

Farmington Valley Trails Council

Greenway News

May, 2012
Issue 1

Volume 12,

President's Letter



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Bike Sales

Bicycle Retailer reports 2010 bicycle sales by type as follows: Road 37.8%; 26" Front Susp. MTB 15.6%; Hybrid 15.5%; 26" Full Susp. MTB 9.4%; 26" Comfort 4.6%; 29er Front Susp. MTB 3.9%; all other categories are around 2% or less.

Happy Spring to all of our members, volunteers, supporters and friends. Our major fundraiser of the year, the 15th annual Trails in Motion sponsored by St. Francis Hospital on June 2nd is coming up. Help us to support the trails on our 20th Anniversary!

Yes, twenty years. It seems unlikely that such an amount of time has passed. The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail is built in the Valley, the River Trail is substantially complete (up to RT 44) and the FVTC has programs in place to keep them clean, provide helpful amenities and provide for repairs. We are dedicated to the safety, education and happiness of every trail user. With your support we have an operating budget that has been averaging over \$40,000 a year, with 94% going exclusively to trail programs.

The far-seeing group that started it all was led by our founding president, Preston Reed of Farmington and Len Tulisano of Simsbury. Some of the original key members of that group included Steve Noble (still our invaluable treasurer), Bob Thompson, Mike Schloss, and Deb and Ron Lilly. Past presidents include Jim Sage and Dwight Weed. So many people contributed to the success of the trails over two decades that it is impossible to list them all. To all board members and officers past and present, our sincere thanks. Most of all, our thanks go to all of our volunteers and members who allow us to do what we do. In fact, in our largest all-volunteer project to date, over 175 volunteers showed up for our Clean-Up Day on April 15th. Old friends and new faces confirmed our ever increasing vibrancy as a volunteer organization.

I have reached out to the Farmington Canal Rail to Trail Association headed by their President, Lisa Fernandez and Executive Director, Norm Thetford to discuss working more together. Talks have been proceeding about the possibility of the FVTC joining forces with FCRTTA to support the whole trail system from New Haven to Suffield. For this to succeed we will need the existing FCRTTA membership (over 400) to help us in their communities. The combined organization would have over 2000 members, 13 municipalities including the City of New Haven, an increased budget and a new mix of key advocates. We have already drawn closer over the years, and some of our programs already are taking root like an Adopt-a-Trail group in Hamden. Our board of directors is reviewing this issue.

(See page 3)

Connecticut Adaptive Cycling

Riding a bike is a skill most of us conquered early in life - a sort of rite of passage as we experienced the joys of the wind in our hair and the independence it inspired - either real or imagined. A bike ride, for most of us, takes only a modest amount of courage, agility and balance and delivers enormous rewards. For adults and children with physical or neurological challenges, the thrill of riding a bicycle, and certainly riding a bicycle with family and friends, is often out of reach - both physically and financially.

Simsbury-based Connecticut Adaptive Cycling (CAC), established in 2011, is a program of The Adult and Children Mobility Project, Inc., a not-for-profit 501(c)(3). Adaptive cycles allow riders to enjoy cycling in spite of a broad mobility challenges that may include traumatic brain injury, Multiple Sclerosis, Spina Bifida, stroke, Parkinson's, or combat related injury.

(cont. page 2)

CAC "Everybody Rides!", Cont.

15th Annual

Trails-in-Motion

Please join us at Iron Horse Blvd in Simsbury on June 2nd (National Trails Day) for a 10, 30, 50 or 62-mile ride. Or if you want you can walk, skate or run. See www.fvgreenway.org for more information and registration materials.

- Metric Century (8:00AM)
- 50-Mile Bike Tour (8:00AM)
- 30-Mile Bike Tour (9:30AM)
- 10K Walk/Run/Skate (9:30AM)
- 5K Walk/Run/Skate (10:30AM)
- 10-Mile Bike Tour (10:30AM)

Fun for the whole family!
Proceeds go to the trails.



