

# Trail Connections

Summer\Fall 2013

The Quarterly Newsletter Published by the Linn County Trails Association



## *President's Message:*

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I hope everyone was been able to get out and enjoy our trails this past summer and so far this fall.

LCTA is a totally volunteer organization and nothing happens unless we do it ourselves. In that spirit, I want to thank everyone who helped with all of our activities this past spring, summer and fall!

LCTA volunteers met with thousands of people at activities like the Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmers' Market, NewBo's Meet Me at the Market, the Mayors' Bike Ride and at smaller events like Neighborhood Association Meetings or Health Fairs to spread the word about the value of trails.

My experience at many of these events is that people are eager to learn about improvements to their favorite trails or to learn about the "how" and "why" of trails. We still get lots of questions like, "Do you still have to buy a trail pass?", "When did they put an underpass at County Home Rd?", "When will the CVNT be paved to Waterloo?", and mostly when will there be more trails to more places in Linn County and the metro area?

These are all great questions and I appreciate the fact that many people care deeply about trails. The truth is that it takes advocacy for trails to happen because there are many competing uses for our public dollars. Part of that advocacy is education like answering a question at the Farmer' Market, but it is also attending Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMPO) Board meetings and CMPO Transportation Technical Advisory Committee meetings to make sure that policies are developed that clearly support trails.

The decision by CMPO member organizations to commit 80% of available funding to trails starting in FY17 is an amazing opportunity for this metro area that should not be overlooked. The reason it takes until FY17 for a majority of the funding to kick in is that current funding has been committed to other projects and it isn't until FY17 (September 2016 - October 2017) that the full 80% of CMPO funding is available to trails projects. We need to stay engaged with the CMPO and show our continued support for this policy.

We also need to celebrate some new (paved) trail options: Sac & Fox – Prairie Park Fishery connection and the new section of Lindale Trail. The new paved section of the Lindale trail in Cedar Rapids also offers 3 feet wide gravel strips on both shoulders for our runner trail partners – we anticipate that this will become a standard trail feature when spacing is available. It was only through the tireless commitment of John Wauer and many generous LCTA donors who regularly contribute plus a special grant from Rockwell Collins that we were able to respond and make this trail section happen quickly.

I hope you will remember to support LCTA by renewing your membership (check your address label) and consider making an additional end of the year gift to LCTA to help make NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT happen in Linn County!

Our LCTA meetings are the second Monday each month at the United Way Building (317 7th Ave SE, Cedar Rapids). One exception to this rule is that the meeting on December 9th will be our Annual Trail Supporter Appreciation Event, which will be held at the Shores Event Center, 700 16th Street NE (more information about this event is available in this newsletter or the LCTA website - [linncountytrails.org](http://linncountytrails.org))

*Hope to see you there*

*Steve Hershner*  
*LCTA President*

## LCTA Officers

### President

Steve Hershner

### Treasurer

Keith Sutherland

### Secretary

Brad Mullin

### Past President

John Wauer

## Board Members

Sarah Barber  
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Dean Barnum  
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Dick Woodward  
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## Advisory Board

Dan Biechler (Linn County Conservation)  
Randy Burke (Linn County Conservation)  
Dennis Goemaat (Linn County Conservation)  
Ron Griffith (City of Cedar Rapids)  
Kesha Billings (City of Marion)  
Daniel Gibbins (CR Parks and Recreation)  
Adam Lindenlaub (Corridor MPO)  
Tom Neenan (Iowa Trails Council)



## Upcoming Events

LCTA Board Meeting  
Monday, November 11, 7:00pm  
Location: United Way of East Central Iowa  
317 7th Avenue SE,  
Cedar Rapids

LCTA Annual Supporter Appreciation Event  
Monday, December 9th, 5:30pm  
Location: Shores Event Center?  
700 16th St. NE  
Cedar Rapids

LCTA Board Meeting  
Monday, January 13, 7:00pm  
Location: United Way of East Central Iowa  
317 7th Avenue SE,  
Cedar Rapids

