



End of Year

2009

NEWSLETTER

You're Invited!

NEW YEARS DAY RESOLUTION WALK DAVE HEYBOER



the trail, or just enjoy a time of quiet contemplation.

Refreshments will be provided by the "Friends" and cheerfully served at our return to the Pavilion.

The walk takes place rain, snow or shine.

We want to thank the City of Rockford and the Rotary Club for the use of their facilities.

We hope to see you there! ▲

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Volunteers	2
Comments from the Chair	2
Comments From A Volunteer	3
Thank You	3
Check Passing Ceremony	4
Comcast Cares	5
Dick Wagen Remembered	5
Trail Crew Safety	6
New Picnic Table	6
Spring Clean-up	7

This coming New Years Day we will be celebrating our 9th annual New Years Resolution walk.

Please join us for lively interaction and a little exercise with friends, family, fellow trail walkers, leashed dogs, and kids.

We will start at the Rockford Rotary Pavilion at 10:00 AM, walk south this year to the new covered picnic-table, and back on our beautiful Fred Meijer White Pine Trail. Yes to the south this year, so we can enjoy a different venue and see the first of two covered picnic-tables that are funded by Wolverine World Wide!

On this new route, you will be crossing several streets, please be careful!

Last year we had 191 walkers and 12 dogs.

The walk takes about an hour and covers four miles. This is a great opportunity to catch up with friends, enjoy the beautiful view along

VOLUNTEERS - WE CAN USE YOUR HELP DAVE HEYBOER

The "Friends" have been a very successful organization and we owe this to our many volunteers. We consistently have projects / jobs that are available for interested persons. Some of these jobs require certain skills and or expertise, some do not.

This is an ongoing article to keep you informed of opportunities within the "Friends". We have had several persons move on for various reasons. This organization runs on good people willing to help out on varying levels.

This organization runs totally on volunteers, none of us get any wages for what we do. We donate our time, expertise, skills, and tools. With a little help from our great membership we do great things.

If any of these positions / jobs are something that you think you would like to help out with please contact the chairman or one of the board members.

You may have indicated in the past that you are interested in helping; unfortunately the records that had the names have been mis-

placed, so if you have expressed an interest in the past and are still interested please re-contact us.

Positions / Jobs:

- ◆ Workday coordinator – assistant – southern area
- ◆ Event coordinators
- ◆ Newsletter assistance
- ◆ Public relations
- ◆ Treasurer – backup
- ◆ Membership records
- ◆ Tractor Operator - mowing

If you have an interest in doing something not listed and have suggestions in how you may help please contact us, we are always open to new suggestions and welcome input.

We do very much appreciate your support and sincerely hope that we can continue with this great organization through the volunteer efforts of our members. ▲

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN DAVE HEYBOER

We have had a great year on the trail with some very good events and projects.

Our E-Newsletters are working out very well and are keeping everyone well informed of trail related information. Unfortunately, some people do not use e-mail.

The executive board has decided with the efficiency of the e-newsletters and the high cost of the printed newsletter that we will only do an end of the year newsletter.

One drawback to a single newsletter is that we have had a rolling membership system with renewals at various times of the year with renewal dates on the mailing labels. With a single newsletter, we will not be able to continue this renewal system. Our new membership system will be January to January. If you are paid into 2010, do not be concerned, we will no drop you, please just renew during the next cycle. We will still put the renewal date on your label this time so you will know where you stand. Thank you for your support.

Here is a list of the year events some of these items, marked with an * will have an article in this newsletter

- ◆ Dick Wagen Remembered *
- ◆ New Years Walk *
- ◆ Paving – Cadillac South – We are working with the MDNR on the next stage of paving
- ◆ Comcast Cares – Workday on the trail *
- ◆ Spring Clean-up in the southern section *
- ◆ Workdays – This year we had several great workdays on the trail. Thanks to all that have participated in these projects
- ◆ Covered Picnic table placement *
- ◆ Mowing on the trail - - This has been another great year for the trail users due to the commitment of a number of volunteers that have been keeping the trail mowed thanks to:

- Rex Houseman
- Alan Parker
- Ron Baker
- Peter Patin
- Jack Richards
- Bob Grice
- Bill Rollins



