

2023 Spring & Summer  
NEWSLETTER  
Vol. 28 No. 58



National Recreational Trail 2008



Millennium Trail 2000

**OPENING:** Fall of 2023 is officially upon us! We, the Friends of the Musketawa Trail, hope this newsletter reaches you, our readers and supporters, and finds you doing well and enjoying the Fall color.

Our small group of "Friends" continues to advocate for and enhance your experience on the Musketawa Trail.

We thank you for your continued interest, support, and use of the Musketawa Trail! Please read on to get the latest about the Musketawa Trail and other local trail news.

**Trail Projects (2023 and beyond):** Friends of the Musketawa Trail project work started out quickly in 2023. As reported in the last newsletter, we had a clean-up of the Muskegon Broadway trail head and installation of the Sharon Davis Memorial bike rack in Conklin.

Projects continued this summer with a "spruce up" of the metal arts bike rack in Ravenna. Board vice-president Gary DeKock repainted the rack to go along with a nice, new paint job on the caboose.



Thanks to Linda DeKock for the great photos

Speaking of the caboose, we hope that some of you got to enjoy the caboose "Open House" days that Gary (and his wife Linda) organized and volunteered at. The caboose and replica depot were open for viewing on three (3) Saturdays, one (1) each in June, July, and August. We are hoping to continue offering these open houses in 2024.



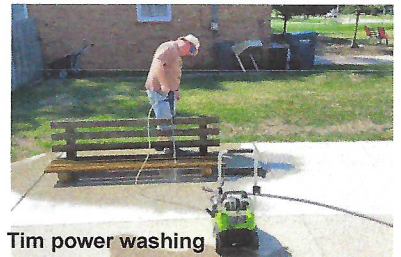
Caboose Open House Days—June, July & August

Photos by Gary DeKock



Next, we had a trail user and Musketawa Trail

neighbor report that a bench along the trail (between 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Arthur) was missing/gone. Age of the wood and carpenter ants weakened the support structure and it failed. Ottawa County Parks picked up the bench and Trail Manager (Kate Alvarez) got the bench to board president (Tim Nink) for repair. Tim spent two (2) days replacing the damaged wood, power washing the older wood and clear stain-



Tim power washing



Bench before repairs

ing the bench. Tim returned the bench to Ottawa County Parks and Kate had her team re-install the bench. We hope the revitalized bench is enjoyed by many for years to come!



Reinstalling the bench

A joint venture between Ottawa County and the Musketawa Trail. Great job



Completed bench installed

Photos by Tim Nink, Sheri Nink, and Ottawa County Parks and Recreation.



Another project in the works is a re-painting of both remaining metal-arts bike racks located in Muskegon and Marne. The unit in Muskegon is up first, has been started, and should be completed in 2023. The unit in Marne will follow. Look for this project to be completed by early 2024 (weather dependent).

We wanted to share that the Ed Holovka Memorial project is still active and being worked on. Our current plans call for the memorial to include a covered shelter and table along the trail side at the Muskegon/Broadway trail head. There is a post installed at the intended site. The project will also include the "final" trail head bike repair station.



E. Holovka memorial post marker



The project budget is a big one! Costs for the materials will exceed \$23,000 with the current budget. We are looking at grants, donations, and other means to get the funds to move forward with construction of this project. Currently, we have just over \$7,400 raised, leaving a shortfall of over \$16,000.

Please consider a donation for this. If you decide to donate to the Ed Holovka Memorial, please submit any donation with a notation of "please apply to the Ed Holovka Memorial". Donations can be submitted via standard mail or via our website ([www.musketawatrail.com](http://www.musketawatrail.com)). Donations "earmarked" for Ed's memorial will be reserved for this project only and not used for any other purpose.

Also, if you are aware of available grants or monies that would be applicable to this project, please get in contact with us and share this information. We can be reached via our website (link above) under the "Contact Us" section.



**STAY TUNED** for updates and other project news!

**Trail Maintenance News:** With the weather and seasons changing, here's a small reminder of who handles trail maintenance for the Musketawa Trail. The trail maintenance contacts and their operation dates are as follows:

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: 231-861-2442  
Email: [veltmanhardware@aol.com](mailto:veltmanhardware@aol.com)

We continue to hear comments about the Musketawa Trail surface conditions and their deterioration. We are aware of these conditions and so is the Michigan DNR. We are happy to let our users know that the DNR has awarded an engineering contract to Hubbell, Roth & Clark. Currently, they have been out on the Musketawa Trail gathering information, doing soil borings and surveys. This is called the "study" phase. We are hopeful that re-pavement of the entire length of the Musketawa Trail will start by 2025. This is tentative, but we are very hopeful as the beginning steps of this process have started! We will share more news when we are able.