*All meetings are open to the public.*

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

[www.linncountytrails.org](http://www.linncountytrails.org)



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*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 ac-  
cepted. 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](mailto:mullinb1427@yahoo.com)*

# Current Metro Area Trails

## Open For Use

### Fall 2013



Separated Trails	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Bowling Street Trail	1.8	Asphalt	From 50th Street SW to Wilson Avenue
Boyson Trail	2.4	Crushed Limestone	Follows Indian Creek, Marion
Cedar River Trail	13	Asphalt	Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha (ADT)
Cedar Valley Nature Trail	20.5	Asphalt/Crushed Limestone	<b>Paved from Boyson Rd. to Schultz Rd.</b>
CEMAR Trail	0.6	Asphalt	From 20th to 29th St. NE
CRT Lake Loop	1.6	Asphalt	Around Cedar Lake
Ellis Trail	3	Asphalt/Concrete	From Ellis Park to Downtown
Grant Wood Trail	8.5	Natural	Through Eastern Linn County in 3 segments
Hoover Nature Trail	2.7	Asphalt	76th Ave. SW to Ely Park (ADT)
Kirkwood Connector Trail	1.2	Concrete	From Ely Rd. to Kirkwood Campus
Krumholtz Trail	.75	Crushed Limestone	Marion: Thomas Park to Highway 100
Lindale Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	From Lindale Dr. West to C Ave.
Robins Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Along Main St, Robins. Connects to CVNT
Sac and Fox Trail	7.1	Crushed Limestone	<b>*All sections open for use*</b>
Park Trails	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Beverly Park Trail System	5	Natural	SW CR: Singletrack Mountain Bike trails
Cedar Greenbelt Trail	4.7	Natural	Near Indian Creek Nature Center/Sac and Fox Trail
Cherokee Park Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	West Side: Edgewood to Wiley Blvd.
Cherry Hill Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids: Cherry Hill Park
Fay Clark Memorial Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Hiawatha: Fay Clark Memorial Park
Fross Park	1.2	Crushed Limestone	NW Center Point
Huston Park Trail	0.11	Asphalt	SE Cedar Rapids
Jackson Park Trail	0.4	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids near Jackson Elementary School
Lowe Park Trail	0.5	Asphalt	Marion: N. 10th St to 35th Ave
Matsell Bridge Natural Area Trail System	8.4	Natural	NE Linn County, near Viola
Morgan Creek Trail System	3.8	Natural	NW Cedar Rapids
Nixon Trail	0.75	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Around Nixon School
Noelridge Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Noelridge Park
Pinicon Ridge Park Trail System	12	Natural	Five park trails near Central City
Prairie Park Fishery Trail	2	Asphalt	SE Cedar Rapids: Prairie Park Fishery
Reed Park Trail	0.25	Crushed Limestone	SW Cedar Rapids near Taylor Elementary School
Squaw Creek Park Trail System	4	Natural	Located within Squaw Creek Park plus 1 mile singletrack mountain bike trail
Thomas Park Singletrack	2	Natural	Singletrack mountain bike trail
Van Buren Park Trail	0.5	Crushed Limestone	SW Cedar Rapids near Van Buren Elementary School
Wickiup Hill Outdoor Learning Center Trail System	5	Natural	5 mile network near Toddville

# *Biking from Brandon to LaPorte City for Lunch.*

*-Jan and Dean Barnum*

**B**efore the Great Cedar River Flood of 2008, one of our favorite bike rides was the ten mile trip from Brandon to LaPorte City on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail. We stop at LaPorte City for lunch and then return to Brandon. We made a point of making one trip near the end of May, when the Phlox were in full bloom, with later trips just for the fun of it.

*Let us tell you about it.*

First, open up your Linn County Trails Association Metro Trails Map. On the back side is an insert that details the Cedar Valley Nature Trail including mileages. The city of Brandon is about 26 miles north of Cedar Rapids. Once in Brandon, turn left at the convenience store. In about two blocks is the trailhead. At the trailhead, there is plenty of parking, water, flush toilets and a covered picnic area.

