



# Great Plains Trails Network

Fall 2012

Issue 109

## Trail Trek 2012 Kicks It Up A Notch!

by Roger Hirsch

It was Trail Trek's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and participants' T-shirts celebrated the milestone in a silk-screen antique depiction of a bicycle-built-for-10. The shirts were emblazoned with "Biking Is More Fun With Friends."

Apparently everyone's friends showed up too. Riders could have filled up dozens of 10-seat bikes.

There were about 1,400 entrants who pulled on those blue t-shirts and rode bikes on five routes of 10, 13, 24, 31 and 40 miles—an increase of nearly 40% over last year. Registration volunteers quickly adjusted to easily accommodate the surge in numbers.

And how about those volunteers? Decked out in orange T-shirts designed like the blue ones, nearly 100 volunteers registered participants, rendered aid, manned relief stations, drove trucks, monitored trails and the riders, handed out water, bananas and granola bars and picked up the discarded bottles, peels and wrappers. The volunteer increase was about 80% over last year.

One of the event sponsors, Hy-Vee, served over 1,500 meals as hungry riders coasted back into Haymarket Park's west parking area after a morning on Lincoln's trails and headed straight for the serving lines.

The sudden increase in participation became apparent just the weekend before the June 24<sup>th</sup> event. The registration cut-off was that weekend, and on the following Monday about 200 registrations came in the mail. Trail Trek just broke through to new levels.

The annual "last-Sunday-in-June" event has an increasing regional appeal. Riders came from such places as Bennett, Grand Island, Gretna, Omaha, Pawnee City, Raymond, Roca and other communities to participate in the Lincoln-based event.

Event sponsors included Assurity Life Insurance, The Bike Rack, Cycle Works, 106.3 KFRX, Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN), Hy-Vee, *The Lincoln Journal Star*, Pepsi and SouthPointe Pavilions.

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# Great Plains Trails Network

*since 1988*

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

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## *Trail Trek continued*

John Taylor and event sponsor *The Lincoln Journal Star* created advertising themes, t-shirt designs and other materials and handled registrations. Sponsor Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) distributed materials, including a new Lincoln/Lancaster County trails map. Mike Long of the Lincoln Amateur Radio Club helped coordinate communications between relief stops along the trails and Haymarket Park in an effort to keep the stops supplied with water and food.

Riders took their time at the start to avoid crowding the trails, and make the rides more leisurely and pleasant for everyone. Most of the entrants jammed the plaza along the first-base side of Haymarket Park following the trail rides to participate in the drawing for 20 bicycles donated by The Bike Rack and Cycle Works. Singer and guitarist Chris Sayre once again entertained and helped make welcoming announcements.

Four of the bikes were reserved for participants in the Safari Trek—riders needed to spot special landmarks along the 10- and 13-mile trails and earn the right to participate in the Safari drawing. The Safari Trek is popular with kids, and while an official tally is not available, they were out in record numbers too.

Trail Trek extends its deep gratitude to Jim Carveth of The Bike Rack and Kris Sonderup from Cycle Works for the donation of all the bicycles. Carveth also served as chairperson of 2012 Trail Trek Committee.

“Trail Trek 2012 was the best one ever because of the many different groups of people from eastern Nebraska who came to Lincoln to experience the great trails we have,” said Carveth. “The distance many of them traveled just for that morning’s ride was a neat thing to see.”

Over \$12,000 was raised in registration fees, donations and sponsorships, according to event planner and volunteer Elaine Hammer. She said the entire amount would go to the the on-going Pioneers Park restoration project.

Terry Genrich, Natural Resources Coordinator for Lincoln Parks and Recreation, said “we are constantly trying to improve the existing trails and at the same time, build new trails and facilities.”

He said this year’s event included a new link between Billy Wolff with Antelope Valley/Union Plaza, a renovated portion of Billy Wolff next to the Children’s Zoo, and the Jayne Snyder Trails Center.

