



TRAIL NEWS

ISSUE #10

HURON COUNTY, OHIO

FALL 2008

NORTH COAST INLAND TRAIL

COLLINS GRAND OPENING

1.3 Miles of beautiful new trail now open!



Joe Wilhelm was hard at work preparing the new trail surface as we went to press. A finished trail will await you on Oct 19!

Firelands Rails to Trails is pleased to announce the Grand Opening of 1.3 miles of new trail in Collins. This is the first piece of the North Coast Inland Trail in Huron County to be opened east of Norwalk.

Wilhelm Construction, of Monroeville, was awarded the contract for grading, cleaning ditches, trail surfacing, and constructing a new parking lot at Hartland Center Road.

Volunteers began clearing brush eighteen months ago and have been working tirelessly to prepare the stretch between Hartland Center Road and Derussey Road. The volunteers also constructed safety fencing over two culverts and placed posts and signs at each end of the trail.

The next phase of construction will push west from Hartland Center Road back toward Norwalk. Clearing has already begun and will continue as the leaves fall and snow flies.

Please join us and your Collins neighbors in celebrating the Grand Opening of this beautiful piece of recreational trail.

GRAND OPENING

**Sunday, October 19
Hartland Center Rd
to Derussey Road
COLLINS**

1:00 to 4:00 pm

***Festivities begin
at Hartland Center Rd.***

Come walk, bike, or bring your horse and check out the exciting, new, scenic tree-lined trail in the Collins Community!

1st 5K Race Brings Fast Times and Big Dollars



Robert Littlejohn turned on the steam on the back stretch and took first place with a time of 19:03:00.

NORWALK - The inaugural Bridge the Gap 5K Run/Walk was a big success with 129 participants on a brisk Saturday morning, May 17.

The race on the Norwalk portion of the North Coast Inland Trail was a fundraiser for the rebuilding of a century-old railroad bridge in Monroeville. The bridge will close the gap between the two open portions of the trail in Huron County.

"This is the first fundraiser we've held on the trail," said Firelands Rails to Trails President Gordon Oney. "Based on this turnout, it won't be the last."

In addition to the large turnout, the event was made successful by the many local businesses sponsoring it and donating door prizes, said race coordinator Joyce DuPont. The final amount raised came to \$4,914.00 less expenses. All proceeds will go toward joining the two trail pieces.

Firelands Area Runners Club administered the race. Top finishers in the race received handmade trophies crafted from railroad artifacts designed by Fritz Kuenzel, a Firelands Rails to Trails Trustee and railroad history expert. All runners received a "Bridge the Gap" t-shirt.

For race results and a list of the generous sponsors, see page 3. *Article by Rick Schaffer*

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WORK DAY REPORTS... a review of our progress!

Work Days are held every first Saturday and every third Sunday of each month. Volunteers meet at specified locations on the trail to perform a variety of tasks and complete various projects. Good planning and great participation lead to big progress and a good time had by all. All work day announcements are done via email the week before. To get involved, sign up for email notification, pick a work day that interests you, then simply show up!

Photos by Colleen & Stan Bernhardt, Fritz Kuenzel, Gordon Oney, and Joe Mantey.

April 5: Step one in converting an abandoned industrial corridor into a recreational trail is to clear back the brush and debris enough to see what we have to work with. Over a dozen volunteers met at Collins to scout out the future trail in preparation for surveying and drawing up specifications. On the same day, volunteers worked west from Collins to clear brush toward Medusa Road. This was the first time work had been performed in this area and those present enjoyed the new scenery. Compare this photo with picture #5 on page three!



April 20: Volunteer Matt Bernhardt stares in disbelief at the trash just pulled out of the woods..... Volunteers from Firelands Rails to Trails spent half a day in Monroeville picking up miscellaneous junk along the recently opened trail as part of their Earth Day 2008 contribution. In their continual effort of converting the former abandoned industrial corridor into the North Coast Inland Trail, members of the group rounded up 22 tires, 16 bags of trash, 2 old bicycles, one too many oil filters, several chairs, metal scraps, and even a satellite dish in just over a quarter mile of trees bordering the trail near Rt 547.



