

Building Trails for a Healthier Kentucky, 2/18 & 2/19

62 people came out on a very snowy day with slick icy roads and made the 2006 Conference "Building Trails for A Healthier Kentucky" a very good synergistic meeting with lots of optimism for the future of railtrails..... If we work at it.

The conference began on Friday with a Bike Education Class taught by Steve and Cheryl Wyatt. Saturday morning Dave Adkisson, President of the KY Chamber of Commerce, gave us a positive view of how trails lead to better communities. He described the difficult time Owensboro had in selling the public on the value of their greenbelt; now several local residential and commercial developers use their close



(Students in the Bike Education Class at the 2006 KRTC Conference.
Photo by Pablo Alcala, Lexington Herald Leader.)

proximity to the Greenbelt as a marketing tool. Judge Kirtley of Muhlenberg County walked us through how his community built and now are using their trail more than they ever imagined.

Dan Burden of "Walkable Communities, Inc. challenged our thinking about community development. He gave examples of the multiple health and economic benefits of walkable communities. He cited our diseases of inactivity and life style and our increasing gasoline prices. Trails and greenways are a major part of walkable communities. For more information go to his website, www.walkable.org.

Regina Hall of the Big Sandy ADD reported that a price had been placed on the Dawkins Line of \$500,000 at which R.J. Corman would sell the line to the three counties of Breathitt, Johnson and Magoffin. Since the conference the ADD has received a go ahead to purchase a feasibility study.

Dr. Terry Brooks reported on the "Kids Count Data" and gave us some sobering news. KY has gone from 37th to 42nd in ratings of the health care of our kids. The drop from 37th to 42nd was the worst drop by a state in one year. Dr. Aaron Beighle of UK talked of the necessity of having physical activity for children.

Martin Schickel spoke from his experience of running a business on the "Loveland Trail" of the Little Miami Trail in Ohio. He reported that a trail can not be the sole sustainer of most businesses but it is a positive amenity that attracts business. A developed trail has fewer problems associated with it then an abandoned corridor. He spoke about the increase in property values and businesses and the decline in vandalism associated with the Little Miami Trail.

Joanna Hinton, Executive Director of Preservation Kentucky gave a talk entitled "Historic Preservation, It's not just about buildings anymore" and invited railtrail and greenway projects to pursue historic preservation grants. Crystal Ducker, the Executive Director of the Office of Transportation Enhancements walked us through how to submit applications for TE funding.

Lisa Rainey Brownell, a UK Doctoral Candidate in Geography reported on her trail interviews that document how communities value their trails. In all it was a very good conference which should have a ripple effect across the state.

Kentucky Equine Trail Riders Join Forces

An umbrella organization representing equine trail riding enthusiasts across Kentucky has been formed to work with state and federal officials to insure future use of public and private lands.

Trail Rider Equestrians in Kentucky (TREK) representing trail riders was organized on February 7 at a meeting at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington with the assistance of the Kentucky Equine Education Project (KEEP). The organization's goal is to create a coalition of trail riders to preserve, expand and promote equestrian trails and campgrounds and inform the public of their economic value to Kentucky while protecting the equestrian riders' right of access to these facilities.

Mardy Smith of Taylorsville, the newly elected chair of the group, said "This is an exciting opportunity to bring trail riding interests together to work for a common cause. Pressure from development and lack of funding is placing enormous pressure on availability of places for equestrians to ride."

"TREK wants to work with existing trail riding organizations around the state as points of contact," said Ms. Smith. "This is the Horse Capital of the World. It should be the trail riding capital as well." Article from the KEEP website (Kentucky Equine Education Project) http://www.equinealliance.com/keepnews.php?news_id=67.



Saturday, May 20, Courthouse Plaza. KY Rails to Trails and the Bluegrass Rails to Trails Foundation are sponsors and will have a booth. Activities that promote alternate transportation will increase support for rail trails and greenways. Spectators can watch a series of bike races. Kids can learn traffic rules and safety skills during a bike rodeo. A 10 mile car-free family ride begins at 10:30 AM. The Traveling Bike Museum will be at Bike Lexington telling the story of bicycle development from 1816 to present. The event is **FREE** and appropriate for all ages. For more information contact Kenzie Gleason at 258-3605 or visit www.bikelexington.org.

