



KNOBSTONE HIKING TRAIL ASSOCIATION
An Indiana not-for-profit incorporation
www.KnobstoneHikingTrail.org.

Our Spring/Summer 2017 Knobstone newsletter contained an article on the first page entitled “Historic Hoosier National Forest Agreement.”

This was published prematurely with information that is not entirely correct, so we want to set the record straight. A formal agreement has not been finalized. A meeting was held between the KHTA, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Lake Monroe Management in May to discuss possible routes moving forward.

Finding an approved route through the Hoosier National Forest is obviously critical to making the 150-mile long Knobstone Hiking Trail a reality. To accomplish this, we must partner with the HNF management. They are actively engaged in this process and they desire to see this connection complete.

We were advised to state the KHTA does not advocate hiking on unapproved routes. Crossing Salt Creek at any place without a bridge can be dangerous at any time of the year. We discourage everyone from trying to cross it at the Pin Oak Wetland.

THE

NOBSTONE



SPRING/SUMMER 2017 NEWSLETTER Vol. 4, No. 2
of the **NOBSTONE HIKING TRAIL ASSOCIATION**, founded in 2013

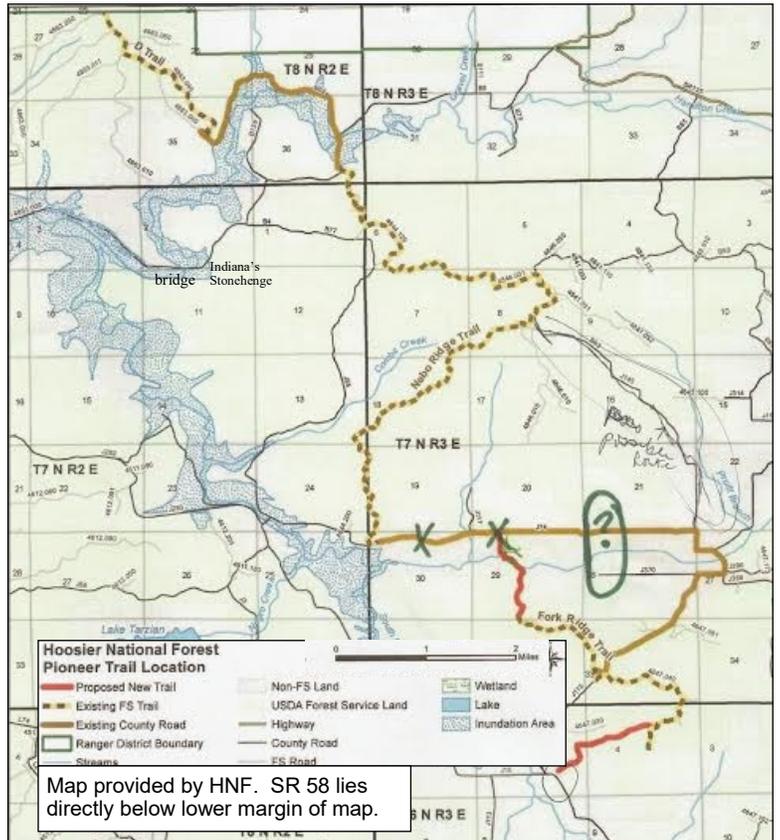
KHTAAssociation@gmail.com; www.knobstonehikingtrail.org; editor: smittenthal@gmail.com

HISTORIC HOOSIER NATIONAL FOREST AGREEMENT ADDS HNF MILES TO THE PIONEER SECTION OF THE NOBSTONE HIKING TRAIL

A follow-up meeting in April to the KHTA's September 2016 KHT Summit meeting with Hoosier trail stakeholders from all over Indiana was held at HNF Forest headquarters in Bedford (photo: KHTA president Charles Andrew making presentation). Approval of the incorporation of the Brown County/HNF Horse Trail D and HNF Nebo Ridge Trail into the proposed KHT Pioneer Section was formally announced. The route will incorporate 2.1 miles of Horse Trail D, 2 miles of road walk, and 8.6 miles of Nebo Trail. Pending approval of a short DNR connection, this will mean an extension of the official KHT hike length beginning with the Tecumseh from 42 miles to nearly 55 miles.

