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 $450,000 to support this important trail connection. Please consider donating to this exciting project.

Make contributions payable to:
Nebraska Trails Foundation

Mail to: GPTN
P.O. 82902
Lincoln, NE 68501-2902

GPTN continues to celebrate its accomplishments of 30 years of trails at the 30th Annual Meeting of the Great Plains Trails Network. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 23, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at Cornhusker Bank Center in their Community Room at 8310 O Street (84th & O) in Lincoln. (Enter on the north side of the building). The public is invited.

An ensemble presentation about the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch and the importance of the prairie to Nebraska will be given by Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler, Michael Forsberg, and Sara Hartzell. Forsberg is a conservation photographer who has dedicated 25 years of his life to photograph America's Great Plains, once one of the greatest grassland ecosystems on Earth. He is best known for his images of the Great Plains, wildlife, landscapes, Sandhill cranes, and watersheds.

Sara Hartzell is a Park Planner for Lincoln Parks and Recreation. She will also give a State of the Trails overview of the Lincoln Trails System. This network is 131 miles in length, and includes approximately 85 miles of Commuter/Recreation trails, and 46 miles of Hiker/Biker trails in parks.

Following the presentation, the GPTN’s annual awards program and election of the 2019 Board of Directors will take place. Refreshments will be provided.

For more information about the Great Plains Trails Network or the annual meeting, contact Dena Noe, President of GPTN at 402-770-0032 or visit our website at www.gptn.org.
Welcome to New Members:

Gratitude
This is my last column as president of GPTN. I have been honored to serve the great members of GPTN, but most of all I leave with a feeling of gratitude for the 31 members of our board of directors. These wonderful people engage, and unite the community around building the trails in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

I need to take a moment to thank the three departing board members for their help over the years. Kris Sonderup has served on the Board for 13 years and was instrumental in getting Trail Rack Off the ground. Kris is always great to have on a trail ride, I can tell you he’s served more than one bicyclist from a long walk back home. Ron Case has been part of the board for four years and a great help with Trail Rack and other GPTN activities. Chris Heinrich served on the board six years and with his passion and dedication we have built a new bridge in Wilderness Park and the second will start construction this spring. Thank you all for your time and efforts on the GPTN board. We will miss you!

We have a fantastic line up for you at this year’s GPTN Annual Meeting. I invite you to come and celebrate the accomplishments of 2018 and a look toward what the future will hold for our wonderful trails system on Saturday, February 23.

I would be amiss if I didn’t take this opportunity to thank my husband. Many of us on the board could not do what we do if I would be amiss if I didn’t take this opportunity to thank my husband. Many of us on the board could not do what we do if he’s the love of my life and I’m blessed to have him with me through the joys of serving this fine group and the challenges.

He’s the love of my life and I’m blessed to have him with me on this journey through life.

As I turn my duties over to another, I plan on continuing to be involved in this work. Thank you for the trust you have given me, I hope I served you well.

Dena Nae
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 e-mailed 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).

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

Support Lincoln Trails
By donating to the Nebraska Trails Foundation through the:

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

2019 NEW GPTN BOARD MEMBERS

Doug Dittman
I’m excited and honored to be asked to serve on the GPTN board. As owner and operator of the Hub Cafe located on the Big West Trail at 21st and Q, I see first hand the number of runners, walkers, and riders that use the trails on a daily basis. It has also become a great jumping-on place for me to use the trails for fitness as well as a really efficient way to run errands and attend meetings around town. As I came to use the trail system over the last several years, time and time again I’ve been amazed to find yet another trail already in place that took me safely to the desired destination. I hope in some small way I can be of help in perpetuating and expanding GPTN’s vision of a trails network that encourages healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities.

Marybell Avery
Marybell Avery is a native of North Carolina and received a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She moved to Nebraska in 1984 and served as Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Education and Exercise Sciences at Creighton University for five years. Marybell retired in 2015 from Lincoln Public Schools after teaching for five years and serving 21 years as curriculum specialist for health and physical education. Her primary work focus was K-12 health and physical education curriculum, including professional development of teachers, instructional practice, assessment of student performance and program assessment. Marybell is active in leadership at Westminster Presbyterian Church and secretary of the Hillcrest Heights Neighborhood Association. She enjoys golf, biking, walking, strength and aerobic training. She has been married to Stan Campbell for 31 years. They have two sons and two grandsons who live in Iowa City and Sunny the cat who lives with them in Lincoln.

New board member Denise Teahon will be presented in the next GPTN Newsletter.

Over 28,000 trips on BikeLNK from April to December 2018.
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/

On November 18, 2018, over 40 trail supporters celebrated the completion of the Murdock Trail Renovation. From 56th to 70th Street, this section includes a 10 foot paved trail and adjacent 4 foot gravel sidepath. Bob Torell led the group in singing "Side by Side", a fitting song for the celebration.

Update on the Rock Island and Jamaica North Trail Connector

For many years, trail users have asked for a connection between the Rock Island Trail and the Jamaica North Trail in south Lincoln near the Cooper YMCA and Densmore Park. That wish is now becoming reality!

The City of Lincoln, the Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD), and GPTN are partnering together to provide a 350-foot pedestrian bridge over the BSNF railroad, safely connecting the two trails. RTSD is contributing $600,000 to this project to enhance safety issues around the railroad tracks. City of Lincoln is providing $250,000 while GPTN is raising the remaining $450,000 for this $1.3 million dollar project.