*And what about Trail Trek 2013?*

*Continued page 3*

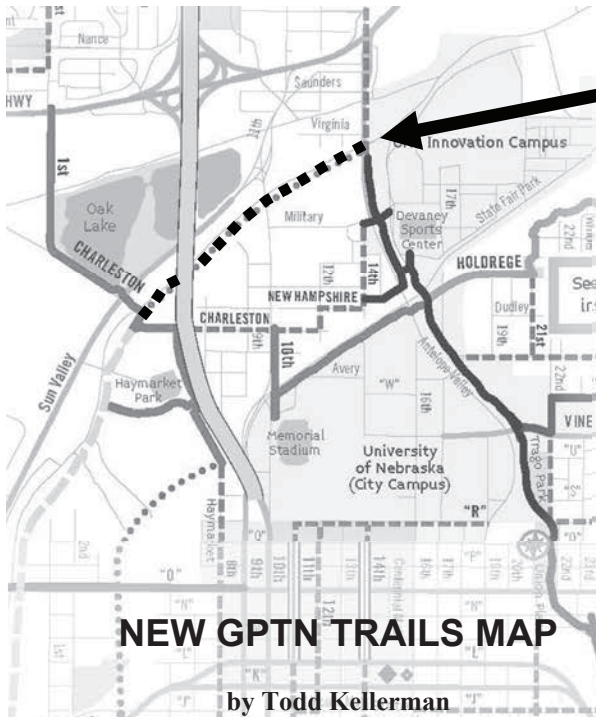


## New Key Trail Segments continued

The Haymarket Ball Park Trail generally follows Salt Creek atop the levee and is simply an extension of the Salt Creek Levee Trail. It goes under the I-180 bridge, the 10<sup>th</sup> St. bridge and the 14<sup>th</sup> St. bridge before connecting with the Antelope Valley system.

The Salt Creek Levee Trail begins near Wilderness Park at First and Van Dorn Sts., where it links to the south with a finished segment of Jamaica North. The Antelope Valley system connects to the Billy Wolff Trail, which in turn has a connection to the Rock Island Trail. Plans also call for the Salt Creek Levee Trail to be extended to 27<sup>th</sup> and Cornhusker to link with yet other trails.

The design work has been completed and construction should begin this fall. The Nebraska Roads Department will use federal trail dollars to pay for 80 percent of the \$604,000 project, and the Lower Platte South NRD will pay for the remaining 20 percent.

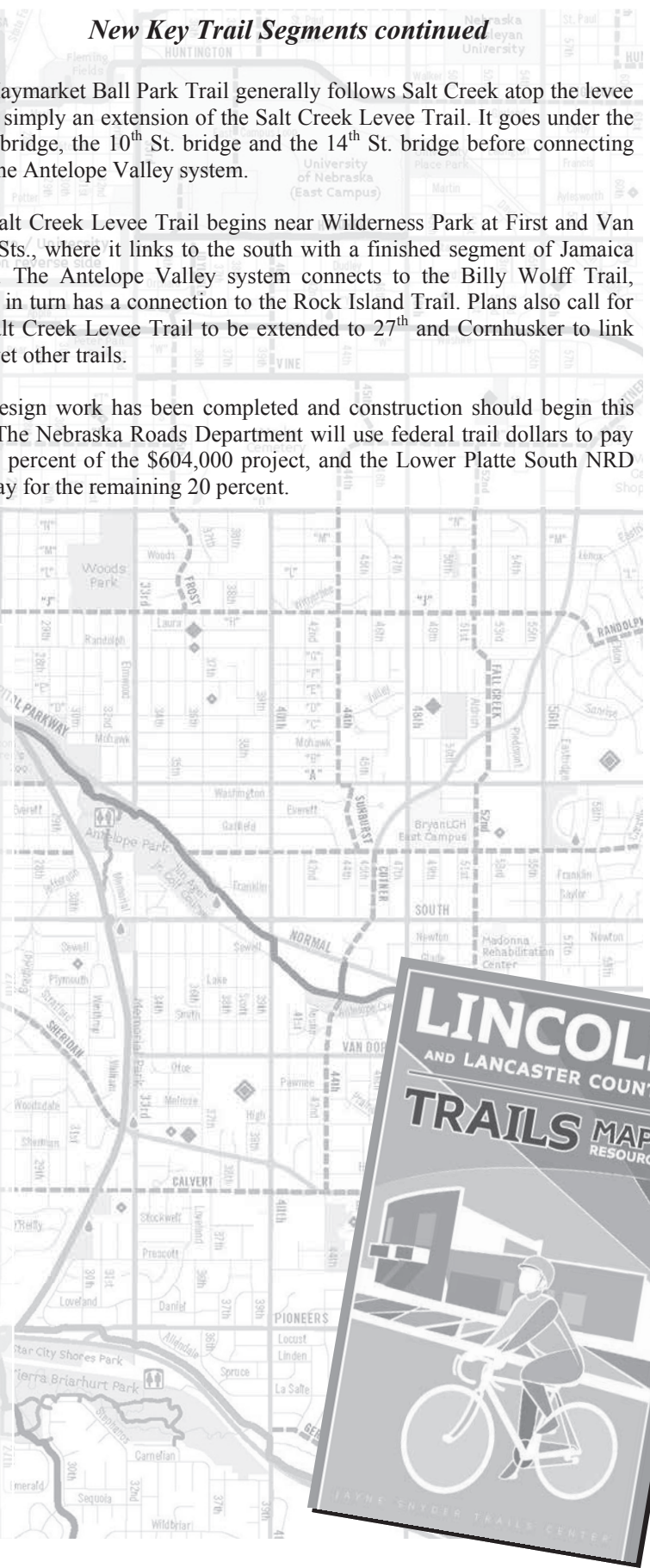


GPTN is pleased to announce the release of our newly expanded trails map. These maps are an effort to create a more usable map that allows trail users to better identify Lincoln's great trail system as well as other trail and on-street facilities. Since our trails map is one of GPTN's defining marketing tools, our hope is that the new map will also enhance the community's awareness of our group and its mission.

Map users will also notice the major trails are colored coded on the new map. These colors correspond to new signs that will be placed along the trails this summer. A tear-off tab is available to solicit new members to GPTN. The back of the map contains smaller maps of nearby rural trails, a detailed map of Wilderness Park trails, an inset map of downtown/UNL, safety information, as well as other resources.

After soliciting bids from local companies, GPTN hired Thought District, a local sales and marketing firm, to create the new map. A GPTN map committee met with their team several times to design the map features and review the work. The process took a better part of 2011 to accomplish the desired product. Patience by Thought District as they worked with our volunteer committee was greatly appreciated.

As the price for printing the full-color new maps was higher than the old maps, GPTN sought sponsors to cover a majority of the printing costs. GPTN would like to thank the following sponsors for their support: ScreenInk, Bike Rack, Cycle Works, Sandhills Publishing, Partnership for Healthy Lincoln, Lincoln Pediatric Group, Lancaster Co. Medical Society, Body Innovations, Scheel's, and Great Plains Bicycling Club. Maps are free to GPTN members and the general public. Maps are available at local bicycle shops as well as the Lincoln Parks & Rec. office.



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## UNION PLAZA GRAND OPENING

Union Plaza is Lincoln's newest destination attraction and the first of its kind six acre urban park that is located north of "O" Street between 21st and 22nd Streets as part of the Antelope Valley flood and roadway project.

Construction of final park amenities and landscaping touches are nearing completion. Make plans now to join us for a grand opening September 13, 2012. The Jayne Snyder Trails Center is located in the heart of Union Plaza and this celebration is a great time to visit the new center.

The schedule of activities include:

5:00 pm Union Plaza Grand Opening Celebration begins-Free and open to the public

6:30 pm Program --Speakers, performance by local choral groups, and fountain display

7:30 pm Union Plaza Grand Opening Celebration concludes

Union Bank will be hosting a treasure hunt filled with fun activities for children and the whole family. Offerings from snacks to dinner will be available for purchase from local food vendors that typically exhibit at Jazz in June and the Haymarket Farmers Market. Guests are encouraged to ride their bikes to the event and to enjoy the convenience of 'bike valets or bike corrals' to secure your ride during the fun! Parking will also be available.

For more information please contact the Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department at 402-441-7847 or event organizer Linda Hubka at [linda\\_hubka@hotmail.com](mailto:linda_hubka@hotmail.com) or 402-488-0968.

[http://lincolnparks.org/news/Union\\_Plaza\\_Grand\\_Opening.htm](http://lincolnparks.org/news/Union_Plaza_Grand_Opening.htm)

## STEAMBOAT TRACE NOW OPEN

The flood-damaged Steamboat Trace trail between Nebraska City and Brownville once again is open for its entire 22 miles. Kreifels Conservation and Excavating of Nebraska City repaired the south half of the scoured limestone-surface trail, which has been closed for the past year, the Nemaha Natural Resources District said in a news release.

NRD crews also have been busy working on bridges and other maintenance items along the scenic hiking and biking trail that parallels the Missouri River.

