

## 2023 Fall & 2024 Winter NEWSLETTER Vol. 29 No. 59

**OPENING:** The Fall of 2023 and Winter of 2024 are now past us. We, the Friends of the Musketawa Trail, hope you, our readers and supporters, are getting out and enjoying the Spring weather while on the Musketawa Trail. Our "Friends" group continues to volunteer our time to enhance the Musketawa Trail and be advocates for its use. We appreciate your continued support, interest, and usage of the trail! Read on to get the latest about the Musketawa Trail.

**Musketawa Trail Reconstruction News:** You may have read the Musketawa Trail reconstruction update in a recent West Michigan Trails newsletter. We wanted to provide a further update on the Michigan DNR's efforts to get this project "rolling." It looks like the work will happen in multiple phases or parts (this is subject to change). Phasing is still being determined based on constructability and costs. The Michigan DNR is making considerable progress with their consultant on the project. Presently, there

is not a firm start date for construction, but it is looking like the first phase will start later in 2024. Stay tuned for more updates!

**Trail Projects (late 2023, 2024, and beyond):** The Friends of the Musketawa Trail 2023 project work finished with a "spruce up" of the metal arts bike rack in Muskegon (Broadway trail head). Friends board member Oscar Reed cleaned up and painted (prime and topcoat) the rack there. Those of you who use the trail head might also notice that



the color changed to orange. We decided to make this change so that all four (4) racks (Marne, Conklin, Ravenna, and Muskegon) are similar in color. Re-painting of the unit in Marne is planned for sometime this Spring/Summer.

Photos by: Tim & Sheri Nink



National Recreational Trail 2008



Millennium Trail 2000



Our 2024 project season opened with a clean-up of the Muskegon/Broadway trail head. This event is quickly becoming an annual tradition. This project was organized by board secre-



tary, Cari Draft. We also had a couple other board members join including board president, Tim Nink, board member Paul Boucon, Sheri Nink and other "early rising" volunteers. Many hands

made short work as we picked up trash, raked leaves and planted fresh flowers in the flower box at the trail head entrance. Please enjoy some pictures of the event and thank you to all who came out to help.



Photos by: Cari Draft (Secretary) & Tim Nink (President)

Another event/project that continues into 2024 are the caboose "Open House" days! We hope that those of you



who have joined us in the past enjoyed seeing inside the caboose and replica depot. If you have not had the chance to experience this event yet or would

like to go again, board vice president, Gary DeKock and his wife Linda are hosting open houses again. The caboose and replica depot are open for viewing on June



1<sup>st</sup> and August 3<sup>rd</sup> (both Saturdays) from 10AM-2PM. We are also looking to arrange a date in July as well. We will provide any updates via our Facebook page. The Depot was built by the Ravenna Historical Society around 2020.

The Ed Holovka Memorial is still an active project for us. As previously stated, our plans for the memorial include a covered shelter and table along the trail side at the Muskegon/Broadway trail head. Currently, we have a wood post marker installed at the intended site. The project will also include the "final" trail head bike repair station. We purchased this unit last year and it's waiting to be installed.

Construction work is waiting for fundraising efforts to be completed. At the time of writing this newsletter, we have a budget shortfall of approximately \$12,500.



As you may or may not know, Ed was the first president of the Friends of the Musketawa Trail. He held that position for 21 years and dedicated many, many hours to not only organizing/leading our board meetings, but also planting flowers/

trees and organizing & collaborating with volunteers on projects. Ed was very dedicated to the Musketawa Trail and that showed with his numerous volunteer hours and lots of hard work on trail advocacy.

If you are able, please consider a donation for this cause. Any donations should have the following note: "Please apply donation to the Ed Holovka Memorial." Donations can be submitted via PayPal at our website ([www.musketawatrail.com](http://www.musketawatrail.com)) or via standard mail. Any donations we receive for Ed will be reserved solely for this project.

We are open to any ideas you (our readers) may have for available grants or monies that would be applicable to this project. Also, we



Ed Holovka along the Musketawa Trail

would be open to sponsorship for the covered structure with the caveat that this individual/business/sponsorship would need to be vetted and approved by the Michigan DNR. Please reach out if you can assist us with our fundraising efforts. We can be reached via our website (link above) under the "Contact Us" section.

We will provide updates as things progress.

### Trail Usage Etiquette Reminder:

As trail usage moves into the heavier traffic seasons, here is a list of things to be mindful of while using the Musketawa Trail:

