

# Lincoln Trail-A-Thon

## A great outdoor challenge for all ages

By Dena Noe

Lots of events have been postponed or cancelled due to COVID-19. We are happy to say Lincoln Trail-A-Thon is still going strong because it is individual-based event. We have almost 460 people participating. All proceeds from Trail-A-Thon will go to help build the connector bridge between the Rock Island Trail and the Jamaica North Trail.

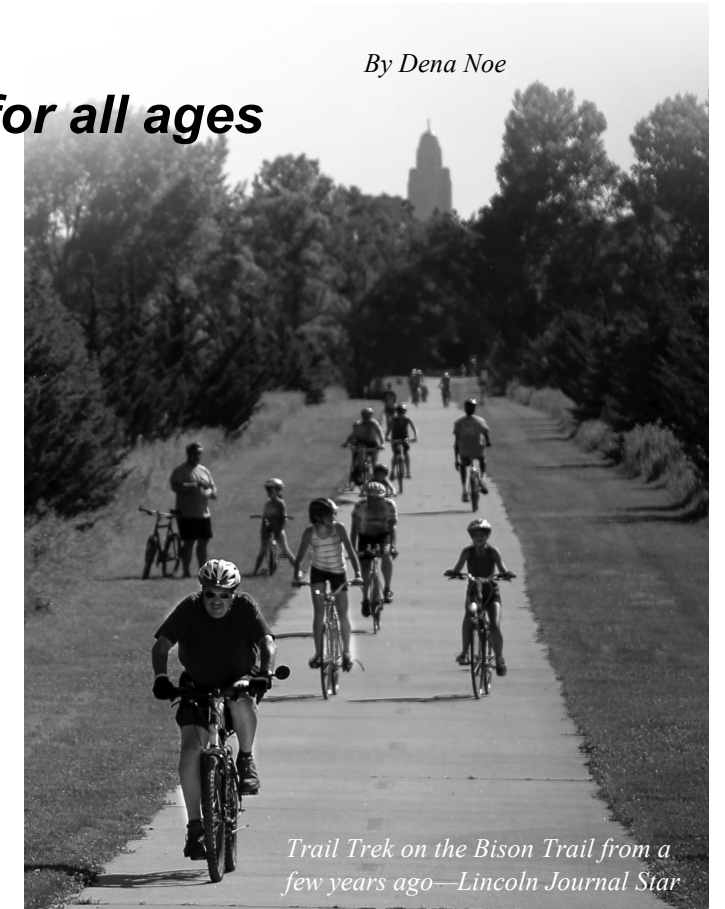
Trail-A-Thon was developed in partnership with Bo Bryson of Trinity Chiropractic. It was his idea and we were lucky that he decided GPTN was a great cause and asked us to participate. Thanks Bo! The Trail-A-Thon challenge is to walk, jog or run all 78 miles of trails in the City of Lincoln. Anyone can participate and we have a nice schedule highlighting a section of trail each month with maps and some trail descriptions and history. In this issue, we cover the first four trails of the year.

Often times we frequent the same trails that are convenient, but Trail-A-Thon is here to get you to try something new. It was also created to get people out and moving. We've received some wonderful comments from participants:

Stephanie Hoffman posted on Facebook – *My kids and I have been having fun with this, we printed the list of trails and highlight each one as we complete it.*

*I am so grateful to have signed up for the 2020 trail-a-thon because it has been a consistent adventure for me. Even though I grew up in Lincoln with a bike practically attached to my feet, I have never actually taken the time to explore the amazing Great Plains Trails Network—They thought of everything: there's a featured trail each month, social media challenges, a potential for high fives (well, waves or elbow bumps right now) when you bump into friends on the trail, and a souvenir t-shirt too! Plus, your registration fee will support all the trails, including that new favorite one you will discover this year. 10/10 would recommend. (Lovena G)*

Trail-A-Thon participation is at your own pace. Register at [gptn.org/lincolntrailathon](http://gptn.org/lincolntrailathon). GPTN wants to remind you to follow the restrictions set by the City of Lincoln and be award of your physical distancing while enjoying the trails.