For more information about Steamboat Trace, contact the district at 402-335-3325 or visit:[www.nemahanrd.org](http://www.nemahanrd.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Nacho Ride**  
Tuesdays 5:30 p.m.,  
84th St. MoPac Trailhead  
<http://www.nachoride.com>

**Streets Alive!**  
September 9, 2012  
12:30—5:30 p.m.

**Union Plaza Grand Opening**  
September 13, 2012  
5—7:30 p.m.

**Market to Market Relay**  
October 13, 2012  
[markettomarketrelay.com](http://markettomarketrelay.com)

## STREETS ALIVE!

On September 9, 2012 from 12:30pm-5:00pm. 3.3 miles of Lincoln's streets will be closed to motorized vehicles and opened to walkers, runners, bikers, roller-bladers--anybody using human-powered transportation--to come out and Play in the Streets! Streets Alive! is an afternoon of healthy fun and activity for families, kids and seniors on the streets from Woods Park thru Antelope Valley. Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler will be on hand to open Streets Alive! at 12:30 at the Union Plaza Amphitheater at 21st and Q.

### *Use a Streets Alive! Passport to win cool prizes*

To help you navigate Streets Alive! this year, you can visit different exhibits with your passport, get it signed, turn it in, and win prizes! Passports are available at all the information booths at all four entertainment sites along the route. Visit at least 10 different exhibits from two different sites, obtain signatures, and turn in your passport by 4:30 p.m. to win. Drawings will occur at 5 p.m. at the 22nd and Q streets Main Stage. Prize winners need not be present to win. Everyone who turns in a passport will win a participation prize.

Here are just some of the prizes:

- Free Zumba and Budokan classes
- 1 yr family membership: Lincoln Children's Museum
- Visa gift cards
- Pedometers
- Dufflebags

Streets Alive! is loaded with talent. From polished performers like the Rockerfellers, Coolpoppas The Mighty Magic Pants and Two Gals & a Guitar to rising stars from Academy of Rock, and Harris Academy of Arts, Streets Alive! will be rockin' and jazzin' the entire 3.3 mile route.

Performers will be located at Trago Park (near the Malone Center at the north end of the route), Union Plaza (22nd & P), American Legion Park (27th & Randolph) and Woods Park (33rd & O).

<http://www.facebook.com/StreetsAliveLincoln>



Recently completed Homestead Trail—a 40-mile rural ride between Lincoln and Beatrice—looms as Trail Trek responds to its increasing regional appeal. Parks and Recreation Director Lynn Johnson said the North 14<sup>th</sup> Street and First Street trails will be completed and on next year's routes. The event will be June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

In addition to Carveth, Hammer, Long and Taylor, other Trail Trek committee members included: Dale Arp, Dick Boyd, Ben Cahoon, Don Dingman, Nancy Dyas, Deb Fisher, Tim Hagener, Paul Harrison, and Carol Rogers. Lists of all volunteers and bike winners are nearby.

## THANKS TRAIL TREK VOLUNTEERS

Tara Anderson, Dale Arp, Brett Baker & family, Jason Bakewell, Jim Barger, Cara and Gary Bentrup, Ann Bleed, Pat Bracken, Jenny Cardwell, Kim and Jim Carveth, Parks Coble, Alex and Ben Cohoon, Jim Cook, Jon Curran, Don Dingman, Nancy Dyas, Hess Dyas, Joyce Ely, Debbie and Dean Fisher, Jack Flanagan, Peggy Forcier, Barb Fraser, Terry Genrich, Ken Gonzales, Marnelle Greene, Elaine Hammer, Paul Harrison, Edwin Harvey, Christina Hess, Mike Heyl, Jack Higgins, Roger Hirsch, Jay Hoffman, Sandy Johnson, Lynn Johnson, Chuck Jones, Katie Kontor, Scott Krueger, Therese Liegl, Lynn Lightner, Nancy Loftis, Mike Long, Judy and Jerry Luedtke, Katherine Lukes, Ralph E Martin, Kent Mattson, V.T. Miller, Baker Noelle, Rosina Paolini, Connie Parrish, Joan Phelan, Rose Quackenbush, Kaci Quinn, Rebecca Roberts, Carol Rogers, Dalcy Ronnau, Jennifer Rossio, David Scoby, Vi See, Ned Sharp, Paul Avery Smith, Les Smith, Clancy Smith, Kris Sonderup, Denise Terry, Mary and Bob Torell, Margaret Tyler, Jim VanKirk, Peggy and Ken Volker, Jamie Warren, William Wehrbein, Heather Wheatley, Caleb Wiedel, Oak Williams



## And The Winners Are....!

GPTN suspects that notwithstanding the drought heat of 2012, there were some proud owners of new bicycles out on Lincoln's trails this summer. Thanks to The Bike Rack and Cycle Works, twenty winners rode away on new two-wheelers at the conclusion of Trail Trek 2012.

