

Friends of the Flint River Trail



"Riding together in Flint and Genesee County"

2014

Who are The Friends of the Flint River Trail?

For 16 years, the Friends of the Flint River Trail have led regular Sunday bicycle rides on the trail, have advocated for trail expansion, have volunteered hours of service on the trail, and have promoted safe and active bicycling. We are an active chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC).

Our Sunday rides are family friendly, leisurely rides of about 10-12 miles in length. Our favorite destinations along the trail are Stepping Stones Falls and Blue Bell Beach – both in the Genesee County Parks system. Our rides are scheduled every week from the first Sunday in May through the last Sunday in October. The rides start at 2:00 from the old Flint Farmers' Market at the intersection of Boulevard Drive and Robert T. Longway Boulevard.

In recent years, we have averaged 35-40 riders every Sunday, each coming from about 30 different zip codes. We have introduced many riders to the trail, to the river, and to beautiful sites along the trail. The riders form a positive impression of the Flint River – thus promoting the mission of the FRWC. Last year volunteers from the FFRT donated over 300 volunteer hours cleaning, mowing, trimming branches and removing fallen trees from along the trail.

We were instrumental in advocating for the Kearsley Park Trail, the paving of the trail between Dort Highway and Carpenter Road, and the west extension from downtown to Ballenger Highway at McLaren Hospital. We are now actively engaged in advocating for a trail along the abandoned CSX rail line from downtown Flint to the south city limits.

In addition to our Sunday rides, we sponsor a once a month Saturday ride to other mid-Michigan trails with the purpose of introducing riders to other opportunities for bicycling in the area. We work cooperatively with the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, the Genesee County Planning Department, the League of Michigan Bicyclists, and Safe and Active Genesee for Everyone (SAGE).

We welcome your participation in our rides! You can learn more about us from the "chapters" section of the FRWC website, flintriver.org, or on Facebook. You may also contact Bruce Nieuwenheis (bnbaton@gmail.com) or Jack Minore (jacksonmin@aol.com).

First Sunday Ride of 2014

Sunday, May 4th

2:00 pm • old Flint Farmers' Market

First Saturday Ride

Saturday, May 10th

10:00 am • Southern Links Trail
Columbiaville

Subject to weather conditions, the first Sunday ride will be a pleasant, family friendly ride of about 10 miles - from the Market to Stepping Stone Falls and back - with a brief stop to view the falls.



Friends of the Flint River Trail Sunday Bicycle Rides — Join Us!



We are often asked if one must join, or pay a fee to ride with the FFRT, or if there are rules. Here are some **'rules of the road'** we try to follow:

- There are no fees, but a donation for the cookies after the rides is welcomed and riders are encouraged to join the Flint River Watershed Coalition, our parent organization.
- The rides start at 2:00 on Sunday afternoons at the old Flint Farmers' Market parking lot. Be sure to get there early so that the ride can start promptly at 2:00.
- Arrive with your bike in good condition – tires pumped up and brakes adjusted. (We have people who can help with condition problems, but get there early if you need assistance.) Bring water to take on the ride with you.
- We'd like people to sign in so we can keep track of the zip codes of our riders – this information helps in promoting the group and helps solicit funds for expansion projects. We also would like contact information to send the newsletter to you, and to keep in touch.
- We strongly encourage all riders to wear HELMETS.
- Do not ride in front of the leader, who will be identified by a colored vest. Ride single file when the trail is narrow, and keep to the right on the few sections that are on the street.
- When crossing streets be aware of the 'sweeps' helping with the traffic, and follow their instructions. There will be sweeps riding in the back to help with flat tires and other problems.
- When stopping on the trail, pull off the trail for other users. Never block the trail by stopping or standing ON the trail. Always move OFF the trail.
- Ride leaders often "bark out" directions or warnings. It is important for riders following to repeat the comments to those behind them: i.e. to "pass the warning on". Some common warnings include:
 - "Car UP" (there is a car approaching OR, "bike up, runner up" etc.)
 - "Car BACK" (a car is approaching from the rear)
 - "Glass" (accompanied by pointing to where the glass is)
- When you must stop for any reason, shout out "stopping" so others do not run into you.

So come out and ride as often as you'd like. If you want to get more involved, let one of the leaders know if you are available to help with branch trimming, mowing, and other trail maintenance. We are also always looking for new leaders, so let us know if you are interested in taking on that role.