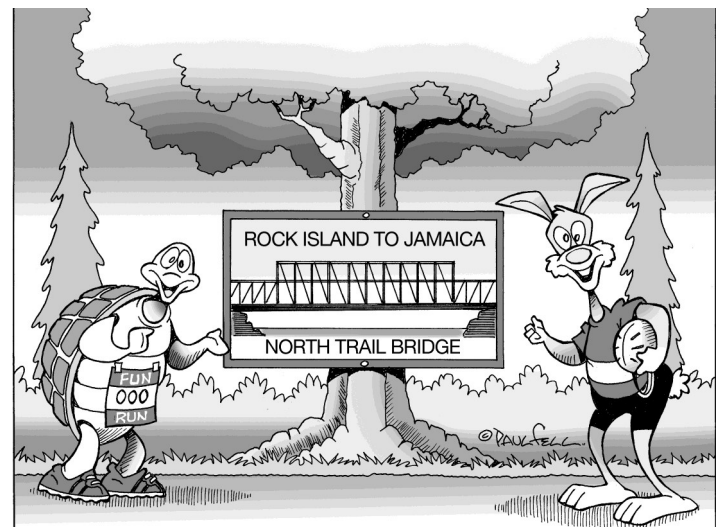
**Bison Trail and Pioneers Park Loop**

The Bison Trail is one of Lincoln's most interesting, connecting iconic Pioneers Park to Van Dorn Park, the Salt Creek Levee Trail, and the Jamaica North Trail. Pioneers Park was built in the 1930s as part of a New Deal program. For decades it has drawn Lincolniters to the west edge of the city. The Buffalo Run, one of Lincoln's oldest road races, and cross country meets are big draws for runners. For decades, however, there was no safe way to run or bike to the park. The old Van Dorn Street was a narrow, busy two-lane road with minimal shoulders. GPTN decided to tackle this project in what turned out to be one of the most complicated undertakings ever. Easements were needed for private and public land; the railway had to give permission for the tight squeeze over their tracks; the highway department had to permit an underpass under the West Bypass (Highway 77),

*Continued on page 4.*

### Rock Island & Jamaica North Trail Connector

*The City of Lincoln is building a pedestrian bridge over the BNSF Railroad to connect the Rock Island and Jamaica North Trails near Densmore Park. GPTN in partnership with NTF is raising \$1,067,000 to support this important trail connection. We have \$61,000 to go. 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 68501-2902**



# Great Plains Trails Network

since 1988

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

2020

**PRESIDENT** Greg Rosenboom  
**VICE PRESIDENT** Jim Krieger  
**SECRETARY** Bill Wehrbein  
**TREASURER** Charlene Dunbar

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dale Arp	Jordan Messerer
Marybell Avery	Jerad Morris
Gary Benstrup	Dena Noe
Noel Briseno	Jesse Petersen
Parks Coble	Ann Ringlein
Doug Dittman	Shelby Robinson
Charlene Dunbar	Greg Rosenboom
Steve Dunbar	Kris Sonderup
Sue Ferguson	Ray Stevens
Corey Godfrey	Denise Teahon
Marynelle Greene	Mary Torell
Rachelle Hadley	Bob Torell
Elaine Hammer	Jamie Warren
Kent Henning	Bill Wehrbein
Corey Godfrey	Ken Winston
Jim Krieger	

### MAILING ADDRESS

**P.O. 82902**  
**LINCOLN NE 68501-2902**  
**WWW.GPTN.ORG**

Newsletter comments, questions, corrections  
gbentrup68@gmail.com

## A Note from the President



Here we are in the middle of an historic event: COVID19. Almost every aspect of our lives have been changed, postponed, put on hold, or approached with a high level of awareness, care and consideration. GPTN too has reviewed our usual schedule of events and adapted to the circumstances. We cancelled our board meeting in March, and in April we met virtually – all of us in our own space, but together on the computer screen. It worked. It’s different but we were able to conduct our business as necessary and all in all, we just keep on supporting trails like we have for 30 years.

Of course, we have had to make some changes: Our Tour-de-Lincoln rides in May are postponed and we don’t have a date for those but are considering the fall or as restrictions ease up. Trail Trek, scheduled in June, will be held September 13. The first order of GPTN Jerseys will be delivered to you, (or you may already have it by printing) rather than gathering at Jayne Snyder Trails Center to pick it up. The second order is ongoing, you can still get one for late delivery. The Trail-a-Thon has been. . . NOT cancelled OR postponed! People keep on signing up, and participating in the trail a month event. It not too late to join up at GPTN.org. Bo get people moving Bryson – what a great idea for an event – people love it!

