

Mendota Trail Newsletter

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE MENDOTA TRAIL

We need your continued support of the Mendota Trail. Please send us a special year end gift to further our efforts.

Your support will benefit Bristol's economy and well-being, as well as that for the immediate surrounding area. It will help promote outdoor recreation and the enjoyment of the natural beauty of our region.

We need your financial support now to help us start 2019 on firm footing as we develop the first five miles of trail on the Bristol end. Remember, your 2018 contribution will be tax advantaged since Mountain Heritage, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

Please mail your year-end contributions to:

Mountain Heritage, Inc.
PO Box 1259
St. Paul, VA 24283

or deliver to:

Mountain Sports, Ltd.
1021 Commonwealth Avenue
Bristol, VA 24201

Make checks payable to **Mountain Heritage, Inc.** with a memo notation that the gift is for **"The Mendota Trail Project"**

Thank you!!!



Thank you to Mendota citizens for providing a festive fall arrangement and maintaining the Mendota trailhead.

IN THIS ISSUE...

Mendota Trail Update

Meet a Trail Supporter

Mendota Trail T-Shirts

Economic Impact Study

The Housers

Notoriety in a Regional
Publication



MENDOTA TRAIL UPDATE

2018 was a busy year for the trail on a number of fronts. Our accomplishments included the following:

- secured two separate easements from property owners, allowing for trail passage across their private land
- met with adjacent private property landowners to plan accommodations for trail traffic adjacent to their property
- consulted with VDOT on multiple occasions to determine appropriate signage requirements at road crossings and to learn about setback regulations from roadways; also obtained their assistance on grant submissions
- applied for several grants aimed at trail improvement
- held a successful social event in March and our first annual work day in April
- participated with a design team from Virginia Tech in the development of preliminary plans for a trailhead in Mendota
- received financial support from multiple donors
- signed a sales agreement to acquire property adjacent to Island Rd. for the future development of a Bristol trailhead
- approached local corporate sponsors for funding help for the trail
- rehabilitated our first trestle, the Tindall Trestle, on the Bristol end of the trail
- contracted with Key-Log Economics out of Charlottesville to complete an economic contribution study
- worked with scout groups to perform trail improvements, including the erection of a trail kiosk by an Eagle Scout candidate
- obtained a unanimous resolution of support from the Washington County Board of Supervisors in our pursuit of grants from the public sector and private foundations
- worked closely with Bristol, VA staff in submitting an application for a federal grant
- completed a lengthy permitting process with Washington County related to Erosion and Sediment Control
- collaborated with regional entities and the Creeper Trail in a joint application for funding opportunities
- met with Washington County staff related to zoning issues that could potentially impact the trail

We fully expect to develop the first part of the trail leading out of Bristol in 2019. We look forward to your continued support to help us make this happen!

Submission by Bob Mueller

If you wish to learn more about the Mendota Trail and how you can be involved or contribute to this newsletter, please email:

info@mendotatrail.org



Meet a Mendota Trail Supporter



Oscar Harris has been a long-time supporter of the Mendota Trail since the early 1980s. Oscar is a native of Hiltons, Virginia but has called Mendota home since marrying Katie Harris, who was born and raised in Mendota. During his professional career, he held many positions but the constant in his life has been the role of musician. He is both a solo artist and an ensemble artist in groups such as Dale Jett & Hello Stranger.

He gladly shared his musical talents with Mendota Trail supporters at our Spring Gathering in March, much to the enjoyment of all who were in attendance.

He sees the Mendota Trail as a viable endeavor for our region to promote ecotourism.

Trails like the Mendota Trail facilitate enjoyment of the beautiful natural resources yet also ensure these resources are maintained for future generations to enjoy. It's a win-win.

Oscar regularly volunteers his time and energy doing trail maintenance on the Mendota end of the trail, mowing the trail and helping to clear it of debris as needed. He feels that Mendota will receive a much-needed economic "spurt" following the further development of the Mendota Trail as small businesses rise such as a convenience store, bed and breakfasts, places to eat, bike shops and possibly even a small hotel at some point.