May 3: Trees and tall brush were removed from the ditch just west of Halfway Road. The "two track" as seen here has been sprayed and will soon be removed to and create a smooth trail.



May 16: Sixty (count 'em!) loads of dirt were brought in to raise "the dip" just west of North West Street. The goal was to raise and smooth the area of trail over the culvert. Mark Haynes (right) stepped in quickly and smoothed the fresh limestone to create an ideal running surface for our first 5K Race. A huge thanks to Mark!



June and July: Ever resourceful and inspired by the loads of scrap found along the right of way, FRTTI Volunteers filled truck after truck of scrap metal tie plates and other trash. Proceeds from the scrap drive will go toward the "Close the Gap Fund". To date, FRTTI has amassed over \$2,000.00 in scrap sales in 2008!

June 22: Volunteers performed erosion control at the double arch stone viaduct by installing railroad ties.

July 20: New benches were installed under the leadership of Joe and Andrew Missler. Low branches were trimmed.



July 4: FRTTI participated in the Norwalk 4th of July Parade with bikers, walkers and Doug Jaqua's Classic Whippet.



Aug 17: Wilhelm Construction began work at Collins.
Aug 23-24: Volunteers began fence work at Collins.
Aug 30: Freshman Students from Oberlin College cut brush on the west side of Collins (above and left)
All Summer: Steve Siesel, Stan Bernhardt, Fritz Kuenzel, Paul Douglas cut all the grass. Meanwhile, Lisa Wendt applied for a grant from the National Trails Foundation to rebuild the Meggison Creek Bridge.

"Nothing will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome." Samuel Johnson, 1759.

