

Trail Connections

Winter 2011

The Quarterly Newsletter Published by the Linn County Trails Association



President's Message:

I would like to introduce myself as the newly elected president of LCTA. I am a retired engineer from Rockwell Collins and have been active in LCTA since about 2003. I have installed and maintained the trail counters located throughout Linn County and also assisted with the LCTA sponsored Linn County Mayors' Bike Ride for the past two years, the publication of the LCTA trail maps and the recent redesign of the LCTA web site. I am a bicyclist, former bicycle commuter, Hawkeye Bicycle Club member and have ridden RAGBRAI many times.

I want to thank Geoff Eastburn for his leadership over the past two years and the progress LCTA has made. We have added many young, dynamic members to the board and I hope we can continue to revitalize the board. Please consider joining the board. We meet at Peoples Unitarian Church, 600 3rd Ave SE, at 7:00 pm on the second Monday of the month. The meetings are open to the public.

Most significant is the successful completion of the Capital Campaign to Pave the Cedar Valley Nature Trail. We are providing \$96,250 to Linn County to match grants to pave approximately 7 miles of trail from County Home Road to within 3 miles of Center Point. Originally the work was to start in 2010 to pave 4 miles to Lafayette, but another grant was obtained to pave an additional 3 miles and so work has been delayed to start later this year. The donations have come from 227 foundations, companies and individuals. This demonstrates the wide and strong support for trails when this kind of money can be raised in these tough economic times. The check will be presented to Linn County in the spring and we will publish more information including the donor list at that time.

Going forward, I would like to see LCTA more involved in promoting the development, improvements and maintenance of trails in communities throughout Linn County. We need to participate more in two way communication with the cities to learn how we can assist them in trail development. If you would be willing to act as a liaison with a community, please contact me.

LCTA needs a steady income stream in addition to occasional capital campaigns in order to perform its mission to act as a catalyst for the development and growth of connected, multi-use trails through Linn County and Eastern Iowa. LCTA will be sponsoring many events and public service projects this year to promote trail usage and bicycle transportation. There will also be opportunities to jump-start smaller government trail projects by contributing LCTA funds without launching year long campaigns. 95% of all money raised through donations and grants goes directly to build more trails or to improve existing trails. We rely on the annual contributions from supporters like you. Thank you!

At the bottom of all pages on our web site is a option to sign up to "Get Updates by email". Please signup. We will not release your email address or flood you with emails. You have the option to unsubscribe at any time. Try it, You'll like it!

Happy Trails

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Upcoming Events

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, February 14, 7:00pm

People's Church

600 3rd. Ave. NE.

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, March 14, 7:00pm

People's Church

600 3rd. Ave. NE.

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, April 11, 7:00pm

People's Church

600 3rd. Ave. NE.

All meetings are open to the public.

Sign up to recent updates on trail news and events, visit
the Linn County Trails Association's website at

www.linncountyltrails.org



Find LCTA on facebook @
www.facebook.com/lctrails



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www.twitter.com/lctrails

*Trail Connections is the quarterly publication of the
Linn County Trails Association.*

*It is published January, April, July and October
Articles may be submitted as an MS Word or text file.
Typed, printed or clearly handwritten articles are also
accepted. Photos can be prints or can be submitted
digitally and saved with a resolution of ideally 300 dpi
and a size of 6x8 inches. The deadline for each issue is
the first day of the month prior to publication. Please
send pictures, stories, and ideas to Brad Mullin:
mullinb1427@yahoo.com*

Current Metro Area Trails

Open for use Winter 2011

Trail	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Cedar River Trail (ADT)	11	Asphalt	Cedar Rapids+Hiawatha+County
CEMAR Trail	.6	Asphalt	From 20th to 29th St. NE
CRT Lake Loop	1.3	Asphalt	Around Cedar Lake
Bowling Street Trail	1	Concrete	From 50th Street SW to Wilson Avenue
Prairie Park Trail	1.7	Asphalt	Prairie Park off Otis Rd. SE
Cherokee Park Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	West Side: Edgewood to Wiley Blvd.
Ellis Park Trail	3	Asphalt/Concrete	From Ellis Park to Downtown
Boyson Trail	3	Crushed Limestone	Follows Indian Creek, Marion
Kirkwood Connector Trail	1	Concrete	From Ely Rd. to Kirkwood Campus
Grant Wood Trail	5	Grass/Gravel	Through Eastern Linn County
Lowe Park Trail	0.5	Asphalt	Marion: N. 10th St to 35th Ave
Cherry Hill Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids: Cherry Hill Park
Noelridge Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Noelridge Park
Nixon Trail	0.75	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Around Nixon School
Fay Clark Memorial Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Hiawatha: Fay Clark Memorial Park
Squaw Creek Trail	4	Natural-Groomed	Located within Squaw Creek Park
Matsell Bridge Natural Area	8.4	Natural-Groomed	NE Linn County, near Viola
Pinicon Ridge Park	12	Natural-Groomed	Five park trails near Central City
Beverly Park	5	Natural-Groomed	SW CR: Singletrack Mountain Bike trails
Fross Park	1.2	Crushed Limestone	Walking trail, NW Center Point
Wickiup Hill	5	Natural-Groomed	5 mile network near Toddville
Morgan Creek Park	3.8	Natural-Groomed	NW Cedar Rapids
Hoover Nature Trail	2.4	Asphalt	76th Ave. SW to Ely Park

