

“Friends Groups: The Heart and Soul of Trails & Greenways: Example from the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail”

Friends of Fred Meijer Heartland Trail Achievements

- June 22, 1988 Letter to Bill Cargo from West Mich Reg. Planning Commission notification of abandonment
- October 01, 1993 Trail Volunteers collect 2000 signatures in support of trail development
- January 01, 1994 Friends of Heartland Trail formed voluntary, non profit organization
- March 14, 1994 Edmore Voters expressed support for the development of the Trail
- June 08, 1994 Fred Meijer \$265,000 gift allows purchase of the 29-mile proposed Trail
- September 15, 1995 Friends acquire Historic 115 year old steel Flat River Bridge on South County Line Rd. from Rd Commission
- May 06, 1996 Grant requested from MDOT for \$370,279 for Sidney to Stanton Trail Development
- May 24, 1996 Sidney Township supports Trail MDOT Grant
- August 03, 1996 Friends receive \$355,000 MDOT grant to build 5-mile portion from Sidney to Stanton
- August 20, 1996 \$25,000 grant from Dick Allen Lansing to Mackinaw Bike Ride
- November 01, 1996 Flat River Bridge moved to Fred Meijer Heartland Trail over Fish Creek south of Stanton
- June 10, 1997 Adopts FFMHT Management and Trail Management Operations Plan
- September 25, 1997 Gratiot County Commission approves Board Resolution to support the concept of the FFMHT
- May 16, 1998 Pere Marquette Trail hosts Home and Richland Township officials to promote trail concept
- July 18, 1998 Friends host ground breaking with guests: Fred and Lena Meijer, Dick Allen and John Stafford
- June 26, 1999 Eagle Scout Project - Two Bike Racks completed by Ryan Rogers-one to be placed by the DALMAC Bridge
- July 01, 1999 Plaque recognizing DALMAC contributions at the DALMAC Bridge
- July 19, 1999 Friends Host the Michigander Bike Tour Riders at MCC with over 750 bikers Fundraiser-\$250
- August 01, 1999 Gratiot Friends of Fred Meijer Heartland Trail officially organized and officers elected
- September 17, 1999 Court hearing for the damages against Mid Michigan Motorplex at Stanton Courthouse
- September 28, 1999 Eagle Scout Project - Picnic Table completed by Jeff Beach
- October 26, 1999 Nauta property rights suit settled
- November 08, 1999 Trailhead Signs Dedication - Special Guests Warden Rennico and Prison School Director John Klein
- February 15, 2000 Legal agreement reached between Mid Michigan Motorplex (Ledford) and the Friends
- May 01, 2000 Friends of Fred Meijer Heartland Trail receive Friends of Kal-Haven Trail Volunteer Service Project Award
- May 02, 2000 Ownership of Trail passed on to Friends from National RTC. Fred Meijer donates \$70,000 for transaction
- May 06, 2000 Fundraiser nets \$4,965.59 which Meijer matches
- June 02, 2000 Montabella 6th graders place Bird houses between Lake Montcalm Road and Edmore
- July 25, 2000 Friends proceed and approve Adopt-A-Trail Program to administer and operate maintenance needs
- July 25, 2000 Cary Property intrusion for second year and instructed to remove agricultural planting
- August 17, 2000 FFMHT received \$848,532 MDOT grant and \$222,133 from Fred Meijer for phases four and five
- September 01, 2000 First Annual FFMHT Bridge Walk from Stanton to the Historic DALMAC Bridge
- September 26, 2000 FFMHT-Gratiot submits \$6,000 grant to Gratiot Community Foundation
- September 26, 2000 Thank you letters sent to summer maintenance volunteers, Duane Hansen, Duane Munns and Leon Howell
- November 06, 2000 Judge rules \$12,000 settlement for infringement on trail property by Mid Michigan Motorplex
- November 28, 2000 Friends submit a nomination and register FFMHT for the Community Millennium Trail Designation
- December 31, 2000 Legal Expenses paid for 2000 \$5,891.70
- February 27, 2001 Sixteen sections of 32 have been adopted for maintenance

