



Musketawa Trail

NEWSLETTER



National Recreational Trail 2008

Millennium Trail 2000

Spring & Summer 2015

Vol. 20, No. 41

20 Years of trail work and counting

Dear Trail Friends:

As summer fades on into fall, we hope all have been out enjoying our many scenic and well managed West Michigan trails and have done so safely whether alone, with family, or with friends. Our Friends volunteers have been out doing various enhancement projects, planning for future ones, as well as trail events, and some have even had time to ride and enjoy the trail.

THE CABOOSE HAS LANDED: Early morning, July 2, 2015, West Shore Services, Inc. with a flat-bed semi, led by owner Jeff DuPulka, with the aid of a large crane, hoisted the wheel sections, then the caboose body upon the pre-laid railroad tracks. Purchase and transport costs were funded by the Ravenna Chamber of Commerce, the Beechnau-Thieme Fund, and the Ravenna Historical Society for \$10,000 and \$5,000 respectively. The Ravenna team was headed by Phil Hayes, Bruce Jones, and Dave Ruble who formed the search and purchase team, and handled the Michigan DNR requirements for placement on State property.

Built in 1897 in Montreal Canada, the Grand Trunk Western Caboose ran until the 1970's, was purchased privately in 1974, painted the original Morenci Orange with black trim and was resold in 1995 to the Seemstra family of Allendale, the current seller. Local village volunteers are now in the process of restoring—painting the outside while our Friends group has volunteered to clean and repaint the interior. Site improvements and landscaping are planned. Ravenna has now become a railroad historical trail site with our reconstructed 100-year old water tower and various railroad signage and signals already on site, with more planned.

TRAIL PROJECTS: Our board and other volunteers have spent the spring & summer planning projects, next year's Gold Spike Trail Tour III and performing various trail enhancements and maintenance projects. Our information kiosk and trail signage installed years ago in



Memorial for 4-year old Lil' biker

Ravenna received a "refreshing" by trail vice president, Tim Nink and volunteer James Smith, cleaning, staining, and reroofing the structure. Yours truly and Brian Hopwood did maintenance at the Broadway Trail Head, staining the picnic table, benches, planting trees, and installing a memorial for our "Lil" four year old biker.



Volunteer James Smith and VP Tim Nink—reroofed and stained kiosk at Ravenna Trail Head



Eagle Scout Troop 1127

while we provided technical supervision. Jacob raised the money for the project, with our Friends group donating the first \$100. Thanks to the scouts for a job well done, the fifth Eagle Scout project on our trail.

The Black Creek Trestle and observation deck received a fresh new look by staining from Eagle Scout, Jacob Maas, a senior at Fruitport High School. He was assisted by his team members of Troop 1127. Mom, dad, and adult scout leader assisted



Scout troop staining trestle at Black Creek

We are planning future staining projects at other observations sites to enhance appearance and hopefully to extend the wood life of our decks.

GOLD SPIKE TRAIL TOUR III is planned for **May 28, 2016**, on the Memorial Day weekend.



2014 Gold Spike Tour II—start and finish line at Meijer parking lot in Walker

a repeat of ideal weather of 2014 as well as a great turn out and enthusiastic participants. Befitting the Memorial Day weekend, we are considering a trail theme “Honoring our fallen”, with patriotic additions included. Enclosed is our registration form for your convenience. If you’re not a rider, please pass the ride registration form on to someone who might be interested. We hope to see you all and others on the trail.

TRAIL SIGNAGE: Over the years we’ve made two formal requests to MDOT to place Musketawa Trailhead signage at two major highway access points to no avail. Despite such signage at other regional trails, ie. Hart-Montague and Kalhaven, requests for the same at I-96 in Marne and U.S. 31 in Muskegon, the east and west end entry points were denied. We’ve now placed that request in the hands of DNR staff and hope they are more successful in getting a timely and positive solution. After all, the Musketawa Trail is a major intrastate link, allowing for travel to the cross lake ferry to Wisconsin and has the unique, distinct listing on two national trail directories. We thank both the Muskegon and Ottawa County Road Commissions for their like signage at state and county road sites.