- ◆ Snow removal in the south: This past snow season was interesting! We had a lot of snow causing our equipment to be worked to its full capacity. Normally we use a plow on the tractor, but the deep snow we had this past winter required a lot of use of the snow blower, which is very slow going. Using the snow blower can reduce the speed to around 2 miles per hour, and when you are doing so many miles that adds up to a lot of volunteer time! Thanks to Kerry Kilpatrick and Steve VanAndle, the two volunteers that helped me keep the trail open.
- ◆ Check passing ceremony in Cadillac - *
- ◆ New Treasurer – we welcome Laurel Korreck to the treasures position. Our previous treasurer, Rhonda Welcher and her husband have new jobs both of which are on the east side of the state. Thank you Rhonda for all your help!
- ◆ Comstock Park – the project to pave and improve the area along the trail and behind the business district was completed this year! Congratulations go to the Comstock Park DDA and Plainfield Township for this excellent project. This project was totally funded by the Comstock Park DDA and completed very timely. There is a short section to be completed along Mill Creek street that will finish the loop around the 5/3 Ballpark.

Hope to see you at the annual New Years Walk

Thanks to all for your support ▲

COMMENTS FROM A VOLUNTEER ROXANNE WALKER

Thursday, July 09, 2009 - Monday, July 20, 2009

My mother is the sort of woman who will let an eight-foot thistle grow in the middle (and I do mean the middle) of her flower garden just because it pleases her. As such, she raised the sort of daughter who wouldn't notice an eight-foot thistle in the middle of the garden until a door-to-door sales representative laughed about it.

Whether you call it passion for nature or just a full-hearted acceptance, the drive instilled in my mind motivated me to volunteer with Friends of the White Pine Trail. The work contributes to my volunteering as Michigan Service Scholar through Kalamazoo College - but like any good volunteer work, affects me far beyond the paperwork.

On my first day cutting brush and picking up garbage on the White Pine Trail, I encountered...

- ◆ Hundreds of bikers, walkers, runners, and other trail users
- ◆ A thousand times as many bugs
- ◆ Three plants with unnoticed thorns
- ◆ Something that may have very well been bamboo and made an excellent *swish* noise when cut long, stripped, and wielded
- ◆ Five reasons to break out my intense shears
- ◆ At least a dozen people who said, "thank you"
- ◆ One tremendous reason not to cut: a robin's nest nestled in the branches overhanging the trail

led in the branches overhanging the trail

Although I'll be the first to admit my OCD tendencies, which make the work slow, I still unearth lightheartedness on the trail that is hard to find in the nine-to-five grind. It comes from the earth itself—dirt and wood and green—and from the heart of a community that makes sure to inform me that my efforts are appreciated.

However, one other comment on my first day has stuck in my mind stronger than those of gratitude: "You have a lot of work to do."

He spoke teasingly and with a grin, but also with truth. The White Pine Trail stretches 90-odd miles, a distance I could never cover over the short summer I am home in Grand Rapids. Everybody reading this has some investment in the White Pine Trail, but I suspect relatively few have been out working the trail itself.

So if you've ever dug your hands in the soil just to absorb its energy, or let an eight-foot thistle grow in your garden; if you've ever loved a bug even (or especially) after it fed its bug babies with your blood; if you've even been cruising down a nature trail and been hit in the face with overgrown branches... get out there. Go with a sense of adventure, and a touch of humor; go alone, with family or friends; go morning, noon, or night. Nevertheless, be sure to go. ▲

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU TONY STACHOWIAK

It is time to thank all the people that help on the trail:

- ◆ The Folks that come out on Work Saturdays.
- ◆ The Adopt - A - Trail People in the Southern section that take care of their mile from North Park Street to 22 Mile Road all summer long.
- ◆ The regulars that help out when needed for special projects.
- ◆ The mowers that spend hours on the tractor at a blazing 4 MPH. You make this trail happen! ▲



FRIENDS OF THE WHITE PINE T SHIRTS TONY STACHOWIAK

Friends of the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail T-Shirts are available in limited sizes at our Monthly Meetings (or call to make arrangements for pick up) \$6.00 for members / \$11.00 with Membership.

We will take orders for out of stock sizes with payment and place an order when we have a minimum order.

Call Tony at 616.874-9332, or e-mail astachow@comcast.net ▲



CHECK PASSING CEREMONY IN CADILLAC

DAVE HEYOER

EDITORS NOTE— REPRINTED FROM E-NEWS

We had the check presentation ceremony / event at the staging area just south of Cadillac on Friday. I estimate we had approximately 100 -150 persons present.

