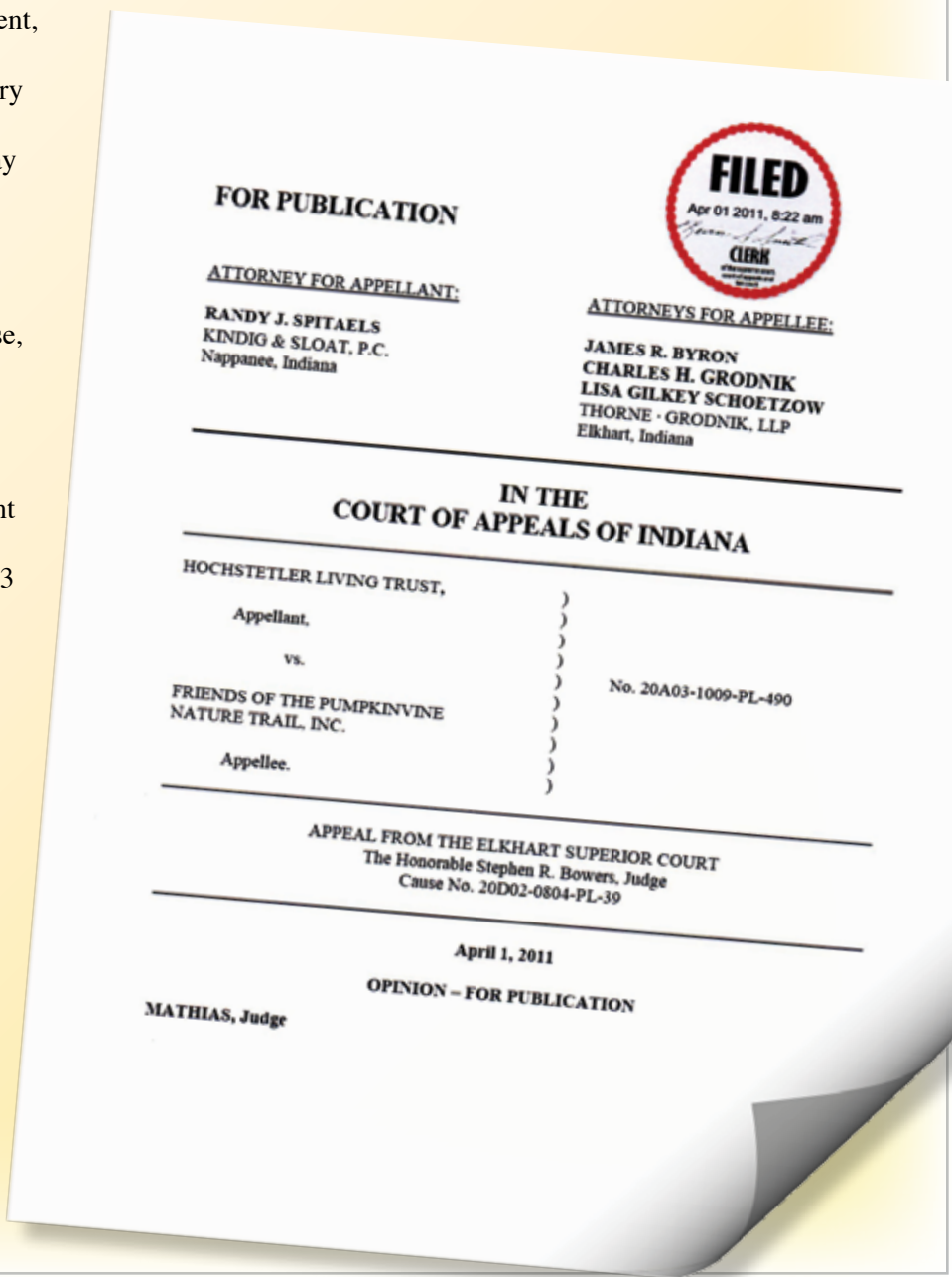
The disagreement on ownership resulted from the fact that the Declaratory Judgment in a class-action law suit against all Penn Central corridors in Indiana (including the Pumpkinvine) awarded this small section of the corridor to the adjacent landowner, even though the original conveyance to the railroad showed that the railroad owned the land and could sell it to the Friends.

However, the Declaratory Judgment, released in 2004, also said that “it is not within the scope of this Declaratory Judgment to resolve title disputes between individual persons which may occur as a result of conveyances of portions of the Settlement Corridors prior to the entry of this judgment or otherwise, and that such disputes, to the extent any have arisen or may arise, must be resolved by the individual parties concerned.”

The Appeals Court said the argument that the Declaratory Judgment gave the land to the adjacent landowner was invalid because the Friends purchased the corridor in 1993 and the Declaratory Judgment wasn't issued until 2004.

“We agree with the [Friends of the Pumpkinvine] Nature Trail that the current title dispute clearly falls within the scope of this exclusionary clause,” the Appeals Court said.

Since, the Declaratory Judgment didn't control who owns the land, ownership is determined by the original deed to the railroad and its successors, which ultimately became the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. The Friends argued that the deed conveyed fee simple title to the railroad and then to the Friends. Two courts have now agreed.



Thank you

We would like to thank these local businesses that supported the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.



PLATINUM LEVEL

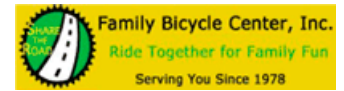


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You may become a supporting member of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail or renew your membership by completing the form below. Your tax-deductible donation will be used to complete the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and goes toward paying the day-to-day expenses of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. No board members receive remuneration. By showing your Friends' membership card, you are eligible for discounts on specified purchases at the following area bicycle shops: Elkhart Bicycle Shop, Elkhart; Family Bicycle, Elkhart; Lincoln Avenue Cycling and Fitness, Goshen; House of Bicycles, Osceola; Pumpkinvine Cyclery, Middlebury, and Union Cycle Works, Shipshewana.

Has your membership expired?

If the date on the label of this newsletter has passed, it's time to renew your membership in the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Membership levels are:

- Individual \$30 Family \$40 Sustaining \$60 Contributing \$100 Patron \$250
 Benefactor \$500 Benefactor Silver \$1,000 Benefactor Gold \$2,500 Benefactor Platinum > \$5,000

Send your membership payment to:

Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail • P.O. Box 392 • Goshen, IN 46527

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____