

THE

NOBSTONE



WINTER 2014 NEWSLETTER
of the KNOBSTONE HIKING TRAIL ASSOCIATION, *founded in 2013*

Welcome to the Trail

Greetings to all the members and friends of the 150-mile Knobstone Hiking Trail. New hikers will get used to referring to the three separate Tecumseh, Pioneer, and Knobstone sections of the trail, with the KHT used for the whole. To help with this, the KHTA has just published the first rudimentary guide to the whole 150-mile trail. Please contact the KHTA for one (KnobstoneHikingTrailAssociation@gmail.org) if you do not have one yet, or go to the KHTA website to see the 150-mile trail map. You can also contact the KHTA if you would like to be informed about work day opportunities such as the "Sparksville Park Privy Fest" pictured in the photo at right.

Newsletters will be published in the future in winter and well in advance of spring and fall hiking seasons.



JERRY PAGAC, ORIGINATOR AND EARLY BUILDER OF THE KNOBSTONE TRAIL TO SPEAK AT KHTA FIRST ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 15

The event, at The Lutheran Hills Church Camp Hall, northeast of Bloomington off SR 45 at Trevlac, begins with an optional hike to the Tecumseh trail at 1pm. The short official KHTA meeting begins at 3pm. Mr. Pagac will speak at 3:30, telling how the first miles of the original Knobstone Trail were laid out and built in the 1970s.. A pitch-in supper follows at 5:30. Details on enclosed flyer.

The Missing Link: Pioneer Trail Will Connect Tecumseh and Knobstone Trails

This newsletter will feature articles about news of and noteworthy sights along the KHT's central section, where trail access must still be acquired.. The route follows the Knobstone escarpment between two major river crossings with existing bridges, near SR 58 at Kurtz, and on the Jackson/Washington County line at Sparksville.

Right now, the KHTA is working with officials of the Hoosier National Forest (HNF) to identify the route through the HNF, including use of the Nebo Ridge Trail (photo at right shows the iconic Browning Hill, with its view of Salt Creek valley).

Completion of this HNF section will provide official access to the Pioneer section from both SR 46 between Bloomington & Nashville in the north, and SR 58 at its south end. This will greatly benefit hikers from Indianapolis and Bloomington as well as from Seymour, Columbus and further south.

Historical note: The provisional route suggested by the KHTA has been hiked (and even driven on) since Pioneer times. A part of it near Brown County State Park was called Dan Sipes Ridge by settlers, according to a grandson who still goes mushrooming there where he used to visit his grandparents. The grandson said federal land agents treated his grandparents well. When they were bought out, they got to stay in their cabin till they died, with a stipend to live on.



Second Sunday slow summer at Browning Mountain, 2011.
Source: Brian Kehnig

The Knobstone Hiking Trail Association Was Incorporated in the State of Indiana in April 2013. As a Fund of the Community Foundation of Morgan County all donations to the KHTA are fully tax deductible.

ITS MISSION is to work for “the completion, preservation, and promotion of the Knobstone Hiking Trail along the Knobstone Escarpment from 30 miles south of Indianapolis to 10 miles north of Louisville, KY.” It will serve as “a long-term management organization for the trail which will assure continuity of assistance in maintaining the trail to the governmental entities through whose jurisdictions the trail passes.

IN ITS FIRST YEAR, its founding Board has worked to define its objectives, establish it as a legal entity, inspire a hopeful group of members, and begin to develop contacts with relevant government and civic organizations to build the base to support its activities. KHTA Board members have also been working on easement acquisition, website development, & projects such as the trailside Sparksville Park privy.

TO PUT FACES with names, these are some of the Board members at a recent Board meeting: (right to left in photo): Fred Hanson, Trail/GPS; Tony Abbott, Treasurer; Jeff Edmondson, President; Nina Andrew, Secretary; Charles Andrew, Trail Water Resources. Also shown is visiting website consultant, Shannon Bennett. A full list of Board members and contact information will be posted on the KHTA website.



NEWSLETTER EDITOR and Board member (photographer): Suzanne Mittenthal. Members/readers are encouraged to pose questions and contribute news or other items. Please contact me at 765/349-0204 or smittenthal@gmail.com,

Annual Mtg. Will be a chance to meet members and learn more about the objectives and activities.....



SPARKSVILLE PARK DEVELOPMENTS ALONG THE KHT:

At Mile 83, N to S, is located Jackson County’s trailside Sparksville Park. For the KHT, the park serves as a vital, legal respite for hikers in the midst of private land easement and some road hiking miles. It’s 13 miles from legal camping on the Turner property at Mile 70. It’s 7 miles to the next legal camping area to the south on Hikers Knob, the Oak Heritage Conservancy property in Washington County.

