

2021 GPTN Annual Meeting

Making Connections! By Mary Torell

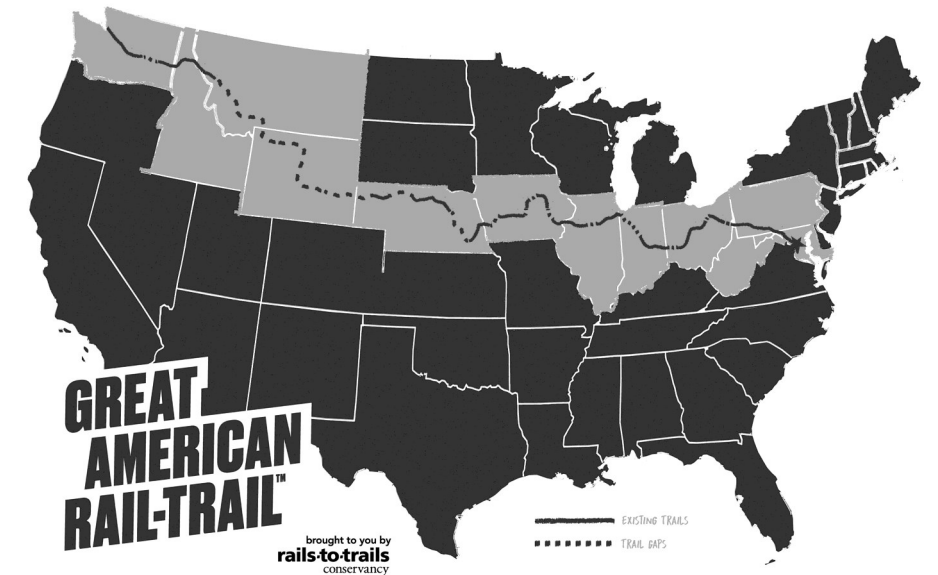
The Great Plains Trails Network Annual Meeting will be held virtually on Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 1:00 pm. We are celebrating our new Great Plains Trails Network Connector bridge and making the connections of two fantastic trail systems! The meeting will be held virtually online via Zoom because of the COVID-19.

We are excited to have two representatives from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) in Washington, D.C. Marianne Fowler, Senior Strategist for Policy Advocacy, and her colleague Kevin Belanger, Trail Planner, will give presentations about the Great American Rail-Trail through Nebraska and across the country. Since 1986, RTC has worked to bring the power of trails to more communities across the country, serving as the national voice for the rail-trail movement. In addition, Sara Hartzell, Park Planner for Lincoln Parks and Recreation, will give a comprehensive report on current projects, and what's next for the trails system in the future.

Marianne Fowler has been with the Rails to Trails Conservancy since 1988, and her pivotal roles in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) reauthorizations, have established her reputation as a veritable legend of the rail-trail movement and one of the true game-changers in the history of American bike/ped policy.

Before joining the RTC team in 2016, Kevin Belanger spent many years in the active-transportation world—first for the Student Conservation Association, building trails in Arkansas (which instilled in Kevin a major appreciation for the impact trails can have on personal and community growth), and then as the bicycle and pedestrian coordinator for a suburb in Maryland.

Lincoln's trails system now consists of 135 miles of paved trails, which connect to rural routes that add another 100 miles between northern Kansas and the Omaha area. And additional miles of dirt and mowed trails in wilderness and natural areas.



Following the presentations, GPTN's annual awards and election of the 2021 Board of Directors will take place.

Go to our website GPTN.org to register to attend the Zoom Annual Meeting. Registration is free but required in order to receive the link to the Zoom Meeting. We hope you are able to join us.

For more information about the Great Plains Trails Network or the annual meeting, contact Greg Rosenboom, President of GPTN at 402-659-5909, or visit our website at www.gptn.org.

Chris Beutler Trail

In the future South Haymarket Park, the Chris Beutler Trail will connect the N Street Protected Bikeway to the Jamaica North Trail at J Street. Estimated cost for the trail and easements is \$275,000. GPTN in partnership with NTF is raising funds to support this critical trail connection. Please consider donating to this exciting project. Thanks!