"SHARE the ROAD" RALLY

The Dept of Transportation is organizing a "Share the Road" Rally on Saturday, June 24th, at 11 AM on the Capitol Grounds in Frankfort. A bicycle ride and run/walk are included. The rally is to celebrate the 2006 issuance of the Share the Road License Plate, promote Kentucky as a tourist destination for cyclists, promote healthier lifestyles in Kentucky, focus public attention on safety issues related to the "Share the Road" concept and give information on the rails to trails and transportation enhancement programs in Kentucky.

All cyclists, runners and walkers who use the roads in the Commonwealth and their friends are invited to attend. Kentucky Rails to Trails was a supporter of this initiative; lets come out and celebrate. Details will be posted on the KRTC AND KYTC website.



Clear Creek Rail Trail

The Clear Creek Rail Trail is located in southeastern Kentucky in Bell County and goes through Clear Creek Baptist College campus. The trail was completed in January, 2002. It is located on an abandoned Louisville & Nashville line (aka Chenoa Branch, Cumberland River and Tennessee Railroad). The rail line was constructed in 1893 and was abandoned sometime in the 1980's. It is close to the Pine Mountain State Park and within the Kentucky Ridge State Forest.

It has a gravel surface that supports running, walking and biking. It starts approximately 1.2 miles from U.S. 25E on the Asher-Clear Creek Road and proceeds southwest approximately 2.35 miles thru Clear Creek Baptist College and terminates on state Hwy. 190. There are no current plans by the college to expand the trail however the abandoned line goes from Pineville to Chenoa for approximately 10 miles. Parking is available.

Funding for this project was provided by Kentucky Department of Parks, with the Parks Dept. also responsible for maintenance. Contact person is Donnie Rosenbalm at drosenbalm@cbbbc.edu.

Harlan & Letcher County Abandonments

There is a potential abandonment by CSX in Harlan and Letcher Counties and another proposed abandonment from CSX in Harlan County. These 2 rail lines, if abandoned, have the potential to give Harlan County over 25 miles of trails. Contact Brent Sweger at Brent.Sweger@ky.gov. Information provided by Brent A. Sweger, Division of Planning, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, 502.564.7183 (x3297).

Your Kentucky Rail Trail Council

The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council continues to work hard with the generous donations and the volunteer work of our committed membership. There is always more that can be done, but we do a lot.

In the past year KRTC's website has become the "goto" site for information on railtrails and greenways in the state. The website is constantly being updated. Members from across the state feed information to the Council which is posted on the website and collected for the newsletters. KRTC's display board designed by Cindy Deitz with its map of KY showing the abandoned railroad corridors and RT projects is developing its own social schedule. It is in demand at conferences, fairs and public events.

In 2005 KRTC received \$11,861 dollars in contributions and membership fees with a membership of 227. Let's make a goal of 300 members for 2006. We spent \$15,628 in 2005. Some of our expenses for 2005 were nonrecurring such as the initial design and setup of the new website and brochures and stationery bought in bulk. At the end of 2005 our cash position was \$18,729.66. The CPA firm of Dean, Dorton and Ford reviewed our accounting and reporting techniques in the fall of 2005 and stated that "overall (the) accounting is in very good order."

The donations and contributions that KRTC receives provide the framework that support the work of the many KRTC volunteers. Your donations enable volunteers to take and distribute materials to meetings, fairs, libraries and public meetings and plan, meet and support the local groups. Membership is for a calendar year. To date KRTC has 110 members for 2006. Please renew your membership; we count on you.

LEXINGTON- BIG SANDY RAIL TRAIL WORKSHOP

"...if you build it, they will come..."

The workshop was held Saturday, April 1st, 2006 at the Adron Doran University Center, Morehead State University, Morehead, Kentucky. The workshop was held because there is renewed interest in developing a connected rail-trail along the 109 mile former CSX rail corridor between Lexington and Ashland, Kentucky. To be successful, this project will need a coordinated and focused effort by hundreds of dedicated volunteers, local community groups and public officials. When all or parts of the LBS Rail-Trail are completed, it will bring a safe means of transportation and recreation; economic development; and civic pride to the communities along the old rail line.