After leaving Brandon, within a half mile you enter a wooded area with a total canopy. This describes the trail for most of the next six miles. In about three and a quarter miles in, you come to some extensive rock outcropping on the right and the Cedar River backwater on the left. During the May trip, this is about where the Phlox become plentiful. See picture 1.

At about three and three quarter mile mark, you come to the end of the heavy blooming Phlox and reach a clearing. On the right is Buzzards Glory Quarry. At the far end of this clearing, there exists a concrete abutment that once held a water tank to refresh the steam locomotives that traveled the inter-urban route.

Five miles into the trip, you come to a clearing with a bench on the left with a fine view



*Picture 1*

of the Cedar River. One mile further is a memorial overlook on the right followed by several short bridges.

At about six and a half miles from Brandon, is the old railroad bridge across the Cedar River. This bridge was a classic arch bridge with ballast filling each arch to make a level roadbed. It was worth leaving the trail and viewing the bridge from the side. We just called it “beautiful”.

At seven miles from Brandon, you come to McFarlane County Park. From this point, the trail is paved all the way to the north end of the trail at Evansdale.



*Picture 2*

*All Photos: Dean Barnum*

From McFarlane Park, it is a three mile ride to La-Porte City. In LaPorte City, near the ball field is water and flush toilets. Straight ahead is a very nice pavilion. However, our favorite route is to follow the street into downtown. Just beyond the streetlight on the right is a Dairy Queen style establishment. It had an extensive menu for lunch.

After the Great Cedar River Flood of 2008, we heard that the Cedar Valley Nature Trail was badly damaged north of Brandon and that the McFarlane Bridge across the Cedar River was down. My wife and I decided to see the damage for ourselves.

As in the past, we started in Brandon. About a quarter of a mile from the McFarlane Bridge was a substantial fence with a “Stop” sign on it. Beyond this point the trail appeared to have vanished. See picture 2. In the distance, we could see the bridge so we “suffered” and forged ahead along the “no” trail to the bridge.

At the MacFarlane Bridge, we found the concrete abutments to the bridge out of place and the trail washed out between them. We scrambled up onto the bridge. What we saw was overwhelming. All the way across the bridge, it looked like an accordion with every other section of the bridge tipped up and the next one down. The surprising thing was that the accordion effect was straight across and none of it was in the river. The explanation for the accordion effect of the bridge surface was that high water had washed out all the ballast in the arches and the bridge surface broke at these open places and made the accordion effect. See pictures 3 through 6.



*Picture 3*



*Picture 4*



*Picture 5*

*Picture 6*



For the last few years, we missed our “lunch bike outings”. When we found out earlier this year that the new McFarlane Bridge across the Cedar River was open, we again had to see for ourselves. We again started in Brandon. The trail was in good condition. Paving started about a half mile before the new bridge. We observed no trace of the old bridge. See pictures 7-9.

*Picture 7*



*Picture 8*



As far as the eating establishment is concerned, before the flood it had an extensive menu. It is now much shorter. We are just happy that the flood did not cause it to close. It still has a covered area with picnic tables. This bike ride has again become one of our favorite trips.

*Picture 9*



*All Photos: Dean Barnum*

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## *Lindale Trail Update:*

In October, the city of Cedar Rapids will pave its portion of the Lindale Trail. The trail, from C Ave. and the Marion city limits, will include three foot gravel shoulders. The city of Marion plans to pave its section trail, to Lindale Drive, in the Spring of 2014.

With the assistance of the LCTA, the City of Cedar Rapids received a \$15,000 Rockwell Collins Charitable Corporation donation for the paving in 2012. LCTA, together with a Rockwell Collins donation, will have contributed over \$55,000 towards Lindale Trail development. The LCTA purchased the abandoned railway property, removed trash from the property and secured the Rockwell Collins donation.