He sums the future of the Mendota Trail and its influence over Mendota as saying "The opportunities are endless." *We agree!*

Submitted by Eva Beaulé

MENDOTA TRAIL T-SHIRTS

Mendota Trail T-Shirts are available at Mountain Sports, Bristol, Virginia for \$20. All proceeds benefit the Mendota Trail.



ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS STUDY

Mountain Heritage, Inc. contracted with a Charlottesville firm, Key-Log Economics, to perform an economic contributions study related to the Mendota Trail. Their executive summary reports on page 6: "Overall, results indicate that completion of the Mendota Trail project would help bring new jobs and economic opportunities to the area. At just 50,000 day-use visitors, the economic impact to the local economy would be approximately \$655,712 in terms of value added (value of goods and services provided) and result in approximately 11 jobs."

Here is a link to the full report:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_VWOURrQD5pTljCjNm95F8l8XbH0WYFs/view

A study of this nature provides affirmation of how our local economy will benefit from the full development of the Mendota Trail. It helps us in seeking funding support from public grants, corporate sponsors, and private foundations.

SAVE THE DATE!

April 6 Work Day, Creeper Trail
April 13 Work Day, Mendota Trail
April 27 Creeper Fest



THE HOUSERS

George and Judy Houser recently donated an easement on a portion of the land they own in the vicinity of Little Wolf Run Rd. and Phillips Rd. for usage by the Mendota Trail.

This generous gift provides greatly needed access to the old rail bed in that vicinity in order to bypass an area where one of the old trestles (#16) had previously been removed by VDOT. Rebuilding the former trestle would have been challenging from an engineering standpoint and a very expensive proposition.

The Housers have recollections of the old excursion train that used to run in the area. They have owned their property since 2001 and previously enjoyed hiking on the old rail bed. Mr. Houser said he is pleased to help with the trail effort. He noted:

'Just look at the Creeper Trail.....we need something like that around here.'

George Houser



Notoriety in a Regional Publication

The Mendota Trail was recently referenced in the November, 2018 edition of **BLUE RIDGE outdoors**, on page 23.

One of our dedicated volunteers, Randi Goodman, is featured in an article written by Ellen Kanzinger, **30 UNDER 30**. It highlights ‘...the next generation of outdoor leaders across the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast...’

The content follows:



Randi Goodman, 26 Mountain Biker, VA

For Randi Goodman, the outside is the place to be and she wants to get more people involved. While at King University, she helped her team win two National

Championships, one in mountain biking and the other in cyclocross. Around the same time, Goodman started working at Mountain Sports, Ltd., an outdoor store specializing in equipment and information.

Now a full-time employee, Goodman wants to start beginner-friendly rides for people who might not have as much experience on bikes but want to get outdoors. She’s also helping write grants to fund the Mendota Trail, a rails to trail under construction in Washington County, VA.

“I just want to encourage more women to get out there and get muddy and sweaty and dirty. I mean, I’ll still paint my nails and grab on to my handlebars,” Goodman said.

RULES FOR TRAIL USE

Only officially announced portions of the trail (the first mile in Mendota) are open to the public. The rest of the corridor is closed due to dangerous conditions; non-permitted usage is solely at the user’s own risk.

Additional rules are:

- The trail is open dawn to dusk
- No trespassing on adjacent private property
- No motorized vehicles
- No hunting or discharge of firearms
- No animals other than leashed, non-vicious dogs; dog waste must be disposed of properly
- Minors must be accompanied by adults

TRAIL USERS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK AND BY USING THE TRAIL WAIVE ALL CLAIMS OF INJURY OR PROPERTY DAMAGE AGAINST MOUNTAIN HERITAGE, INC., ITS AGENTS, VOLUNTEERS, EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, BOARD MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES