# Rock Island & Jamaica North Trail Connector

The City of Lincoln is building a pedestrian bridge over the BSNF Railroad to connect the Rock Island and Jamaica North Trails near Densmore Park and the Cooper YMCA. GPTN is raising \$600,000 to support this important trail connection. Please consider donating to this exciting project.

## Make contributions payable to: Nebraska Trails Foundation

Name:	
Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Designated Project:	



Mail to: GPTN	
P.O. 82902	
Lincoln, NE 68501-290	

## **Celebrating 30 Years of Trails**

2019 Great Plains Trails Network Annual Meeting by Mary Torell and Dena Noe

The Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) continued to celebrate its accomplishments of 30 years of trails at the GPTN Annual Meeting March 23 at the Cornhusker Bank Center.

A larger than usual crowd turned out to learn about the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch project from an ensemble presentation by Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler, Michael Forsberg, and Sara Hartzell. The Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch is a tallgrass prairie passage and trail that will build on our nationally recognized trail and greenway system and will link two of Lincoln and Lancaster County's premier environmental resource and education centers. It will follow the Haines Branch of Salt Creek from the Pioneers Park Nature Center, to the Conestoga Lake State Recreation Area; extend down through the Village of Denton and on to the Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center.

Mayor Beutler spoke about his long-term vision of preserving the Prairie Corridor for its simple beauty as well as connecting with our trail and greenway system. As he said "if this land is not protected and preserved, it will be gone forever". He also discussed how the corridor project is our legacy project of today. Just as others before us preserved and built Pioneers Park, we have a chance to preserve one of Nebraska's most valuable resources, the tallgrass prairie. As with other legacy projects before it, the Prairie Corridor will not be finished overnight, but now is the time to make a commitment for future generations.

Michael Forsberg, a conservation photographer who has dedicated 25 years of his life to photograph America's Great Plains, presented a rare insight through photography of what the prairie holds from the past and the future and why it is so important that we protect it. His presentation centered around how he captured a phenomenal photo of a bobcat on the Prairie Corridor. His photo allowed the audience to visualize his dream and that of others for this area.

The third presenter at the meeting was Lincoln Parks and Recreation Park Planner, Sara Hartzell. She gave an overview of the Lincoln trails system, including the completion of the Murdock Trail. That trail is now paved to 70th Street with a softer rock surface next to it to accommodate runners that have used this trail as a mainstay

Continued on page 3



Panoramic photo shot of the crowd attending the GPTN Annual Meeting by Michael Forsberg prior to his presentation.



since 1988

dedicated to the goal of developing a network of commuter and recreational trails within Lincoln and Lancaster County

#### 2019

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Newsletter comments, questions, corrections gbentrup68@gmail.com

#### A Note from the President



This is my first letter as president of GPTN, and I feel fortunate to work in this capacity for this group of people so passionate about our trails and within this organization with a 30 year record of accomplishments.

We currently have a couple big projects on the agenda: The Prairie Corridor and The Rock Island - Jamaica North

Connector Bridge are the two largest. Thank you, Michael Forsberg, Mayor Chris Beutler, and Sara Hartzell for bringing to our members in such a personal way the importance and the unique qualities of the Prairie Corridor. Their presentations at our Annual Meeting demonstrated the completion of this project and the 14.5 mile trail connecting Pioneers Park, Conestoga Lake and Spring Creek Prairie will be a source of pride for our community.

The Rock Island Jamaica North Connector Bridge will bring us more immediate satisfaction. We have an unexpected challenge due to the rising cost of steel, but everyone involved has approached the issue with steely resolve. This bridge will provide safe, convenient access to the Homestead Trail, Jamaica North Trail and Wilderness Park trails, one of my personal favorite places to hike, bike, and picnic. By the way, there will be a new bridge completed in Wilderness Park this year too.

These two major projects certainly make it an exciting time for me to come in as president, but I could never underestimate the importance of all the regular GPTN activities; the annual Tour de Lincoln rides in May, our major fund-raising event, Trail Trek, in June, the maps, participation in the community events where we meet so many members and trail supporters. This regular activity of our organization provides a place where we can meet you, who support our trails, and learn what is important to you.

