



# Musketawa Trail

NEWSLETTER



National Recreational Trail 2008

Millennium Trail 2000

Spring / Summer Newsletter 2018  
Vol. 23 No. 48  
23 Years of trail work and counting

Dear Trail Friends:

With the passing of another wonderful spring and summer in West Michigan, we hope that many of you have been out to enjoy our Musketawa and other nearby trails, the ride comradery, the scenery, the railroad historical features, and the wonderful sense of heart-healthy fatigue.

Much has transpired on the trail with Friends activities as well as other cycling news to report. Last but not least, is a reminder of our annual trail membership drive. Please use our enclosed envelope or PayPal to submit your generous donation to support our efforts to proceed with further trail enhancement projects and maintenance. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



### CHAINSAW TRAINING:

Early trail Friends activities started out in Lansing where our Friends president **Tim Nink** and board member **James Smith** (in back row) attended a two-day workshop on chainsaw use and safety sponsored by the Michigan United Conservation clubs. Both of our participants passed

the course "with flying colors" (B & A ratings). They report the course was very informative, learning saw safety, personal protective gear, chainsaw use, maintenance, hazards, etc. With practice and actual usage, they are now U.S.D.A. Forest Service qualified. So if you hear the buzzing of tree cutting on the trail, rest assured you are in capable hands.

**GOLD SPIKE TOUR IV:** Our Gold Spike Tour IV was a resounding success, with riders encountering lovely weather and good trail conditions, timely SAG stops, and with energy-replacement nourishment, with lots of smiles and animated conversations amid the sweat and fatigue. See further info with the 100k riders highlighted in photo collage insert and write-up info by organizer Tim Nink.

**PURE MICHIGAN TRAILS:** We very recently submitted an application to the DNR for inclusion into the **Pure Michigan** trails listing. If approved, the Musketawa Trail would, with other trails, be cited in future **Pure Michigan** advertisements, providing greater awareness of the trail. A lengthy and detailed application was completed by yours truly and wife Diana. Hopefully this will be approved.

### TRAIL PICNIC TABLES:

On a late summer Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m., four board members convened at the Ravenna Trailhead with two pick-up trucks loaded with special lumber and



Finished table with James Smith

power tools. Board members (above) **James Smith**, **Tim Nink**, **Oscar Reed**, and **Gary DeKock**, put their talents to work rebuilding three "weather weary" picnic tables. These tables were an early Friends project and with DNR recommended special lumber, the materials should last for years without maintenance and painting.

Two of the tables were inscribed with memorials to Harold Drake paid for by daughter Karol Vander Ploeg and the second to James Schmitt paid for by wife Joan. The third table was paid for by our Friends as a thank-you to our donors for your contributions to the trail. The board volunteers finished the project as the sun was setting at 8:00 p.m., a 12- hour day of dedication to the Musketawa trail.

Staining of another observation deck at Swanson Road, west of Ravenna, was completed by board member **Oscar Reed**. The use of an oil based stain will improve the appearance as well as extending wood life. Future such staining of other observation decks is planned.





George looking over the trail

**TRAIL MAINTENANCE:**

George Czinder, manager of the Muskegon County section of the trail and Anne Engvall, Ottawa



Anne Engvall

County Parks Supervisor (north area) both report that an active maintenance season. This includes clearing fallen limbs and trees as well as debris, mowing, and patching up “sink holes” caused by groundhogs. This maintenance pays off with the trail being “ship-shape” and receiving repeated favorable comments by trail users.

**TRAIL USE ISSUES:** A recent request was received by a trail user regarding camping on the paved trailhead. Over the years we have received inquiries of this nature. The newest update by the DNR, who is legally responsible for this State property, is that **camping is NOT ALLOWED**. In addition, hours for trail use are from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., with signage posting being considered. We have wonderful State park camping sites on nearby Lake Michigan reached by an extension of the trail.

**TRAIL USER COMMENTS:** Bill Bylsma reports the trail is very nice and thanks us for doing a great service to the area. Karen & Don from Riverdale report having another good season on the trail. Carol Konwinski of Grand Rapids reports her husband enjoys riding on the Musketawa as well as the White Pine.

A thank-you note was received from Terry Welsh of Muskegon, a past trail user. Terry suffered severe injuries in a motor vehicle-bicycle collision. I met Terry at the Broadway Trailhead in Muskegon. His physical therapist was helping him to his wheelchair for a jaunt on the trail, a part of his physical therapy. He reports receiving out patient therapy as a result of his traumatic brain injury, multiple broken bones, and added medical issues. Great hearing from you, Terry, hoping and praying for the best possible recovery. Our board, and I’m sure our trail users are “pulling for you.”