TRAIL WEBSITE: The Friends board at its most recent meeting voted to update and redesign its current website. It has been capably managed by one of our board members in the past and with consultative assistance but has become somewhat outdated. After careful scrutiny of two written proposals, we have chosen a professional web designer and marketing firm to complete the redesign. We hope to get our website up and running by the first of the year, if not sooner, to allow State wide bikers to register for our May 28, 2016 Gold Spike Trail Tour III ride. Please continue to visit us on Facebook until the new web site is complete.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME: The enclosed envelope is provided for your convenience and your continued support and promotion of our trail work. Your past generosity is much needed and appreciated. We are careful stewards of these funds, all going toward the trail, with time, talent, and sweat equity provided by volunteers. In reviewing our years of past work, my conservative estimate is that we have raised and spent nearly \$50,000 that has been put into trail projects with funding obtained through numerous grants as well as memberships and donations. Much thanks to all.

BICYCLE METAL ARTS PROJECTS: Of the three we have planned, one has been completed and the other two are being build by a talented welder, Jason Beintena at Padnos Leitelt in Grand Rapids. The project has been delayed by shoulder surgery, we look forward to seeing the outcome and adding them to our trailheads.

Thanks to Bonnie Poulin and Mary DeHousler of the Ravenna Village Garden Club, for their lovely care of the flowers around the water tower. We recently teamed up with them by providing funds to add mulch to the flower beds for weed control. Their job was beautifully done and much appreciated. The Ravenna Village staff do a great job of keeping the grass mowed at that site.

CORRESPONDENCE: A request came in from an out of area biker planning a trip through Muskegon for information on the availability of bike rental along the Musketawa Trail. He was notified of rental businesses in Grand Rapids and Muskegon as well as was provided worthwhile tourist site information in the area. An email from Scott Braspeninx of Muskegon states that he and a cousin peddled the entire length and back of the trail and had a fabulous time. Scott is an environmental and industrial — Brownfield Development professional—and offered volunteer assistance in fund seeking as well as sweat equity on the trail. Thanks Scott, we’ll keep you in mind.

Received a nice note from Doreen Clark of Ravenna with photos of a very impressive memorial build on a trail in Florida. It is not unlike the most recent roofed wildlife observation deck we recently built between Marne and Conklin. We have put up a number of memorial plaques on posts at various trail sites upon requests. We appreciate this suggestion and will keep it in mind.

Our adventuresome board member, Gary DeKock and wife Linda of Grand Rapids, just completed another kayaking event to raise funds for a national organization **Water for People**. Their 400 hundred mile journey started at the head waters of the Grand River, proceeded for two weeks and 250 miles to Grand Haven and then continued along the Lake Michigan shoreline to Chicago, encountered two days of high winds, changed to bikes, and negotiated some nice trails to Indiana and the Buckingham Fountain in Grand Park, Chicago. Donations to support the **Water for People** organization by check or if you have any questions, you may contact: Gary DeKock at: gdekock@gmail.com You may also donate directly via credit card at the Crowdrise website: www.crowdrise.com/GrandRiverVoyage

Another board member, Sharon Davis and female companions, did a New England biking odyssey covering seven states and Canada including 12 days and 2300 miles of auto traveling. They enjoyed lovely trails in Vermont, the Finger Lakes and Watkin Glens in New York, Nagasacki Bay in Rhode Island, etc. They returned to the USA via the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron.

DID YOU KNOW: (a) Total economic value of trails in Michigan is estimated at 660 million dollars. (b) Michigan leads the United States in trails with 12,500 miles and growing. (c) Trails generally increase adjacent land values by 10 percent. (d) Governor Snyder envisions Michigan’s Iron Belle Trail from Belle Island State Park in Detroit north and westward to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula, crossing 48 counties. (e) It is truly noted that communities build trails and trails build communities, especially connecting small railroad towns.