Approximately 50 people were in attendance representing all the counties along the line and then some. Larry Ridenour organized and provided the direction for the workshop. Larry is a semi-retired Landscape Architect with 15 years prior experience developing railtrails in Pennsylvania. He has relocated to Kentucky and is volunteering his time and energy to help the LBS become a reality. He gave an overview of the extent of the project and talked about design and construction, maintenance and monitoring. Carolyn Kenton, an attorney from Lexington, a trail rider and the secretary of the newly formed Trail Rider Equestrians in Kentucky (TREK) gave us a primer on legal real estate terms, working with landowners and the acquisition of right of way for the trail. Tom Eling with the US Forest Service in Winchester and who helped manage the Virginia Creeper talked on the issues of liability, property values, trail opposition and crime on trails. He convincingly made the case that crime is not a major factor, that active trail use makes crime and vandalism less and in general property values go up. Wesley Delk of the Gateway ADD told us about funding sources and walked us through how to apply for grants and reimbursement monies. Lynda Wilson from Mt. Sterling gave us pointers on building a coalition to advance the trail. At the end of the day Judge Kirtley from Muhlenberg County spoke to us from his personal experience. His county created a coalition that worked together to build a 6 mile trail and at this time the longest railtrail in Kentucky. He described the process and how he saw people who were "agin it" change their attitudes and now enjoy using the trail.



(LBS Workshop, Morehead, 4/1/06, K. Lovan)



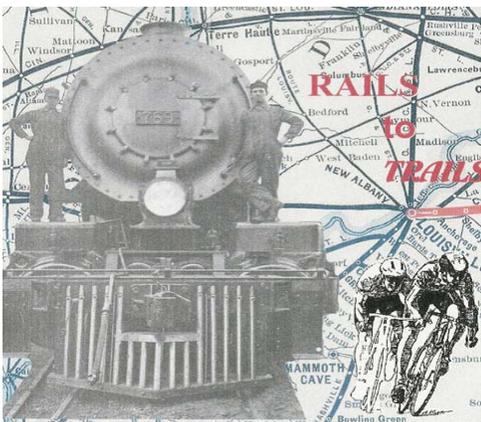
Challenge Award for the Lexington -Big Sandy

A challenge award of \$300 is to go to the first non-profit group along the Lexington Big Sandy Corridor whose county or city opens the first mile of railtrail along the corridor. The donation is be used for improvements to the trail. The award is provided by Dr. Glenn Proudfoot, a native of Rowan County who is an emergency room physician in Somerset. KRTC invites other RT supporters to match or add to Dr. Proudfoot's contribution. It is a tangible way of showing support for the Lexington Big Sandy RT.

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Lexington to Ashland Cycling Relay

KRTC will be hosting their second bicycle relay ride from Lexington to Ashland as a National Trail Day Activity on Saturday, July 22, 2006. The relay is to promote the development of the abandoned CSX railway between Lexington and Ashland into a continuous multi use railtrail. On the same day the Eastern Hills Saddle Club will be having their St. Jude's Ride over some of the actual corridor right of way east of Olive Hill. Cyclists and horseback riders will be within 20 feet of each other in places. In addition to the relay, the planners are hoping to offer cyclists who sign up in advance to ride a "century" (100 miles) paralleling the corridor. Since the route is not a loop there may be a minimal charge to transport riders and bikes to the start of the century at the eastern end.



The cycling relay will start at the Pleasant Ridge Park in Fayette County. The relay will be done in 20-30 mile stages at an average pace of 15 mph on paved roads and 12 mph

mph in eastern Carter County where a sections of road closest to the corridor is unpaved. The first rider will leave Lexington at 8:00 AM. and the last rider is expected to arrive in Rush at 6:00 PM. This is not a speed race. The rain date is August 19th. If you would like to participate as a rider or volunteer , contact Dixie Moore@insightbb.com or 859-227-6165.

Future of KY Railtrails & Greenways

Some of our local non profit groups that advocate railtrails and greenways in their local communities are at a stalemate as to how to proceed. These stalemates can be productive in that they force people to approach problems in new ways. The general assumption has been that a section of trail would be built in a community, people would see it, like it and then want more. Even though the feedback that KRTC receives is uniformly positive, local groups have become demoralized by the lack of concrete results. Several communities have grants that have been earmarked for projects for several years and the communities are in danger of losing the money since the projects have stalled. Railtrail and greenway advocates in Kentucky have underestimated how much work it would take to get the idea of linear parks accepted by the public and for local governments to step up and lead. Several groups have had some of their first enthusiastic supporters become inactive due to frustration with slow or lack of progress. What is heartening to see is that there are new people with new ideas willing to step forward.