Four of them won bikes in a special drawing held as part of Trail Trek's popular "Safari Trek" on the 10- and 13-mile routes. They were:

Julie Gentleman	Jordyn Holt
Colin and Denise Krierleber	Payton Moore

The rest of the bikes were awarded in a drawing of everyone else. The winners were:

Bobbie Beat	Kristin Chmelka
Randy Denniston	Aria Feit
Elliott Hannerman	Lowell Irvin
Monica Marschman	Caleb Krueger
Rusty Lashley	Harry Petersen
Tim Sealock	Aaron Schmitz
Lynette Teegerstrom	John Vogel
Jill Wintz	Scott Yank



**NEWSFLASH:** Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department is still waiting for approval of permits before construction can begin on the Bison Trail Bridge replacement .

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## NEW KEY TRAIL SEGMENTS CONNECT BEATRICE TO DEVANEY!

by Roger Hirsch

With the recent completion of two trail segments a bike rider can now mount up in downtown Beatrice and travel—by trail—to watch Nebraska's fourth-ranked volleyball team at the Devaney Sports Center.

But you better leave now—it will be a 50-plus mile trip.

Workmen recently completed the two key trail segments in separate projects, and both will greatly extend the riding experience for urban and rural riders.

The big one—Homestead Trail—has been under construction for a decade, and the full 40-mile length connecting Lincoln and Beatrice finally came together with the completion of the nine-mile segment connecting Cortland and Pickrell.

Another 19 miles, and riders will be able to pedal from Beatrice to the Nebraska-Kansas border. That segment is not completed, but the Nebraska Trails Foundation is working with the Lower Big Blue Natural Resources District to finish it.

Right now, Lincoln-based riders can pick up the Homestead Trail at about 24<sup>th</sup> and Saltillo Road and go deep into the City of Beatrice to just south of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Court Sts. About four blocks to the west of the Beatrice terminus, on the north side of Court St., riders can pick up the trail that connects Beatrice's Riverside and Chautauqua parks.

Homestead follows the old route of the Union Pacific Railroad, which the railroad officially abandoned in 2000. In February, 2001 the Nebraska Trails Foundation picked up the right-of-way for \$500,000, with some help from local governments and trail groups.

The trail between Lincoln and Beatrice was finished in segments, and the Cortland-Pickrell segment was completed last. The Foundation, City of Beatrice, and Lower Platte South Natural Resources District have had a hand in building the trail between the Capital City and Beatrice.

The Cortland-Pickrell stretch is characterized by 18 bridges, including a 120-foot steel monster across Indian Creek about

a mile north of Pickrell. Much of the segment is lined with shady trees, which is likely to make it one of the more popular segments of the predominantly rural trail.

The entire trail winds through farm country in rural Lancaster and Gage counties, except for the segment between Cortland and the unincorporated community of Princeton—where the railroad line once hugged Hwy. 77 as it serviced the grain elevators in those towns, and Homestead dutifully follows the old right-of-way.

The City of Beatrice has spent about \$1 million on its portion of the Homestead Trail, which includes the recently completed segment. Some 80% of the money came from federal funds.

While a future grand celebration may officially dedicate and open the Homestead Trail, bike riders aren't ones to wait for the traditional gun. The crunch of rubber tires on limestone could be heard as soon as trail-building equipment departed. Homestead Trail—finally—begs to be ridden.

There's another, shorter segment that will soon be constructed and will connect major trails in

north Lincoln—it's the “knee” bone fulcrum that connects the “shin” and “thigh” bones in Lincoln's still-growing skeleton of bike trails.

The 1.3-mile Haymarket Ball Park Trail will run from the old Charleston Street bridge to 14<sup>th</sup> St. near the old state fairgrounds. While the trail itself may be short, it will link two major trail systems—the Salt Creek Levee Trail and the Antelope Valley Project trail system.

The Haymarket ball park and Oak Lake are now accessible from the Antelope Valley system, while the Devaney Sports Center, the Jayne Snyder Trails Center and the entire Antelope Valley system are accessible from the Salt Creek Levee Trail.