LCTA Activities Fall 2010 :

Haunted Trail: On Sunday, October 31st, about 30 kids ventured down the “Haunted” Boyson Trail in Marion. A candy station, sponsored by LAMBA, leaf coloring station, and mystery station were featured stops along the trail. The Marion Public Library read ghost stories to participants (*right*).

Trail Clean-up Day, November 6th: Starting at 4 different trail heads, almost 20 miles of trails were cleaned. In total, almost 30 bags of trash were collected by volunteers. The clean-up had about 20 volunteers. The event was organized with the cooperation with the city of Cedar Rapids.



In January, the Iowa Events Center, in Des Moines, is the venue for the Iowa Bicycle Summit on January 28th and 29th. Programs on bicycle facility design, transportation planning, off-road trails and construction of the High Trestle Trail are scheduled. On Saturday January 29th, a special RAGBRAI route announcement party will take place at 8pm in the Iowa Events Center with The Johnny Holm Band providing entertainment.



February is a perfect opportunity to use some of the area trails for cross country skiing, snowshoeing, running or biking. Valentine's Day, February 14th, is another perfect opportunity to go shopping for a new tandem bike or matching running shoes with that special someone.

While the Iowa Bicycle Summit happens in January, the National Bike Summit will take place March 8-10th in Washington D.C. Janette Sadik-Khan, the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation, is the keynote speaker, Wednesday March 9. Since her appointment in 2007, the New York City has completed more than 250 miles of bike lanes and 20 miles of cycle track. Look for summit information on the League of American Cyclists website (www.bikeleague.org).

Local trail supporters will take advantage of the opportunity to promote more "greener" trail usage as part of an entry in the St. Patrick's Day SaPaDaPaSo parade, Thursday, March 17th in Cedar Rapids.



As spring is inaugurated on March 20th, more and more trail users will explore the new trail opportunities created in 2010. The Prairie Park Fishery, CEMAR, and the Hoover Trails are new additions for use in the spring of 2011. Sometime in the spring, the Linn County Conservation Department plans a grand opening for the Hoover Nature Trail connection between Cedar Rapids and Ely.

Other grand openings happen across the state. Travel to the center of the state and celebrate the opening of the High Trestle Trail on April 30th. The twenty five mile paved recreational trail runs from Ankeny to Woodward in Central Iowa. An impressive 13-story high, half mile long bridge provides scenic views of the Des Moines River Valley is a must see for any trail user. For further information visit their website. (www.hightrestletrail.info)

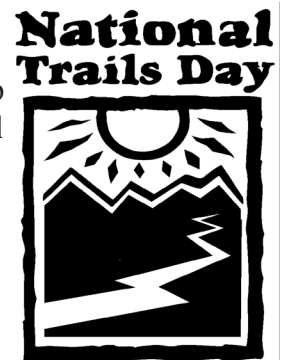


discover a new view

The month of May is dedicated as National Bike Month. During Bike to Work Week from May 16th to May 20th, you can commute to work using one of the area trails. Join cyclists across the United States as National Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 20th. Bike to Work Day was originated by the American League of Bicyclists in 1956. Visit the LCTA website (www.linncountytrails.org) for local Bike to Work events.



National Trails Day is Saturday, June 4th. The Linn County Trails Association will hold its Progressive Breakfast along the Cedar River Trail. Look for stops with donated food and beverage from area businesses along the trail. Organized by the American Hiking Society with co-sponsorship from various federal agencies, and many private corporations and other partners, National Trails Day is a celebration of trails to increase the awareness of community trails and help volunteer trail clubs.