In March 1999, Friends sponsored a half day conference on trail development with featured speaker and then director of trails, at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources hosted by Friends president Ed Holovka. It stirred much interest and discussion by the municipal planners, township officials, park & recreation staff, user groups, etc. Thanks to the Community Foundation for Muskegon County for funding and the Muskegon Community College for their fine accommodations.

Congratulations to Nancy Krupiarz and the Michigan Trail & Greenways Alliance (MTGA) in Lansing celebrating 15 years of trail planning and development. She and board members have played a pivotal role in planning 700 miles of trails in Michigan with more to come.

Lastly, how about a fall ride on the newly paved and widened **HART-MONTAGUE TRAIL** with blazing colors abound, amid farms, fields, forests, and orchards. The trail is getting a



Looking for a smooth ride, the newly repaved Hart-Montague trail



Trestle that was replaced on the Hart-Montague trail

complete rebuilding with paving to be completed by Halloween. Please note and say hello to hard working trail manager and long time trail advocate Joel Mikkelsen.

Looking forward to seeing you on the trail.

Edward Holovka, President

Friends of the Musketawa Trail is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization with donations tax deductible. To have your donations count for your 2015 income tax year, please mail them before December 31, 2015. Thank you for you contributions and enjoy the trails. Your donations can be made via PayPal on the trail web site or mail them in the envelope provided to:

**Friends of the Musketawa Trail
P.O. Box 5082
Muskegon Michigan 49445**

**FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL
2016 SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS**

- March 3, 2016, Thursday - 7:00 p.m.
- May 5, 2016, Thursday - 7:00 p.m.
- August 4, 2016, Thursday - 7:00 p.m.
- October 6 2016, Thursday - 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at

Ravenna Village Hall
12090 Crockery Creek Drive
You're all welcome to come join us.
We appreciate your input and insight

**FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL
BOARD MEMBERS**

Edward Holovka, President	(231) 744-8133
Tim Nink, Vice President	(231) 747-6116
Sharon Davis, Secretary	(616) 837-9310
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
Gary DeKock, Director	(616) 791-9490
Donna Christensen, Director	(616) 531-9683
Harold Drake (Ex-Officio)	





**Above - The Caboose landed July 2, 2015
Photos are courtesy of the Ravenna Independent
News Thursday, July 9, 2015**

**Below - Ravenna Trailhead
Photo courtesy of the Ravenna Independent
News, Thursday July 9, 2015**



Friends of the Musketawa Trail
PO Box 5082
Muskegon MI 49445



GOLD SPIKE TRAIL TOUR III

Saturday, May 28th, 2016

Hosted by: The Friends of the Musketawa Trail

Visit us online at: www.musketawatrail.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-the-Musketawa-Trail/205175442856666>

Come ride with us RAIN or SHINE!

When: Saturday, May 28th, 2016 (Check in opens at 8AM and closes at 10AM)

Where: Meijer HQ parking lot: 2929 Walker Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544 (Take exit 28 from I96, then south on Walker Ave)

Why: Promote rail trail usage, enjoy the outdoors and have fun!!!

Ride the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail and the Musketawa Trail

The Gold Spike Trail Tour offers cyclists of all abilities a chance to explore the Fred Meijer Pioneer Trail and the Musketawa Trail. The ride features:

- A one day, organized bicycle ride of one or both trails
- An out and back route that does not require cyclists to leave the trail at any point
- Options to ride 20K, 41K, 60K, 100K or to turn around at any point on the trail
- Funds raised benefit The Friends of the Musketawa Trail (a 501 [c] [3] non-profit) for improved trail amenities, promotion and advocacy.
- A t-shirt with ride logo guaranteed for all early PAID registrants.
- SAG stations with refreshments and light snacks at Marne (10K), Conklin (20.5K), Ravenna (30K) and Muskegon (50K)
- Beautiful trails through scenic woods, farmland and wetlands
- A chance to ride with friends, family and fellow trail enthusiasts

Sponsors:



GOLD SPIKE TRAIL TOUR III

bike ride

May 28,
2016

REGISTRATION FORM

One Form Per Rider (May be Photocopied)

*Required Field MUST BE FILLED IN (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