Speaking of Trail Trek, I'd like to give a special thank you to our outgoing President, Dena Noe. Dena played a central role making our largest fund-raising event, a GPTN event. Her guidance and enthusiasm allowed that event to thrive and her service as president has left the organization in fine shape as I begin my service. Thank you, Dena.

I'm eager to serve GPTN and build on the successes of the last 30 years. See you on the trails! Greg

#### **GPTN NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS**

February to April 2019

#### Welcome to new members:

Craig Clark, Angie Graham, Katharine Hogan, Zack Johnson, David Miller, Jack Podoll, Jeffery Prince, Denise Teahon, Loren Warren, and Kristin Williams.

#### Thank you to renewing members:

Su Allen, Mary Amen, Dale & Peggy Arp, Brett & Noelle Baker, Ardith Barber, Bev Barry, Sean Barry, Mat Baumeister, Maxine Bishop, Lori Blum, Jacob and Crystal Bock Thiessen, William Bonecker, Pam Boyle, Cliff & Colleen Brugman, Penni Bruning, Rose Holz & Eric Buhs, Jim & Kim Carveth, Paul Claus III, Dean Cole & Cindy Rutan, Jody Cook, Jim Craig, James Crook, Steve Danahy, Jen Davidson, Steve Danahy, Donald L. Dingman, Gene & Andrea Dinkelman, Curt Donaldson, Terry & Judy Dougherty, Diane & Bill Edwards, John Eggerss, Mike & Bonnie Engel, Gene & Colleen Eubanks, Larry & Peg Fletcher, Eric Fuentes-Ruiz, Jan Gauger, Corey Godfrey, Mark & Nanette Gokie, Carrie Grant, Burklee Green, Corey Godfrey, Carrie Grant, Burklee Green, John Green, Karen Griffin, Rachelle Hadley, Ted Hamann, Doyle Haney, Elly Hardekopf, Eleanor Hardin & Jordan Stump, Paul Harrison, Sara & Lynn Hartzell, Carol Rogers & Edwin Harvey, Doyle Helmink, Kent & Lisa Henning, Veryl Herr, Ann Heydt, City of Hickman, Gerald Hilde, Marie Hitz, Ginger Hobbs, Holly Holle, Ann & Phil Hovis, Betty Howe, Marilyn Hutchinson, Margaret Jacobs, Michael James, Sarah Janiak, Lisa Janssen, Al Jensen, Lynn & Susan Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Donice Kaspar, Jeff & Heather Kimble, Mary & Jim King, Glenda Pierce & Jeff Kirkpatrick, Al

Koontz, Darrell & Julie Knight, Art Knox, Barb Kortum, Ed Kouma, Steve & Diane Kraus, Mike Kreikemeier, Larry Kunc, J. Carey Taylor & Alison Krohn, Cindy Kugler, Roger Lempke, Jim and Doris Lewis, Diane Laffin, Mike Laughlin, Susan Leach, Roger P. Lempke, Jim & Doris Lewis, Christine Lodes, Cynthia Looper, Craig Roper & Sydney Lynch, Bob & Kay Marshall, Erin & Christopher Masada, Ed May, Chad McNeese, Edith Meints, V.T.& Joyce Miller, Peter & Lori Morin, Craig Nelson, Kristi Newcomb & Topher Hansen, Dena Noe, Bill & Jan Norris, Chuck & Pilar O'Connor, Ronald & Susann Ogden, Gerry Oligmueller, Richard & Barbara Ollenburg, Tonn & Holly Ostergard, Lois Paschke, Jesse Petersen, Cary & Lisa Peterson, Aimee Poor, Jesse Poore, & Thomas & Kristen Powers, Rose Quackenbush, Benjamin & Barbara Rader, Mike & Peggy Rasmussen, Bob & Lisa Rauner, Daryoush Razavian, Matt & Mary Reckmeyer, Gareth Rees, Gerry & Karen Rehm, Gregory Reicks, Bryan Rettig, Bob Ripley, Shelby Robinson, Jennifer & Bob Robinson, Dalyce Ronnau, Greg Rosenboom, David & Martha Rowe, Richard Russell II, Steve Russell, Kris & Mary Rutford, Fred Schelert, David & Rhonda Schoenmaker, Donita Consbruck & David Scoby, Dennis & Carla Seeba, Coleen Seng, Bob Shanahan, David & Sharon Sinkler, Paul Smith, Randall B. Smith, Jim & Jan Spalding, Jerry & Jo Stanley, Gayle & Mary Starr, Ray Stevens, Josephine Stewart, Del Stuefer, Ray & Katie Taddeucci, Dennis & Laura Tegtmeier, Neal & Lois Thomas, Annette Thompson, Brian Toalson, Teri Tomasek, Bob & Karen Truba, Cheryl Vajgrt, Jim & Nancy VanKirk, Lyle & Joyce Vannier, Melinda Varley, Michael R. Voorhies, Melanie Walter, Terry & Mary Werner, Bobbie & Kevin Wickham, Sarah Disbrow & David Wishart, John & Cyndi Woollam and Kevin J. Wright.