In addition, June 4th is the first day of the Cedar Rapids Downtown District's Farmer's Market. Use the trails to walk or bike downtown to the market. The Bicycle Advisory Committee will have a bike corral for everyone to park their bikes while visiting the vendors downtown.

Further north, The Iowa Trails Summit will occur June 16th to the 18th in Waterloo/Cedar Falls. The Iowa Trails Summit was held for the first time in June 2010. This two-day conference involves a diverse group of trail organizations representing virtually every trail user group, including motorized and non-motorized, equestrian and water sports. The conference focuses on strategies, policies and development opportunities vested in unique partnerships promoting creation of new trail opportunities. Look for an agenda on the Iowa Department of Transportation's website (www.iowadot.gov/iowabikes/trailsummit.html).



Long summer days are great for long trail adventures. Take the opportunity to enjoy some peace and quiet on area trails as the majority of the cyclists partake in RAGBRAI from July 24-30. Venture north to Waterloo/Cedar Falls and enjoy the fun of the 16th Annual Cedar Trails Festival from August 10th to 14th. A five kilometer run, dog walk, bicycle safety rodeo, eco-triathlon and Tour de Valley Ride are scheduled events (www.cedartrailspartnership.org/festival.html). The Saturday, August 13th Light Up the Night Ride will begin at dusk from Gateway Park in Cedar Falls and participants will journey along the trails with lights and helmets taking advantage of the short summer nights.

The month August may mark the beginning of construction for the paving of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail north of County Home Road to Schultz Road in Linn County. A marked detour will direct users around the construction area and completion scheduled in 2012. In September, the construction should begin on the Pinicon Ridge Park Trail connection with Central City. Within Pinicon Ridge, the construction of the Mary Lundby Memorial Bridge should be underway as well. The bridge will connect the trail system from the campground to the day-use side of the park.



Labor Day is Monday, September 5th and the Linn County Trails Association with Bicycle Advisory Committee will hold the Mayors' Ride. The event will have food, fun and entertainment for everyone.

Late in October, beware of "haunted" trails in the area. The LCTA plans to hold its Halloween event again in 2011. Visit the LCTA website for further details. The Annual Meeting of the Linn County Trails Association will be Monday, November 14th. The agenda may feature a special speaker as well as a yearend summary of trail happenings.

As the winter wind blows, it is time to explore the skiing opportunities in the area. Both non-groomed and groomed trails exist for all levels of skiers. Find maps of local ski trails on the LCTA website under *Trails/Find A Trail* and further information on page 10 of this issue. 2011 is filled with plenty of trail related activities for everyone.



Cedar Valley Nature Trail Construction Start

East Post Road Bridge Improvements

In November 2010, the East Post Road Bridge re-opened for both motorists and trail users. The \$2.3 million bridge replacement over Indian Creek features a 14-foot-wide trail/side-walk on the upstream side and a regular-sized sidewalk on the downstream side. In addition, an improved trailhead on the upstream side of the bridge features a new paved access to the Sac and Fox trail. A proposed five foot sidewalk will allow access from the east side of the bridge to the Sac and Fox trail.

