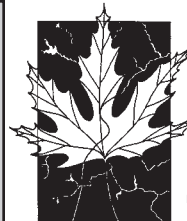


The GPTN Newsletter is published whenever there is enough news to justify an issue. It is distributed to GPTN members and interested others.



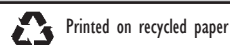
Great Plains Trails Network

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Great Plains Trails Network

Spring 2014

Issue 115

Trail Trek's 12th Annual Bike Ride June 22

Check your gear! Put on the T-shirt! Strap on your helmet! Mount up! Rain or shine, it's Trail Trek time!

Lincoln's popular Trail Trek family bicycle ride will be held on Sunday, June 22. As always, the Great Plains Trails Network is a major sponsor of the *Lincoln Journal-Star's* annual event. Details and registration are available at <http://journalstar.com/trail-trek> or in registration brochures available from the Journal-Star, local cycling shops and various commercial stores.

Organizers are looking to top 2012's record registration of 1,400 cyclists and volunteers. Trail Trek is the largest family-oriented cycling event in Nebraska and draws participants from surrounding communities and Iowa. The event is non-competitive, oriented towards families and welcomes all biking skill levels.

Trail Trek attempts to introduce a new trail ride each year, and this year's event includes a 14-mile loop in northwest Lincoln that will take riders through the Highlands, Fallbrook and Stonebridge neighborhoods.

Other official trails are familiar to annual participants—a popular 20-mile Holmes Lake loop that takes riders through central and southeast Lincoln, and a 50-mile tour that was introduced last year and drew around 150 participants.

The 50-miler runs from Haymarket Park to Cortland's city park along the Jamaica North and Homestead Trails. Beatrice-based cyclists led by the Big Blue Biking Club will again join Trail Trek on a Homestead Trail route through Pickrell to Cortland. Lunch and entertainment will be in Cortland, and there will be a radio link to Haymarket to facilitate drawings for free bicycles.

Bikers may design their own trail rides, if they wish to shorten or lengthen the official trails. However if they are off the noted tours, they are on their own for bike support. On all routes, all registered riders are required to wear helmets no matter whether they wander.

Registration fees are \$20 per rider 13 and older, and \$10 for youngsters 12 and under. Youngsters 5 and under are free. Don't be late! After June 13 registration costs go to \$25 and \$12. Registered bikers may pick up ride packets and register for the drawings at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center on

Saturday, June 21 from 10:00 to 4:00 and in the Cortland city park from 4:00-5:00 pm. Riders may also register the morning of the event at the Haymarket Park.

The fee includes a T-shirt, water bottle to the first 1,000 registrants, snacks, minor mechanical repairs at SAG stops, and lunch. All registrants also have a chance to win one of 20 bicycles donated to the event by co-sponsors The Bike Rack and Cycle Works.

You can never have enough volunteers for Trail Trek, and readers of this newsletter are encouraged to volunteer. Trail Trek organizers are always concerned about safety, and volunteers perform a valuable function in monitoring each trail, staffing "support and gear" (SAG) stops, coordinating refreshments, providing communications and rides, and helping with registration. The on-line site includes a link for volunteers, whose registration is without cost and includes a T-shirt, snacks and lunch.

Event sponsors KFRX 106.3 and KZKX 96.9 will entertain at Haymarket Park while Chris Sayer, who has been with Trail Trek since the first event in 2003, will be in Cortland. Dave Marsh will be at the Fallbrook stop on the 14-mile tour and the Melody Wrangler Trio will be at Holmes Lake.