The approved route is the one suggested as a high water alternative to the original proposal by the KHTA of a route extending S. to the bridge over Salt Creek at the foot of Browning Hill. This was given provisional approval in 2011 by a previous administration. The new route will serve hikers coming from a distance, who may not inquire ahead about weather conditions. (Circled ? is area to be avoided in high water.)

Next step: getting approval for a bridge over Salt Creek, and approval of a connection to the HNF's Fork Ridge Trail, which extends to the southern boundary of the HNF purchase area at SR58. This will require one easement, bridge fundraising, and impact assessments required by HNF management regulations. Meanwhile, to try the route, hikers can continue to use routes visible on topographic maps—the usual is the wetlands area crossing. Watch the weather carefully for water conditions down near Houston, a town that time forgot on CR 1000N near the end of the Nebo. [Houston School Festival 2nd Sat. in October—Fun!!!]



KHTA 4TH ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 25:

“CONNECTING TRAILS” Morgan County's *Reporter-Times*, Susan Carter, correspondent, March 27, 2017 (photo, excerpts).

Indiana has a rich history of hiking. People are not just hiking existing trails, but creating new trails and maintaining old ones. A novel idea, right? Not really. Sometime in the eons of history a ridge of rock strata, running from what is now Martinsville down through the Louisville area was formed. It created a 150-mile line of high knobs and bluffs, with a gentle slope toward Illinois in the west, called the Knobstone Escarpment. The ridge and connecting trails can carry a hiker from about 30 miles south of Indianapolis in the Morgan-Monroe State Forest, all the way to 15 miles north of Louisville, Kentucky....almost. The “almost” refers to the section of the Knobstone Hiking Trail that is not yet completed.

The KHTA, founded to complete and manage that trail, held its 4th annual meeting Saturday, in the MMSF Fire Headquarters building. Jim Allen, property manager (photo) spoke of his role in creating the trail. A DNR Plan in 1996 for completing the trail called for acquisition of many miles of trail on private parcels connecting state lands, but the funds were not available. In 1998 the DNR decided to go ahead and connect at least the many adjacent MMSF properties. Suzanne Mittenthal (photo) was working for the DNR at that time scouting, expanding, and correcting trails. Allen and Mittenthal continued to work on the trail until it was completed in 2001.



The KNOBSTONE HIKING TRAIL ASSOCIATION

P.O.Box 1814, Martinsville, IN 46151

www.KnobstoneHikingTrail.org

KHTAssociation@gmail.com

TK editor: smittenthal@gmail.com



DEVELOPMENTS ALONG THE KHT New north end at Martinsville



TRYING THE MARTINSVILLE SPORTSMANS CLUB EASEMENT TRAIL —NATIONAL TRAILS DAY HIKE JUNE 3, 2017 The route is not official, but there are old pioneer tracks in use for more than 100 years to follow from the edge of the Conservation Club boundary. Nina Andrew, Volunteer Coordinator and Trail leader will lead a hike from the Jones Parking lot trailhead. Details on MeetUp!

KHTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Charles Andrew, Martinsville BUSINESS & GOVERNMENT TRAIL COORD. charles-andrew1@att.net

SECRETARY: Nina Andrew, Indianapolis TRAIL DEVELOPMENT, VOLUNTEER COORD. nandrew701@aol.com

TREASURER: Bob Decker, Indianapolis FINANCIAL ADVISOR, LEGISLATIVE & TOURISM LIAISON. rdecker@lucashealthgroup.com

Chris Donohue, Bloomington Construction, MEMBERSHIP, Bloomington, clack3@lycos.com.

Ed Lizewski, Eugene, Oregon WEBMASTER, khta.webm@yahoo.com

Rodney Mclean, Martinsville. TRAIL SUPPORT. rmclean64@hotmail.com

Bob Merriman, Indianapolis GPS COORD. KHT WATER RESOURCE PROJECT COORD., merriman_robert@hotmail.com

Suzanne Mittenthal, Martinsville REAL ESTATE EASEMENT/LAND ACQUISITION COORD., KHTA NEWSLETTER EDITOR, smittenthal@gmail.com

Jerry Pagac, Bloomington PUBLIC AGENCY LIAISON, jerpagac@yahoo.com

Steve Schafflein, Franklin ADOPT-A-TRAIL sschafflein@stroselions.net

Terry Usrey, Bloomington OUTREACH. usrey@indiana.edu

ADVISORY BOARD

Tony Abbott Attorney: 136 E. Market, Suite 300, Indianapolis, 46204. a1306@aol.com.

