

News from the Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council

# TRAIL TRACKS



Spring, 2012



## MISSISQUOI VALLEY RAIL TRAIL

### Introducing our new logo!

The Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council is pleased to introduce its new logo for the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail. We feel the logo very effectively communicates all that the MVRT stands for – multiple uses and the beautiful rural surroundings of northern Vermont.

The logo will be used for advertising/marketing purposes and on any new signs on the MVRT.

### Sat., July 14 Fit Family Day

Save the date and plan to bring your children to the Council's family day on the MVRT. To be held at 2 locations on the MVRT this year, St. Albans and Enosburg Falls, there will be races, scavenger hunt, walking, running, bicycling, a stroller walk, and prizes for families with children under 10 years old.

Introducing the MVRT to your children at a young age will hopefully develop in them not only a love for the Trail that lasts a lifetime, but also an enthusiasm for outdoor exercise!



## Photo Contest

### Winter Shots for 2012-13

As a slight change for this year's Photo Contest, we have decided to focus on winter pictures. Details of the contest will be announced in October with a deadline for submissions of April 15, 2013.

So while you're out on the MVRT this summer, think about where you might want to come back for a winter shot and share with us your spectacular sights of the MVRT with snow!

### 2011 Winners

On Tuesday, November 15, 2011 the Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council announced the winners of its Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail 2011 Photo Contest. Grand Prize winner was Baird Morgan of Florence, VT for his photo 'Looking East', shown at right.

Winner of the Scenery/Views category was Baird Morgan for 'Corn in August'; Jauna and Justin Berry for 'Relaxing with a View' in the Trail Users category; Fred Murphy for 'Ancient Signpost' in the Nature category; and Jauna and Justin Berry for 'Faithful Friend' in the category Trail Neighbors.

Runners up were Ann Hull for 'Frosty

Morning' in the Scenery/Views category; Angel LaRose for 'Hurry Up' in the Trail Users category; Valerie Bluhm for 'Mother Nature's Magic' in the Nature category; and Jauna and Justin Berry for 'Rail Trail Wheels' in the Trail Neighbors category. You can view all these photos on our website <[mvrailtrail.com](http://mvrailtrail.com)>.

Many thanks to Sheldon Elementary School for the use of their premises, and to judges David Juaire, Jo-Anne Rock and Barry Kade for their time and assistance.



## Updates

### MVRT Parking Areas

If it seems like forever that you've been hearing about our project to construct parking areas along the MVRT, you're not mistaken. In fact, it's been 14 years since the Council received its first grant; this was followed by a second grant awarded 11 years ago. The original project involved developing parking improvements in St. Albans, North Sheldon, East Berkshire, and Richford; later amendments included the addition of information kiosks in the existing parking areas at St. Albans and North Sheldon, and developing three additional parking areas (Swanton/Greens Corner, East Berkshire, and Richford).

A Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) crew helped with the improvements at the St. Albans and North Sheldon sites in the late 1990's. With the construction and installation of the information kiosks by another VYCC crew in

2002, these two parking areas were complete.

The Swanton/Greens Corner, East Berkshire, and Richford parking areas are at various stages in the design/permitting process. With limited funding remaining from the grants, in 2006 the Council prioritized the 3 projects and

opted to pursue development of the East Berkshire site first. Construction of this site was planned for 2008. The local VTrans office, District 8, had agreed to construct and maintain the E. Berkshire parking area. Prior to construction, a site visit and initial soil test revealed the presence of 'coal ash', a substance often found at railroad sidings. This was not surprising as the parking area site was a former railroad siding. The extensiveness of the coal ash is not known without further soil testing. As it is now, there is no problem with the current use of

the site; however converting it into a parking area would involve disturbance of the soil which in turn might necessitate remedial activity. VTrans has decided to abandon the parking area idea and to leave the site undisturbed.

The Council's next priority parking area site is Greens Corner in Swanton. A construction estimate and several approvals obtained for this site in 2008 need to be updated. With the passage of time and increase in construction costs, our remaining grant funds are not sufficient to complete the project. The Northwest Regional Planning Commission is discussing with VTrans the possibility of acquiring the additional funds that would be required to construct the Greens Corner parking area.

In 2008, the Town of Richford requested the Council to put the development of a parking area on hold. We have no further update on the status of this site.

So the parking area project is still viable, and as we've said for so many years now, stay tuned for further news! Hopefully we'll see a new and improved parking area at Greens Corner!

## Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

The project has been going through Act 250; public hearings have been held and the permit is expected to be issued this summer. Trail work cannot start until the Act 250 permit has been issued.

The trail construction is planned in three phases:

Phase 1 is expected to take 2 years and will cover, from west to east, Swanton to Sheldon, Cambridge Junction to Morrisville, and West Danville to St. Johnsbury.

Phase 2 will cover Sheldon to Cambridge, and Morristown to Greensboro Bend.

Phase 3 will cover Greensboro Bend to West Danville.

VAST is presently working with municipalities along Phase 1 portions of the Trail to be able to use Town roads to access the LVRT for the purpose of constructing the trail.

## Friends of the MVRT

*Thank You* to our many returning friends for your continued support of the Trail and the Council:

*John Chicoine*

*Abe & Jean Brown*

*H. Wells French*

*Mary Steuber*

*Sue & John Martin*

*Steve & Debbie Bourgeois*

*Baird Morgan*

*George Hall*

*Dolly MacNeil*

*Frances Casey*

*Thomas Smith*

*Michael LaFontaine*

*Ann & Earl Sanft*

*Peter Backman & Annie Christopher Fund*

*Peter Perrino*

*Dana Wolcott*

*Anne Bowers*

And, it is with great pleasure that we *Welcome!* our new Friends:

*Mr. & Mrs. John Bolog*

*Bryant Andrews*

*We are thrilled that you all enjoy the MVRT as much as we do, and that you value the Council's efforts on behalf of you, our Trail users!*

Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council  
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*The Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail*  
*Farms, Forests, Fields, and Communities: Come Harvest Our Agricultural Heritage!*