If you’ve been on the trails recently, you might have noticed there seem to be more people than usual using them. The instruction to stay at home and stay safe during COVID, but very real need to be out and exercise to stay well, has brought some additional awareness to the importance of our trail network. You’ve all been supporters, and I think now, even those who had not thought much about them are recognizing how much we need this well developed, well maintained, safe trail system in our city. Kudos for your work and support!

If you’ve been south on Rock Island at Densmore Park, or along the Jamaica Trail, you may have noticed construction equipment. Yep – that’s going to be a new bridge to connect the two. Construction has begun. That will be exciting to watch. If you are so inclined, we are still raising some funds for that project. Wink, wink.

I wish you all the most wonderful spring you can make it under COVID. Stay safe, be well, enjoy the trails!

Greg Rosenboom

## GPTN NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

January 2020 to April 15, 2020

Mary Amen, Katherine Anderson, Lincoln Arneal, Dale & Peggy Arp, Marybell Avery & Stan Campbell, Kimberly Barrett, John & Beverly Barry, Mary Barry, Andrea Betancur, Troy Betancur, Lori Blum, William Bonacker, Pam Boyle, Sara Brock, Mark Brohman, Cliff & Colleen Brugman, Travis Bull, Renee Burchell, Peggy Burt-Martinez, Cassidy Buse, Chris & Ellen Calkins, Greg Chubbuck, Glynnis Collins, Cindy Conger, James Crook, Carrie Cross, Shirley Danahy, Jen Davidson, Jason Davis, Jennifer Davis, Shirlene Davis, Kirk & Joan Dietrich, Donald Dingman, Gene & Andrea Dinkelman, Curt Donaldson, Richard Draper, Bill & Diane Edwards, John Eggerss, Mark Eilers, Julie Enersen, Michael N. Eppel, Ingrid Esparza, Ted & Barb Fraser, Matt Frengs, Eric Fuentes-Ruiz, James Gallentine, Brandon Garrett, Robert Geschwender, Mike Gloor & Marie de Martinez, Corey Godfrey, Carrie Grant, Julie Grives, Patrick Hagedorn, Elaine Hammer, Topher Hansen & Kristi Newcomb, Jim Harder, Paul Harrison, Sara & Lynn Hartzell, Laura Heine, Kate Heltzel, Sandra Hilsabeck, Roger Hirsch, Scott & Sarah Holmes, Jane Holt, Beth Imig, Lisa Janssen, Wayne & Judy Jensen, Glenn Johnson, Donice Kaspar, Paula Kellner, Sara Kemper, Kirk & Jo Kinberg, James King, Mary King, Tricia King, Chris & Mary Kingery, Donald Knop, Art & Earlene Knox, Barb Kortum, Ed Kouma, Dan Kounovsky, Darrell & Julie Knight, Diane Laffin, Randy & Sue Leach, Jim & Doris Lewis, Stacey Litz, Christine Lodes, Bill & Susan Macy, Bob Mancuso, Robyn Mason, Kenneth May, David & Jan McChesney, Neal Mersmann, Lori & Peter Morin, Bob Michaud, V.T. & Joyce Miller, Jeremy Mitchell, Glen Moss & Nancy Sutton-Moss, Jim Muggy, Lynn Murman, Craig Nelson, Randy & Sandy Nitz, William Noel, Jan & Bill Norris, Blane Osterman, Dave Palm, Lois Paschke, Jason Peplinski, Jesse Petersen, Jack Podoll, Dan & Cathy Pudenz, Rose Quackenbush, Ann Quinlan, Benjamin & Barbara Rader, Mike Rasmussen, Gareth Rees, Gerry & Karen Rehm, Mary Reiman, Jeff & Kathy Richner, Arlan Ristow, Greg Rosenboom, Aaron Rutt, Alisa & Bruce Sandahl, Chris & Cathy Sayre, David & Rhonda Schoenmaker, David Scoby, Amy Seiler, Cathy Seybold, Bonita Sharif, David & Sharon Sinkler, Harold Smith, Randall Smith, Shelley Sorensen, Mike & Michele Spadt, Joseph Stefkovich, Jo Stewart, Dan Strout, Del Stuefer, Tedde Taeye, Mark Taylor, Denise Teahon & Jim Peter, Lois Thomas, Bob & Julie Timme, Mary & Bob Torell, Mark Traynowicz, Dave & Sue Van Horn, Monica Vandergrind, Joyce & Lyle Vannier, Verjean Vannier, Melinda Varley, Dennis & Wanda Vodehnal, T. Marni Vos, Michael Walsh, Tammy Ward, Loren Warren, Rhonda Warren, Brenda Weyers, Lorey Wheeler, Richard White, Sylvia Wiegand, Mary Windle, Kathy Zimmerman.