Pam Dunscombe, Martinsville LOCAL PARKS COORD., 765/343-6053, pamalaleleah@gmail.com.

Jess Gwinn Surveyor: 7625 N. Newark Rd., Solsberry, IN 47459, jagmo@bluemarble.net.

Brian Holzhausen, Fortville TRAIL RUNNING, Brian15@DINOseries.com

D. Jack Mahuron, Salem FOUNDATIONS ADVISOR, dmahuron@blueriver.net

John Miller, Rising Sun LAND TRUST ADVISOR, quercusalba@embarqmail.com,

Joe Payne, Thorntown DEVELOPMENT, joepa@outlook.com.



THE KHTA STAGES CHAINSAW AND TRAIL DESIGN & BUILDING WORKSHOPS The KHTA is taking on more of the management functions appropriate for a trail of national significance. Skill development is essential for the volunteer mission of the KHTA to continue to work. Organizations such as Volunteers for Colorado have extensive staff, paid and volunteer, to serve this function. The giant VOC has engaged more than 100,000 volunteers since 1986 in over \$22 million dollars worth of labor. It has hundreds of trained trail crew leaders directing projects every weekend all over Colorado. Leaders do not lay out trails, special technical crews do that. But its leaders obtain certification after workshops and trail building experience in order to lead volunteers.

KHTA TRAINING WORKSHOPS TO BE HELD ANNUALLY. The KHTA's aim is to develop its own trail crew leaders, as well as offer certification for others. Workshops will be held annually in the fall, and posted on the KHTA website. Chainsaw Certification Workshops will be held as needed. Training sessions will be posted on the KHTA website and MeetUp! Chainsaw workshops are run by the DNR in a cooperative relationship with the KHTA; the KHTA is only the facilitator for this valuable service to the public.

The first KHTA Trail Design and Building Workshop was held April 8, 2017, in the Activities Building and on the adjacent Ogle Hollow Trail at Brown County State Park. Its objective was to 'teach the major principle of sustainable trail design: "Interrupt the Flow.'" Its focus was learning and practicing design and maintenance techniques to prevent erosion of hiking trails by the accumulation of water on them from failures in design or maintenance. The class consisted of a morning of lecture and review of erosion-control design elements built into the BCSP's Ogle Hollow Nature Trail during its reconstruction in 2007. During this review, participants could see that there was no visible erosion damage in the intervening years. Outcrops were measured; it was determined that they were still functioning to shed water off the side of the trail, along with the numerous reverse-grade drains built into its design. The afternoon was spent in repairing some deadfall damage, reconstructing the trail with techniques learned in the review (photo above). Workshop led by Suzanne Mittenthal.

The first KHTA Chainsaw Safety and Use Certification Workshop was held April 24, 2017 at Starve Hollow SRA (class photo, right). Brad Schneck, J-WSF Property Manager supervised and organized the workshop. KHTA liaison and recruiter-in-chief was Steve Schafflein, leader and coordinator of the KHTA's Adopt-A-Trail program.



TRAIL BUILDING VOLUNTEER HOURS CLOCK: April-May: Volunteers 37, Hours 144. To date, since 2013: Volunteers, 331, Hours, 1728. Labor value: \$39,744 at \$23.06, the latest government estimate.

NEW 2017 KHTA MEMBERS: Tom Schleicher, Borden; Phil Zabel, Melvin Wilson, Bloomington; Paul Dilts, Janet Schneider, Indianapolis; Johnny Ledbetter, Converse; Randy Polumbo, NYC; Scott Daugherty, Zionsville; Mark Rogers, Spencer; Jim Garlits, Shelbyville; Apple Muncy, Nashville. Correction: The Fox donation noted in March of \$5,000 is the total of their donations to the KHTA to date, making the Silicon Valley Fund our largest donor on record.

KHTA DECAL: The KHTA has produced a **KHT CARSONITE TRAIL POST STICKER** for use on marking the new section of trail traversing the Hoosier National Forest.