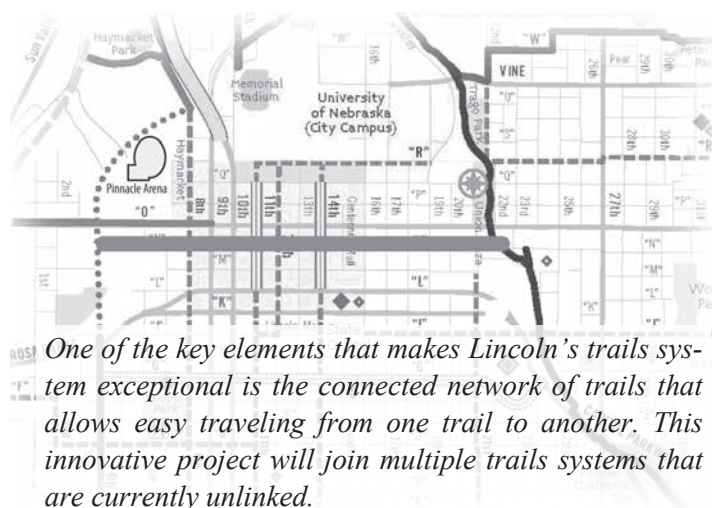
Trail Trek organizers are also planning a corporate challenge for 2014. Businesses will be organized in three levels based on size, and a company with the most participants at each level will receive a free bicycle.

Proceeds from the event are used to create and maintain trails in and around Lincoln's 131-mile system.

LINKING LINCOLN: THE N STREET LINK

The N Street Link will provide a two-way protected bike lane on N Street. It links the Jamaica North trail at 4th and J Street with the Antelope Valley Trail.

The connection will offer easy access to downtown businesses and the Haymarket district. GPTN is raising \$100,000 to support this once in a life time opportunity which will be matched with an equal amount from the Jayne Snyder



One of the key elements that makes Lincoln's trails system exceptional is the connected network of trails that allows easy traveling from one trail to another. This innovative project will join multiple trails systems that are currently unlinked.

Make contributions payable to: Nebraska Trails Foundation

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Designated Project: _____

**Mail to: GPTN
5000 North 7th St.
Lincoln, NE 68521**





Great Plains Trails Network

since 1988

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

2014

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gbentrup68@gmail.com

RUN FOR THE BRIDGES

Mother Nature sure did shine upon us; full moon, lovely temperature, and soft but not muddy trails :))

Run for the Bridges is a success because of all you who commit your time to an event and a cause that you love. Please feel my hugs and gratitude for your commitment and hard work!!

Run for the Bridges Tally for 2014

\$10,979 gross

2,120 t-shirts

(provided by a helpful discount and waived set up fees)

\$8485 net that will be used to replace trail bridges in Wilderness Park.

Many thanks and happy trails

*rosina



2013 Run for the Bridges Photo by Joseph B arycki

GPTN NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

January to April 2014

Welcome to new members: Bret Betnar, Earl Burns, Deborah Eagan, Pam Edwards, Michael Ford, Thomas Green, Lily Hershey, Marie Hitz, Dan & Mary Howell, Beth Imig, Diane Laflin, Dan & Renee Lysthause, Tice & Carren Miller, Dale Minter, Matt Mundorf, Cathy Regush, Julie Robinson, Beverly Russell, David Staenberg.

