

THE PATH FINDER



HISTORICAL TRAIL

RAILS TO TRAILS OF NORTHWEST MONTANA

SPRING 2014



2014 Great Northern
5K Race and Kids Sprint
Date: Saturday, May 17th
Time: 8:00 a.m. - Registration & Packet Pick-Up Begins
9:30 a.m. - Kids Sprint
10:00 a.m. - GN5K

Rails to Trails Great Northern 5 K will be held May 17th. The race starts in the Meridian Court Business Complex cul-de-sac, near the corner of Center St. and Meridian in Kalispell.

Chip timing, provided by Competitive Timing, will continue for the GN5K but not for the kids sprint. The course is an out and back race that finishes at the Meridian trailhead.

Stay after the GN5K for a huge number of prize drawings and refreshments. There are awards for the overall top 3 male & female finishers. We promote a family friendly environment and emphasize a focus on the spirit of the event.

Contact : www.gn5k.com or greatnorthern5k@gmail.com for additional information.

Race proceeds benefit Rails to Trails projects. The GN5K is dedicated in memory to Sonny Boon.

President's Message

From the President's Desk, March 31, 2014

Spring has come and the trail is in good shape. Now we all can enjoy biking from Somers to Kila (22 miles). During 2013, we continued upgrading the trail for your enjoyment. Almost \$9,000 was spent seal coating, crack sealing and replacing asphalt where needed. This work was done between Dern Road and the Smith Valley Grange Hall.

In early 2013 Rails to Trails received a State recreational trails grant of \$18,300. We were able to contract with a supplier to have a vaulted toilet built out near Kila. It is very nice and we are proud to have this additional facility for you the trail users. We did not use all of the project funds and are very proud of our contractor and volunteers that made this happen. These are 3 year period funds that will be used for additional trail work.

On arbor day during April, trail volunteers and students from the Petersen elementary school planted 125 additional seedlings east of Dern road along the trail. During the past two years, we have planted almost 350 trees. Three or four of our volunteers hand watered these trees as needed. We are getting crowded and will not plant trees during 2014. We are waiting to see what our survival rate turns out to be. If survival is low we may replant in 2015.

It is our plans to upgrade the trail beyond Kila in order to prevent flooding on the trail. More seal coating, crack patching and asphalt repair will also be done this year. We continue to submit grants to the State for additional recreational trails funds. Our latest request is for additional funds for correcting the drainage issues in the Kila area.

Your support by attending our pie auction in November and the fun run in June was very outstanding and added to Rails to Trails bank account. Also your donations have really helped financially. Our bank account is strong!

Here's to great walking, biking and pushing a stroller down the trail on your way to Somers or Kila.

Thank you, Richard Siderius, President

Trail User Testimonial

To whom it may concern:

I wanted to take the time to share my experiences using the bike trail system. I had not done much biking until recently so the flatness to the trail system was very helpful while getting my bike legs.

The scenery and the number of others using the bike path greatly add to the enjoyment. I have met people walking, running, pushing strollers in addition to a great variety of bike riders. I haven't yet covered all the trails but hope to complete them this year. I think this bike system adds so much to the character and livability of our town. Sincerely, S... R...

Fred Adkins, Our Hero and Volunteer of the Year!

Our Hero and Volunteer of the Year!



Fred at a pottery class

In grateful recognition of his enduring commitment, we honor Fred Adkins as Rails to Trails Volunteer of the Year.

Fred was partly responsible for the founding of the local Rails to Trails group in the 1980s. However, his job with the railroad kept him from being active for a while. Val Parsons recalls meeting

Fred at a Fish, Wildlife and Parks Tail-of-the-Year presentation. She encouraged him to come back to meetings and he became active with a positive and optimistic attitude. He immediately proved that he was not only interested but also reliable and dependable.

Fred is proactive and has long-range vision. Being generous with his time and skills, he has worked tirelessly on mowing, weed control, noting problems areas, repairing, maintaining and cleaning up. Fred has also been involved in trail signage. For the past two years he has also been part of the tree seedling planting project by 5th graders at Peterson School. He was determined to help the tiny trees survive by being the person mainly responsible for watering them. He has offered to continue this important work.

Fred's community connections have helped Rails to trails all the time. He knows local businesses and encourages their trail support. He distributes posters for Rails to Trails events and gathers donations for fundraisers. As a frequent user of the trails, he is really an ambassador.

Fred looks on the bright side of life. Here's a quote from Fred, "Riding a bike makes you feel like a kid all the time!" His amazing contributions to Rails to Trails and this community are commendable. He is our 2013 Great Northern Historical Rails to Trails HERO!

A note from Fred's son, Greg Adkins. *It is so awesome that my father is being honored as the "Volunteer of the Year" for Rails to Trails. The trail holds a special place in our family. Four years ago, when my dad suffered a serious injury he was allowed*

to leave the rehab center for his first afternoon outside of the hospital in months. While he loves so much about this valley and its beauty he didn't want to see Flathead Lake, Glacier Park or the Bob Marshall (places he truly loves), he wanted to spend the afternoon on the trail that he had spent much of his retirement committed to. I remember his smile when he saw that the trail was clean and accessible on that cold early spring day. The trail was the vision of some great people in this community and I am proud that my father is being recognized for his dedication and commitment to this vision.



Fred (right) helps pour cement.

Eagle Scouts Work on RR Trestle Area Landscaping and Maintenance

The original landscaping of the railroad trestle area just west of the Meridian Trailhead had shown the effects of time and gravity and it was time to fix up the area. Eagle Scouts Chase and Augustus Baldwin (accompanied by father Dan Mulligan) restored and beautified the railroad trestle area west of the

Meridian Trail head. They restored the posts and landscaped the dirt/gravel. The project took a few weeks of effort. All supplies for the project were donated from local businesses. All rocks were donated and moved in by hand by the Boy Scouts.