*Continued page 5*



## GPTN NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

June 2012 to August 2012

Welcome to new members: Cathy Brown, Michael & Susan Carlson, Karin Coulter, Dale Dahlin, Bud & Georgianne Gerhart, Hua-Chieh Shao, James Greenwood, Leah Harris, Caroline Jezierski, Stu Kerns, Ben Fischer, David Koesters, Ed Kouma, V Kuhlman, Deborah Larson, Mike Murphy, Chris Norden, Melvin Northrup, Rob & Carolyn Otte, Sheppard Perkins, Weston Ryter, Chris Smith. Eric Umland, Brad & Kimberly Walker, David White, Dean & Amy Windle, Greg Zimmer.

Thank you to renewing members: ABC Electric, Dave Armknecht, Lee Anderbery, Dorothy C. Anderson, Amy Birky, Chad Brassil, Linda Breen, Rick & Sandy Brown, Rich & Tammie Burns, Dan & Becky Caldwell, Walter Canney, Jim & Rosalind Carr, Peggy & Eli Chesen, Jeff Chevront, Wes & Carol Christensen, JoAnn Churley, Deb Cirksena, Max D. Clegg, Julie Cole & Brian Sivill, Jim & Judi Cook, Terri & Larry Day, Jason Davis & Maggie Dayton, Judith DeGraff, Richard & Julie Dregel, Hess & Nancy Dyas, David Feingold, Howard Feldman, Don Freeman, Matt & Ellen Fuller, James & Sandra Gallentine, George & Barb Gammel, Jan Gauger, Ron & Beth Goble, Richard & Ursula Goodban, Robert & Vanessa Gorman, Ronald & Constance Gormley, Jan & John Gradwohl, Charles & Carolyn Gregorius, Nate & Dana Haecker, George & Sandi Hansen, Troy Hansen, Jason Hayes, Yvonne R. Heakin, Craig & Jean Hellweg, Alicia Helmink, Steve Hensel, Steve Henrichsen, Dennis & Rosemary Hicks, Marilyn Hutchinson, Glenn & Elaine Johnson, Jeff Kimble, Kirk & Jo Kinberg, Victor Kirilloff, Terry Klein, Kathy Krone, Doug & Diane Kuppig, Steve Larrick, Linda Lowe, Jerry Luedtke, Jay Marshall, Chris Marvin, Gary Meyer, Steve & Patsy Meyer, Mark C. Miller, Amy Fabricus & Kit Minks, John Miyoshi, Philip Morgan, Rosalind Morris, Francis Moul, Ruthann Nahorny, Nebraska Sports Council, Don Niemann, Fred & Carol Ochsner, Connie Parrish, Scott Patterson, Rich Peters, Dean Petersen, Jon Peterson, Jerry Pohlmann, Kathie Putensen, Cody & Julie Ramel, Matt & Mary Reckmeyer, Alan & Karen Reiners, Claudia & John Reinhardt, Jennifer Lyons & Bob Robinson, Lynn Roper, Raymond & Bonnie Roth, Richard A. Russell, II, David Rutz, Suzanne Schied, Jay Schluckebien, David & Trixie Schmidt, Lester Schoen, Terry & Pam Schoonover, Cathy Seybold, Dottie & Bob Shapiro, Frank Sidles, Wayne Simpson, Nadine Skupa, Hal Smith, Chris & Vicki Sommerich, Cliff & Jan Sorensen, Dick & Sue Spangler, Dave & Tani Stempson, Linda Stephen, Faye Stevens, Martha Stoddard, Gloria & John Strope, Jr., Neil Stuthmann, Dave Swartz, Don & Sue Sylwester, Sherry Taylor, Ginny Schnabel & Mike Thew, Kristine Thoms, John Thacker, Tom Vandenack, Joy & Rex Walton, Heather Wasko, Rita Weber, Wedgewood Legacy Medical, William M. Wehrbein, Cindy Woldt, John & Cyndi Woollam, & Chris Zygielbaum.



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\$10/person and \$15/family.

# REPLACING PIONEER'S PARK TRAILS

*The Parks and Recreation Dept. is in the process of seeking funds to begin the replacement of the aging (1972) asphalt trails in Pioneer's Park. If funding is secured this will be the first step of a long-term, multi-stage project to replace all the existing trails with 8 foot, concrete trails. GPTN has agreed to provide some of the necessary matching funds.*



## Make contributions payable to the Nebraska Trails Foundation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

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**5000 North 7th St.**

**Lincoln, NE 68521**

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For more information,  
contact: Elaine Hammer,  
402-477-0242, or [www.gptn.org](http://www.gptn.org)

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**Great Plains Trails Network**



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