Thank you to renewing members: Bruce Abnerthy, Jack Higgins & Su Allen, Mary Amen, Erik & Carol Anderson, Joan Anderson, Margaret Allington, Shannon Anderson, Dale & Peggy Arp, Stan Campbell & Marybell Avery, Earl & Barbara Barnawell, Bev Barry, Rod & Debbie Basler, Neal & Jo Bateman, Chris & Steph Baum, Bellwod Family, Linda Bergen, Scott & Maggie Bigelow, Maxine Bishop, Peter & Ann Bleed, William Bonacker, Chad Brassil Douglas Campbell, Jenny Carson, Tony & Laura Ceraolo, Jeff Chevront, Barb Chmelka, Clarissa Christensen, Max Clegg, Lois Coleman, Ed & Jan Connolly, Jim Craig, Jon Curran, Steve Danally, Barbara DiBernard, Donald Dingman, Gene & Andrea Dinkelman, Curt Donaldson, Terry & Judy Dougherty, Charlene Steven Dunbar, Karen & Robert Dunan, Ted Durant, Paul Durbin & Barb Calder-Durbin, Pat & Candace Dussault, De & George Edgar, Eugene Edwards, David & Kathy Ells, Richard & Katherine Endacott, Bonnie & Michael Engel, Chuck & Mary Ann Erickson, Larry Zink & Laurel Erickson, John & Jean Fallick, Jack Flanagan, & Larry Fuerst, Mildred Gardner, Michael Germer, Matt & Laura Gersib, Bruce & Janet Gfeller, Tom & Amy Goeschel, Jocelyn Golden, Corey Godfrey, George & Barb Green, Karen Griffin, Gary Gustafson, Elaine Hammer, Priscilla Handy, Jason Hayes, Tim Henkel, Kent Henning, Jack Herbert, Damon Hershey, Ann Heydt, Michael Hopkins, Ann & Phil Hovis, James Hruska, Gary Hunt, Michael & Judith James, Sitaram Jaswal, Courtney Jerke, Dick Johnson, Glenn & Elaine Johnson, Lynn & Susan Johnson, Nancy Johnson, K.M.Kane, Donice & Tom Kaspar, Martha Kaul, Stu

Kerns, Mary & Jim King, Randy Kinney, Art & Earlene Knox, Sarah Kohlhof, Al Koontz, Edwin Kouma, Carey Taylor & Alison Krohn, Mike Kreikemeier, John Krajnski, Carla Lasley, Susan & Randy Leach, Roger Lempke, Tess Lesoing, Jim & Doris Lewis, Lynn Lightner, Delfs Linder, Max & Pat Linder, Jim & Gail Linderholm, Ruth Lionberger, Chris Lodes, Peggy Loos, Dan & Vera Mae Lutz, Bob Mancuso, Lynn Marienau, Bonnie Maschka, Karyn & Albert Maxey, Ken & Irene May, Dallas McGee, Laurie McKenzie, Jane & Jack McVay, Edith Meints, Andy & Jaine Merliss, Jordan Messerer, Mickey Metzger, Gertel & Walter Mientka, Steve Miers, V.T. & Joyce Miller, John Miyoshi, Peter & Lori Morin, Bill & Jeanette Moser, Mario & Michelle Mota, Laura Neemann, James & Patricia Neid, Craig Nelson, Jared & Sara Nelson, Topher Hansen & Kristi Neucomb, D.W.Niemann, James Nora, Bill & Jan Norris, Melvin Northrup, Ronald & Susann Ogden, Mark Orr, John Oswald, Lois Paschke, Bob Peewthers, Todd & Kristin Pfeil, Emir & Khara Plicanic, Bryan & Sandra Poppe, Tom & Kris Powers, Ann Quinlan, Ben & Barbara Rader, Gareth Reis, Gerry & Karen Rehm, Bryan Rettig, Arlan Ristow, Dalcyce Ronnau, Craig Roper, David & Martha Rowe, Dean Cole & Cindy Rutan, Krus & Mary Rutherford, David Rutz, Sherry & Nick Savener, Renee Schafer, Mr. & Mrs. Fred Schelert, Can & Marge Schlitt, Lester Schoen, Ron Schroeder, Cliff, Christie, Kaile & Hannah Schroff, David Scoby, Brian Scusa, Theodore Seacrest, Dennis & Carla Seeba, Charles Shambarger, Paul & Jo Siebert, Bert & Karalene Smith, Hal & Sher Smith, Arlene Sorensen, Marvin Soucek, Jerry & Jo Stanley, Nancy & Dennis Stara, Gayle & Mary Starr, Robert Stoddard, Carla Stormberg, Ellen Paporozzi & Walt Stroup, Del Stuefer, Ronald & Camilla Svoboda, Marlene Swanson, Joe Sweeney, Bryan & Lisa Sypal, Neal & Lois Thomas, Larry Toalson, Bob & Mary Torell, Barbara & Hank vandenBerg, Monica Vandergnead, Joyce & Lyle Vannier, Michael Voorhies, Allan & Denise Walter, Leona Warnsholz, Terry & Mary Werner, Roger & Sylvia Wiegand, Lynn Willey, Paul Wisnieski, Phil & Mary Wolfe, Charis Zygelbaum, Cassidy & Madison Whitney & Joeth Zucco.