Both scouts attended a Rails to Trails board meeting and presented their completed projects for sign off. Chase Baldwin reported he spent approximately 35 - 40 hours landscaping the area by the trestle west of the Meridian trailhead. Augustus Baldwin reported he

spent approximately 16 hours repairing and painting fence posts and cleaning up graffiti at the RR trestles west of Meridian trailhead.

We will acknowledge their work along with Scout Troop 33 by placing a brick on the trail gift wall.

2013 Great Northern Rails to Trails 5K and Kids Race Results

The morning of June 23 was a beautiful sunny morning perfect for our annual Great Northern 5K and Kids Sprint. The turn out was great with approximately 150 participants. Top female finishers were Michelle Noftsinger, Jennifer Flink, and Dana Clements. Michele had a time of 23:19. Top male finishers were Justin Whitman, Keaton Grove, and Jacob Stueben. Justin

finished in 19:36.

Race Sponsors were: Sunrisers Lions Club, Glacier Bank, The Summit Medical Fitness Center, Sliters Ace Lumber and Building Supply, Hammer Nutrition, eyedesigngraphics, Fun Beverage Inc., Colter Coffee, Wheatons, and Rocky Mountain Images. Other donations came from Imagination Station, Norms Soda Foun-

tain Candy Shop, Dairy Queen, When in Rome, The Laser Cosmetic Center at Dermatology Associates, Sweet Peaks, McDonalds, and Rosauers.



The Value of Protected Open Space and Trails

The Flathead Valley is a special place in ways that are collectively (such as open space, lakes, clean air and water, Glacier Park) and individually (such as family, jobs and a place to raise a family). We have a good and growing network of foot and bike trails. The benefits of open space and trails are hard to evaluate and are not well understood but studies often

list 1) higher property values along "boundary" property; 2) providing environmental services; 3) providing recreation opportunities and health benefits, and 4) promoting economic activity.

Homeowners pay more for property near open space and they pay more in taxes.

Environmental services pro-

vide wildlife habitat, uncongested landscapes in an urban area.

Recreational activities are numerous as seen daily with walkers, bikers, strollers, bladers, boarders and dog exercisers. These are generally low cost forms of recreation close to town. If you're moving you're exercising which is a healthy activity.

Last, some recreation activities require maintenance and support of local businesses. We also know tourists visit the area and some use our trail systems. The trails also provide opportunities for local service organizations and businesses to provide community service in the form of helping to maintain and promote trail use.

Rails to Trails 2013 Finance Summary

TREASURER'S REPORT
 Rails to Trails Funds have increased over recent years due to successful applications for grants, general donations and our fundraisers.
 General Fund: \$31,686.
 DADavidson: \$ 2,673.
 White Fish CU: \$17,354.
 Total: \$51,713.

Each year volunteers perform many hours of service and hundreds of dollars of time and supplies are often

donated to maintain and manage the Great Northern Historical Trail. We sincerely want to thank every individual, organization, business and agency for continuing to support Rails to Trails. Your donations help us to continue to expand and maintain the trails.

Take a minute to look over our gift walls located in Kila, Kalispell (2 locations) and Somers.

Dern Road Tree Planting Update

During May 2013 Patti Mason, from Flathead Conservation District, completed a survey of our 2012 tree planting project. She calculated a 66% survival rate of the 200 trees planted last year east of Dern Road. The Aspen and larch had the worst survival rate. The 2013 planting was easier as it was in better soil with better weather conditions. 150 trees were

planted this year from the end of last years plantings eastward toward town.

Trees were donated by the Salish - Kootenai Tribal Council. Planting was conducted by the Peterson Elementary School and trail volunteers. The trees were watered by hand over the summer.



The Path Finder Newsletter

Rails to Trails of Northwest Montana
P. O. Box 1103
Kalispell, MT 59903-1103

Rails to Trails of NW Montana
meets at 5:30 PM on the second
Monday of each month at the
Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Conference Room
490 N. Meridian Road, Kalispell

We're on the Web!
www.railstotrailsofnwmt.com/

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

2013 Harvest Dance & Pie Auction

The Smith Valley Grange was again the host of this annual fundraiser. Contra dancing to the music of Grin and Bear it String Clan and calling by Helen Pilling was enjoyed by young and old alike. Lively bidding for delicious and decadent pies promoted by auctioneer Sam Scott brought smiles and laughter to the crowd. The dancers and those on the sideline imbibed on pie alamode throughout the evening.

The Silent Auction of many one of a kind art and crafted pieces was well received. The profit realized is \$2076 and will be used for maintenance of the trail. Thanks to all who donated homemade pies and for your loyal support of Rails to Trails. Mark your calendars for the next dance and pie auction on Nov. 8th. Bring your home made pie (one per person) for free admission and dance the night away. Hope to see you there.

Website Update

Please check out our newly refurbished Website, railstotrailsofnwmt.com, and, AND our Facebook page at 'rails to trails'. Even though there are very few of the core R2T folk who sit behind their computer for more than an hour a day, we know there is some magic in the way the World Wide Web works. Check us out often, 'like' us and invite your friends to 'like' us. Send us favorite photos of

your adventures on the Great Northern Historical Trail. Thanks to the local business, [eyedesigngraphics](http://eyedesigngraphics.com), we will be updating these sites, posting events and comments. We also use your photos and letters of support for the grants that we apply to. So, keep them coming, peruse railstotrailsofnwmt.com and by all means enjoy the trail.

Remember Rails to Trails During the 2014 United Way Campaign

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\*\*\* SAVE THIS DATE: NOVEMBER 8th FOR THE 2014 HARVEST DANCE and PIE AUCTION \*\*\*  
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