The Park was donated by local farmer Greg McPike. It provides safe camping, shelter, and nearby water for trail users. Almost more importantly, Sparksville Park has become a useful recreation facility for local and county residents. The photo (below) shows its picnic shelters being used for the 2009 Sparksville Heritage Reunion. Kids play in the woods’ wetlands pond and on the playground equipment. A volleyball net is up, and basketball hoop. Summer school lunch programs are held here. And, as of November 2013, it has a privy.



The potty works were donated by Bestway waste haulers. Building materials, including the concrete pad, were paid for by a grant from Wal*Mart. Builders included master carpenter Robert Martinez (Sparksville), who also designed it, purchased materials, and provided all power tools and truck & tractor/lift. Also: Ed Lizewski (Eugene, OR); Dorothy Boling, Dempsey Boling (Salem); Archie Boling (Sparksville), Charles Andrew, Nina Andrew, Indianapolis; Suzanne Mittenthal, Martinsville; Larry Norman, Brownstown. Refreshments for builders: Edith Boling and Nancy Martinez, Sparksville..



and Nancy Martinez, Sparksville..

**YOU WILL READ A LOT ABOUT EASEMENT STRINGS:
TRAIL WORK NEAR SPARKSVILLE PARK**



Last year, Robert Darlage, of Columbus, (in photo at left with KHTA property acquisition specialist Suzanne Mitten-thal) donated a very valuable 1.5-mile easement. It's on a high ridge, just north of Sparksville, in a string of 5 easements needed to take the trail off the road north of Sparksville Park (KHT Mile 83). We are working on agreements

with the other property owners.

Linear trails often require the cooperation of many adjacent landowners..... The route is not arbitrary, but follows the escarpment' geological footprint. The forested acreage along the escarpment in both Washington and Jackson Counties is mostly held as classified forest. Many of these properties as well as some with agricultural acres are also leased for hunting.



KHTA members are already at work clearing the trail route for surveying work and eventual construction. Photos show KHTA Secretary Nina Andrew at work clearing poison ivy, and ducking under the blossoms of a local native Catalpa tree. This will be an interesting trail section! It will connect the string out to the road via an easement offered by John Howard, Sparksville resident, "for his grandchildren." When asked why he would help with trail access on his property line, he said "the Sparksville Park." His grandchildren play there.

*** * * * I WANT TO HELP BUILD THE KHT * * * ***

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS: **New** **Renew**

- Student/Elder \$15** **Family \$40** **Individual \$30** **Org./Club \$50** **Business \$100**
- Legacy \$100+_____** **Life \$1000** **KHT LAND & EASEMENT FUND \$_____**

Enclosed is my contribution of: \$_____

New Members: Please note if you would like to receive copies of the original Knobstone and Tecumseh Trail maps and the KHTA's Knobstone Hiking Trail Guide:_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____

State _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____



Make checks payable to: KHTA, Inc. Fund

**Mail to: The KHT, Suite 301
342 Massachusetts Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46204**

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE KHT?

- We met with staff of the Hoosier National Forest and the DNR, to help extend the KHT into the HNF.
- The KHT website was launched by retiring Board Member Glen Steenberger. Updating it is ongoing.
- A provisional trail route for new sections of the KHT in Jackson County near the Sparksville Park were cleared, flagged, and GPSd by KHTA volunteers, in preparation for survey .
- A KHT t-shirt design was created with the help of Ed Liizewski's great topo graphic, for sale on website.
- Initial contacts were made to extend the KHT to the edge of Martinsville, to attain its potential 150 miles.



LOCAL MAN'S BIG VISIONS REALIZED.

When John Jones graduated from high school, he took a small handful of dollars and bought a dump truck. Now he has a global business, shipping stone crushing and screening machinery as far away as South America and Saudi Arabia. Photo at left shows his company headquarters compound near Paragon.

Now Mr. Jones, or "Johnny," as he is known locally, has taken an interest in the vision for the Knobstone Hiking Trail. He just happened to acquire a property at the edge of Martinsville recently, It lies along Indian Creek, at the base of a high forested bluff that extends in the distance to state land owned by the

Department of Natural Resources. One day it is hoped that a route along the bluff can be acquired to extend the KHT 6 miles to the edge of Martinsville. There's great interest locally for a trail starting here.

Johnny Jones has donated easement land at the base of this bluff for a 210-space trailhead parking lot for when that happens. He is shown in the photo at left signing the document, with KHTA land & easement acquisition specialist Suzanne Mittenthal. Mr. Jones says he's anxiously "waiting and watching to see those hikers starting to park in his lot!"



The Knobstone Hiking Trail Association, Inc.
Suite 301, 342 Massachusetts Ave.,
Indianapolis, IN 46204