Make contributions payable to: Nebraska Trails Foundation

Name: _____
 Address: _____
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P.O. 82902
Lincoln, NE 68501-2902

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Noel Briseno	Elaine Hammer	Ray Stevens
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Kyle Clouston	LaDonna Little Elk	Mary Torell
Parks Coble	Jordan Messerer	Jamie Warren
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Eli Frank	Jesse Petersen	
Corey Godfrey	Ann Ringlein	
Jamie Granquist	Roy Rivera	



Great Plains Trails Network

since 1988

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

2021

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Newsletter comments, questions, corrections
gbentrup68@gmail.com

A Note from the President



The first newsletter of the new year, and my last column as president of GPTN leaves me a difficult task of what to address. So much can be said about our trail system, the people who make up our GPTN board, the people who participate in GPTN events, and the community of trail supporters who offer GPTN assistance, and with which GPTN coordinates and cooperates to help build our trail system.

One entire newsletter is not enough space to express the gratitude and recognize the people who have helped build Lincoln's trail system. The commitment, passion, talent, expertise, and cooperation I've witnessed just these last couple years leaves me proud to have been a part, even though with a miniscule role. Part of what makes Lincoln special to me is the trail system and public spaces. Thank you to each of you who have participated in whatever way to making our city a better city by supporting our trail system.

I'm looking forward to 2021, GPTN, trail related events, bikers, runners, walkers, and being out on the trails!

Greg Rosenboom



GPTN NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

November 16, 2020 - January 22, 2021

Standard \$10

Lincoln Arneal, Charles Bacon, Jeff Bliemeister, Kyle Clouston, Mike & Kath Conroy, Deb & Paul Eisloeffel, Judy Garlock & Tex Richters, Melanie Gary, Angie Graham, Katharine Hogan, Paula Kellner, Charlotte Kupsh, LaDonna Little Elk-Parpart, Ruthann Nahorny, William J. Noel, Rosina Paolini, Jim Peter, Denise Teahon Peter, Loren Warren

Associate \$20

Gil Andersen, Neil & JoAnne Bateman, Gene & Jane Boilesen, Peggy Burt-Martinez, Sue & Tom Guild, Todd Jarchow, Brent Kalemkiarian, Stan Kuta, John & Shirley Laflin, Steven Larrick, Jerry & Judy Luedtke, Edith Matteson, Albert Maxey, Sr., Laurie McKenzie, Sue Moore, Debra K. Morgan, Jim Muggy, Curtis Schneider, Jennifer Snyder, Dave Swartz, Mark Traynowicz, Douglas Vander Broek, Kenneth & Peggy Volker, Mike & Sue Wilkins

Trail Sustainer \$50

Ben Armstrong, Paul Brinkman, Kathryn Campbell, Parks Coble, Jenny Dauer, Barbara DiBernard, Theodore Durant, Mike & Bonnie Engel, Sue Ferguson, Jocelyn Golden, George & Barb Green, Yvonne R. Heakin, Ann Heydt, Randy & Tracy Holcomb, Sharon Kennedy & Ralph Hartley, Tom King, Jami Lanka, Phyllis Larsen,

Trail Sustainer \$50

Roger Lempke, Richard Littrell, Cindy Loope, Tyler & Denise Mainquist, Randall Malone, Sandra Mathews & Dale Benham, Ed May, Jim Nora, Michael O'Neill, Aaron Rutt, Sherry & Nick Savener, Mary Schroer, Susan Scott, Harry Seward, Judy Seward, Pete Smith, Jo Theis, Vicki Valente, Gary Wenzl, Kenneth Winston

Trail Patron \$100

Don Alvord, Susan Bauer, Dave Dinsmore & Cathie Bailey, Steve & Charlene Dunbar, Lynette Exum, Randy Gerke, Mark & Nanette Gokie, Dennis & Hayley Grabast, Jeff & Amy Handeland, Philip Hovis, Con & Barbara Keating, Ted & Mary LaGrange, Jim Lauerman, Patricia S. Lisee, Nancy Loftis, Bill & Susan Macy, Kathie & Blane Osterman, Mike & Peggy Rasmussen, Ray Stevens, Robert & Julie Timme, Bradley & Kimberly Walker

Trail Benefactor \$250

Gale & Julie Pokorny, Alisa & Bruce Sandahl, Laurel Shoemaker, Roger & Sylvia Wiegand, John & Cyndi Woollam





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BICYCLINCOLN™

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/>



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.



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Saturday: 10 AM - 5 PM
Sunday: 12 PM - 5 PM



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/>

2021 Lincoln Trail-a-Thon *By Dena Noe*

Registration is now open for Trail-A-Thon 2021. The Lincoln Trail-A-Thon is a challenge to ride, run, jog or walk all the trails within the Lincoln city limits in 2021. When you finish you will have covered 78 miles of trails.

In 2021 as you complete each trail section, you'll record the accomplishment with us and receive a 2.25-inch diameter locally designed collectible trail button. This fun challenge was started to inspire individuals to be healthier with an opportunity to GIVE BACK, EXPLORE new trails and CONQUER a common goal. Check out gptn.org to register and see the first button designs.