Thank you from the 2014 GPTN Board of Directors. Your memberships are crucial to GPTN.



TRAIL UPDATES!

- Jamaica North Trail construction to begin Spring 2014.
- Design has begun on the Wilderness Park Bike bridge between Pioneer Blvd. and Old Cheney. Expected completion by December 2014.
- The Boosalis Trail completed but some sections will have to be replaced during 2014 because they did not meet trail construction standards.
- N Street Protected Bikeway construction is temporarily postponed due to construction bids exceeding available funds. Rebidding is scheduled for August 2014.
- Billy Wolff Trail renovation from 27th street to the new bridge near Randolph expected to be completed by December 2015.

BICYCLINCOLN™

BicycLincoln is a community group that supports and promotes bicycling in the city of Lincoln. Check them out at <http://bicyclincoln.org/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bike To Work Day
May 16, 2014

Trail Trek
June 22, 2014

Bike to Work Week
May 9 - 16, 2014

Oak Creek Valley Ride
May 18, 2014

The Canine Scrub

Self-Serve Dog Wash

2774 South Street
Lincoln, NE 68502
(402) 477-2782

www.thecaninescrub.com email@thecaninescrub.com

<p>HOURS: Monday: 10 AM - 7 PM Tuesday: CLOSED Wednesday: CLOSED Thursday: 10 AM - 7 PM Friday: 10 AM - 7 PM Saturday: 10 AM - 6 PM Sunday: 12 PM - 6 PM</p>	 
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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.


GREAT PLAINS
Bicycling Club



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LINCOLN READY TO DEFEND ITS' NATIONAL BIKE CHALLENGE TITLE

Lincoln finished in 1st place out of more than 800 communities in the second annual National Bike Challenge during the summer of 2013. Nebraska also finished in second place in the Challenge among all 50 states. The National Bike Challenge is back for its 3rd year, and the challenge will be to retain its title against cycling powerhouse communities like Madison, Wisconsin.

Lincoln's goal is to finish first as a community again, help Nebraska finish first as a state, and to have two or more teams finish in the top 10 of their categories. The Challenge begins on May 1st and runs through September 30, 2014.

The National Bike Challenge registration can be found at <https://nationalbikechallenge.org/>. The challenge is free and open to anyone.

There are three apps you can download to automatically upload your rides on your smart phone – Endomondo, MapMyRide, or Moves. Participants can also enter their mileage on-line each day at the website. The National Challenge will offer a chance for participants to win prizes in drawings each month, May through September.

A local Challenge, the Lincoln Bike Challenge, will run at the same time. Registration in the national challenge automatically enters local participants in the Lincoln Bike Challenge. The Lincoln Challenge will offer its own support, prizes, and a party in early October to celebrate the end of the Challenge.

The lead national sponsor is Scott Naturals® Brand and the Challenge is organized by the League of American Bicyclists. The Lincoln Challenge is presented courtesy of Cleaner Greener Lincoln, WasteCap Nebraska, BicycLincoln, the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department, Lincoln Parks and Recreation and several bicycle shops in Lincoln.



BIKE To Work Week

The City of Lincoln is partnering with the local bicycling community to encourage residents to participate in Bike to Work Week, May 9-16. Participants who commit to riding to work at least one day that week can receive a free reusable bag full of information and coupons (while supplies last) and will be entered in a drawing for prizes. Registration sites are:

- Bike Rack, 3321 Pioneers Blvd.
- Cycle Works, 27th and Vine
- Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Dept, 3140 "N" St.
- Lincoln Parks and Recreation, 2740 "A" St.

A **free Kickoff Rally** is set for 8 a.m. Friday, May 9 at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center in Union Plaza. Bikers will meet at 7:30 a.m. at either the Bike Rack or Cycle Works locations listed above and bike as a group to Union Plaza for refreshments. Riders also are encouraged to ride to the Trails Center from their homes or workplaces.