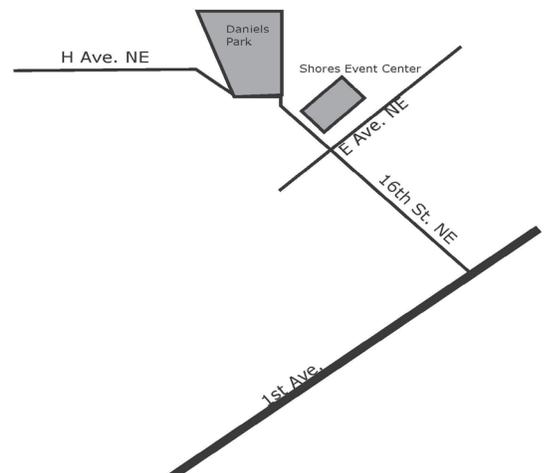


The Lindale Trail is a prime bicycle commuting route to Rockwell Collins and other nearby employers as well as a great recreational trail. The trail connects to the Boyson Trail and on to the Krumholtz Trail (a leg of the future CEMAR Trail) that extends to Highway 100 near Menards. In the future, the west end of the Lindale Trail will connect to the proposed Dry Creek Trail as well as the newly developed Collins Road Corridor. Special acknowledgement to John Wauer, John worked effortlessly to make this trail a reality.

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## *Linn County Trails Association: Annual Supporter Appreciation Event*

The Linn County Trails Association would like to invite our supporters to our Annual Supporter Appreciation Event. The annual event allows trail supporters to meet with some the LCTA Board of Directors and learn about trail activities that occurred over the past year. The event is Monday, December 9th in place of our regular board meeting. The venue for this year's event is the Shores Event Center located at 700 16th Street NE. It is a beautifully restored space in the heart of Cedar Rapids' Irish District and not far off of the CEMAR Trail. Food and drink will be provided. Alcoholic beverages will be made available for purchase for those 21 and over. The event will begin at 5:30pm and end at 7:30pm. Donations are welcomed.



## *Ellis Trail Extension:*

The City of Cedar Rapids will construct a 10-footwide trail from the end of the existing of the Ellis Trail at the Boat Ramp to Edgewood Rd. The \$337,000 half of a mile project has received Federal STP Funds through the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization and is included in the City of Cedar Rapids FY14 budget. Trail users will meander through Manhattan Park along the shores of Robins Lake. Construction is expected to start in August 2013 and end in October. The Ellis Trail extension will connect with the proposed Edgewood Road NW Multiuse Pathway. The city plans to construct a trail from Ellis Rd. to O Avenue on the road's east side. The city of Cedar Rapids has contracted with McClure Engineering Co. for design and engineering services. Construction of the Edgewood Pathway could occur next year. The extension provides an important link between the city's west-side and the downtown area.



## *Pinicon Ridge Park/Central City Connection:*

The Linn County Conservation Department completed its trail construction within Pinicon Ridge Park. The trail is part of an extensive trail network in the park and crosses under Highway 13 into Central City. In January 2013, preliminary trail work was completed so that paving of the final 5,000 ft. of trail within Pinicon Ridge Park could occur in the summer. With its completion, trail users can travel from Central City through Pinicon Ridge Park across the Wapsipinicon River, using the Mary Lundby Memorial Bridge, to other side of the park. The new bridge, new plaza and new trail are great one day destination for trail and nature lovers.



