

# FRIENDS OF THE FALLING WATERS TRAIL

www.fallingwaterstrail.org

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## CALENDAR

**FFWT Monthly Meetings**  
third Wednesday each  
month at 6:30 PM

Cascade Starter House -  
1992 Warren, Jackson

### January

- **20—Kickoff 2010**  
**6:30 PM**  
Cascade Starter House

### February

- **2—Groundhog Day**  
**Dawn**  
Hope for shorter Winter

### April

- **22—Earth Day**  
**All day**  
Plant a tree!

### May

- **Membership Drive**  
**TBA**  
Invite others to join this  
great organization!

## FALLING WATERS TRAIL UPDATE

### WINTER TRAIL USE

I have been out of town over the first two weeks of December. It was nice coming home to a snow-covered Michigan.

After a day of Christmas shopping with my daughter, I was lucky enough to find it still early in the afternoon. So, I decided to go for a short run down the trail.

The nice thing about running in winter is that nature takes on the presence of a quiet stage. There is no rustling of trees, the birds seem at rest, and the snow forms some sort of magical blanket of warmth and tranquility.

I did see evidence of life on the trail, with all of the deer, rabbit, and other miscellaneous critter tracks. One such critter lumbered across the trail about

50 feet in front of me. It must have been busy as it did not even notice my huffing and puffing from my afternoon run. But I now know what muskrat tracks look like.

I invite you all to enjoy the trail in winter. Dress appropriately, watch out for the occasional patch of slippery slush, and bring your cell phone to tell others just how beautiful the trail is.

## WILD LIFE MARATHON—WRAP-UP

### FIRST RUNNING A SUCCESS

Over 300 athletes braved the frigid temperatures to join us by participating in either the Marathon, Half-Marathon, 5K Run or Walk. There were about 26 Marathoners, 160 Half-Marathoners, 97 5K Runners, 26 5K Walkers.

Our efforts raised about \$9,600 that will be used to help the Concord Trail Head Park project, and marketing for next

year's Wild Life Marathon event.

Our Winners include:

- **Marathon:** Jake Gillette of Goshen, Indiana and Steph Rahilly of Canada.
- **Half-Marathon:** Herbert Rotich of Jackson and Rebecca Boggs of Onsted.
- **5K Run:** Mark Furkis, and Sierra Melling of Hanover.
- **5K Walk:** Ray Drysdale of Albion and Jill Rose-Redman of Concord.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the following people who helped greatly in making this event successful:

Tammy Neelis and family, Susan Foster and family, my family, Helen and Ken Burnett, Brandon Ransom, Sunrise Coffee, Sew Stoppers, Millers Shoes, Tri-County Water, Spring Arbor McDonalds, Panera Breads, Hutches, Spring Arbor and JCC Cross Country teams.

## THE TRAIL IN WINTER

### HAVE FUN, BE SAFE

Remember the trail is there for use all year round. The shoulders are wide enough for cross country skiing, while the trail portion is available for the hardy winter riders and runners.

Here are a few tips for safe winter outdoor activities:

- Notify friends and family

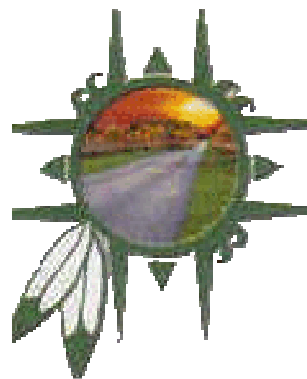
where you will be before you go out. Take a cell phone with you on the trail in case of emergencies.

- Do not leave areas of the skin exposed to the cold. To stay warm and dry, be sure to wear a hat and scarf to cover your face and mouth when appropriate. Sleeves should be snug at the wrist. Mittens are warmer than gloves. And be

sure to avoid perspiring, because when you get wet from interior or exterior sources, you will become chilled and it increases heat loss. When exercising, dress in layers so you can shed layers.

- Remember our body shivers for a reason. It is the first sign that we are losing body heat. Pay

*Continued on page 2*



The Falling Waters Trail is one of 131 Rail Trails in the Upper and Lower Peninsulas of Michigan. This 10.41 mile trail is part of over 1,431 miles of Rail Trails in the state.

## THE TRAIL IN WINTER (CONTINUED)

attention and stop your exercising if you or anyone you are on the trail with begins to persistently shiver.

• Winter exercise can affect us differently. Cold weather puts extra strain on our hearts. Warm up and go slow. Avoid becoming overtired.

• Frost bite typically occurs in temperatures less than 32 degrees, but can occur at 40 degrees. Watch for any skin color change or loss of sensation. The nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers and toes are most often affected. Check each other frequently.

• Staying hydrated is as important in the winter as in the summer months. Avoid caffeinated and alcohol containing beverages.

For more information about winter safety, including travel safety, please visit <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/staysafe/>

## 2010 WILD LIFE MARATHON ANNOUNCEMENT

### GETTING READY FOR NEXT YEAR'S EVENT

Mark your calendars, mark your neighbors calendars, call your family, and call your friends! The 2nd Annual Friends of the Falling Waters Trail—Wild Life Marathon will be held on Sunday, October 10, 2010!

We have conducted an online survey for our 2009 athletes, and have been us-

ing their suggestions in order to help us plan a better 2010 event.

Things we are looking into include a different Marathon route, new start and finish line location, and a maybe an event to involve the youngsters.

A couple of goals we like to achieve at our next event are to increase participation in

both the Marathon and 5K events.

To make our second running more successful than our first, we would like to extend an invitation for members of the Friends of the Falling Waters Trail to assist us. We are actively looking for volunteers to help build a planning committee. If you are interested, please email me at [marathondirector@fallingwatertrail.org](mailto:marathondirector@fallingwatertrail.org).

## LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

### EYES AND EARS ON THE TRAIL

Safety is always a top priority for us on the Falling Waters Trail. And whereas we have a number of law en-

forcement agencies that spend a lot of time on the trail, we also think it would be a great idea to begin an organized effort to have some volunteers on the trail to

keep an extra eye on things. If you are interested in volunteering some of your time to help insure safety on the trail, give Brandon Ransom a call at 768-2917.

## CONCORD LANDS TRUST FUND GRANT

### HUGE WIN FOR THE TRAIL

The Village of Concord was awarded a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant in early December. The \$109,400 grant award will go to enhance trailhead amenities at the western end of the Falling Waters Trail. This \$218,000 project was one of 67 chosen for funding from

175 applicants state-wide. The Village is in the process of raising the 50% local match needed for the project. About half of that amount has been raised to date.

Proceeds from the first running of the Friends of the Falling Waters Trail—Wildlife Marathon went to this worthwhile project. Local residents

and businesses have also stepped forward to financially support the project.

If you are interested in contributing, donations can be dropped off at the Concord village office, 110 Hanover St., from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, or mailed to P.O. Box 306, Concord, MI 49237.

### Muskrat

The muskrat is related to the beaver. It lives in local marshes and builds its home in the banks or as domes in marshy area as can be seen easily from the trail near Concord. Other facts:



- Family: Cricetidae
- Habitat: Riverbanks and marshes
- Body length 10-14 inches
- Tail is 8-11 inches and is naked, scaly, black, and flattened from side to side.
- Eats vegetation, clams, frogs, and fish.
- Females can produce 2-3 litters per year of 5-6 young each.

### Membership drive...

To bring consistency to our membership efforts, we will focus our membership drive in May 2010. This will coincide with the Jackson County Parks drive.

Your membership dollars will help with trail maintenance and any additional upgrades along the trail, such as restrooms and a concession stand.

Watch for more information in our next FWT newsletter!