

# Pumpkinvine

Volume 20 No. 1

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March 2011

## Trail Talk



### Spring wildflower walk on the Pumpkinvine



You are invited to a guided wildflower walk along the newest section of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail with John Smith, professor emeritus of education at Goshen College. The walk will be Sunday, April 17, 2011 from 3 – 5 p.m.

You will likely see Hepatica, Spring Beauty, Harbinger of Spring, Wild Ginger, several species of Violets, Bloodroot and other early spring flowers.

The walk will explore the area between County Road 31 and County Road 33. Because there is limited parking close to the walking area, plan to meet at Abshire Park and car pool to the walk. You may, of course, bicycle the four miles to County Road 33. Plan to arrive there by 3:10 p.m. The walk will last approximately two hours.

If you have questions, call or e-mail Smith at 533-9496 or [johnjs@goshen.edu](mailto:johnjs@goshen.edu).

### Interagency Coordinating Council formed to plan how to manage the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail

An interagency council has begun meeting to plan for the management of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. When completed, the 17-mile greenway will link Goshen, Middlebury and Shippshewana along the route of the abandoned Pumpkinvine railroad. Sections of the greenway are currently owned by the non-profit organization, Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., and four government entities: Goshen Parks, Elkhart County Parks, the town of Middlebury and the town of Shippshewana.

The purpose of the council is to establish common policies and procedures for managing the greenway, policies like when the greenway is open, event coordination, having consistent signage, rules for trail etiquette and a security philosophy. The Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. are involved as historic landowners and greenway consultants.

One early decision of the group is to use the

Friends' website as the central location for information about the greenway and trail policies. Ultimately, the group will likely formalize relations between the government agencies and the Friends in an intergovernmental agreement.

Members of the council are: From Shippshewana, Sheryl Kelly, town manager and Dave Palenchar, building and grounds superintendent; from Middlebury, Mark Salee, town manager, John McKee, chair of the Middlebury Park board, and Tom Enright, park and recreation manager; from Elkhart County Parks, Larry Neff, superintendent, Steve Gangloff, area manager and Ronda DeCaire, superintendent of operations; from Goshen Parks, Sheri Howland, superintendent, Rich Kindel, director of maintenance, and Tanya Heyde, recreation supervisor; from the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., Robert Carrico, trail operations manager and John Yoder, president.

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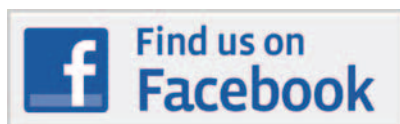
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 Follow our blog,  
Along the trail:  
<http://fopvnt.blogspot.com/>

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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](http://www.pumpkinvine.org)

## From the president Who will maintain the Pumpkinvine?



The article on page one of this newsletter reports on the first meetings of a group to coordinate the management the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail after it is completed. It would be hard to overstate the importance of this development in the history of the trail.

Even though the creation of the trail has taken 20 years from purchase to settling legal issues to funding the development, we have always known that managing it once it is done would be as large a challenge as creating it. Management and maintenance is a day-to-day, month-to-month, indeed year-to-year proposition. There's no vacation for park managers.

There are trail projects that have the good fortune to be near enough to a large population base so that there are enough volunteers to staff a trail without professional help. The Cardinal Greenway from Muncie to Richmond, Ind. is one of those trails, but most trails eventually end up as city or county parks. Although we have wonderful volunteers who give generously for trail work and the Pumpkinvine Bike Ride, we do not have enough to do all the work needed to perform maintenance on a 17-mile trail.

The park departments have the expertise to manage a park that we lack. The problem in 2011 is that in these tough economic times, parks are some of the first government agencies to have their budgets cuts. Legislators don't see parks as essential services. It is, to my way of thinking, a shortsighted viewpoint, but it's the reality.

What does trail maintenance involve? Here's a partial list.

- Mowing the shoulders.
- Surface cleaning to remove fallen branches and leaves.
- Planting wildflowers and native grasses.
- Tree pruning and removal
- Invasive species removal
- Empty trash cans
- Repairing cracks and potholes in the asphalt or ruts in the limestone.
- Patrolling the trail.
- Removal of illegal dumping
- Repairing fences,
- Inspecting bridges
- Fixing signs, benches, fences and gates.

How do the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. and our supporters fit into this phase of the trail's life? What will our role be? How can we make the best contribution?

That's part of what our board and the Pumpkinvine interagency coordinating council (my term) will help clarify in the next few years. In my mind, the creation of this trail is not like a relay race in which we (the Friends) hand to baton off to the next runner (the four local agencies) to manage the trail. Instead, it is a partnership in which we work alongside these agencies.