Unfortunately, Fred Meijer had some health issues that prevented him from joining us, so he sent two of his foundation staff members to represent him. We wish Fred a quick recovery.

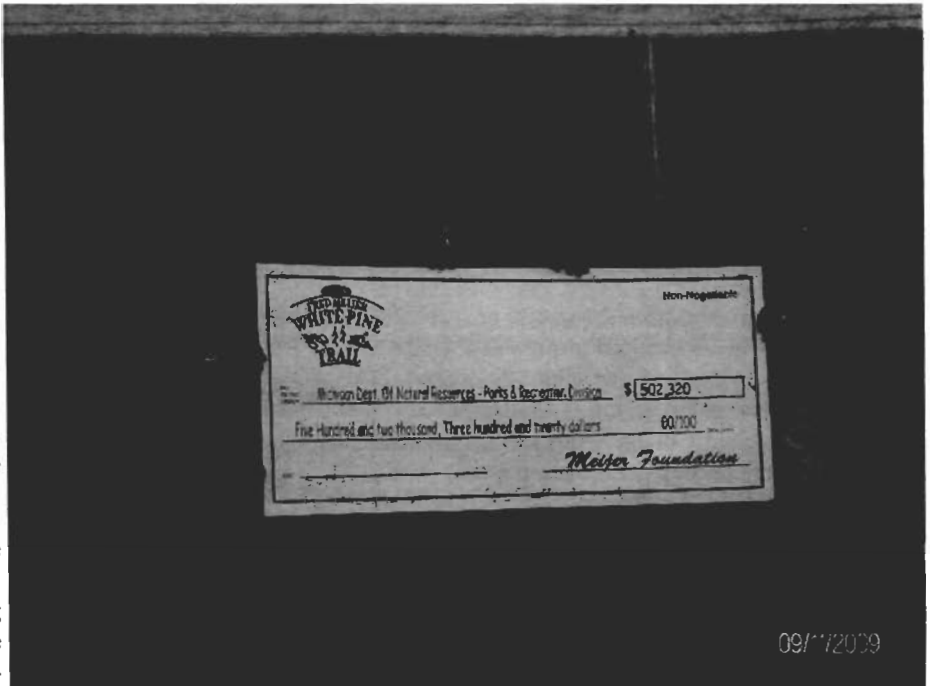
This event was the official kick-off a major project that will improve the asset that is the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park. This improvement in the form of asphalt paving will open the trail to all its approved users including walkers, hikers, bikers, skaters, wheel chair users and more.

This is the beginning to a project that will take your support in many forms to help us complete. The current available funding (approximately \$2.5 million) will not finish the project which is to completely finish the paving of the trail to Grand Rapids, that is where we need all the help we can get to raise the remaining needed funds to make this project complete. Please help us with the following if you can:

- ◆ Contact to possible funding sources
- ◆ Letters, e-mails, personal comments to
- ◆ Legislators both state and national requesting the completion of the paving
- ◆ News organizations, TV, Radio, and Newspapers
- ◆ Governor
- ◆ Local politicians such as cities, townships, counties
- ◆ Encouraging people to join the "Friends" – strength is in numbers
- ◆ Personal donations to the project
- ◆ Your employer may have a matching program
- ◆ Help during the upcoming capital campaign

Several persons spoke about the trail, their perspectives, and the many benefits of the trail. The speakers have a double ** behind their names below. Representatives from many organizations, and legislative – both state and federal, attended. I am going to try to list all as best I can, if I omit anyone I apologize.

- ◆ Brandon Fewins - US Senator Stabenow's staff **
- ◆ Wayne Kuipers – Michigan State Senator **
- ◆ Jill Brown – US, Representative Hoekstra's staff **
- ◆ Bill Barnett – Mayor of Cadillac **
- ◆ Lee Richards – Avon Automotive **
- ◆ Jack Richards – "Friends" Vice Chair **
- ◆ Mike Julien – Meijer Foundation
- ◆ Rob Verhuelen – Meijer Foundation **
- ◆ Robert Gattin – Cadillac Visitors Bureau **
- ◆ Bill Porteous – Father of the Trail
- ◆ Vicki Anthes – MDNR



- ◆ Mary Nardo – MDNR
- ◆ Paul Yauk – MDNR **
- ◆ Larry Solce – Park Manager
- ◆ Troy Rife – MDNR Planner
- ◆ Scott Harvey – Plainfield Township Clerk **
- ◆ "Friends" board members
- ◆ Cadillac Winter Promotions

There were many of our great trail users and supporters including members of the "Friends," Michigan Snowmobile association, Big Rapids Bike Club, and the Pere Marquette Snowmobile Club, along with others.