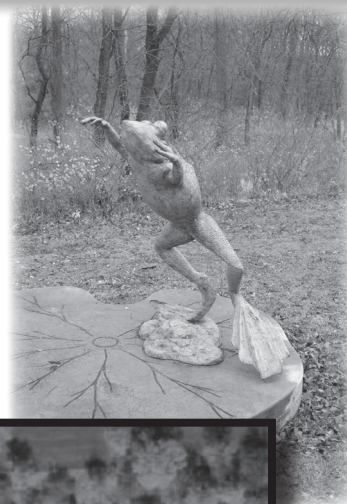


The upstream trail/sidewalk



New paved access to the Sac and Fox Trail

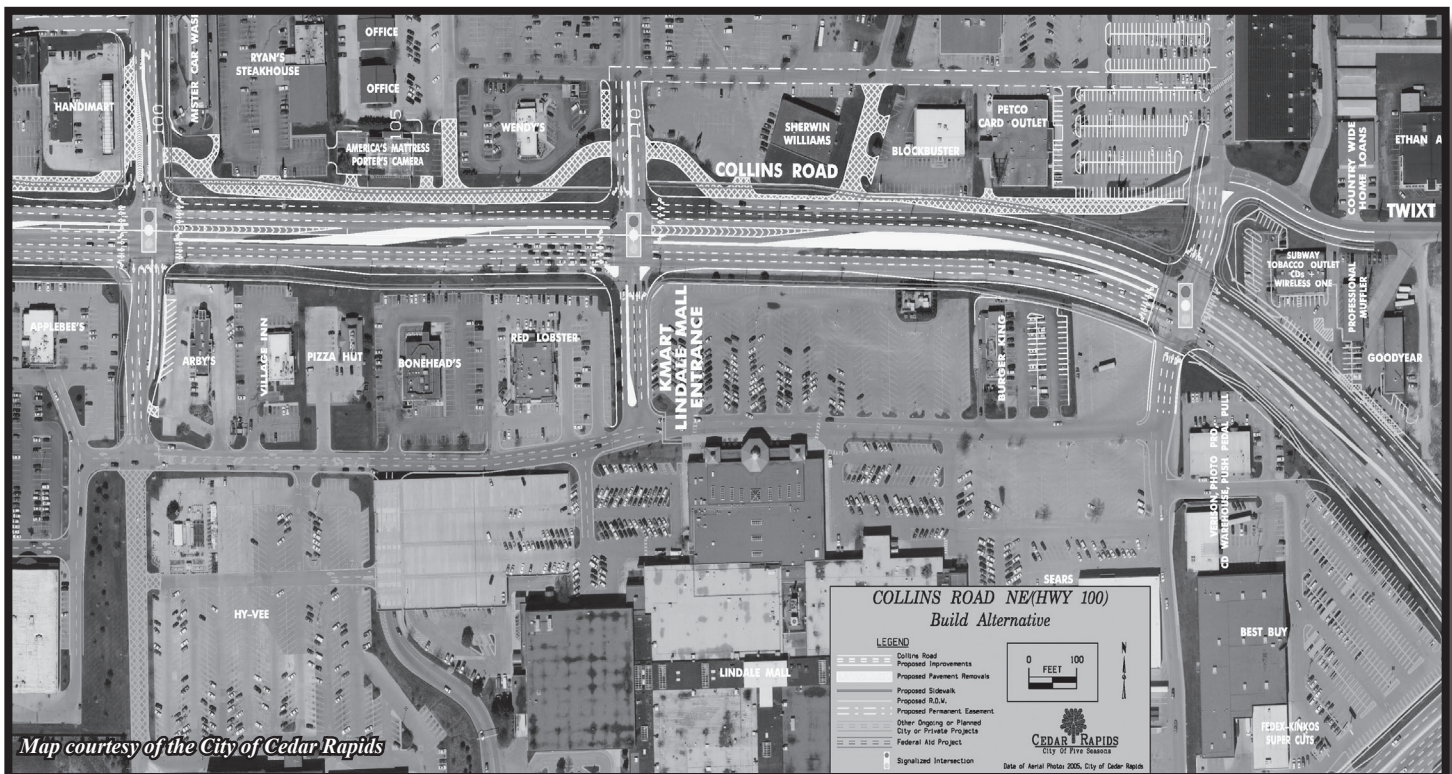
On the westside of East Post Road, a trail/sidewalk will extend 1,000 feet to the south and provide a connection with a future Lincoln (Inter-Urban) trail to Mt. Vernon. The connector project is approved by the Federal Highway Administration and has already secured \$429,000 in funding. It may be completed in 2011



Collins Road Underpass

In 2010, work began on the expansion of Collins Road in Cedar Rapids. The road was originally constructed in 1957 as a twenty four foot wide facility and widened to a four-lane divided roadway in 1968. The estimated \$40 million project provides for the widening of the road to six lanes in both directions and other improvements from the intersection of Center Point Road east 2.6 miles to approximately 750 feet east of the intersection with First Avenue. The new construction will have accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists. A six, or ten, foot sidewalk on the both sides and a constant median width are featured in preliminary conceptual design.

In January 2011, the city of Cedar Rapids received \$1.5 million award from the Clean Air Attainment Program. The program was created with federal funds in 1994 for the purpose of reducing transportation-related congestion and air pollution. Funds are available to cities, counties, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations through an annual application-based program. The city's application of the construction of an underpass of Collins Road received the largest of 11 Clean Air Attainment Program Funding awards from the Iowa Transportation Commission. The project would allow pedestrians and bicyclists travel between Lindale Mall and the trails, stores and homes to the north of Collins Road. The intersection will become more difficult to cross, because of plans to widen the stretch of Collins Road to six lanes and turn lanes. The project is part of the Complete Streets initiative the city has adopted.



