

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR (2005) *By Horace Sanders*

The largest project for 2005 was the completion of 2.5 miles of trail between Dern Road and Whalebone Road. This was a Community Transportation Enhancement Project (CTEP) and community donations paid the 13.4% of the cost. You will see else where in this publication the grand opening of this portion of the trail. A second project involved a grant from the State Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The grant provided funds for graveling the abandoned rail bed and also for signs and benches that have been installed along a three mile portion of trail near Kila. The trail is ready to be paved at this site. We continue to work diligently at fund raising for completion of the trail from Meridian to Kila. We are grateful for all the support, interest and monies contributed to this great project that benefits the whole community. We continue to need support and dollars, peruse the new catalog that accompanies this publication. We have a new item of interest, "Loon Lake" Print by Mark Ogle. Future goals include completing more paving, finishing the area between two bridges and securing plans and funds for the two needed bridges across Ashley Creek. We would like to ac-



knowledge and thank the following folks who helped get these projects off the drawing board and on the ground. MDOT Bretta Duncan, State Fish, Wildlife and Parks for Grant, Flathead Electric Roundup for Safety Grant, Bruce Lutz for preliminary engineering, TD&H Engineering Sherry

Halloran project engineer, Sandon Construction as trail contractor, LaSalle Sand and Gravel for trail gravel, Flathead County Road Dept. Charlie Johnson, Flathead County Planning Office, Flathead County Commissioners, U.S. Fish and Game. Sun Risers Lions, Ron Hoyte for cement donation.

KUDOS FOR RAILS TO TRAILS

By Don Snow

Saturday, 4 June 2005 was a banner day for the Great Northern Historical Trail. Montana State Fish Wildlife and Parks had chosen the trail to be "Trail of the Year" and sent a representative to present an award to the trail board. A small crowd was on hand to witness the event along with some local dignitaries. This honor was unexpected and very welcome. Those who have helped along the way to bring the trail to fruition have been rewarded by the State of Montana. For those who have contributed money, how can we tell you how grateful we are for your help! Learning how big an effort and how long it takes to accomplish such a plan is humbling. To all a sincere THANK YOU !

Meridian Trail Voted "Best Trail for Bicycle Riding" by Flathead Citizens.

GREAT NORTHERN TRAIL CELEBRATION

By Pat Sanders

Rails to Trails celebrated the opening of the Great Northern segment of trail on September 15, 2005. The Trail is a continuation of Trail voted "Best Place to Ride a Bike" by Flathead citizens. There is now 5.5 miles of paved pathway/trail from Meridian Road west



to the first Ashley Creek bridge. Neighbors, bike riders, walkers and other supporters were on hand to enjoy the festivities. Commissioners Joe Brenneman and Bob Watne did the ribbon cutting honors. Rails to Trails of the Northwest would like to thank all who had a part in the planning, engineering and construction of the newest segment of trail. The project is a true grass roots effort involving, County, State and Federal Government, local business and supportive citizens.

MEMBERSHIPS NEW AND RENEWAL

Steve Anderson
 Dan G. Kimbrough
 Nola Chandler
 Dave Landstrom
 C & K Williams
 Greg & Nancy Sanders
 Sue Crawford
 Ken Siderius
 Hadwin Family
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 Nancy & James Berry
 Nancy M. Weckwerth
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DONATIONS

\$50.00 - \$99.00

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 Sheila Hill
 Franklin E. Schroeter
 Dana & Stephanie Christensen
 Liz Hammer
 Bob Beck
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 Vallie Ostrem
 James & Julienne Valentine
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 Darrel Martin
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 Marion Stuart & Paul Storm
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 Fred Adkins
 Dennis Winkel
 Bob & Cheryl Klein
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\$100.00 - \$199.00

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 Northwestern Energy
 Joan & Richard Siderius
 Randy Jones Construction
 Jim & Jeanne Oleson
 Rich & Mike Mulcahy

\$200.00 - \$299.00

Flathead County Health Dept

\$300.00 - \$399.00

Third Street Market

\$500.00 - \$1000.00

Montana Rock Works
 Montana Community Foundation
 Audrey Neuharth Ponoski
 Thrivent Financial

2005 GIFTING AND SUPPORT

All donations go directly to trail construction and maintenance. Our donors are our neighbors and friends and we appreciate all that they give to the Trail effort. Without the support of the community the Trail project would be nil. Your donations give the community some degree of ownership. Your dollars that come to Rails to Trails are tax deductible. Sincere thank you to all for your contributions.

THRIVENT FINANCIAL

By Steve Anderson

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a financial institution plus it is also the country's largest fraternal benefit society. They provide grants and gifts to Lutheran members, organizations and to the communities where members live. As part of a community grant, the Flathead County Chapter of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans gave Rails to Trails \$1000 as a match to the money generated at our annual Harvest Dance and Pie Auction in November.

DOES YOUR DOG LOVE THE TRAIL?