CAC has a growing fleet of adaptive/modified bicycles (hand-cycles, trikes, power-assisted trikes and recumbents) to address the needs of adults and children with special requirements. Connecticut Adaptive Cycling shares a shop with Simsbury Free Bike a community-based bike share program led by Larry Linonis and Patti Smith Jacobus and based on Ironhorse Boulevard in Simsbury right next to the trail.

Connecticut Adaptive Cycling is an event-based bike share program. Most events begin and end at Rotary Park in front of the Simsbury Performing Arts Center. The events draw riders from all over Connecticut and include partner events with Gaylord Hospital Adaptive Sports, The Hospital for Special Care, The Christopher Reeves Foundation and the Greater Hartford YMCA. Family members or friends in need of bikes are encouraged to borrow a bike from the Simsbury Free Bike fleet. The Simsbury shop location is an ideal site for family rides. The venue provides a flat trail, ample parking and exquisite scenery. Ken Messier, President of Connecticut Adaptive Cycling, has deep roots in the adaptive sports arena. He is Commissioner of The Northeast Sled Hockey League, an adaptive hockey program with teams from Maine to Pennsylvania. Ken is also President and co-founder of the Connecticut Wolfpack Sled Hockey team.

Connecticut Adaptive Cycling is committed to inclusiveness on the trail with their slogan "Everybody Rides". Visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/connecticutadaptivecycling. "Like" us to receive updates on upcoming events, to view photos from previous events or to learn about financial, volunteer or in-kind contribution programs. The program is supported exclusively by volunteers, sponsors and grants.

Introducing the FVTC Jersey

A great design and made right here in New England of high quality state of the art wicking fabric. It features scenes from the Valley, sized as unisex/men's XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL. \$74.39 (tax included) with proceeds going directly to the trails. They will be available at a few selected stores and can be ordered at Trails-in-Motion so bring your check or you may send a check made out to FVTC to:

FVTC c/o Susan Phillips
15 Cedar Glen Road
West Simsbury, CT 06092
(Please add \$5.00 mailing fee = \$79.39 total)
Be sure to include your desired size and mailing address.



VOLUNTEERISM!

We are in need of marshals and other help for Trails in Motion. If you can help get in contact with Matt Graeber, mwgraeber@gmail.com

If you are interested in other volunteer opportunities with the Farmington Valley Trails Council and the Greenway, contact Mary-Jane Gately, mjmarmee@comcast.net or Jerry Ledger, jjldjr@ieee.org.



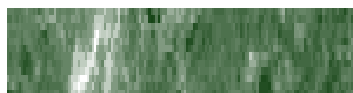
Thanks to Clean-Up Day Volunteers

On Sunday, April 15th, over 175 volunteers worked to beautify over 38 miles of trails that encompass the finished sections of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and the Farmington River Trail. Volunteers collected over 12 cubic yards of trash and deposited it in large dumpsters provided by Paine's at four staging areas throughout North Central Connecticut. It is notable that the number of volunteers more than doubled from last year, showing that an increasing group of civic-minded volunteers truly care about this beautiful amenity that is so heavily used by bikers, walkers, skaters and runners. The Clean-up Day ended at a picnic at Flamig Farm allowing volunteers access to its great facility. Good food and fun was had by all. Thanks to Tessa Bondi at REI and Tulmeadow Farm for some awesome ice cream as well.

We appreciate the efforts of our staging area managers and project managers, including Dwight Weed, Lee Sinkwich, Matt Graeber, Larry Linonis, Norm Hausmann, Jean and Jerry Ledger, and Rich Rowleson. Again this year, there were numerous reports of trail users stopping volunteers to express their gratitude for the clean-up efforts. In addition, a number of people approached our staging area managers to make donations to FVTC in support of our efforts to maintain and improve the trails for everybody to use. Bruce Donald, FVTC's President, commented: "We were very pleased that Farmington High School and Westminster School sent students to help with the clean-up as part of their community service efforts. They all did a wonderful job. In addition, several Boy and Girl Scout troops participated and proved themselves to be very enthusiastic about the clean-up". We received input from our volunteers and we will make some additions and improvements in the clean-up next year to make it even more wide-reaching and effective.