How might that work? We can supply some volunteers, like we did last year after the June 17 storm that toppled dozens of trees onto the trail. We could also help fund a staff position that would greatly enhance management of the trail and take pressure off the local managing agencies.

But questions remain: Will our supporters be willing to "tax" themselves through membership dues toward such a goal? Will the annual bike ride continue to flourish and provide income above expenses to the Friends? Will sponsors be as generous five and 10 years after the trail is open?

It is our responsibility to make the case for that continuing support.

# Friends of the Pumpkinvine 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner



**Greencroft Senior Center**  
**1820 Greencroft Blvd., Goshen, Ind.**

**Tuesday, April 26, 2011**

- Doors open at 6 p.m. for viewing exhibits and enjoying light refreshments.
- The dinner/meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. sharp.

Dress is casual; seats are not assigned. However, if you fill a table of eight, we will reserve your table.

You also can register online from a link at [www.pumpkinvine.org](http://www.pumpkinvine.org).

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The annual dinner will bring you up to date on the recent past and Friends' plans for the future. Grand door prize is Trek 7100 hybrid comfort bike donated by Lincoln Ave. Cycling.



Jerry Good, marketing coordinator for Elkhart County Parks, will speak on the benefits the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail provides in connecting people to the natural environment, the protection and enhancement of plant and animal habitat and the natural beauty found along the trail. Good has previously served the department as a park ranger, interpretive naturalist and chief naturalist. He has a bachelor degree in Environmental Interpretation from Ball State University and is a member of the National Association of Interpretation.

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## Ticket Calculator

1 x \$23.50 = \$23.50

2 x \$23.50 = \$47.00

3 x \$23.50 = \$70.50

4 x \$23.50 = \$94.00

## Come and enjoy an evening with other trail enthusiasts.

- Circle those names that would like a vegetarian meal.
- Circle total # of tickets and write check for that amount.
- Make check payable to: Friends of the Pumpkinvine.
- Mail check and completed Reservation Form to:

**Friends of the Pumpkinvine**

**P.O. Box 392**

**Goshen, IN 46527-0392**

- No refunds will be possible after April 15.

## Can't attend? Consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Friends.

- Enter your name and address above. Indicate the amount of your gift.
- Make checks payable to Friends of the Pumpkinvine
- Mail your check and this form to: Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, P.O. Box 392, Goshen, IN 46527-0392
- We will send you a receipt for your gift.

**I can't attend the meeting, but enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you!**

# 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pumpkinvine Bike Ride

# June 18

## Register early & save!



## The 12<sup>th</sup> annual

Pumpkinvine bike ride promises to be memorable. In a unique blend of the old and the new, the ride will feature many new routes and a new starting location in Shipshewana but retain the acclaimed SAG stops of the past. The routes will satisfy bicyclists who want a light or vigorous workout on low-traffic county roads. The routes are also interesting to bicyclists who want to experience horses with buggies, farm animals in fields, flower gardens, country schools and small towns. Country stores and businesses that operate without electricity are marked on the route maps and you are welcome to stop for a visit.

### New this year:

- Starting locations in Goshen and Shipshewana.
- New routes for most distances.
- **Friday Dinner Ride that starts in Goshen or Shipshewana.** Bicycle 28 miles (from Goshen) or 16 miles (from Shipshewana), round trip, and enjoy an Amish-cooked Thresher's Dinner at the half-way point. Registration is limited to 85 bicyclists and closes May 31.

### Special features of the ride include:

- Excellent SAG stops with cyclist-specific food and drinks, restrooms and biker assistance.
- Homemade pie with ice cream at the end of the ride.
- Opportunity to see working farms with horses, foals, sheep, goats and cattle.
- Colorful short-sleeved T-shirts available for purchase.
- Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc. tote bag available for purchase.

### Staging area:

- Goshen ride starts at Abshire Park, 1912 W. Lincoln Ave.
- Shipshewana ride starts at the Shipshewana Flea Market, 345 South Van Buren St., (State Road 5).

### Register using the form in this newsletter.

### Register online:

You can register online for an added fee (minimum \$3) based on the total charges. For online registration, you can find a link at [www.pumpkinvine.org](http://www.pumpkinvine.org).

### Cost:

The 21-, 30-, 51- 60- and 100-mile routes are \$23 by May 31 and \$33 after May 31. Family registration is \$46 by May 31 and \$66 after May 31. The Family Trail Ride is \$20 before May 31 and \$30 after May 31. T-shirts are \$12.