We are placing MUTT MITT dispensers on the Meridian Trail. To honor your beloved dog(s) (past or present) you can purchase an engraved plaque to be mounted on the post. The price is \$25.

Name _____

Phone _____

Message (up to 8 words)

Mail to: Rails to Trails

MUTT MITT

1230 5th Ave. E.

Kalispell, MT 59901

HARVEST DANCE AND PIE AUCTION

By Helen Pilling

The second Saturday in November is a date everyone should mark on their calendars. At the Smith Valley Grange, right on the Great Northern Historical Trail, we hold a "Barn Dance and Pie Auction". This was the eighth year. We had a fantastic gathering of enthusiastic folks of all ages, who not only like to dance but also like pie! Munching on key lime pie to the tunes of "The Grin and Bear It String Clan" and bidding on a berry pie with the encouragement of Sam, the auctioneer always turns out to be a very enjoyable evening. We also included a silent auction with local hand made wonders. We raised \$1400 that night which the Thrivent Financial group graciously matched with an additional \$1000. This fundraiser really does prove that our group appreciates fun events and all the support we get from this great community. Thanks! Mark your calendars for November 2006!



TRAIL SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE

By Val Parsons

As the popularity of the Great Northern Historical Trail continues to grow, it is our responsibility to remind everyone of safety and etiquette when using the trail.

ON the topic of etiquette, dogs must be controlled at all times if not leashed when others approach. Please respect the rights of private property owners along the trail. When passing others on the trail, let the person in front of you know which side you are passing on. Receptacles are at the trail head and under the trestle for your assistance in picking up trash on our trail.

Safety has been enhanced by the development of this trail. But



there are a few safety issues that result by the use of the trail. If you encounter public drunkenness or vagrancy please report this to the Flathead County Sheriff's department. When exiting the trail at Meridian Road, please cross Meridian at the 4-way stop at Center Street. I have seen many users crossing right on the railroad grade. This is very dangerous and annoying to those driving Meridian Road. The 4-way stop is just half a block away.

When riding the trail, please stop at all stop signs and look in all directions that traffic could be coming. Also be alert when crossing the numerous driveways on the new portions of the trail. The popularity of the trail is a joy to watch. Thank you for your donations and support for the trail.

CRITICAL MASS

By Mark Crowley

The Flathead Valley has reached a critical mass of trails and paths. The city and county governments recognize that these are part of the necessary infrastructure to serve our growing population. With a thorough network in place, they help to reduce traffic on our roads. Our paths help transport our children safely to schools and parks. They allow all of us to get some of the exercise our society needs so badly. Even people that do not use the paths can recognize that having

bikes and pedestrians off of the busy shoulder of Highway 2 makes sense.

Columbia Falls now requires paths to be a part of new subdivisions. Kalispell is working to link up the paths around town. Whitefish has secured some spectacular funding for their vision of a trail around the lake.

As we grow, we need to look ahead and keep this the best place.

COMING EVENTS

By Rebecca Shaw

The second Annual Great Northern 5K will be held on May 20, 2006 at 8:00 am. The race will follow the same course as last year on the Great Northern Rails to Trails on Meridian Road. There will be age group prizes for the following categories: 19 and under 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+



Rails to Trails of N.W. Montana
 PO Box 1103
 Kalispell, MT 59903-1103

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Rails to Trails of Northwest Montana
 meets on the first Monday of each
 month at the Fish, Wildlife Conference
 Room 490, Meridian Road

COMING EVENTS

May 13, Meridian Trail Clean-up
 May 20, 5K Run

EXERCISE CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

By Steve Anderson

Diabetes, heart disease, stress, and other maladies can be prevented or reduced by exercise. A brisk walk for 30 minutes, five days a week can prolong your life and help you enjoy it more. The winter with its rainy and snowy conditions comes with an increased likelihood of a sedentary life style. Be kind to your body by hitting the Rails to Trails whenever you can or buying a stationary bike or any exercise machine. Set it in front of the window or TV and invest some time in your health.

Q. How many calories make 1 pound of weight?

About 3,500 calories adds up to about 1 pound. This applies whether they are food calories coming in, or calories (burned by exercise) going out. If you eat 3,500 calories more than your body needs, you will put on about 1 pound. If you use up 3,500 calories more than you eat, you will lose about 1 pound in weight.

Q. How many calories are burned during exercise? (varies by weight, sex and intensity)

Type of Exercise	Calories/hour	Type of Exercise	Calories/hour	Type of Exercise	Calories/hour
Sleeping	55	Office Work	140	Walking, 3 mph	280
Eating	85	Housework, moderate	160+	Table tennis	290
Sewing	85	Golf, with trolley	180	Walking, 4 mph	310
Knitting	85	Golf, without trolley	240	Gardening, hoeing, etc.	350
Sitting	85	Gardening, planting	250	Tennis	420
Standing	100	Shopping	250	Swimming	540
Driving	110	Dancing, ballroom	260	Running 9 minutes/mile	780