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KHT TRAIL PARTNER REPORT: MEDORA COMMUNITY SCHOOL EARTH DAY PROJECT

..... May 16, 2017, by Lori McDonald, reporter, from the **Jackson County Banner** (article will also be featured in the *Seymour Tribune*—check www.tribtown.com) (Update May 19, Pat Bahan, Medora Community School)

Last October, a request for help was all it took for a regional hiking association to develop a relationship with students at one of the smallest schools in the state. That and the possibility of putting their community on the map and spending time outside instead of in a classroom have helped foster an even deeper relationship that many at Medora Community Schools hope continues.

The Knobstone Hiking Trail Association is a nonprofit organization whose members are dedicated to the completion, preservation and promotion of the Knobstone Hiking Trail, which begins in Clark County and heads northwest toward Martinsville. The association formed in 2013 to be a steward of the trail, which is not fully complete.

The Medora school is only five miles away from the trail, where it runs through the western part of Jackson County. When Suzanne Mittenthal, a board member of the association, approached Medora social studies and history teacher Pat Bahan last year to round up a group of students to assist with a trail work day, he enthusiastically accepted, and the task turned into a senior class project. The three tasks of the class were to build a 16-foot footbridge at the edge of Sparksville, clear a half-mile of trail and erect a commemorative bench. That project was completed successfully on Oct. 31 and later reported in the *Seymour Tribune*.



The Association only applied for the wetland trail boardwalk follow-up Earth Day 2017 project money last fall after learning the school's junior class (photo above, at Sparksville Park) wanted its own project, Mittenthal said. "When working with the seniors, I had seen that the boardwalk at the swampy edge of the beautiful wetland pond had rotted away," she said. "Without it, the valuable wetlands trail loop was unusable for most of the year." Mittenthal then consulted the Community Foundation of Jackson County, the funding source of the seniors' fall project but thought her case was hopeless because it was too late for the usual application deadlines (see page 6 for how the funds came through.) Students: Katelin Beesley, Hunter Browning, Allison Carney, Katlyn Douglas, Caylin Farmer, Lillian Hatfield, Gavin Henson, Charlene Hillenburg, Elexus Morris, Griffin Morris, Emily Newby, Tony Norklun, Zakary Owen, Marsadeez Phillips, Prayon Phillips, Tyler Reynolds, Kelsie Marie Silvers, Mersadies Stroud, Joshua Turner.





COMPLETING THE SPARKSVILLE PARK BOARDWALK LOOP

When the funds came through, Pat Bahan was happy to be a part of the follow-up project April 21, just in time for Earth Day on April 22. Bahan has taught at Medora Community Schools since 1982. "My involvement as a teacher is trying to develop my students' sense of civic participation by creating service learning projects at Medora Junior-Senior High," Bahan said. "Being an outdoor enthusiast myself, when Susie came to me with the Sparksville Knobstone Trail project a year ago, it was like having a gift dropped in my lap." The Medora seniors completed one phase of the Sparksville project, and the juniors had the next phase, helping along Bahan's goal of establishing service learning at Medora Community Schools before he retires. "This has a real sense of urgency for me as I have already submitted my request to retire as soon as I turn 64 on Christmas Eve," Bahan said. "If I can get the rest of the junior-senior high on line and participating in service learning by the time I leave, I think that will be a nice note to go out on."

At least 100 hours of volunteer time was donated by the juniors that day, and the need for an Earth Day project for Bahan's class provided the catalyst for getting the park's wetland loop trail in shape (view of section of finished trail below, right). "How lucky can the public get? Not too many other sources of labor like that are available in the county," Mittenthal said. "For the record, hardworking KHTA volunteers also came from Wash-

ington, Morgan and Marion counties to help in addition to the two Jackson County teachers, whose help was precious." Christy Sener Townsend, an English teacher at Medora, accompanied Bahan to take the junior class to the park at Sparksville to work on the project. Sener Townsend said the hope is to have further student involvement with the trail, but nothing is set up right now. "Pat is interested in having a community service cornerstone project, "Now that we've established that relationship, we hope to keep it going."

The boardwalk was completed that day except for a few top boards because the group ran short after it was decided that the boardwalk width should be increased. Sparksville resident Nancy Mock Martinez, who helped build the park's picnic pavilions, has the lumber and nails to finish the missing 5 feet of boardwalk, Mittenthal said. "Besides the boardwalk, the rest of the wildlife loop trail was cleared. A lot of digging was needed, which was not easy work," Mittenthal said. "It's a better trail now than originally."

