

FFMHT TRAIL TRACKS

Summer, 2007



(M. Morford, photo)

All Aboard in Summer 2008

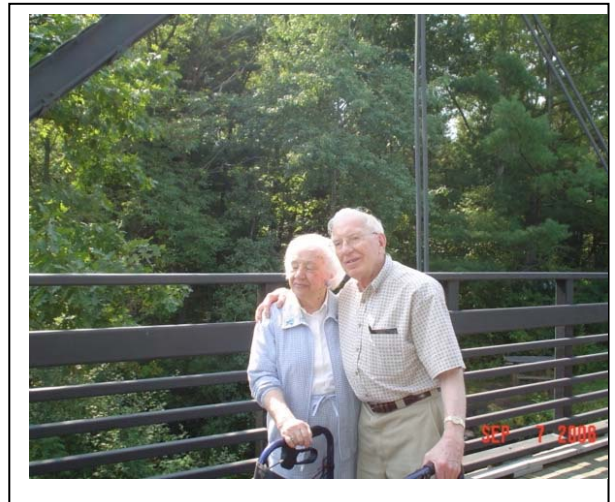
ALMA TO RIVERDALE: Here We Come!!

The Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail recently learned that the two Gratiot County MDOT grants to fund trail development from downtown Alma to the County line in Riverdale have both been approved! At the July 24, 2007 Board meeting, the Friends received the most recent development plan from Board President Franz Mogdis. Specifically, 9.5 miles of trail traversing Gratiot County will be developed beginning Summer, 2008.

The approved MDOT (Trail Enhancement, TE) grants to fund the trail project total over \$2.5 million dollars! Additionally, local matching dollars are necessary in order to receive these TE grants. These matching funds include over \$600,000 from the Meijer Foundation, \$100,000 from West Michigan Trails & Greenways, \$60,000 from the City of Alma, \$30,000 from Pine River Township, and \$10,000 from Seville Township. The City of Alma will also contribute "gifts-in-kind" totaling over \$100,000 for project engineering services that occur within the city limits (Luce Rd. to downtown Alma). Construction "bid letting" will take place during the April, 2008 cycle with construction beginning in May. (cont'd., p. 2)

Edmore to McBride paving work is underway! Work began on July 16 and is scheduled for completion by August 10, 2007. The contract was won by Youngstrom Contracting Co. and is being overseen by LS Engineering.

A ribbon cutting Trail Celebration and Trail ride/walk/bike will be held in Edmore on August 25, 2007, starting at 10:00 a.m. at Forrest St. between Sheldon & Lewis St. Everyone is welcome!! Refreshments will be served. More info at 989-352-6179.



Fred & Lena Meijer on the Dalmac Bridge during their Trail visit last fall.
(M. Morford, photo)

Alma to Riverdale, cont'd.

The Friends are especially excited about these most recent trail developments due to the fact that for the first time in Fred Meijer Heartland Trail history, local government entities have come forward to financially assist with the Trail project! Way to go Gratiot County!!

As we approach the time period in which the Gratiot County portion of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail is completed, the Friends will be in continued need of many Trail supporters. With a developed trail, volunteers are critical for regular maintenance including mowing, keeping the trail cleared of fallen trees and other debris, and maintaining weed control – to name a few. Watch for further trail updates as the Gratiot County Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail group will soon need to resume monthly meetings!



Gilson St. in Edmore – moving toward the Curtis Building
First cuts and gravel on the curve onto Sheldon St.
(K.Stearns, photo)

**2007 ANNUAL BANQUET
SUCSESSES**
The 2007 Annual Banquet and fundraiser cleared just over \$5000 in profits this year, thanks to all of the many donors who supported the Raffle, Silent Auction, Cupcake Sale, Stone print raffle, and the Banquet itself. A heartfelt THANK YOU! to all merchants and individuals who donated prizes and to the MANY volunteers who helped plan, sell tickets, take tickets, set up, clean up, and gave encouragement to all!
Sincerely,
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WEBSITE CHANGES

Our website has been under revision since April, 2007. Check out the new pages at the Montcalm County site at www.montcalm.org. Click on **Recreation** and then on **Fred Meijer Heartland Trail (Current)**. There are more photos of the Edmore preparations and updated information on the Trail.

HELP WANTED!!

The Friends need your help for some very important projects in the near future! Please choose one or two and then contact 989-235-6170 or dkstearns@cmsinter.net to get more information. Thank you!!

1. Workers for the Celebration Tent in Edmore on Saturday, August 25, 2007.
2. Workers for the Alma Middle School Open House on Wednesday, August 29, 2007.
3. Workers for Trail sections in Gratiot County – paving is coming soon.

“You don’t need to be president to make history. Make your own history by contributing to your own community. Then you will discover the joy of being part of something bigger than yourself - and the realization that, while we make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.” - Gerald R. Ford