The Friends received thank-you note from Rick Szczepanski, at the “Never Give UP” M.S. Scholarship Foundation for our board’s personal donations. Rick has been a long time trail supporter and generous donor. His foundation has for 18 years, in memory of his mom who courageously fought M.S, raised awareness and awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships to high school and college students who raise funds for the foundation. As a thank-you to Rick, our board contributed \$150 in personal funds to the foundation. Our trail’s articles of incorporation allow us to only use funds contributed to our Friends non-profit organization for trail related projects.

We received a nice note from Herb Ritsema, from Grand Rapids, with a generous donation, one of many over the years, that has helped pay for some of our special trail projects. As I noted in a previous newsletter, Herb was injured in a roadside collision as he was biking to enter the Musketawa Trail. He recovered from his injuries, he has decided to give up biking for a while to care for his ailing wife. Thanks Herb and God Bless; your donations leave a lasting legacy on the trail.

**BIKE SAFETY:** Michigan Bicyclists Magazine, the Spring 2018 Edition, reports growing popularity of cycling throughout the country. So also are the number of fatalities of bike collisions

with motor vehicles. Transportation data for 2015 reports 45,000 fatalities and injuries nationwide, reflecting a significant increase over previous years. We are seeing laws being passed to recognize and help protect cyclists on our roadways as well as communities providing rider pathways and signage.

Another interesting article, “Why I Tour In Michigan” is noted by a resident of Colorado who writes that he has enjoyed coming to Michigan over the past 20 years to ride our trails. He writes that during this time, he flies to Michigan with camping gear, doing the various summer tours, enjoying riding by crystal clear lakes, quiet roads and limestone trails, admiring the forests and sunsets, and the wildlife. He meets riders from many other states and especially enjoys the people and seeing “his family” each year. Quite an endorsement!

**A CANOEING ODYSSEY:** Gary DeKock, our Friends vice president, and wife Linda, completed another one of their river canoeing odysseys, this time, canoeing the Missouri River. They



started at Three Rivers, Montana, June 2, and canoed 2341 miles ending up in St. Louis, Missouri, August 26, 86 days. In the process, they passed through the states of Montana, North & South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. The ordeals encountered were many, including four-stage waters, a thousand miles of reservoir waters, and incredible storms including a tornado (rode it out in a cement outdoor toilet).

The rewards of their journey included many helpful and generous people, the scenery in Montana and the near \$26,000 raised for the **Water for People** program. To top it off, they camped overnight on portions of the Katy Rail-Trail which runs alongside the Missouri River over 150 miles between Boonville and St. Charles. They describe it as a beautiful trail with well-marked signage, numerous access points and lots of amenities. It has scenic bluffs along the river—a trail they look forward to biking in the near future.

A new idea for cycling caught my eye that is inviting and has appeal. Have you heard of a **Trishaw**, likely not? But it is a trend in Europe called “**Cycling Without Age**”.

Photo by Matthew Dae Smith/  
Lansing State Journal for the Michigan Bicyclist Magazine-Fall 2017



The trishaw is from Denmark that allows senior and nursing home residents to experience the outdoors, nature, and “wind in their hair”. It is like a pedicab or rickshaw with riders in front and a peddler behind, giving riders an unobstructed view. A retired M.S.U. professor purchased one in Denmark, apparently the first in Michigan. A website lists 50 such chapters in the U.S. but none in Michigan. In the hands of a trained peddler, it is safe, travels only 10 m.p.h., and fits nicely on our trails. The

drawback may be it’s cost, a significant \$8000. The experience has brought some hesitancy but later smiles to riders and is seen as a likely life enhancer.

This information was taken from the Michigan Bicyclist Fall 2017 with the original article by Judy Putnam, a columnist with the Lansing State Journal, September 18, 2017

The Gold Spike Trail Tour IV took place on Saturday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The Gold Spike IV was an out and back bike ride on the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail and Musketawa Trail. This event was organized and hosted by the Friends of the Musketawa Trail under the leadership of board President Tim Nink. Many of our Friends group board members assisted and/or helped plan the event.



The day-of-the-event weather proved to be sunny and fantastic. The ride started at the Meijer Headquarters parking lot in Walker, with options for riders to visit Marne (12 miles), Conklin (25.5 miles), Ravenna (37 miles) and Muskegon (62 miles). SAG stops were provided with water and light snacks for the riders. The event had (146) pre-registered and walk-up participants which surpassed the 2016 event that had (133). Participants of the ride came from all over Michigan, including places such as , Kalamazoo, the greater Grand Rapids area, West Michigan lakeshore communities and even Chicago, IL. We had plenty of returning riders from our last two recent Gold Spike events in 2014 & 2016.