There were 19 juniors on hand for the trail project, including Griffin Morris, who said he had helped his father before with similar work. "We've had to build bridges under our dog kennel, and I have also raked up our garden before and cleared out brush," Morris said. "The work has been good today, and I've enjoyed it. It's been an experience." Students pulled up the old boardwalk and stakes to make way for the new boardwalk and cleared the trail path. "It's not super-hard work. It just takes a lot of time," junior Hunter Browning said. "It depends on if you have the right tools or else some of the work would be next to impossible." Mittenthal said, "Digging the trail wasn't very exciting work, but it had to be done, and a lot of it."

For the Knobstone Hiking Trail Association, it means their work in the KHT trailside park is nearly



complete. There are still funds for an information sign out front, and having the park's valuable wetland loop trail in nice condition now will likely speed up placement of the signage. "Some places spend millions recreating wetland habitats, and we have a very valuable one right here donated years ago by farmer Greg McPike," Mittenthal said. "Wood ducks are nesting here every year, which is a sign of a functioning wetland." While gathering up lumber with his fellow students, junior Gavin Henson summed up his experience working on the trail. "It felt pretty good helping out," he said. "It's like we're doing something good here for everybody else."

EARTHDAY UPDATE MAY 19: Nancy Martinez reports she will complete the boardwalk this weekend. Teacher Pat sent memo, stating he was amazed at how much work was done, and collected more student comments: "I loved it. Tony; It was a lot of hard work, but we all learned something from it. Caylin; It was time-consuming, but we all got something good out of it. Katelin; It was a great experience, and I was glad to help. Griffin; I'd do it again in a heartbeat! Lillie; Fun Fun Fun. Gavin; It was a really good experience that left me a feeling of accomplishment. I would do it again! Lexi; I thought it was really fun! Marsadeez; It was SO fun." Charlene.



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

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS: New Renew

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|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Elder \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Org./Club \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Legacy \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Landmark \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Milestone \$1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____ | | |

I'd also like to make a donation to the KHT LAND & EASEMENT FUND: \$ _____

Enclosed is my contribution of: \$ _____

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City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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OR GO ONLINE TO THE KHTA WEBSITE, AND JOIN with PAYPAL: www.KnobstoneHikingTrail.org



2nd SATURDAY TRAIL CREW WORK REPORTS

Tecumseh Trail extension to the new Jones Trailhead at the Martinsville Sportsmens Club property: work has been completed. Scouting for a route to connect to the present TT trailhead off the old center ridge pioneer/logging tracks is ongoing. In the meantime, there's plenty of other work.

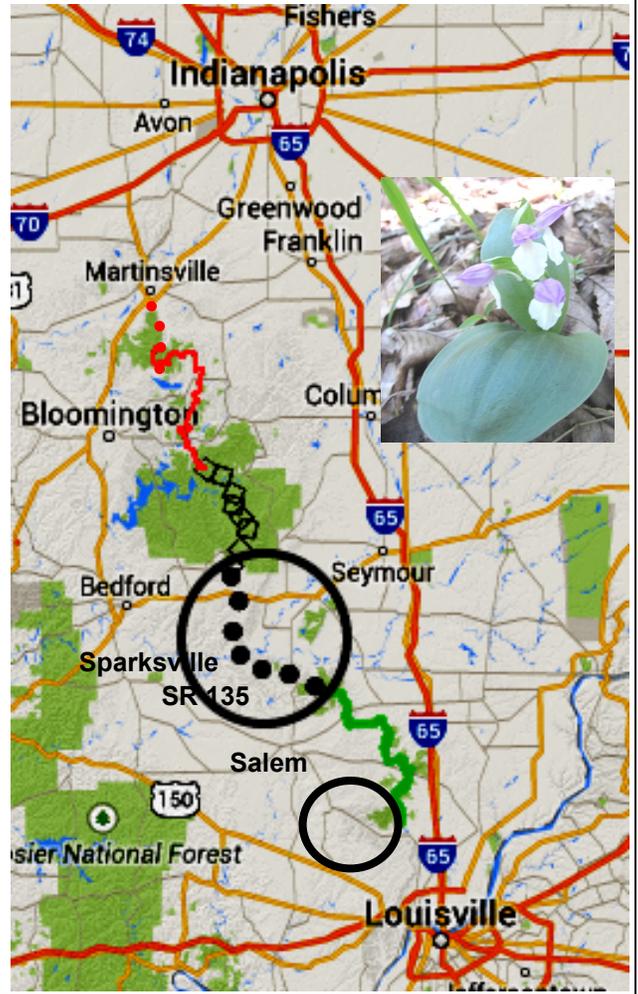
The new Knobstone Trailhead at Deam Lake State Recreation Area: this will take many more months to complete. Crews are nearing completion of clearing the route. Possibly by summer it can be hiked. Benching—leveling the footbed—will take more months of effort.