Additional Saturday Rides

The Friends of the Flint River Trail lead rides to trails within an hour's drive of Flint once a month on Saturday. The rides leave at 10:00 am from the trailhead.

2014 Scheduled Saturday Rides

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 10th—Southern Links Trail, Columbiaville • June 21st—Saginaw Valley Trail, St. Charles • July 19th—Paint Creek Trail, Rochester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 16th—Lansing River Trail, Lansing • September 20th—Bay City Loop, Bay City • October 18th—Kensington Metro Park, Milford |
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Join Us as We Spruce Up the Bike Trail

Saturday, April 26th • 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
Lunch Provided After the Cleanup

A lot of trash accumulates over a Michigan winter. The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) will host their annual Flint River Trail cleanup in preparation for the Sunday bike riding season. Volunteers are asked to meet at Vietnam 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. The FFRT recommends that you bring drinking water, work gloves, and any tools that you may want to use.



We will be joined by workers from other groups and organizations, and many new and former volunteers. After the cleanup, lunch will be provided by the Flint River Watershed Coalition at Vietnam 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 Johnson-Barnes at 810-695-7777 or 810-785-1046.

Other Rides – Across the State and Beyond

By Jack Minore

The Friends of the Flint River Trail encourage riders, in addition to 'our' rides, to try other options across the state. There are multiple options available.

- League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB.org). The League has a ride calendar for the state and other nearby rides. Nearly every week there are multiple rides, some just for pleasure; many for causes. Most rides have multiple routes of varying lengths from 20 to 100 miles. The calendar is published in print and is also available on line. One of my personal favorites is the twice yearly ride across the Mackinac Bridge.
- Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance (MTGA – michigantrails.org). MTGA publishes a map of all of the trails in the state. They also sponsor a 2, 6, or 7 day tour on trails – this year it's in northwest Michigan in mid-July.
- Commercial Tours—There are multiple commercial companies that offer tours in various areas in this country and even overseas. Some of us have done tours in Missouri, North Carolina, New York and Michigan, as well as in Holland and in France.
- Another option for riding with other cyclists in the greater Flint area is the Genesee Wanderers Bicycle Club. They organize weekly rides throughout the county on scenic, flat, low traffic roads. They also host the Assenmacher 100 Ride in August. For more information go to geneseewanderers.org.

So check it out! You are sure to find a ride to fit your schedule, riding style and budget!



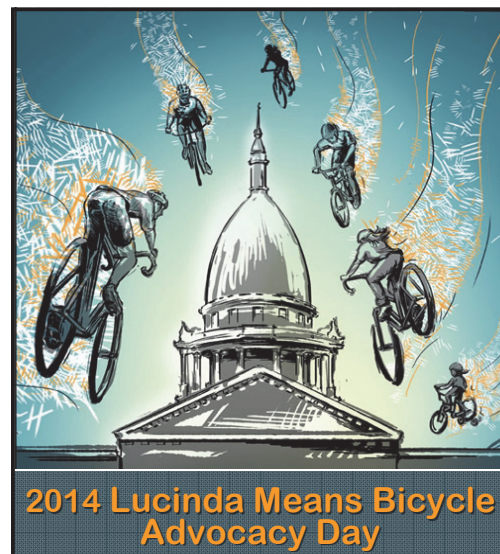
Bicycle Advocacy Day – May 21st

Want to see more bike trails? More bike lanes on the roadways? Better safety rules for motorists who don't like bikes on the road?

Join other cycling advocates for the annual Lucinda Means Legislative Day – this year it's Wednesday, May 21 -- on the grounds of the State Capitol in Lansing.

This event is sponsored by the League of Michigan Bicyclists, the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, and the Michigan Mountain Biking Association. The day starts with a briefing on the capitol lawn and is followed by visits to legislators to discuss specific key issues related to bicycling.

Please visit lmb.org for more information.



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



Michigander Bicycle Tour ~ July 12 to July 18, 2014

The 23rd Annual Michigander Bicycle Tour is a multi-day ride for cyclists of all ages and abilities through beautiful Northern Michigan. Participants can choose between the 2, 6, or 7 day options depending on their riding preference.

Bicyclists will tour northern Michigan's rail trails and back roads on a fabulous biking adventure. The featured trails on this year's tour will allow you to cycle beside pristine Lake Michigan beaches and marinas where you can witness the beauty of Michigan's lighthouses. Come pedal along Northern Michigan

trails winding through Leland's Fish Town, downtown Traverse City, Sleeping Bear Dunes State Park, and Cadillac's state and national forests.

