

Mendota Trail Newsletter

GRAND OPENING ON THE BRISTOL END OF THE MENDOTA TRAIL 8/16/2019 !!!

Bristol celebrated the Grand Opening of 3.1 miles on the Bristol end of the Mendota Trail on Friday, 8/16/19. Over 100 people attended, including dignitaries and various community members. It was a festive occasion. Local media were in attendance which resulted in coverage on WCYB later that day and in the Bristol Herald Courier on Saturday. See: https://www.heraldcourier.com/news/mendota-trail-adds-miles-to-its-proposed-mile-length/article_a181b5bd-c3fa-5fa7-8ad1-c4a0f14da88a.html

Speakers included Del. Todd Pillion, Washington County Tyler District Supervisor Saul Hernandez, Mayor Neal Osborne from Bristol, VA and Vice Mayor Mahlon Luttrell from Bristol, TN. Mr. Frank Kilgore, representing Mountain Heritage, Inc. as our project manager and two of our dedicated volunteers, Ellen Mueller from Bristol and Eva Beaulé from Mendota, were also featured.

A ribbon cutting followed the ceremonies and many in attendance then enjoyed some time on our beautiful trail. It was a great day! Thanks to all of you who helped this dream become a reality!



**THE BRISTOL TRAIL HEAD IS
OFFICIALLY OPEN!**



OPENING DAY THANK YOUS

Several parties were instrumental in helping us with our Grand Opening and deserve special recognition.

Thanks to:

- Boy Scout Troop 8 for parking assistance
- Bart Long & Associates Auction Company for sound amplification equipment
- Bicycle Patrol Team from the Washington County Sheriff's Department
- Bristol Virginia's Public Works and Police Departments
- Jeff Rice from Tri-City Tent & Event.



Above: Bristol, Virginia Mayor Neal Osborne

Below: Washington County Tyler District Supervisor Saul Hernandez



Above: Ellen Mueller, dedicated trail volunteer and Vice Mayor Mahlon Luttrell from Bristol, Tennessee.

Right: Frank Kilgore, Mendota Trail Project Manager





TRAIL FUNDING FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

A state budget amendment has been approved by the General Assembly for the benefit of the Mendota Trail in the amount of \$50,000. The request was sponsored by Del. Todd Pillion, a true supporter of the trail. The funds have been earmarked for the further restoration of Trestle # 3, the “high” trestle leading into Benhams from Bristol. Restoration of this trestle will allow the opening of an additional 2 miles of trail from the current end point on Reedy Creek Rd. (633). Trail users will have the opportunity to access the trail in Benhams off of Rich Valley Rd. (700).

This is a reimbursement award. We will be paid back for our expenditures after the work and a final audit are completed.

Thank you Delegate Pillion for your support!



Delegate
Todd Pillion
speaks at the
Bristol Trail-
head Grand
Opening.

BRISTOL TRAIL HEAD AND RTP GRANT UPDATE

Work continues behind the scenes related to the preliminary engineering requirements of our federal grant for the Bristol Trail Head and the first 0.5 mile section of the trail. The bulk of the effort has been dedicated to completing environmental impact studies, obtaining a required appraisal and resolving issues related to a sewer connection. We have also had engineering consultations on how to proceed with developing the initial trail segment. Our next step will be the architectural design of the shelter/bathroom facility and picnic area.



KROGER REWARDS



Shopping at Kroger with a Rewards Plus Card can now earn money for the Mendota Trail!!

Link your Kroger rewards card to the trail and Kroger will make a donation to us every three months.

1. Go to Kroger.com and sign in.
2. From the menu at the top, click on Save, then Kroger Community Rewards.
3. Scroll down and click I'm a customer.
4. Type Mendota Trail in the organization search box then click Save.

The more people that register, the more money we receive!



SWINGING BRIDGE ON THE MENDOTA END OF THE TRAIL



The swinging bridge crossing the North Fork of the Holston River was recently refurbished by VDOT. It now feels much more secure. Thank you, VDOT!

STAY CONNECTED!

