



# The Cannonball Courier

Winter 2017

## \$140k Grant Received to Extend South Fork

The Clean Ohio Trail Fund has awarded NORTA \$145,571 for the South Fork Trail Extension, Phase I Project. This grant will help us clear, improve and surface over one half mile of the trail from the current end-point at Henry Co. Road 6C to the historic depot in Liberty Center. This joint project includes the Village of Liberty Center, the Liberty Center Historical Society and NORTA in a cooperative trail development.

This section of the South Fork has been undeveloped since we acquired the trail. The funded improvements will include a boardwalk and informational kiosk at the historic depot as well as surface work and signage at all road crossings. Sections of the trail in Liberty Center will be shared bike-path lanes on Wabash Street in the village limits. Engineering work for the project is just about complete. We hope to finish construction in late 2017.

The grant will reimburse NORTA for 75% of the total costs. NORTA will need to fund the remaining 25%. If you would like to help us raise the needed funds, send your tax deductible donations to NORTA at PO Box 234, Delta, OH 43515

### EXTENSION PLANNING MEETING HELD

On Saturday, Feb. 4, 2017, NORTA Board of Trustees held a planning meeting with the partners in the South Fork Extension Project, Phase I, i.e., Village of Liberty Center, Liberty Center Historical Society (LCHS),



An map of the first phase of the South Fork Trail Extension project in Liberty Center.

and Poggemeyer Design Group (PDG). The meeting was held in Liberty Center's historic restored depot. Preceding the planning meeting, guests were treated to an 8:00 a.m. breakfast prepared by NORTA and LCHS. Seventeen people were in attendance.

Immediately following breakfast, Lee Rausch (PDG) distributed copies of schematics for the extension project, reviewed the progress drawings, coordination items and scheduling. Rausch also fielded questions and comments to clarify and solidify project plans/details. At this point, the project is operating on-schedule and all are excited in anticipation of the project's commencement.

## Trail Offers Montpelier Chance for Growth

The February 14 edition of the *Bryan Times* featured the following report by Josh Ewers with the title: **Montpelier has high hopes for bike path.**

The village is on course to build a bike path to attach to the Wabash Cannonball Trail.

"We've been looking for a driver to spur on some economic development in Montpelier," Village Administrator Kevin Brooks said at Monday's regular village council meeting. "What we're

trying to do is create a destination to get people into town. One of the strategies we've talked a great deal about is a bike trail."

Still in its infancy, the proposed \$700,00 project would create an 8-foot-wide bike path with a pedestrian lane. The path would attach

not only to the existing bike path in Montpelier, the downtown area and the fairgrounds, but also to the Wabash Cannonball trail. It would then extend beyond corporation limits where other municipalities could potentially hook in to the trail.

The path's exact route and length is still under development.

The village has been consulting with several parties including the [NORTA] group and the Williams County Health Department to discuss options, including possible grant funding.

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# Welcome New NORTA President

The Board of Trustees has appointed a new president to head Northwestern Ohio Rails-to-Trails Association for the upcoming year. At the December meeting, Jay Budde tendered his resignation and the board then nominated and voted for Tom Duvendack to become our new leader.

Tom will pick up where Jay left off. Tom brings with him many years of experience with trails and outdoor recreation activities, having worked for the Metroparks of Toledo for most of his career. Tom has been involved with NORTA since its infancy back in the early 1990's, and has served on the Board of Trustees since 1993. Jay has served as President since 2013 and has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the performance of his duties. We are fortunate, however, that Jay plans to continue serving on the Board of Trustees.



Tom Duvendack

# And the Walt Award Goes To ...

I would just like to thank NORTA for honoring me as Volunteer of the Year. Unfortunately, I was required to work that evening and missed the festivities, but my Mom had a great time. Here's to many more years of doing *The Cannonball Courier!* - Bev Apel



Rosemary Ott accepts the Walt Award for her daughter.

## Officers and Board members

Below you will find contact information for various board members. You may also contact us via our website: [www.wabashcannonballtrail.org](http://www.wabashcannonballtrail.org). Phone: 419-822-4788 or 1-800-951-4788

President: Tom Duvendack (tomfortrails@windstream.net)  
Vice President: Tom Striggow (tstriggow@yahoo.com)  
Secretary: Bonnie Markley (bonniejm@windstream.net)  
Treasurer: Patti Gehring (pmgnorta@buckeye-express.com)  
Maintenance: Randy Miller (RMiller@frontier.com)

Jay Budde (jbudde0407@embarqmail.com)  
Bob Hofbauer  
John Fitzgibbons (fitzgibbons75@yahoo.com)  
Ed Snyder

## NORTHWESTERN OHIO RAILS-TO-TRAILS ASSOCIATION, INC.

### (NORTA) Membership Form

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Categories:

- Senior/Student \$10
- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Patron \$100
- Business/Organization \$50
- Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Lifetime \$1,000 Donation

Contributions are tax deductible

# Thank You to Our Supporters...

NORTA's officers and board of trustees would like to thank and acknowledge those who have supported our organization this past fiscal year, ending September 30, 2016. Every gift, no matter the size, is important to our continuing mission to provide a safe outdoors experience on the Wabash Cannonball Trail.

