

Friends of the Flint River Trail



"Riding together in Flint and Genesee County"

April 2012

Join Us as We Spruce Up the Bike Trail

Saturday, April 28th • 9:00 am to 1:00pm • Lunch Provided after the Cleanup

The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) will have their annual Flint River Trail cleanup in preparation for the Sunday bike riding season. Volunteers are asked to meet at Veteran's Park on James P. Cole Blvd. (just south of Hamilton) prior to the cleanup to sign in, form groups, obtain garbage bags and receive cleanup instructions. Keep Genesee County Beautiful will provide the garbage bags, and the FFRT recommend you bring drinking water and work gloves.



We will be joined by volunteers from HealthPlus of Michigan, Security Federal Credit Union, and many new and former volunteers. The trash collected by the volunteers will be taken away by the City of Flint's Sanitation Department. After the cleanup, lunch will be provided at Veteran's Park.

Prior sign up is not required but if you or your group would like more information regarding the trail cleanup, please contact Linda at 810-695-7777 or 810-785-1046.

Who We Are

First Sunday Ride of 2012
Sunday, May 6th
2:00 pm • Flint Farmers' Market

For the past 15 years, the FFRT have hosted weekly bicycle rides on the Flint River Trail every Sunday, May through October and monthly Saturday rides on trails within an hour drive of Flint.

First Saturday Ride
Saturday, May 5th
10:00 am • Southern Links Trail
Columbiaville to Millington

The FFRT hosts a spring clean-up of the winter debris, trash and dumping along the trail. Trail maintenance throughout the season includes; mowing along the trail, trimming branches, and removing debris after wind storms. The FFRT advocates for trail expansions and improvements in conjunction with local government and other groups. We have also worked for signage, bike lanes and curb cuts in the Flint area.

Typically we host over 800 riders each year, including as many as 150 first-time riders to the trail. Riders come from all over Genesee County and beyond. We welcome all levels of riders, including family groups.

Please Join Us!

The FFRT is an official chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC).

The FRWC has included us on their website at flintriver.org.

Find us on the lower right hand side of the website under Chapters. Also find us on Facebook.

Official FFRT Sunday Rides by Bruce Nieuwenhuis

FFRT leads rides every Sunday at 2:00pm, starting at the Flint Farmers' Market from May through October. There will be several standard rides:

- to Blue Bell Beach (about 12.5 miles round trip)
- through the UM/Flint and Mott campuses to Stepping Stone Falls (also about 12.5 miles)
- to the village of Genesee for Ice Cream (about 17 miles round trip)
- and to Atwood Stadium and Kettering to Ballenger Highway and back (distance depends on additions on the way back).

We will also do at least one ride partly on city streets to For-Mar Nature Preserve, and possibly some rides through the East-Court residential streets.

We intend to have a shorter ride for new riders and those with small children who would prefer a less strenuous ride during May as the need arises. Riders will be divided into manageable sized groups to make street crossing more manageable and safer.

We will continue to have sweeps to assist with bike problems like flat tires and chain adjustments. We ask that riders come with their bikes in good condition and tires pumped up, although we will have pumps at the market for those who might need air. It might be a good idea to take your bikes to a local bike shop for an annual tune up to make sure they are safe and working well.

We strongly encourage HELMETS. It is much safer.



Additional Saturday Rides by Bruce Nieuwenhuis

The FFRT also leads rides to trails within an hour's drive from Flint once a month. This summer they will be either on the first or second Saturday of the month.

These rides have been scheduled:

- May 5 - Columbiaville to Millington
- June 2 - Chippewa Nature Center (from Davenport College in Midland)
- July 7 - Lansing River Trail
- October 13 - Kensington Metropark starting in Milford at the YMCA.

Destinations for August 11th and September 8th will be determined from the list below.

Additional Saturday rides will be added depending on interest. Let us know which rides you'd like added to the schedule (and if you'd like to lead one). These are some rides we have done in the past and might be considered:

Saginaw to St. Charles
Pere Marquette
Bay City
Paint Creek

Clinton River
Harger Trail
Macomb Orchard
(to Stoney Creek or to Romeo)

Polly Ann Trail
Portland
Hamburg to Pinckney
Wadhams to Avoca Trail
Ann Arbor Trail

Updated ride schedules will be available at Sunday rides and posted on our Facebook page.



Organized Rides Elsewhere Across the State

by Jack Minore

During the ride season there are multiple group rides all across the state – most with varying lengths and degrees of difficulty. The Assenmacher 100, for example – which is an annual local ride out of Swartz Creek – offers routes of 20, 32, 50, 62 or 100 miles. All routes start and end in downtown Swartz Creek – so virtually any rider can experience this (and other) large group rides. Most group rides offer ‘rest and refreshment stops’ every 12-20 miles. Most have support and gear (SAG) cars along the route to deal with anyone who has a problem – or who just “can’t make it”. While the Assenmacher (which has been going on for over 25 years) is the only truly “local” such ride, there are many others near-by.