We also had news crews from TV 9 & 10 and several newspapers

Thank you to all that came out to support this event.

I want to also thank the following:

- ◆ The Cadillac Boy Scout Troup 125 for setting up their tents for the event
- ◆ Pine Grove Athletic Club for donating the most delightful refreshments
- ◆ The Cadillac chamber of Commerce for supplying the sound / speaker system

Bill Tencza from the Chamber for his help making this event a success

Our next event will be the grand opening of the newly paved section of the trail; I suspect that event will be next summer. If you would be interested in helping with that event please contact me as I am going to start now to take names and get ideas around making that event spectacular with your help. ▲

I am extremely happy to report on a phenomenal event that took place on the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail yesterday. The sheer magnitude of the event resulted in the Sheriff being called out to investigate "unusual activity" (they left with a smile after they realized what was going on – see below).

I received a call several weeks ago from Maria Holmes who is the Public Affairs Manager for Comcast in the Detroit area. She asked me if we could use some help on any trail projects. She stated she could have volunteers gather for some projects and wanted to know if our members would like to help also. I was then referred to Rose Stewart who is the local coordinator to get more details. I sent out an e-mail to all of you last week asking for volunteers and many of you immediately said you would be there.

As we got closer to the event Rose called me and said the number of volunteers from Comcast was growing steadily and would I have work for all of them. Originally, my plan was to install a fence in an area of the trail just north of Belmont where traffic leading away from the trail is creating significant erosion. That project alone would not keep the 60 to possibly 75 volunteers Rose was projecting busy for long. After some scrambling, I was able to come up with a list of activities that I thought would keep everyone busy throughout the event. As you will see I underestimated the work ethic, the quantity and the competence of the volunteers that ultimately showed up!

On Wednesday (April 22nd), I met with Roseanne Stewart and Chris McGraw at our storage building in Belmont which was to be the staging area for the event later in the day. They proceeded to transform the building as they brought in food, drinks, t-shirts, and equipment for the crew that would gather later.

Around 4:00 pm the volunteers started showing up and then before long, the parking lot was full of Comcast service vehicles. I introduced Comcast Vice President Larry Williamson to the growing crowd and he talked about Comcast Cares Days which was the title of yesterday's event. He then introduced Senator Mark Jansen (pictured at right) who told the story of how the event came about. Ron Orlando, Comcast Director of Governmental Affairs, had been talking to him about doing a Comcast Cares Day in West Michigan. Senator Jansen said emphatically "you need to talk to the Friends of the White Pine Trail. They can always use help!" The result of that conversation was literally an army of volunteers that numbered between 80 and 90 people!

I then let the gathered throng know the various projects and tasks that needed attention and we spread out and "invaded" the trail. All the volunteers were dressed in Comcast blue t-shirts and it was an incredi-

ble sight to see them piling onto the trail in such a large group. The fence project was going to take some significant manpower and with a tractor and gear vehicle leading the way, a large contingent of blue shirts marched up the trail to the construction site. Within 5 minutes, a sheriff's car came driving up the trail to the work site due to complaints from the neighbors of unusual activity on the trail. He smiled when we told him what we were doing and wished us luck.

At the fence building site (see before and after above) it was apparent that the Comcast people had brought their A-Team. After an initial overview of the project, they immediately began taking over and with the precision of a drill team, they had the fence up with the accuracy of a die maker. As you can see from the picture, it runs straight and true and is a thing of beauty. The job that I thought would take hours to do was finished in about an hour and the group said collectively "what's next?" I didn't have a "next" planned so they broke up into smaller groups and did some trail clean up and brush removal.

By the end of the event the trail had been scoured of trash, encroaching brush had been cut back, a fence had been built and landscaped, bags of debris and rubbish removed and all the tools and equipment returned to the storage building. The Comcast crew (a small portion picture below), along with the Friends volunteers, spruced up the trail from the Fifth Third Ballpark, up through Belmont, and all the way to Rockford. We were able to do more in a few hours, with the army of volunteers that showed up for the event, than we typically accomplish in several months worth of our usual volunteer workday events.