Reroute of KT north of Leota Trailhead. A recent accurate GPS of the original layout revealed a section here, near Mile 25, actually passes over private land. Thanks to Steve Schaflein's Adopt-A-Trail "creds" we are the go-to folks to help plan a sustainable reroute. The old one was too steep anyway, and a footbridge is needed at the base of the new section. This opens up new potential for upgrades of the KHT, the very mission of the KHTA. A task force of Steve, Nina, and Suzanne did the work.



5/12 TRAIL CREW THE DEAM SRA NEW KT TRAILHEAD project again attracted some new S. Indiana members. Several were from a program in Indianapolis—volunteers who had heard Nina and Charles' presentation at the Central Indiana Wilderness Club monthly meeting in April. The crew represented a strait flush of a sort, containing representatives from each decade from the 20s to their 70s. As we always say, there's work for every ability and experience level. At times, experience even trumps youth. But both are needed. This project is a stretch for trail builders from Indy and Martinsville—a two-hour drive. It's grand to have workers from Columbus, Henryville, and Borden—and they say they're coming back!

PROGRESS ON THE 150-MILE KHT



KEY: red dots=provisional KHT extension M-MSF to Martinsville; red line = Tecumseh Trail; black chain=provisional Hoosier National Forest; black dots, circle=Pioneer Trail easements; red circle=J-WSF provisional Muscatatuck Bluffs & Chestnut Ridge; green line= original Knobstone. Trail. Large circle: Medora H.S. Sparksville work project. Small circle: New Southern Knobstone Trailhead at Deam Lake.

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

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Elder \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Org./Club \$50 |
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CFJC OWEN-CARR TWP FUND GRANTS EXTENSION OF FUNDS FOR JUNIOR CLASS EARTHDAY PROJECT An original grant last fall of \$2,200 for Jackson County's Sparksville Park improvement and a Knobstone Hiking Trail footbridge was obtained from the foundation. Help was obtained from the Fund's local Board, made up of residents from Carr and Owen townships. It is funded with donations from Rumpke Consolidated Services, which operates the Medora Landfill. "It's our way of giving back to the community that supports us," Medora Landfill manager Ralph Collins said. Donations to the fund are based on the tonnage of trash processed at the landfill. Rumpke also makes donations to support the Owen-Carr Township Community Endowment at the foundation, which also supports needs in the two townships. The endowment can accept gifts of cash, stock, real estate and other real property from donors other than Rumpke, said Dan Davis, president and Community Foundation of Jackson County. But when more students wanted to be involved, there seemed no way to fund materials for another project.

"I'm very grateful to the foundation, which advised me of a special President's Fund that could be approached regarding an extension of an existing project," Mittenthal said. "As a Sparksville Park trail improvement project, it was appropriate for me to apply." The foundation awarded the Association \$461 for the lumber and fittings needed for another class project, to replace a boardwalk on a wetlands loop trail (photo left). A better quality of treated timber with a wider width was purchased this time for the replacement than had been used 10 years earlier, Mittenthal said. (See pages 3-4 for photographs of the work the students accomplished on a gorgeous spring day just before the Prom.)

SUMMER EVENTS CALENDAR: DETAILS INSIDE OR ON:



JUNE 3, 2017 NATIONAL TRAILS DAY HIKE NEW KHT TRAILHEAD SOUTH FROM MARTINSVILLE. Details on MeetUp! Search for Monroe County's Mystery Rocks!

JUNE 10, JULY 8, AUGUST 12, SEPT. 9 KHT TRAIL BUILDING 2ND SAT. HELP BUILD NEW KT TRAILHEAD AT DEAM LAKE. With enough volunteers, the DNR may be able to open it. Details on MeetUp!



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The **COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**
 of Jackson County
Together, we grow tomorrows