Please visit our website! Our brochure, video and prior newsletters are available for viewing.

www.mendotatrail.org



www.facebook.com/mendotatrailblazer



Instagram @mendota_trail

#mendotatrail

Work Days

Regular work is required to improve and maintain our beautiful trail. We will have scheduled work days on the **first** and **third Saturdays** in **November** to address tasks that need to be completed. Assignments on a given day will vary between lighter and heavier work. We will meet at Mountain Sports Ltd. (1021 Commonwealth Ave., Bristol, VA) at 8:30 AM on those days to organize the teams. We expect to be done by noon. Other “special” work days will be announced periodically by emails to those who have previously participated or indicated an interest in doing so.

LEAD BRISTOL!

The Mendota Trail was selected as an awardee of a leadership project coordinated by the Bristol Chamber of Commerce. The project team will complete an updated PowerPoint Presentation that will help the trail better tell its story to local civic and governmental groups as well as members of the larger surrounding area. The team will meet regularly to learn more about the history of the trail, its current status and plans we have for moving closer to our dream of opening the entire trail. The project will be completed next spring. We are honored to have been selected as a recipient of the time and energies contributed by talented members of the Bristol community in this effort. Thank you Chamber of Commerce!

PLEASE HELP THE EFFORT !

We recently reached a major milestone with the opening of the Bristol end of the trail. Your financial contributions have truly made a difference!

Our next goal is to extend each end of the trail toward the middle. Funding is urgently needed to cover current expenses related to further trail development and pay for grant expenditures that will later be eligible for reimbursement.

Please help maintain our current momentum!

Send your tax advantaged contributions to Mountain Heritage, Inc., with a notation on the memo line that the gift is to be applied to the Mendota Trail.

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

Or deliver to: Mountain Sports, Ltd.
1021 Commonwealth Ave.
Bristol, VA 24201



Locals enjoying the newly opened section

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are blessed to have a dedicated team of volunteers who have played a major role in the success of the Mendota Trail. Additional help is always greatly appreciated! Please consider helping us in some of the following ways:

- trail building, maintenance and preservation
- communications committee (website, social media, new brochure)
- fundraising, event planning
- Etc., etc.,

We thank you in advance!

Contact us at info@mendotatrail.org if you are interested in becoming more involved.



STEERING COMMITTEE FORMED

The spring work session suggested the formation of a steering committee to establish short and intermediate term goals related to the trail effort and also formulate a project timeline. A committee has since been formed to accomplish these objectives and meets monthly to advance the trail's progress. Members of the committee currently include:

- Bobby Cheers
- Ken Fleenor
- Jim Lapis
- Bob Mueller
- Randy Olson
- Brian Penley
- Mike Spear

MENDOTA TRAIL T-SHIRTS

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



RULES FOR TRAIL USE

Only officially announced portions of the trail 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



WCSO Bike Patrol enjoying the Bristol
Trailhead Ribbon Cutting!



FALL HOURS FOR THE STORE @ MENDOTA

The Store @ Mendota, conveniently located opposite of the Mendota Trail Head, will have new hours this fall. They are open

- Wednesday – Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM
- Sunday, noon – 5 PM.
- Closed Monday and Tuesday.

They will remain open until mid to late December. Stop by for hearty sandwiches, scrumptious desserts and warm smiles!

MENDOTA DAY 8/2/19

Mendota was celebrated by the Virginia Highlands Festival on Friday, 8/2/19. Randy Smith, Eva Beaulé, and Ellen Mueller gave talks on the history and outdoor attractions (Adventure Mendota and the Mendota Trail) in the area. Some then toured a local historic farm which was followed by a delicious lunch at The Store @ Mendota. Jeremy Stout, naturalist at Steele Creek Nature Center in Bristol, led an informative guided walk on the Mendota Trail following lunch. Others enjoyed some solitude on the river with Adventure Mendota or spent time viewing some local organic farming efforts. Many positive comments were shared by the participants.



Ellen Mueller sharing trail news with an attentive gathering in Mendota.