

FRIENDS OF THE FALLING WATERS TRAIL

www.fallingwaterstrail.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Todd Zeller, President
Jeff Jackson, Vice-President
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Helen Burnett, Secretary
Kathi Bigelow, Trustee
Timothy Payne, Trustee

CALENDAR

July

•10– County Park Association Picnic—Lime Lake

12:00 PM

Invite others to join this great organization!

October

•10– Wild Life Marathon

8:00 AM

Concord High School

FALLING WATERS TRAIL UPDATE

TRAIL ETIQUETTE

The Falling Waters Trail is a gem for Jackson County.

As the trail becomes more heavily travelled, use of proper trail etiquette will help make user experience more special and enjoyable. To help keep fellow trail users safe, we would like to share a few basic safety guidelines.

General use rules:

- Stop at all stop signs at the road crossings. Stop, Look & Listen.
- Mathews Road is especially of concern on the South side with a curve close to the trail. Listen as well as look for cars,
- Stay to the right side of the trail regardless of how you are traversing the trail.
- If not actively moving on the trail, please consider shifting to the grass shoulder so other users have safe passage.
- We discourage the use of earphones on the trail. If you are using earphones, you may not hear traffic at crossings, or a bicyclist or runner who is coming up behind you.
- If wearing headphones, please be sure to either turn your volume down or use only the right earpiece. This will give you some ability to hear important things such as

oncoming traffic, passing trail users, and nature.

- To quote a National Parks rule: Leave no trace behind – take out with you what you bring in.
- Enjoy the wildlife by watching. Do not try to touch or chase the animals.
- Please do not pick the flowers.
- Do not venture off of the trail or onto private property.

Walkers:

- Stay to the right at all times.
- Please do not walk three abreast making it difficult for others to pass. Two side by side is a good rule of thumb.
- When someone is passing, consider switching to single file for safety.

Cyclists:

- Travel at a pace safe for conditions.
- We encourage the use of helmets for safety.
- Slow down in congested and populated areas
- Control your speed and yield to pedestrians.
- Be especially mindful at the Lime Lake area as children, adults, and pets may be running across the path.
- Signal you are passing with a polite warning of a bell and

calling out "Passing on your left".

- Share the path.
- When stopping, pull off onto the grass shoulder to make way for others.

Runners:

When approaching slower traffic move to the left side of the trail (pass on left only) and say "Loudly" before you get to the walkers: "On Your Left". This will give them time to get out of your way.

In-line Skaters and skate boards:

You are much faster than walkers and runners. Follow the "On Your Left" rule for the runners. Special Note: Watch for the occasional cracks that make the trail less than safe.

Trail use for Parents with small children:

- Keep children to one side of the trail. Don't let the run into the oncoming traffic.
- If your child is cycling, make sure they stay to one side and they listen when you tell them to get to one side.
- Teach your children to share the trail.
- Teach your children to respect the wildlife along the trail to look and don't touch.

TRAIL TO BECOME SEGMENT OF A LARGER TRAIL

Poison Ivy

If you have ever gotten poison ivy before, you know what the effects are. Itching, scratching, crying, cursing...and other things I probably cannot write about.

One thing that should top or list of things to know is to be able to identify this plant



before we find ourselves walking through it.

Below are a few bullet points of useful information to know when you are on the trail and in at the edges of parks and in the woods.

See the signs:

- Spring and summer-time sprouts are a bright red.
- Some leaves are notched.
- Some leaves are not.
- Aged plants have duller leaves.
- Plants have groupings of only 3 leaves.
- Poison ivy turns all sorts of colors in the fall: yellow, red, orange.
- You can still get itchy from oil of poison ivy at any time.

A good website on identification and treatment of poison ivy is at http://www.ehow.com/how_17705_treat-poison-ivy.html.