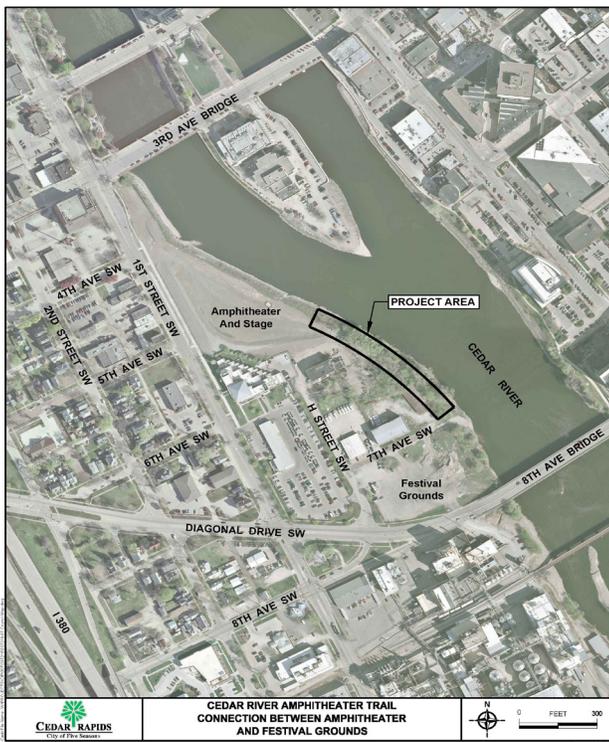
## Cedar River Trail: CRANDIC Railroad Underpass:

In Summer 2013, construction is scheduled for the Cedar River Trail underpass of the CRANDIC Railroad Bridge. To increase safety, an underpass of the bridge was agreed upon by the City of Cedar Rapids and CRANDIC Railroad. The CRANDIC Railroad contributed \$82,400 to the project and FEMA has approved \$431,566 for the construction as an Alternate Project. The current trail routing through the Park and Ride Lot will be eliminated. Of the two connections to the Park and Ride Lot, the north connection, located 70 feet north of the CRANDIC Bridge, will not be retained due to the high cost of retaining the connection with America with Disabilities Act grades and retaining walls. The existing south connection to the Park and Ride Lot, located 500 feet south of the north connection is retained with the project improvements. Work is scheduled for completion in 87 calendar days, November 2013.



## Cedar Rapids Amphitheater Trail:

City of Cedar Rapids will construct a 14-foot wide trail along the Cedar River. The \$110,000 project will connect trail along the river bank in the Amphitheater Area and the trail in the Festival Grounds. Construction is scheduled to begin near the end of July and be completed within 30 working days.



Map Courtesy of the City of Cedar Rapids.

# 2013 LINN COUNTY MAYORS' RIDE

Seasonal temperatures made for a great bicycle ride throughout the city of Cedar Rapids on Labor Day, September 2nd. The 2013 Mayors' Bike Ride had an estimated 456 participants from several Linn County communities including Cedar Rapids, Marion, Robins, Center Point, Ely Fairfax, Springville, Ely and Hiawatha as well as far away as Wisconsin and Kansas. Four mayors and eight other elected representatives rode along with the large contingent. This year's total of registered riders was the largest recorded since LCTA sponsorship of the Mayors' Bike Ride. The previous highest total was 436 in 2009.



The free, educational bicycle ride is organized annually as an opportunity to showcase the continued need and development for multi-modal transportation networks in Linn County. For some elected officials, this is an opportunity to experience first-hand what it's like to be a bicyclist in Linn County. For bicycle enthusiasts, this is an opportunity to show support for bicycling and the development of trails in Linn County. In 2013, participants donated \$444 towards trail development in Linn County.

*Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's great ride. It was a great show of support.*



## Elected officials who participated in 2013 Mayors' Ride :

*Ron J Corbett (Cedar Rapids Mayor)*

*Kris Gulick (Cedar Rapids Council Member: District 1)*

*Monica Vernon (Cedar Rapids Council Member: District 2)*

*Ann Poe (Cedar Rapids Council Member: At Large)*

*James E. Doyle Jr. (Ely Mayor)*

*David Rasmussen (Ely City Council Member)*

*Jason Rabe (Fairfax Mayor)*

*Ian Cullis (Robins Mayor)*

*Roger A. Shebetka (Springville Council Member)*

*Liz Mathis (Iowa State Senator: District 34)*

*Kristen Running-Marquardt (Iowa State Representative: District 69)*

*Joan McCalmant (Linn County Recorder)*

# 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](http://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. All donations are  
tax deductible.*

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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

Linn County Trails Association  
P.O. Box 2681  
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*LCTA volunteers assist with a water stop during the 2013 New-Bo Half Marathon*