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- April 14, 2001 Vestaburg Depot building donated to FFMHT from John and Margaret Phelps
- April 24, 2001 Vestaburg Youth League encroaches 13 feet onto trail right-of-way
- April 24, 2001 FFMHT becomes a Partner in the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition
- April 24, 2001 FFMHT establishes lifetime membership at \$200.00
- May 22, 2001 Gratiot County incursion on Perkins Property on trail destroys trees, fences, gates.
- June 16, 2001 Trail wide clean-up day for Adopt-A-Trail
- June 26, 2001 FFMHT receives \$3,000 grant from Michigan Rails to Trails Conservancy-Michigander Fund
- June 26, 2001 Bill Lawrence donates an acre for a Park at pine Street and the Trail in Stanton
- July 24, 2001 Riverdale ACT members presented request for Park adjacent to the Museum
- September 15, 2001 Fundraising Dinner \$1,670, Raffle sales grossed \$2,746.00 and Silent Auction \$1,891
- November 27, 2001 Rented M-90 Brush Bandit Chipper \$529.00 to Vestaburg to McBride
- November 27, 2001 FFMHT brochure developed by Sarah Peterson, Montabella Senior Project. 5,000 brochures printed.
- December 31, 2001 FFMHT Legal Expenses \$9,527.72
- December 31, 2001 Greenville Foundation Grant \$8,237.00
- March 26, 2002 DALMAC grant submitted for \$8,360.00 for Kawasaki Mule, Billy Goat blower and North Star Sprayer
- April 23, 2002 Small Claims Court Hearing Damaged Bollards
- May 28, 2002 Accept proposal to survey Vestaburg Property by Tom Sage \$3,600 to \$4,200
- May 29, 2002 FFMHT testifies on Senate Bill 1016 (Segway Legislation)
- June 12, 2002 Adopt-A-Trail Picnic Stanton Park
- August 01, 2002 Purchased Maintenance Equipment Mower, Trailer, John Deere Gator, Blower, generator, sprayer
- August 11, 2002 Letters to Editor on Proposal 2 published in the Morning Sun and Daily News
- August 27, 2002 Easement approved by Road Commission Lake Road to Greenville
- August 27, 2002 All 32 sections of Trail Adopted by Volunteers
- August 27, 2002 Eagle Scout Project Nathan Badge mile markers placed on developed trail
- August 27, 2002 Work continues on Vestaburg Property issues, Loomis lease, McCormick Building, ConAgra Lease
- August 27, 2002 Purchased equipment and liability insurance \$368
- September 24, 2002 Volunteer Patrol organized, adopted through partnership with Montcalm County Sheriff Department
- October 22, 2002 Purchased Volunteer Insurance for \$160 Franey, Parr and Muha
- March 25, 2003 City of Alma receives letter of notification considering rail line abandonment of 5.5 miles Elwell to Alma
- April 26, 2003 Gratiot Friends cleaned brush and planted trees with Sierra Club
- April 29, 2003 Grant request to Congressman Camp for \$2.7 million
- May 01, 2003 Port-a-jons placed at Stanton Trail Head for summer
- May 03, 2003 Sierra Club Tree Planting
- May 17, 2003 Banquet Fundraiser Net Profit \$3,507.50
- May 19, 2003 Sheridan Community Hospital Health, Fitness and Lifestyles Clinic
- May 27, 2003 Bill Lawrence building a small park at corner of Trail and Pine Street
- June 24, 2003 Police Report Gratiot County 67-2115-03 filed Mich State Police-Missing Ballast
- June 29, 2003 Property encroachments - Sackett, Perkins and Burris at McBride survey completed and letters sent
- July 15, 2003 Board offers resolution of \$1,500 for Balcom damages