CROSS STATE TRAIL

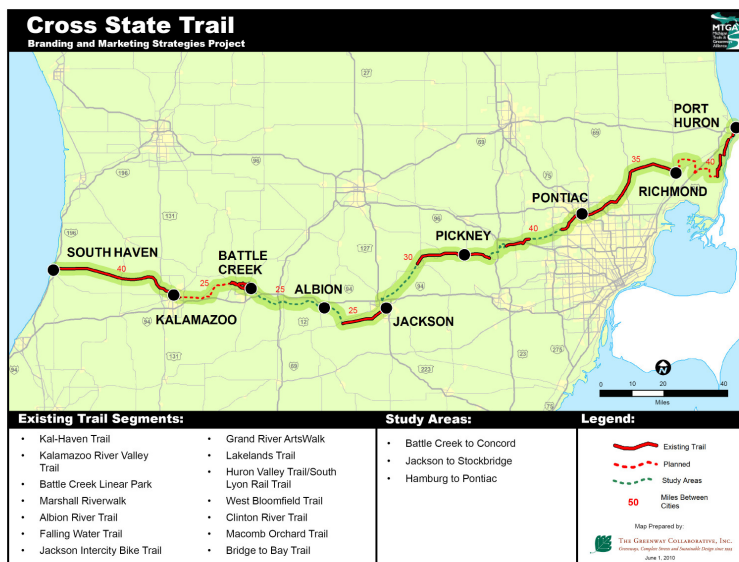
Imagine peddling away from the beach, your back tire still dripping with water from Lake Michigan, on a four-day trail ride ending at the shores of Lake St. Claire. Along the way you will eat at small cafes and local restaurants, lounge in city parks, and rest up at quaint bed and breakfasts along the route. The route would expose you to a cross-section of Michigan, both in culture and landscape, including the Falling Waters Trail. It may sound like a dream, but the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance is working on turning that dream into a reality through plans to complete a trail that stretches 240 miles from the Lake Michigan beach in South Haven to the shore of Lake St. Claire in Port Huron. This is a tremendous project, but not so daunting as you may think.

The proposed route includes 132 miles of existing trail. The Kal-Haven, Lakelands, Huron River Valley, and Macomb Orchard trails are a few of the sections that will eventually become a cross-state trail.

The Falling Waters Trail is the keystone of this regional effort. The 14 miles of trail connecting Concord to Jackson lie at the center of the cross-state plans, with opportunities to expand. Trail extensions are already in progress. Concord received a grant to develop a trail head at Mill Pond and the Grand River ArtsWalk will extend the trail through the Armory Arts Village and to the north edge of the City. This is a great time for us to extend the trail across the county. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Department of Transportation are noting grant requests for trail development that contributes to

the shore-to-shore trail.

The state-wide trail provides economic opportunities for our community. The numerous trail parking locations, parks adjacent to the trail, and the fact that the trail runs right through downtown Jackson, makes Jackson County an obvious choice for a major trailhead where out-of-town visitors come to park and ride the trail. They will also be looking for lunch, snacks, coffee, bike repairs, shopping, and possibly overnight accommodations. But more importantly, employers are looking to locate in communities that will attract top-quality employees. One of the amenities these potential employees are looking for is quality recreational space, and specifically trails for recreation and access to vibrant, walkable downtowns. Attracting jobs is the long-term economic value that trails con-



Continued on page 4



Membership Form

FRIENDS of the FALLING WATERS TRAIL



| Select | Membership Type | Amount |
|--------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| | Individual (Annual) | \$20 |
| | Family (Annual) | \$30 |
| | Lifetime | \$200 |
| | Corporate | \$500 |
| | Maintenance and Development Donation | \$ |
| | Renewal | |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|-----|--|
| Name | | | |
| Address | | | |
| City | | | |
| State | | Zip | |
| Phone (Day) | | | |
| (Evening) | | | |
| E-Mail | | | |

[Newsletter by email only, unless specified that you do not have email]

Make your tax-deductible check payable to: Friends of the Falling Waters Trail

Mail to: Friends of the Falling Waters Trail, c/o Jackson County



RUN ON THE WILD SIDE

FRIENDS of the FALLING WATERS TRAIL



Sun., 10/10/10
Falling Waters Trail

To register and further information:
www.fallingwatertrail.org/wlm/wlm_home.htm
QUESTIONS?
 E-mail: marathondirector@fallingwatertrail.org
 Phone: 517.917.0670

OUR EVENTS:

- Beginning at 8:00 a.m.
- Marathon
- Half-Marathon Run/Walk
- 5K Run/Walk
- 12:30 p.m. Kids Wild Dash

Our unique marathon route will offer athletes the experience of village streets, a flat and paved Falling Waters Trail, and roads that consist of paved, gravel and rolling terrain. Included may be a challenging hill or two.