## Best Ways to Preserve Nature While Hiking

By Rachel Gaffney

If you want to get healthier and reduce stress hiking is one of the best ways to do that. More than 30 million people every year will take at least one hike. Hiking will lower your blood pressure, help manage the symptoms of depression, and decrease your risk of having a heart attack. But, as more and more people hit the trail in an effort stay healthy, trails and adjacent lands are becoming damaged. Here are some easy ways that you can do your part to preserve the environment when you’re hiking:

### Invest In A Reusable Water Bottle

Plastic bottles are terrible for the environment and won’t hold enough water to keep you hydrated on the trail. If you bring a plastic bottle of water, please recycle it or dispose of it in the bins that are usually located at trailheads.

### Don’t Forget A Trail Map

Trail maps should be part of your hiking gear because GPS may not always work. Staying on the trail will keep you from damaging vegetation and causing soil erosion.

### Clean Your Boots

As you hike your boots pick up bits of soil, seeds, and bacteria in the soil. Make sure that you hose off or wipe off your boots between hikes so that you’re not transferring seeds and bacteria from one place to another.

### Use Trail Shelters And Picnic Areas

Using designated picnic areas or trail shelters can minimize impacts. Pack out leftovers since wildlife shouldn’t be eating human food.

### Leave Wildlife Alone

Enjoy seeing wildlife from a safe distance but don’t try to get close to them or see if they will come over to you.

*This article was created by Personal Injury Help ([www.personalinjury-law.com](http://www.personalinjury-law.com)), an organization dedicated to providing the public with information about personal injury and safety information. Nothing in this article should be construed as legal advice, and it is intended for informational use only.*



## Align your principal with your principles.

Learn more about SRI investing. Sustainable. Responsible. Impact.

402-423-4022  
tmainquist@aicinvest.com  
MainquistSRI.com

**TYLER MAINQUIST**  
Financial Advisor, CFP®, ChFC, CAP®

Tyler Mainquist is a Registered Representative and Investment Advisor Representative offering securities and investment advisory services solely through Ameritas Investment Corp. (AIC). Member FINRA/SIPC, a registered broker/dealer and registered investment advisor. AIC and Central Financial Services (CFS) are not affiliated. Additional products and services may be available through Tyler Mainquist or CFS that are not offered through AIC. Representatives of AIC do not provide tax or legal advice. Please consult your tax advisor or attorney regarding your circumstances.

## BICYCLING LINCOLN™

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/>



**RICH RODENBURG**  
REALTOR®, Associate Broker  
Team Lead, Your Team

402.440.7570  
rich@cb-nhs.com  
www.cb-nhs.com



**COLDWELL BANKER**  
NHS REAL ESTATE

## The Canine Scrub



### Self-Serve Dog Wash

4130 S. 48<sup>th</sup> St  
Lincoln, NE 68502  
(402) 477-2782



[www.TheCanineScrub.com](http://www.TheCanineScrub.com) email@TheCanineScrub.com

**HOURS:**  
Monday - Friday 10 AM – 6 PM  
Saturday: 10 AM – 5 PM  
Sunday: 12 PM – 5 PM



## Ride. Share.

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 | Show 'n go rides  
Ice cream & coffee shop rides | Moon-lit rides  
Hammering training rides | 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](http://greatplainsbikeclub.org).



## BIKE WALK NEBRASKA

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.