Virtually every ride is included in the ride calendar of the League of Michigan Bicyclists annual ride calendar. You can find the list of rides – in date order – on [the League web-site which is - LMB.org](http://theLeagueweb-site-which-is-LMB.org). While most rides are purely recreational, some of the rides are organizational fund-raisers: Durand, for example, has a ride with the entrance fee going to the rail-road museum and a memorial for RR workers. There are a couple of rides to raise money for Multiple Sclerosis research, for Humane Societies, for Habitat for Humanity, etc. Again: all are listed by date in the LMB calendar.

Some of our regular riders join folks across the state for multi-day rides such as the DALMAC (the Dick Allen Lansing to Mackinac) ride or the PALM (Peddle Across Lower Michigan).

The Flint River Watershed Coalition

by Jack Minore

‘Friends of the Flint River Trail’ is a chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC); and we encourage our riders to join. These are the only dues or obligations we ask from our riders and your response is entirely optional. The FRWC is a community-based advocate for clean water resources. Our mission is “to protect, preserve and improve our watershed” in partnership with other environmental and water resource groups. The Flint watershed is all the land that drains directly or indirectly into the Flint River. It covers most of Genesee County, about half of Lapeer County and portions of five other counties. Besides the main mission, we encourage recreational use of the river with the bicycle trail, paddling events and river walks.



Major programs of the FRWC include a river clean-up in the spring; benthic testing at 30+ sites across the watershed; a school program involving students in every school district within the watershed; and advocacy for good environmental practices. *For more information, [the web-site is flintriver.org](http://the-web-site-is-flintriver.org).*

FRWC – an opportunity for service.

Anyone interested in service to a premier environmental and advocacy group –the FRWC – as well as having an interest in our rides – might want to consider more involvement with the Watershed Coalition. I have served for some time on both the Steering Committee of the FFRT and on the Board of the FRWC. I’d like another trail advocate as a voice on the Watershed Board. That, of course, means first and foremost a commitment to the goals and mission of the FRWC. If you are at all interested in such service, please talk to me about just what that involves and let’s explore your interest and your willingness to serve.



2012 Boats, Bikes, & Bricks Exhibition Triathlon

Saturday, July 14, 2012

Sign-in begins at 7:30 am, Race starts at 9:00 am

This 12K event is not a competitive race, but an exhibition triathlon that highlights various recreational opportunities the Flint River Corridor has to offer. You will run through Mott Park neighborhood, canoe/kayak on the Flint River, and bike along the Flint River Trail. A celebration will be held afterward.

To get more info or to volunteer, contact Cade Surface at the Flint River Corridor Alliance (810) 424-5467 or visit www.frcalliance.org.

Bicycle Advocacy Day – May 23rd

The Friends of the Flint River Trail are pleased to support the League of Michigan Bicyclists, Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, Michigan Mountain Biking Association and MSU Bikes as they to join forces once again for the Lucinda Means Bicycle Advocacy Day to be held at the State Capitol on Wednesday, May 23rd, 2012 as a culmination of National Bike Month.

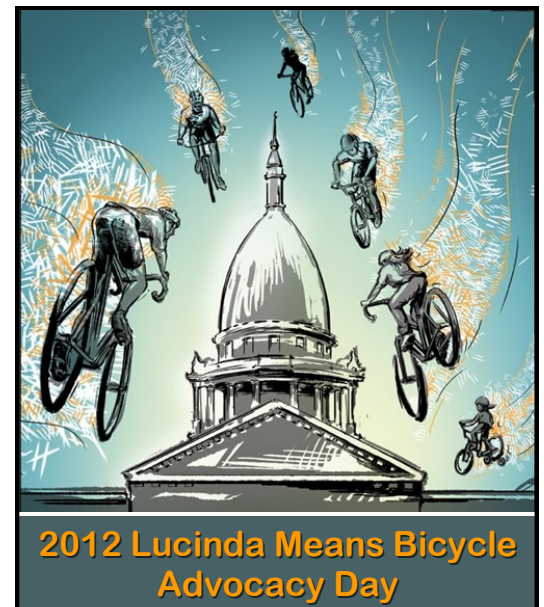
Whether you enjoy riding on Michigan roads, trails or dirt single track, Advocacy Day is your opportunity to speak with one voice to help advance the interests of all cyclists in the state. We hope that casual riders and die-hards alike will join us in advancing the interests of all bicyclists by communicating the great importance of cycling to the Michigan Legislator.