Photo provided by Kiboum H. Snow

The purpose of this annual event is to raise funds to help maintain the Falling Waters Trail and to support local community and county park improvements to the trail.

COME JOIN US FOR A PICNIC

JACKSON COUNTY PARKS ASSOCIATION

We invite you to come to a potluck picnic at Lime Lake County Park on Saturday, July 10 at noon. Bring a dish to pass, tableware and a beverage. Hot dogs will be provided by the JCPA. Kathi & Bruce Bigelow are hosting this picnic. Children are more than welcome.

We hope you will consider

joining the JCPA. We are an outdoor-loving group of volunteers that help with the upkeep and improvements of our county parks. Dues are only \$10.00 per year for a family membership. We visit a different county park every month for a picnic in the summer and also have workbees to plant flowers, weed flower beds, rake leaves, pick up trash and so some paint-

ing at the different parks.

The picnic for August is on the 21st at noon at Clark Lake County Park on Ocean Beach Road. On September 11th we will be at Vineyard Lake County Park off

M-124 on North Drive, 1.5 miles southeast of Brooklyn.

We hope you will join us for a nice time, a good meal and a chance to visit our beautiful county parks.

CROSS STATE TRAIL

Continued from page 2

tribute to communities.

In early June, Jackson hosted a convening at the Armory Arts Gallery for the 30 communities along the proposed trail. The main focus of the convening was to address the name, or rather the need for one. The project was originally titled the Michigan Airline Trail, named after the rail corridor that was conceived in 1869 to connect Port Huron to Chicago. While the historical connection is interesting, the Airline is not a well-known rail corridor, and the Airline name is already attributed to another big trail in Connecticut. Perhaps the best reason to choose a new moniker for the trail is the foreboding fact that the Airline rail line was never completed under that name!

The 48 attendees at the convening participated in facilitated exercises and discussion about the title, mar-

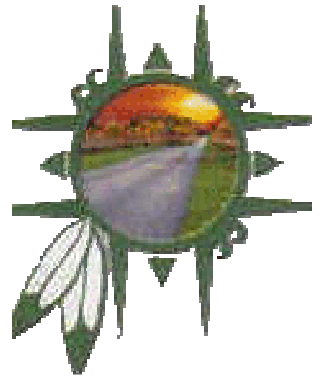
keting, and on-the-ground identification of the trail effort. The Great Lake to Lake Trail was the most popular name. Participants were split on whether the trail should be marketed on its own, or as the beginning of a larger system of trails in Michigan. Interestingly, most communities envision young families using their trail while national studies show that an older population (45 - 65) are the largest demographic of trail users. Everyone agreed that state bike route signage should be developed. However, there was concern that the larger project should not replace or overshadow the marketing of the local trail.

The Fitness Council of Jackson is working to promote the trail project in Jackson, and identify potential routes to connect the Falling Waters Trail to Calhoun County to the west and the Lakelands trail to the east.

The Friends group has provided great information

and insight to this work. The challenges currently being addressed are the connection to Calhoun County (Homer and Albion are the two options), and the route around the prison property north of the city. Many opportunities for trail expansion have presented themselves during the nine months of this project. A 240-mile trail won't be established overnight, but Jackson County is a clear leader in contributions to the state-wide effort, largely due to the completion of Falling Waters Trail.

You can learn more about the Cross State Trail project and the results of the Spring Convening by visiting www.greenwaycollab.com/MTGA.htm.



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.

Letter to the trail...

My wife Aline and I bicycle and walk the trail, usually starting at the Teft Rd. The Lime Lake part of the trail is so unusual that we always cross the lake... just because it IS so unusual...

When the trail was being paved, we noticed a tree on the north side of the trail growing through an automobile tire. It is still there, and for us has become a landmark.

You may know about it, but if not, here's how to find it:

At the west end of the lake on the trail, there are two short pieces of fencing on the north side of the trail.

Counting from the western edge of the second short fence, continue west along the trail for about 100 yards.

Look to the right (north) of the trail about 15 feet off the trail and you will find this tree/tire combination.

At this time, the tree doesn't look stressed by the tire and it is an unusual sight... I'd hate to see a tree-hugger remove it, as it's been there for many, many years and is now a landmark of sorts.



Nature prevails.