Become a member at:

<https://www.bikewalknebraska.org/>

## Bridge Update!

### Help Us Close the Final Gap

We are getting closer to completing the fundraising for the Rock Island—Jamaica North Trail Bridge. The cost of the bridge is \$2.2 million and the cost is being split 50-50 between public sources (the City of Lincoln and the Railroad Transportation Safety District) and private donors.

The bridge is under construction with a completion date set for Fall 2020. Periodic closures of the Jamaica North Trail will occur through fall while the project is under construction. Obey closure barricades when they are in place. The Rock Island Trail will remain open until the final stages of the project.

In March, the Acklie Charitable Foundation generously provided a \$50,000 grant to support this keystone project. We are sincerely grateful for their donation and the amazing support from our other numerous donors. The current funding gap is now reduced to **\$61,000**. We are in the home stretch.

Please consider a donation to help us get to the finish line for this legacy project. **Give to Lincoln Day** on May 28th is a great opportunity to donate to this project. When completed, this bridge will be a jewel in the crown of Lincoln's trail system.

## NEW! GPTN Bike Jersey Now Available



For the first time, GPTN will be offering our own bike jersey for sale. Place your order between April 1 to May 15. For more information and ordering, go to [www.gptn.org](http://www.gptn.org)



Construction at the Rock Island—Jamaica North Trail Connection—Looking east towards Densmore Park.

## Lincoln Trail-A-Thon *Continued from page 1.*

and the project was adjacent to Wilderness Park. Aside from getting everyone on board there was money to be raised. The trail was finally dedicated in 2002.

When the park was originally planned, the east entrance was supposed to have a vista opening to the then new state capitol but funds weren't available so for decades the park looked out to corn fields. With the Bison Trail project this plan could finally be realized—the trail stretches out toward the capitol as planners had envisioned. But the Bison Trail hasn't been trouble free. The original trail used the old Van Dorn road bridge over Haines Branch Creek, orphaned when the West Bypass was built. The massive floods which devastated Wilderness Park wiped out most of the supports for the bridge and the county engineer, fearing immediate collapse, closed the bridge to bikes and pedestrians. After 3 and ½ years a new pedestrian/bike bridge replaced the old bridge and the trail reopened. GPTN lobbied for the project and raised \$50,000 in private donations.

### Helen Boosalis Trail

The Helen Boosalis Trail was born in 1980 as the Highway 2 bikeway. Of course that was before there were really "trails" as such. It was more of a glorified wide sidewalk from 56th Street to 27th Street. West of there it was not



even that—just a left over asphalt path leading to the highway department parking lot. But in 2005 the trail acquired its present name in honor of Helen Boosalis Lincoln's first female mayor who served from 1975 to 1983. A plaque and bench on the route were dedicated that November, designed to be a tribute to her unwavering community spirit.

The name was also designed to give the trail a new identity as major upgrades were undertaken. The Great Plains Trail Network addressed a major issue—the trail's eastern end was 56th Street. It did not connect with the new Old Cheney Trail. The gap was only a block or two but it required runners to traverse the shoulder of Highway 2 dodging vehicles turning north onto 56th Street, a scary prospect. The project was surprisingly challenging in part because the terrain required retaining walls and curves and slopes because the elevation change. Today the connection is heavily used.

The Lincoln Track Club sought an upgrade of the trail from 48th Street to 20th, part of the first loop of the Lincoln marathon. The old trail was a bottleneck forcing runners onto the grass and mud. LTC persuaded city tourism officials to partially fund a new, wider trail allowing them to raise the number of entrants to the marathon. Today's event which can accommodate 10,000+ runners is the result. Left out was the trail west of 20th Street and north to Burnham Street and the Indian Hills neighborhood. The city finally replaced the old asphalt with the new surface in 2017. Today a neighborhood

association is pressing the city to find a safe crossing over 9th/10th Street to connect the Boosalis Trail to Van Dorn Park and the Bison Trail. Will it happen? Stay tuned.

Finally when you run the eastern part of the trail you will notice an ongoing flood control project along the Beal Slough. This area has been plagued by chronic flooding so major drainage work is being done on both sides of Highway 2. A new trail bridge over the Beal Slough will be constructed.