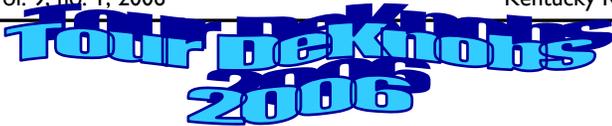
For at least a decade there has been a small but strong and committed group of advocates for more multi use trails as alternate transportation in Kentucky. Thanks to all who faithfully renew your memberships in KRTC. We have spoken at length, perhaps too much among ourselves and not enough to others, about the economic and health benefits of trails and how it makes our communities more livable.

Supporters in Somerset and Pulaski County of the Cathy Crockett Trail who started in 2000 are in the process of figuring out how to continue past the first mile of their proposed 8 mile trail connecting recreational areas and communities in Pulaski and McCreary Counties.

The Bluegrass Rails to Trails Foundation that was established in 1998 to promote railtrails and greenways in Fayette Clark and Montgomery Counties is discussing restructuring. Some members want to continue as a skeleton organization and a regional entity so in the future BRTF could evolve into a nonprofit volunteer support group for the planned Lexington -Big Sandy RT. Another option is for BRTF to separate into three distinct county groups. The supporters in Clark County plan to hold a public meeting on June 13th at City Hall at 7 pm to present the case for trails and greenways in Clark County.

The nonprofit group Greenways for Oldham County has been pushing for a trail for about a decade; they at

(Continued on page 5)



Sunday – May 21, 2006, starts 1 PM

All proceeds from this event go to the development and promotion of rails to trail in Rowan County. Start at Cave Run Bicycle and Outdoor Center, 995 HWY 801 South, Morehead, Kentucky 40351. Choose from 2 routes, the traditional 38 mile loop or a new 50 mile loop. The moderate to difficult terrain of the traditional loop will provide you with some great views of Twin Knobs, Green Knob, Smoky Knob, and Buzzard Knob. You will also ride by Hillsboro and Ringos Mills Covered Bridges. For more information visit the DBRT web site at <http://www.dbrt.org>. or contact dbrtinfo@yahoo.com. Sponsors for the event are Cave Run Bicycle and Outdoor Center, <http://www.caverunbikeshop.com> and the Daniel Boone Rails-to-Trails, 105 East Main Street, Morehead, KY 40351.

Meetings in Madison County for a county wide Greenway system

Several meetings have been held in Madison County to discuss creating a county wide greenway system that would include railtrail sections. A goal is to tie all points of interest in Madison County together with a trail system. Each trail should have a destination; or a reason for riding the trail. Anyone who has questions or has suggestions about rail trails and greenways in Madison County should contact Eddie Farrey at 859.626.0863 or eddiefarrey@peoplepc.com.

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first wanted a railtrail along the Interurban Line between La Grange and Pewee Valley. Based in part on an environmental study released last year which concluded that the original plan might not be feasible they have changed their goal to a bike and pedestrian trail that works its way through the county to the Jefferson County line.

The norm for trail acceptance in other states has been uniformly slow at first. The first rail trail on Cape Cod, the Shining Sea Bikeway, took 12 years. As one supporter said "It started when I was in Little League and finished when I was out of law school". We forget that multi use non-motorized trails connecting communities and destinations is a new concept to most Kentuckians and that our efforts are not just to get a trail built but to change how people think about their environment and how they can move around in it. Working on a new or updated Feasibility Study is a great way to get new people interested in a project. The gathering and analysis of local data including "a visual walk thru" is something that is necessary and will help new people buy in to the project.

The 6 mile railtrail in Muhlenberg County that opened in 2002 and the recently constructed 5 mile Hike and Bike Trail in Mammoth Cave National Park are examples where determination and dedication paid off. The Muhlenberg County RT is well received and advocates within the community are looking to see how it can be extended. As a group we are learning how to be better advocates for trails and forming coalitions with other interest groups. We need to have our displays at more fairs, talk to more groups, become more active about what we want to happen and to contact our local, state and national leaders.

Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION , DONATION &/or RENEWAL for 2006

- \$25 Supporter \$ 50 Promoter \$ 100 Benefactor \$ 250 Engineer
- \$ 500 Trail Blazer Other Donation \$_____ Address Correction

Name: _____

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The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council is always in need of volunteers, e.g. writing newsletter articles, being an officer or board member, , fundraising, giving presentations, contacting landowners, checking maps, web site design, letter stuffing. I would like to volunteer with KRTC.

Please make check payable and mail to: Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc.

Post Office Box 597, Lexington, KY 40588-0597

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The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council promotes and advocates for the establishment and use of rail trails and associated greenways in Kentucky.

Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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