Back row (L-R) Ray Stevens, Marynelle Greene, Denise Teahon, Dale Arp, Shelby Robinson, Bill Wehrbein, Elaine Hammer, Steve Dunbar, Charlene Dunbar. Middle row (L-R) Kent Henning, Brett Baker, Jim Krieger, Jeff Kimble, Doug Dittman, Corey Godfrey, Greg Rosenboom. Front Row (L-R) Karen Griffin, Gary Bentrup, Mary Torell, Bob Torell, Dena Noe, Parks Coble.

Not Pictured: Marybell Avery, Matt Baumeister, Noel Briseno, Rachelle Hadley, Jordan Messerer, Jesse Petersen, Ann Ringlein, Jamie Warren.

2 11

## Lincoln Track Club Membership Application

The Lincoln Track Club, Inc. was established in 1975 by an eager group of track enthusiasts. Although our title contains the reference to track, we have become a distance oriented club. Our membership includes some of the nation's finest road racers as well as a great number of fun runners.

In essence, our club is a nonprofit community service organization, established to promote running throughout this area and provide educational assistance for its runners. Our quarterly newsletter has become an informational running publication for local runners. The LTC is a member club of both the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) and USA Track and Field.

The Lincoln Track Club is not just about running. It's also about volunteering. This is the one ingredient that makes LTC work. The whole organization is made up of volunteers and we can always use more.

Please consider joining one of Nebraska's finest volunteer-run organizations. LTC members receive entry forms for all LTC races, FastTimes (our newsletter, which is emailed quarterly), an invitation to our annual meeting, and a discount of an entry fee for a single LTC road race. All memberships expire at the end of the calendar year (December 31).

#### 2019 LTC Calendar

3/30 Tabitha (10K/2M)

5/4 Mayor's Run (1M)

5/5 Marathon/Half-Marathon

6/1 Havelock (10K/3K)

7/7 Lincoln Mile

7/14 Nebraska Football Road Race (5K/1M)

9/8 Buffalo (5M)

12/8Holiday Run (5K/1M)

## To join the Lincoln Track Club: www.lincolnrun.org

# Support Lincoln Trails

By donating to the Nebraska Trails Foundation through the:





CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF TRAILS continued from page 1

to their training year in and year out. She also gave an update on the Rock Island to Jamaica North Trail Connector bridge that will be built near Densmore Park and the Cooper YMCA. This project will provide a pedestrian bridge over the BNSF railroad tracks.

Following the presentations, GPTN's annual awards program and election of the 2019 Board of Directors took place. President, Dena Noe presented Forsberg with a thank you gift for presenting at the meeting. Elaine Hammer gave a heart-felt speech presenting Mayor Beutler with the Trailblazer Award. This very significant award is given sparingly to an individual organization or corporation for outstanding contributions to the long-range development of trails. Beutler received the Trail Boss Award in 1994 when he was a state senator, and then again in 2012 as Lincoln's Mayor for his continued support for the trails. Congratulations Mayor, you deserve it!