5K RACE RESULTS & SPONSORS

Overall Male Winner

Robert Littlejohn 19:03:00

Overall Female Winner

Mara Lee Beebe 20:52:00

Overall Male Walker

Joe Grof 39:53:00

Overall Female Walker

Melanie Grof 39:52:00

Male 13 & Under

Nate Good 23:22:00 1st

Nathan Nash 23:24:00 2nd

Brandon Seifker 25:03:00 3rd

Female 13 & Under

Ashley Dellinger 23:32:00 1st

Katie Jackson 28:20:00 2nd

Zura Webb 38:47:00 3rd

Male 14-19

Randall Littlejohn 22:34:00 1st

Josh Good 27:06:00 2nd

Female 14-19

Ashley Smith 24:15:00 1st

Hannah Riley 34:09:00 2nd

Nikki Hall 37:52:00 3rd

Female 20-24

Kelsey Keller 25:05:00 1st

Male 25-29

Joe Hicks 19:22:00 1st

Vinnie Beebe 20:24:00 2nd

Joe Binkley 21:41:00 3rd

Female 25-29

Amy Cull 26:01:00 1st

Janie Frisch 26:05:00 2nd

Sarah Hartlaub 28:22:00 3rd

Male 30-34

Abe Helmstetter 22:16:00 1st

Dave Krueger 24:30:00 2nd

Jason Cross 24:47:00 3rd

Female 30-34

Colleen Oney 25:51:00 1st

Camie Bomar 26:41:00 2nd

Veronica Feicks 34:46:00 3rd

Male 35-39

Derek Mathieu 19:19:00 1st

Chris Feyedelem 21:23:00 2nd

Rob Good 22:46:00 3rd

Female 35-39

Vickie Feyedelem 21:11:00 1st

Shanna Keefer 28:12:00 2nd

Dawn Gauman 28:58:00 3rd

Male 40-44

David Sloan 21:08:00 1st

Bryan Tatar 22:51:00 2nd

Darin Carlson 23:33:00 3rd

Female 40-44

Robyn Schaffer 32:04:00 1st

Beth Loughridge 32:42:00 2nd

Mary Ivory 34:27:00 3rd

Male 45-49

Kevin Ryan 20:32:00 1st

Dan Moyer 22:00:00 2nd

Bob Wagner 23:35:00 3rd

Female 45-49

Sherry Volz 26:22:00 1st

Mary Davis 26:26:00 2nd

Patty Moyer 27:38:00 3rd

Male 50-54

John Gross 20:39:00 1st

Bill Alford 23:52:00 2nd

Bill Schaefer 26:03:00 3rd

Female 50-54

Kris Hilty 26:04:00 1st

Kathy Yaussy 31:26:00 2nd

Cathy Siwek 31:43:00 3rd

Male 55-59

Dave Wallingford 20:55:00 1st

Bob Tuneberg 24:24:00 2nd

John Flickinger 26:48:00 3rd

Female 60-64

Margaret Lonz 44:20:00 1st

Male 70-74

Larry McGlinchy 51:41:00 1st

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL
OUR PARTICIPANTS!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

R.S. Hanline and Co.
Perkins restaurant
Underground Utilities
Lawrence McGlinchy, P.E., P.S.
Owens Law Firm
Balduff's Carpet
Lake Erie Construction Co.
Mike Adelman, Huron County
Commissioner
Berry's Restaurant
Gardner's Supervalu
Domino's Pizza
Tom & Lisa's Gulf Inn
Excel Bike and Fitness
The Lapatea
Fisher Titus Medical Center
Nobil's Sport and Trophy
Kramer's Market
National City Bank, Monroeville
Home Savings and Loan
Sherris' Coffeehouse
Pean's Pizza, Subs & Sudz
Peacock Water
Beauty Vault
Croghan Bank
Easy Trip Gas Station, Monroeville
Subway, Monroeville
Jeff Colvin
Kenilee Lanes

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION IN COLLINS



1



4



2



5



3



6

Wilhelm Construction personnel performed heavy grading, ditch clearing and worked their way through the jungle which obscured the former railroad corridor (above) as volunteers from Firelands Rails to Trails erected fences and prepared the trail for opening day:

- 1) Brush cutters head into the fog and mess in early 2008.
- 2) Holes are drilled for the fence posts east of Hartland Ctr.
- 3) Fencing completed over one of the ancient culverts.
- 4) Posts are set at Old Woman Creek near Derussey Road. The large sandstone slabs were part of the original 1851 abutments and had to be removed prior to post installation!
- 5) The fence takes shape over Old Woman Creek.
- 6) A few of the dedicated volunteers take a short break.

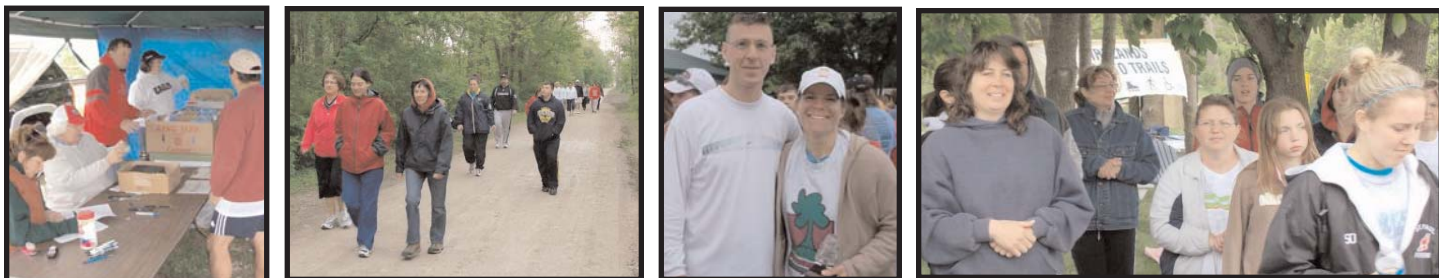
Our Mission

Firelands Rails to Trails, Inc., (FRTTI) is dedicated to completing the Huron County section of the North Coast Inland Trail. FRTTI will develop, maintain, and operate the trail on behalf of the owner group for the benefit of all citizens and visitors to the area. FRTTI will work to earn the support of citizens, organizations, and businesses by making the best use of their expertise, equipment, materials, labor, and financial contributions.