This year's key issues include:

- Protect Vulnerable Roadway Users - Enhanced penalties for injuring cyclists
- Revise Right Turn Signal - Make extended right arm legal in Michigan
- Support Bikes on Trains - Roll on bike service for Michigan trains
- More issue info coming soon at lmb.org

Escorted by local police bike patrols, the day will start with a short road rally ride from MSU Bikes to the State Capitol where volunteers from all three organizations will educate legislators on the above policy issues that facilitate a bicycle-friendly Michigan. Lunch will be provided after legislative visits, followed by an optional afternoon ride.

More details are available at lmb.org and will be provided by mid-May at our Sunday rides.



Join us every Sunday at 2:00pm beginning at the Flint Farmers' Market.
Rides are scheduled from May through the end of October.
Hope to see YOU there!



“Volunteer Extraordinaire” Dave Beaulieu

by Jack Minore



Dave Beaulieu receives the Volunteer of the Year Award from FRWC representatives

Virtually all of the work connected with the Trail and our rides is a purely volunteer effort. In addition to a major spring clean-up; we log about 200 hours per year in trail maintenance. The Sunday rides are led by and swept by volunteers. Over the course of the summer, several volunteers attend most of the 25-27 rides and do some of the work involving hosting the rides.

Dave Beaulieu represents the very best of this group and he was recognized at the annual meeting of the Flint River Watershed Coalition as their ‘Volunteer of the Year’. Dave takes care of purchasing and bringing the treats to our weekly rides –EVERY week. He is at every group clean-up and trail work session during the ride season. He usually brings his own mower to help with trimming; and can be seen operating the chain saw when needed. He’s been doing this for several years. The FFRT is proud of Dave’s work and pleased that the FRWC recognized his enormous contributions. **Congratulations and thanks to Dave !**

Statement of Purpose

The Friends of the Flint River Trail

We promote:

- Greater use of the trail through improved safety, maintenance, and publicity;
- Healthy lifestyles by promoting bicycling to new and existing cyclists as transportation and recreation;
- Improved facilities along the trail;
- Extension of the trail’s length and movement toward a city/county trail system.

Ride of Silence - Wednesday, May 16th



On Wednesday, May 16th, The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) will join cyclists from around the world in what has become an annual event, the “Ride of Silence” (ROS). The ROS was started in 2003, in Texas, to commemorate a lone cyclist killed by a bus on a virtually empty road.

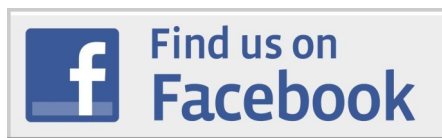
Since then, it has grown to hundreds of rides across the nation and the world. There will be more than 30 commemorative rides in Michigan alone. Genesee Wanderers has hosted a ride for several years in Lennon; the FFRT will hold their third this year.

The FFRT “Ride of Silence” will start at 6:45 at the Flint Farmers’ Market and will be about 10 miles in distance. Riders are encouraged to wear black arm bands; the ride is slow and made in silence.

River Ride

Friends of the Flint River Trail
c/o Flint River Watershed Coalition
400 North Saginaw Street, Suite 233
Flint, Michigan 48502

FFRT Chairman Bruce Niewenhuis
810-742-0071 • ffrtinfo@yahoo.com



Friends of the Flint River Trail

check our event calendar
for updated ride information



A very Special THANK-YOU to The GENESEE WANDERERS !

*Given the costs of printing and mailing this newsletter, the FRWC/FFRT sought help in covering the cost of this publication. The Genesee Wanderers responded and has underwritten a substantial part of the Newsletter's cost. **WE SINCERELY THANK THEM!** The Wanderers are a 'sister bicycling group' that generally sponsors faster, longer and road-oriented rides in the area. Following is their identity in their own words:*

Hello Cyclists! If you enjoy bike riding with other cyclists in the greater Flint area, you are invited to become a member of the Genesee Wanderers Bicycle Club. We organize weekly rides throughout the county on scenic, flat, low traffic roads. We also host two special social events every year, the Spring Potluck New Member meeting in May and the Annual Holiday Pot Luck in early December. As the major event of the year we organize the famous Assenmacher 100 ride on the third Sunday in August in Swartz Creek. Now in its 33rd year this year's Assenmacher 100 is being held on Sunday August 19th and features routes from 20 to 100 miles long.

The Genesee Wanderers has a web site, email group, Face Book page and ride calendar that allows us to communicate and update our members and the local cycling community on events and rides. Everyone participating in Genesee Wanderers rides is expected to wear a bicycle helmet, to obey all laws regulating vehicles, and to ride in a courteous and safe and friendly manner.

We hope to see you soon. <http://www.geneseewanderers.org/>