Gary Bentrup presented the Trail Boss Award to Sara Hartzell for her work advocating and expanding the trails system in Lincoln. This award is given to an administrator or legislator who takes leadership in implementing trails projects or plans.

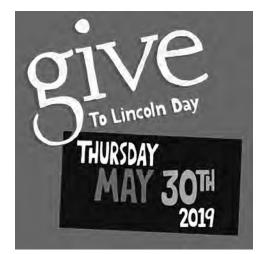
The newest members of the GPTN Board of Directors Marybelle Avery, Doug Dittman, and Denise Teahon were presented by the nominations committee and voted onto the board by those present at the meeting. President Dena Noe thanked Ron Case, Kris Sonderup and Chris Heinrich for their time given to the board as they completed their service.

A project award is given to individuals, organizations or corporations which made significant contributions in time or resources to a specific project. Paul Zillig, General Manager of the Lower Platte South NRD, was presented the Salt Valley Project Award by Gary Bentrup. Mary Torell presented Kelley Van Bruggen and Jamie Granquist project awards for their work in developing, administering and implementing the BikeLNK program. Following those presentations, Noe played a video of Glenn Moss, Lincoln Track Club president, as he accepted the Trailblazer Award on behalf of the club for their continued financial support of Lincoln's trails.

The Board of Directors thanks everyone who attended our annual meeting as well as everyone's continue support of GPTN. We hope to see you all again at next year's meeting!



Gary Bentrup presenting the Trail Boss Award to Sara Hartzell.



Give to Lincoln Day is on May 30 and GPTN is raising an additional \$150,000 for the Rock Island and Jamaica North Trail Connector. *We just found out the price of steel has gone up and it will cost more to build the bridge.* 

#### WAYS TO GIVE!

Go to www.GivetoLincoln.com and give to Nebraska Trails Foundation. Donations can be made from May 1st to 30st.

Give to Lincoln donations may be made in person on May 30 by cash or check at one of the three donation stations listed below:

- LCF office, 215 Centennial Mall South, from 8:00am to 5:00pm
- Tower Square, 13th & P Streets, from 10:00am to 2:00pm
- West Gate Bank, 6003 Old Cheney Road, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Thanks for your support!

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#### 2019 NEW GPTN BOARD MEMBER



#### **Denise Teahon**

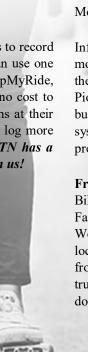
I felt honored when I was recently asked to join the board of GPTN. Since I first discovered the trails after moving to Lincoln from central Nebraska 28 years ago, I've felt a sense of gratitude to those who founded the organization and their successors who have worked to create and maintain such a wonderful trail system! One of my favorite activities is to venture out either by bike or on foot to explore the most recent great trail improvement and I look forward to helping continue the hard work and dedication of GPTN and its members.

#### NATIONAL BIKE CHALLENGE

In 2018, more than 900 Lincoln riders logged over 700,000 miles, steering Lincoln into the top spot in the National Bike Challenge. Lincoln finished 1st in communities with populations from 150,00 to 400,000 in the National Bike Challenge, passed the second place finisher—Madison, WI—by more than 250,000 miles! The State of Nebraska also took 1st place in states with populations of 2 million or less.

The National Bike Challenge is back and Lincoln and the State of Nebraska are ready to retain top honors. The Challenge begins on May 1st and runs through September 30, 2019. The National Bike Challenge registration can be found at https://www.lovetoride.net.

Challenge participants can use several different apps to record miles or can also manually enter the miles. You can use one of the following apps: Strava, Ride Report, MapMyRide, Endomondo, and The Love to Ride app. There is no cost to participants and riders are encouraged to form teams at their workplace or school to motivate their colleagues to log more miles or to start commuting for the first time. GPTN has a team that is open to anyone in Lincoln. Please join us!





**Friday, May 10** - Kickoff Event, 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center, 250 North 21st St. BicycLincoln and the Parks and Recreation Department will provide pastries, coffee and juice as well as information on cycling events during Bike Month and the rest of the year.