Hoover Nature Trail

The Linn County Conservation department completed the second phase of its Hoover Nature Trail Project in November 2010. The construction of a 1.091 mile trail connecting the first phase to Ely City Park had an estimated cost of \$392,510 (*left*). The trail will be open to users in the spring 2011, after some final landscaping and edging, with a formal dedication as well. Recently, the Linn County Conservation Board, Anderson-Bogert Engineers and Surveyors, Inc. and LL Pelling Company received the 2010 “Trails and Paths Paving Award” from the Asphalt Paving Association of Iowa for first phase from 76th Avenue SW to Wright Bros. Blvd. (*Below*) The award recognizes high quality projects that are rated on items such as surface appearance, joints, edges, degree of difficulty and texture. Award recipients represent the best commercial projects in the state.



The city of Ely has preliminary plans to connect the Hoover Nature Trail to the intersection of Rowley and State streets in the Ely city limits (*below*). The initial cost of the project is \$396,900. The first stage of the project will link Ely City Park to Rowley street. Acquisitions of two parcels of the former railroad right-of-way between the park and Dows street are necessary. Ely does not anticipate state or federal funds to be used for this stage and construction could occur in 2011. The second stage will connect the south end of the park to the intersection of Rowley/State streets. Ely has received US Transportation Enhancement Funds to construct second stage for 2013 and 2014.



Cross Country Ski Trails in Linn County

As the snow falls opportunities for cross country skiing are provided for trail users. With sufficient snowfall, the Cedar Rapids Parks and Recreation Department marks and groom several cross country ski trails. Trails within Jones Park, Twin Pines and Ellis golf courses are groomed for skiers. Two are trail-related areas, Cherry Hill Park and the Sac and Fox Trail are maintained as soon as they are completely covered with snow. The Department has a Winter Sports Hotline, (319) 286-5700. Call for trail openings and conditions. Press "6" for Winter Sports to receive current information.



The Linn County Conservation Department grooms several properties in their jurisdiction for skiing. Squaw Creek Park, Matsell Bridge Recreation Area, Morgan Creek Park and Pinicon Ridge Park feature groomed trails with adequate snow cover. An extensive marked skate and cross country trail system is around the Wickiup Hill Education Center which has small group who meets to ski together. For ski trail updates in Linn County contact the Linn County Conservation Office at (319) 892-6450. Even though not groomed the Cedar Valley Nature Trail and the Hoover Trail are further opportunities in the county as there is no snow removal done by the Department.



If you are a seasoned cross country ski veteran or new to the sport and wanting to learn more, you might want to contact the East Iowa Ski Club. Established in 1980, the East Iowa Ski Club is a non-profit organization that organizes skiing trips, and social events, for people living the Cedar Rapids/Easter Iowa area. Membership includes a monthly newsletter, *The Skid-doo*, and free admission to the September through March monthly meetings. The group meets weekly in the winter to cross country ski various local areas. In addition, the club organizes ski trips, both downhill and cross country, and other events. In the non-winter months, the group participates in other social opportunities such as volleyball, golfing, picnics and biking. Visit their website for a membership application and meeting/outing information:

www.eastiowaskiclub.com



LCTA SUPPORTER FORM

Why would I want to support LCTA?

1. Your support will count you among the hundreds of enthusiastic trail advocates who make up the Linn County Trails Association.
2. By becoming a supporter you will have already begun to play an important role in building a network of connected trails in Linn County and the surrounding area.
3. 95% of all money raised through donations and grants goes directly to build more trails or to improve existing trails. LCTA has been able to multiply this financial support by providing matching funds to secure significant grants.
4. As a supporter, you will receive our quarterly newsletter. Here you can read about trail vacations, upcoming trail events, opportunities to volunteer, and issues that are important to trail development.
5. Supporters are not expected to attend meetings and no one will call you. Of course, if you want to get involved, we will welcome your help.

Learn more about LCTA by visiting our website at www.linncountytrails.org

Information required: (fill out if not on label on other side)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Please print the information CLEARLY

Donations to LCTA are Tax Deductible

TRAIL BLAZER	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100*
TRAIL PARTNERS (Family)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 35
TRAIL SCOUT	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 20

* At the Trail Blazer level, supporters also receive the "Advocate," the newsletter of the Iowa Trails Council.

Please consider an additional donation for NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT \$ _____

If you provide your email address, we will send future reminders via email and will add you to the LCTA email distribution list, which is used to provide information on trail-related events to supporters.

Mail donations to:
Linn County Trails Association
PO Box 2681 Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

*Please check your mailing label for your
Support Renewal Date.*

*If you renew without our sending you a
reminder, it saves us time & money.*

So PLEASE - Renew in a timely manner.

THANKS!

If you are not already a supporter, please consider helping us.

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