1. *Please obey all trail use rules posted on the trail and at the trail heads.*
2. *Please be respectful of other trail users regardless of their usage type or speed.*
3. *Please stay to the right side of the trail, allowing others to pass on the left.*
4. *Bicyclists, when passing, clearly signal your intent by sounding a bell and/or verbally announcing "passing on your left." Users wishing to pass are responsible for the safety of the passing maneuver (including their own safety and the safety of the trail user(s) being passed).*
5. *Please respect our trail neighbors (private property) and stay on the trail.*
6. *Bicyclists yield to all other users; pedestrians yield to horseback riders.*
7. *Please travel at a reasonable speed (bicycle racing is not allowed).*
8. *Please maintain control of your animal (on a leash) and clean up after them (examples: animal droppings from pets such as dogs or horses for our equestrian users).*
9. *Please do your part by leaving the trail as you came onto the trail. Do not litter and be respectful of trail amenities and property.*
10. *Campfires and camping are not allowed on the trail, trail right-of-way or at the trail head parking access points.*
11. *When stopping for any reason, please get off the paved/main trail for both your safety and the safety of other trail users.*
12. *Please do not disturb vegetation and wildlife.*
13. *Class 1 e-bikes (pedal assist only up to 20 MPH, no throttle) are allowed. Class 2 and 3 e-bikes are prohibited.*
14. *Most important of all, **ENJOY** your time on the trail!!!*

**Trail Maintenance News:** With the Spring & Summer 2024 seasons arrival, here is our reminder of who oversees trail maintenance for the Musketawa Trail. The trail maintenance contacts, and their operation dates are:

April 1<sup>st</sup> – November 30<sup>th</sup>

**Ottawa County:** Kate Alvarez  
Phone: 616-610-0440,  
Email: [kalvarez@miottawa.org](mailto:kalvarez@miottawa.org)

**Muskegon County:** Gregory Sherburn  
Phone: 231-744-3480,  
Email: [sherburng@michigan.gov](mailto:sherburng@michigan.gov)

December 1<sup>st</sup>-March 31<sup>st</sup>

**Ottawa & Muskegon Counties:** Steve Veltman  
Phone: 616-610-0440  
Email: [veltmanhardware@aol.com](mailto:veltmanhardware@aol.com)

**Closing Statement:** We hope you have enjoyed this Fall 2023/Winter 2024 update of the Musketawa Trail and the Friends group. Please feel free to share any comments and/or questions that you have with us. We enjoy hearing from our trail users including their outdoor experiences on the trail. We encourage you to continue to utilize the Musketawa Trail in a safe, responsible, and respectful way. As always, if you are curious about our Friends group and/or what we do, please feel free to join us at any upcoming board meeting. Meeting dates, times and details can be found in our newsletter and on our website: [www.musketawatrail.com](http://www.musketawatrail.com)

Thank you for your continued support  
And all the best,

Tim Nink, President  
Friends of the Musketawa Trail

## **FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL BOARD MEMBERS**



President-Tim Nink



V-President-Gary DeKock



Secretary-Cari Draft



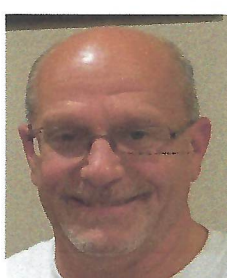
Treasurer- Diana Holovka



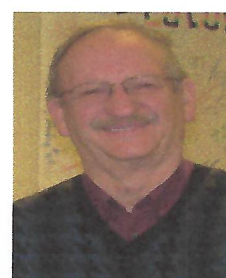
Director-George Czinder



Director-James Smith



Director-Mark Fritsma



Director-Oscar Reed



Director-Paul Boucon

## **FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL 2024 SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS**

April 4, 2024 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.  
June 6, 2024 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.  
August 1, 2024 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.  
October 3, 2024 Thursday, 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at Ravenna Village Hall  
12090 Crockery Creek Drive

Come join us,  
we appreciate your input and insight

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 projects so you can enjoy a safe ride.

Provided you are 59 1/2 years of age, donations from your 401(k) or IRA, can be made without tax liability. Also they would NOT count as income or a deduction from your income. Please consult with your Financial Advisor or Income Tax preparer.

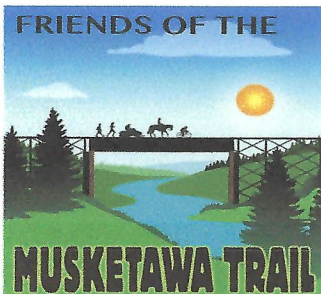
### A Moment of Thanks

I (Tim Nink) wanted to devote a portion of this newsletter to giving thanks to everyone who has contributed to the work and support of the Musketawa Trail (and all trails). I especially want to thank our Friends board members including Gary DeKock, Diana Holovka, Mark Fritsema, Oscar Reed, George Czinder, James Smith, Cari Draft and Paul Boucon. You all give of your precious free time and that is noted and much appreciated. Thank you to all past Friends of the Musketawa trail board members who have either passed on or moved on. It is on your "shoulders" that our group continues to stand upon. Thank you to our partners at the Michigan DNR, especially Jill Sell and Greg Sherburn, for being helpful and so easy to work with. Also, thank you to Kate Alvarez and Ottawa County Parks & Recreation for managing the Ottawa County portion of the Musketawa Trail, keeping it beautiful and assisting us. It takes lots of people to create and maintain public amenities/facilities and those listed above are only a handful of individuals with that responsibility. For those that I have not specifically named who have been helpful and supportive of the Musketawa Trail and other trails, I also want to share a warm

"Thank You"!



*Have a safe and fun summer, Happy Trails.*



4467 Spruce Ct  
Norton Shores MI 49441