Information will be available on BikeLNK, StarTran's busmounted bike racks, the new City of Lincoln Bike Plan, and the new Haines Branch Prairie Corridor. The corridor near Pioneers Park is a tallgrass prairie passage and trail that will build on Lincoln's nationally-recognized trail and greenway system and will link two of Lincoln and Lancaster County's premier environmental resource and education centers.

Friday, May 17 - Wrap-up Event, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the BikeLnk office, 206 South Antelope Valley Parkway. Families are encouraged to celebrate a successful Bike to Work Week with free BikeLnk passes, gift certificates from local bike shops and lemonade from BikeLNK. Beverages from Code Beer Company and food from the Porkcentric truck will be available for purchase. Secure bike parking and a dog-friendly environment will be provided.



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# BICYCLINC DLN"

BicycLincoln is a community group that supports and promotes bicycling in the city of Lincoln. Our mission is to provide information and a unified voice for bicycle advocacy in an effort to make cycling in Lincoln more friendly, safe, easy, accepted, and "so that more people bike and bike more often.

Check them out at http://bicyclincoln.org/



That's what the Great Plains Bike Club is all about. We actively promote bicycling with rides for all levels of riders in and around Southeastern Nebraska.

Weekly rides with a leader I Show 'n go rides Ice cream & coffee shop rides I Moon-lit rides Hammering training rides I Trail rides

We sponsor the Spring Fling ride in April and Heatstroke 100 in August. We also promote bicycling safety through community-sponsored events. For more information and an on-line application to join the club, go to **greatplainsbikeclub.org**.



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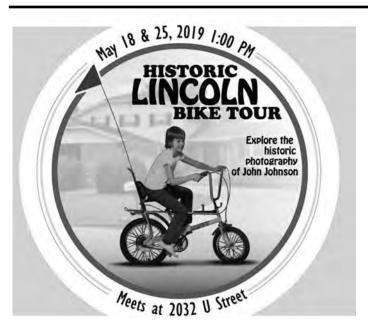
Bike Walk Nebraska cultivates and supports safe and accessible active transportation across our state by leading sound policy and advocating for best practices. We work across sectors in partnership with elected officials, municipalities, and organizations to ensure that biking and walking - whether for transportation or recreation - works for all Nebraskans.

**BIKE WALK** 

Become a member at:

https://www.bikewalknebraska.org/

. lacksquare



Join the Nebraska History Museum for the first History Bike Tour of the year! They are celebrating their exhibit featuring John Johnson's historic photographs of Lincoln with a tour of the city his work features.

Starting from the Malone Center (2032 U St), Lincoln Historic Preservation Planner Ed Zimmer will lead participants on a tour of locations related to Johnson's photos. John Johnson (1879-1953) was a talented photographer who recorded the Lincoln scene and especially his African American community in hundreds of photographs between 1910 and 1926. Working without a studio, he created beautiful portraits on front porches and in Lincoln parks. Our tours will visit about a dozen sites of his photos near City Campus, downtown, and south of the Capitol. Copies of the relevant Johnson photos will be provided to illustrate how little, or how much, these scenes have changed in the last century.

There are two separate tours, one on May 18 and another on May 25. Helmets are required for all participants. Tours begin at 1 pm. For more information and to register, go to <a href="https://history.nebraska.gov/biketour">https://history.nebraska.gov/biketour</a>

### CAN YOU CATCH THIS GUY?



www.lpsnrd.org



#### **EVENT CALENDAR**

#### MAY

9 — Tour de Lincoln: Northeast

10—Bike to Work Kick Off

14—Celebrating the Prairie Corridor

16 — Tour de Lincoln: Southeast

17—Bike to Work Wrap Up

23 — Tour de Lincoln: Northwest

30 — Tour de Lincoln: Southwest

18 and 25 — Historic bike ride with Ed Zimmer

30 — Give to Lincoln Day

#### **JUNE**

23 — Trail Trek



## **Celebrating the Prairie Corridor**

Tuesday, May 14, 2019 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Martin Prairie at Pioneers Park Nature Center