**Local Trail Connector News:**

Many of you may have heard about the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail getting new asphalt this year. The 21-mile stretch between Howard City and Big Rapids is the final section that was unimproved. Construction is ongoing and is expected to be completed by mid-November. Light clean-up work and landscaping may remain for early 2024. Once this project is completed, the entire 93-mile trail from Comstock Park to Cadillac will be paved!

**Acknowledging a Remarkable Journey with the Musketawa Trail Board**

We wanted to take a moment to recognize and express our deep gratitude for the exceptional dedication and service of Joan Schmitt, a longstanding member (director) of the Friends of the Musketawa Trail Board.



Throughout the years, Joan's unwavering commitment has played an integral role in shaping the success of our group and the Musketawa Trail. Her generosity, passion, and insights have left an indelible mark on our community and the overall trail experience.



Joan at her late husband Jim's memorial at the Ravenna Trailhead.

Due to recent developments, Joan has been unable to attend the past few meetings, leading to her stepping down from board membership. We honor her legacy and the meaningful contributions she has made during her time serving on the board.

While Joan Schmitt's official board membership may have ended, her impact will continue to be an inspiration to us all. We extend our heartfelt appreciation for her dedication and wish Joan the very best in her journey ahead..

We, the Friends of the Musketawa Trail Board members, want to thank Joan for her exceptional service and time!



**Closing Statement:** We hope you have enjoyed this Spring/Summer 2023 update on the Musketawa Trail and other local trail news. As always, we welcome comments and/or questions from you. We enjoy hearing from our users and their experience and usage of the Musketawa Trail. As a reminder, please continue to utilize the Musketawa Trail in a safe, responsible, and respectful way. Also, if you are interested in getting involved, please feel free to join us at an upcoming Friends board meeting or reach out via email.

Thank you for your continued support  
And all the best,

Tim Nink, President  
Friends of the Musketawa Trail

As our President Tim stated above, please feel free to contact us regarding your thoughts and experiences on the trail.

We would like to add you, our 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.

Thank you for your interest in the Musketawa Trail.

Please visit us on:

Face Book and our website:  
[www.Musketawatrail.com](http://www.Musketawatrail.com)

Thanks to all of our donors, your donations have helped make the trail what it is today. And, your donations will continue into the future.

## 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

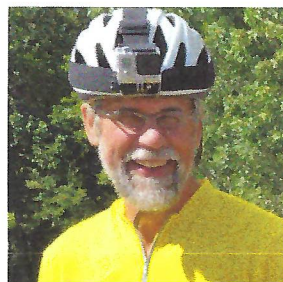
Your donations provide us with the means to continue our trail enhancements, promotions, and maintenance projects so you can enjoy a safe ride.

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.

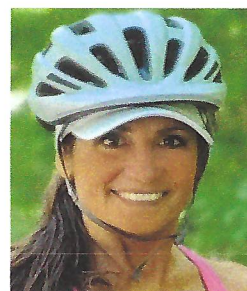
## FRIENDS OF THE MUSKETAWA TRAIL BOARD MEMBERS



President-Tim Nink



V-President-Gary DeKock



Secretary-Cari Draft



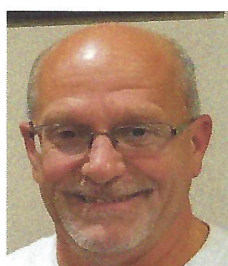
Treasurer- Diana Holovka



Director-George Czinder



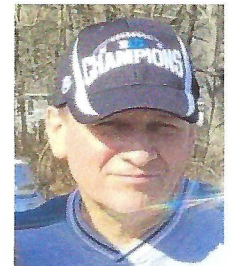
Director-James Smith



Director-Mark Fritsma



Director-Oscar Reed



Director-Paul Boucon





The Musketawa Trail Board reward themselves once a year with an annual dinner. This year we went to Whit-lows Restaurant. A good time was had by all.

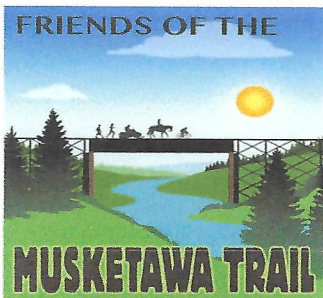


**Friends of the Musketawa Trail Board Members**

Left to right  
Gary DeKock, Cari Draft, George Czinder, Tim Nink, Diana Holovka, Paul Boucon, Oscar Reed, and Mark Fritsma.  
Jamies Smith was unable to attend.

Spouses are also included in our annual dinner as some are many times part of the volunteer crew.

*Have a safe and wonderful Holiday Season with friends and family.*



4467 Spruce Ct  
Norton Shores MI 49441