

Trail Talk

By Steve Litts, Executive Director
Dickinson County Trails Board

CONGRATULATIONS LAKE PARK!!

Last month we reported the great bid letting West Okoboji City Council had for their trail project. This month we are excited to announce the successful bid letting Lake Park City Council had for the Silver Lake Trail. Estimated to cost over \$273,000, the council received three bids, all of which were under the engineer's estimate. The winning bidder was Diamond Concrete Construction of Spirit Lake with a bid of \$190,560.34. Diamond Construction is the contractor who built the Bay Harbor Trail last fall. With the REAP grant obtained by your Dickinson County Trails Board, Friends of the Trails donations and local fundraising in Lake Park, the cost to the city will be approximately \$42,000. The trail will begin at the west end of Silver Shores Estates and M 27 and meander in sight of the south shore of Silver Lake and empty onto County Club Drive. Upon completion, the city will also designate various city streets as Bike Routes, providing a connection between West Bay Estates and the retail center of the town.

This is the start of a loop that will eventually become part of the trail on the RR corridor. Congratulations and a sincere thanks to the many contributors who made this trail route possible.

WHAT PLACE IN YOUR CHILDHOOD REMAINS WITH YOU?

That was a question posed by Peter Forbes to those attending the Midwest Regional Trails and Greenways Conference last fall in Kalamazoo, MI. For me it was walking out to the back forty to bring the cows home for milking (okay, they probably knew the way, but it was something to do that made me feel useful); it was the haymow; and when we moved to town it was building a dam in the creek out of old, sand-filled burlap sacks, and using scrap crating material to build a clubhouse. In short, on the farm or in the city, my fondest childhood "places" were mostly set in nature. And what about you?

Today you can find that connection with nature – a renewed belonging with the land – through your travels on the Iowa Great Lakes Trails. "Querencia" has two different translations: a place where one feels secure – a place where the animal lives. As you travel the Dickinson County Trails, may you discover "Querencia" and recall the favorite place from your childhood.

ADVERTISING ON TRAILS

DCTB is happy to be a part of promoting tourism in Dickinson County and the Great Lakes area. One of the features of our trails that make people want to come here is the "Querencia" that many discover. Advertising signs on the trail right of way distract from the trail experience, are not permitted and will be removed.

TRAIL RIDES

In addition to our own trail rides: the University of Okoboji Campus Ride; BRASL, the Stateline Ride and the University of Okoboji Oktoberfest Ride, there are several other

ride opportunities such as RAGBRAI that are available to you that we encourage you to experience. Shorter trips, using RAGBRAI's formula of camping and nightly entertainment, have sprung up all around the country. They offer an affordable, if sometimes demanding, vacation.

This column does not allow for a full listing of the many rides available, but you can Google "Bike Rides" and find over 3 million hits. If you choose to participate in any of these rides, this column would be happy to hear about your experiences.

TRAIL WORK REPORT

A bridge repair in Wahpeton is complete and should have opened by the time this column is published.

Sawmill Bridge in Arnolds Park: Rain has delayed the completion of this much-appreciated new bridge. The adjusted target date is June 4th.

Spine & Poyzer Trails: Renovation work is scheduled to be completed before Memorial Day.

Bay Harbor Trail: Due to drainage issues, a section of trail has been replaced. The new section is designed to keep water from pooling on the trail. Additional finish work on retaining walls, drainage improvements and electrical hook ups are also in the works, but the trail is open for use.

UPCOMING TRAIL EVENTS

June 5th - Mini-Wakan 5K and 10K run. (Replaces the Trails Poker Run, sponsored by Dr. Steve Fila and the Spirit Lake Chiropractic. A big thanks to Dr. Fila and his staff for their past support of this event.) Be looking for more details on the Mini-Wakan event.

June 19th - The Pearson Lakes Area Art Center is sponsoring a 5K and 10K fundraiser.

June 26th - The University of Okoboji Campus Run or Ride. Always a fun event that you don't want to miss. Contact Okoboji Tourism at 712 336-2209.

That's the news for this month. Be checking next month's column and our website for additional information on trail construction and activities. (<http://www.co.dickinson.ia.us/> and click on Trails Board) Until then, as always, Happy Trails to you and yours.