GIVE

The 2021 entry fee will GIVE BACK to the Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) to help expand the trail system in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

EXPLORE

Each month a different trail will be explored. You may choose to follow our plan or rearrange it to create a plan that fits your schedule. The plan was created to do two things, keep the exploration to a reasonable distance and keep trails grouped together based on location. We will also have fun monthly trail activities to keep everyone moving toward their goal.

CONQUER

While Trail-A-Thon is a self-directed, family friendly event, once you complete all 78 miles you will feel like you have conquered the challenge, and you won't be alone. We'll all do it together.

We invite you to join us by registering at gptn.org today!

Thank you to our sponsors:





Stories *By Cara Bentrup*

Earlier this month, unseasonably warm temperatures prompted a spontaneous Wednesday afternoon bike adventure; the intended errand turned into a much longer ride that traversed Lincoln. Though I have spent endless hours in movement on trails; my inherent tendency to absorb what surrounds me provides a colorful backdrop of memories, and favorite stretches of these paths in which I find solace. Rock Island Trail, by way of Bishop Heights Park, was my childhood thoroughfare to Shopko and then Star City Shores. Mulberries provided a quick nosh on those warm summer days. Heading towards the Sheridan penny bridges, treacherous on those winter running days; yet perfect habitat for a fox, peeking out at me from behind his wooded shelter. Maybe I should slow down sometimes anyway?

Except during high school track practice. Holmes Lake, Billy Wolff Trail and 400-meter repeats on the backside of the dam; down to 60 second splits, which was at a time when I could eat anything I wanted within an hour of my run and pay no price. Have you ever watched the sun come up and the moon go down over that awesome sledding hill? On top of the dam. Pure bliss. Look closely and the State Capitol dots the western horizon. On Bison Trail, near Pioneers Park she stands proudly in the east. Though holding one's gaze too long is not recommended out there, as deer often grace the open grasslands alongside that trail. Cautiously they watch, until catching scent that it is time to dart into the bountiful Wilderness Park.

Then there are the cats. Anyone that knows me, is well aware of my fondness for felines; for those unfamiliar, the truth is now revealed. A crew hangs out alongside Mopac Trail, near Riley Elementary School, a giant orange tabby cat, ear-tipped as he should be. He seems to enjoy the cooler temperatures. Someone near Dawes Middle School on David Murdock Trail feeds a crew in their backyard. Another managed colony across Adams Street alongside Upco Park on the John Dietrich Trail. I often wonder how they manage to coexist with the numerous foxes I have also seen along these same sections of trail; chasing squirrels, looking for something to eat. I usually do that when I get home too, fella.

Maybe one day I will follow through on identifying the many vibrant colored and sounding birds that catch my eye in the glorious trees. Oh, but the trees. They also continue to evolve as we tread alongside, above and below their roots. Perhaps this concept is what draws me to such profound thought and observation. Though I have covered the many miles of Lincoln's trails over and over again; each individual adventure, memory, connection to nature allow a tome of stories in which I can draw contentment. Mopac Trail will look different tomorrow than they did yesterday; Helen Boosalis Trail, she is a favorite late winter walk choice, as the increasing sunshine makes its return from the far south; our currently snow-lined Rock Island Trail will soon be paralleled by newly budding trees, preparing his wooded areas for another season. More experiences, and narratives to share.

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).

2021 LTC Calendar

Check LTC Website
for Current Status



To join the Lincoln Track Club: www.lincolnrun.org





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Tour de Lincoln *By Mary Torell*

Join the Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) along with Lincoln Parks & Recreation as they celebrate National Bike Month in May with their annual Tour de Lincoln bicycle rides.

For the past 16 years, GPTN has sponsored Thursday evening bike rides designed to take participants to different quadrants of Lincoln. GPTN plans to host the rides with safety precautions in place due to the Coronavirus. All rides start and end at the Jayne Snyder Trails Center at 228 North 21 Street (21st & Q Streets) Union Plaza Park, beginning at 6:00 pm. This year's bike rides are scheduled each Thursday in May as follows:

May 6 – Southwest Tour de Lincoln – 13 miles

May 13 – Northwest Tour de Lincoln – 12 miles

May 20 – Southeast Tour de Lincoln – 15 miles

May 27 – Northeast Tour de Lincoln – 16 miles

Members of GPTN's Board of Directors lead each ride, provide mechanical support and make sure there are no riders left behind. The rides vary in distances from 12 to 16 miles each, and are designed to acquaint cyclists with different trails, conditions and features. Refreshments will be available before the start. People of all ages and families are invited to come out and enjoy the rides. Lots of positive comments have been made by riders on how much they enjoyed past rides. Many have never ventured out on trails that are not near their residence, so they welcome the opportunity to see where a new trail leads them.