- Visit the Hudson Cabin
- Explore the Heritage School
- Discover the Prairie Scavenger Hunt for Kids
- Enjoy Local Food for Purchase (Gelato to Go, Kitchen Sink Bakery, Gilded Swine and Roaming Tacos)
- Tour the Corridor Trail via Pedicab or BikeLNK bikes
- Experience the Prairie from a Drone's Perspective
- Learn about Native Birds
- Stroll through the Prairie

All activities on the Martin Prairie— please dress appropriately. In case of inclement weather, this event will be cancelled. On-site parking available for vehicles and bicycles. For more information, 402-441-8258

#### **2019 Tour de Lincoln Bike Rides** by Mary Torell

Join the Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) along with Lincoln Parks & Recreation as they celebrate National Bike Month in May with their annual Tour de Lincoln bicycle rides.

For nearly 15 years, GPTN sponsors Thursday evening bike rides designed to take participants to different quadrants of Lincoln. All rides start at 6:00 p.m. at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center at 228 North 21 Street (21st & Q Streets) Union Plaza Park. This year's bike rides are scheduled for the last four Thursdays in May as follows:

May 9 – Northeast Tour de Lincoln – 16 miles

May 16 – Southeast Tour de Lincoln – 15 miles

May 23 – Northwest Tour de Lincoln – 12 miles

May 30 – Southwest Tour de Lincoln – 16 miles

Members of GPTN's Board of Directors lead each ride, provide mechanical support and make sure there are no riders left behind. The rides vary in distances from 12 to 16 miles each, and are designed to acquaint the city's cyclists with different trails, conditions and features. People of all ages and

families are invited to come out and enjoy the rides. Lots of positive comments have been made by riders on how much they enjoyed past rides. Many have never ventured out on trails that are not near their residence, so they welcome the opportunity to see where a new trail leads them.

Weather cancellations will be announced on Facebook and on our web site at http://www.gptn.org/. Let's all get out on the trails and have some fun!





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#### Murdock Trail Completed by Parks Coble

On November 18, 2018, the city of Lincoln, GPTN, the Lincoln Track Club, and others celebrated the completion of the Murdock Trail upgrade. The culmination of two years of fundraising efforts, the project was completed with the support of the Jayne Synder Bequest at the Nebraska Trails Foundation. Jayne Snyder, a long time GPTN stalwart, was a native of northeast Lincoln and proud Northeast Rocket, and had long sought an upgrade for this trail.

The David Murdock Trail is a major link in our city's outstanding trail network. Running almost 5 miles, the trail's west end connects to the John Dietrich Trail at 48th Street, runs east along the south side of Ballard Park, and then crosses 84th Street on the overpass just south of the Lancaster Events Center. The Murdock Trail was primarily only limestone. While many runners enjoy the softer surface, bikers and others do not. Also much of the Murdock Trails' limestone was poorly maintained with major erosion problems. The biggest drawback was that limestone trails cannot be plowed in the winter. Especially along the 56<sup>th</sup> to 70<sup>th</sup> street portion which ran through a residential, commercial, and industrial area, this limited use by commuters.

The upgrade of the Murdock was a unique project for Lincoln—a side-by-side trail. Part of the right-of-way was a paved trail with a limestone trail by its side. Runners have their softer surface; commuters have their plowed trails in winter. Roller boards and blades are now usable on the Murdock. As if to demonstrate the need for the upgrade, Mother Nature dropped a significant snowfall the night before the trail dedication. City crews had cleaned the paved portion of the trail so that participants could bike, run, or walk over to Ballard Park for refreshments after the dedication.

With the upgrade the Murdock Trail is now one of Lincoln's premier trails. The side-by-side feature is one which might be used on other city trails. A special thanks to all who donated to this project. GPTN members can make a difference!







Murdock Trail after reconstruction.

# TESO TO THE STATE OF THE STATE SUNDAY · JUNE 23 · HAYMARKET PARK Enjoy Lincoln's trail system with hundreds of our cycling friends on a family-focused bike ride that includes food, fun and a performance from the NoWear BMX Freestyle Stunt Team. Choose from



three fun routes and enter the drawing to win one of 17 new Trek bicycles courtesy of Cycle Works and the Bike Rack. All proceeds benefit Lincoln's trails.

























