



**2020 Spring & Summer
NEWSLETTER
Vol. 25 No. 51**

Dear Trail Friends:

We hope this newsletter finds all our friends and trail users doing as best they can and staying healthy amid the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. It is without a doubt that this situation is affecting our way of life. Trail usage throughout the State of Michigan is way up! That is good news, but it also brings problems.

Please be courteous, respectful and maintain social distancing while using the trails. Also, please make sure to be respectful and follow the rules of the Musketawa Trail and other trails as you use them.

With the pandemic, our (Friends group) work on the Musketawa Trail was delayed this season. We are only going to complete one project this year and have delayed others to next year and beyond. It is also time for our annual request for donations and membership renewals. The Friends of the Musketawa Trail group is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization and we hope that you will consider giving to our group. Your donations help us to maintain and enhance the trail and trail heads.

We will continue to be here to support the Musketawa Trail and to apply the funds that you and all our supporters have given.

Thank you for your continued support and use of the Musketawa Trail!

**Trail Projects (2020):
The Ravenna Depot**

has paint and picnic tables now. We hope you are enjoying this addition to the Musketawa Trail. We want to thank



both the Village of Ravenna and the Ravenna Historical Society for all the hard work that went into this project. We hope you enjoy the photos. Stop at the Ravenna trail head and see the building in person. Take a walk on the trail and enjoy the fall colors.



National Recreation Trail 2008



Millennium Trail 2000

Shavalier Memorial Bench replacement: Our lone Friends project for 2020 is the replacement of the Stan Shavalier memorial bench. This bench is located just west of the Musketawa Trail crossing of Barnes Road in the old town of Sullivan. Stan Shavalier's family requested the replacement of the old, outdated wooden bench. According to his family, Stan was one of the Musketawa Trail's original volunteers. He loved the outdoors and was an avid snowmobiler. He

was very interested in the idea of a new trail in the area with great interest. In the 90's, he loaded his tools into his old Chevy truck and drove onto the trestle in Ravenna. He proceeded to pry out, by hand, the spikes that held the rails in place and



loaded them all into the back of his truck. He worked alone, making it clear he did not want any help. Stan was also instrumental in getting the trestle covered with a protective layer to help alleviate damage from the studded tracks of snowmobiles. Stan worked and interacted with early Musketawa trail volunteers/board members such as Harold Drake and Ed Holovka.



Board members Tim Nink, James Smith and George Czinder went out on a very hot, sunny afternoon late this summer and mixed and poured forty (40) bags of concrete to create



the new pad for the replacement bench. The new bench and removal of the old bench followed later. We hope you enjoy the pictures associated with this project.



Other future trail projects: As reported in our last newsletter, the Friends of the Musketawa Trail has plans for a small upgrade to the Ravenna trail head. We will be adding a handi-cap access picnic table and a bike repair station all on a new concrete pad. This project has been delayed until sometime in 2021 pending an updated budget and construction planning.

We will also be discussing plans for a memorial project for former president Ed Holovka. If you still wish to donate to this project, please submit any donation with a notation of where you would like it to be applied. We will do our best to accommodate.

STAY TUNED!



Small repair project and possible location of Ed Holovka's memorial.

Michigan DNR Update (by Jill Sell): I wanted to take this opportunity to say **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers who dedicate their time to take care of the trail. Your work is very much appreciated!!

I know this year has been difficult and different with COVID-19 and the state spending freeze causing significant maintenance funding delays. Thank you all for being patient while things were getting sorted out and for hitting the ground running once cleared to get back out on the trail. The good news is that people got a chance to enjoy the outdoors more and as a result trails statewide have been experiencing record levels of use.

If all goes as planned, in 2021 we will begin the process of design and engineering for surfacing improvements to the trail. This will include evaluating bridges, culverts, and other existing infrastructure. This will also provide an accurate cost estimate so we can begin to acquire funding for resurfacing and other necessary repairs. Thank you all again for everything you do!

Happy Trails!

Jill

(Jill Sell is the "SW Michigan Trails Specialist" for the Michigan DNR and covers the Musketawa Trail and other trails in the area.)

Trail Usage Reminder: We want to share some friendly reminders to our Musketawa Trail users. We have recently had some illegal trail usage in the form of dirt bikes on the west end of trail, and we thought it a good time to publish this information. These rules come directly from the Michigan DNR

and we have selected ones that apply to the Musketawa Trail and added notes in parenthesis where applicable.

On land owned or under the control of the Michigan DNR (as the Musketawa Trail is), it is unlawful to do any of the following:

- 1). Move, remove, destroy, mutilate, or deface a poster, notice, sign, marker or any property of the department or any other agency of government
- 2). Destroy, damage, or remove a tree, including a dead and downed tree and woody debris, shrub, wildflower, grass, or other vegetation. This does not apply to picking and removing mushrooms, berries and edible fruits or nuts for personal use.
- 3). Solicit business of any nature; distribute or post any handbill or other advertising material; post a sign; paint or otherwise mark any tree or rock on any state-owned land, water, structure, or property, except with written permission from the department.
- 4). Obstruct any road or trail in a manner that hinders public access to state-owned land.
- 5). Hold an event including, but not limited to, a race, endurance contest, tournament, or trail ride, unless the event is conducted pursuant to a permit issued by the department.
- 6). Use or operate any wheeled, motorized vehicle (except a Person Assisted Mobility Device) on state-owned land in the Lower Peninsula of the State of Michigan, except on a designated route, a designated trail, or a designated area. (The Musketawa Trail is NOT a designated trail, so wheeled motorized vehicles are prohibited from the trail surface and the surrounding trail property on either side of the trail surface without an authorized and signed permit from the Michigan DNR).
- 7). Possess a dog or other animal unless it is under immediate control on a leash not more than 6 feet in length (The Musketawa Trail is a designated equestrian {horse} trail. Equestrian users should maintain control of their animal and make provisions to capture the animal droppings).