*First Name: _____

*Last Name: _____

*Mailing Address: _____

*City: _____

*State: _____ *Zip: _____

*Phone (Day): () _____

*Phone (Evening): () _____

*Email Address: (For email confirmation)

(I don't have Email, PLEASE MAIL MY CONFIRMATION
MATERIALS)

*Age on ride (5-28-2016): _____

*Gender: Male Female

*Person to Contact in Case of Emergency:

On Ride Not on Ride

*Name: _____

*Phone: () _____

*Event ride duration desired (not binding):

12 miles (20k) 37 miles (60k) 62 miles (100k)

Visit us online at: www.musketawatrail.org

RECORDS USE ONLY:

_____ PAID

_____ COMP. _____ AUTH.

Disclaimer: Event will take place rain or shine. Please be prepared with proper attire for predicted weather conditions. No refunds.

Ride Costs:

Child (under 10) \$FREE\$ \$ _____

Youth (10-17) \$10 \$ _____

Adult (18+) \$20 \$ _____

After April 15, 2016, a late fee of \$5 applies: \$ _____

Extras:

A ride event t-shirt is provided to all early PAID REGISTRANTS (10 and older). The cutoff date for early registration is April 10, 2016. After that date, t-shirts are not guaranteed, but some extra t-shirts will be ordered and provided on a first come, first serve basis.

T-shirt (Check Adult Size)

S M L XL 2XL

Additional ride t-shirt - \$10 (Check Adult Size — optional)

S M L XL 2XL \$ _____

Tax deductible donation to "The Friends of the
Musketawa Trail" (optional) \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED (IN US DOLLARS) \$ _____

Note: Please make checks payable to: "The Friends of the Musketawa Trail"
On check memo line, state: "Gold Spike 3 registration fee"

Mail To:

The Friends of the Musketawa Trail
P.O. Box 5082
N. Muskegon, MI 49445

*Note: Include completed registration form,
liability waiver and payment (check).*

Online:

Fill in PDF enhanced form and email to:
musketawatrail@gmail.com

Registration payments can be made via Paypal
with our website link at: www.musketawatrail.org
Purpose/Memo: "Gold Spike 3 registration fee"
Please mail completed liability waiver per above.

I understand that the Friends of the Musketawa Trail Gold Spike Trail Tour III (2016) ride requires physical ability. I represent that I am in sound medical condition. I also state that I have no physical or medical condition that would endanger either myself or others.

I accept responsibility for the condition of my bicycle and agree to abide by all rules of the ride event, especially as they relate to the wearing of a helmet and carrying of identification.

I understand that bicycling can be a HAZARDOUS activity that has many dangers and risks, including injury or death resulting from accident or physical exertion. I understand that bicycling involves a risk of injury, and that injuries are a common and ordinary occurrence of the sport. I agree, as a consideration of, and in consideration for, being permitted to participate in the Gold Spike ride event, I agree not to make a claim against or sue the Friends of the Musketawa Trail or other sponsors or affiliated organizations, and their respective agents, directors, officers, volunteers and employees for injuries or damages relating to bicycling and/or other activities during the ride event.

I am aware that this is a release of liability and contract between the Friends of the Musketawa Trail and myself. I am signing it freely and of my own accord and I recognize and agree that it is binding upon myself, my heirs and assigns, and in the event that I am signing it on behalf on any minors, I have full legal authority to do so, and realize the binding effect of this contract on them, as well as on myself.

PHOTOS RELEASE

During the Gold Spike Trail Tour III (2016) ride, photos may be taken and used for promotional purposes. I hereby give the Friends of the Musketawa Trail the absolute and unqualified right and permission to make and publish photographs of me or in which I may be included or reproductions thereof as it desires for promotional purposes in any media.

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HAVE CAREFULLY READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY (INCLUDING PHOTO RELEASE) AND FULLY UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ITS CONTENTS.

Print name:

Signature or Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:

PLEASE NOTE: Minor under the age of 18 MUST have signature of parent or guardian and return waiver with ride event registration.