

Trail Talk

By Steve Litts, Executive Director
Dickinson County Trails Board

KUDOS TO THE TRAIL PATROL

As the summer shades of green turn to the browns, yellows and reds of autumn, the Dickinson County Trails Board wants to extend our thanks to the men and women who volunteer to patrol the county and city trails. Under the guidance of Stan Miller and Sheriff Baloun, the S.A.L.T. (Seniors and Law enforcement Together) team provides security, a clean, attractive trail environment and a friendly helping hand to all who use the Iowa Great Lakes Trails. Thanks for another season of outstanding service to county residents and visitors.

TRAIL REROUTED FROM SAWMILL BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

Readers may have already seen the DETOUR signs in Arnolds Park that takes traffic around the Sawmill Bridge construction on Rohr St. To avoid placing trail traffic and on the same detour as vehicular traffic, DCTB is providing an easy-to-follow route along the southwest side of Lake Minnewashta on Dam Street to Lower Gar State Park. Look for the new route signs along Hwy. 71 in Arnolds Park and near the north end of the trail in Lower Gar State Park. The City of Arnolds Park anticipates the reopening of Rohr St. next spring.

BAY HARBOR TRAIL UPDATE

The weather has been great at the lakes over the last month, providing excellent conditions for trail construction as well as trail walking, running, skating or cycling. Work on the trail itself is 80% complete and one of the two tunnels is in place. By the time you read this, the second tunnel will be close to complete and the trail bridge will be installed. As reported last week, Hwy. 86 will probably reopen for all traffic on or close to September 24th. Thanks for your patience while Highway 86 was closed. When opened, this trail will benefit both trail and road users as there will be far fewer places along Hwy. 86 where motor vehicles will have to compete with cyclists for space on that busy highway. An official opening date for the trail has not been determined, but we're expecting it to be ready to use around October 6th.

With the planned completion of the Garlock Slough Trail next summer, the vision of providing both a scenic and a safer route for people on the west side of the lake will be achieved. Thanks to over five hundred people and businesses who made this possible. Without your local support, we would have limited ability to compete for grants to maintain and expand trail opportunities. Multi-use recreational trails are growing in importance to communities throughout the United States, not only to enhance a recreation destination, but as an everyday tool to healthy living.

STILL TIME FOR TRAIL FUN

The hectic, fun-filled days of summer are surrendering to the gentler, easy-pace of autumn, but with the change of seasons comes the promise of many more opportunities for fun on the Iowa Great Lakes trails. In addition to the University of Okoboji Oktoberfest Ride, September 26th, Active Okoboji is hosting Tails on the Trails on October 4th. Bring your pet for a fun time. No pet? One will be provided for you to walk. In addition, the trails are open and available to all. As one trail rider shared with

me recently, "I like to ride on my own rather than in organized events." That's okay. The Iowa Great Lakes Trails provides a wide variety of fun and healthful activities, on you own or in a group.

Be checking future columns and our web site at <http://www.co.dickinson.ia.us/departments/trailsboard.asp> for additional news on trail construction and activities. Until then, as always, Happy Trails to you and yours.