With rising steel costs, engineers at Olsson are revisiting the design to bring costs down to the original estimate. Construction is still scheduled to begin in Fall 2019 and should take eight or nine months, if the weather cooperates. See the back panel of this newsletter for more information on how to donate or go online to www.gptn.org. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Sustainable, Responsible, & Impact Investing

Financial Planning - Risk Management - Investment Strategies
Securities and Investment advisory services offered solely through Ameritas Investment Corp. (AIC), Member FINRA/SIPC. AIC is not affiliated with GPTN or CPS. Additional products and services may be available through Tyler Midwest, CPS, or GPTN that are not offered through AIC.

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

The Nebraska Bicycling Alliance is a nonprofit corporation primarily supported by public donations, memberships and grants. Our mission is to promote health and safety for all who ride bicycles in Nebraska.

The vision of the Nebraska Bicycling Alliance does not compete with existing clubs or organized bicycling groups, but rather enhances and supports all of these groups, bike shops, health and safety groups, city planners, policy makers and NDOR. We plan to promote bicycling in Nebraska when needed at the State and local levels in any way we can with project design, seeking federal funding, promoting safe routes for kids, and public education.

Learn more at: http://www.nebike.org/
Completion of the bike network will happen over time, as resources become available. The proposed network is divided into 135 individual projects. Eight of the projects may be constructed in the near term - many as part of routine street rehabilitation and capital roadway projects. By combining implementation of the bike network with other street projects, the projects can be completed at a significant cost savings.

The remaining projects are prioritized to help focus resources on projects that will provide the greatest benefits to Lincoln. The projects are prioritized based on evaluation criteria linked directly to the bicycle goals: 1) barriers, 2) bicycle demand, 3) safety, 4) connectivity, and 5) social equity. The project phasing plan also considers the relative project costs and the ease of implementation.

One of the goals of the plan is to be recognized as a Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. Achieving Gold status requires a concerted effort on the part of elected officials, City staff, and advocates to implement the recommendations of this Plan: expand outreach, education, and enforcement programs; and think strategically during the next application process. The Lincoln Bike Plan documents recommended steps to achieve Gold status and further Lincoln’s bicycle-friendly culture.

What about the cost?
The Bike Plan doesn’t give per-project cost or an overall price tag since this is a high-level planning document. The plan does include general estimates:

- Bike routes: $19,000 per mile.
- Bike lanes: $49,000 per mile.
- One-way buffered lanes: $39,000 per mile.
- Bi-directional buffered lanes: $79,000 per mile.
- Separated bike lanes: $1.9 to $4.3 million per mile.

City street comparisons:
- Expanding a street by one lane, $3 million/mile.
- Resurfacing one lane of a street, $600,000/mile.

There are many economic, environmental and social benefits the come from investing in bike infrastructure. For instance, each $1 million spent on bike infrastructure projects, 11.4 jobs are created. Road-only projects create 7.8 jobs per $1 million.

EVENT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY
23 — GPTN’s Annual Meeting (see front page)

MARCH
9 — Run for Bridge (see advertisement in this issue)

MAY
9 — Tour de Lincoln
16 — Tour de Lincoln
23 — Tour de Lincoln
30 — Tour de Lincoln
18 or 25 — Historic bike ride with Ed Zimmer

JUNE
23 — Trail Trek

North 33rd and Cornhusker: Improving Safety for a Better Tomorrow

The BNSF railway currently carries nearly 65 trains daily on the double-track mainline railroad through northeast Lincoln, resulting in at least 3.5 hours per day that each of the at-grade railroad crossings at N. 33rd Street and Adams Street are blocked to vehicular traffic. The Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) is leading the charge to make travel in this vicinity safe and efficient for all transportation types, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Draft Subarea Plan has an informative section on the proposed measures to improve safety and enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. Find out more about this exciting project at: https://www.33rdcornhusker.com/

TRAIL UPDATES

Murdock Trail Renovation
The City of Lincoln has completed the Murdock Trail Renovation from 56th to 70th Street. This section includes a 10 foot paved trail and adjacent 4 foot gravel sidepath.

Wilderness Park South Bridge
The City of Lincoln did not receive grant from the Recreational Trails Program however the City is still on track to construct the bridge this spring.

CAN YOU CATCH THIS GUY?

Homestead Trail
Oak Creek Trail
MoPac East Trail

North 33rd and Cornhusker: Improving Safety for a Better Tomorrow

https://www.33rdcornhusker.com/
Since May 2018, the City of Lincoln and transportation consultants Felsburg Holt & Ullevig have been developing the Lincoln Bike Plan. Drawing heavily on help from the cycling and noncycling public through open houses, online surveys, calls and emails, the goal is to understand the existing system and identify improvements that would improve travel options and make Lincoln more bike-friendly.

The result is a 52-page plan that will guide the city’s construction of on-street bike infrastructure. The plan, maps and other resources are available at the website including an interactive map viewer. See www.lincolnbikeplan.com.

The plan is now making its way through the various approvals in order to be included in the city’s Comprehensive Plan and Long-Range Transportation Plan. This plan amendment will be introduced to City Council on February 4, 2019 and a public hearing will be held during the City Council meeting scheduled on February 11, 2019.

The Bike Plan doesn’t recommend additional trails, which are built and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Instead, it focused on adding to the existing 95 miles of bike routes and lanes on city streets. The plan identifies 144 miles of on-street upgrades — bike routes and bike boulevards, bike lanes and buffered lanes and separated lanes and side paths (see adjacent sidebar for details). Twenty three intersection enhancements are also proposed from crossing beacons to bridges.

Continued on page 8.