A **free Ice Cream Social** is set for 4:30 to 6 p.m. Friday May 16th at the Jayne Snyder Trail Center features refreshments from the UNL Dairy Store and prize drawings.

Bikers are strongly encouraged to wear helmets. The City also reminds residents that it is illegal to ride a bike on sidewalks in downtown and other congested districts.

For more information, visit lincoln.ne.gov or contact Mike Heyl, Public Health Educator, Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department, at mhey1@lincoln.ne.gov or 402-441-3889.

GPTN 25TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY DRAWS 180

by Roger Hirsch

It seemed appropriate to celebrate 25 years of Great Plains Trails Network existence, and 180 people agreed.

That many trail lovers included current GPTN board members, past presidents, volunteers and others who joined to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the organization on April 10th at the Mary Riepma Ross Theater.

Thanks to the hard work of board members and organizers Marynelle Greene and Joyce Vannier, GPTN put on quite a bash for itself.

The event featured a documentary film, "Rising From Ashes", narrated by Forest Whitaker. It's about how a few young Rwanda cyclists helped bring their genocide-torn country back together by creating "Team Rwanda". The inspirational film was introduced by Dr. Gerise Herndon, Director of Gender Studies at Nebraska Wesleyan University. Dr. Herndon has taught in Rwanda and will be taking a group of students to Kigali this summer.

Ethnic cleansing 20 years ago tore apart families, left Rwanda devastated and destroyed a rich tradition of cycling. "Team Rwanda" came together for the country, trained and competed for several years, and sent representatives to the 2012 Olympics in London—an amazing achievement for a country in transition. The team was trained and led by legendary Jonathan "Jock" Boyer, the first American to participate in the Tour de France in 1981.

But the actual party following the film was about GPTN and its contributions to Lincoln and Lancaster County over the past 25 years. With over 20 trails and 131 miles in the current trails network, it was time GPTN looked back in celebration.

Current GPTN President Karen Griffin praised the group's past efforts and singled out the leadership of past GPTN presidents, many of whom were in attendance. She lauded the efforts of volunteer board members and community citizens who have "provided financial, volunteer and moral support" for projects.

"We want to give you—the trail supporters of Lincoln—a chance to celebrate your success, relish in your accomplishments, and talk about your plans to use the trails this spring and summer" Griffin told attendees. "The trails are ready and waiting!"

Many citizens have contributed to GPTN's efforts over the years, and GPTN took the opportunity to award its prestigious Trailblazer Award to Lincoln Parks and Recreation Director Lynn Johnson for his leadership in helping develop Lincoln's trails. Johnson told the group that there were plans for future trails and that it was "time to get back to work" on developing the network. The award was presented by board member and GPTN founder Elaine Hammer.

Major sponsors of the celebration included the Bike Rack of Lincoln, and Cycle Works, also of Lincoln. Other sponsors included Joyride Bicycles, Lincoln Running Co., Monkey Wrench Cycles, Snyder Physical Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation, and Lincoln law firm Harding & Shultz.



GPTN ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) was held Feb. 16 at the Bryan-LGH College of Health Sciences. J.J. Yost, manager of planning and construction for the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department, reviewed progress made on the trails in 2013 and trail projects under way. The trails system is 131 miles in length, and includes 85 miles of commuter/recreation trails, and 46 miles of hiker/biker trails in parks.

Al Laukaitis, longtime reporter for the Journal Star, received the Trailblazer Award, given for outstanding contributions to the long-range development of trails. Laukaitis was recognized for his years of providing information to the public on trail plans; various trails projects and numerous trails activities while working at the Journal Star.

Special Project Awards went to GPTN board member Chris Heinrich, for putting together a fundraising team to help raise money for two Wilderness Bridges; Rosina Paolini, for fundraising for fundraising and public support for the Wilderness Bridges; and Glen Moss, for obtaining funding for widening of the Helen Boosalis Trail along Highway 2.