President's Letter, Cont.

In the long run I believe that a combination of forces is the correct route to brand the whole of the FCHT as one entity. It would make us one of the largest such groups in New England. A very important part of our goals for 2012 is granting money through the Maintenance Fund to various towns in need. Probably first on the list though is trail resurfacing on the River Trail in Burlington. The town has applied for funding and we have pledged to help get the job done ASAP. Farmington is getting together a list of fencing that needs replacement and we expect to help other towns as well. We are planning to help correct some safety issues around Ensign-Bickford in Simsbury. This busy corridor will likely receive center lines, additional fencing and signage. We have just been awarded \$5,000 to provide a visitors center in downtown Collinsville. All roads intersecting the trail will be stenciled with the road name for safety and to aid connections to our towns. We have ordered more handlebar bells which are available free to announce passing on the trail. In April, we inaugurated our "You Are Here" trail orientation program. On a monthly basis in season, we will be stationed at points along the trail to greet trail users and answer questions. Stations will be outfitted with maps, membership materials, safety guidelines, complementary bells and water bottles, and water. We hope to increase our membership and provide useful information to trail users. Our Website continues to be very popular and we actively rotate and create content. We are nearing completion of a hand-held application to view our Website and particularly our mapping with a "you are here" feature built in for trail users. Our sister organization to the north is moving along with their formation and the FVTC has given \$400 to the Friends of Southwick Trails to file the federal paperwork for a 501(c)(3) designation. Congratulations to FOST! Visit them at southwicktrail.org.



No Bike? No Problem!

Simsbury Free Bike is a non-profit community bike-share program offering bikes from May 1 to October 31. All locations are in close proximity to the Trails.

Riders must be 18 and provide a \$10 refundable deposit. Bikes with helmets locks and baskets are intended for use on paved roads and trails and can be borrowed for up to 24 hours. Locations:

Fitzgerald's Supermarket
710 Hopmeadow St. Simsbury
860.658.2271. Trail Mile Marker 11.3
www.Fitzgeraldsfoods.com

Bidwell's Yard & Garden Center
133 Hopmeadow St., Weatogue
860.651.8555 - Trail Mile Marker 8.0
www.bidwellsygp.com

Flamig Farm
7 Shingle Mill Rd, West Simsbury
860.658.5070. (3.6 miles from Trail)
www.flamigfarm.com

Riverfront Mini Golf and Ice Cream
218 River Rd, Unionville
860.675.4653 - Trail Mile Marker 3.3

Contact SFB at:
Simsburyfreebike@gmail.com

FVTC DIRECTORS

- Bruce Donald, President**
- Jim Cassidy, Vice President**
- Steve Noble, Treasurer**
- Mary-Jane Gately, Secretary**
- Nancy Anstey**
- Steve Cole**
- Ron Coleman**
- Barb Collins**
- Joy Himmelfarb**
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**FARMINGTON VALLEY
GREENWAY NEWS**

This publication is written and formatted by board members. The Farmington Valley Trails Council is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation dedicated to advocacy, education, beautification and building multi-use trails in the Farmington Valley of Connecticut. Contributions to the FVTC are generally tax-deductible. This newsletter is available electronically, or printed and distributed by our friends at FAVARH.

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We're on the Web!
www.fvgreenway.org

Your Support is Important!



Check desired box and enclose membership fee:

- \$10 Senior 65+ / Junior under 18
- \$20 Single
- \$30 Family
- \$100 Friend
- \$500 Sustaining Member
- \$1,000 Lifetime Benefactor

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (days) _____ (eves) _____

E-mail _____

Would you like to be contacted for volunteer opportunities? Y / N

Comments?

Detach and mail to FVTC, P.O. Box 576, Tariffville, CT 06070

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