## Lifetime Members (\$1,000)

We've expanded our Lifetime Membership category to include both monetary contributions of \$1,000 or more, as well as in-kind donation of goods valued at \$1,000 or more. Plus, a Honorary Lifetime Membership may be awarded to those who exhibit extraordinary and/or long-term volunteerism in support of NORTA's mission as determined by the board of trustees.

- Nancy Beadle
- Al Benjamin\*
- Defiance Chapter of the Ohio Horseman's Council\*
- Don & Nancy Dunkle\*
- Tom & Marianne Duvendack
- Patti Gehring
- Lucinda Hunt
- Irene & Walt Kruse
- Fred & Mal Lenz\*
- Bonnie & Gene Markley
- Sandy & Dave Mason
- Ed & Anna Snyder
- Jack & Dortha Stoner
- Tom Striggow
- Walt Studebaker
- Toledo Area Bicyclists\*
- Toledo Area Council,
- Hostelling International
- Diana Wells

\* New Lifetime Member in 2016

## Patron Members (\$100)

- Ronald Adolph
- Rick Bryan
- Walter Lang
- Fred & Mal Lenz
- Frank Merritt
- Tom Reuss
- Doug Schimmoeller

## Business/Organization Members (\$50)

- Black Swamp Spoke & Pedal
- Firelands Rails-to-Trails
- JustGus Services, LLC
- Lange Tree Farm

## Large Donations (>\$100)

- Defiance Chapter of the Ohio Horseman's Council
- Don & Nancy Dunkle
- Irene Kruse
- Cindy & Jesse Rowe
- Janet Smith
- Toledo Area Bicyclists

## In-Kind Gifts

- Al Benjamin
- Fred & Mal Lenz

## Gifts In Memory of ...

### Gene (Ralph) Markley

- Annabell Markley
- Nancy & Jeff Richards

### Howard Miller

- Howard's family, friends & neighbors

### Jack Stoner

- Several of Jack's friends & neighbors

And many thanks to the rest of our loyal members and donors at all levels. I wish we had the space to list everyone!

*Patti Gehring, treasurer*

## Work Day Scheduled March 18

Volunteers are invited to meet for a work detail from 9 a.m - noon on Saturday, March 18 at the Savanna, located at Fulton County Roads 10 and F. Needed tasks include tree pruning and removal of invasive trees. Helpers are asked to bring loppers and bow saws. If you don't have any, NORTA will supply. Please arrive a few minutes early for brief instructions before work starts.

## Montpelier - continued from front page

A veteran's bike route is also being discussed.

"It gives us that economic driver," Brooks said. "We're looking at a letter of intent that would be due Feb. 1 of 2018. If our letter of intent is accepted, we would put in an application later in 2018. We'd be notified of an award in 2019 and eligible for construction in 2020. Our approach is to take

this very slow and be very well planned, and do it right the first time."

The planning process is being funded in full by a grant.

"We hope this is something that will put Montpelier on the map," Brooks said.

*It's just a skinny park!*



## WANTED/NEEDED

Ongoing needs include:

- Heavy deep cell battery
- Battery charger/jumper
- Hand cleaner such as Go-Joe
- Round Up herbicide for grass control
- Shop rags
- Plumber to fix broken water pipe in NORTA office
- Cash donations - specify toward any of the above and money will be used for that purpose

## 2016 Annual Meeting

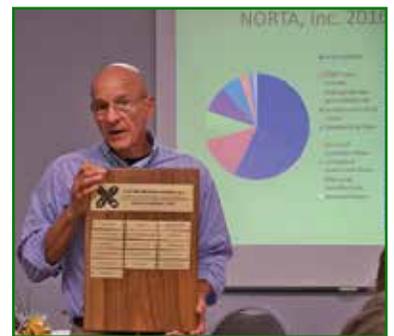
The 25<sup>th</sup> annual membership meeting and volunteer recognition dinner was held at the Swanton Community Center, Swanton, Ohio on Thursday, October 6, 2016. Included in the general meeting, was the election of the Board of Trustees. All current Board members agreed to serve another term. There were no nominations from the floor. (Board members for the current year are listed on page 2.)

With sincere gratitude, Jay presented the 2016 Volunteer of the Year Award (aka Walt Award) to Bev Apel for lending a professional hand in producing NORTA's newsletter, *The Cannonball Courier*. Accepting the plaque and "The Hiker" traveling statue for Bev was her mother, Rosemary Ott. Vice President Tom Duvendack recognized all volunteers who have been given the Walt Award from 1992 to the current year with the presentation of a handsome plaque. A similar plaque was presented showing the names of recipients of the Lifetime Member distinction. Both plaques are on display in the NORTA headquarters building.

Marianne Duvendack introduced the evening's speaker, Luke Jordan, an outdoor recreation planner for the National Park Service currently working with North Country National Scenic Trail (NCST). With an engaging narration and strikingly beautiful photos, Luke shared his long distance hiking experience on the NCNST commencing in North Dakota and terminating in New York—a distance of 4,600 miles in about 200 days. Luke is in the process of writing a book about his ambitious undertaking.

Special thanks to longtime member Linda Doyle for providing silver enhanced centerpieces for the tables that followed this year's theme—NORTA's 25<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.

—Bonnie Markley



**President Jay Budde shows the Lifetime Member plaque.**



**Speaker Luke Jordan**