

TRAIL TRACKS



Fall, 2009

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

2009 Photo Contest Winners



Grand Prize winning photo by Ann Hull, 'Just me and my Great-Grampa'

The Northwest Vermont Rail Trail announced the winners of its 4th annual Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail Photo Contest at a reception held November 19 at Sheldon Elementary School.

Ann Hull won the Grand Prize for her photo 'Just me and my Great-Grampa'. Category winners were 'Fall's path' by Elijah Benoit for the category Scenery/ Views, 'Biking Neighbors' by Don and Anita McFeeters for the Trail Neighbors category, 'Enjoying a scenic ride' by Steve Ratte for the Trail Users category, and 'Walking music' by



Dave Stanley with Ann Hull, our 2009 Grand Prize winner

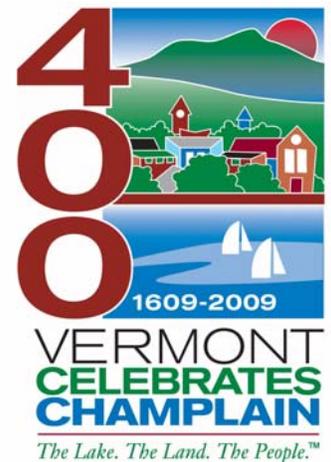
Robert Tipper for the Nature category.

Many thanks to our judges David Juaire, George Moskevitz, and Terri Poirier for your time and input; those were difficult decisions to make! And a huge thanks to all you shutterbugs who shared with us your MVRT experiences! We were so please to see such excellent photos!

Exploring Franklin County, VT the 21st Century Way

To celebrate the Lake Champlain Quadri-centennial and National Trails Day 2009, MVRT Council members offered to take outdoor enthusiasts on guided recreational outings in Franklin County. A paddle, two bike rides and a hike were selected to highlight the natural history and scenic beauty of Northwestern Vermont.

On May 30, Rail Trail Council Chair Dave Stanley led a group of a dozen kayakers on a 4-hour paddle through the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. Starting at Louie's Landing, the group followed the Missisquoi River to Missisquoi Bay, crossed about a mile of open water, and returned to Louie's Landing via Dead Creek. It was a gorgeous day except for the short period of time when some really interesting cloud formations turned into a very windy and wet storm – there



was some very fast paddling as people headed for the relative shelter of Dead Creek!



Paddling in Missisquoi Bay as a storm approaches

Council members Don Mueller and Phyllis Tiffany led a two-day bicycle outing on the MVRT. On July 11, the group of bicyclists rode to and from St. Albans to The Abbey. The following day the group, with some new faces, bicycled the remainder of the MVRT from The Abbey to Richford and back. Great weather accompanied the riders both days!



Bicyclists on the MVRT in Sheldon

Our fourth outing was a hike up Burnt Mountain in Montgomery Center on August 15 led by Council members Jane Williams and Alisha Sawyer. It was a sunny but incredibly hot and humid day, and the intrepid hikers were rewarded with lunch and fabulous views of Jay Peak, the Trout River valley, and Quebec when they

reached the 2600' summit. The climb is about 2.4 miles each way with about 1,600' of ascent.

Hikers at the top of Burnt Mountain



UPDATES

Bathrooms

Rail trail restroom facility gets city water

Public restrooms, the only ones of their kind, located along the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail (MVRT) will be open beginning May 1, according to developer Phil Gerbode.

The seasonal facilities will be open to the public from May to September.

Completed in 2006, the pavilion is maintained by the homeowners association for the adjacent Village at Franklin Park. The delay in opening the restrooms was the result of what Gerbode characterized as a lengthy negotiation between St. Albans City and the association over the cost of providing water and sewer hookups to the facility.

The city had insisted that the association pay for a full residential hook-up, the smallest unit available, according to City Manager Dominic Cloud. The cost of a residential hook-up is \$5,000.

Because the pavilion is only open for five months out of the year and will use much less water than a home, the association asked for a pro-rated fee.

The city has now agreed to a \$500 hook-up fee. "We really appreciate what Dominic Cloud has done to facilitate this," Gerbode said.

The Pavilion building is located within Franklin Park near the I-89 overpass less than a mile from the MVRT railhead in St. Albans City.

Michelle Monroe
Staff Writer, St. Albans Messenger
Reprinted from the St. Albans Messenger, November 11, 2009

New Trail Surface

Plans to resurface the entire MVRT next summer are underway. VTrans will be putting the project out to bid this month and a contractor will be selected early in the new year. This work is being funded by federal stimulus dollars being spent here in Franklin County!

In preparation for the resurfacing, VTrans District 8 staff have been repairing or replacing old culverts and cutting back vegetation in the shoulders so that the resurfacing trucks will have sufficient maneuvering space to do their work.

Parking Areas

This project is still alive and progressing! In order to determine the extent of coal ash present at the planned East Berkshire parking area site, the State hired The Johnson Company of Montpelier to conduct an environmental assessment. We are presently awaiting the results of this assessment and whether further remedial action is required.

Friends of the MVRT

Welcome and thank you to our new Friends

*John Moody
Jeorg Mellmann
Peter Brosseau
Allan Louis
Peter Perrino
Brian & Patti Lariviere
Betsey Allen*

And sincere thanks to our loyal Friends of the Trail who have renewed their memberships for another year. We truly appreciate your continued support!

*Carmen Lanoue
Gail Benjamin
Mark Lagrow
David & Christa Chevalier
Glen & Sharon Roa
Catherine Fitzgerald
Mary Stueber
George & Virginia Lewis
Robert Nixon
John King
Don Mueller
Carolyn & William Barnes
Ed Menkens
Diane Hakey
John Chicoine
Jane Williams
Eleanor Dodd
Martha Smith
Chuck Webb
Bill & Judy Zimmerman
Maurice Baker
Abe & Jean Brown
Dolly MacNeil
Mike LaFontaine*

Your Friendship represents an investment in the future of our families, our businesses, and our communities. Thanks so much to all of you!

Trail Users



The MVRT is used by many people and for a variety of reasons. We typically see young parents pushing toddlers in prams, young and old on bicycles, walking, or jogging, and horseback riders. Even National Guard members use the MVRT – they were in training prior to being deployed to Afghanistan.

Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council
c/o Northwest Regional Planning Commission
155 Lake Street
St. Albans, VT 05478

The Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail

Farms, Forests, Fields, and Communities: Come Harvest Our Agricultural Heritage!