Due to technical difficulties at the annual meeting, Jennifer Dam Shewchuk, UNL's Assistant Director for Campus Planning and Space Management, gave her excellent presentation at the March GPTN Board meeting. Jennifer provided details of the overall bike plan for UNL and the bike/complete streets concept.



Trailblazer award being awarded to Al Laukaitis



Join the University Sertoma Club of Lincoln as they sponsor their 14th Annual Oak Creek Valley Bike Ride on **May 18, 2014** starting in Valparaiso, Nebraska, located only 18 miles north of Lincoln on Hwy 79. Ride the trail, or enjoy riding through the beautiful Bohemian Alps.

Choose from several distances of 24, 31, 39, 44, 46 or 70-mile routes of Nebraska highways through the Bohemian Alps, paved county road or the stretches of natural prairie on the Oak Creek Trail. Take in beautiful scenery, wildlife and enthusiastic riders. More than 150 riders participated in the 2013 ride!

This ride is a fundraiser benefiting many sponsorships of University Sertoma. Proceeds will benefit Prescott Elementary School in Lincoln, Great Plains Trails Network and Camp Sertoma for children with hearing disabilities.

Check-in from 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. the day of the ride at the Trailhead at the North Oak Bridge, 356 North Oak Street in Valparaiso, (about two blocks west from Highway 79). Everyone must check-in to make sure you are properly registered and the liability waiver is signed. Support from The Bike Rack will be available at the start and during the ride. Water will be available at the start.

The ride begins Sunday morning, May 18, 2014, at 8:00 a.m. after a brief welcome at the trailhead at the North Oak Bridge.

Find more details and register online at <http://university.sertoma.net/>. Registration forms are also available at most bike shops and fitness centers in Lincoln and Omaha. So come out for a great ride and support a good cause!

Hope to see you there!

NORTHERN BIKES, SOUTHERN TRAILS

by Roger Hirsch

Serious bikers always want more. More trails, more visions, more experiences, more challenges.

But seriously....alligators?

That's just one of the things you'll want to look for, or look *out* for, if you become a winter visitor from the North—popularly called a “snowbird”—and you choose the Gulf of Mexico's coastline to seek a refuge from bitter winters on the Great Plains.

The area known as Gulf Shores, Alabama is such a refuge, and while y'all are down there, take your bike and enjoy the hard-surfaced trails that meander through the community and its neighbor, Orange Beach. Typically there are abundant 60- and 70-degree days in January and February, and that permits plenty of outdoor activities. This year was unseasonably cold—the coldest in 30 years said the locals—but that still left some days suitable for biking. For me, that meant mid-60s.

The communities themselves are low in population, say, 16,000 total local residents, but they cater to tourists; everything from high-rise condos, elegant beach homes, and stilted beach houses are available for winter rental. In the winter, this is Big Ten territory too. License plates from Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Ohio are everywhere, and one of the first questions posed to condo owners is “do you have BTN?” As my wife scoped out fabric stores to feed her quilting addiction, I biked.

The area is bike-friendly, and the core biking and hiking area is the Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail. Branyon has six

inter-connected trails with asphalt surfaces, and they vary in width from 8 to 13 feet. They have colorful names—Rosemary Dunes, Cotton Bayou, Catman Road, Rattlesnake Ridge, Twin Bridges Trail, and the fascinating Gulf Oak Ridge Trail. The trails are part of the Gulf State Park area, and follow old logging trails, abandoned roads and paths, some of which were old enough to have been used by Indians and early settlers in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Branyon trail network was designated a National Recreation Trail in 2010 and is part of the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail and the Coastal Connection National Scenic Byway. The six trails total maybe 11 miles, and can be easily covered in a leisurely 2-3 hours. Benches contributed by snowbird clubs, local businesses and organizations, families and others are plentiful, as are restroom areas. The area is generally quite flat, but in the Branyon area there are some gentle slopes. The trails intersect with each other at something of a hub in the middle of the area called Boulder Rock.