Bring your hybrid, mountain or road bike. An all-paved route is available for road bikes and there are opportunities for mountain bikers to test their mettle on singletrack.

Routes include the trails of Pere Marquette, the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park, the Betsey Valley Rail Trail, Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail, Leelanau Trail and TART Trail.

Rides Include:

- Showers/Shower Truck
- Dinner & Breakfast Each Day
- Shuttle to Local Attractions
- Water Stops (10-15 Miles)
- Gourmet Coffee and Tea
- Baggage Transport
- Cell Phone Charging Stations
- Evening Entertainment

For more information visit: michigantrails.org



Ride of Silence - Wednesday, May 21, 2014

On Wednesday, May 21st, The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) will join cyclists around the world in an annual event, the “Ride of Silence” (ROS). The ROS is a chance to show respect for and honor the lives of those who have been killed or injured in bicycle/motor vehicle accidents over the past years.

This year’s Flint ride will start at 6:55 promptly from the old Flint Farmers’ Market on E. Boulevard Drive – just off Longway. This is a slow, silent ride of about 10 miles through the downtown area, college campuses, and nearby neighborhoods.

Please join us as we honor our fellow cyclists.

Road Rules: Eight Tips for Safer Cycling

Be Seen-To be seen, “stick out”. Wear colorful clothing by day. Wear reflective gear and always use a front light and rear flasher at night.

Go With the Flow-Always ride in the same direction as traffic, *never* in the oncoming lane or on the sidewalk.

Play By the Rules-Always obey stop signs and traffic signals.

Take the Road Less Traveled-When it comes to choosing cycling routes, don’t think like a motorist. Go for roads with less traffic and lower speeds, not the “straight shot”.

Be Considerate-Want to get respect on the road? Give it! Never obstruct traffic by riding abreast. If traffic is piled up behind you, pull off the road in a safe spot to let vehicles get by.

Get Your Bike Out of the Gutter-Don’t ride on the very edge of the road. One wobble and you’re in the ditch. Unless there’s a bike lane or a wide, clear shoulder, ride to the *left* of the white line, roughly along the path that a motor vehicle’s right wheels would travel.

Sometimes It’s Right to Go Left-Sometimes safety requires riders to “claim the lane”. In a busy downtown area, ride toward the middle of the lane to avoid getting doored. Climbing a curvy mountain road, a driver may see you sooner if you move toward the middle of the travel lane as you first hear the approaching vehicle, then back to the right as the vehicle nears.

At Intersections, Do What the Cars Do-Most bicycle-car collisions occur at intersections. If you’re turning, use the same turn lanes the cars do. If you’re going straight, be wary of right turning vehicles and make eye contact with drivers preparing to turn left. Be prepared to yield if they don’t. *Never* run a stop sign or red light.



The Flint River Watershed Coalition is a membership organization that promotes citizen stewardship of our natural resources by providing members with the resources, knowledge, and capacity necessary to protect local water quality and watershed habitat. Learn more about FRWC programs at flintriver.org.

River Ride

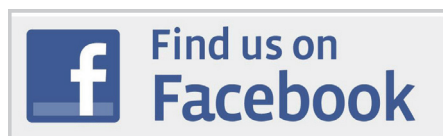
Friends of the Flint River Trail
c/o Flint River Watershed Coalition
400 North Saginaw Street, Suite 233
Flint, Michigan 48502



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Friends of the Flint River Trail

check our event calendar
for updated ride information



HELP SUPPORT OUR RIDES

The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) is a chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition, whose mission is to protect, preserve and improve the Flint River and its surrounding watershed. This organization provides valuable services to the FFRT – including financial and staff support, and the printing and mailing of this newsletter. The Watershed is happy to help us on the trail, because it promotes the recreational use of the Flint River - - but they need the support of ALL of US ! Membership is strongly encouraged – and IF you add an extra \$5.00 to the membership fees, the FRWC will match that five dollars by dedicating another \$5.00 directly to the Trails Budget! Please join by June 15th to take advantage of this great offer.

Membership Form:

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

e-mail _____ Phone _____

Student	\$10	_____
Individual	\$25	_____
Family	\$40	_____
River Sponsor	\$100	_____

MAIL to: Flint River Watershed Coalition
400 N. Saginaw St. Suite 233
Flint, MI 48502

Or bring to the Sunday ride

(\$25 of River Sponsorship automatically goes to FFRT)