Many Thanks must go to Senator Mark Jansen along with Comcast Vice President Larry Williamson (pictured below with yours truly) for delivering the army of volunteers that did an extreme makeover on a significant section of the southern end of the trail. And many thanks to all the volunteers for taking time out of their busy schedules to help make the trail event a huge success.

It is significant to note that many of the volunteers noted how appreciative the trail users were of their presence. It is said that the wages of all volunteers are the thanks that they get. I am happy to say that White Pine Trail users are very vocal in their appreciation of everyone that supports their trail.

It was a GREAT DAY for the White Pine Trail. I look forward to seeing you on it! ▲



DICK WAGEN REMEMBERED

DAVE HEYBOER

EDITORS NOTE— REPRINTED FROM E-NEWS

Below you will find a reprint from the e-news we send out. I feel it is good to remember this fine person!

Dick's family requested donations at the time of the funeral be directed to our care for a proper memorial on the trail remembering Dick. There has not yet been a decision made regarding this memorial, it is coming!

This is sometimes a very, very tough job, and today, specifically this note, is very hard to write. The "Friends" have lost a very important and good person from our membership and board.

Richard (Dick) Wagen passed away on Thursday at his home. Dick had been in and out of the hospital with heart related is-

sues for some time.

We will miss Dick's expertise, great sense of humor and his devotedness to our endeavor. Dick was always there to help when we needed it, having spent a lot of time working on the trail on projects such as the overlook north of Rockford, the rest area between Belmont and Rockford, the kiosk at Belmont, and the gazebo at the West River Road Bridge, just to name a few of the many things. Dick was one of those people that just did the job quietly and moved on. Thanks Dick.

Dick was an early member of the board and his wisdom and input was a great asset to us through the many years we have worked together. ▲



TRAIL CREW SAFETY TONY STACHOWIAK

When most people see someone working on the trail they usually are careful and courteous and give us lots of room. Our trail crews are all volunteers. Free labor to keep the trail nice. Trail Crews Deserve A Little Respect. The people that keep branches from slapping you in the face, fill the sink holes patch the root damage, cut the roots growing under the trail, pick up the litter, sweep the gravel off the pavement, blow the leaves and sticks, plow the snow, build the rest stops, mow the grass, cut the fallen trees, clean up graffiti, fix washouts and pick up dog poop. Do it for nothing other than a good feeling of giving back to the community.

Please give them room when they are working. They are busy tending to their work and don't have eyes in the back of their head. Slow down, stop, walk around reel in your dogs and children, and go single file!



Over the years, there have been a few close calls. All could have been prevented if people were a little more cautious. There are just plain rude people that blow by you when you are haling cut limbs out of the brush or try to sneak by when we need to close the trail while we drop a dead tree with a chain saw. (Let's see chainsaw, dead tree vs. bike. Who is going to win? Nobody!) Some people have actually gotten angry that we were on "their trail" working and in their way, Sorry! This really hurts the

volunteer's feelings. We question the worth of the human race. Who ever this was, please send me your riding schedule so I can arrange with Mother Nature not to drop any dead trees at these times.

We are sorry that at times we have to have motor vehicles on the trail (always with the DNS's Permit) to get our work done but we can get much more done with equipment and the limited volunteer hours. Please give them space. Please let the snow plow have plenty of room (4 to 5 feet, not 1 to 2 inches like we have seen) Again.. snow plow vs. jogger. Who is going to win? The plow has to keep up speed to properly throw the snow onto the cross-country ski half. When a slow jogger refuses to step aside for the plow the trail doesn't get plowed as well and it takes our volunteer longer to get the job done. Plowing takes from 5 - 8 hours per snow of volunteer time! Let's not make it longer.

On the flip side of that. We get plenty of thank you's. One lady even rode back into Rockford and brought us cookies. This made it all worthwhile. So be alert when you see us working, be nice to the trail crews (bring cookies) & enjoy the trail safely.

Tony Stachowiak, Southern Trail Maintenance Manager ▲



NEW COVERED PICNIC TABLE DAVE HEYBOER

This past Saturday the "Friends" volunteers erected the first of two new covered picnic tables at a site just between Belmont and Rockford about a quarter mile south of the House Street crossing. The second table is tentatively going to be placed near Sixteen Mile Road; we are waiting for site approval from the DNR.