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- July 15, 2003 CSX notifies Friends they are willing to negotiate for interim trail use for railbanked line effective July 29
- July 15, 2003 Don and Karen Stearns donate \$2,500 toward purchase of materials to build maintenance storage facility
- July 15, 2003 Stanton "Old Fashioned Days" Take - a - Hike Event planned with partnership with Sheridan Comm. Hospital
- July 15, 2003 Don and Karen Stearns work 6-week Michigan Works Project 10 plus people for 25 hours a week
- August 07, 2003 Adopt-A-Trail Volunteers Picnic at Stanton Park
- September 29, 2003 Gratiot forms fund raising subcommittee, attendees MDOT, MDNR, Meijer Fndn, Greater Gratiot Dev
- September 29, 2003 Leases presented for Loomis Property Vestaburg 83 X 154 5-year at \$25 annual
- September 29, 2003 Proposed lease to ConAgra for \$1,500 per year and in advance
- January 20, 2004 Grant application submitted to DALMAC for Alma 5.5 mile acquisition
- January 22, 2004 STB extends railbanking until July 23, 2004
- February 24, 2004 Simon Baldwin, Troop 60, Eagle Scout Project Bike Rack to be placed at McBride when the snow melts
- April 25, 2004 Robyn Anderson and Carolyn Kane were on WCFX's Sunday Morning Staff Meeting
- April 27, 2004 West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition representatives visit FFMHT to discuss Coalition plans
- May 01, 2004 Adopt-A-Trail Committee holds First Annual Trail Clean-up Day
- May 15, 2004 Annual Fundraiser - Silent Auction \$2,193.50 - Raffle \$2, 476
- May 19, 2004 Sheridan Community Hospital has Health, Fitness and Lifestyles Show
- May 25, 2004 Trail Maintenance and Operations Activities revised. Holding monthly Maintenance Meetings
- June 22, 2004 John Waldron Eagle Scout Project \$250 stairs, table and bench at Fish Creek
- July 27, 2004 Subsidence Damage at Miles/Grow Road Estimated cost for repairs \$20,000
- August 24, 2004 Railbanking extension
- August 24, 2004 McBride Parking Lot complete joint project with Village of McBride Trail paid \$12,000
- September 28, 2004 Storage Building Floor and Handicap Access Completed with MRTC grant \$2,042
- October 15, 2004 Check received from CSX for lease payment from ConAgra \$9,183.33 for lease money since 1994
- October 26, 2004 Cement Curbs placed at Sidney with grant from MRTC money used for expenses
- October 26, 2004 Volunteers patch roof at Vestaburg Depot
- October 26, 2004 Gratiot Fundraising reports \$321,500 or about \$20,000 short
- October 26, 2004 Damage to trees that were cut valued at \$70 or triple damages. Small Claims Court Suit filed.
- November 01, 2004 IRS notifies FFMHT of penalties due 2001 \$2,683.55 and 2002 \$2,877.80
- November 07, 2004 McCormick Property Building burned down by Richland and Home Fire Departments-saved Friends \$15,000
- November 29, 2004 Received check from ConAgra for 2002-2003, 2003-2004 lease \$2,320.00
- November 30, 2004 Tom Sage Surveyor hired \$30,000 quote for land survey for 5.5 miles into Alma required from Purchase Agreement
- December 30, 2004 Treasurer updates Accounting records to Quick Books
- December 30, 2004 Total Maintenance Volunteer Hours recorded for 2004 - 999.5, expenses \$5,000
- December 30, 2004 Total FFMHT Donors for 2004 - \$2,852.70
- February 04, 2005 Railbanking Extension CSX and STB
- February 22, 2005 Meeting held with Lan-Ro who crushes ballast. Approximate cost per mile \$20,000
- March 22, 2005 Committee reviews requirements for Trail User Survey
- April 16, 2005 Safe Routes to School Bike Rodeo Central Montcalm Elementary School
- April 16, 2005 Sierra Club plants trees on April 16, 23, and 30

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- April 26, 2005 Quotes for improvements Coral Road to Edmore \$15,000
- April 26, 2005 Three Quotes for roof repair at Vestaburg Depot
- April 26, 2005 Purchased used wood chipper \$2,055
- April 26, 2005 Board considers ownership issue for Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee
- April 30, 2005 Adopt-A-Trail Cleanup Day Major trimming and clearing Dalmac Bridge to Klees Road
- April 30, 2005 Gratiot Friends install railroad ties for temporary barrier posts
- May 02, 2005 Landscape beautification project: Edmore Women's Club, USDA, NRCD, Sierra Club, MCD, and village
- May 07, 2005 Open House at Vestaburg Depot for community
- May 14, 2005 Annual Banquet and Fundraiser at Edmore, Dinner, Raffle and Silent Auction - Proceeds \$2,500
- May 25, 2005 Publication of New Trail Brochure