Despite the low total miles, the biking experiences vary in Branyon. Rosemary Dunes meanders through sandy dunes hosting rosemary sprigs, as its name suggests. Native plants crowd the area, and with few trees, it is a sunny, flat trail. The other trails in Branyon are in sharp contrast with Rosemary Dunes. Crowded with towering pines and full oaks, the other trails are much shadier. Saw palmettos are everywhere, along with scrub oaks. This area consists of six different ecosystems dominated by forests, dunes and swampland.

The most fascinating, Gulf Oak Ridge Trail, is heavily shaded with those famous Southern oaks that provide a thick canopy of leaves. They are choked with Spanish moss. There are



several swamp areas along the trail. Gulf Oak Ridge is also the home of the afore-mentioned alligator. There are two of them, and one or both emerge from a swampy home in the morning to sun on a bank. Great Blue Herons keep a wary eye on the alligators while seeking fish along the edge of the swamp. Signs along the trail warn hikers and bikers to be on the lookout for those bad boys.

But the Branyon network, while the most popular, is only a small part of the local trail system. Generally, there are double-wide sidewalks close to residential streets such as Marina Road, which runs from Orange Beach Blvd. to Boggy Point Landing, which in turn juts out into Terry Cove. Robinson Island is just off the point and is crowded with deep-croaking cormorants, and screeching pelicans barking at whatever. You get the picture.

Signs everywhere remind motor vehicle drivers to “share the road” with bikers. Busy four-lane Beach Blvd. has a double-wide shoulder trail that is intermittently marked with outlines of bikes and riders. Gulf Shores welcomes the use of bikes, and the authorities are clear as to where they want you if you are biking, and where they don't want you if you are driving a car. Occasionally trail-sized sweepers dust the hard-surfaced paths when sand starts to accumulate. Here, it's snow; there, it's sand.

Like all communities, there are areas where the serious biker wishes there were better trails. One such spot is Fort Morgan Rd. Stretching from Gulf Beach Blvd. west some 20 miles to Fort Morgan (close to which Admiral David Farragut famously damned those torpedoes and urged more speed from his fleet as he sailed into Mobile Bay.) There is a rough asphalt trail (think Billy Wolfe Trail before repairs) of varying widths and sudden turns that accommodates bikers for about 4 ½ miles, and abruptly ends. The biker is then forced to the shoulder of Fort Morgan Rd. for the next 16 miles. It is not shady along that road, and traffic is not always mindful of the speed limit

on that flat straight-away. Turn around where the trail ends and leave famous Fort Morgan for a car trip.

There are other trails in the area outside of Gulf Shores. One very interesting trail is in Fairhope, Alabama, a fascinating community of arts, antiques, small shops and plenty of history. Scenic old Hwy. 98, or Mobile Street, stretches along the heavily-shaded homes that border Mobile Bay's eastern shore in Fairhope. Oaks, pines, redbuds, magnolias and scrub bushes are thick along the wide trail that is just off the street. It isn't busy with traffic, and the neighborhood reeks with easy living in homes that vary from elegant to early fishing shack. The trail runs about 8 miles from where it turns north along the shoreline to the iconic Fairhope Municipal Pier. Downtown is but a few blocks away, up a thigh-burner hill, but it is well worth a bike ride and extended visit.

Can't bring your bike? There are rental spots in Gulf Shores with plenty of bikes, but they are pricey. A comfort or hybrid bike will run \$10 an hour, \$70 a week, while road bikes are \$20 an hour, \$125 per week. There are plenty of single speed “beach” bikes too, with the balloon tires and fenders, and seats that don't seem to adjust well for long-legged bikers.

Bike care down south presents a couple of challenges. Salt and sand. Neither are good for bikes. Keeping the bike frame clean and dry, and wiping down the mechanical parts with lubricant are musts. Local authorities do a great job keeping sand off the trails, but shore breezes keep them busy as the slowly shifting dunes seek new frontiers. Still, all well worth the biking experience if you maintain your bike.