For more information and maps of all the routes, check our web site: [www.pumpkinvine.org](http://www.pumpkinvine.org) or contact Bob Carrico at (574) 266-1362 or [rjcarrico1@frontier.com](mailto:rjcarrico1@frontier.com).

Proceeds from the ride support the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc., in their efforts to convert the entire 17-mile Pumpkinvine corridor into a linear park and greenway.



**REGISTER EARLY ... SAVE MONEY!**  
To be sure to get this year's commemorative T-shirt; preorder on the Bike Ride registration form.

# Reflections on leaving the Friends' board

By Frances Ringenberg

*Note: Frances Ringenberg resigned from the Friends' board in November 2010. She lives in Middlebury and served on the board since 2005. She wrote the following reflection on her five years on the board.*

Serving on the Friends of the Pumpkinvine board has been a great experience for me. I was new to the area when I started on the board, and being on it was a great introduction to Elkhart County geographically and culturally.

In my five years on the board, I have seen a major increase in enthusiasm for the trail in Middlebury. The public, many of whom were unfamiliar and a bit suspicious of trails, has finally seen the benefits as a result of the actual trail laid down in Middlebury.

I learned about bikers too. When I first volunteered for our annual bicycle ride, I was ready to pick up litter and make sure the ride made a good impression. I saw families, energetic elderly, happy young people, and plump matrons, all rolling out and wondered how anyone could have reservations about the trail. And there wasn't as much as a gum wrapper to pick up.

One of the highlights for me has been seeing how much the renovated trestle bridge across the Little Elkhart River has added to the delights of Middlebury. Getting funding for the tunnel under State Road 20 was another great moment, but the real Big Excitement is ahead – the first trip from Middlebury to Shipshewana on finished trail!

One thing I will always take with me from this time on the board is a great appreciation for the commitment and energy any park, trail or beautiful public space represents. I've learned these resources don't spring from the ground by themselves. Every time I enjoy a beautiful recreation area I will know that someone made the plans and did the work to make it happen. What a wonderful gift to healthy community and hopeful future.

A new opportunity to serve on the pastoral team at Prairie Street Mennonite Church as well as family responsibilities mean that I need to give up evening meetings, like the Friends' board, but I look forward to continuing as a regular supporter and enthusiastic promoter of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.



## Exercising helps you live longer and look better

The British Journal of Sports Medicine (March 2008) reported that people who exercise regularly live an average of 12 years longer than non-exercisers.

Living longer is a wonderful thing. Looking better while doing it is a very nice side effect.

“Most middle-aged and older athletes look significantly younger than non-exercisers of the same age,” asserts cycling physician Dr. Gabe Mirkin. The doc’s bottom line: “Following the training methods of competitive athletes allows fit older people to run, cycle and do other sports at close to the level of much younger athletes. Recent studies show that intense exercise may also slow the effects of aging on their hearts and muscles as well as their cells.”

But remember, he cautions, “Intense exercise can cause heart attacks in people with blocked arteries. Check with your doctor before you increase the intensity of your exercise program.”

For more details on telomeres, check the *New York Times* article, “How Exercising Keeps Your Cells Young.” RoadBikeRider.com Newsletter. Issue No. 429 - 02/11/10:

# On the Pumpkinvine, the commute is always new

By Buddy Dyck

If you had occasion to ride the Pumpkinvine this past autumn in the so-called rush hours of the day, you would likely have met Matt Lind, on his 1972, 40-pound, Jacquef Anquetil two wheeler on his way from Goshen to Northridge Middle School in Middlebury where he has been teaching for some 20 years. There was a time when Lind wondered if that Pumpkinvine Nature Trail would ever become a commuting option for his trip to work since it had been in the making for so many years. However, this past year, that option became possible when another phase of the trail was completed between County Road 28 and County Road 33.

“I had done some minimal commuting to school,” Lind said, “but I found that County Road 22 between Goshen and Middlebury was unsatisfactory for a number of reasons: traffic quite fast, very little brim. I continue to use that road when I’m in a hurry because it cuts several

**Note: you can see a video Lind made of riding the trail speeded up to last six minutes at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vj9\\_Fdc0UJI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vj9_Fdc0UJI) or search YouTube.com for “Pumpkinvine trail bike ride.”**

miles from my commute. The biggest difference between County Road 22 and the Pumpkinvine is that the county road is a way to get to work, while the trail is a destination in itself.”

When he started riding the trail to work, Lind had little intention to make it a daily commute, but after just a week or two of commuting, the ride proved increasingly doable and even exhilarating. Ultimately, after spending a day in a school classroom, he started to anticipate the ride for the relaxation it provided.