As resolved by the Board of Trustees, July 2008

5K RACE A BIG SUCCESS

The first ever 5K Race on the North Coast Inland Trail was great fun and a huge success thanks to our many sponsors and volunteers. FRTTI Trustee Joyce Dupont went above and beyond in race day promotions, runner sign ups, acquiring sponsors, and race day organization. Thanks to Joyce's efforts, and the FRTTI Board of Trustees, the 5K went smoothly and created more awareness of the new trail.



OTHER NEWS: BELLEVUE, SANDUSKY COUNTY, AND THE NLGWRT

FRTTI Trustees held a meeting at the **Bellevue Rec Center** on Tuesday, Sept. 2 to create trail awareness on our west end. Another Power Point presentation is planned for Norwalk later this year. Further west, **Sandusky County Park District** continued work on the brand new Fremont-Lindsey-Elmore portion of the NCIT which is scheduled to open this fall. Visit www.scpd-parks.org for details. **New London Greenwich Rail Trail Inc.** has been officially formed and is in negotiations with W&LE Railway to acquire 7.8 miles of former railroad between the two towns. You can support their efforts immensely by becoming a member at: www.newlondongreenwichrailtrail.org

TELEGRAPH OFFICE... *chatter on and off the trail*

"In the period July 2 through August 3, I spent 37 hours on the trail, rode 473.2 miles and encountered 375 people." - Trail Sergeant Mike Conney on trail bike patrol as submitted in his monthly report.

"I can't wait for the trail to be completed through Collins. I can't wait to use it... and my property value will go up!" - Collins resident and adjacent property owner.

"We are bringing our horses up from Bucyrus on Wednesday to tour the trail, where should we park our big horse trailer?" - Bucyrus Equestrians via the website

"Any updates on extending the trail to Bellevue? I would like to get involved and someday be able to use the trail to bike to work in Norwalk." - Bellevue resident via the website

"We are planning a trip to your area to ride the bike trail. Please send us a trail brochure and information on lodging and local attractions." - Bicyclists from Erie, PA via the website

SAFETY FORCES DAY



Police, Fire, Sheriff and EMS personnel arrive and listen to the presentation at the Peru Center Road Trailhead in Monroeville. Many of them are regular runners and bikers on the NCIT.

Twenty Three members of local police, fire, sheriff and EMS were present at the Safety Forces Day event on the trail on September 15 in Monroeville.

FRTTI Trustees hosted the event in effort to educate emergency responders in the event of an on-trail emergency. The presentation covered trail access, spring posts, bridges and culverts and jurisdiction of local agencies.

Trail Patrol Officer Sgt. Mike Conney discussed safety and law enforcement issues and briefed everyone on his experiences on the 1,400 miles he has biked so far in 2008! The event was well received and appreciated by those in attendance. Pocket trail maps were given to all to familiarize themselves with the new and proposed sections.

NEW TRUSTEE

Meet Rick Schaffer

FRTTI is pleased to announce long time volunteer Rick Schaffer has been elected to the Board of Trustees. Rick and his wife, Robyn and son, Taylor, live in Norwalk and are avid outdoors people. Rick will help with grant applications, press releases and public relations along with the many hats we all wear as typified by Rick setting posts at Rt. 547 (below). Welcome and a big thanks to Rick.



PRESERVING OUR RAILROAD HERITAGE

PART 1 OF 5: THE EARLY DAYS OF THE TOLEDO, NORWALK & CLEVELAND RR

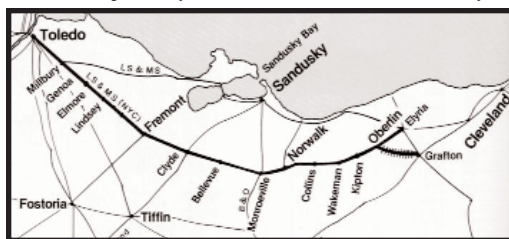
"We are happy to announce that the contractors upon our Rail-Road, or a part of them, have arrived, with men, horses, carts, and other implements; so that, in a few days, we may expect to see the entire line from Toledo to the Junction (Grafton) in a state of bustle and progress. Go ahead, say we." Norwalk Reflector, September 9, 1851.