The funds for these tables are from the **Wolverine World Wide Foundation**. We are so very fortunate to have such great organization supporting our activities!

I want to thank all that have helped on this project. There were several persons that came out to help on the concrete pour and the construction days.

Here is a list of the volunteers that helped on this project so far:

Tony Stachowiak
Henry Greeb
Mike Bowler
George Dorset
George Zuiderveen
Jack Gibson
Ted VanVels
Dave Heyboer
Bob Pawloski
Kerry Kilpatrick
Chuck Dykstra
George R ??? (could not read signature)
Dan Ives
Bob Grice
Peter Patin
Deb Stachowiak



I want to also thank Deb Stachowiak for delivering lunch on Saturday; the volunteers greatly appreciated the fine food.

EDITORS NOTE— REPRINTED FROM E-NEWS

We also want to thank the Kent County Road Commission – North Complex for letting us store the un-built structures at their facility until we can place them.

We will be starting on the next table as soon as we get approval for the site from the DNR, this of course does rely on weather conditions being right for concrete work. ▲



Email Addresses Requested

We have current email addresses on about 90% of our members. We will mail only one newsletter at the end of the year in the future, but we send out monthly / periodic emails as necessary with information on the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail. Stay current with the latest trail happenings by providing "Friends" with your current email address. Email your address using the below address to our chairman David Heyboer, who will add it to the e-

ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP - - SOUTHERN AREA DAVE HEYBOER

This year's annual spring-clean up in the southern area was an overwhelming success again!

We are very fortunate to have such great partners in the schools that participate in this annual project.

The following are the participants.

- ◆ Godwin Schools
- ◆ Cedar Springs Schools
- ◆ Rockford Schools

Along with the schools, we want to thank the communities that are in the areas that get the cleaning as they let us dispose of the debris at their collection areas. Those communities are:

- ◆ Plainfield Township
- ◆ Cedar Springs
- ◆ City of Rockford

Thanks to all the young people and the communities for their support. ▲



FWPT NEWSLETTER CIRCULATION

Approx. 700

EDITOR / ASSEMBLER David J. Heyboer

If you have an article you would like published please submit it, final decision on use and content will be made by the editor!

Southern Chapter Meeting Schedule 2010

January 13,	Comstock Park Library
February 10,	Algoma Township Offices
March 10,	Plainfield Township Offices
April 14,	Cedar Springs Offices
May 12,	Rockford Community Cabin
June 9,	Sand Lake Library
July 14,	No Meeting
August 11,	Comstock Park Library
September 8,	Plainfield Township
October 13,	Cedar Springs City Offices
November 10,	Algoma Township
December 8,	Plainfield Township

Time is 7:00 pm for all monthly meetings.

We are very fortunate to be able to use local government facilities and libraries for our meetings, almost always at no charge. These facilities rarely have conflicts, but circumstances do arise where a facility must be changed at the last minute. For your convenience, if you are planning on attending a meeting, please check the Friends Information Line a day or two before the meeting to confirm the location. ▲

YOUR ORGANIZATION

Officers

Chairman	David Heyboer
Vice Chairman – Southern Chapter	
Vice Chairman – Northern Chapter	Jack Richards
Secretary	Mike Bowler
Treasurer	Laurel Korreck
Steering Committee Members (<i>at large</i>)	Barb Rollins
	Jan Proli
	Rex Houseman
	Ron Baker
	Tony Stachowiak

ALL DONATIONS TO THE FRIENDS OF THE WHITE PINE TRAIL ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE
UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE DESIGNATED TO THE "FRIENDS"

Friends of the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail
P.O. Box 159
Belmont, Michigan, 49306

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #106
CEDAR SPRINGS MI
49319

Our current web site is whitepinetrail.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ e-mail Address _____

Amount Enclosed _____ ? Individual and Family - \$5 per year, ? Business - \$25 per year

Is this membership New ___ Renewal ___

PLEASE INCLUDE ALL INFORMATION
IF THIS IS A RENEWAL IS THERE A CHANGE IN YOUR INFORMATION? _____

Your Membership is important! When we talk to legislators and or other governmental officials it is very helpful when we can say that we represent a large number of people. Much of the progress we have made has been with the help of the legislators and the numbers help get their attention.

Please take note to your address label, the date at the bottom indicates your membership renewal date. The form above may be used to renew your membership if you wish. Thank you for supporting this organization.