## 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 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).

### 2020 LTC Calendar

Check LTC Website  
for Current Status



To join the Lincoln Track Club: [www.lincolnrun.org](http://www.lincolnrun.org)





LINCOLN'S AUTHENTIC  
FARM-TO-FORK CAFE AND BISTRO

250 N 21ST STREET | LINCOLN, NE 68508  
TWO BLOCKS NORTH OF O STREET ON 21ST, JUST EAST OF UNL CITY CAMPUS

**FREE DRIP COFFEE**  
or \$1 off a specialty coffee drink

HUBCAFELINCOLN.COM   @HUBCAFELINCOLN

Take-out ordering available from 9-5 everyday.  
Menus and ordering at <https://hubcafe.revelup.com/weborder> or call at (402) 474-2453

## Support Lincoln Trails

By donating to the  
Nebraska Trails Foundation  
through the:



**Community  
Services Fund  
of Nebraska**

[www.communityservicesfund.org/](http://www.communityservicesfund.org/)

## TRAIL TREK NOW SEPTEMBER 13

By Dena Noe

With the City of Lincoln under a health directive due to COVID-19 the Great Plains Trails Network made the decision to move Trail Trek from June 21 to September 13. We are very thankful to our vendors and sponsors for supporting this change 100%. We also want to thank those that registered early and their willingness to make this change with us. If you haven't registered for Trail Trek 2020, please think about doing that today by visiting [gptn.org](http://gptn.org). If Trail Trek is cancelled due to COVID-19 in September, we will offer all participants a full refund. Our no refund policy for weather, etc. will still be enforced.

All proceeds from Trail Trek go to expand the trails in Lincoln and Lancaster County. This year the funds will go towards building the connector bridge between the Rock Island Trail and the Jamaica North Trail. The cost of the bridge increased substantially and we still have a \$61,000 funding gap. Trail Trek proceeds will help us with this need.

At this point all routes advertised will stay the same, but our packet pick up will now take place at the building in Bethany Park at 65<sup>th</sup> & Vine Streets on Saturday, September 12 from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Trail Trek couldn't happen with support from our local businesses, so please if you can give them some love we'd appreciate it: Bike Rack, Cycle Works, Pepsi-Cola of Lincoln, Hy-Vee, Olsson, Kidwell, LES, Bryan Health, Alpha Media, UBT, Good Life Fitness, Sutton Dermatology & Aesthetics and the University of Nebraska Federal Credit Union.



Winter wonderland by Shelby Robinson

## TRAIL UPDATES

**Sanitary sewer and water and stream stability project:** Wilderness Park trails on the east and west sides of Salt Creek at Old Cheney Road are rerouted via signs and the Jamaica North Trail. Periodic closures of the Jamaica North Trail will also be necessary. This project will continue into winter.

**Timber bridge replacement in Wilderness Park:** The horse and bike trails leading to the timber and cable bridge just south of Yankee Hill Road and east of Highway 77 are now closed. Signs will be posted at Old Cheney Road and the 14th Street trailhead. There are no reroutes. This project is scheduled to be completed this summer.

**Bridge replacement of Wilderness South Bridge:** The Jamaica North Trail is now closed from about Rokeby Road to the project location about one-half mile north of Saltillo Road. Wilderness Park trails in the immediate area are closed, but the trails north and south of the project remain open. This project is scheduled to be completed this summer.

**South Beltway construction and utility relocation:** The Jamaica North Trail will remain open during construction, but temporary and periodic closures will be required in the area one-half mile south of Saltillo Road. Obey closure barricades when they are in place. This is a multi-year project.

**Tierra/Williamsburg Trail corridor.** Schemmer Associates is working on the design of bank stabilization and some associated trail replacement in the Tierra/Williamsburg trail corridor. Construction of this project is anticipated for fall of 2020

**Beal Slough Trail from 56th to 70th St.** Design work continues on the Beal Slough Trail. This project is shown in the NDOT schedule for construction in 2021/22.