“The trail always offers something new to experience, whether the changing colors on trees or fields, or the activity on adjacent farms, or Amish children in their school playground who stop to wave a greeting as I pedal by,” he said. “You don’t get this experience when commuting in a car.”

Lind had intended to commute only as long as the temperatures remained above 50 degree, but he realized that he could handle 30- and even 20-degree chill, too. But with the coming of the snow, Lind put enthusiasm on hold to await the inducements of the spring melt.

What are Lind’s lasting memories of these 40-plus commutes along the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail? The constant changes of scenery, the beauty of the environment, the peace and quiet away from the noise of traffic, and the shock of deer exploding up and across his path to mention a few.

But whichever direction he pedals, Lind claims, “The commute is always new.”





## The Friends find new Friends in Indy

By Danny Graber

The Midwest Tandem Rally is an annual gathering of tandem bicycle riders. The host city changes each year as different tandem clubs pick up the organizing details common to keeping the bicyclists organized, fed, entertained, and lodged.

This past Labor Day weekend 472 tandem teams were in Shipshewana for the rally. Hoosiers Out On Tandems (HOOTS), based in Indianapolis, was the sponsoring tandem club. But since they needed planning assistance from northern Indiana, they contacted me (my wife Rhonda Yoder and I ride tandem and attend these rallies) to ask for help. They also offered to share proceeds from the ride with a local bicycle-related group, if that

group provided the necessary volunteers.

I went to work and served as co-chair of the event along with Rhonda and Don and Dolly Craft from HOOTS. I contacted three local groups soliciting volunteers, one being the Friends of the Pumpkinvine. As can be expected, members of the Friends stepped forth enthusiastically.

After the event was over, HOOTS, which is a part of Central Indiana Bicycling Association (CIBA), made a contribution of \$6,500 to Friends of the Pumpkinvine. Now isn't that a nice way to make friends?

### Friends who made it happen

Elvie and Ruby Bontrager	Jeanie Martin
Don and Marie Clemens	Merle Mast
Don and Dolly Craft (Indianapolis)	Bill Melchoir
Danny Graber	Dick and Diana Miller
Bob and Janice Carrico	Chet and Ruthann Peachey
Gary and Elma Chapman	Jonathan and Betty Schrag
Mark and Georgia Gingerich	Gerald and Rose Schrock
Gordon and Phyllis Hostetler	Milbourne Taylor
Nate Jones	Cosette Torrance
	Ora Troyer
	Byron and Becky Yoder
	Rhonda Yoder

If I missed your name, please contact me at 266-4265 – Danny

In a separate action, CIBA awarded a \$1,900 grant to the Friends to help pay for the cost of designing and printing a new Pumpkinvine Nature Trail brochure.

### Trail status report

This table shows construction progress on the various sections of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail.

Pumpkinvine phases in geographical order from south to north: Goshen to Shipshewana.

Phases	Location	Miles	Managing agency	Status
1	State Road 4 to CR 28**	1.75	Goshen Park Dept.	Opened in 1999
5A1	CR 28 to CR 127	0.54	Elkhart County Parks	Opened in fall 2008
5A2	CR 127 to CR 26 & 31	1.61	Elkhart County Parks	Opened June 6, 2009
5A3	CR 26 & 31 to CR 33	1.24	Elkhart County Parks	Opened June 6, 2009
5B	CR 33 to CR 35	1.70	(County roads)	No current plans
5C	CR 35 to US 20	1.60	Elkhart County Parks*	First .25 miles completed. Additional funding needed
5C & 6	Tunnel under US 20		Elkhart County Parks	<i>Tunnel is completed</i>
6	US 20 to Wayne St.	1.20	Town of Middlebury*	Design work began in August 2009 Completion in 2012
2	Wayne St. to York Dr.	0.64	Town of Middlebury	Opened in 2005
3	York Dr. to Elkhart Co. - LaGrange Co. line	2.40	Elkhart County Parks	Funded <i>Construction has begun</i>
4	Elkhart Co. - LaGrange Co. line to CR 850 West	4.70	Town of Shipshewana	Funded <i>Construction to begin spring 2011</i>
	Total miles	17.4		

Changed since the last newsletter are in *italics*

\*Parts of these sections are owned by the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail, Inc.

 Platinum Level	 Silver Level	 Bronze Level
 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level
 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level
 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level
 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level	 Bronze Level

Friends of the



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Permit No. 172  
Goshen, IN 46527

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 \_\_\_\_\_