Imagine life in Huron County in 1851. Most have never even seen products of the industrial revolution and for many, the steam locomotive is the first such mechanized device they would see. *"We have to-day for the first time, had a view, from our office window of the "Iron Horse," as he snorted and pranced along through the town."* Norwalk Reflector, November 18, 1852.

Our TN&C was part of the original east-west transcontinental between New York and Chicago, and though very significant, its completion at Grafton ("The Junction") was much less heralded than the joining of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific in Promontory, Utah some 16 years later. The line was constructed to serve as a link between Toledo and the Cleveland, Columbus & Cincinnati Railroad at Grafton, hereby giving the TN&C a direct connection to Cleveland. At the time, rail itself was not even being produced yet in the U.S. and the first rails came from England. Norwalk would soon grow into a hub for the TN&C's successors and would feature a large car and locomotive shop complex and the line would see regularly scheduled freight and passenger traffic for over a century. After merging with the Junction Railroad, the line would soon become secondary branch line.

In the next issues we'll take an in-depth look at how the railroad evolved through different companies, hit its zenith, slowly declined and would someday be reborn as a recreational trail and historic treasure for all to enjoy.

Compiled by Fritz Kuenzel and Joe Mantey.



Artifacts and photos from the early TN&C days are almost impossible to find. The photo above (near actual size) shows the front and back of a TN&C baggage tag. Map shows original TN&C line going to Grafton and later Elyria. Map from May 1984 Mainline Modeler.

1851 TN&C Railroad construction begins

1852 First train through Norwalk

1853 TN&C Merges with Junction Railroad and becomes the Cleveland and Toledo Railroad.

1866 Connection built to Elyria by C&T RR

1869 C&TRR merged into Lake Shore & Michigan Southern. LS&MS Line through Sandusky is rebuilt and becomes THE mainline. The original TN&C line through Norwalk forever becomes a branch line known as "The Norwalk Branch"

1914 LS&MS becomes part of rapidly expanding New York Central System

1968 NYCRR and Pennsylvania merge to form Penn Central. PC is nation's largest bankruptcy by 1970.

1976 PC officially abandons the Norwalk Branch

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Dues:

____ New ____ Renewal

____ Individual \$ 10.00

____ Family \$ 15.00

____ Patron \$ 50.00

____ Business \$ 100.00

____ Donation _____

____ "Bridge the Gap" Fund _____

TOTAL _____

Membership fees and donations to
Firelands Rails to Trails
are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

I would also like to donate:

____ Labor _____

____ Equipment _____

Detach and Mail this section.
Please make your check payable to:

Firelands Rails To Trails, Inc.
44 East Main St.
Norwalk, OH 44857

TN10

The EXTRA BOARDThe latest news and information

How to join the growing Coalition of Trail Supporters:

Firelands Rails to Trails is creating a Coalition of Trail Supporters. Support from local businesses and civic organizations is the key to the overall success of YOUR trail here in Huron County.

Potential grantors look not only at our membership, but the level of support from the overall community.

For details, and to join the Coalition of Trail Supporters, simply visit www.firelandsrailstotrails.org. Sample letters of endorsement can be found here.

CONTACT US

Firelands Rails To Trails Inc.
44 East Main St.

Norwalk, OH 44857

bikedoc123@verizon.net
or contact us online!

www.firelandsrailstotrails.org

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Cut and mail the form above or visit us online and print the membership form.
- Join FRTTI for as little as \$10
- Sign up for our Email News
- Join us on one of our Work Days
- Tell some friends about it!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thur. Oct 2: Board Meeting
Sat. Oct 4: Work Day at Collins 8-12
Sun. Oct 19: Collins Grand Opening
Sat. Nov 1: Work Day, TBD, 8a-12n
Thur. Nov. 6: Board Meeting
Sun: Nov 16: Work Day- KofC*

*Board Meetings: Norwalk Police Station @ 7pm
* KofC Breakfast in Monroeville at 8:00 followed
by a work day from 9:00-12:00.*

TRAIL NEWS

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