**CAN YOU CATCH THIS GUY?**  
Wouldn't it be fun to try?

**Homestead Trail**  
**Oak Creek Trail**  
**MoPac East Trail**



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH  
natural resources district  
[www.lpsnrd.org](http://www.lpsnrd.org)



## Dietrich and Murdock Trails

Constructed in 1985, the John Dietrich Trail is one the earliest trails built in Lincoln. It is named after a trail advocate and bicycle shop owner in northeast Lincoln. The trail begins in Lintel Park near 21st and Holdrege and ends at 48th and Fremont. Created on abandoned land once intended for a highway, the Dietrich Trail was part of the Radial Reuse Project. This multi-year effort created a four-mile linear park that revitalized the area and served as a buffer between industrial and residential land in the Clinton, Malone, and University Place neighborhoods. Framed views of grain elevators, trains, and parks are scattered along this winding trail.

The Murdock Trail connects to the east end of the Dietrich Trail at 48th and Fremont. It continues through the Havelock neighborhood and along the north edge of Mahoney Park. Named after a who donated the land to the City, the trail runs along a former Rock Island Railroad corridor established in the 1850s. From 56th to 70th it consists of a concrete trail and adjacent crushed stone path. GPTN and the Lincoln Track Club raised over \$400,000 to support this trail renovation. From 84th to 112th, the trail transitions to the old rail bed and offers a scenic route through farmland.

## Tierra Park Williamsburg Trail

I'm excited to have the opportunity to write this month's trail bio for Trail-A-Thon. The Tierra/Williamsburg Trail is my favorite because it is my link for commuting to work. While I don't get to do that every day, I'm very thankful for the people who came before me on the GPTN Board and fought to get this trail open.

While digging into the trails archives, I found the first mention of this trail was when it was presented for approval at the March 1996 City Council meeting. Planning and preparation started well before that, but the news coverage in the Journal Star began about this time. The Tierra/Williamsburg Trail was not without controversy, as the neighborhood thought the trail should only be a neighborhood trail and not the connector to the trails system that it is today.

In July 2002 the Tierra/Williamsburg trail opened to the public. This connection provided a direct link from the Rock Island Trail through Tierra Park south to Williamsburg. This beautiful wide trail follows the drainage creek through the Tierra neighborhood to Old Cheney Road. It then crosses Old Cheney and connects to the Williamsburg Trail. The trail splits just north of Pine Lake Road. *Dena Noe*

## Lincoln's New David Murdock Trail

On Aug. 18, Real Estate Developer David H. Murdock announced that he was donating the North Rock Island railroad right-of-way from 48th just north of Fremont St.) to 112th to the City of Lincoln. Valued at \$500,000, it will provide a vital link to Lincoln's trail system. Pictured at right, then clockwise are: Murdock makes announcement while city officials look on; Riders carefully cross bridge on trail over Stevens Creek; Mayor Mike Johanns and GPTN's Elaine Hammer, also Chair of the Mayor's Trails Advisory Committee, present Murdock with a commissioned watercolor of the trail; GPTN's Rich Rodenburg on the unfinished Murdock Trail; Mayor Johanns and Murdock take a spin after the Aug. 18 news conference.



## NEW GPTN BOARD MEMBER



Sue Ferguson

I am from Lincoln and work for HobbyTown in the corporate office as director of franchise accounting. FYI -HobbyTown was started in Lincoln about 30 years ago and we have about 125 stores across the United States. When not working

things that keep me busy are - I am a teammate, reading, of course husker athletic events, walking or riding my bike on the trails. I think I have been on most of them! Working out so we can try new restaurants and old favorites without guilt! I believe the trails are a very important part of Lincoln. I look forward to helping keep the trail system the gem that it is and getting more people to enjoy and support them. My favorite trail is probably the Rock Island.

*We will introduce other new board members in the next issues of the GPTN Newsletter.*

# Trail Safety & Etiquette During COVID-19 Pandemic

By Mary Torell and Ann Ringlein

GPTN Board members are thrilled to see the Lincoln trails system so full of hikers, bikers, runners, scooters, skaters, strollers and dog-walkers — many of them searching for an escape from coronavirus confinement. But along with the fun that the trails give us, we must be considerate of others during this time.

But many board members and city officials have noticed not only an increase of trail usage, but are noticing something else, too. Many of the users appear to be new to the trails, and not all of them know the traditional rules and etiquette — or appear to be keeping their social distance.