There is a list of other trail etiquette items that we may include in a future newsletter and/or post on the trail head kiosks (stay tuned).

If you notice any of the activity above and suspect it has not been authorized, please first contact the Muskegon State Park (231-744-3480) and then call the local police non-emergency line (or 911). Poaching should be reported to the RAP line (800-292-7800). If you can safely obtain pictures of the suspected illegal activity, these could be helpful to the agency following up on the reported activity. Please try to report the location of the activity as well. Thank you for observing the usage rules and we hope you continue to enjoy the trail!

Anne Engvall's Retirement:

After more than thirty (30) years in the field of Parks and Recreation, Ottawa County Parks Supervisor Anne Engvall is retiring in February 2021. This Halloween marks fifteen (15) years that Anne has been overseeing Ottawa County's section of the Musketawa Trail, as well as fourteen (14) other parks and open spaces in Ottawa County. She has been blessed with just



two (2) different seasonal Trail Attendants during that time in contrast to the more typical three-year stint of seasonal employees. With minimal supervision and challenging conditions, they have taken extraordinary care of the Trail on a daily basis.

Anne comments that she has also been impressed by the steadfast dedication of the Friends of the Musketawa Trail: "I admire their long-term efforts to plan, build, maintain, improve and support the Trail. They are an amazing group of committed volunteers". She notes that there are, in fact, many people who use the Trail on a regular basis and pick up litter, clean up fallen branches and report problems. "Thanks to all of you who enjoy and care for the Trail."

The Friends of the Musketawa Trail would like to thank Anne and her team for their dedication to the Musketawa Trail and Ottawa County Parks. She has been a very staunch supporter of the Musketawa Trail and non-motorized trails in general. Anne will be sorely missed as she was very helpful on many projects that we collaborated on including the three (3) most recent Gold Spike Trail Tour rides.

If you are able, please help us in thanking Anne for all her work on the Musketawa Trail and the other Ottawa County Parks she was responsible for. (Thank you to Anne for contributing to this article).

Oscar Reed, Director on the Board of the Musketawa Trail provided the following information: The West Shore Snowmobile Council received the 2020 RIF grant extension that was requested for maintenance of the Musketawa Trail. The grant is good in that George and I will not have to submit all expenses by October 8, and it will give us more time to use up the \$15,000 that was allocated. The grant extension will expire October 30, 2021. We don't think the \$15,000 will carry us thru until October 2021. We feel we will have to request a new RIF 2021 grant to last until fiscal year end, October 31, 2021.

Thank you Oscar for this important info.

Oscar and George are also members of the **West Shore Snowmobile Council**. They apply for the Michigan DNR maintenance grant funds to do regular maintenance on the Muskegon County portion of the Musketawa Trail.

Closing Statement: We hope you have enjoyed this Spring/Summer 2020 update on the Musketawa Trail and other local trail happenings. As always, we welcome any comments or questions you may have. We love to hear about how much you are enjoying the trail. Also, if you would like to get involved either as a volunteer or regular board member, please contact us. We are always looking for helpful people who are passionate about the Musketawa Trail!

Thank you for your continued support and best regards,

**Tim Nink, President
Friends of the Musketawa Trail**

FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL 2021 SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

**April 1, 2021 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
June 3, 2021 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
August 5, 2021 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
October 7, 2021 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
4467 Spruce Ct
Norton Shores, MI 49441**

Your donations 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 BOARD MEMBERS

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





It's been one year (October 8, 2019) since we said "goodbye" to Ed Holovka, the first president of the Friends of the Musketawa Trail. He held that position for 21 years before he stepped down and Tim Nink became our current president.

Ed was a tireless volunteer, planted hundreds of trees and hand watered them along the trail. He was a true "environmentalist" always wanting to be outdoors doing "something" for the environment.

Ed is missed by his family and friends but I think he may still be planting seedlings of a different kind.

Ed, may you rest in peace, especially for all the hard work you put into living your life and enjoying it everyday.

December 7, 1931 - October 8, 2019



Please visit us on our
Face Book page and website:
www.Musketawatrail.com

If any of you have any photo's or experiences on the trail and would like to share, please contact one of the board members. We would like to add trail users' insight to our newsletters. Let us know how you use the trail, walking, biking, roller-blading, and wildlife activities you see along the way.

I would like to give credit to Tim Nink, president of the Friends of the Musketawa Trail for his contribution to this newsletter. Also to Oscar Reed for his info on the West Shore Snowmobile Council's participation in obtaining grant monies for trail maintenance. And, I give myself, Diana Holovka, credit for the design and typing of the newsletter along with assembling and mailing preparation.



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