In addition to the SAG stop amenities, our riders got a “goodie” bag with various items including a 2018 Michigan Trails magazine, Meijer branded items, Gold Spike wristband and a Musketawa Trail LED lighted keychain. Early pre-registered riders also were guaranteed a 2018 Gold Spike IV event t-shirt.

**Please help us thank our generous 2018 SPONSORS**

**Platinum Level (Featured):**

**meijer**

**Gold Level:**

**DEWYS Manufacturing**

**Silver Level:**

**VIKING PRODUCTS INCORPORATED**

**MTGA Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance**

**WMTG WEST MICHIGAN TRAILS & GREENWAYS**

**JOHNSTON BOILER COMPANY**

**Bel-aire MOTEL**  
Your Host: Joan Schmitt (231) 733-2196

**MICHIGAN DER BICYCLE TOUR**

**AC ADVANCE CONTROLS**

**Friends of Ottawa County Parks**

**Bronze Level:**

**Lighthouse GROUP - TITLE**

*Also, please help us thank all the wonderful volunteers who donated their time to help put on and support this event.*

We want to thank all our generous sponsors for their wonderful support and our volunteers for their donation of time and assistance. We also wish to thank our participants for supporting the Gold Spike IV event, the Friends of the Musketawa Trail and for utilizing Michigan’s abundance of trails.

Many thanks to Edward Holovka, board member and former board president for his work in writing the trail newsletter. Also much thanks to Diana Holovka, board member and treasurer for the typing and layout of photos and getting the newsletter to the printer. The newsletter is then labeled and sealed with postal seals and postage, ready for mailing. Enjoy and let us know if **YOU** have any news to report.

**FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL  
2018 SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS**

- April 4, 2019 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
- June 6, 2019 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
- August 1, 2019 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
- October 3, 2019 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.

**Meetings are held at Ravenna Village Hall  
12090 Crockery Creek Drive**

**Friends of the Musketawa Trail is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization with donations tax deductible. Thank you for your contributions and enjoy the trail. Your donations can be made via PayPal on the trail web site or mail them in the enclosed envelope to:**

**Friends of the Musketawa Trail  
PO Box 5082  
Muskegon MI 49445**

**Your donations are much needed and provide us with the means to continue our trail enhancements, promotions, and maintenance work so you can enjoy a safe ride.**

**FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL**

Tim Nink, President	(231) 747-6116
Gary DeKock, Vice President	(616) 791-9490
Donna Christensen, Secretary	(616) 531-9683
Diana Holovka, Treasurer	(231) 744-8133
Oscar Reed, Director	(231) 744-5731
Mark Fritsma, Director	(616) 897-2198
George Czinder, Director	(616) 847-0947
Joann Schmitt, Director	(231) 733-2196
James Smith, Director	(231) 266-3263
Edward Holovka, Ex-Officio	(231) 744-8133

Tim Nink                      Gary DeKock                      Donna Christensen                      Diana Holovka



George Czinder                      James Smith                      Joan Schmitt                      Mark Fritsma



Please visit us on our [Face Book](#) page and website: [www.musketawatrail.com](http://www.musketawatrail.com)



Friends of the Musketawa Trail  
PO Box 5082  
Muskegon MI 49445

Photos provided by Diana Holovka, Broadway SAG Coordinator



**Rich Klien      Duane Snowdin      Rob Wiersma      Maggie Cornett      Daniel Romej      Mike Brus & Keith Boneburg      Rachel Bassett & Bernie Bennett      Colleen Myers**



**Carim Caulkins      Denise Drake & John Chambers      Wendy Hahn, Karen Knapp, & Michelle Brown      Dennis & Divina Otte & John Holmes      David Stricklen      Debbie Kelley & Bruce Jennings      Nancy Czyzewski & Janet Chambers**



**Sam & Dan Gallmeyer      Kathy VanderKolk      Herb & Scott Pfeiffer      Tom Vanderbilt      Matt Ulmor      Dan Raybourn**



**Michael Balk      Nancy Vanderville & Pete Huver      Toni, Gabrielle, Paul & Samuel VanWesep      Jenn & Andy Amante      Dave Johnson      Valerie Sisson      Sharon Edgar      Linda & Dave Stuart**

**FRED MEIJER PIONEER TRAIL** Photos provided by: Karen Gentry



**WALKER STAGING AREA**



**MARNE SAG STOP**



**CONKLIN SAG STOP**



**RAVENNA SAG STOP**