The city tracks trail usage at certain sites, and traffic was up the week of March 23 compared with a similar weather week a year ago according to Kellee Van Bruggen, city transportation planner. On the Helen Boosalis Trail near the Rock Island junction, for example, the city counted 3,125 users over the week, a 57% increase. On the Rock Island Trail near Bishop Heights Park, 7,044 users, a 44% jump. The Billy Wolff Trail at N Street increased to 6,201 users, an 11% climb, and use of the MoPac Trail at North 26th Street grew to 2,445, or 17%. It's clear the system is providing relief and recreation at a time when so many other outlets are closed.

Our trails are our biggest asset to everyone right now and we want everyone to keep safety in mind. As the creators of trails, we don't want to be responsible for having someone come down with the virus. During this pandemic, keeping social distance is one of the most important things we can do to stay safe, and make the experience more enjoyable for everyone. Lincoln Parks & Recreation have placed signs outside of Lincoln's parks reminding us to keep six feet apart and encouraging us to wear a mask or have some kind of face covering to keep oneself from spreading germs to others.

Currently, there is not enough evidence to mandate that trail users wear masks. In general, if you feel more comfortable wearing a cloth mask, and think having it on will make others more comfortable, you probably should. One doctor suggested that you can have a mask ready around your neck and pull it up when you see someone coming towards you on the trail. Regardless of wearing or not wearing a mask, medical experts say that trail users should always maintain as much distance from others as they can. If they are in remote areas with no one around them, it's not necessary to wear a mask.

Here are a few guidelines for happily sharing the trails with fellow cyclists, joggers, dog walkers, and everyone else:

**Ride right, pass left.** Trails are like highways. Act like a car in these situations. Stay to the right and pass on the left. And of course, obey all traffic signals.

**Keep your distance.** You can carry on a conversation from six feet, so there's no need to bunch up. But if you do, be kind to strangers: Get over to the right to give ample room when people are passing from behind or approaching from the front.

**Make some noise before passing.** A bell is nice (and less startling) than a call out "on your left!" but either is preferable to no notice at all! Make noise—be sure you're heard—well before you reach the person you're passing. Then a "Thank you!" is always appreciated!

**Slow down—and be prepared to stop—when there are others around.** It's fun to go fast, but a bike path isn't the place to speed. People are unpredictable. Kids and pets especially. Anyone can be so involved in a conversation or wrapped up in their own thoughts that they'll make a bad choice even if they hear you coming. Slow to a walking pace and keep your hands on your brakes.

**Look around (and signal!) before passing or stopping.** Just because you're doing it right doesn't mean everyone else is. Before you swing left to pass or hit the brakes to stop, give a hand signal, and take a look behind you for oncoming traffic.

**Don't stand, or sit on the trail.** Sometimes it's nice to stop and look around and take a drink or visit with someone. Pull off the trail when you do so, otherwise you'll block the way for everyone else.

**Keep dogs on leashes.** And keep their leashes under control. Stretched across the trail, they can become tripwires! Bring some water for your dog — all the drinking fountains are turned off and will be for some time now.

**Clean up after yourself—and your dog!** Take any waste with you if there's not a receptacle nearby.

**Don't text and bike.** It's way too dangerous. Pull off the trail to text.

Wear a helmet. It could save your life!

**Use lights.** If it's getting dark, turn on both front and back lights, it's the law!

**No Spitting.** Spreading Covid-19 by spitting is possible medical experts say as saliva could contain mucus from the lungs. Athletes should carry tissues for mucus and spit and dispose of them promptly. When spitting is unavoidable, do it discreetly and caution: Get to the side of the trail or street, make sure you're six feet from others and don't spit on the riding/running surface. To protect yourself if you're going to exercise outside, follow these precautions when running or bicycling:

- Don't share water bottles.
- Practice good cough etiquette by coughing and sneezing into your arm, not your hand.

- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the bathroom (or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you're unable to wash your hands for any reason).
- Consider bringing hand sanitizer or wipes to use after portable toilets.
- Cleanse hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water after any possible contamination.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from stray droplets.

**Be courteous.** This is so important and is just common sense. Treat people the way you want to be treated. Be friendly. Wave. Say hello.

Please, keep your distance and it will make all of our time on the trails a little more fun and safer during the pandemic! Remember, we're all in this together!