And those alligators? An official park sign urged visitors not to feed the alligators, and punctuated the warning with this curious phrase: “A fed gator is a dead gator.” Did one ever get a biker? “Naw,” said a local fisherman. “They don't like to get spokes in their teeth.”

Not a great reassurance. I rode on.

Consider joining our friends!

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, a one dollar (\$1.00) discount off the entry fee of each LTC road race. All memberships expire at the end of the calendar year (December 31).

2014 LTC Calendar

3/29	State Farm (10M/5K/1M)
4/12	Novartis (10K/2M)
5/3	Mayor's Run (1M)
5/4	Marathon/Half-Marathon
6/7	Havelock (10K/3K)
7/13	Lincoln Mile
7/20	Uplifting Athletes Run (5K/1M)
8/9	Thunder/KFOR (5K/1M)
9/7	Buffalo (5M)
10/19	Governors (15K/5K/1M)
12/7	Holiday Run (5K)

Type of Membership:

Student/Senior: **\$10**
(under 22 or over 62)

Single: **\$12**

Family: **\$16**

Patron: **\$35**

The Century Club: **\$100**

Check if NEW member:

Make checks payable to
LTC and mail to:

Michelle Bivens
5841 Box Canyon Circle
Lincoln NE 68516

Name: _____

Birthdate: _____ Sex: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Family Members (for Family level memberships or above)

Name	Birthdate	Sex	Email

Club Membership Application Waiver:

I know that running and volunteering to work in club races are potentially hazardous activities. I should not enter and run in club activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running and volunteering to work in club races including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, the conditions of the road and traffic on the course, such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application for membership, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Road Runners Club of America, the Lincoln Track Club and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind of arising out of my participation in these club activities even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver. I understand that bicycles, skateboards, baby joggers, roller skates or blades, animals, and radio headsets will not be allowed in LTC races and I will abide by this guideline.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature (if under 18): _____ Date: _____

A drawing was held for 25 items—one for each year of GPTN. Local businesses donated biking items, coupons for food, personal care items, recreational clothing items, and tickets. Prize items were provided by Bike Rack, Bagels & Joe, Bah-Shah Salon, Cycle Works/Moose's Tooth, Joyride Bicycle, Lincoln Children's Zoo, Lincoln Racquet Club, Lincoln Running Co., Rainbow Nails & Spa, Salon on the Court, Snyder Physical Therapy, Wild Bird Habitat, and Zesto.

While the group partied, it was entertained by guitar soloist Daniel Martinez of Lincoln, whose light Latin sounds drifted over a lively crowd. Light snacks catered by Tastefully Yours and a cash bar by Meier's Cork & Bottle added to the festivities.

A large screen reminded celebrants of GPTN's contributions over the years by listing the trails it had supported. Griffin alluded to those successes while performing MC duties at the event. She also reminded attendees of GPTN's recent activities—support for the planned construction of the N Street Protected Bikeway and replacement of the Wilderness Park bridges. Griffin said GPTN will be thinking big and looks forward to developing other visions—including a trail linking Pioneers Park with Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center south of Denton.

Often working in partnership with other groups and government agencies, GPTN has raised over three million dollars to help create Lincoln and Lancaster County's network of trails. Major projects partially funded by GPTN include the Mopac Trail and Trailhead, Oak Creek Trail, Jamaica North Trail, Bison Trail and Homestead Trail. Other projects include the Lied Platte River Bridge, Antelope Valley J Street Bridge, Elaine Hammer Bridge and most recently the Bison

Trail Bridge replacement. GPTN has also helped fund the renovation of Pioneers Park Trails, in addition to the on-going support of the planned N Street Protected Bikeway and the Wilderness Park replacement bridges.

GPTN also helped fund the crown jewel of the trails system—the Jayne Snyder Trails Center in Antelope Valley's Union Plaza—where the group now conducts its monthly meetings.

Congratulations to GPTN and its many volunteers and supporters. Keep pedaling!