“We try to feature different trails when possible during Tour de Lincoln rides,” said event chairperson Mary Torell. “The most important thing is to expose bike riders to all quadrants of the city and allow them to discover Lincoln’s great trails system. Our network of 135 miles of trails continues to grow, and these rides give people an opportunity to see portions of the city and trails they may not have seen or ridden.” “We encourage people to get out and explore the trails and have fun”!

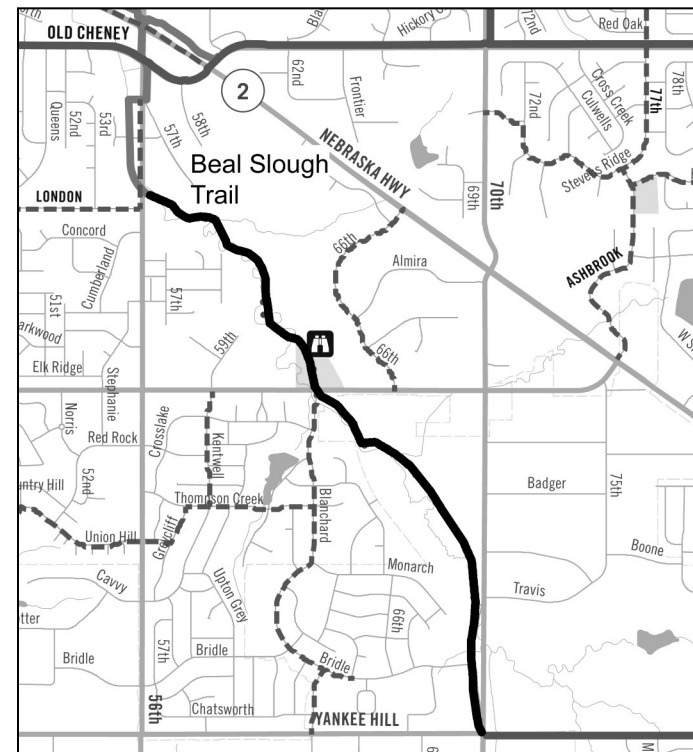
No registration fees are required, but participants are required to wear helmets for all GPTN sponsored biking events. There will also be drawings for refreshments from The Hub Café (next to the Jayne Snyder Trails Center).

Weather cancellations will be announced on Facebook and on our web site at <http://www.gptn.org/>. Let’s all get out and ride!

Trail Updates

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. This is a multi-year project.

Beal Slough Trail from 56th to 70th St: Design work continues on the Beal Slough Trail and construction should begin in 2022.



GREAT PLAINS TRAILS NETWORK

TRAIL TREK

A BENEFIT BIKE RIDE FOR LINCOLN'S TRAILS

SUNDAY · JUNE 20

SPEEDWAY VILLAGE
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REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 1

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FOR DETAILS

Lincoln's Climate Action Plan: Role of Active Transportation

In fall 2020, the City of Lincoln released a draft Climate Action Plan to provide strategies for creating a resilient Lincoln. Resilience is commonly thought of as the ability to bounce back from a shock or disturbance. While recovery is a necessary component of resilience, climate resilience also includes capacity-building that allows continued adaptation in the midst of an ever-changing environment.

This Climate Action Plan paints a vision for what the city of Lincoln could become over the next 30 years. It is a vision of a city that is thriving with local businesses and verdant greenways; a city that uses both ordinary and innovative measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in transportation, electricity and buildings; a city that is inclusive, welcoming and fair.

This plan takes an intersectional approach to climate resilience, looking at the ways in which climate risks will intersect with Lincoln's socio-economic, health and systemic vulnerabilities, and also at the ways in which solutions can have co-benefits across sectors. Specific recommendations fall under broad goals for the city to transition to low-carbon energy, build a decarbonized transportation system, align its economic and climate goals, improve protections for residents, reduce waste and build a resilient local food system.

Some of the specific bike and pedestrian-based strategies in the Climate Action Plan are shown in the adjacent box. To learn more about the Climate Action plan, go to: <https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/Projects-Programs-Initiatives/Resilient-Lincoln>.

Continue to integrate active and equitable transportation planning into long-range plans

- Continue the work of the Complete Streets Committee to identify appropriate Complete Streets projects and increase funding as-needed.
- Update the 2015 Complete Streets Gap Analysis and Prioritization Strategy in order to evaluate needed improvements for bike and walk lanes.
- Adopt pedestrian-oriented development policies.
- Create pedestrian focused overlay zones that prioritize pedestrian safety and comfort and include human-scaled design.

Increase active commuting

- Encourage and facilitate bike commuting.
- Continue to expand bike trail network to facilitate bike travel and recreation within city limits and throughout the county.
- Implement recommendations from the Lincoln Bike Plan (2019).
- Encourage and assist businesses to become League of American Bicyclists, Bicycle Friendly Businesses.
- Encourage large employers and public agencies to provide for bike parking, lockers and shower facilities.



New GPTN Broad Members



Dwight Brown

Professional: Dwight has worked at the Bike Rack since 2016 and loves it! It provides him another outlet for physical activity and he really enjoys helping others get active. He also enjoys the aspect of educating people about their bikes, helping them become mechanically literate.

Personal: While Dwight was born in Philadelphia, he was raised in Lincoln and attended Lincoln high where he ran cross country and track. He ran on the Lincoln Running Team in 2014. He studied art and design at UNL.

Favorite trail: Dwight's favorite trail is the Rock Island. While running for Lincoln High and maturing as a runner, the Rock Island was one of their main routes towards Highway 2 bridges, out and backs. He knows all the landmarks and distances up and down the trail. As an adult, his favorite trail is MoPac because it helps him get out of town while on his bike. He's used it to start rides to and from Omaha twice in 2020.

Kyle Clouston

Professional: Kyle works for a company called Iquvia as an Engagement Manager, helping health care providers and connect with health care supply companies.

Personal: Kyle is born and raised in Lincoln and attended Lincoln East where he played baseball. He's been running races since he was a kid, encouraged and supported by his mom, who is also runner.

He and his wife have an 18 month old who keeps them busy, but Kyle finds the time to serve on the board of the Lincoln Running Company Racing Team as of community relations. He also has his national coaching license, focusing on long-distance runners.

Favorite trail: Kyle's favorite trails are MoPac and all the wonderful single-track trails out at Wilderness Park.



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





Jamie Granquist

Professional: Jamie is the City Manager of Bike LNK since prior to program implantation & launch in early 2018. Jamie is passionate about getting our little ones to find joy in cycling and serves as the Program Director of Nebraska Devo, a state wide youth mountain biking education organization.

Personal: Jamie is born and raised in Lincoln and attended Malcolm High. She went out west to Chadron for college and there she met her husband Mark. Jamie has no problems staying active – an avid cyclist, she's outside year-round (#bikinginsideisdumb). She's also a fitness instructor at the Y, helping others stay active.

Favorite trail: Jamie's favorite trail is the Jamaica/Homestead. She likes it because it's both it's in town and out of town. It can go all the way to Kansas! This trail represents what Nebraska is all about. (Hokey pokey!?)



LaDonna Little Elk

Professional: LaDonna is a Program Coordinator at the Mental Health Association of Nebraska, a non-profit organization that provides support to individuals struggling with mental health and/or addiction issues.

Personal: She is from Burwell, but has lived the last good chunk of her life in Lincoln. She loves running and will hop into any race that they'll let her sign up for. Her pups are two of her best running buddies and two to three times a week she helps lead a group run at The Bridge. She got sober on August 15, 2016 and began running a year later. Running is a huge a part of her recovery and that's why it means so much to her to run with the men at The Bridge.

Favorite Trail: LaDonna runs on all of them, but particularly likes the Billy Wolff trail.



Roy Rivera

Professional: Roy is an office specialist for the Lincoln Parks & Recreation. He works with the forestry and special events departments. He is one of the people who handles incoming requests via UPLNK for areas of the city that need servicing.

Before he worked for Parks & Rec, he worked at the Hispanic Center (El Centro de las Americas) helping to empower members of the Hispanic community and connect them with services like medical care, legal and educational assistance.

Personal: Roy is from Honduras and has lived in the US for the last 15 years. Roy is very familiar with our trails as he uses them to commute to and from work. He isn't new to giving back to the community and served on the Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committee. He spends his free time hanging out with his wife Stephanie and their dogs, as well as getting in miles on his bike with friends.

Favorite trail: Roy is fascinated by the entire trail system and the ability to hop on a trail and get to so many different parts of the city without crossing or riding on many streets. His favorite trail is Rock Island, his main commuter trail. He particularly enjoys the sections of trees with the canopy – it makes him feel like he's out of town and is excited about the new bridge!